



BRIEFS

NELSON TO RECEIVE DONALD ROSS AWARD FROM ASGCA



CHICAGO — Byron Nelson has been selected to receive the 2002 Donald Ross Award from the American Society of Golf Course

Architects (ASGCA), which will be presented at the Donald Ross Banquet on April 30 in Santa Barbara, Calif. Among Nelson's many accomplishments is his assistance in the development of the TPC Four Seasons at Los Colinas, the site of the yearly Verizon Byron Nelson Classic. The Donald Ross award is presented annually to an individual who has made significant contributions to the game of golf and the profession of golf course architecture. Past winners have included Jack Nicklaus, Arnold Palmer and Gene Sarazen.

SADDLE HILL TO GET A NEW START

HOPKINTON, Mass. — Developers Joe Pasquale and Dan McLaughlin have started transforming the former public golf course known as Saddle Hill to a family country club. Architect Ian Scott-Taylor will oversee the renovation, which is expected to be completed by July. The renovation, which Scott-Taylor described as a classic 1930-era design approach, will use the existing topography to create fairways cut from natural grasses. Pasquale and McLaughlin, also plan to construct a 15,000-square-foot clubhouse, adjacent to which will be a sun deck and pool.

GCBAA ELECTS BOARD MEMBERS

LINCOLN, Neb. — The Golf Course Builders Association of America (GCBAA) recently elected six new directors and re-elected four directors to serve for the next two years. The newly elected directors are Ellen Davis of Greensmix, Sam Sakocius of SAJO Golf, Rob Stambaugh of Quality Golf Inc., Bob Steele of SEMA Golf LLC, Dennis Wagner of Rain Bird Corp., and James York of York Bridge Concepts. Scott DeBolt of JacklinGolf, Kirk Kyster of Landscapes Unlimited LLC, Rick Lohman of the Toro Co. and Willie Slingerland of Flowtronex PSI were re-elected to the board.

Houston development boom leads to renovations

By DEREK RICE

HOUSTON — Like most places in the country, the Houston area has seen a lot of golf course development in the last decade. As a result, most of the projects that are underway now, according to Richard Luikens, a consultant for Richard Luikens Golf Services, are renovations.

"In the Houston area, we've had such an influx in the last five to seven years. Thirty to 40 new facilities have opened up, and that is really tapering off," Luikens said. "I can only think of three golf courses that are under construction in the Houston area right now, and there is not a lot of talk of many more."

One Luikens project that is underway is a renovation of Lakeside Country Club. The \$2 million project broke ground on

Feb. 11 and has a reopening target date of July 15. The project includes complete renovation of the greens, replacement of the entire concrete cart path system and expansion of the irrigation system. Luikens is working with general contractor Wadsworth Construction, architect Ron Prichard and superintendent Terry Hutcherson on the project.

The timetable is important, Luikens said, because until mid-July the club's membership has no place to play.

"We spent a lot of time and effort putting the schedules together and getting the contractor in place and the materials in place so that we can turn the golf



A bulldozer builds up a green slope at Houston's Lakeside Country Club.

course back to the membership in a very short time," he said.

At the moment, members are forced to

Continued on page 16

Pistol Creek looks to videotape

By JOHN TORSIELLO

BERLIN, Conn. — The owners of recently opened Pistol Creek Golf Club here have come up with unique marketing strategies to make play more enjoyable and keep golfers at the club once they finish their rounds.

Pistol Creek, which opened this month, has cameras located near the 18th green that capture approach shots and action around the hole. The tape is shown on a 15-minute delay in the club's restaurant and lounge.

"It's just a fun thing to do," said Gary Schiarrillo,

president of the Milford-based GRS Group, which developed, owns and manages the new course. "Whether you have had a great round or a mediocre one, being able to go into the grill room and watch yourself finish extends your round a little longer. To my knowledge it isn't being done anywhere else."

The owners of Pistol Creek say they have further made their course player-friendly by limiting the total number of

annual rounds to around 29,000 to ensure speedy play.

"We are limiting the rounds because we want people to get around the course in no longer than four and a half hours," said Schiarrillo, whose company was the consultant and project manager for Great River Golf Club in Milford. "We're taking a more long-range view rather than filling as many tee times as possible. We want people to have a pleasurable experience and come back."

To monitor pace of play, cameras will be installed at several key locations on the course. Golfers will not be let out until the previous group is on the first green. Rangers will patrol the course displaying a series of flags informing groups of their pace.

