

GOLF COURSE NEWS

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Analysis

Watershed findings: Pesticides test well

By STUART COHEN & TOM DURBOROW

Thousands of water samples from golf courses have been subjected to more than 100,000 analyses in 13 projects since the Cape Cod Study was completed in 1988, and only five samples contained pesticides above health-based action levels.

In fact, only 30 to 60 samples had even quantifiable pesticides, substantiating indications that proper golf course maintenance does not endanger water supplies.

Most of these studies have been done as a result of permitting requirements, occasionally as a result of research projects. With a few exceptions, they have not been well publicized. The reasons are that most of the studies have not been completed, and, equally important, the results are mostly favorable for the golf industry. It is hard to use good news to scare people.

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ECOLOGICALLY SOUND

This used to be a parking lot. Now it's Squaw Creek Golf Resort in Squaw Valley, Calif., perhaps the nation's most ecologically sound golf course. It's also the top mountain course to open during the last five years, according to an exclusive Golf Course News survey of architects. For story, see page 35.



ARCHITECTURE'S HOTTEST DUO

Ben Crenshaw (left) and Bill Coore are making news: Barton Creek, Kapalua, and now the much-anticipated Sand Hills. They spoke with GCN, page 35.

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State associations build/buy, manage their own courses

By PETER BLAIS

To provide improved member services and increase public play, a growing number of local golf associations are building and buying golf courses.

The Northern and Southern California golf associations along with the Oregon State Golf Association are developing their own facilities.

"Many other groups are talking about doing something similar," said Tom Morgan, executive director of the Southern California association.

The Northern California association started the golf ball rolling in 1975 when it acquired an option on 165 acres of Del

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No. 3 at Rancho California, soon to be owned/managed by the Southern Calif. Golf Association.

Arizona groups eye golf tax to benefit turfgrass research

By MARK LESLIE

PHOENIX, Ariz. — Following unproductive campaigns to raise research funds through volunteer donations, the Arizona green industry is taking steps in a new direction.

The newly formed Commodities Group is drafting legislation that would assess 10 cents per round on golf played in Arizona. The levy could potentially generate \$800,000 a year, according to Mark Clark, president of Cactus and Pine Golf Course Superintendents Association and superintendent at the Country Club of Green Valley.

Similar assessments reportedly have worked well for lettuce, citrus and grape growers, who all tax each crate of produce to fund research and development

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William Schultz

Schultz to assume leadership role at CMAA conference

By PETER BLAIS

SAN ANTONIO, Texas — A resident Texan will be elected president of the Club Managers

Association of America when the group holds its 67th Annual Conference here Feb. 6-10.

William Schultz, general manager of Houston Country Club since 1990, will assume leadership from outgoing President Richard Kolasa.

Schulz has been on the board since 1988, serving on several national committees and community organizations during that time. He graduated from Milwaukee Area Technical College and is currently CMAA's vice president.

In addition to Houston CC's 18-hole Robert Trent Jones-designed layout, Schulz has overseen Twin Orchards CC in Long Grove, Ill., and Brynwood CC in

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Golf Ass'ns buy

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Monte Forest land on Monterey Peninsula. It bought the \$7,000-per-acre property in 1982 and opened Robert Trent Jones Jr.-designed Poppy Hills in June 1986.

"The course provides a place for us to hold our tournaments [22 days worth annually] and provides a source of public golf for our members," said Executive Director Bill Paulson.

For their \$20-per-year dues, SCGA members can play Poppy Hills for just \$45 a round. Guests of members pay \$65 and non-

members \$95.

"Eighty-five percent of Poppy Hills is membership play," Paulson said. "It's another service [in addition to tournaments, handicap services, news updates] we can provide them. We have 165,000 members, larger than any other state or regional association."

Poppy Hills has been so successful the association is negotiating for a 283-acre parcel in Livermore, an hour's drive northeast of San Francisco. Rees Jones has done a preliminary design for 27-hole Poppy Ridge.

The seller agreed to first obtain

all necessary building permits. Financing will come from a combination of membership dues, residual income from Poppy Hills and some form of debt serviced by the NCGA's holding company.

Paulson hopes to start construction of Poppy Ridge this summer or fall and open the NCGA's second layout by summer 1996.

"Because of the success of Poppy Hills, we're committed to building golf courses from scratch [rather than buying existing facilities] and staying away from residential real estate," Paulson said.

"But the other two are going

different ways. Southern California is buying an existing course and Oregon is working with a real estate developer."

The SCGA went the acquisition route after confronting countless roadblocks along the construction highway.

"The SCGA has wanted to build a golf course for almost 20 years," Morgan said. "We were spurred on by the NCGA. We wanted to build one from scratch. But we kept having environmental permitting and entitlement problems. We just couldn't get it done."

The SCGA decided to change course in mid-1992 after the pro-

posed Firestone Ranch project in Brea fell through because of environmental and access problems. The board decided acquiring a course would be easier. Permits would be unnecessary and the slumping real estate market meant bargains were available.

The board settled on Rancho California in Murrieta, an 18-hole, Robert Trent Jones Sr. design first opened in the early 1970s.

"The owners had financial problems and we are trying to acquire it through the bankruptcy court," Morgan explained in early January. "We hope to finalize the paperwork and open the course in the next few weeks."

The board had several reasons for buying Rancho California, Morgan added. First, it would provide an alternate site for the association's 70 annual tournaments currently spread among the SCGA 324 member clubs. Second, the 140,000 SCGA members would receive reduced green fees at a top-notch facility. And third, projected profits would help hold down member dues.

"We looked for a quality design that, with proper maintenance, could become a first-class course," Morgan said.

"Rancho California was one of Jones' first California courses. It had a good reputation. But it was hard to keep up while the course was going through bankruptcy. We want to bring it up to SCGA standards. We plan some pretty extensive renovations, mainly bringing the irrigation system up to speed and rebuilding many of the greens."

Morgan said if Rancho California is "half as successful" as the NCGA's Poppy Hills, the board would consider buying or building more courses.

The Oregon Golf Association has taken a third tact. Tukwila Partners gave OGA land for an 18-hole layout in Woodburn while retaining surrounding acreage for house lots.

Working with architect Bill Robinson, OGA will open the driving range this March. The first nine is under construction and should be ready for play by mid-summer. The second nine will be financed by a dues increase and should begin construction within the next five years, according to OGA President Tim Stetson.

The OGA board had the foresight 19 years ago to realize an association course would be necessary to take pressure off member courses to host tournaments, Stetson explained.

OGA began assessing a \$1 annual fee on its 45,000 members to establish a golf course usage and acquisition fund. Ten years ago, the levy doubled to \$2. By last year, the fund had grown to \$1.2 million, allowing the association to build the first nine holes and driving range with no debt.

The annual fee was bumped up to \$5 this year, which should allow OGA to pay cash for the second nine, also.



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