

NEWS IN BRIEF

MEMPHIS, Tenn. — Park Commission members have said they would like an 18-hole golf course and a Martin Luther King Jr. memorial added to a master plan for Martin Luther King Jr./Riverside Park. Commission Chairman John Malmo said suggested changes in the park's \$6 million master plan — i.e., the golf course — would give it a money-maker. The park's current nine-hole course breaks even.

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VERNON, N.J. — A state decision to override wetlands laws has cleared the way for a developer to build an 18-hole golf course here. Glen Theobald, vice president of Sussex Valley Development Co., hopes construction will begin early this summer on Wolf Paw Golf Club, to be routed on 124 acres. He said the project could not have been built without the exemption granted by the state Department of Environmental Protection. The project still needs a stream encroachment permit and waiver allowing the fill of 10 acres of wetlands.

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BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — The Golf Channel has acquired broadcast rights to a combination of PGA Tour and Nike Tour events for 1994. Though the 24-hour, all golf cable channel has not yet begun broadcasting, it has agreed to televise six PGA Tour events — the Deposit Guaranty Classic, B.C. Open, New England Classic, Buick Southern Open, Walt Disney World/Oldsmobile Classic and H.E.B. Texas Open — and the entire Nike schedule. The Golf Channel will be distributed nationwide via the Hughes Galaxy IR satellite.

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ALBANY, Ore. — The City Council here has authorized spending up to \$8,000 to determine if the city could profit by the building of an 18-hole golf course. Bill Robinson, a golf course owner and designer, said a site near wetlands in south Albany is a good place for a new golf course.

**BREAKTHROUGH TURF: BRED FOR SEASIDE USE**

The "Cemetery Hole" at the Arthur Hills-designed Oakridge Course at The Landings resort in Savannah, Ga. Because of its proximity to the Intracoastal Waterway, Oakridge may someday benefit from research being conducted on seashore paspalum, a grass strain which is salt-resistant, drought-resistant, fine-textured and requires relatively little pesticide application. It even stands up well to effluent laden with nickel and cadmium. For more on this breakthrough turf, see page 16.

Schenley Park project nixed in Pittsburgh

PITTSBURGH — The City Council here has shot down a private developer's bid to take over operation of the Schenley Park Golf Course.

The Council voted 4-1 against developer Carol Rosenbloom's plan to spend \$3.2 million to renovate the run-down, 18-hole course and turn it into a redesigned nine-hole course with higher fees and a new driving range. The course runs an annual deficit of \$200,000 to \$250,000, according to Reginald Young, director of the city Parks Department.

Rosenbloom's plan prompted vociferous opposition from Squirrel Hill neighbors who feared increased traffic and congestion. Specifically, they didn't like plans to create a 100-car parking lot within the park and light the proposed range at night.

Redesign may anchor elaborate development

RICHLAND, Wash. — The Planning Commission has recommended the City Council approve a 300-acre commercial and golf course development here.

In addition to building a town center, parks and condominiums, the proposal calls for a \$2 million redesign of the Sham-Na-Pum Golf Course. Private money or city money (raised through revenue bonds repaid by increased green fees) would pay for the redesign.

Dan Lofgren, head of Prowswood Management Inc., a Salt Lake City-based firm the city has contracted to develop the property,

Supers in High Sierras getting out from under

By DOUG SAUNDERS

The blizzard of '93 blanketed the Eastern seaboard in March, impeding the arrival of spring. Even venerable Augusta National Golf Club, which received four inches of snow, showed the lingering effects of winter during the Masters as the dogwood and azaleas were late in blooming.

In the High Sierras of California it is a far different, far more serious story. Course superintendents are creating spring on their own through the use of snow grooming machines, snowblowers, tarps, and hand labor after the heaviest winter in seven years brought more than 55 feet of snow and left a pack that varies from five to 12 feet. Innovative methods to deal with fusarium and typhula mycelium have been created by these resourceful turf technicians.