"We feel the flag system is a non-confrontational way to handle course patrol," said Schiarrillo. "Green means everything is OK, yellow means you're a little slow, and red means pick it up and move to the

Continued on page 18



The 10th hole at Pistol Creek.

Spencer building the course of his dreams

By DEREK RICE

TOLEDO, Ohio — Denny Spencer of Spencer Golf Concepts will be the first to tell you that he's been extraordinarily fortunate in his life. After a lifetime of amateur golf, at age 50, he joined the Senior PGA Tour, where he played for five years. At the end of that run, he went to work for architect

Jerry Matthews, where he was able to learn about the golf course design business.

After five years with Matthews, Spencer decided to go out on his own last April, starting his own design firm and working from his home.

Now he can add golf course owner to

his resume. Along with his brother, his nephew and two contractors who own the land, Spencer has designed and is building The Golf Club at Saddlehorn, an upscale public course located just west of his hometown of Toledo.



Architect Denny Spencer modeled the entrance to The Golf Club at Saddlehorn after a Kentucky thoroughbred farm.

Because a lot of thoroughbred horses are bred in Swanton, where the course is located, Saddlehorn is modeled after a Kentucky thoroughbred farm. Spencer said this is part of a push to add a little something extra to the golf experience.

"I believe very strongly that golf has to

Continued on page 17

Hills, Forrest see building market heating up

By DEREK RICE

TOLEDO, Ohio — While many in the golf industry talk about the future of the development resting in the area of renovation, Steve Forrest of Arthur Hills/Steve Forrest and Associates said his firm has seen an upswing in the number of new projects it's being asked to bid.

"New work went on hold between June and December last year, but I've seen a change in the last four weeks where people are starting to move forward with new projects," Forrest said.

That's not to say that renovation numbers aren't a little higher than normal.

"When I counted up the renovation projects we had, we do have quite a few," Forrest said. "It still probably accounts for 50 percent of the projects. It may be 30 to 40 percent at other times."

The size and scope of the projects the firm is working on recently, such as the first nine holes of a 27-hole renovation at Ivanhoe Country Club in Ivanhoe, Ill., has increased as well, which Forrest said may be another indicator that the industry is turning around.

"There seem to be more extensive renovations these days than perhaps there would have been in the past," he said. "Most of them are rebuilding the majority if not all of their greens, certainly all the bunkers and upgrading the tee complexes without too many exceptions."

In total, the firm is handling about 15 renovation projects, five or six of which—in varying stages—are Forrest's responsibility.

There are two main reasons course owners look to renovate, Forrest said.

Continued on page 18



Steve Forrest

Houston boom leads to renovation

Continued from page 14

play at other facilities, but Luikens said the course owner has a unique way to deal with that problem.

"The golf pro actually secured daily tee times at other facilities. His membership basically has a lottery system. His members call in and there's, say, 30 or 40 tee

times and the club is picking up the cost of the green fees," he said. "When you think about it, the member is still being charged his monthly dues, and he doesn't have a golf course to play on. I admire the golf course stepping up and doing that for the membership. It's a way to appease the membership because they don't

have a course to play on."

THE DRIVE TO RENOVATE

Money, Luikens said, is one driving factor behind most renovation projects. Rather than trying to build a new course, owners are looking at ways to breathe new life into existing facilities.

"It's a little tough to borrow money right now to build a golf course. If you've got an established club, owners can go out



Terry Hutcherson and Richard Luikens talk strategy.

and borrow the money because they're just improving their own property, but they're not betting on the fact that they're going to sell lots or they're going to attract a new membership or a new set of golfers," Luikens said. "They have already captured their audience."

Another driver is the need to update courses that were built many years ago and bring them up to a level where they are competitive with the newer courses that are being built.

"[In the Houston area] we had a lot of golf courses that were built in the '70s that are, I hate to use the word 'worn out,' but they are," Luikens said. "They're 25 years old, and they don't meet the expectations of today's golfers. With all the new properties that have opened up that do meet the golfers' expectations, the other guys have got to keep up, so they've got to put money into their projects."

"Technology just in construction methods has changed so much in the last 25 years that just to keep up, the new kid on the block is better, whether he really is or not, just because he's got updated technology in his construction," he added. ■

Stick to News.

