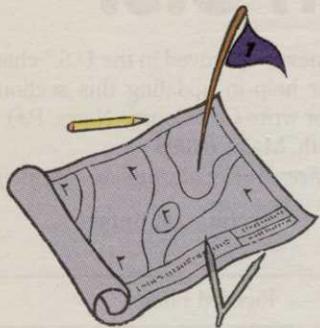


Briefs



JAPAN CITES VON HAGGE COURSE

Von Hagge Design Associates of Spring, Texas, has learned its Horai Country Club in Tochigi Prefecture, Japan, north of Tokyo, will receive the country's Best New Course award for 1990.

Earlier, Robert von Hagge accepted "Le Premier Trophee Du Meilleur Golf De L'Annee" (the first trophy for the best golf course of the year) for France 1990 for the Golf du Seignosse.

Last year, the firm's Golf International "Les Bordes" received the only new five-star rating in 20 years on the European continent.

Recently, associate and lead architect Rick Baril and Mr. and Mrs. von Hagge attended the opening of another von Hagge Design Associate course, Golf Club National.

The Golf National, outside Paris, is the first stadium-style golf course on the European continent and will be the permanent home for the French Open.

PALMER PUTTING IMPRINT ON LAYOUT

COLUMBIA, S.C. — Arnold Palmer is adding his personal touch to Plantation Pointe here, with a 18-hole championship golf course carved from the woods along the shores of Lake Murray.

Palmer and the Palmer Course Design Co. team will master-plan the remainder of the more than 550-acre community surrounding the lakefront course.

INDIAN TRAILS NEARS OPENING

BUCK GROVE, Ill. — The back nine of the new 18-hole Indian Trails Golf Course should be ready for play in March, and the other nine playable by early to mid-summer.

Course superintendent Paul Pierceall said he irrigation system is in place on the back nine and the holes seeded.

The course is on 145 acres, five miles south of Mattoon. Lakes come into play on seven holes.

PGA professional Kelly Spaulding will be course director.

YOUNG, CLASSIC GOLF ON PROJECT

MARIETTA, Ga. — Mike Young Designs, of Watkinville, Ga., and Classic Golf Management of Athens, Ga., will redesign and renovate the former Marietta Country Club.

Construction of the 18-hole layout is under way and the course, purchased by the city, is expected to reopen as the Marietta Municipal Golf Course early in the fall of 1991.

The clubhouse dates back to before the Civil War, when it housed the Georgia Military Academy.

GOLFSCAPES CHOSEN FOR COURSE

LINCOLN, Neb. — Golfscapes of Arlington, Texas, will design the 18-hole Highlands golf course in the northwest section of the city.

The course is a major aspect of the development plan in the Highlands, annexed into the city in December 1989.

Construction is scheduled to start next fall, grass to be seeded in August 1992 and the course open in June 1993.

Pesticides last hurdle for major Sherman Hollow project in Vermont

By Vern Putney

HUNTINGTON, Vt. — The proposed golf course at Sherman Hollow here, which since 1984 has suffered more rejections than 5-6 Atlanta Hawks guard Spike Webb attempting a scoop shot on basket-guarding Patrick Ewing of the New York Knicks, tried for the umpteenth time to live up to the Tenth Commandment of the state Environmental Board.

The board held rigid to its dictum, "Thou shalt not permeate the ground with pesticides not meeting our standards."

Developer Paul Truax and Sherman Hollow

Inc. associates, cleared on nine counts, have been relentless in pursuit of golf course approval, considered a necessary first phase to transform this chosen land into a destination resort, bedecked with a hotel, restaurant, conference center and swank condominiums.

The original project price tag was \$22 million. Truax and partners, while declining to be specific on costs aimed at obtaining approval, won't quibble with a "hundreds of thousands of dollars" guesstimate. The current cross-country ski area can not survive unless allowed to expand, Truax ventured.

Town officials, hard-pressed for the Yankee dollar, can break their expenditure down to pennies.

