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GOLF COURSE NEWS

SPECIAL LISTINGS
Architects and Builders
Pages 16, 17 and 20

THE NEWSPAPER FOR THE GOLF COURSE INDUSTRY

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INSIDE

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Course openings in 1990 through June 30

	Daily Fee	Municipal	Private	Total
Opened as new facilities	54	16	23	93
Added to existing facilities	19	4	13	36
Total courses	73	20	36	129

Source: NGF

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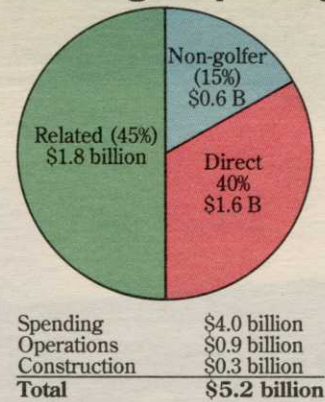
BY KIT BRADSHAW

Golf in Florida is a cornucopia, pouring \$5.2 billion annually not only into the golf industry, but into resorts, restaurants, agriculture, real estate, tourism, retail sales and services.

But the economic impact of golf as a business and the environmental benefit of golf courses must be recognized and understood by the public, legislators and governmental regulators.

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Florida golf spending



Will other states follow the lead?

BY MARK LESLIE

In the wake of Florida's successful golf summit and with Golf Summit 90 set for Nov. 12-13, states where golf is big business may follow suit by adding lobbying arms and bringing together the industry and government agencies.

Summits like Florida's are "very important because golf is not well coordinated in most states," said Gerald Faubel of Saginaw (Mich.) Country Club.

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Pebble Beach course facelift going full tilt

BY FRANK POLLARD

Plagued by drought and turf problems, Pebble Beach Co. on California's Monterey Peninsula faces an aggressive renovation program at the hands of its new owners.

Prior to the billion-dollar sale of Pebble Beach Co. to Ben Hogan Properties, Inc., officials at the facility had started an extensive program to restore Pebble Beach Golf Links to its original design. At the

same time, though plagued by drought, Pebble Beach was undertaking a program of additional course changes to meet the stringent requirements of the U.S. Golf Association for the U.S. Open, scheduled there in June 1992.

The primary challenge was eradicating Kikuyugrass and all noxious weeds from the tees, aprons, collars, fairways and rough.

Continued on page 15

Calif. supers in suspense

BY PETER BLAIS

Californians will vote this month on two ballot questions dealing with pesticides that could greatly affect how golf course superintendents do their job.

Proposition 128, commonly called the Big Green initiative, would ban 70 to 80 percent of common pesticides used in agriculture, many of which

Continued on page 12

Flood hits Augusta National and others

BY MARK LESLIE

Augusta National Golf Club lost its entire 11th green complex, Augusta Country Club faced washed-out riprap and one-quarter inch of silt on its 8th green, and other courses in Georgia and South Carolina dealt with their own problems after receiving as much as 15

inches of rain Oct. 10-12.

Tropical storms Klaus, Lily and Marco converged in a deluge creating the equivalent of 50-year floods in some areas.

Many courses simply watched the heavens open for two days and waited as the water soaked into the ground.

Others weren't so lucky.

Augusta National superintendent Marsh Benson had to contend with a complete washout of the 11th green and retaining walls, a washed-out 13th members' tee, a flooded 12th green and damaged 13th green as Rae's Creek

Continued on page 28



The 13th hole at Iowa Shoreline Golf Course shows how well "derelict land" can be turned into green space. Architect Patrick Wyss of Rapid City, S.D., designed the course in Carter Lake, Iowa. For more on new courses, see page 11.

Lobbying

Continued from page 1

president of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America. "It seems the more highly organized the efforts are, the more success people have in some states."

One of those is Arizona, one of two states employing a lobbyist. Asked whether other states might hire lobbyists, Arizona Golf Association Executive Director Ed Gowan said: "It's a matter of enough people being put up against the wall by the regulations, and then being forced to react..."

"The golf industry has to perceive itself as an industry, and golf associations have to become trade organizations representing them. I don't believe the environmental impact studies we're seeing and the questions raised by environmentalists and legislators are isolated to Arizona and Florida."

However, only Michigan and Florida have held state summits on the golf industry, and only Arizona and California have lobbyists at state capitols. Florida now expects to keep watch on legislation as a result of forming the Florida Golf Council in September.

And Robert Thomas, director of communications for the Southern California Golf Association in North Hollywood, said summits and lobbyists aren't for every state.

"We've discussed having a summit. But at this point, if we did one, it would be very focused, such as on water. The feeling is the NGF is covering that area," Thomas said.

Concerning lobbyists, he said: "California is unique. We have year-round golf and it's a major, major industry. It's worth our time and effort to do it."

"We have had a lobbyist for at least seven

years in Sacramento to let us know what's coming up and provide us the ability to reach legislators. Our efforts are coordinated through that person."

Gowan said Florida's summit was "wonderfully timed."

"Everyone came to the realization that their problems are not three or four years off. Their problems have begun," he said. "That's very much what happened in Arizona five or six years ago."

"I think Florida has a great opportunity to protect the industry and help it grow. And they have the support of the governor, too, who understands golf is an important part of the community. It is an important part of tourism. And yet they are all also concerned about the environment, water use, and a lot of concerns."

He said those concerns "will have to be addressed by a body like the Florida Golf Council, or there will be regulations written without their input. They can participate now or they will be regulated without their participation."

