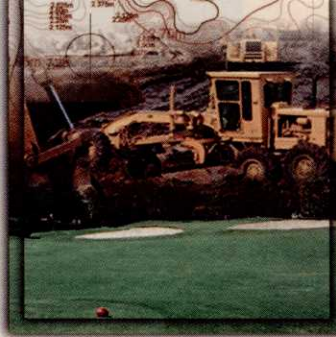


DEVELOPMENT & RENOVATION



BRIEFS

BRIAR COMPLETES CATHEDRAL CANYON RENOVATION

LA JOLLA, Calif. — Briar Golf has completed its \$1 million renovation of Cathedral Canyon Golf and Tennis Club in Cathedral City, a semi-private 27-hole course designed by David Rainville. Capital improvements to the club were completed under the direction of its new general manager, Howard Whiteside.

THE DUKE AT RANCHO EL DORADO TO OPEN

MARICOPA, Ariz. — The Duke at Rancho El Dorado, a new 18-hole course managed by OB Sports Management, will open to the public later this month. Designed by David Druzinsky, the course encompasses 200 acres with 90 acres of turf. The Santa Rosa Wash winds through the golf course, providing interesting boundaries to the fairways and increasing the course's challenge.

FREELAND'S POLO CLUB REDESIGN COMPLETE

BOCA RATON, Fla. — Architect Tim Freeland of Freeland Golf Group recently completed a \$5.2 million redesign at the Polo Club here, which reopened Dec. 4. According to Freeland, the course was "too short, too tight, too hard and too hard to maintain." RyanGolf handled the construction.

WEITZ GOLF COMPLETES RECENT RENOVATIONS

NORTH PALM BEACH, Fla.— Weitz Golf International recently completed two renovation projects. At Rancho Santa Fe Club in Rancho Santa Fe, Calif., Weitz renovated tees, greens and bunker complexes extensively, as well as lakes and streams, car paths, bridges and new turf in recontoured areas. At Weston Hills Country Club, in Weston Hills, Calif., Weitz provided expertise to help the club's maintenance staff improve bunker conditions on the Players Course.

Irwin crafting gem of a course in Minnesota

By JERRY POLING

LAKE CITY, Minn. — In lovely Lake City, Minn., the biggest name in town always has been the Mississippi River, which flows by the city in a broad channel about 65 miles south of Minneapolis.

Much of the town's business, tourism and heritage are connected in some way to the river. In fact, it was in this city in 1922 where water skiing was invented, the city claims.

Lately, a couple new names in town are all that residents seem to talk about. A short drive above downtown and the Mississippi, bulldozers are clearing land for



The Jewel at Lake City, a Hale Irwin design, is attracting a lot of attention just outside Minneapolis.

the biggest planned urban development project in Minnesota history: The Jewel at Lake City, an

18-hole semi-private golf course and residential development.

Residents aren't just talking about

the Jewel, but they're talking about who it has brought to town: golf

Continued on page 12

Firm stresses view to future in renovation projects

By DOUG SAUNDERS

RANCHO CORDOVA, Calif. — It is a scenario that is being played out in markets around the country. As an established private golf club in a fast growing region sees their membership aging, they are having a tough time drawing new members as newer high-end daily-fee facilities give golfers another option. Should



This drainage pond, located in front of a Safeway store under construction near a PGS client's golf course, solved major issues for all parties involved.

the golf club spend money to upgrade their course to be more competitive or should they put their funds into a new clubhouse instead?

This is just one of the examples of how existing courses, both private and public, are assessing their situation and struggling to decide how to move forward.

Continued on page 12

Guest Commentary

Recognize 'red flags' now, avoid future headaches

By BOB PINSON

If superintendents and course owners haven't noticed by now, let me spell it out for you: The course construction business is getting pretty tight, and by that I mean too many contractors for too few projects. If



Bob Pinson

you've put a new construction or renovation job out to bid during the last six months, you know exactly what I'm talking about. I bet you never thought you'd have so many friends in the construction trade.

