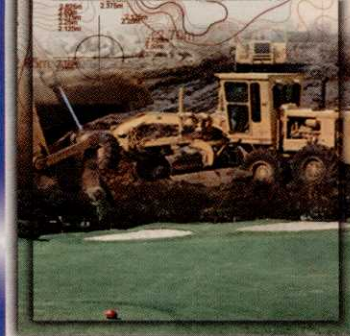


DEVELOPMENT & RENOVATION



BRIEFS

FIRM PROMOTES LUTZ TO VICE PRESIDENT

TOLEDO, Ohio — Arthur Hills/Steve Forrest and Associates promoted Quentin Lutz to vice president of global business development and marketing and media relations. Lutz will be responsible for strengthening and extending the Hills/Forrest brand worldwide. Lutz was formerly the firm's director of marketing and media relations.

NEW OWNERS CLOSE JONES CREEK FOR RENOVATION

AUGUSTA, Ga. — Jones Creek Golf Course here closed in early January for several weeks of renovations. Upon completion, which is expected in early March, the course will convert from private to semi-private. Renovation will focus mainly on reseeding greens at the club, which was recently purchased by Jones Creek Joint Venture from Fairways International Clubs LLC and Jones Creek Golf Club LLC.

NICKLAUS, PALMER, PLAYER TO CO-DESIGN AUGUSTA CLUB

AUGUSTA, Ga. — At press time, work was expected to begin in late January on a 27-hole private course here with a unique twist. Each of the club's three nines will be designed by a different legendary golfer-turned-architect: Jack Nicklaus, Arnold Palmer and Gary Player. The course is part of a 2,000-acre development project.

WEIBRING TO RENOVATE DALLAS MUNICIPAL COURSE

DALLAS — D.A. Weibring will undertake a renovation of Cedar Crest Golf Course here later this year. The Dallas water department will loan \$3 million to the city's parks department for renovations at the municipal course, originally designed by A.W. Tillinghast in 1919. Among the renovations will be the addition of a new pond, where treated wastewater will be held and used for irrigation. Weibring will also add about 20 bunkers and a driving range to the facility.

Sunday River to begin long-awaited course in 2003

By DEREK RICE

NEWRY, Maine — While the rest of the state weathered a barrage of snowstorms in late December, Sunday River Ski Resort was looking ahead to finally starting construction on its planned golf course in the spring.

After nearly five years of planning, the Robert Trent Jones Jr.-designed golf course at Sunday River will begin taking shape soon.

The American Skiing Co. resort began clearing land in the Jordan Bowl area of the property in 1998 in preparation for the 18-hole course, but various factors have delayed the project.

"It's something we've been

wanting to do for a while and we actually started the plans in '98, now it's finally becoming a reality," said Susan DuPlessis, corporate communications manager for Sunday River.

DuPlessis said the development is on track for a spring or summer construction start.

"It looks like everything's on track. We're going to have the purchase and sales agreement, that will be the next step," she said. "The last I heard, we

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A rendering of the planned course at Sunday River, which was designed by Robert Trent Jones Jr.

Hills fast out of the gate in 2003

TOLEDO, Ohio — At press time, golf course architects Arthur Hills/Steve Forrest and Associates were looking at a busy January, with three course openings scheduled within four days in the state of Florida.

The Club at Renaissance in Fort Myers was to open to members and their guests on Jan. 18. Constructed by Golf Forms Inc., the course was described by Hills as, "a challenging but playable layout."

The city of Miami Beach was slated to reopen Bayshore Golf Course under its new name, Miami Beach

Golf Club. Most notable about this course opening is its wide use of Seashore Paspalum, a salt-tolerant turfgrass, said superintendent Jim Torba.

"Imagine a turfgrass that provides a carpet-like playing surface, an emerald green color year-round and can be irrigated with salt water," Torba said. "Seashore Paspalum is revolutionizing the golf course industry."

In addition to the paspalum, architects Steve Forrest and Ken Williams had to work within challenging environmental and

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The Arthur Hills-designed Club at Renaissance in Fort Myers, Fla., is one of three Hills courses that opened in Florida in January.

Builder makes Billy Bunkers case

By DEREK RICE

GAINESVILLE, Ga. — Fresh off another Billy Bunker installation at Wade Hampton Golf Club in Cashiers, N.C., Course Crafters Inc. is making the case for the bunkering style for those who can afford it.