GOLF COURSE NEWS
THE NEWSPAPER FOR THE GOLF COURSE INDUSTRY

A UNITED PUBLICATION
VOLUME 13, NUMBER 5
MAY 2001 • \$7.00
www.golfcoursenews.com

INSIDE

- It takes two: Barbaron and Southeastern Golf to Tom Fazio's North Course at Medfield
- New chemistry: Golf Course News takes a look at what's new in pesticides, herbicides and fungicides.
- Secondary turf equipment market shows growing pains
- Chicago credit giant to finance golf
- Wolf Creek offers high drama in Nevada desert
- Drought-stricken N'west faces dry summer

COURSE MAINTENANCE

- Brutal winter leaves Northeast a mess... 11
- Superintendents debate the 'three-year rule'... 11
- Tools of the Trade at Rainsch's Ridgewood CC... 12

COURSE DEVELOPMENT

- Harbottle's remodeled Monarch Bay reopens... 19
- Rees Jones returns to Carolina's low country... 21
- Mysterious donor gives \$1 million to Ga. club... 22

COURSE MANAGEMENT

- Z Golf enters management scene... 27
- Baine leading Texas' Ironwood Golf... 27
- T-Links teams with Teetimes.com... 28

SUPPLIER BUSINESS

- Dow AgroSciences buys Rohm and Haas... 32
- Bayer's sales surge... 33
- Dealers bear brunt of used market risk... 35

PERIODICAL

Secondary turf equipment market shows growing pains
By JAY FINEGAN
OVERBECK
A variety of leasing turf equipment has emerged in the market for used equipment has been slow, the market for used equipment has been slow, the market for used equipment has been slow...

Chicago credit giant to finance golf
By JAY FINEGAN
CHICAGO — A new source of capital has entered the golf industry, and this one comes with deep pockets.
Heller Financial, a \$20-billion credit firm, recently established a golf lending unit with plans to fill some of the void created when Bank of America abandoned the golf financing field last fall.
Ironically, two of the key players in the new Heller golf trust have sailed in from Bank of America. Kick Nekorowski, who completed \$275 million in golf course investments for Bank of America, will be in charge of the trust from the eastern half of the country from Bank of America. Seeburger, a West Coast loan officer, will be in charge of the trust from the western half of the country.

Wolf Creek offers high drama in Nevada desert
By DOUG SAUNDERS
MESQUITE, Nev. — The fairways of the recently opened Wolf Creek Golf Club pour through the stark desert terrain like green lava flowing through the landscape. Their stunning contrast against the multi-colored sandstone cliffs creates a spectacular setting that begs a golfer to come out and play in this high desert setting in southeastern Nevada.
Your first thoughts are: how could a year Heller...
ager for the golf...

Drought-stricken N'west faces dry summer
By JOEL JOYNER
SPOKANE, Idaho — A drought-stricken emergency for the state. According to Scott Gudes, acting administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the Northwest is the most drought-stricken region of the United States.
Continued on page 12

Superintendent for the 'BIG DIG'
After swanning the globe building golf courses most of his life, Massachusetts native Gary Reeser, 42, has returned home to oversee construction of one of the most ambitious golf projects ever undertaken in the United States — Quarry Hills Golf Course. The John Seayfield design is taking shape just outside Boston. The story begins on page 13.

Three-year-old John Deere Fairway Mower
A three-year-old John Deere Fairway Mower light retails for around \$22,000, compared to \$36,000 for a brand-new 3235B model. It comes with a one-year warranty.

CAUL THESE GUYS!

TRICKLY MEDICINE IS TESTING!

INFORM!

TICKLER FILE

INEXPENSIVE ACTION?

COPY

WRITE

Garl goes with paspalum

Continued from previous page

want to be good neighbors and we want to be environmentally sensitive," he said. "Using this new grass is just another step in that direction. We want to build golf courses that lie softly on the land."

Garl also had nothing but praise for the project's contractor, Highland Golf.



The Ron Garl-designed Crown Colony Golf & Country Club uses hybrid paspalum.

"You can't build a great golf course without a great contractor," he said. "Often the contractors don't get enough credit. The architects get too much. These really fine golf courses come from a combination of good owners, great sites and contractors that have the ability to pull it all together with the architect." ■

Golf Course News delivers.

Cover-to-cover, Golf Course News has the news your customers need to know.

To deliver your message, contact Jon Whitney, publisher
(207) 846-0600, x.263 • Fax (207) 846-0657 • jwhitney@golfcoursenews.com