I've been in the course contracting business more than 10 years, and I can tell you this: When things get this tight, the bidding process becomes hyper competitive—meaning contractors will do almost anything to secure the low bid. I don't mean they'll start sending flowers to your wife (though they might); I mean they will promise a price so low, you'd be crazy to refuse it.

Now, I'm not saying you should refuse it. I'm just saying there are times when a bid price is so low, something isn't right. Something has been left out or ignored, and accepting that bid, as is, might risk

Continued on next page

Harvey completes Berkshire Valley design



Berkshire Valley GC is built atop an abandoned gravel mine in Jefferson Township, N.J.

JEFFERSON TOWNSHIP, N.J. — Golf Course architect A. John Harvey of The RBA Group has completed the design of Berkshire Valley Golf Course for the Morris County Parks Commission. The 6,900-yard 18-hole layout was built on an abandoned gravel mine.

The first five holes play along a terrace carved into a mountain, while the rest of the course lies in the base of the pit, bounding several large ponds that were once used during mining operations for material screening and silt containment.

The tee at the 195-yard 12th hole was constructed within the ruins of a stone building used in the 1910s by Ringling Brothers to house circus elephants.

Berkshire Valley is scheduled to open in spring 2004, according to Harvey.

Irwin designing Minnesota gem

Continued from page 10

course designer and three-time U.S. Open champion Hale Irwin.

And then there are two new golf course home-site owners, Minnesota Gov. Jesse Ventura and his wife, Terry. Ventura has announced plans to live at the Jewel sometime after he leaves office in 2003. He did not run for re-election in November.

Greg Matz, director of sales at the Jewel, said he realized what the project meant to the city of 4,500 recently when an elderly gentleman who had lived in Lake City all his life said, "Well, it's finally happened: Lake City has been discovered."

The project has been moving quickly after several years of work to gain city approval. Most of the course shaping, which is being done by Sema Golf of Scottsdale, Ariz., will take place in 2003, with an eye toward a July 2004 opening.

The Jewel is one of several golf courses currently being developed by Hale Irwin Design, a company Irwin founded in 1986.

Mississippi Jewel Land Development Co. is spending \$8 million to build the golf course and \$50 million on infrastructure to develop the land, Matz said. The eventual retail value of the land is expected to be \$250 million to \$300 million.

The golf course will have five

sets of tees, bentgrass throughout and stretch to 7,000 yards. "No two holes will be alike," Irwin said. "We have some dynamic



Work continues at the Jewel, which is scheduled to open in July 2004.

holes and others that may have started out bland but will be very nice."

It will open as a public course and gradually become restricted as more members join, Matz said.

In addition to designing 25 courses, Irwin's company is part owner in three others, including the Jewel.

By buying into the courses it is building, Irwin's company "can add value to the project, and that will help us gain entry into more projects," Meyer said.

By becoming a partner in a project such as the Jewel, Irwin said, "We give investors and owners confidence that we're in for the long haul with them."

Stan Gentry, who has been with Irwin since 1991, is the on-site architect responsible for overseeing Irwin's designs, Meyer said.

"What sets us apart is the owner - Hale's personality," Meyer said.

"The same seriousness and vigor, the way he approaches competitive golf, is the way he approaches his business."

Irwin said he always has felt comfortable with designing courses. "My greatest learning curve has come from knowing the needs of the owner/developer. I didn't know that much about that side," Irwin said.

His philosophy, he said, is to design courses that are enjoyable and challenging for all handicaps. That approach was summed up by Meyer. "At the end of the day, Hale doesn't want people to say 'Who designed this?' but 'That was fun, and, oh, by the way, who was the designer?'" Meyer said. ■

Redstone readies for Tour stop

Continued from page 1

a double-ended practice facility, will encompass 440 yards.

Redstone brought in respected golf instructor Dick Harmon as director of golf in November, in anticipation of the club's opening. Harmon came over from the Redstone-managed Houstonian Golf and Country Club.

