Let’s Stop Giving Golf a Bad Name

BY GEOFF SHACKELFORD

The recent boom in golf course construction means hundreds of new tracks have arrived in the past few years. With the new crop of layouts comes a dire shortage of names.

I concede the world of golf doesn’t need another Hillcrest or Riverside. But has anyone taken notice of how lame, moronic and embarrassing golf course names have become in the past 20 years? Am I the only one who blushes for the honest, hard-working folks who have to work at these places?

At least the names are easy to break down into categories:

• **Futile attempts to make a name “looke elegante”** — You know these names. Someone takes a simple word like Bay, Point or Old and tacks on an “e” in a feeble attempt to convince people that the course has ties to old(e) money.

• **Dial 911** — Fire marshals must cringe when hearing all the variations on “Burning.” Oaks, ridges, bushes and even sands are ablaze at one golf course.

• **The links tie-in** — It’s a fascinating thing when tree-lined American inland golf courses become links. If you award a winner for “Best Performance by an Oxymoron in a Golf Course Title,” this is your category. Just run an Internet search on links and tree names, and you’ll get a kick out of all the so-called links that also have tall woody plants. And in case you don’t understand my point, well, how do I put this gently: There are no trees on authentic links courses!

• **Animals doing strange things** — Golf courses have quails and blackwolves running, rabbits dancing, eagles doubled, puppies in creeks and raccoons doing things we can’t put in print. You could populate a very odd zoo with these wacky creatures.

• **Strange pines** — Again, there are plenty of ways to use pines in a pleasant, simple way that stands up over time — Pine Tree, Pine Valley, Pinehurst, etc.

But why the desire to treat pines like a con-