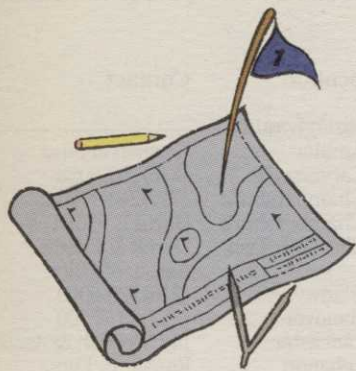


Briefs



MATTHEWS COURSE TO OPEN IN AUGUST

Officials expect an August opening for the front nine at Railside, an 18-hole championship course under construction south of Grand Rapids, Mich.

Jerry Matthews of Matthews and Associates in Lansing, Mich., is designing the course. It will be a semi-private facility with 110 home sites.

The course will have Penncross bentgrass greens, tees and fairways, continuous cart paths and seven acres of native wildflowers, according to superintendent William Fountain, who worked with Matthews on the award-winning Timber Ridge Golf Course in East Lansing.

Charles Knowles, who has been head professional at Fiddlesticks, The Vines and The Forest in Ft. Myers, Fla., will be director of golf at Railside.

PLAYER SIGNS ON FOR ST. LOUIS COURSE

ST. LOUIS — Sunset Hills city officials have endorsed a golf course and resort community that will feature a Gary Player signature layout.

Tapawingo (Indian meaning "Place of Joy") will be a 27-hole course surrounded by 260 home sites and a 200-unit conference center on 400 acres, according to Stephen G. Symsack, executive vice president of the developer, Symcor Companies.

Gary Player Design Co. President Jim Applegate said preliminary environmental research studies are being done to help maintain "the natural characteristics and historical legacy of the development."

Golf pro Mike Murphy said "a variety of terrain" on the site will offer Player "an enormous advantage for creativity and quality."

FOUR HOURS, 174 MEMBERSHIPS

PORTLAND, Ore. — Membership sales for The Oregon Golf Club hit 174 within the first four hours, said Jim Hardy of Golf Services Group, whose Golf Group, Inc. is developing and will operate the private club. Membership will be limited to 400.

The 7,159-yard par 72 18-hole course is being built on 445 acres at a cost of \$12 million.

Tour pro Peter Jacobsen and Ken Kavanaugh of Tucson, Ariz., are co-architects. A July 4, 1992, opening is planned.

THAILAND DEVELOPER INKS GARL

RAYONG, Thailand, — American golf course designer Ron Garl has been retained by Dr. Nob Stayasai to design two 18-hole golf courses here.

The courses will be part of the Dokkrai Golf & Sports Club, an 800-acre project that will include a 200-room hotel and 600 homesites and villas.

The development is 60 miles southeast of Bangkok near the resort area of Pattaya.

Thailand has more than 60 golf courses, with another 40 under construction.

Garl is headquartered in Lakeland, Fla.

'X-ray' machine breaks into golf

By Mark Leslie

A new technology that surveys underground will help prevent some of the existing vague specifications and faulty judgment found in golf course construction, claims Charles Gockel of Agri-Systems of Texas, Inc.

Agri-Systems, a soil-testing laboratory in Tomball, Texas, and Environmetrics of Houston have introduced "a non-destructive, subsurface survey of golf greens and other sports turf structures," Gockel said.

The companies say the survey is very exact and provides a complete profile of each of the layers of materials used during construction — from the seedbed mix to the choker layer and gravel, as well as the loca-

tion and slope of the drainage tile system.

"The survey is done with a radar signal similar to the oil-field seismic process," Gockel said. "Radar is a shallow investigative tool. It is as precise as one-fourth inch, maybe one-eighth inch."

The technology is used in other fields. Archaeologists use it where they're looking for anything unnatural to an area. Foresters have used it to track the growth of a tree's root system.

Gockel believes faulty construction — most of which is accidental — is a major cause of greens failures.

Saying a lot of the laboratory's work is forensic, Gockel added: "So many times courses were constructed and the folks didn't

get what they thought they were paying for... Sometimes they put on their three-piece suits and find someone to sue. Sometimes they bite the bullet, feeling they thought what they were doing during construction was right at the time."

Gockel said the first job for this subsurface survey is at a prestigious Mid-America golf club that just two to three years ago reconstructed some of its greens. "They have been non-performers since Day One," he said. "It was one of those 'better ideas.' A lot of these cases (of failure) have been done in-house. In this case the superintendent was told to keep his nose out of it... He got fed up and left."

