

NEWS IN BRIEF

McALESTER, Okla. — Thundercreek Golf Course project manager Sam Green thinks an 18-hole course here could be open May 1. Green said March will be a big month. "If we avoid bad weather, sprigging and seeding should be done in late February or early March. This will allow the grass to have growing time to be playable by May 1."

MARYSVILLE, Ohio — Richard B. Stahl has been named senior vice president of The Scotts Company. Stahl, who joined Scotts in 1967, will be responsible for integrating Grace Sierra, Scotts' most recent acquisition, into the organization and providing for an orderly transition of management of the Professional Business Group. Stahl will also continue to serve as Scotts representative in RISE, NACA and the GCSAA.

PALM BAY, Fla. — The City Council and the Recreation Advisory Board here plan to huddle with representatives of four firms vying to design Palm Bay's proposed golf course. If approved, the course would be built on a vacant parcel south of City Hall. The applicants are Clifton, Ezell and Clifton Golf Design Group of Deltona; Ronald M. Garl Golf Course Design Inc. of Lakeland; Sanford & Associates of Jupiter; and Robert Trent Jones II of Palo Alto, Calif.

ARBUCKLE, Calif. — A golf course aimed to place and keep youth on the right track has been proposed for a site west of this town, 45 miles north of Sacramento. The Elite Golf Club, formed by Pittsburg's Jess Turner in 1988 to get youths interested in golf instead of drugs and crime, would shift its base from the city-owned Delta View Golf Course in Pittsburg to the proposed course, tentatively named Rancho del Sol. Work on the driving range has begun, and Turner hopes the course will be open in two years.

Surfers & seals keep ARCO project on hold

By PETER BLAIS

GOLETA, Calif. — The California Coastal Commission will choose between surfers, seals and slices this April.

That's when it will hear an appeal filed by the Surfrider Foundation challenging the local government's approval of Atlantic Richfield Co.'s proposed golf course on an oil drilling facility west of the city.

Surfers have traditionally trespassed over the private property to reach beaches near Naples Reef. Their organization claims a golf course will stop them from doing so. They also claim errant balls and golfer traffic could pose a threat to the harbor seal rookery at the base of the 50-foot cliffs.

ARCO counters that the Ben Crenshaw/Bill Coore-designed Dos Pueblos Golf Links will beautify the ravaged site. The company has offered to build two paths surfers can use to reach the beach. And it believes surfboards are more dangerous to the nesting seals than the occasional mis-hit golf ball.

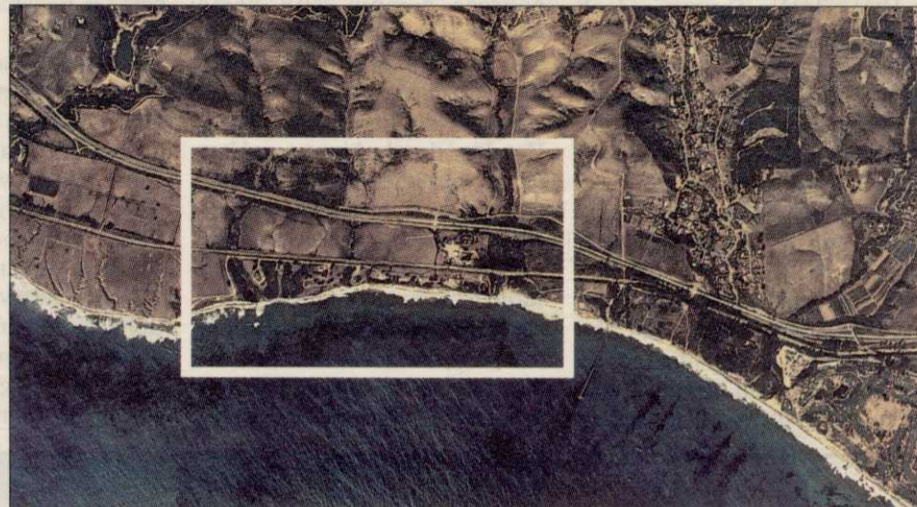
"We've offered to provide public access, but within our budget constraints," noted Whitt Hollis, ARCO's

local manager of land services. Hollis said surfers and Coastal Commission staff want ARCO to build, maintain and staff the trail around the clock to insure user safety.

"We don't want or feel it's fair for ARCO to absorb that cost," Hollis added.

ARCO presented plans for an 18-hole championship course, nine-hole par-3, clubhouse and seven-acre paved parking lot last year. The price tag for the 250-acre project was \$10 million.

The Santa Barbara County supervisors unanimously approved Dos Pueblos last



The Dos Pueblos site at Goleta (above), as seen through the lense of an aerial photographer, looking East. The existing golf course visible at far right is Sandpiper. The highlighted area in the above photo is enlarged, at left, showing how the proposed Coore/Crenshaw course would be routed.

August. ARCO was therefore fairly confident the Coastal Commission would approve the concept when it met in December. But to the company's surprise, the Coastal Commission staff recommended vetoing the project.

The reason was zoning. The land was rezoned for agricultural use several years ago, even though it hasn't been used for farming since the 1920s.

Fearing a golf course would erode the area's rural atmosphere by encouraging neighboring development, the Coastal

Commission staff recommended against allowing a golf course on the rurally zoned property.

In light of the staff's findings, which weren't available until early January, ARCO asked the full Commission to delay its decision until April, giving the company an opportunity to address zoning concerns.

"The staff said the property must first be rezoned for recreational use before it could recommend approving the project," Hollis said. "We believe current zoning regula-

Continued on page 54

Suppressing Poa Annua Seedhead...

No other soil wetting agent suppresses Poa annua seedhead emergence while it helps to move water deeply and uniformly throughout the rootzone. Isn't it time you give AquaGro® a try?

