

Dreams of N.J. golf complex eroding

ROCKAWAY TOWNSHIP, N.J. — Local officials' dreams the township would be home to a sprawling complex of million-dollar homes and golf courses may be doomed as the state negotiates to purchase 2,500 acres containing the Copperas Ridge tract.

A state Department of Environmental Protection and Energy (DEPE) official said the land would be purchased for preservation under the Green Acres program as a wildlife preserve or park.

Township officials were upset, saying the sale would mean millions of dollars in lost tax revenues.

"If that golf course project was ever built, it could bring in \$3 million in ratables," Mayor Frank Maddaloni told the *Daily Record*.

Purchase of the acreage from Hawaii-based developer Kal Uezu would be financed through a proposed bond issue, and is one of many open space purchases under negotiation throughout the state, said Tom Wells, administrator of the DEPE's Green Acres program.

Plans for Copperas Ridge, once heralded by developers and township officials as the project that would "put Rockaway Township on the map," have dwindled since first proposed in 1989.

The proposed 1,700-acre complex didn't get off the ground partly because of the stagnant economy and lack of sewer hook-ups.

And strict wetlands protection laws passed in 1990 reduced the number of developable acres by 600.

The area was part of a 3,123-acre tract purchased by the Parsippany-based Sammis Co. for \$28 million in 1988.

It was reportedly the largest land deal in Morris County this century.

The next year, plans for the \$500 million luxury housing and golf complex were unveiled.

The proposal originally called

for five golf courses, including one designed by the legendary Arnold Palmer, and more than 400 homes on five-acre lots, costing \$1 million each.

But in 1990, Sammis sold its interest to a Japanese company, Takao Building and Development Co.

Takao scaled down the plan in 1991 to two golf course and 300 homes, costing only \$500,000 each.

Takao sold the tract to Uezu in 1992.

Downtown Chicago track opens July 31

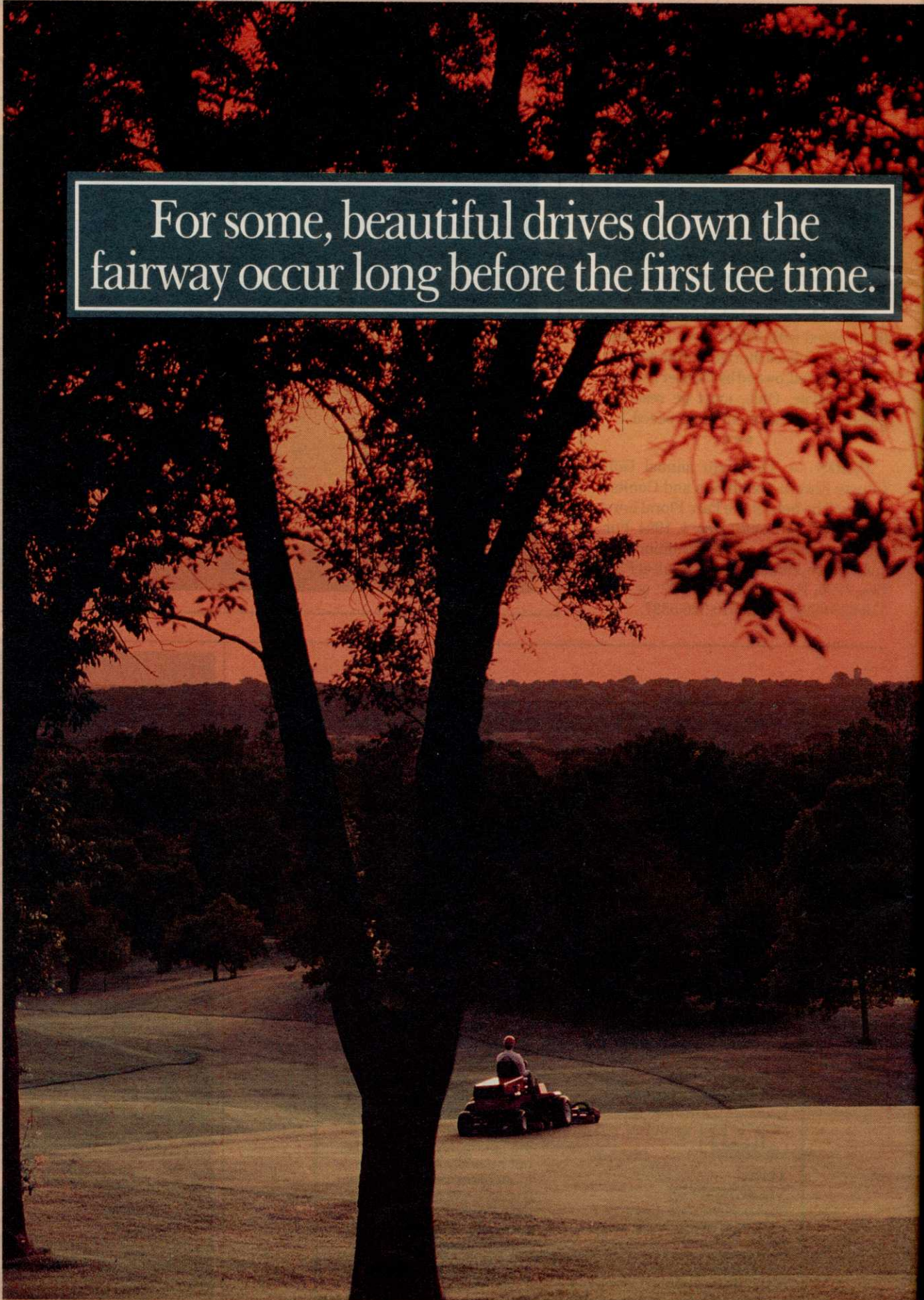
CHICAGO, Ill. — Perry Dye's downtown, nine-hole public golf course and driving range, surrounded by office and residential towers, is on schedule for a July 31 opening.

The par-3 course carries a \$3.5 million price tag.

The Illinois Center Golf, named for the complex it abuts, is an urban rarity. "I don't know of any [downtown area] in the world with a facility like this," general manager John Wiley told the *Chicago Sun-Times*.

Because the course sits below street level, pedestrians and windows will be spared the nuisance of errant golf balls. The longest hole measures 155 yards and the ninth hole features the Dye trademark, an island green.

The project also includes a 7,000-square-foot clubhouse, restaurant, pro shop and golf academy/learning center where several full-time pros aided by video recorders will give lessons.



For some, beautiful drives down the fairway occur long before the first tee time.

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