Billy Bunkers, named for former Augusta National Golf Club superintendent Billy Fuller, who invented the method, are designed to

improve bunker drainage. Each lateral drainage arm runs straight into an outfall pipe or into individual "smiley" drains located at the terminus of each lateral. A 1.5-inch layer of gravel is laid over the bunker floor, capped by a Trevira liner, which is specially cut to reveal the herringbone drainage pattern. The entire drain-line scheme is then

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"Smiley" drains are an integral part of the Billy Bunker method.

Spencer finds peace of mind, security in sale of his firm

By DEREK RICE

TOLEDO, Ohio — Golf course architect Denny Spencer may have sold his company, Spencer Golf Concepts, to Columbus, Ohio-based Zande & Associates Inc., but that doesn't mean he's getting out of the business.

According to Spencer, quite the contrary has happened. By selling his firm and going to work for

Zande, he is able to concentrate on golf course design without having to worry about making ends meet.

"With the golf industry being as volatile as it is, I had to take a real hard look at my situation at age 60 and just starting a brand new company, my timing wasn't the best in the world," Spencer said. "When you sit down and take a hard look at

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Spencer's sale

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it, what they were offering me was a three-year contract with an offer of a salary so good I couldn't refuse, plus a lot of other perks. It's going to allow me to work for another six or seven years."

Spencer said the situation works out well for Zande as well, as the company has wanted to get

into golf course design for a while.

"Zande is a 450-man civil engineering company, and they have a very large landscape architecture department, as well as several other arms off that, such as surveying and environmental and traffic studies and land planning, really everything that you would want to employ if you were a developer putting in a big housing development with a golf course," Spencer

said. "They've always wanted to be in the golf course design business but they didn't want to go through the four- or five-year learning curve. I've always needed the technical backup and always had to farm that out. It's been a win-win for both of us. I get the security and the backup that I've needed and they get into a whole new area of the business."

As for Spencer's own golf

course, which he started last year (GCN, April 2002), that has been put on hold, but not because of his new work arrangement.

"It's still alive. It's on the shelf because financing has been virtually impossible," he said.

The first project that Spencer and Zande will undertake is the remodeling of Oberlin Country Club in Oberlin, Ohio. Spencer did a master plan for the course, originally

built in 1898, late last year.

"The members have just recently voted to do the entire plan," Spencer said. "It's the first active project that our new merger is going to undertake. We're working on specs and plans right now."

Another project that is in the works, which Spencer said would allow him to "die a happy man," is a course he hopes to lay out on an island in Toronto harbor called the Portlands.

"There's about 175 or 180 acres of unbelievably mistreated industrial land on the southern and eastern tip of that island," he said. "The city of Toronto, the province of Ontario and the Canadian government have put together a pool to completely renovate the Toronto waterfront, and included in that renovation is the Portlands. We've had a golf course laid out on this thing for years, and it has evolved because of various requirements."

Spencer said his plan is backed by a high-profile developer who has contributed "a substantial amount of money" to the project. All that remains now, Spencer said, is to convince the city of Toronto to approve his plan for that land.

Spencer said one of the things that excites him the most about working for Zande is that it will allow him to work on only a small number of projects, rather than spread himself thin.

"I believe very strongly in the old-fashioned way of building golf courses, which means that the architect has to be on site very often and very regularly, which precludes me from having 20 different projects going on at the same time," he said. "With the situation with Zande, I don't have to do 20 projects a year to make a decent living, and they are totally on board with my way of thinking." ■

Billy Bunkers

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overlaid with Enkamat, a fiberglass mesh material that keeps the gravel from leaching into the sand layer.

Course Crafters president Bob Pinson said the method is more costly than other methods, but also more reliable.

"It is quite a bit more expensive than other bunkering methods," Pinson said. "But we figure it pays for itself in four or five years."

Bo Alexander, superintendent at Wade Hampton, said he doesn't regret spending the extra money on Billy Bunkers.

"These bunkers get the water into the tile so fast, the sand doesn't have time to wash," he said.

Pinson said both Fazio Design and Cupp Design, with whom Course Crafters works often, are among the architects who push for Billy Bunkers in their designs. ■

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