

NEWS IN BRIEF

SHERBURNE, Vt. — This town is scheduled to get the state's first municipal golf course in 1996. Local voters last month approved a \$5.5 million bond issue. State and federal environmental permits must be obtained, and Vermont's rigid Act 250 regulations hurdled. Town manager David Lewis is confident of all necessary permits and expects construction to begin this spring. Gene Bates will design the 18-hole course.

LOS ANGELES — An 18-hole golf course will be prominent in the largest project under development — in terms of land area — in Los Angeles County. Ritter Ranch, a 10,625-acre master-planned community poised for first-phase construction, lists five separate residential villages. Encompassed will be 400 acres of parks, 85 miles of hiking, biking and equestrian trails.

RIVERDALE, Mo. — A 400-home housing development here, which will eventually include an 18-hole golf course, has been proposed by developer Dr. Glenn Turner, who said he couldn't estimate the project's expense. The golf course will not be completed until the final phases of the project.

CHICAGO, Ill. — Wittek Golf Supply Co. has appointed Charlie Garrett as regional sales manager of Wittek-West. Garrett will be responsible for managing all sales activity in California. Garrett and Wittek-West are located in Mission Viejo, Calif. The telephone number is 714-347-9007; in state, 1-800-365-0889.

LYNN TOWNSHIP, Pa. — The Old Homestead Golf Club, planned for 230 acres along Route 309, is a go after hurdling a minor cost holdup. The developer and Lynn Township agreed to split the cost for repair of a small road. Next step is a driving range, pro shop and parking lot. Second phase will be clubhouse, 18-hole course and driveway.



Royal Kenfield is one of the former Mizuno holdings up for bid at government auction.

Ex-Mizuno holdings on the block this spring

HENDERSON, Nev. — Two golf course properties, Indian Wells and Royal Kenfield, that were seized in the second largest non-drug forfeiture case in United States history, will be auctioned to the public in late spring.

First on the auction block — April 28, 1994 — will be the 18-hole Royal Kenfield Country Club located here, just outside Las Vegas. Formerly known as the Showboat Country Club, Royal Kenfield is a Clark Glasson design opened in 1959. It was later remodeled by Bob Cupp with help from Hubert Green.

The sale of Indian Wells properties, scheduled for May 19, 1994, will include the 155-room Hotel Indian Wells founded by Desi Arnez, approximately 6.2 acres of vacant land adjacent to the hotel, and the 27-hole golf course designed by Harry Rainville.

The two prominent properties were turned over to the federal government last October as the result of a guilty plea

in a landmark case connected to an international money laundering operation with ties to Japan. Ken International — a Japanese corporation headed by Ken Mizuno that developed golf courses and other properties in Japan — admitted that it fraudulently oversold memberships to the Ibaragi Country Club. Fifty-two thousand memberships were sold, while only 1,830 were actually available.

Approximately \$100 million derived from the fraud were used to purchase a number of properties in California, Nevada, and Hawaii, including Indian Wells and Royal Kenfield.

Proceeds from the auctions will cover U.S. Government costs, with the remaining distributed to the Japanese victims, U.S. Government, and U.S. creditors.

The sale is being conducted by EG&G Dynatrend of Burlington, Mass., and Larry Latham Auctioneers of Scottsdale, Ariz. For more information, contact Sales Manager John Saunders at 310-618-0164.

Pebble Beach Co. to co-sponsor Environmental Summit in 1995

By HAL PHILLIPS

PEBBLE BEACH, Calif. — Leaders from the golf course industry and the environmental movement will likely beat a path down 17 Mile Drive next year when the Pebble Beach Co. and The Center for Resource Management co-sponsor an "Environmental Summit" addressing the ecological impact of golf courses and resorts.

The summit is tentatively planned for Jan. 16-18, 1995, here at the Inn at Spanish Bay. According to Rich Patterson, program manager in the Planning Department at Pebble Beach Co., the attendee list should include representatives of the United States Golf Association (USGA), Sierra Club, Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA), Environmental Protection Agency, American Society of Golf Course Architects (ASGCA), Professional Golfers Association (PGA), Audubon Society, National Golf Foundation (NGF) and the Nature Conservancy.

