

# Industry gets its act together

In one brief meeting in the middle of July, Florida's golf industry got its act together.

And the show goes on Oct. 11-13.

"You can't afford to miss it," touts the postcard mailed to industry leaders at the end of August. "Please mark your calendar for what may possibly be the most important meeting you'll attend this year."

Despite the hyperbole, the postcard is probably correct.

The inaugural Florida Golf Summit at the Hyatt Regency Grand Cypress in Orlando will offer a solid day-and-a-half of meetings and discussions sandwiched between golf and social events at the beginning and more golf at the end.

The meat is in the middle.

For the first time, the owners, operators, designers, developers and builders of golf courses will meet with government officials and environmental terrorists and everybody is supposed to be on the same side: protecting the environment while nurturing one of the state's largest industries (Florida golf weighs in at \$5.5 billion, according to a year-old study by the National Golf Foundation).

Theme of the meeting is "Government Relations." Major topics include water resources and restrictions, government permitting process, environmental protection, golf course design and developmental financing. A complete schedule and preliminary speakers roster ac-

companies this story.

"Everybody who has a financial interest in golf should attend this meeting," said golf course designer Jan Beljan, one of the organizers of the event.

Perhaps even more significant than the Summit — and certainly more interesting — is the birth of its sponsoring organization: The Florida



## Mission Statement

- Provide a clearing house for technical information and research
- Educate members and the public as to the benefits of golf through conferences and research dissemination.
- Form alliances with special interest groups.
- Develop a public relationship program and communications medium
- Establish an advocacy position with local, regional and state government
- Promote innovative design for environmental protection
- Provide a broad base of services for members of the organization

Golf Council.

Jump-started in Palm Beach July 13-14 at a "Florida Golf Leaders Conference" called by Ron Safford, director of sports promotion for the Florida Department of Commerce, the organization's gestation was so short that it was off and running under its own power before the PGA Tour, golf's major entertainment entity headquartered in Ponte Vedra Beach, could grab control of it.

"The PGA Tour is willing to assist the Florida Sports Foundation in the formation of the above-referenced program," sniffed Deputy Commissioner Tim Finchem a week after the meeting, apologizing for his absence from it because of a prior commitment. "However, we are curious as to the short notice and not having an opportunity to discuss this subject with you prior to the meeting. In our view, such an important program should be developed with PGA Tour involvement."

Florida's golf course superintendents were represented at the leaders conference by FGCSA Public Relations Chairman Mark Jarrell.

Keynote speaker at the conference was Bill Sutton, Florida secretary of commerce.

"We're proud to have a thousand golf courses in Florida and we don't think it's enough," he said. "We think it's a great industry. We certainly don't want to do anything wrong ecologically in Florida, nor do we want to be on the other side like the darter fish a few years back who kept some needed economic development from happening."

Among the facts considered by the leaders:

- Golf is the only industry anywhere near its size without a single lobbyist in Tallahassee. Even state agencies have lobbyists.

- The 16-mile "Grand Strand" around Myrtle Beach, S.C. outspends the en-

## Summit Speakers

Gov. Bob Martinez	Secretary of Commerce
William Sutton	Commissioner, PGA Tour
Deane Beman	CEO, National Golf Foundation
Dr. Joe Beditz	CEO, PGA of America
Jim Awtrey	Executive Director,
Cal Korf	Florida State Golf Association
Bob Yount	Executive Director,
Ed Gowan	Florida Turfgrass Association
Steve Melnyk	Executive Director,
Jay Landers	Arizona Golf Association
Tom Fazio	President, Riverside Golf Group
Tim Hiers	CBS Sports Announcer
Dr. Thomas M. Latta	Partner, Landers & Parsons
Paul Courtneil	Fazio Golf Course Designers
Gene Bates	Golf Course Manager, John's Island Club
John Johnson	President, AmerAquatic, Inc.
Erling Speer	Leisure & Resort Group,
W. Lee Berndt, Ph.D.	Gunster, Yoakley & Stewart
Allen E. Salowe	President, Gene Bates & Associates
Rich J. Budell	Partner, Laventhol & Horwath
Pete & Alice Dye	President, Willoughby Golf Club
John Wodraska	Director of Environmental
Gary Player	Services, Golden Bear Enterprises
Mark Latch	Senior Associate,
Roy Case	Fishkind & Associates
Wade Hopping	Bureau Chief, Bureau of Pesticides,
Ron Safford	Department of Agriculture
Dennis Wise	Pete Dye, Inc.
Raymond W. Miller	Executive Director,
Henry J. Fishkind, Ph.D.	South Florida Water Management District
Jack Mathis	Gary Player Design
Raymon A. Finch, Jr.	Deputy Division Director,
Dr. Richard Orman	Division of Water Management,
Richard L. Norton	Dept. of Environmental Regulation
Donald E. Rhodes	President, Case Golf Company
Howard L. Searcy, P.E.	Managing Partner,
Mike Dasher	Hopping, Boyd, Green & Sams
W. Clinton Smallridge	Director of Sports Development,
Ed Seay	Florida Department of Commerce
Ron Andrews	Fazio Golf Course Design
Ronald H. Silver	CEO, Wilson, Miller,
Charley Stine	Barton & Peek, Inc.
Larry Hawkins	President,
Rick Jacobson	Fishkind & Associates
Doug Winter, P.E.	President, Golf Plan Group
Bob Cupp	Chairman, Emerald Dunes
Henry Dean	Vice President, Public Golf Corp.
Joseph Towry	General Manager,
David Pearson	NGF Consulting, Inc.
Robert G. Nave	Vice President, Golf Finance,
F. Michael Wiles	Textron Financial Corp.
	Howard L. Searcy Engineers
	Arthur Hills
	Golf Course Superintendent,
	Royal Poinciana CC
	Executive Vice President,
	Palmer Course Design Co.
	Grand Harbour
	Chief, Field Operations Branch,
	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
	Editor, Golfweek
	GeoScience
	Jack Nicklaus Golf Services
	Doug Winter & Companies
	Cupp Design Inc.
	Executive Director,
	St. Johns River Water Management District
	Public Utilities Department,
	City of St. Petersburg
	Partner, Pearson, McGuire Associates
	Division Director,
	Resource Planning & Management,
	Department of Community Affairs
	Senior VP of Marketing,
	Hammock Dunes Private Community.

