

## Conference Report

# Jones: Industry must fight misconceptions

BY MARK LESLIE

A preacher preaching the gospel of golf.

That's Robert Trent Jones Jr.'s view of himself at the end of his one-year term as president of the American Society of Golf Course Architects.

Jones, who at the end of March turned over the ASGCA gavel to Dan Maples, heightened the environmental issue in golf to the political level.

The 50-year-old, globe-trotting architect believes the groundwork has been laid for the various groups in the golf industry to successfully keep golf course construction alive.

He spearheaded the move to organize the Allied Association of Golf, pulling together in one effort the ASGCA, National Club Association, PGA of America, PGA Tour, Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, National Golf Foundation, Golf Course Builders of America and Club Managers Association of America.

"There's enough going on in the golf world for us all to succeed, so let's not fail by bickering over small points," he said in an interview.

He said golf organizations should muster their strength and fight the misconception that golf courses harm the environment.

"Because people misuse and abuse chemicals on their own lawns, they think we do the same. But it is absolutely the opposite. Any park is very concerned about the costs and maintenance of the environment, and a golf course is one of many parks where people are more concerned," he said.

Jones devoted his tenure as president to:

- Making government agencies aware of the industry's willingness to cooperate and its interest in preserving the environment.
- Urging golfers to support golf proposals in their hometowns.
- Asking ASGCA members to attend each others' hearings and support them.

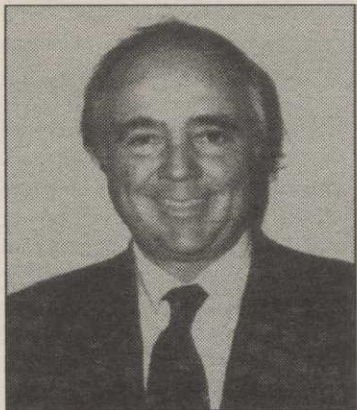
After all, he said: "We're not in competition for jobs any more... It's a little like Patrick Henry said: 'We're either going to hang together or we're going to hang separately, so let's hang together.'"

Jones said it is crucial to prove to the Environmental Protection Agency, the Army Corps of Engineers, and state and local agencies that golf course architects are devising innovative ways to preserve flora, fauna, wetlands and animals.

He said his Spanish Bay Golf Course in Pebble Beach, Calif., is an example of a highly sophisticated and advanced environmental solution to restore desecrated dunes.

Pete Dye's Old Marsh Country Club in Palm Beach Gardens, Fla., is an advanced technical solution to marsh grasses, while Ed Seay's Orchid Island course in Vero Beach, Fla., uses marsh grasses as a filtration system on the edge of lakes, he said.

"We're telling the EPA, 'Show us what you want and we'll do it,'"



Robert Trent Jones Jr. Jones said.

"After all, architects are each of

us environmentalists. We all want the same general things that anyone is concerned about: clean air to breathe and fresh water to drink. But in addition to that, golf courses provide animal habitats, albeit different from what the land currently bears. They provide bird sanctuaries. And in certain sections of the country they provide filtration systems for wetlands. In fact, we increase wetlands most of the time by building ponds. And in the western part of the country, where fire is a big problem, we provide fire breaks in suburbs...

"In the old word 'conservation'

sense, we conserve land. Pebble Beach would be a subdivision now if it had not been built as a golf course. Courses conserve the natural resource by being useable land, and golf is a sport that provides healthy exercise..."

"So why do those very well-meaning, perhaps, and sometimes not-so-well-meaning people, accuse us of being a toxic waste dump when there really is no evidence to that effect?" he asked.

Saying the golf industry is more concerned than most people about the environment, Jones added, "For example, farmers in their row-

crop farming put in 10 times more fertilizer per acre than a golf course would, and it does go into the water supply. Golf courses show no phosphorus in ground water pollution."

Jones charged people "masquerading as environmentalists" with being a major problem. "They are really no-growth people... who attack the course on environmental grounds because people who are not knowledgeable in that area respond to those kinds of fears," he said.

