



BRIEFS

SOUTHEASTERN GOLF EARNS CERTIFICATION

TIFTON, Ga. — Full-service golf course construction company Southeastern Golf Inc. has earned professional certification from the Golf Course Builders Association of America (GCBA). The program, established in 1992, identifies competent and experienced golf course builders and ensures uniform quality standards within the industry. Certified builders must be in the golf business at least five years, provide professional and financial references, attend one GCBA education session annually, pass a written exam and engage in ethical business practices.

NUGENT TO OPEN TWO PUBLIC COURSES IN ILLINOIS

LONG GROVE, Ill. — Nugent Golf Associates is preparing to open two new public courses in the Chicago area this summer. Construction was recently completed on the Foxford Hills Country Club in Cary, Ill., which has been turned over to GolfVisions to manage. The design for each hole at the Legends, located in Bensenville, was inspired by holes from notable American courses.

ASGCA OFFERS REMODELING BROCHURE

CHICAGO — The American Society of Golf Course Architects (ASGCA) is offering a free brochure titled *Remodeling Your Golf Course* to assist golf course owners, managers, superintendents, greens committees and anyone who may be planning a remodeling project. The booklet covers areas to consider in a remodeling project, including advice on drafting a remodeling master plan and costs, funding and other factors relating to construction. Copies can be ordered online at www.asgca.org.

LAKE KEOWEE COURSE TO OPEN ON SCHEDULE

SUNSET, S.C. — The Jack Nicklaus Signature course at The Reserve at Lake Keowee is currently undergoing construction, which began in 2001, and is on schedule to open Oct. 15. David Heatwole, a senior design associate at Nicklaus Design, will oversee the final implementation of the construction plan. The course is part of a 3,200-acre community with more than 23 miles of shoreline on Lake Keowee.

Continuity leads to consistency during club's reconstruction

Editor's note: This article is the first in a series that addresses the long-range planning and implementation of a reconstruction program at Willoughby Golf Club in Stuart, Fla. The course is an 18-hole residential facility that was owned and operated by a development company and then turned over to the membership after 10 years. The membership has now operated the facility for more than four years but the long-range planning began a few years prior to the takeover. Kevin Downing, CGCS, has been the golf course and landscape manager since the inception of the project and provides valuable insight into initiating their long-range plans.

By KEVIN DOWNING

STUART, Fla. — As Willoughby Golf Club embarks in a full-scale renovation project that will involve closing the course for the next six months, proper long-range planning has been a key organizational advantage. I have headed up the renovation planning process, which began in 1998. Since I have been at the club from the beginning, I have been able to easily identify what steps need to be taken to improve the layout



Kevin Downing, CGCS

because I understand the course's mission.

In the late 1980s the developers of Willoughby set out to create a golf course that focused on the needs of the average golfer. They wanted to create a stimulating round of golf, but realized that most of the buyers were high-handicap golfers.

The developers originally chose the Arthur Hills design firm because of their ability to work with environmentally sensitive property and because they understood the diverse needs of the eventual homeowners and club membership. I worked closely with their firm and the housing configuration to insure that the course hit the targeted market. The result was a 6,600-yard course that still challenged all levels of golfers.

As courses mature, the design characteristics and landscape materials can alter the playing conditions of the best of

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Golf Trail looking for first site

By DEREK RICE

SAN FRANCISCO — Unlike most of the country, the San Francisco Bay area doesn't have enough golf courses. With land scarce, it's difficult to find 150 acres to build on, which means that the daily-fee courses are packed.

Because he doesn't have the time to play at a crowded course, Dwight Pate got to thinking about golf facilities that could be built on less land.

"I started thinking that the whole business of 150 acres in the design of



Dwight Pate says this is the optimal layout for his Golf Trail.

golf courses is dependent on the sanctity of par," he said. "Rather than the sanctity of par, why don't we just create shots. Suddenly the land requirement is about a third. That was the basis of the Golf Trail concept."

Golf Trail is the combination of a golf course and a practice facility. Golfers use standard equipment to hit operator-supplied balls to target greens and fairways. Players can add a competitive component

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Twin Creeks project progressing

By DEREK RICE

AUSTIN, Texas — Twin Creeks, a 760-acre residential, country club and golf course community located in the Cedar Park area of Austin, will be the first private country club and the first Fred Couples signature course in the area when it opens this fall.

The project is a venture of Twin Creeks Holdings, a partnership between Crescent Resources LLC and SWD Communities. The development, undertaken by Weitz Golf International of Palm Beach, Fla., broke ground last October and is progressing on schedule, said Harry Turner, senior vice president of Twin Creeks Holdings.