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tire State of Florida in attracting golf destination visitors.

• Several pieces of legislation with potential impact on the industry have been considered without substantial input from the golf industry because no centralized organization represents it.

Regarding the latter situation, the leaders virtually unanimously decided that a broadly-based umbrella organization was needed and an organizational committee at the conference later recommended that the organization be a "positive, accurate, factual, unified, environmentally sensitive voice for the entire golf industry."

Its mission statement also accompanies this story.

The original focus of the organization should be "oriented toward pro-

moting better governmental relations, public opinion and preserving the quality of the game and business," says the committee report.

The committee also recommended that the organization be led by a board of 40-60 with operational power vested in a much smaller executive committee. Composition should be one third representatives of associations and government, one third golf course owners, operators and developers, and one third consultants, technical staff, attorneys, etc.

A board meeting is scheduled for the first day of the Summit, although the Florida Golf Council had not announced who the directors are or how they were selected.

The committee foresaw an annual budget of \$250,000 to \$500,000. ↘

### Summit Schedule

Hyatt Regency Grand Cypress, Orlando

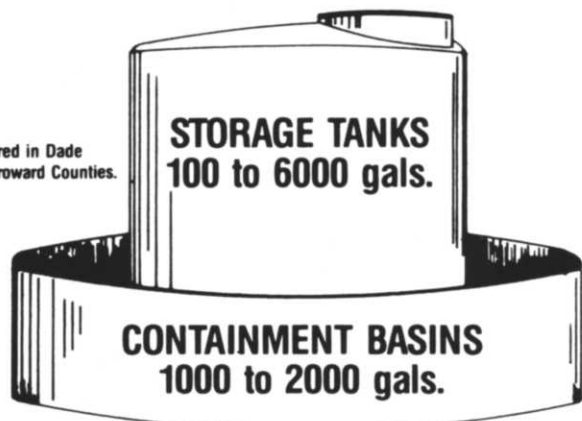
<b>Thursday, Oct. 11</b>	
10:00 a.m. - Noon	Florida Golf Council Board of Directors Meeting
1:00 - 5:00 p.m.	Inaugural Florida Golf Tournament
3:00 - 8:00 p.m.	Registration
6:30 - 7:30 p.m.	Cocktail Reception
<b>Friday, Oct. 12</b>	
8:00 - 8:30 a.m.	Continental Breakfast
8:30 - 9:00 a.m.	Welcome
	Keynote Speaker: "The Golf Industry in the 90s"
9:00 - 9:30 a.m.	Evolution of the Florida Golf Council
9:30 - 10:45 a.m.	Inter-coordination among agencies
10:45 - 11:00 a.m.	Break
11:00 - 12:15 p.m.	Concurrent Sessions
	1. Water Resources in the 1990s
	2. Regulations & The Approval Process
	3. Communications & Marketing
12:15 - 1:15 p.m.	Buffet Luncheon
1:15 - 1:30 p.m.	Keynote Speaker
1:30 - 3:00 p.m.	Golf Course Design in the 1990s:
	Dealing with Government Regulations.
	Panel discussion by prominent golf course architects.
3:00 - 3:15	Break
3:15 - 4:45	Concurrent Sessions
	1. Public/Private Ventures - A case study on developing a municipal golf course
	2. Detailed course design — resolving regulatory issues
	3. Recycled water and its growing importance to the golf industry
	4. Financing and refinancing of new and existing golf courses.
<b>Saturday, Oct. 13</b>	
8:00 - 8:30 a.m.	Continental breakfast
8:30 - 9:00 a.m.	Keynote Speaker
9:00 - 11:00 a.m.	Roundtable Discussions:
	The Future of Florida Golf in the 1990s.
11:00 - Noon	Wrap-up session.
1:00 p.m.	Golf (optional)

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