What will happen when folks from the Sierra Club and Nature Conservancy sit down at the same table with all these acronyms?

"I think people will realize there is a little more common ground than one might expect," said Patterson, one of the summit's architects. "The main point will be to get together and really discuss the issues that have been volleyed back and forth in the press.

"We also want to pass along some practical information to the audience. And hopefully, those who run golf courses and resorts will be in attendance."

The Denver-based Center for Resource

Continued on page 60



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Leslie on Public Golf

Continued from page 57

what you can get. It isn't going to cost you a dime more to put another player on the golf course."

HOT BUT HEAVY

To fill tee times during Florida's hot days, Lansbrook's Gagliardi improved his rounds from 114 to 164 per day on Terrific Thursdays promotions in July and August. Enlisting cooperation from area hotels, restaurants and other businesses, Gagliardi ran closest-to-the-pin contests on every par-3, two long-drive contests and a daily grand prize drawing, plus specials in the restaurants. He developed a mailing list using the registrations for the drawing.

SATISFYING THE CUSTOMER

"Grass and people: Those are the two things you have to spend your time thinking about," said Lesnik.

While saying a golf course should "spend what you have to spend on turfgrass maintenance — you'll get it back in the long run," Lesnik added: "We're as concerned that the people who play the \$9 round [at one of our courses] feel they got value for their money as we are about the person who paid \$95 [at another course]. It could have been a larger percentage of the ex-

pendable income of the person who spent \$9 than it was of the person who spent \$95."

Just as debt service often determines just how profitable you are going to be on an annual basis, don't ever forget the greens fees are where it's at. That's what drives the money.

One of several Lesnik suggestions: "If you sell permanent tee times at a public golf course, a lot of people are discouraged from coming. Sell every second, third or fourth tee time. If people want to play your course, they will pay a premium for a tee time. And if you stagger them in a way that is convenient for you, you won't discourage other play."

SOW AND REAP

"Have fun and ... make a difference. The key to that is give, give, give, said Alfonso, who is part-owner of The Rail in Springfield, Ill. "We can all make a difference in our lives — to the people around us, to our communities..."

What you sow in goodwill will return manifold to you in increased business, Alfonso said, adding that key to his business is building lasting relationships. He cited a study that found that "winning over a new customer is five times more expensive than selling a product to somebody who's already your customer."

Five years of GCN

Continued from page 10

builders association alive, and stayed very busy in Asia-Pacific

- Phil Arnold, executive director, GCBAA — the guiding hand
- Jim Snow, director, USGA Green Section — now, more than ever, the turf authority
- Carol Browner, administrator, Environmental Protection Agency — like her or not, she's a force to be reckoned with
- Steve Mona, executive director, GC-SAA — a new beginning
- Randy Nichols, outgoing president, GCSAA — oversaw the passing of the torch
- Tom Fazio, architect — solidified his reputation as golf's top designer
- Mike Shannon, head of KSL — made big splash on management side by snapping up La Quinta and PGA West, then acquiring Fairways
- Craig Price, president, American Golf Corp. — led AGC on acquisition binge, then formed publicly held acquisition wing, National Golf Properties.

From a publisher's point of view, it's interesting to note a large number of publications have entered this market over the past five years. If I miss one, I apologize to any of my peers. But here's a sampling:

- Golf Course News
- Golf Course New Asia-Pacific
- Northern Turf Management
- Southern Turf Management
- Western Turf Management
- Golf Business Today (and yesterday...)
- Turf (North & South)
- Golf & Grounds Trade
- Golf, Inc.
- GolfWeek (new format/circulation)

Last, but certainly not least, I offer a list of new products, trends and services which have emerged during the past five years or so — let me know if I've left any out:

- Water-injected aeration
- Computerized weather stations
- Soil blending
- Lightweight greens mowers
- Wetting agents
- Growth regulators
- Integrated pumping stations
- Slow-release fertilizers
- Composting
- Biological alternatives
- Endophytes

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struction of a Pete Dye course there. Minger was also involved in the development of Desert Mountain and the Palmer course in Whistler, British Columbia, Canada.

