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GOLF COURSE NEWS

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A United publication

INSIDE

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Type	Open		Under Construction	
	1990 YTD 3rd Qtr.	1989 Year-end	1990 YTD 3rd Qtr.	1989 Year-end
Daily Fee	112	156	291	218
Municipal	28	35	75	63
Private	53	99	191	177
Undecided			4	5
Totals	193	290	561	463

Source: NGF

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Golf Summit 90:

Industry must give ground on environment

BY MARK LESLIE

The golf industry must do some "serious soul-searching" about the magnitude of its projects and undertake research to disclaim "pseudo-scientists" if it is to continue to thrive, according to government and industry officials.

Speaking at Golf Summit 90 in Palm Springs, Calif., experts from the Environmental Protection Agency, Golf

Course Superintendents Association of America, United States Golf Association and American Society of Golf Course Architects agreed obstacles to golf development will get tougher and laws harsher.

The obstacles include golfers' demand for green and low-cut courses; misinformed environmentalists and the lack of scientific information on pesti-

cide and fertilizer use; an upcoming re-registration of List A pesticides; tightening wetlands regulations; and localized anti-development sentiment.

"But you shouldn't see the environment as a roadblock....," said EPA Associate Administrator Lewis S.W. Crampton. "A pleasant environment is a very important part of enjoying the game."

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Californians vote no

BY PETER BLAIS

California voters last month turned a major thumbs down on two ballot questions that would have banned many of the pesticides used on golf courses.

"We're obviously pleased that our efforts were successful," said Raymond Davies, president of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of Southern California which united with other regional California superintendent associations to fight the Big Green and

CAREFUL initiatives.

"But we know the issue isn't dead. This is just the first inning in a long ball game. Now we'll just have to wait and see what type of initiative or other tactic the environmentalists come up with next time."

Sixty-four percent of the electorate voted against Big Green, which would have banned up to 80 percent of common pesticides.

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First Partners Club a 'go'

BY MARK LESLIE

Construction is about to begin on the first link in an international chain of exclusive golf and meeting facilities called The Partners Clubs.

International Golf Management, Inc., has reached agreement in principle with the board

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A golfer drives from the back tee of the 6th hole at Boulder Ridge Country Club in Lake in the Hills, Ill. Bob Lohmann and Fuzzy Zoeller designed the 18-hole course at the private residential golf community. For more on new courses, see pages 14-15.

Americans share knowledge in Europe

BY VERN PUTNEY

Golf Course Europe drew many of the leading names in the American golf industry to Paris in late November to discuss the state of the game in Europe, considered among the most fertile

breeding grounds for new golf course development in the world.

"Golf has its roots in Europe, but now is a universal sport," said Dan Maples, president of the American Society of Golf Course Architects.

"(In the United States) growth has lagged behind the growing number of golfers, a situation also probably true in Europe. That's our challenge — finding the sites, financing and talented people

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Golf Course Europe

Continued from page 1

necessary to design and build the needed courses."

Markets once considered 'saturated,' such as the Chicago area and New England, have many new and successful residential golf course developments, Maples said.

"New England and Rocky Mountain ski resorts have seen the opportunities in developing year-round business by adding golf courses to attract visitors during the summer months," the ASGCA president said. "Resorts should be a major target for European golf course development. U.S. resorts have found they cannot attract high-quality customers or sales conferences without a championship golf course.

"Earlier retirement, more leisure time and

longer life spans will provide more players on both sides of the ocean. Our golf courses are much more flexible to accommodate juniors, women and senior players. It's necessary to design up to four tees on each hole so that players can find an acceptable length.

"The key to a successful golf course development is assembling a professional team. Included should be an experienced land planner, civil engineer, golf course architect, housing architect, attorney and financial consultant. If the site is environmentally sensitive, an experienced environmental consultant should be included."

Bernard R. Baker III and Paul W. A. Courtneil Jr. of the Leisure and Resorts Group with Gunster, Yoakley & Stewart, P.A. discussed various membership plans.



'Resorts should be a major target for European golf course development. U.S. resorts have found they cannot attract high-quality customers or sales conferences without a championship golf course. Earlier retirement, more leisure time and longer life spans will provide more players on both sides of the ocean.'

— ASGCA President Dan Maples

New golf club membership programs are being designed in the United States, Japan and elsewhere to provide a maximum return to the developer, a valuable asset to the

member, and a marketing advantage to the project, they said.

Whatever plan is chosen, disclosure should receive particular attention. It is very important the member understand the rights and responsibilities of membership, ownership of the club, ability of the owner (if the club is not owned by the members) to terminate memberships, and restrictions on transferability of memberships.

Although it is possible, because of market demand, to sell memberships without full disclosure, developers providing materials explaining the program (in multiple languages if necessary) are better protected and have a marketing advantage.

Basic programs are 'member-owned' and 'right to use' clubs owned by the club developer or by a third party owner-operator.

