

GOLF COURSE NEWS

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USGA adds funding

Researchers rejoiced when informed that the USGA had doled out \$4.5 million 4

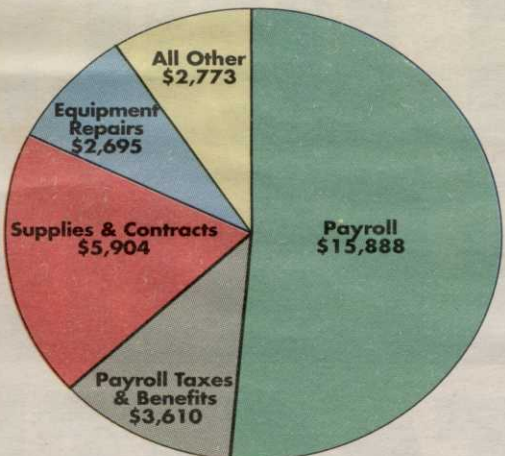
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Maintenance breakdown per hole



Based on a 1991 survey of private country clubs in the United States. The average maintenance cost per hole is \$30,870. Source: Pannell Kerr Forster

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Michigan Homestead gets go-ahead

By Peter Blais

GLEN ARBOR, Mich. — The four-year battle apparently isn't over for the Homestead Resort's golf course project.

The national office of the Environmental Protection Agency May 8 approved the controversial northern Michigan course, including the filling in of 3 1/2 acres of wetlands.

EPA Director William Reilly's decision upheld the Michigan Natural Resources Commission's 1990 approval

Despite EPA approval, controversial project not out of the woods yet

and the wishes of Republican Gov. John Engler. But it conflicted with the recommendations of the regional EPA office and four other government agencies.

Three days later, project opponents — including Friends of the Crystal River, Sierra Club, Michigan United Conservation Clubs, National Wildlife Federation

and Trout Unlimited — filed a lawsuit in U.S. District Court seeking to overturn the EPA ruling. A decision whether to issue a permit to the resort course near Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore isn't due until June 8.

"It's still a hot topic around here," said John Tune, editor of the Record Eagle in nearby Traverse City.

Homestead developer Bob Kuras is unsure when he will start construction,

Continued on page 43

Erosion control blankets fast proving their worth

By Mark Leslie

Erosion control has become a byword in the construction industry, transforming erosion control blankets from a secondary to a major tool of the trade.

"We used to only use them (blankets) from an engineering standpoint when you really had a problem," said Ron Boyd, president of Williamsburg Environmental Group, Inc. in Williamsburg, Va. "Now you've got more regulations — such as laws on cutting, d tilling on steep slopes — so that their use is sometimes mandatory."

Ken Starrett, vice president of marketing for American Excelsior Co. of Arlington,

"People see the quick growth and ask what kind of fertilizer we use. We don't use any."

— Ken Starrett

Texas, said over the last few years strong laws regulated by the Soil Conservation Service, Corps of Farming Engineers and highway departments have been adopted by communities.

"The number increases

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Equal access: A tall order

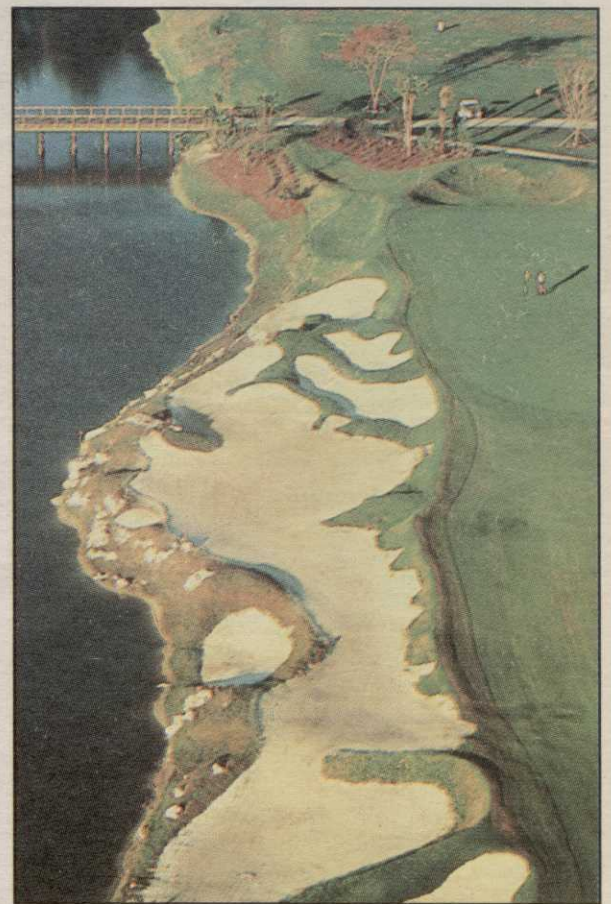
By Hal Phillips

Equal access and fair hiring practices for the disabled used to be goals; now they're the law of the land.