"Golf has been given a bad name because of the mega-developments," Minger said. "It was a way of selling property instead of playing the game as it was originally constituted. We aim to invite people from the golf industry to show the green side, to show the good examples.

"Instead of sniping at each other and filing lawsuits, we're going to sit down and talk. We'll see what the environmental groups find wanting and how the golf course industry can respond and, in the past, I believe golf has shown itself to be very responsive."

Patterson said a preconference meeting is scheduled for June or July, when speakers and conference organizers can devise a first-draft program and walk through it.

"We've contacted more than 25 key individuals and organizations on both sides

Continued on next page

Environmental Summit

Continued from page 3

Management, founded 12 years ago by actor Robert Redford, specializes in bringing together the forces of environmentalism and industry. According to Director Terry Minger, the Center — a 501-C3, or non-profit organization — has staged "meaningful, productive" conferences on oil drilling in the Bering Sea, reauthorization of the Clean Air Act, the ozone debate and global warming.

"We're an organization that builds bridges," said Minger. "We're not an advocacy group. When we brought people together for the Bering Sea seminar, we had 18 oil companies there, as well as environmental groups."

Minger said he expects no more than 65 or 70 attendees, equally representative of the golf/resort industry and environmental groups. Minger added that he possesses a solid grounding in the golf world, having been city manager in Vail, Colo., during con-

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Phillips commentary

Continued from page 10

situations. Now, correct me if I'm wrong, but if someone is too embarrassed to go in the bushes, might they also be too shy to use this so-called wiz stick?

The Arab-Israeli Better Late Than Never Municipal Development Award goes to?... The town of Sherburne, Vt., which is on the verge of building the state's first municipal golf course (see page 3) — no small feat in a state where it's easier to elect a socialist congressman than receive permitting for a new golf facility.

The Tonya Harding/Lady Byng Trophy for Sportsmanship goes to?... Members of the British Ryder Cup contingent, for bowing out of the brouhaha at the Belfry without clubbing anybody on the kneecap with a 9-iron. The English have such good breeding.

The Desmond Muirhead/Put the Artistry Back in Architecture Award goes to?... Bob Cupp, whose geometric exploits have been the subject of more bad metaphors than Pythagoras ever thought possible. What critics have overlooked, however, is Cupp's acclaimed, Pumpkin Ridge outside of Portland, Ore. When viewed from a passing plane, Cupp's 36-hole routing plan actually resembles the inner ear of an ordinary house cat.

But seriously folks... I played some wonderfully designed, beautifully maintained golf courses during 1993. Here is but the creme:

Best New Course You've Heard Of: The Four Seasons Resort at Aviara. This Palmer/Seay design in Carlsbad, Calif. was drop-dead gorgeous, interesting and fair. Here's the ultimate test: I played horribly and still enjoyed it immensely.

Best New Course You've Never Heard Of: Cattail Creek in Edgewood, Md. A Willard Byrd course that featured about 14 spectacular holes, complemented by four solid ones.

Best Established Course You've Heard Of: Finally played Pebble Beach... But Spanish Bay was better. Honestly.

Best Established Course You've Never Heard Of: Oswego Lakes CC, Lake Oswego, Ore. This is a fantastic H. Chandler Egan design (1926) carved into a small mountain outside Portland. Exhilarating old world golf with views of Mt. Hood.

Best Maintained Course: Interlachen in Edina, Minn. Had the pleasure of playing just before the Walker Cup and the conditions were as you might expect: pristine. Incidentally, I played Royal Porthcawl — site of the next Walker Cup — over the summer. The Welsh wind was blowing about 40 mph off the Bristol Channel — nothing special, according to the club secretary.

Looks as if Jay Sigel turned pro at the right time.

Environmental Summit

Continued from page 60

and a couple of things have jumped out at me," Patterson explained. "First, 95 percent have expressed a keen interest. And second, nobody has been to a conference like this before.

"We'd like to break a little ground and maybe make a regular thing of it because these issues must be addressed over time. Solutions will evolve, but only with better communication."

Minger concurred: "We won't muffle anybody. We'll try to balance things so learning can take place."