

East St. Louis resort complex, with 3 courses, has huge price tag

EAST ST. LOUIS, Mo. — A resort complex that would feature three golf courses is being planned for the East St. Louis riverfront.

The cost of building the three, 18-hole golf courses is estimated at \$20 million, with construction cost of the entire resort package expected to rise to several hundred million dollars.

The group of developers who have proposed the project reportedly are considering one 18-hole golf course designed by Jack Nicklaus, one designed by Hale Irwin or Arnold Palmer, and one designed by a black professional golfer.

The three courses would be built on a 600-acre site.

The project might also include apartments, condominiums, homes for senior citizens and a business conference center on 700 adjacent acres. A marina, restaurants and a ferry also may be built.

The developers, who include United Food and Packaging Corp. President Don Wolfsberger and St. Louis developer David A. Wilhelm, want to locate the 1,500-acre complex across from the city's Gateway Arch.

While state officials hope to convince the federal government to extend the national park on the grounds of the Gateway Arch across to the East St. Louis riverfront, the developers say they will cooperate with the state plans.

"You can wind a golf course around anything," Wolfsberger said. "Whatever they do is fine with us."

Envirotron lab fund drive approaches goal

GAINESVILLE, Fla. —The Florida Turfgrass Association is moving closer to its goal of a fall ground-breaking on a state-of-the-art turfgrass research facility.

FTA Executive Director Bob Yount said the proposed 3,100-square-foot Envirotron Research Laboratory will be built on one of three sites being considered at the University of Florida in Gainesville.

Yount said \$700,000 has been raised to build the facility, thanks to donations from private companies and approval of \$350,000 of matching funds by the Florida state Legislature. But, he said, more is needed.

"\$700,000 just buys the bricks and mortar," Yount said. The FTA must raise at least \$100,000 to pay for equipment and furnishings. And while \$75,000 has been raised to fund a research fellowship, Yount said his group needs to add \$25,000 to that number to be eligible for a matching grant program.

Panel says design will return to classic roots

By Bob Spiwak

TUCSON, Ariz. — Architects will combine the best of old and new ideas and design "some of the best courses ever built," Gary Panks told golf writers from the United States and British Isles here in mid-May.

Panks, a Tucson-based architect, was part of a three-member round table that told participants in the World Writers' Cup that changes in design and philosophy are imminent.

The thrust, if not consensus, of the dialogue was that there is a

need to stop building "trick" courses and return to basics, as manifested by such architects of the past as Donald Ross, A.W. Tillinghast and Alister Mackenzie.

Panelists Barry Palm of the Arizona Golf Association and the founder of the Donald Ross Society advocated a return to the classic type of design.

Panks cited Pete Dye as a "creative genius," and said he learned a lot from Dye's designs. But, with many courses so expensive to build and maintain, golfers could be priced right out of the market,

Panks said.

"In the next decade you'll see some of the best courses ever built, taking the best of the old and the new (designs)," he said.

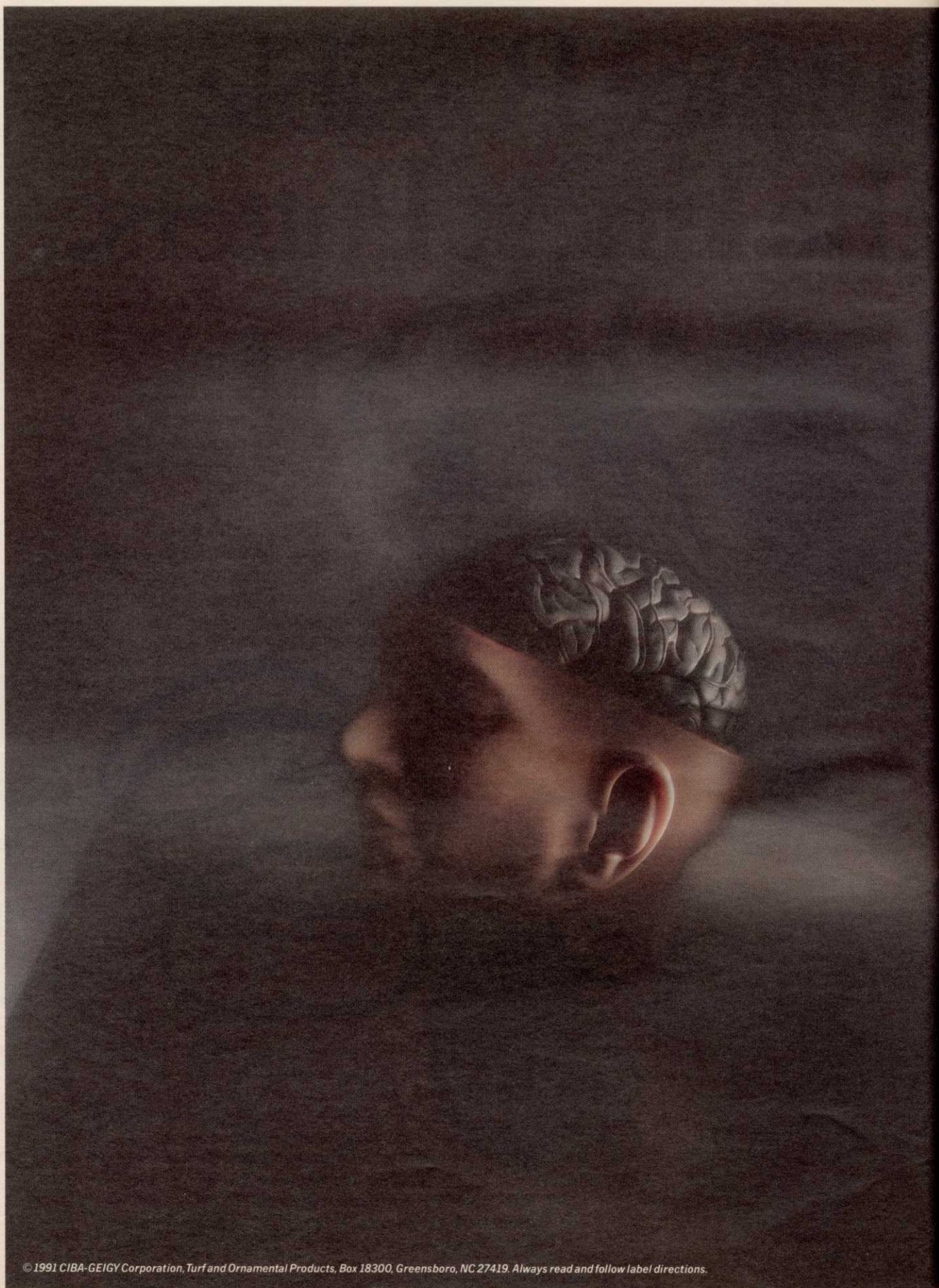
Referring to courses that leave few, if any options for the golfer, architect Ken Kavanaugh said: "Standing on a tee and being told what to do is like waking up and having to go to work."

Palm, whose 2-year-old Ross Society has 350 members, said he began the organization because "I felt the preservation of the original Ross courses was important."

Many of the 20 writers — whose handicaps ranged from five to 36 — were critical of the nearby Jack Nicklaus-designed course at La Paloma, where the teams stayed. Most felt playing the Nicklaus venue was more of a difficult chore than an enjoyable experience.

Moderated by Arizona Golf Association Executive Director Ed Gowan, the round table stretched far beyond the scheduled 1 1/2-hour.

Organizer Parker Smith said it would be included in future Writers' Cup agendas.



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