Although helping with new development, Arizona's lobbying efforts have been more important in protecting the future of existing courses, Gowan said. Legislators and the staff at the Department of Water Resources and Department of Environmental Quality are educated concerning "the value of golf economically in the state, both in direct revenues and jobs created, as well as an important part of the tourist industry," he said.

Taxes, water and open-space legislation have been the ASA's main focuses.

The lobbyist informs the association about proposed legislation, while the ASA talks to lawmakers "to try to make sure there are no laws written that favor one certain group over another, like agriculture to the detriment of golf," Gowan said. "We act as an information source for courses and developments. We give them their options for redress and how to pursue them... We want to present a fair, responsible position of the golf industry to the legislature."

"We're a moderate viewpoint. We try to present to the legislature and governmental bodies the middle-road view of what the golf industry needs and wants. Other entities want freedom and less restriction and they put their own lobbying to reflect that view."

Gowan suggested golf associations, or groups of courses where an association doesn't exist, should discuss their situations with regulatory and governing bodies, and "play an active role in the use of the natural resources. That is only going to become more critical as our population grows."

Gowan and others weren't aware of any other states with summit or lobbying plans.

"The Florida effort was a case of people who perceived the need, wanted to be two or three steps ahead of regulations and wanted to participate in them," Gowan said. "I'm not sure other states are aware of the situation or looking at it."

National Golf Foundation President Joe Beditz said: "We certainly hope and encourage other states to do the same (as Florida). Often, facilities concerns and problems are better solved from the state level. We can provide the national picture, as we do at our summit, and hope that statewide summits can further help facilities and their concerns."

Faubel said the Michigan summit held in the fall of 1989 has already paid dividends and he expects biennial summits.

"Everyone is better informed," the GCSAA president said. "It got public golf and private golf together, brought out the environmental and slow-play issues, brought together the superintendents, university people, architects — everybody. We focused on where our efforts were going."

"We needed to get a better understanding of best management practices, because we didn't have that as far as maintenance goes. And the Department of Natural Resources did not have an understanding of what was really needed."

The DNR, superintendents and Michigan State experts are working to produce a manual "to show how a sensitive environmental area can be managed properly," Faubel said.

He said everybody is now striving together for some of the same goals:

- Meeting the demands of the golfers for golf courses.
- Implementing environmentally safe maintenance practices.
- Increasing junior golf, a "critically important" job done well by the Professional Golfers Association.

Continued on page 23

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Florida summit

Continued from page 21

by encouraging gray water usage; and

- the Army Corps of Engineers' position that golf courses are non-water dependent activities for dredge and fill permitting.

Other areas of regulatory concern, he added, are proposed regulations that protect or preserve upland species habitats and possible rules on buffer zones for isolated wetlands.

"Those involved in developing a golf course must create a consulting team early and keep them involved throughout the approval process," Matthews said.

"The approval process is difficult and, without a pro-active position, it will become more difficult to build golf courses. A major problem in developing a golf course is that the approval process is multijurisdictional. There are too many cooks in the kitchen."

Fishkind offered some practical advice for sorting through the approval maze.

"Consider interim agricultural use for the property before you develop a golf course," he said.

"Integrate your effluent disposal and storm-water designs from the beginning of the project," Fishkind said.

He suggested that when developers present the plan for a course, they make it the initial plan, not the final one.

"The regulators want to see the steps involved in the evolution of the plan, and if you show them the steps taken to eventually create the final plan, it is much better."

Fishkind said working with local governments to create a golf course as a recreational amenity will help fill the demand for public courses while providing an economic advantage to the developer.

"A golf course can have a wonder-

ful economic impact on the community while providing recreational space for the citizens," he said.

Other summit sessions discussed water resources in the 1990s, the growing importance of recycled water, communications and marketing, public and private joint ventures to develop a municipal golf course, detailed course design, and financing and refinancing of new and existing golf courses.

Raymon Finch, chairman of Emerald Dunes Golf Club and one of the summit's organizers, said the catalyst for the creation of the Florida Golf Council was the realization that "there was no organization that was interested in the business aspects and interests of golf in the state."

The council had put together a successful summit in three months, but its future depends upon strong financial support, development and dissemination of empirical data on the environmental impact of golf courses, interaction with regulators and legislators, and communication with members, the public and the media.

The challenges facing the fledgling organization were spelled out by Ed Gowan, executive director of the Arizona Golf Association. The AGA has tackled many of the issues facing Florida golf, and has successfully provided input to legislators and regulatory agencies in Arizona.

"You need to be active, to be there when the legislature discusses the issues, and provide them with facts,"

Gowan said. "You must also communicate to the members of the council, to the public and to the media the importance of golf, the issues that are affecting the industry."

Despite a \$2,500 donation by the Florida Golf Course Superintendents Association, the need to raise funds to continue the work of the council is paramount to its success.

Nancy Oliver, interim executive director of the council, said a major fund-raising campaign will focus on Nov. 17 — three days before Florida Golf Day and the World Cup event at Grand Cypress in Orlando.

The council is asking each of the state's 1,024 courses to donate \$1 per round played Nov. 17 and challenging the golfers to equal that amount.

The council will then take calls at Grand Cypress on Nov. 20 and tally up the donations. Oliver said she hoped \$25,000 could be raised.

"There is a lot of enthusiasm," Oliver said. "The teamwork has been incredible. We received a powerful message: that we're in this together, for the good of golf."

She said she hopes the council hires a director by the first of the year.

"When we go into political forums we need someone strong," she said. "We can't afford to wait much longer... The legislature convenes in April-May, and they're not going to wait for us. They won't table their decisions until we get our act together."

Kit Bradshaw is a freelance writer based in Jupiter, Fla.



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