Oakland’s Metro opens after eight years of obstacles

By DOUG SAUNDERS

OAKLAND, Calif. — The newest public golf course in the northern California region, Oakland’s Metropolitan Golf Links, opened to players April 16. This Johnny Miller-designed venue brings a challenging layout to a wide-open 125-acre site near San Francisco Bay that sits under the landing patterns for Oakland Airport. The course is a first-rate replacement for the former Lew Galbraith Golf Course that closed back in 1994.

“Johnny Miller and I have designed a course that all players will enjoy as well as a superior practice facility that should draw families from the community,” explained co-designer Fred Bliss. “We feel that in time Metropolitan Golf Links will be considered one of the best public venues anywhere.”

While it took nearly three years to complete the 7,045-yard course, that hardly begins to explain how this course came about as a critical part of solving an extremely complex issue for the city of Oakland.

The old Lew Galbraith Golf Course provided the first golf experience for thousands in the Bay Area during its 30 years of existence. But the course was built over a landfill that was mandated by the EPA to be closed down properly in 1992. This closure process called for capping the old landfill with a one-foot thick clay cap.

The city took the initiative to tackle two problems at once. Along with the need to deal with the old landfill, the Port of Oakland was preparing to dredge the

Winterstone GC to play around excavation

By DEREK RICE

INDEPENDENCE, Mo. — With above-ground construction completed on the 18-hole Winterstone Golf Course here and an opening scheduled for this month, there are still four years of below-ground construction to contend with, said Rick Boylan, president of Mid-America Golf and Landscape Inc.

The course’s developer, Roccaprocessing, is mining 4.5 million square feet of underground warehouse space, which will be linked to nearby Carefree Industrial Park via a tunnel under Interstate 291.

The blasting below the course began while construction above ground was still in progress, Boylan said.

“That’s been going on for two years,” Boylan said.

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ASL, developer overcome Cape Cod regulations

By DEREK RICE

MASHPEE, Mass. — When ASL Construction and Willowbend Golf Development collaborated on adding a third nine holes to Willowbend Golf Club here, they had to overcome a number of strict environmental and historical regulations, said ASL’s Jim Despres.

“That area is heavily regulated and rightly so,” Despres said. “It’s a small parcel of land. It’s incredible with the traffic in the summertime. It’s a very intense place.”

To meet the stringent demands, ASL used rubber lining in some fairways and on all tees and greens surrounds.

“The lining was used because there were historical preservation areas on the property,” Despres said. “The lining went below-ground construction, but will eventually be expanded to nine holes.

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