

NEWS IN BRIEF

FAIRBANKS, Alaska — The 18-hole North Star Golf Course, the northernmost golf course in the U.S., held its opening ceremonies recently. Designed by Jack Stallings, the course is ready for play. Better hurry, though. The season in Fairbanks is nearly over.

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DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. — Kathy Milthorpe, the Ladies Professional Golf Association's director of finance and administration, told the City of Daytona Beach the construction of a championship public golf course adjacent to the proposed LPGA headquarters is running smoothly. She said the course will be open for play next summer.

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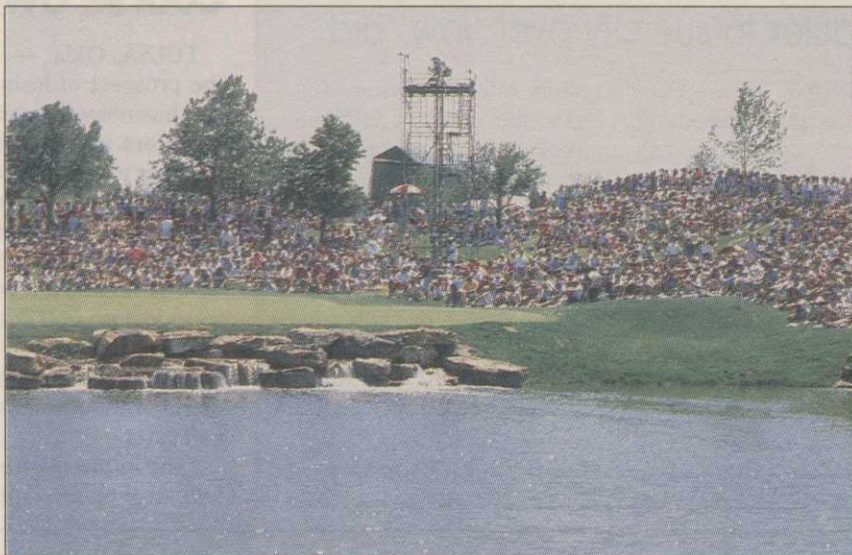
HANOVER, Pa. — The Berwick Township has reached agreement with Berwick Enterprises to begin construction on a new 18-hole golf course. The new course will be located between Route 30 and property abutting Race-track Road. Construction will begin this fall, and the course is expected to be open for play by spring 1994.

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ACKWORTH, Ga. — Brookstone Golf & Country Club has been acquired by American Golf Corp., which plans a renovation of the clubhouse, pro shop and cart paths. Affectionately referred to as "The Stone," this private course in suburban Atlanta was designed by Larry Nelson. The purchase brings the number of AGC's private, resort and public holdings to 152.

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ROCKY RIVER, Ohio — LESCO, Inc. has purchased Atwater Strong Inc.'s line of commercial blowers and vacuums. LESCO will add Atwater's Lo-Blo, Mi-T-Vac and Lit-R-Blo lines of maintenance equipment to its line. LESCO will continue to supply current dealers and distributors of Atwater equipment under the Atwater label. LESCO will also market Atwater's line of blowers and vacuums under the LESCO label.



LAS COLINAS RENOVATION COMPLETE

Dallas-based Golf Resources, Inc. has completed renovation and landscape improvements to TPC Las Colinas at the Four Seasons Resort and Club in Irving, Texas, home of the GTE Byron Nelson Classic. This improvement project not only involved Golf Resources, but Byron Nelson and Jay Morrish, the original design consultant and golf course architect. Improvements were completed in time for the 1993 GTE Byron Nelson Classic. A new lake was added in front of the par-3 17th green (above) and a new tree, dubbed "Byron's tree" by the players, was added to the dogleg point of the 18th hole and also provided excitement as the eventual winner, Scott Simpson, hit his drive behind the tall tree and nearly fell victim. Other improvements include a new creek around the tee boxes on No. 3, new spectator mounds, tees, bunkers and cart path additions.

Yet another hurdle for Ocean Trails

TORRANCE, Calif. — The plan to build an 18-hole championship golf course and luxury home development in Rancho Palos Verdes suffered a setback when a judge ruled the project is in violation of a state law requiring new coastal developments to provide affordable housing.

Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Robert H. O'Brien decided that developers Barry Hon and the Zuckerman family must change their Ocean Trails project (Golf Course News, July 1993) to comply with the state's Mello Act. That law requires new coastal developments to provide low- or moderate-income housing either in the develop-

ment or within three miles of it.

Despite the ruling, Ken Zuckerman, one of the developers, remains optimistic. "I don't think this is any kind of fatal blow to the project — it simply gives us another chore to accomplish," he told the *Daily Breeze*.

Although Zuckerman and the developers hope to clear this hurdle, they may face a lawsuit from the Sierra Club, which opposes the Ocean Trails project because it claims the developers have not thoroughly considered the environmental effects of their project. The Sierra Club contends there is a lack of habitat protection in the area.

Course owners prevail in 'Case of fallen golfer'

By GORDON WITTEVEEN

A golfer who sued the owners of a course where he fell off a bridge and broke his leg, had his case dismissed in an Ontario court. The golfer had claimed damages in excess of half a million dollars.

Had Justice B.J. Wright ruled otherwise, the case could have had far-reaching implications for many golf courses in the area. There are thousands of bridges without hand railings on golf courses all across Canada and the United States. Many of these are removed every fall and re-installed in the spring. Other bridges are merely planks nailed together across small streams. The cost of adding hand rails to all bridges or facing increased insurance premiums would be very expensive for golf course operators as well as private country clubs.