Equity club members are a bit different, having not only an ownership interest, but also voting rights enabling them to control the club by electing officers or club directors. Although it may be necessary for the developer to control the club until most memberships are sold, members know they will ultimately own and control the club, adding substantial value to memberships.

Equity clubs have increased dramatically the past decade. However, non-equity, right-to-use clubs are becoming increasingly popular as development costs for golf courses rise and the time from inception through sellout increases.

Changing economic conditions, consumer tastes and market considerations place a premium on flexibility. Convertible programs giving members a role in the ultimate disposition of the facilities, but retaining some flexibility for the developer, are one answer.

The growing popularity of golf coupled with a scarcity of land has resulted in extremely high prices for golf club memberships in Japan. Many high-priced memberships are not owned by individuals, but by corporations. Many have an option allowing a member to put his membership back to the club after a period of time and recover his initial fee.

Many memberships are bought and sold on the open market through brokers specializing in golf memberships. Nearly 90 per cent are bought primarily as an investment rather than a way to gain access to recreational and social facilities.

U.S. resort developers have started marketing projects with 'undivided interest' memberships or UDIs. These are alternatives to traditional vacation home or timeshare units. The UDI requires an initial membership fee and annual dues in exchange for access to free or reduced-price lodging for a specified time (30 days per year is typical) and unlimited use of other facilities.

Dr. James R. Watson, vice president of The Toro Company and author of more than 400 articles, discussed turfgrass management and water conservation techniques.

"Cultural practices significant in water conservation are: cultivation (aerification) fertilizing, watering, mowing and pest control programs," Watson said. "When applied properly, these management or cultural

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Golf Course Europe

practices produce healthy, vigorous, weed-free turfgrass.

"Water conservation requires an understanding of the fundamental role water plays in plant growth, the effect climate and weather have on growth rates, and how these factors influence water use rates and choice of grass.

"Sound irrigation management requires a knowledge of the basic physical and chemical soil properties and how these affect water absorption, storage and drainage as well as frequency, rate and the manner in which water must be applied. Such basic information must be correlated with the requirements of play or use and adjusted to fit the existing planned irrigation methods.

"Properly designed irrigation systems equipped with computerized controllers tied into on-site weather stations permit an application of water in accordance with the needs of the plant. Studies have indicated that when this type of system exists, a savings of 40-50 per cent of the water normally applied can be conserved," he said.

Water, specifically pond and lake management, was the topic addressed by Charles Barebo of Otterbine Barebo, Inc.

"Not providing ongoing lake management can be costly to correct," Barebo said. "Algae mats, aquatic weed growth, bottom sludge build-up, oxygen depletion and foul odors are symptoms of poor water quality. Mosquito breeding is often common in stagnant waters. Algae can clog irrigation intakes and establish itself on tees and greens."

Some management methods treat symptoms of poor quality, he said. A lake harvester or dredge immediately cleans up weeds and algae and eradicates sludge. Algacides can cure algae blooms. Dyes stop the sun's ultraviolet rays from penetrating the water's surface hindering algae growth.

But harvesters, algacides and dyes treat symptoms, not the cause of the problem, namely poor water quality, Barebo said. The surface mechanical aerator, which his company produces, draws water from the lower depths and throws it in the air, like a fountain. The spray traps oxygen from the air and releases it in the water when it returns to the lake's surface.

"This spray also creates a convection pattern in the water column," he said. "The induced circulation caused by the aerators breaks up stagnant waters, eliminating mosquito population. Aeration is a key factor in reducing sludge buildup as well as fertilizer and organic nutrient loading levels."

A good golf course architect can turn a mediocre or hostile site into an excellent golf course that looks as if it belongs to the land upon which it was placed, and for a realistic price, according to Calum A. Todd of Bradford Benz, Golf Course Architects.

"The primary objective of our design effort is to create golf courses in harmony with the natural systems at work in the environment," Todd said.

"Historically, the first golf course

arose out of natural landscape features, and the game itself originates in man's relationship with the land. Sir Guy Campbell in his 'A History of Golf in Britain' said of earlier courses, 'Nature was their architect, and beast and man her contractor'.

"An environmentally responsible approach to design could be said to be a resurrection of the 'classic values' of golf course architecture. This represents a response to growing environmental concerns of over-irrigation, escalating long-term maintenance costs and a demonstration to a concerned public that there exists a viable alternative approach to contemporary golf course architecture.

"Because of European governmental initiatives, much agricultural land is becoming available for leisure utilization and, of course, golf is a primary developmental choice. With intensive crop rotation, the ecological significance of most farmland is minimal.

"As only a relatively small percentage of most project sites is taken up by intensively managed playing turf, the majority of sites offer a wonderful opportunity to restore or create environmental quality for the property where wildlife and natural vegetation can flourish."

To illustrate the cost differences encountered in course construction,

architect Michael J. Hurdzan compared two courses his company designed within 20 miles of each other in Toronto.