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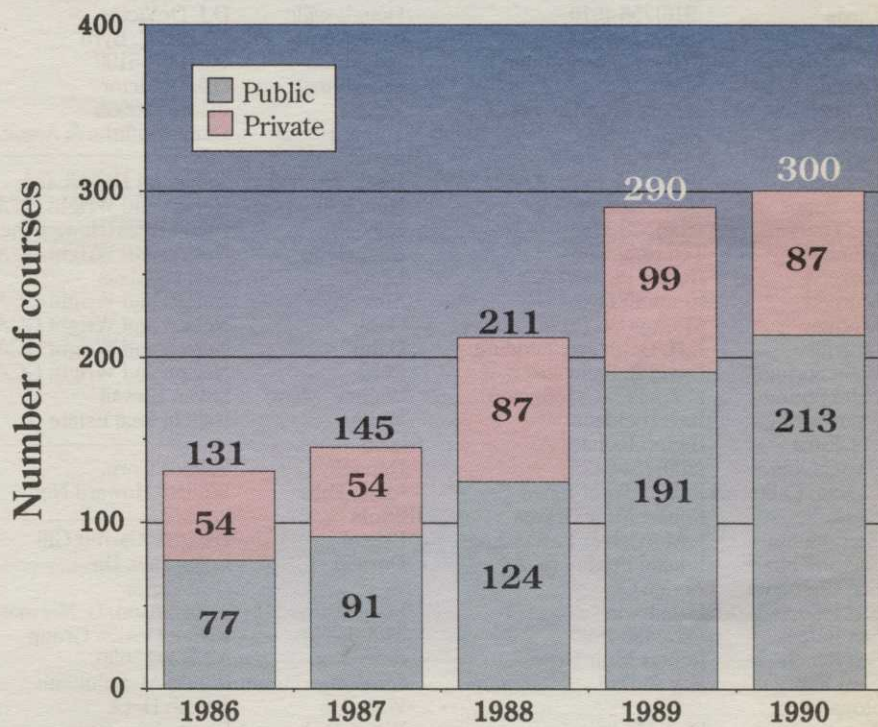
Figures are in: Construction rose again

New course construction continued to gain momentum in 1990, according to National Golf Foundation figures illustrated here.

The graph, at right, shows the yearly rise in public, private and total number of courses built annually since 1986.

The chart below compares the number of daily-fee, municipal, private and undetermined courses either opened, under construction or in planning through the first 11 months of 1990, along with the same numbers for all of 1989.

New course construction 1986-90



Source: NGF

	Open		Under Construction		In Planning		Totals	
	1990 YTD	1989 Year-end	1990 YTD	1989 Year-end	1990 YTD	1989 Year-end	1990 YTD	1989 Year-end
Daily Fee	167	156	296	218	352	251	815	625
Municipal	36	35	72	63	125	85	233	183
Private	78	99	186	177	284	245	548	521
Undetermined	—	—	4	5	12	22	16	27
Totals	281	290	558	463	773	603	1,612	1,356

* All 1990 YTD figures as of Nov. 30, 1990

Source: National Golf Foundation

Don January returns to design side of business, aims for playability

DALLAS — Longtime PGA Tour professional Don January has returned to the golf course design business in which he was once involved.

January, who designed 15 courses when he retired from the Tour in the mid-1970s, has joined son Tim and Craig Curry in January Group, Inc. here.

Tim January is joining him after 10 years working with Myers Development as well as Wadsworth Golf Construction Co. Curry has been with Jack Nicklaus and Associates and the Nelson Corp. in the golf course development and construction business.

Don will take time from his PGA Senior

Tour schedule to devote to this venture.

January intends to use "the old style or classic designs that allow the golfer to put the ball on the ground and still gain access to the target."

"This gives the player more options of shot selection and, I believe, leads to better shot-making, better players and ... a lot more fun. These are some of the reasons our emphasis will be on classic, user friendly, older style golf courses. We are a new venture selling old ideas."

January has become one of the leading professionals on the Senior Tour, winning almost 30 tournaments.

Indian water rights play role in resort

By Bob Spiwak

Concern over water shortages by the Yakima Indian Nation and Colville Confederated tribes could affect the proposed \$400-million four-season Early Winters ski resort and golf course at Mazama, in north-central Washington state.

A state-sanctioned water committee recommended a moratorium on building and well drilling in much of the Methow (METHOW) Valley. "Such a moratorium could halt

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