Residents fighting Sherman Hollow claim the town has spent \$13,422.76 on legal expenses defending and supporting the project since 1985. That kind of coin buys a lot of hay and maple syrup in the belt-tightened Green Mountain State.

Project opponents find it especially galling that their taxes are being used to further the pro-golf course lobby. Despite this, Huntington

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The par 4, 331-yard 4th hole at Cypress Knoll Golf Course in Palm Coast, Fla., is vintage Gary Player design. The tee shot is critical, carrying a wild-growth area. The second shot is a short iron to a green guarded by three pot bunkers.

Int'l golf future bright

By Peter Blais

The opportunities for overseas golf course development are excellent in most of the 126 countries where golf is played, according to a panel assembled at November's Golf Summit 90.

The panel was moderated by Gary Wiren, president of Golf Around the World and master teacher at PGA National Golf Club.

Panel members included John Gordon, managing editor of Score magazine, Canada's largest monthly golf publication; Jillian Yorke, editor of the magazine Japan Golf Report and vice president of International Golf Research Institute; Australian journalist Douglas Mason; Lage Engebo of the Swedish Golf Federation; and John Laupheimer, staff vice president of International Management Group.

CANADA

Canada's population of 25 million, about the same as California, is spread over a land mass larger than the United States, Gordon said. Yet, 95 percent of Canadians live within 100 miles of the U.S. border.

Gordon said there are 5.1 million golfers in Canada that represents 21 percent of its citizens, giving Canada the highest participation rate in the world.

Canada has 2,000 courses with 200 more under construction or planning. The hotbeds are southern British Columbia and Alberta in the west and southern Ontario farther east.

In the past 15 years, the number of golfers and courses has doubled.

Canada has a rich golf history. The Royal Montreal Golf Club founded in 1873 was the

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Blenders, golf courses a perfect mix

By Mark Leslie

A million things can kill a green and there is no excuse for opting for the cheap choice in mixing soil, according to experts in the soil-blending industry.

"The top architects and the aggressive leaders in the industry are specing the blending into contracts," said Troy McNeill of Transamerican Soil Blenders in Lubbock, Texas. "The greens are the heartbeat of the golf course. If you don't have good greens, people won't play your course."

"A first-class green only costs two to three percent more than a third-class green. The

money saved won't be saved a year later when you have to rebuild a green," said Tom Briddle of Tectonic, Inc. in Longmont, Colo.

Briddle, who said he recently blended the soil for a 22-green facility for \$18,000, could only question why a developer would choose to mix the soil with a front-end loader or rototiller.

Golf course architect and builder Jim Fazio of Juno Beach, Fla., agreed. Putting the cost of blending for 19 holes at \$30,000, he said: "On a \$3-million golf course that's only one-tenth of one percent. The average cost of buying the materials and building 19 greens is \$275,000 to \$300,000, and no one's going to

take a chance with that kind of money of not having it right."

Though there are only a handful of blenders in North America, the field is expected to grow, since, as Briddle said: "Anything that's successful always attracts more players."

Christine Faulks, president of Greensmix of Waupaca, Wis., explained the rising importance of blending: "In the past five years or so the whole industry has become more sophisticated. And, in turn, a lot of contractors have been burned—gotten into lawsuits, and had jobs shut down—because their mix was not accurate."

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Blenders making crucial difference in greens

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"Contractors are more quality-conscious than they were before... Plus, players are more demanding, there's a lot more traffic, and members want shorter grass and firmer greens" — so more perfect conditions are required.

"Everybody's looking for perfection," Fazio said. "If an owner doesn't get perfection, then he blames the contractor, who blames the architect for recommending the mix. It's a matter of who does not want to get sued..."

Faulks said that while most blending is done for the root-zone on greens, there have been more calls to mix for tees the last couple of years. "The sports turf field is also taking a harder look at blending now," she said.

When a golf course is under construction the architect has a soil laboratory test the sand and other material to be used in the root-zone mixture. The lab recommends the mix — say, eight parts sand to two parts sphagnum/peat moss.