Royal Woodbine, named after a famous nearby horse racing track, cost \$2,500,000, Devil's Pulpit almost four times that amount.

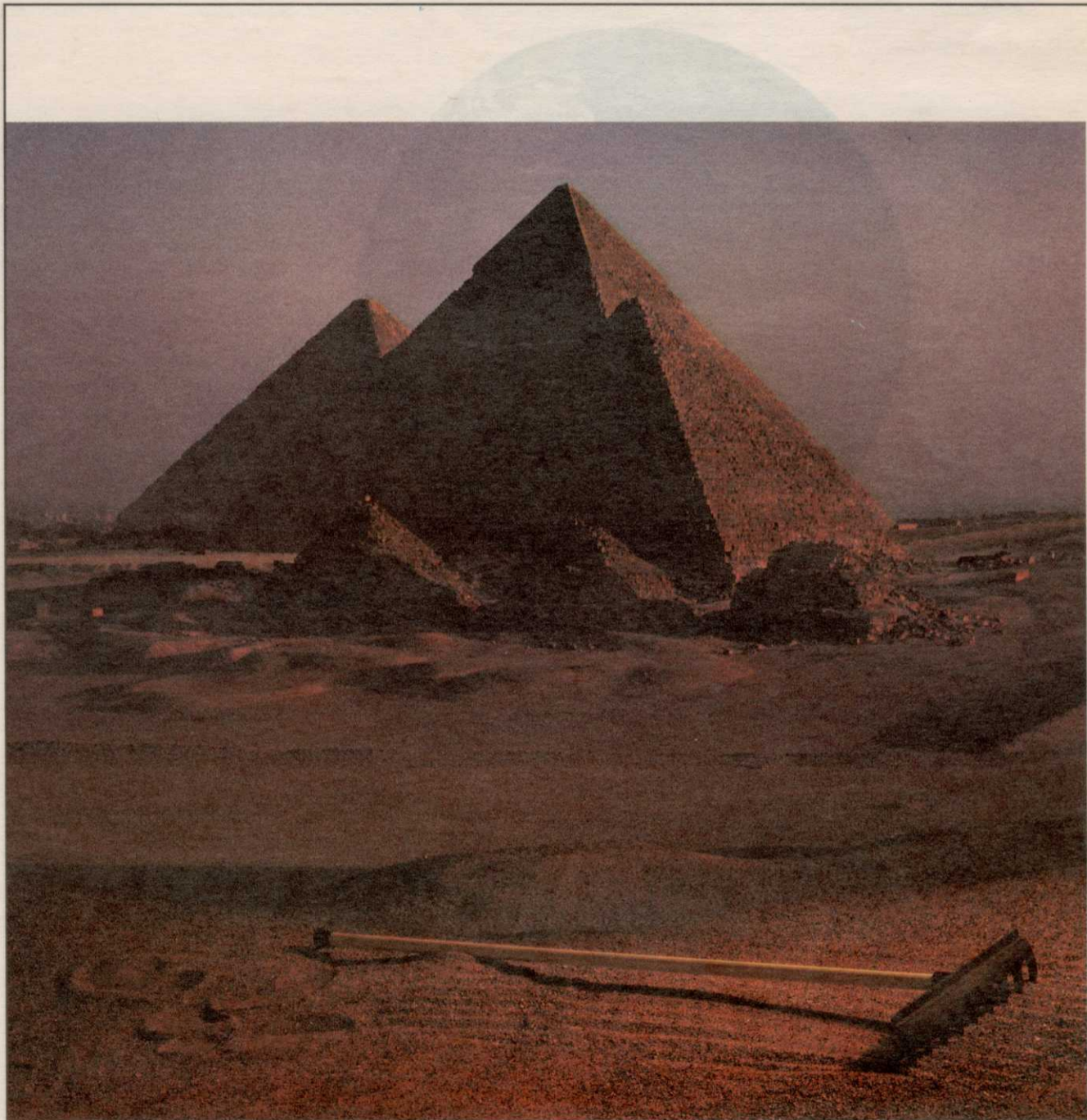
The most dramatic cost difference was in environmental protection — \$1,989,000 at Devil's Pulpit versus \$20,000 at Royal Woodbine..

Devil's Pulpit was on a highly-regulated and protected geologic formation that required an extensive permit and approval process by town, regional, federal and environmental agencies. Environmental expenditures included

\$1,300,000 to install artificial membranes beneath all ponds to protect groundwater quality; \$250,000 to pipe springs through the property to insure no change in water purity or temperature; \$125,000 for silt control devices; \$150,000 to build an environmentally isolated green near a wetland; and \$175,000 for revegetation work.

Royal Woodbine is a semi-private club on 165 acres of city-owned land. The site had been an illegal dumping ground along an environmentally dead stream.

Therefore, the permit process was less arduous and restrictive. Only erosion control measures were required..



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Pictured above: The world's largest bunker — adjacent to the 13th hole on the Valley of Gizza Country Club.

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