Redstone GC ready for '03 Tour stop

By DEREK RICE

HOUSTON — After a couple false starts due to bad weather in Houston, Redstone Golf Management was finally able to open its first 18-hole course at Redstone Golf Club in early December.

Designed by Jim Hardy and Peter Jacobsen, the course will host the 2003 Shell Houston Open two weeks after The Masters. A second 18-hole course, designed by Rees Jones, is currently in progress and is expected to open in fall 2004. The Jacobsen/Hardy course will be private, while the Jones course will be open to the public. The Shell Houston Open will move to the Jones course in 2005.

Jacobsen and Hardy turned the existing course at Redstone GC into a 7,508-yard course. Upon completion of the Jones course, the facility, which also includes a 31,000-square-foot teeing area for POINT

Superintendents Steven Cook and Timothy T. O'Neill debate the merits of changing the GCSAA's articles of incorporation.

COUNTERPOINT

Why haven't more joined?

At issue is compensation for preferred shareholders vs. that for common shareholders.

Gotham Golf merger hits snag in court

NEW YORK — The long-planned and now shareholder-approved merger between First Union Real Estate Equity and Mortgage and Hershey, Pa.-based Gotham Golf Corp., hit a snag in early December when the New York Supreme Court for New York County granted an injunction blocking the transaction.

Audubon sets 50 percent goal for 2007

By ANDREW OVERBECK

SELKIRK, N.Y. — Audubon International has unveiled an ambitious membership drive to attain 50 percent participation from the 17,000-plus golf courses in the United States over the next five years.

Currently 13 percent of the courses across the country have joined either the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program or the Audubon Signature Cooperative Sanctuary Program. Two percent of all courses in the U.S. have achieved Certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary status.

“This is an ambitious effort,” said Kevin Fletcher, director of programs. “Now is the time to be bold and make this happen.”

The plan has five objectives, said Fletcher:

• Make sure that all 17,000-plus courses know the Audubon International program exists.
• Find out why those who know about the program have not joined.
• Do a better job of explaining the benefits of the program to the environment, job satisfaction and overall golf course budget.
• Dispel any myths about the program and its difficulty.
• Work more with the industry as a whole by communicating more with golf course managers, owners, management companies, developers and suppliers.

GCSAA to tackle long list of initiatives

By DEREK RICE

NEW YORK — The long-planned and now shareholder-approved merger between First Union Real Estate Equity and Mortgage and Hershey, Pa.-based Gotham Golf Corp., hit a snag in early December when the New York Supreme Court for New York County granted an injunction blocking the transaction.

At issue is compensation for preferred shareholders vs. that for common shareholders. One preferred shareholder, George Kimeldorf, filed a lawsuit in April seeking class-action status.

Under the original plan, First Union shareholders

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Carolinass Show posts record numbers

Borman to return as executive director in 2003

By ANDREW OVERBECK
MYRTLE BEACH, S.C. — The Carolinas Golf Course Superintendents Association’s 36th Annual Conference and Show here Nov. 18 to 21 posted record numbers for the second year in a row. Nov. 18 to 21 posted record numbers for the second year in a row.

Tour of the Carolinas Show, held here Dec. 9 to 12, was also another voluntary thing that  Audubon International will host an environmental summit Feb. 12 at Catecchee Golf Club outside Atlanta. The point of the meeting will be to create an informal program-level advisory board that provides input to Audubon International’s goals for the coming five years, and to discover new ways to continue to improve environmental awareness and stewardship action throughout the entire golf industry.

The emphasis of the conference was to seek out potential golfers in demographics that have not traditionally taken to the game, including women, minorities and other non-golfers.

One of the most welcome and contentious issues to arise was the proposal to seek funding from various industry sectors, including media, suppliers, associations and players. While there is a seeming consensus that some sort of industry funding is needed, similar to the milk and pork co-ops, no decision on that matter.

The conference adjourned with no decision on that matter. The executive board answers questions at an open session to close the conference. From left: PGA commissioner Tim Finchem, LPGA commissioner Ty Votaw, PGA of America CEO Jim Amshey, NGCOA president Mike Hughes, GCMA CEO Steve Marks, Audubon president and CEO Walter Uhlen, and USGA president Reed MacKenzie (sitting in for USGA executive director David Fay).

One of the top stories at the show was the announcement that Chuck Borman was returning to the Carolinas GCBA as executive director. The association had been without an executive director for much of the year.

Borman previously served as executive director from 1998 to 2001 before leaving to become the chief operating officer for the GCBA. He is due to resume his duties at the Carolinas GCBA in early March. In another news from the show, Rob Roy, superintendent at Oldfield Club in Bluffton, S.C., took home his first Carolinas GCBA Superintendent Member Championship at International World Tour Golf Links. Roy said the win was special because he will soon be leaving the Carolinas to grow in Greg Norman’s The River Club in Dalul, Ga.

“This is likely my last championship,” said Roy. “It means a lot to me to put my name on a trophy next to such great Carolinas superintendents as Mike Seuss, Paul Jett and Mitch Cloudlifter.”

The Coastal Plains team of Kyle Biber, Gordon Williams, Robert Rogers and Dick Ferriter, took home the Local Association Team Championship.

On the closing night of the show, the Carolinas GCBA presented its Distinguished Service Award to James Ernest “Ernie” Hayes. Hayes, who turned 80 in September, began his career as a superintendent at Linville Land Harbor Golf Club in Linville, N.C., in 1969. He was a founding member of the Western North Carolina Turfgrass Association and is an emergent member of the Turfgrass Council of North Carolina.

Funding, player development major themes at Golf 20/20

By DEREK RICE
ST. AUGUSTINE, Fla. — The mood coming out of the third installment of the Golf 20/20 Conference in November was one of optimism, as the industry consortium assembled to grow the game is poised to take some action.

The Golf 20/20 executive board answers questions at an open session to close the conference. From left: PGA commissioner Tim Finchem, LPGA commissioner Ty Votaw, PGA of America CEO Jim Amshey, NGCOA president Mike Hughes, GCMA CEO Steve Marks, Audubon president and CEO Walter Uhlen, and USGA president Reed MacKenzie (sitting in for USGA executive director David Fay).

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