The great challenge from deep snowpacks is the thick white blanket can create a perfect environment in which fungi thrive. As the pack builds up, an air layer 1-foot to 2-feet thick forms between the ground and the bottom of the pack. In spring, as temperatures warm, rains and snow melt will percolate through the pack providing moisture to the dark air pocket. The snow provides the perfect temperature, 34 to 38 degrees F. It is fusarium heaven.

Superintendents do systematic preparations to their courses in fall to prepare the turf for the long winter rest. But variable weather and temperatures mean that no two winters are alike. Flexibility and diligent monitoring of the turf are primary to bringing the courses back in the spring.

Joel Blaker at Tahoe Donner Golf Course has been at this mountain course for two years. He came to the Sierra from Peach Tree in the warm Sacramento Valley and has had a baptism by fire of what snow

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molds can do.

"I have been trying different fungicide applications to find the best method, but each year presents a new challenge," Blaker said. "Last winter we had warm weather in January and February, then a lot of snow in March. That first year I put down a double rate application of FF2 and had serious effects from microdochium nivale [pink snow mold]. This winter I used three different applications. I put down a single application the first week of October, sprayed Rubigan at a rate of 8 ounces per 1000, and then laid down another ap of FF2 at the end of the month. I wanted to give time for the plant to absorb the fungicide, as I thought that last year it dissipated before it was absorbed."

This winter the snows began in earnest in early November. The FF2 only protects for 120 days and the courses had been

under snow for 150. Serious pink snow mold appeared again.

The most important job for the mountain superintendents is to create another month of growing time. The only solution to this problem may be snow removal.

Beginning in mid-March, Carl Rygg, of Resort at Squaw Creek, began digging out his course with two piston bullys, four snowblowers, and 13 men. For Rygg it is very important to get dug out earlier because his course is not allowed to use any fungicide due to county restrictions.

"The first greens exposed showed little snow mold but as I dug out more, just two weeks later, it was a different story," Rygg said. "I was surprised at how quickly the optimum conditions for microdochium are created. It means that getting the greens exposed earlier is important so that they can begin to grow and can be worked on."

Rygg's plan: Dig out all the greens, then cover them with Tytar blankets to increase soil temperature. Tarps are removed in the day and covered at night, except during rains.

Don Colton at Ponderosa Golf Course, a small 9-hole facility, covers his putting surfaces in November and leaves the tarps down all winter. With only a two-man crew, his options are limited.

"I don't get the deep pack that many courses around here get, which is an advantage," Colton said. "The covers help to hold the fungicide on the green as my greens don't drain well. But putting covers down for the entire winter in a deep snowpack could cause problems. If ice forms under the pack and freezes, the tarps to the green could desiccate your turf. It is important to be able to get to the tarps easily to deal with the weather changes."

As far as fairways are concerned, Rygg and Blaker have the most intensive need to clear snow because of the deep pack. Blaker purchased \$1,300 of barks chips which absorb the sun's heat and accelerates the melting. Rygg is plowing out fairways and then spreading the snow throughout the wetland that surround his meadow course.

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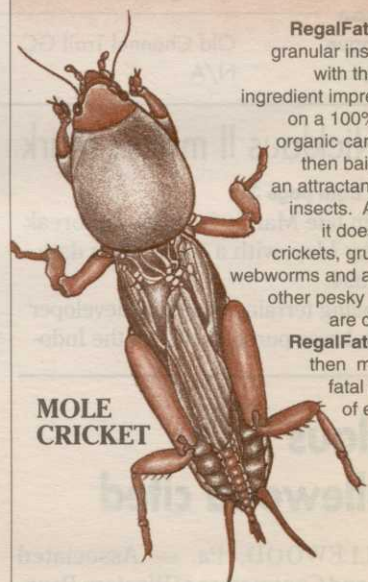
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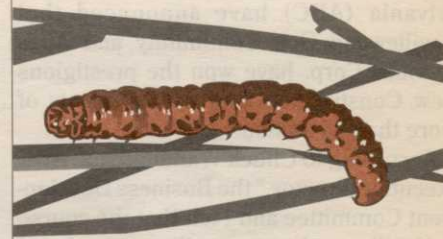
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