

# GOLF COURSE NEWS

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#### INTRAWEST TAKES ON COYOTE MOON

Coyote Moon Golf Club, (hole number 16, above) has hired Intrawest Golf to provide management services. The popular daily-fee layout, designed by PGA Tour pro Brad Bell, opened last fall in California's High Sierras. The 18-hole layout winds through piney forests and sweeps over valleys, ravines and lakes. See story on page 15.

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#### PERIODICAL

## E-commerce struggles for golf foothold

By A. OVERBECK

While e-commerce may actually revolutionize business-to-business transactions someday, the message for now is clear: Don't believe the hype.

In the past year, e-ideas have been scratched and retooled and company strategies have been rethought and rejected. In the process, gobs of money has been raised and spent developing software and Web sites and rolling out lavish marketing and promotional schemes.

Some companies, such as Carl M. Freeman Golf Solutions, never got off the ground. Still other companies, including Golfsat, GreenIndustryOnline.com and Greentrac.com, have

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## Development slowdown a healthy trend, experts say

By ANDREW OVERBECK

JUPITER, Fla. — The downturn in golf course development that was predicted by the National Golf Foundation's 2001 facilities report is becoming evident. The foundation recently reported that for the first half of 2001, just 176 courses were completed. The updated prediction for the year is 378 course openings, down from a record 524 in 2000. This will bring total development numbers back to early 1990s levels.

The significant drop in development, however, is not seen as a negative

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Workers laying bluegrass sod on the front nine of the Fazio Course at Red Sky

## \$100-million Red Sky Golf Club unfolding in the Colorado Rockies

By JAY FINEGAN

WOLCOTT, Colo. — One of the most lavish golf development projects in history is unfolding amidst stunning alpine scenery here in the Rocky Mountains of Colorado.

Vail Resorts, best known for its ski operations, is pouring \$100 million into Red Sky Golf Club, currently under construction in the Vail Valley. The 36-hole complex, featuring signature designs by Tom Fazio and Greg Norman, promises not only eye-popping vistas but two long layouts providing plenty of challenge.

"This place is unbelievable," said director of golf Jeff Hanson, formerly head pro at nearby Beaver Creek Golf Club, also run by Vail Resorts. "I think it's going to be the best club anywhere in the West. From the standpoint of playabil-

ity and aesthetics, it will rival anything in the country. We're targeting for each course to be in the top 100 right away."

The 700-acre property, formerly ranch land, slopes steeply up a mountainside from I-70, Colorado's major east-west artery. The club lies about two hours west of Denver and 20 minutes from Eagle County Regional Airport.

#### HIGH-ALTITUDE GOLF

The Fazio Course, slated to open next summer, stretches an impressive 7,400 yards. Players will make their way through sage-covered hills, dense forests of aspen and juniper, and around a highland lake.

"You'll get two different feels on the Fazio side," said Hanson. "You get a Troon, Scottsdale type of look on the

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Superintendent Mike Valiant

## Fought-Lehman design team fast out of the gate

By JAY FINEGAN

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. — The new design team of John Fought-Tom Lehman Golf Course Architecture is off to a strong start, with three projects in Arizona, one in California and another in Minneapolis.

Fought and Lehman first came together in 1997 to design The Gallery, an 18-hole private course north of Tucson that opened to high praise. More recently, they completed a total renovation of The Farms, an exclusive club near San



Lehman (left) and Fought

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#### CONSTRUCTION DOWN

FIRST 6 MONTHS  
2000: 245

FIRST 6 MONTHS  
2001: 176

Source: National Golf Foundation

## Golf cart vandals nabbed in Washington

By JAY FINEGAN

BREMERTON, Wash. — Three joyriding teenagers who trashed 16 golf cars at Gold Mountain Golf Course here have been arrested and are being prosecuted.

"They're getting hammered pretty good because they did about \$10,000 in damage around here," said PGA pro Scott

Alexander, director of golf at the 36-hole club. "They ended up driving three carts down the road about five miles and we couldn't find them for a week. That turned out to be grand theft — a felony deal."

According to Alexander, the culprits were the same youths who had broken

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## Red Sky

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lower holes, but when you reach the upper holes there's definitely a mountain feel."

Fazio's front nine includes two monster par-5 holes, one measuring 582 yards from the tips, the other stretching to 612 yards. Golfers will get some help from the 9,000-foot altitude, because the ball sails about 10 to 15 percent farther in the thin air. Five sets of tees on all holes will provide additional relief.

"The Fazio Course will be awesome," said Hanson. "The fairways are wide, so you can play the championship tees and get everything you want from a length standpoint."

### 300 WORKERS ON SITE

Mike Valiant, CGCS, director of golf maintenance, is one busy man as workers race to meet the Sept. 15 deadline to have all greens and tees seeded before the first frost. The greens will sport A-4 bentgrass, and some 80 acres of fairway have been sodded with bluegrass.

"We have about 300 people working out here," said Valiant, gazing around the bustling construction scene on the front nine. "Around 60 are with Landscapes Unlimited, our main contractor, and the rest are subcontractors building roads and doing utility work." But much work remains to be completed before December, when snow will shut down the construction.

Valiant is also riding herd on a massive revegetation effort, budgeted at \$1.6 million on the Fazio layout alone. "Last summer we salvaged 23,000 sage plants and another 2,200 juniper and serviceberry," he said. "This year we purchased another 11,000 sage and 6,000 junipers. The Fazio guys want it to match the existing environment."

### RUGGED NORMAN COURSE

High above the Fazio layout, set apart by a huge ridge, lies the site for Greg Norman's gargantuan 7,600-yard track. Construction began this summer, with the opening planned for 2003.

"You'll get a totally different look up there," said Hanson. "It's in a bowl, a big deep valley. The holes crisscross back and forth through these winding aspens and junipers. It has craggy rock outcroppings, rugged gulches and wildflower meadows. It's like a wilderness experience."

A resort guest clubhouse will anchor the Fazio Course, but the super-upscale, 26,000-square-foot private member clubhouse will sit on the Norman site. Designed by Hart/Howerton, it will be constructed of stone and massive logs, ranch-style, like a classic western lodge, meant to blend easily with the surroundings.

Memberships, capped at 425, **GOLF COURSE NEWS**

are selling already for \$150,000, with dues set initially at \$6,500 a year. "The demand has been unbelievable," Hanson reports, "because this is definitely the best project in the valley."

### NORMAN'S PICKUP TRUCK

The price tag here – \$100 million – is steep for two courses, but the expenses kept piling up. The 700 acres alone cost \$15 million. Costs for construction and the pumping system, which

brings water a mile uphill, also ran high.

"The rock blasting here has been unbelievable," Hanson said. "We knew these were the Rocky Mountains, but we didn't think they were that rocky. Huge boulders had to be blown out of the ground. And the architect fees are \$1.2 million apiece. These are signature courses, so the site visits are on top of that – they want you

to pay for their jet fuel. But Norman actually has a big 3,000 acre ranch in Meeker, a couple of hours west of here, so he drove over in his pickup."

Despite the cost, Vail Resorts stands to turn a tidy profit on its investment. The 87 homesites on the property, most of them 1.2 acres, are going for \$795,000. "That's just for the lot, for the dirt," Hanson said. Between the \$63.7 million in initiation fees,

and \$69 million in lot sales – \$132 million – the operation should open in the black.

No wonder a third course is under discussion. "This land was owned before by George Joufflas," said Hanson. "He's a big rancher from Grand Junction, and he owns thousands of acres as you continue west. He wants to sell us some land for another course, so we're talking to him." ■

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