

TPC-Conn. officials face stiff test

Renovations must be complete in time for '91 Greater Hartford Open

Renovations to the Tournament Players Club of Connecticut have begun amid worries the facility will not be up to Professional Golfers' Association Tour standards by next year's Canon Greater Hartford Open.

Eleven new and seven altered holes are being built around 268 luxury homes that will finance the \$5 million renovation and pay off debts.

Pete Dye renovated the Edgewood Golf Club, which became the TPC of Connecticut in 1984. The latest renovations, three years in the planning, were drawn

up by tour employees Brit Stinson, Bobby Weed and TPC general manager Jerry Mobley. Touring pros Howard Twitty, the 1980 GHO champion, and Roger Maltbie also provided assistance. The remodeled facility will be renamed TPC River Highlands.

Work began in March with the clearing of a 52-acre gravel pit near the Connecticut River that will accommodate the 10th through 13th and part of the 14th holes.

The major emphasis will be placed on the greens. The designers plan to give the average player the chance to roll the ball onto most

greens rather than requiring a carry over bunkers. They also hope to avoid the problems on the existing back nine, which reportedly spiked up easily.

Mobley hoped to have several new holes seeded by June. But lack of rain prevented it.

"We would have had to drain the pond (near the 12th, 16th and 17th holes) and we couldn't do that," Mobley told the Hartford Courant.

Added Twitty: "I was hoping the course would be a little further along, but I know everyone is committed to getting the job done. But I'm not going to throw any smoke at

you that we don't have a lot of work to do."

Midwest Links buys Meadowlakes in Texas

Midwest Links, Inc. has bought the golf course and country club operations at Meadowlakes, adjacent to Marble Falls, Texas.

Ralph Riley is general manager and Jim Boockmeier is director of golf. Both are stockholders in the buying corporation, along with Bob Sweeney.

Meadowlakes, a semi-private club with 600 members, has an 18-hole,

6,710-yard golf course, driving range, practice green, tennis courts and a swimming pool.

Remaining lots and land adjoining the country club remain under the ownership of Meadowlakes Corp., according to Flint Sawtelle, president.

Marble Falls is about 45 minutes west of Austin in the Highland Lakes area.

Money-maker pushes county execs to build second course

Wayne County (Michigan) Executive Ed McNamara believes the county can afford to build a second 18-hole golf course now that his administration has shown a second consecutive budget surplus.

McNamara, who was scheduled to meet with New York bond-rating house employees in late July, hopes the surplus will result in an improved bond rating and make the course more affordable.

McNamara estimates a new course would cost between \$3 million and \$9 million and occupy 120 to 150 acres of county-owned land. Two sites are under consideration, one between Middle Belt and Inkster roads, and a second next to Metropolitan Airport.

The county has already designed a course at the Inkster site, although state environmental officials previously opposed the plan because of wetlands.

McNamara has experience in golf management. He is part owner of an Inkster course and oversaw three city-owned facilities while mayor of Livonia.

Moratorium stops course completion

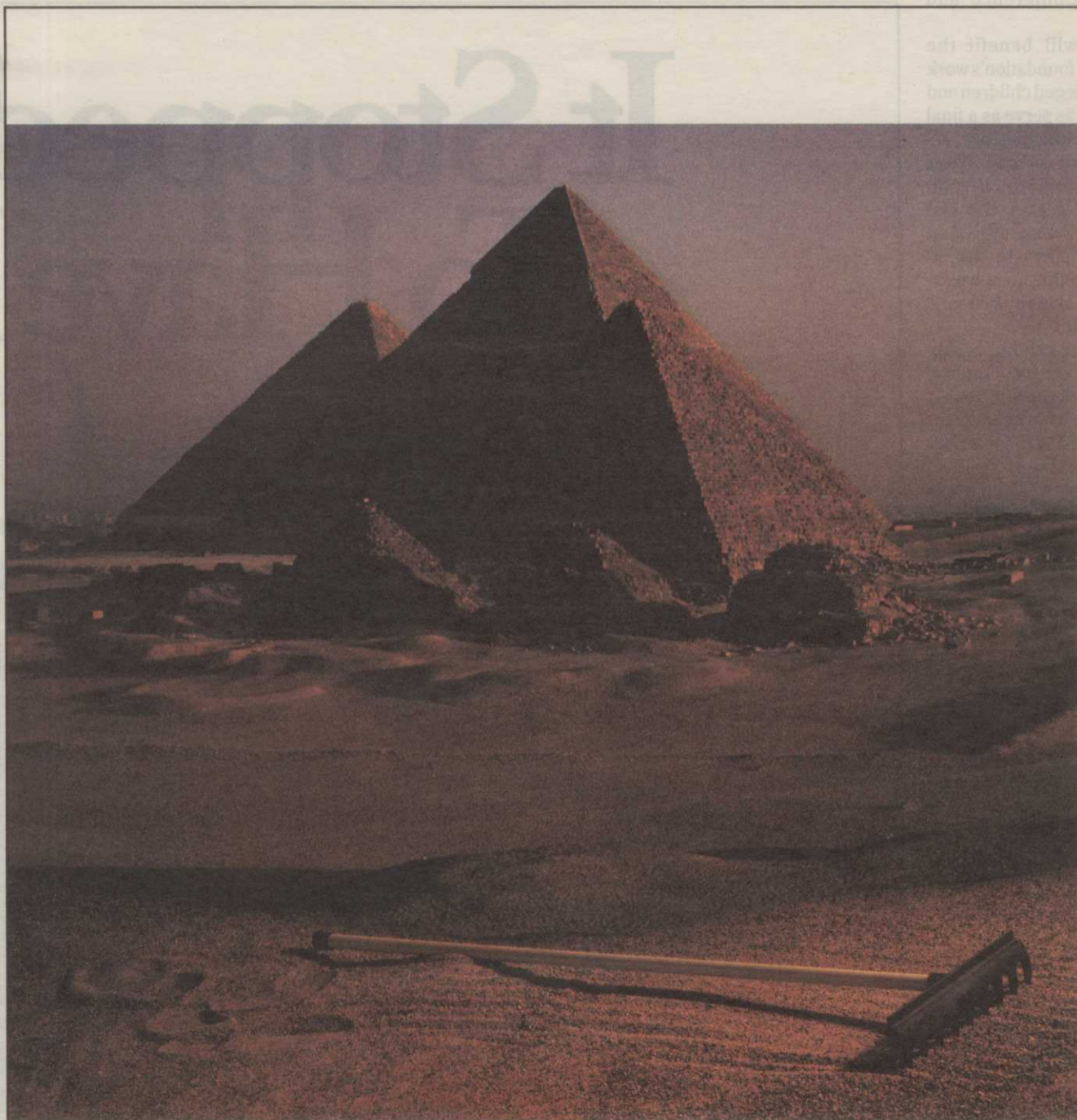
The Columbia (Ill.) City Council has refused to lift a building permit moratorium in a proposed business park to allow golf course developer Jim Watkins to complete construction of his course.

Watkins started construction last year without a city permit. He was told to stop building in December while the city considered new zoning regulations along the (Mississippi) river bottom where the course is located.

Aldermen were sympathetic with Watkins' requests to lift the moratorium and issue him a building permit. But city lawyers advised against it.

The city council must still adopt a new zoning ordinance and hold public hearings.

A recent land-use plan completed by a St. Louis firm considered golf courses a good use for the property. But the course falls in a light-industrial zone that presently requires a variance for a golf course.



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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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