

# Hugo

Continued from page 1

left by the Force 4 hurricane.

Hugo snapped 100-year-old pine trees like toothpicks, uprooted many majestic oaks and left its own indelible imprint on one of the country's major golf destinations. One course received an estimate of more than \$300,000 for tree removal alone.

Huge tidal surges, reaching as high as 19 feet, cut their own trail through some of the golf courses, exposing irrigation lines, undermining cart paths, leaving a 32-foot boat perched on a green, washing away dunes and removing part of the 17th green and tee at one course with surgical precision. Some of the millions of trees left standing are "in shock" and it may be a year before golf course superintendents will know if those trees will indeed survive the root damage and possible rot or disease infesting their broken limbs.

Much of Hurricane Hugo's fury hit two Tom Fazio-designed courses at Wild Dunes Resort on the Isle of Palms, just a few miles north of historic Charleston.

The seaside 17th and 18th holes of Wild Dunes' world-ranked Links Course were severely damaged, and there still remains some question as to whether the holes can be rebuilt because of the state's recently enacted Beachfront Management Act.

Already, Fazio has visited the course to survey the damage and begin formulating a plan for rebuilding.

The damage estimate on Wild Dunes alone may run more than \$2 million. The irrigation system received severe damage. Pump stations were submerged in saltwater and now are useless. Many of the control boxes were uprooted and almost all were submerged. Much of the irrigation pipe itself remained intact and is expected to be salvageable.

Many bridges on the Harbor Course also were destroyed in the hurricane, some of them washing across the Intracoastal Waterway onto neighboring Goat Island.

Cleanup efforts began almost immediately, but greens superintendent Mike Fabrizio was forced to search throughout the island for maintenance equipment, which had been commandeered by National Guard troops protecting the island while martial law was imposed for more than a week after the storm.

Wild Dunes laid off all but 62 of nearly 500 employees in the aftermath of the storm. Director of golf Terry Florence, Links Course head professional Steve Behr and Harbor Course head pro Tommy Young remained on staff, but the rest of the assistant pros, shop personnel and others were laid off.

Fabrizio and about half of his 24-man grounds crew were retained.

"We're going to rebuild, but we have to see what we can do," Florence said. "With the exception of the trees, we can strengthen the golf course. We have to do something to overcome the loss of the trees."

Fabrizio estimated that well over 50 percent of the course's trees had been destroyed, trees that cannot be replaced. In addition to the replacement of the trees, he faces another, more immediate problem: how to dispose of the downed trees. He hopes he will be allowed to burn the trees, for trucking the debris off the island will be an expensive and time-consuming process.

A tree service has been consulted and soon will begin a renourishment program for the remaining trees.

Fabrizio said he is uncertain what will happen with the par 4 17th hole, where both the tee and green were claimed by the ocean. Enough remains of the par 5 18th that it can be rebuilt.

Both maintenance buildings received heavy damage, and most of the equipment, too, will have to be replaced.

A reopening date has not been set, although Florence said he hopes to put together 18 holes, probably in some combination from the two courses, for play by spring.

Some 3 1/2 miles inland of Wild Dunes, across the massive but shallow expanse of Gray Bay, lies Charleston National Country Club, which was scheduled to open just a week after the storm. Charleston National is planned as an equity membership club, and club officials are still striving to retain that format as they dig deeper into their pockets to keep things going for an opening delayed some six months.

The course, designed by Rees Jones, received little structural damage. The 18 holes are intact, although there was one small breach that allowed saltwater to intrude into one of the lagoon systems. Heavy rains after Hurricane Hugo helped leach the

# Hurricane Jerry easy on Texas

Most golf courses in the Galveston, Texas, region escaped heavy damage from Hurricane Jerry, which touched down about 9 p.m. Oct. 15 and was gone three hours later.

While superintendent Hank Rhodes of South Shore Harbor Country Club next to Clear Lake reported "significant tree damage," spokesmen in the maintenance departments at a number of other courses said Jerry did little harm.

"The eye passed right over us," Rhodes said. He said his course lost about 100 pine, oak and Chinese tallow trees, mostly 6- to 8-inch diameter, costing about \$50,000 in tree damage, he said.

The storm also leveled four partially built homes in the golf course community, including two in the \$500,000 range that were framed.

Rhodes' 11-man crew was cutting and hauling the downed trees.

He said that although the area had received 25 inches of rain in a

tropical storm in July and 22 inches from Hurricane Chantal in early August, the 2 1/2 inches from Jerry put a welcome end to a dry spell.

A spokesman said Bay Forest Golf Course in La Porte lost about 25 trees, following the 45 it lost in Hurricane Chantal.

Elsewhere, spokesmen at Golfcrest CC in Pearland, Clear Lake CC, and Galveston CC all said the worst damage they suffered was a few lost trees.

saltwater, which covered seven or eight of the marsh-side holes, from the soil.

No equipment was lost to storm damage. The heavy equipment had been moved to the highest point on the golf course — the middle of the fifth fairway — and escaped the saltwater and falling trees.

Jones visited the course after the storm and said the damaged trees would actually open the marsh vistas on some holes. Charleston National official Tom Dyer said nine holes would reopen within a couple of weeks and the club planned to hold its first member-guest tournament before Christmas.

The devastation of Hurricane Hugo was random. Patriots Point Golf Links in Mount Pleasant, a public course that overlooks Charleston Harbor, was the first Charleston-area course to reopen, 2 1/2 weeks after the storm. The green on the par 3 17th at Patriots Point sits out in the marsh on the edge of Charleston Harbor, but according to golf professional Dave Nelson, the green apparently was covered by the tide before the storm surge hit, protecting the green. The heavy rains helped leach the salt from the soil.

Most other Charleston-area courses received heavy tree damage. The three courses at

Kiawah Island had lots of downed trees. A spokesman for the resort said reopening the resort was being delayed until all the cleanup work had been finished "in order not to compromise the guests' stay."

Osprey Point was to reopen Nov. 1 and Marsh Point a couple of weeks later. Turtle Point will remain closed while some renovation work, including expanding some of the greens, is taking place.

A spokeswoman for Landmark Land Co., which owns the Kiawah resort, said the Pete Dye-designed course being built for the 1991 Ryder Cup Matches has few trees and was unhurt by the storm and construction resumed after just one day.

Courses further south of Charleston received only minor tree damage and reopened almost immediately.

Hope Plantation on John's Island near Kiawah and Seabrook Island resorts, kept its early November opening on schedule.

"We were extremely fortunate not to have sustained any real damage from the storm," said Hope Plantation head golf pro John Roperta.

Haig Point on Daufuskie Island, S.C., also escaped tHugo's wrath and expected to open its third nine on schedule in late fall.

Other courses in the golf-happy Grand Strand region received minor damage and most were reopened within a few days after Hurricane Hugo, although they are battling an image problem painted by the national news media which led people to believe the entire South Carolina coast was leveled.

Debordieu in Georgetown received extensive saltwater damage and some downed trees, but general manager Wallace Street said the course would reopen within 45 days, even if some of the greens had to be resodded.

Pawleys Plantation also received some damage and was temporarily closed, but reopened in mid-October.

The Dunes Club in Myrtle Beach received some saltwater damage on three holes and was closed for a couple of weeks.

Other courses in the Grand Strand actually benefitted from the respite in play, which allowed superintendents to get them in the best condition they've been in for several years.

Charlotte hurting  
But 200 miles away, Charlotte courses were heavily battered.

Perhaps worst hit was Myers Park Country Club, where, according to superintendent Dave Powell, 800 to 1,000 trees were

Continued on page 35



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