Anthony Jenkinson had played the Brookside Golf Club northeast of Toronto at least 100 times before, when he teed off on April 23, 1993. On the 9th hole, a par five, his third shot landed on the green. As he crossed a small bridge over Jenny's Creek — a trickle of a stream barely 2-feet wide — Jenkinson admitted he was thinking about lining up his putt and making a birdie. Instead he slipped and fell and broke his left leg. He purposely fell to the left because he did not want to go to the right — for fear of falling on his clubs and breaking them.

The bridge across Jenny's Creek is 5-feet wide and is made from planks about an inch apart. A two-by-four runs down the edges of the planks to prevent wheels of golf carts from dropping off the edge. A 30-inch piece of rubber conveyor belting runs down the middle of the bridge. The top of the bridge at the middle point is 2 feet above Jenny's Creek.

Jenkinson's lawyer claimed the bridge

Continued on page 30

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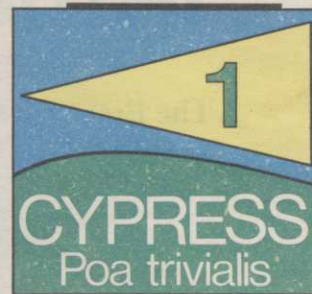
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CIRCLE #130

Marketing Idea of the Month

Here's a switch: Memberships selling homesites

By PETER BLAIS

PRAIRIE GROVE, Ill. — Granite Builders is using golf to help the Chicago area break out of the real estate building slump.

As an incentive to buy a home in its Green Valley of McHenry subdivision, the developer is offering free, two-year family memberships at company-owned Prairie View Golf Course, being built eight miles away and scheduled to open next summer.

In an otherwise dead real estate market, Granite Builders managed to sell six homes, ranging from \$160,000 to \$220,000, during the month of July, according to Green Val-

ley Sales Manager Dennis Birmingham.

"And that's normally a very slow month," Birmingham said.

Granite Builders is extending the offer, with an additional one to four years of free golf, to potential homebuyers at Crystal Woods Estates Community — three years for a lot, six years for lot and home. Crystal Woods surrounds the golf course with homes selling from \$350,000 to \$500,000.

"We look at this as a win-win situation," said Chris Newkirk, president of E.M. Melahn Construction, Granite Builders' parent company.

"The homebuyer gets an additional perk, a free membership, for buying a lot from us. And since the course won't be full the first four to five years anyway, it gets us good exposure. And maybe the free member will invite three [paying] friends along."

Newkirk said the offer has not resulted in any additional sales at the more expensive Crystal Woods development, yet. But with grass being planted in early August, and with the sight of Green Valley homeowners strolling the course next summer, Newkirk expects the added incentive to pay dividends at Crystal Woods, too.

"We expect the biggest impact to eventually be in the Crystal Woods area," Newkirk said.

The free membership includes unlimited play for all family members. At a public fee rate of \$35 to \$40 per round, including cart, the avid golfer could realize a considerable savings.

But with 12 courses in the immediate area, Newkirk doesn't expect Prairie Isle to receive too much play for the first five to six years.

"We might have 50 families there that play for nothing the first five to six years. We could give away 50 rounds per day, I suppose. But it's more likely to be something like 50 rounds a week," Newkirk said.

The idea of offering free memberships for buying a house lot woke Newkirk from a sound sleep.

"I wake up in the middle of the night a lot of times. I seem to get a lot of my best ideas then," he said.

Newkirk's company is primarily an earthmoving and construction firm. His first experience in the golf industry, he said, came inadvertently when he and his partners were awarded the financially troubled Lakewood Golf Club. They sold the club in October 1991 and began building Prairie Isle a year later.

"The course [Prairie Isle] is a definite marketing tool. Our goal is to sell 20 to 25 lots per year," he said.

It can do more damage than a 36 handicapper.



Leaf spot

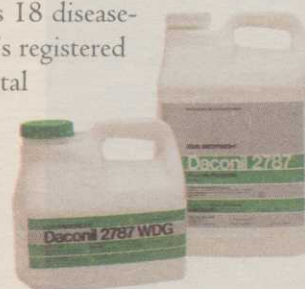
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CIRCLE#125

Course owners win Canadian bridge suit

Continued from page 3

was not reasonably safe for several reasons: There were no railings on the sides of the bridge; the space between the rubber belting and the two-by-four edging was too narrow for golfers wearing spikeless shoes to walk on the wood instead of on the rubber; and the gaps between the planks were too wide — they should be only half an inch, he claimed.

Evidence was presented by the defendants that the need for railings on small bridges can be compared to the need for golfers to wear suits of armour to protect themselves from being injured if hit by a golf ball. The likelihood of a golfer being hit by a ball is far greater than falling off a bridge for lack of a railing, they argued.

It was related that, at the Board of Trade West course, where there are twelve bridges without hand railings, there had been no incidents of fall in more than 20 years. Based on 40,000 rounds of golf per season there had been almost 10 million crossings without an accident.

In his summation on June 4, 1993, Justice Wright noted that "golf courses cater mainly to members of the public who are interested in golfing and are not public areas where all members of the public are invited, including the elderly, disabled and others who have difficulty negotiating walking areas." The judge found that there are no legislated standards or other guidelines governing bridges on golf courses in the province of Ontario. He found "in all circumstances of the case, the defendants [the golf course owners] took such care as was reasonable to see that the plaintiff was reasonably safe while on the golf course." The Justice dismissed the plaintiff's action "with costs to the defendants, if demanded."

Gerry Marcuz, who is the pro/manager at Brookside, expressed satisfaction that the court had ruled in the club's favour. "At least our cost of liability insurance won't go up for awhile," said Marcus.