... Another Reason To Use AquaGro.

AQUATROLS

The Water Management People

800-257-7797

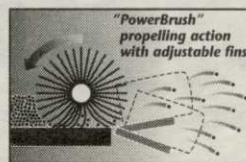
From anywhere in the U.S. and Canada.

The Millcreek 75TD. The Topdresser designed for daily fee courses and daily fee budgets.



Somewhere between the fussy finesse of a greens topdresser and the huge expense of large capacity units - that's where the Millcreek 75TD Topdresser fits in.

You might think of it as a heavy duty all around spreading machine for a multitude of jobs around your course: topdress fairway areas (many use it on greens and tees with great results), load sand into bunkers, spread wood chips on trails, and more. Plus, the Millcreek 75TD is unsurpassed as a grass clipping disperser, saving high disposal costs for many courses. You'd expect to pay around \$10,000 for a machine of this quality. But just wait until you see the price.



Patented Spreading Action

Millcreek's patented "PowerBrush" action and adjustable directional fins enable you to spread almost any flowable material in paths from 3' to 10' wide. A single operator needs no tools for safe, easy adjustments. PTO or engine-drive. 2 cu. yd. capacity.

MILLCREEK

MANUFACTURING CO.

2617 Stumptown Rd.
Bird-in-Hand, PA 17505

1-800-879-6507

Dealer inquiries invited.

Who's got the buying power?

Continued from page 1

first came to E-Z-GO," said Ron Skenes, the firm's communications manager. "If our sales representative has done his homework, he'll know who the decision-makers are. But it's very fragmented."

Skenes explained that an exit poll conducted after the 1993 GC-SAA show indicated 26 percent of superintendents claim they make the golf car buying decisions. A similar survey at the '93 PGA Merchandise Show indicated 25 percent of the professionals claim they

purchase the fleets.

"That leaves the rest of the decision-making to a combination of manager, owner and committees at private clubs," said Skenes.

"It's a mixture," agreed Melex's Jim Moran. "Sometimes it's the club manager, sometimes the superintendent and sometimes the pro. Then you have the board of directors and owners. They may make the decision themselves, seek input from one, or rely on the advice of all three."

While there are no hard-and-fast rules, the identity of the deci-

sion-maker generally varies by region, according to manufacturer representatives.

"In the Midwest, superintendents tend to be more involved in that type of decision," said Skenes. Why?

"I'm not sure," he said.

Ernie Stock, ClubCar's South-west regional sales manager, has a theory: "With the strong influence of turf schools like Penn State and Ohio State, superintendents in the Northeast and Midwest often have a big influence in purchasing all rolling stock."

"In the Sunbelt, it's more likely to be the club manager or pro.

Then you have the buying groups, like American Golf Corp. and ClubCorp. Those decisions are made at corporate headquarters. At the older, more-established clubs, it's often a committee decision made by the board with input from the pro."

Carl Schenken, a San Antonio Yamaha distributor, basically agreed with Stock.

"They've embraced the true general manager concept more in the North," Schenken said. "There, the manager and the superintendent usually make the decision. In the South, the pros and board of directors seem to

get more involved."

Pros are generally losing some clout, at least in Texas, according to Rodney Schlipf, a sales representative in E-Z-GO's Houston operation.

"Boards seem to be relying on the recommendation of the general manager rather than the pro in our area," he said. "I like dealing with superintendents because they generally have complete control over their utility vehicles. As for golf cars, in the Houston area, anyway, I'd say general managers make 60 percent of the decisions, pros 35 percent and superintendents 5 percent."

Todd Sauey, president of Columbia ParCar sees the market as segmented, but fairly regimented within each classification. Excluding fleet purchases — where management companies make bulk purchases — Sauey believes the market breaks down this way:

Owners generally make the golf car buying decisions at daily-fee courses, with input from the pro and superintendent. At private country clubs, the pro or club manager advises the green committee, which usually has final say. At resort facilities, where the top executives are not as heavily involved in the golf operation, superintendents and professionals share purchasing power. At municipal courses, pros have more consultative power — but the city controller signs off on everything.

While attending all three trade shows is time-consuming and costly, the manufacturers all expect to continue doing so.

"We want to show our support for each group," Melex's Moran explained.

"I tell our salespeople to never ignore the superintendent, club manager or pro. If two of them have left when the club's about to make a buying decision, you still have a friend in the third."

Dos Pueblos

Continued from page 3

tions allow a golf course on agriculturally zoned land.

"If the Commission denied the permit in April, we'd have to decide whether to litigate or seek a rezoning. Either way, we are committed to the project."

Local government officials see the course helping the environment, Hollis said. Aging petroleum equipment would be removed, the site cleaned and native grasses planted wherever possible, he explained.

The ARCO representative noted the course will use wastewater from a \$22 million reclamation facility expected to operate at no more than 25 percent of capacity when it opens later this year.

As for the course construction itself, Coore and Crenshaw are noted for minimal earthmoving. Approximately 100,000 cubic yards will be relocated at Dos Pueblos.

"There will be a short-term dust emission at worst," Hollis said.



For The Finest Quality, Weed-Free Turfgrass...

RegalStar®

HAS NO EQUAL. PERIOD!

Hundreds of superintendents from coast to coast say "nothing can match the results." Nothing gives them the quality turfgrass of RegalStar® pre-emerge herbicide.

A single application provides total

control of noxious annual grasses and weeds while supplying 100% of the slow-release nitrogen needed for the entire growing season. Until you've used RegalStar®, you haven't used the best.

Call Us!

1-800-621-5208

We'll tell you how it works and why it works so well. We'll also give you the names of some superintendents in your area who are using it, though you probably already know.



P.O. Box 900 • Alpharetta, GA 30239 • 404-475-4837