

NEWS

Florida firms now designing courses in-house

Sun City Center Corp. and Walden Lake, Inc. of Sun City Center, Fla., are now designing and building golf courses in-house. By maintaining complete control of projects from initial concept to completion, they have realized an estimated 20-percent savings, they say.

"The savings has been in design and construction costs," said Charles Brasington, senior vice president. "A construction management team acts as a general contractor while in-house staff shape the course and install the irrigation system. We hire out the major earthwork and storm-drainage installation."

Sun City Center Corp./Walden Lake, Inc. is building nine holes of golf at Walden Lake in Plant City while 54 additional holes of golf are on the drawing board for Sun City Center.

"The key to this concept is that we have complete control over what happens, when it happens and how it happens," said Brasington. "As a result, we get a golf course that is less expensive to build and to maintain in the future."

Sun City Center Corp. and Walden Lake's team is made up of professionals with backgrounds in land planning, landscape architecture and golf. Through the use of a CAD system, Brasington and with Frank Kurchinski, senior vice president, have been instrumental in building several courses at Sun City Center and Walden Lake.

"At some point, we may consider making the service available to other country club communities," Brasington said.

URI presented royalty money

Lofts Seed Inc. of Bound Brook, N.J., presented a royalty check for more than \$17,000 to the University of Rhode Island.

The money represented profits from domestic and international sales of three of Lofts' proprietary turfgrass varieties - Georgetown Kentucky Bluegrass, Jamestown and Jamestown II Chewings Fescues. These varieties were developed jointly by Lofts and URI.

Lofts pays royalty checks to, and works with several universities in addition to URI. The royalties support research and development of advanced turfgrass varieties, as well as educational and extension programs.

Benz moves HQ

Bradford Benz has relocated his golf course architectural offices.

Benz, who designs courses worldwide, is now headquartered at 475 Alberto Way, Alberto Oaks, Suite 217, Los Gatos, Calif. 95032; 408-354-4543.

Golf, government, environmental forces gather

A future looks brighter for golf courses exists following a meeting between the Golf Course Water Conservation Group in San Diego and developers, governmental agencies and environmental forces, according to a spokesman for the golf association.

"It's a win-win situation for existing and future golf courses in San Diego County," said John Moore of Hydro-Scape Products and vice president of the water conservation group.

"We have been able to bring together builders and developers with the Municipal Water District people to share information about how golf courses are operated and

the methods used for water conservation.

As a result of our joint cooperation, we were able to exclude greens from the Stage 4 water rationing laws that are now on the books."

Water audits have now been done on more than 70 golf courses by Margurite Engles, program director of Large Turf Water Audit Programs in San Diego. She reported; "Generally, we've found them to be over 80 percent efficient in their water usage."

Moore added that golf courses achieve this high rating partly because they are one of the few businesses that employ full-time irrigation managers.

Although many golf courses still use potable water for irrigation, the majority use run-off, effluent, recycled, or well water, he said.

Water audits are available free of charge to all golf courses who want to assess their water usage.

Moore said the water conservation group also arranged for discussions between developers and environmental groups, such as the Sierra Club.

Talks revealed that both parties were trying to accomplish the same thing for the land.

"Golf courses are very pure environments," said Moore. "They provide a wildlife habitat, a sanc-

tuary for migratory waterfowl, clean cool air, abundant plant life and water sources.

"Golf courses use very few pesticides and what is used are fungicides and fertilizers. And, tests have shown that these chemicals do not find their way into the ground water."

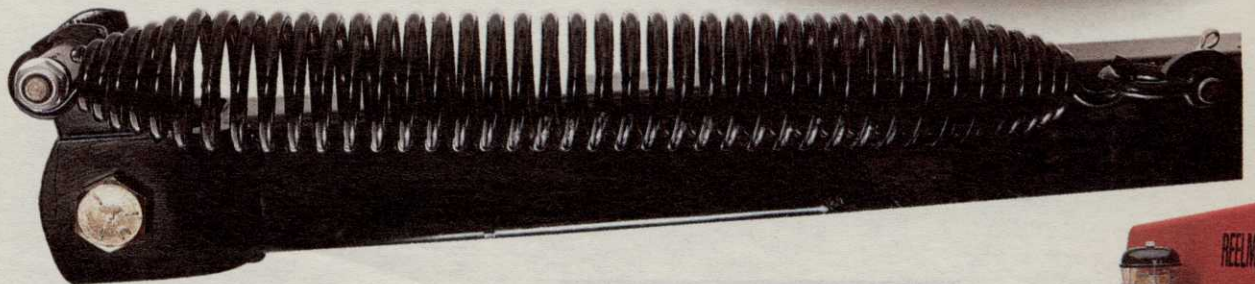
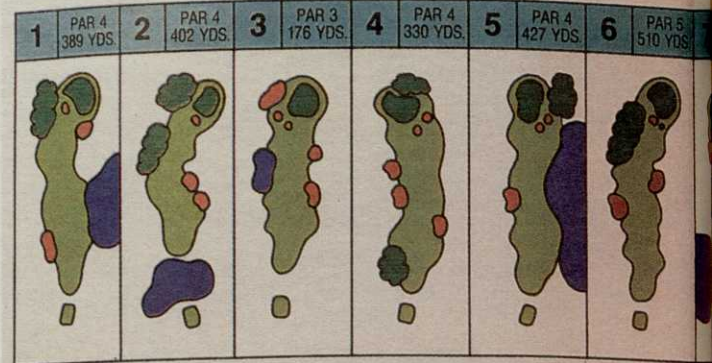
The Golf Course Water Conservation Group predicts that golf course construction will continue in San Diego. "We all want the same things for the environment," said Moore. "We just weren't aware of it."

The group hopes to include the Audubon Society and the Native Plant Society into future meetings.

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