With regard to accessibility for handicapped citizens, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) took effect in February, 1992. Come July 26 of this year, golf clubs with more than 24 employees will be subject to the ADA's employment provisions.

While tax-paying clubs with 15 to 24 employees needn't comply for another two years, golfing establishments nationwide — tax-paying or not, public or private — should study the ADA provisions. The law will

Continued on page 33



Emerald Dunes: Voted best new public course.

The envelopes please...

Architects, builders vote on the nation's top new courses

By Mark Leslie

Diamonds. Emeralds. Golf course architect Tom Fazio must be into gems. Two of his Florida jewels — Black Diamond in Lecanto and Emerald Dunes in West Palm Beach — have been selected by course architects and builders as the best private and public golf courses, respectively, to open in the last five years.

Fazio, who designed three of the top six private courses and two of the best seven public layouts, attributed the achievement to excellent sites and developers.

"It's the people involved that make a project happen," he said. "I've got a story for every course I've done. There's a

Continued on page 6

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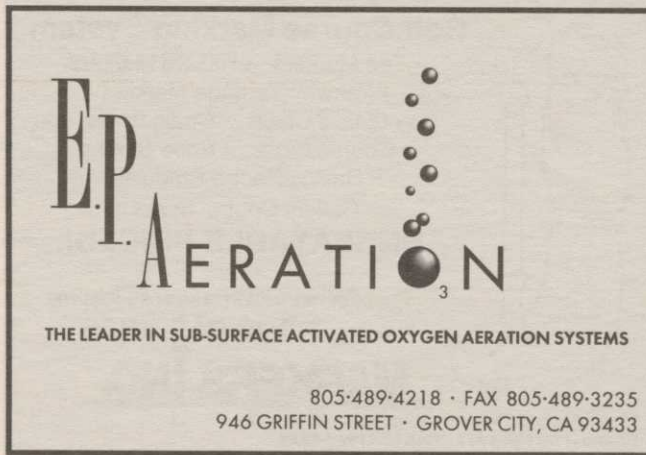
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NEWS

Homestead approval

Continued from page 1

according to course architect Bob Walker. But Kuras and Walker are confident the course will eventually be built.

"This project has met every standard of law. It has earned the support of the community. And, we look forward to proceeding," Kuras said.

Michigan is the only state that issues federal wetlands permits because its laws are stricter than federal regulations. Other states



Bob Walker

rely on the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Opponents argue the EPA caved in to lobbying by Gov. Engler, who headed President Bush's 1988 Michigan campaign. They also believe the federal agency acted illegally in

approving the project and that authority to issue the permit now rests with the Army Corps.

The controversy has left some wondering whether Michigan can responsibly continue to administer those laws.

"Now there will be speculation whether developers can just run wild," said Jack Berry, golf writer with The Detroit News. "None of the other courses in Michigan have riled things up to this extent."

But the national EPA office was satisfied.

"The record establishes that the state has fully considered the relevant information and has determined that this project will not degrade water quality or aquatic resources," EPA Assistant Administrator Lajuanna Wilshire said.

A top architect said state and federal regulators have turned a colder shoulder toward Michigan golf development since the Homestead debate began.

"Restrictions have been getting tighter because they are more guarded than they used to be," said Lansing-based architect Jerry Matthews, vice president of the American Society of Golf Course Architects. "They fear the Homestead project might take wetlands regulation out of the state's hands...The DNR is talking about tightening up on golf courses."

"Incidents like this are likely to happen again. It has made developers more aware of the time and effort they are likely to put in on a project," added Jeff Rivard, executive director of the Golf Association of Michigan, representing 200 courses and 50,000 members.

Walker conceded some antagonism may remain and could make it tougher for a few architects and developers to get projects approved.

"But it will help many other people who have found it difficult to get good projects going," he said. "It will make it easier because this project was approved from a scientific standpoint. It shows there is no environmental damage from golf courses."

Walkersaid slight modifications moving holes away from more sensitive areas of the Crystal River were made during the design phase. Just 3 1/2 of the 87 acres of wetland will require filling, he said. Opponents claim the project will affect closer to two dozen wetland acres.

"It was no longer an environmental issue. It was a political issue. The 10,000 cubic yards it will take to fill the wetlands is a very minute amount," Walker said.

The need for teamwork among developer, architect and regulatory agencies was the main lesson Walker said he took away from the Homestead experience.

"In retrospect, there isn't a single thing we could have done differently," Walker said. "Bob (Kuras) has been through the ringer with this. But he never gave up. Someone has to pave the way and he did it."

Matthews agreed.

"If it hadn't been Bob Kuras, it would have been someone else," he said.