"We're currently in construction with a planned opening of late this year," he said. "We hope to have everything planted by the end of August and I believe that we should meet that as long as we don't get

any big rains or anything that's unforeseen."

One reason the project is going so well, Turner said, is the land itself, which he said is attractive to both golfers and homeowners.

"We've got a perfect piece of land. We've got 15 holes that don't have houses directly on the fairway so from a golfer's perspective it gives you the feel of not being in a housing development," he said. "From

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Fred Couples consults on the Twin Creeks project during construction.

UK alum returns for renovation

By DEREK RICE

LEXINGTON, Ky. — When architect Drew Rogers of Arthur Hills/Steve Forrest and Associates graduated from the University of Kentucky in 1991, he never imagined that he'd one day be back to help renovate the Big Blue course at the University Club of Kentucky.

"When you leave school, you never know where your career is going to take you," Rogers said. "Certainly, I didn't have any idea that I'd ever have an opportunity to come back and be in Lexington to do the kind of work that I do, so that was pretty rewarding."



Drew Rogers

The course, which is set to reopen May 18, has undergone what Rogers called a "typical facelift," including rebuilding greens to USGA specifications and renovating tee boxes, bunkers, drainage and cart paths. Along with these traditional items, Rogers was able to bring the course more in line with its Kentucky roots.

"A lot of vegetation that was on the site that was probably not selected to match the pastoral quality of the site, so we removed a lot of

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Course to open on donated land

By DEREK RICE

BATON ROUGE, La. — Thanks to a donation of 200 acres of land and a property tax levy that raised \$3.2 million, the East Baton Rouge Parish Recreation and Parks Commission (BREC) will soon open a new flagship golf course, its seventh in the area.

Although there is no set date for the opening of Beaver Creek, Bill Palmer, BREC director, said conditions should dictate a summer opening.

"We don't have a target date except for somewhere around July or August," he said. It's growing in and doing very well. It's been a kind winter and the grass really looks good."

A group of landowners donated the land in 1999, keeping 322 acres for a residential community that is also under construction.

"The land is worth about 2.5 million. That's a very significant donation," Palmer said.

Because BREC and the developers have worked together from the start, the two projects will avoid many of the issues encountered by such close neighbors, Palmer said.

"We eliminated a lot of the potential problems by working together in the be-

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Puddicombe tackling ownership role

By DEREK RICE

EDMONTON, Alberta, Canada — Golf course design firm Sid Puddicombe Associates plans to take the next step and become a golf course owner and operator with the opening of RedTail Landing Golf Club, which is scheduled for spring 2003.

"This is their flagship course," said Kimberly Schick-Puddicombe, director of sales and marketing for RedTail Landing. "The guys over there have always worked everywhere else but at home, done it for everybody else, and sometimes there are guidelines and restrictions that a particular owner

wants, so they just wanted to go to town on their own thing."

Construction has been completed on the 234-acre site located at the entrance to the Edmonton International Airport's AirLinks Business Park,

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The 16th hole at RedTail Landing, prior to seeding that will take place as soon as the snow melts.

Twin Creeks

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the homeowner's standpoint it's nice because they're up a little higher and they get the long Texas hill country views as well



The planned clubhouse at Twin Creeks.

as expansive views of the golf holes themselves. They don't just get a confined view of a golf hole like you might think of in Phoenix or Scottsdale or Palm Springs."

Austin's mild winter has also contributed to the success of the construction, Turner said.

"We were pretty fortunate with the winter weather," he said.

Turner said he hopes to have a superintendent and general manager hired by the beginning of summer to oversee the final stages of the project.

In addition to the golf course and surrounding community, Twin Creeks will feature a recreation center, two tennis courts and a water park. ■

BREC course

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ginning," he said.

There were also wetlands issues at the site, Palmer said, which Craig Schreiner Golf Course Architects incorporated into the master plan.

"Craig Schreiner has worked very well with the site to minimize the impact on those wetland areas," he said. "We mitigated 14 acres out there. The adjacent wetlands are some of the features that make the golf course so unique and make it such a beautiful course."

Among those issues was the relocation of a six-foot alligator to a neighboring swamp.

"It calls [the wetlands] home, so we'll see if it comes back," said Kristi Barnett, director of BREC's public relations.

BREC is also undergoing a renovation at its Clark Park facility thanks to a grant from The First Tee. Both projects have been planned and overseen by Schreiner.

"We already have extensive junior golf program, we're just looking to make it better through The First Tee," Palmer said. "Clark Park is a beautiful nine-hole course. We're going to change it a little bit, and add a driving range, make it more friendly for our purposes." ■

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