"They set up a specter that is

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## Chalk up two more All-Americans for Ohio State

**Golf traditions run deep** at The Ohio State University. Its two 18-hole courses were designed by famous golf course architect Alister MacKenzie in the 1920s. Since then, they've challenged All-Americans like Jack Nicklaus and Tom Weiskopf, and today are recognized as two of the premier collegiate tracts in the country.

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## Conference Report

# International conferences scheduled

With the global explosion in golf has come plans for the second new international golf show in a year.

Golf Asia '91 is scheduled for next April 11-14 in Singapore, organized by Connex Private Ltd. Last November the first Golf Course Europe was held in Wiesbaden, West Germany, by convention company Expoconsult of Holland.

Zainal Abidin Shah, Connex exhibition manager, said his firm is inviting potential golf course owners, resort developers, architects and others in the industry to the show at World Trade Centre in Singapore.

The main purpose of the event is "to provide exhibitors and visitors with venues of displaying and observing the most up-to-date equipment and most effective techniques for making golf a better game."

American architect Ronald Fream, who alone is designing four courses in Asia, said there are 38 percent more new golfers every year in Asia, which translates to a demand for more suppliers, driving ranges and courses.

Shah said Thailand and Malaysia are indicative of the growth in the region. Thailand, he said, has 40-odd courses today and another

200 may be completed by 1995. Malaysia, which has 14 courses, has 50 more on the drawing boards.

The Golf Asia '91 organizers are calling it a "golden opportunity" for companies to expose their products and service to "this huge and vibrant golf industry in Asia-Pacific."

Meanwhile, Golf Course Europe, which was visited by people from 23 countries last fall, will be expanded to include more information for groundskeepers its second time around.

Expoconsult's Ellen MacGillavry said that move is in response to complaints that last year's show

was too much geared toward golf course design.

She said more than 1,000 golf courses are being planned in Europe, and the people developing those projects have an "enormous" need for information.

This year's conference and show will be held Nov. 28-30 in Paris.

Shah and MacGillavry are both expecting large turnouts from foreigners at their shows.

People may contact MacGillavry at Expoconsult, Industrieweg 54, P.O. Box 200, 3600 AE Maarssen, Holland (tele-

phone 03465-73777); and Shah at Connex Private Ltd., 3015A Ubi Road 1 #05-11/12, Kampong Ubi Industrial Estate, Singapore 1440 (telephone 7489696).

## Jones

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scientifically not based on fact. But when you've got a cause, fact usually comes in second."

Jones said he has met with congressmen and agencies to make them "aware of our cooperation and interest; to let them know we're different from the farmers, and we are maybe five times the number of farmers. Therefore, while they're super-concerned not to injure farmers' livelihood, they should recognize that golf, too, provides a livelihood for those people who take care of it.

"It's also tourism, and tourism is one of the best dollars you can have because it's a non-cost dollar; it's clean and you don't have to build any social services, schools, hospitals to support it."

He said that for all those reasons, golf courses are economically as important, or more important, than another agricultural crop — "and grass is a crop."

"These are the kinds of interpretive programs I've tried to help people in authority see: that we are the good guys and are with them; and if they explain the rules, we will work with them," he said.

Jones said golfers should attend public hearings to support golf course projects in their communities, regardless of whether they will play there, "because if they don't, and the people who consider them a toxic waste dump have their way, they may pass regulations which will mean their golf courses will be affected."

He said this scenario has been played out in Arizona and California in periods of drought "when they've restrained the amount of water to such an extent that you can't grow grass. It's an easy political thing to do when there is a climatic strain on any system, whether it be sewage or a reservoir."

He said, "If you're a golfer you should take an interest, just as you would about schools..."

His message is getting out and many are interested, because they recognize that there is not enough golf, he said. If there is not enough public golf, private courses might face legislation, he added.

He said he has asked congressmen "to watch bills that might affect us, so they wouldn't throw out the baby with the bath water. If they're going to regulate the farmers and Chemlawn, then they should do it in such a way that those who oppose us for growth reasons, would not have a new arrow in their quiver that was ill intended to be used for the golf world."

At the ASGCA's structural level, Jones said he was recommending two-year terms for officers; and greater clarity regarding membership qualifications.