Fazio recalls when he worked with his uncle George and the firm bought the first four Royer shredders built by The Toro Co. in the early 1960s, then



A blender sends a predetermined mix into a stockpile

Photo courtesy of Greensmix

used them to mix soil.

"Using a front-end loader, we would pre-mix the soil — sand, peat moss and topsoil. We pre-mixed it in a front-end loader to the lab's specs, and would actually pick the soil up and roll it around three or four times before we would put it in the shredder. Then it would come out as uniform as you could ever get it —

in those days."

"It is humanly impossible to blend every day in exactly the same way with a front-end loader," Faulks said, adding, "When the contractor is done, you've got 18 greens that could be totally different in physical characteristics — standing water in one, percing like a sieve in another. So the owner spends more for

maintenance than if he had had it done properly in the first place.

"With our equipment, we guarantee the accuracy of a blend at plus or minus 1 percent. That takes the liability right off the contractor and puts it with the professional that's in the business."

"We built some great golf courses (Jupiter Hills and Hawk's Nest)

where we used pure sugar sand — no drain tile, no stone — because the nature of the sand didn't need it," Fazio said. "On some of those greens we never put peat moss on... The USGA (U.S. Golf Association) has built greens out of pure sand. We've built greens just using sand with peat on top.

"But if they're going to mix sand and peat 12 inches all the way through the mix, then I would say it is absolutely necessary to use a blender... to get a uniform grade."

Fazio said a builder must recommend USGA specifications to a client as the client's first choice. In his case, 70 to 75 percent of the owners decide to use a blender.

The blending companies send their crews, with equipment and mobile homes sometimes, across the country, some following golf course builders from job to job.

In fact, McNeill's equipment even includes percolation testing gear so that his crews can test the mix every 15 minutes to an accuracy "within one to four percent of the labs."

An 18-hole course normally uses 7,000 to 10,000 tons of materials, which takes four to five days to blend, Faulks said.

Dakota Peat defies the odds, scientists testify

By Mark Leslie

While soil blenders are normally crucial to successful golf course greens construction, spokesmen for university athletic departments, football teams and racetracks agree at least one peat on the market needs no blender.

They say Dakota Peat is so fine and mixes so well with sand that it can be blended by front-end loader with the same accuracy as a mechanical blender.

Mike Powell, construction administrator for the University of Florida at Gainesville, hired a blender to mix Dakota Peat for the new Ben Hill Griffin Stadium. When the university builds its 2-1/2 new practice fields, Powell will most likely bucket-mix Dakota and sand, he said.

"K.W. Brown (laboratory) and Powell (Gaines at Tifton Laboratories) were enthusiastic in recommending Dakota Peat as a superior product. My paid agronomist and two volunteer agronomists agreed it was the one to use," Powell said.

Since the Griffin Stadium field was built, the mix has lived up to expectations.

Louisiana State University and Mississippi State University representatives "were amazed at the condition of the field" when they visited it after three successive home games, Powell said. "It was worn but not destroyed."

Ross Kurcab, turf manager at the Denver Broncos training facility which used Dakota Peat for its two full-size and one half-size workout

field, said a few months after construction: "We have 10 inches of roots already, which is amazing. And it has held water way better than I thought it would. It mixed beautifully. It rates out at 97 percent organic.

"We did exhaustive research. Everyone I talked to that used reed-

sedge just love it."

At Santa Anita racetrack in Los Angeles, rebuilt with Dakota Peat, five speed records were broken in the first 30 days.

Soil scientist Chuck Dixon, formerly with K.W. Brown and now at International Sports Turf Research Center, Inc. in Olathe, Kansas, said:

"Dakota Peat is really different from other reed-sedge peats. A lot are really muck... I have not seen anything that compares with Dakota Peat.

"The only thing close to Dakota's carbon-to-nitrogen ratio is city sludge, but that is loaded with heavy metals or ash. Every bag of Dakota

I've gotten has been clean as a whistle. I haven't seen any that blend as well."

Dixon said a "hidden difference" with Dakota is the resulting depth of root systems and the economy of the greens built with it. He said: "Santa Anita had nine-inch root

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