"Those who have played this course before will not recognize it," Harmon said. "The course has gone through major improvements and is in beautiful shape right now. It will challenge players very well."

Harmon, who has been named general chairman of the 2003 Tour Championship to be played in Nov. 2003 at Champions Golf Club, will open a second Dick Harmon School of Golf at the course.

Among the improvements Jacobsen and Hardy made to the existing course were the installation of a computerized Toro irrigation system and TifEagle greens and TifSport fairways.

Jacobsen said the course will play with a level of difficulty for everyone, from the pros on down to juniors.

"I think the pros will find it difficult because of the length of the golf course (7,508 yards), but also fun and interesting because of the variation of the holes, he said. "When you need to make a course harder, just make it longer. We also made sure the course is playable in all types of weather, with particular attention given to drainage, given the weather in Houston." ■

Firm assists owners with renovations

Continued from page 10

This is also the type of challenge that the consulting firm of Professional Golfscape Services is being contacted to deal with.

President Ron Miller and his firm have 20 years of experience in golf construction and maintenance to assist owners and operators with golf course operations. Not surprisingly, his firm has seen an increase in activity in Northern California and the West, as many courses, both private and public, look to retool themselves

in the changing golf market.

"Through the years of working around various landscape projects I felt that there was a need for a firm to help direct courses through the various facets of construction and renovation. This led to the creation of our consulting firm, Professional Golfscape Services," Miller said.

The surge of new golf construction has given golfers more playing options. Older courses feel the need to upgrade their facilities to be competitive with new layouts, and new courses are pressured to hold their market share to pay off their construction expenditures. With a slower economy, the golfing public is careful about where and how much they spend to play golf.

"Here in Northern California there were 27 golf projects that had been planned for over 15 years, but they all were built over the last five years. This influx has changed the region dramatically," Miller said. "What we have begun to realize is that the old business model for golf just doesn't work anymore. Just building a new course does not ensure success. We feel it is important that our clients look at where they want to position themselves for future success when they think of major renovation outlays."

Miller feels the biggest change is how people look at discretionary income. Recreational and leisure activities used to be two sepa-

rate entities. Now these two interests have merged into lifestyle activities, which is why large real estate based developments offer not only golf but swimming, exercise facilities, biking and hiking trails, and restaurants to fill all the lifestyle needs.

"The new developments are aware just golf is not enough to secure success and now offer more. This trend to a different business model is putting pressure on established private clubs, municipal golf courses, and privately owned daily-fee courses," he said. "We help clients work toward a new business model when they consider any renovation project. It is important to have a broad plan that covers the need to reposition themselves in this new business climate."

Miller's firm helps facilities develop a game plan to tackle renovation projects in-house. He assists in permitting, can provide architectural services, and can recommend golf construction firms. Miller focuses on attention to detail so clients won't get bogged down when a project begins.

But as much as the dealing with the nuts and bolts of a construction project, Professional Golfscape Services stresses the need to take a look at the big picture. Miller knows that while large operators and developers can capitalize using global tactics, smaller operators need to develop new alliances to help them thrive.

"I think all golf course operations have to take a strong look at themselves and define what they are in order to know how they will fit into this new business environment. Our contribution has been to help our renovation clients take that hard look in order to thrive in the future," Miller said. ■

Fertigation

Turf Feeding Systems, Inc.

The leader in fertilizer injection - over 1200 systems worldwide

Fast Grow-in

Save \$15,000-\$40,000 annually

Lease for as little as \$195 a month

Manage Color & growth

Reduce Labor

Improve Turf quality

Six models, ten capacities

(800) 728-4504

WWW.TURFFEEDING.COM

Call today for a quote or a brochure



Shouldn't your Grounds Crew look as groomed as your greens?



**GOLF SHIRTS • CAPS
JACKETS • PANTS • RAINSUITS**

**CHESTNUT
IDENTITY APPAREL**

800-336-8977

www.chestnutid.com