

BRIEFS



JONES OPENS FLORIDA TRACK

ODESSA, Fla. — Fox Hollow Golf Club, an upscale public-access facility featuring an 18-hole championship golf course designed by Robert Trent Jones Sr., opened for play Jan. 20. Fox Hollow is the centerpiece of the 3685-acre master-planned Trinity Communities development in southwest Pasco County 30 miles north of Tampa. Each hole has six sets of tees on the par-71 course which can play from 4,454 to 7,138 yards. William Sandri of Bernardston, Mass., owns and will operate Fox Hollow. Sandri also operates the award-winning Crumpin-Fox Club in Bernardston, Mass., designed by Jones.

MAPLES TRACK REOPENS

SUNSET BEACH, N.C. — The Dan Maples Golf Course at Sea Trail Plantation and Golf Links has opened for play after undergoing a renovation. First opened in 1985, the Maples Course is Sea Trail's original track. The renovation consisted of resurfacing eight greens with Penncross bentgrass to allow for more consistent play.



Dan Maples

PALMER HIRES VEAL

Joe T. Veal has joined the staff of Palmer Course Design Co. as design associate and construction inspector. Veal interned with the company during summer breaks from his studies at the University of Georgia, where he graduated with a bachelor's degree in landscape architecture. After graduation and prior to joining Palmer Course Design, he worked as a project superintendent for MacCurrach Golf Construction Co., Inc.

SULLIVAN TABBED FOR NY JOB

VALHALLA, N.Y. — Sullivan Architects of Valhalla has been retained by Westchester County as the project architect and Cornish and Silva Inc. as course architects for the expansion and rehabilitation of Mohansic Golf Course. Sullivan Architects and the County officials are hoping to have golfers playing the expanded facility by the spring of 1997.

BARBARON BUILDING AT CYPRESS LAKE

LAKELAND, Fla. — Barbaron, Inc. of Crystal River has been selected by Cypress Lakes Ventures to construct a new 18-hole additional course at the Cypress Lake Golf and Country Club here. The course has been designed by Powell Golf Design of Bradenton and is scheduled to open in the early fall.

Gotham City golf industry gets new face

Manhattan's piers get new wrinkle with golf range

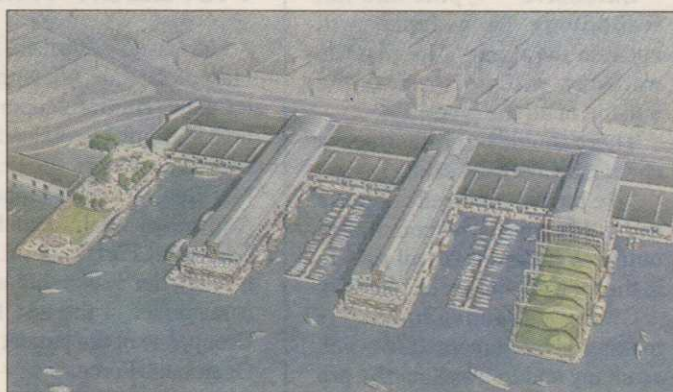
By MARK LESLIE

NEW YORK CITY — New York City is reclaiming its Manhattan waterfront and golf has a hand in it. The natural feel of a golf course will be blended with a high-tech delivery system in a major project that will bring a four-deck golf range to a Hudson River pier.

"We're taking an urban concept you'd find in Japan and importing it to New York — the difference being, instead of a smaller parcel of land, our parcel happens to be a pier and one that is structurally quite substantial," said Steve diCostanzo, a consultant on the Chelsea Piers project.

Construction will begin in late spring on the Chelsea Piers Golf

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Golf facilities at Chelsea Piers, above, and Liberty Park, below, will greatly enhance the golfing options for New Yorkers.



NYC skyline the backdrop for Jersey City track

By PETER BLAIS

JERSEY CITY, N.J. — There is a light at the end of the Liberty State Park tunnel. And the chief proponent of the long-awaited golf course project says there is a better than even chance believers will be able to drive through it by summer's end.

"We're hoping to get Department of Environmental Protection and Energy approval within the next six months," said Peter Ylvisaker, president of the non-profit Liberty State Park Development Corp.

If approved, construction should start in early 1995. The course could be ready for play in 1997, two decades after the idea of a golf course was first proposed.

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Florida Public Television tunes in: How to construct a golf course

By MARK LESLIE

BONITA SPRINGS, Fla. — With golf development booming all around it and the golf industry bringing billions of dollars a year into the state, the southwest Florida public television station is broadcasting a 13-part documentary, How To Build a Golf Course.

"Golf is a large component of the construction and real-estate business in southwest Florida. Most real-estate developments are using golf courses as a prime marketing tool," said Kirk Lehtomaa, station manager at WSFP-TV, who will offer the series nationwide this summer. "Within a 10-mile radius of our station, at least six or seven 18-hole

championship courses are under construction."

With that in mind, Lehtomaa spent part of 1993 following the construction of a fourth nine holes at Pelican's Nest here, from pre-construction site inspections in April through opening day in December. The result is the series of half-hour shows which began airing Jan. 20. Each show will be broadcast twice — Sundays at 2 p.m. and Thursdays at 8:30 p.m.

In the first segment an environmental consultant walks the audience over the course, pointing out wildlife that will have to be protected and enhanced. In another show, Wadsworth Golf Construction Co.

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Q & A Weed: Tour's designer of record

Robert C. 'Bobby' Weed, 38, has been the PGA Tour's chief designer since 1987. Prior to that, he was superintendent of TPC at Sawgrass and construction superintendent for TPC projects. Working



out of the Tour's Ponte Vedra, Fla., office, Weed has been involved in numerous TPC course designs. A South Carolina native, he apprenticed with Pete and Alice Dye and was involved with such widely known Dye designs as Harbour Town and Long Cove in Hilton Head, S.C., TPC at Sawgrass in Ponte Vedra, and Amelia Island (Fla.) Plantation.

Golf Course News: You believe you may be the only member of the American Society of Golf Course Architects who is also a Certified Golf Course Superintendent. How has that helped your design career?

Bobby Weed: I know from my agronomic background what a superintendent can live with and maintain. When I'm designing fairways, sometimes I imagine I'm on a mower. Knowing how something will have to be maintained can give you an edge. Labor is 60 to 70 percent of your maintenance budget. More people are tuning into that in the design phase. If you address it then, it dominoes through to the superintendent's budget and ultimately the fee charged the consumer, who is really paying for all this, anyway.

GCN: How early do you like to bring in

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72 HOLES AND GROWING

The Scott family continues to add to its Gull Lake View Golf Club halfway between Chicago and Detroit, and is in the midst of a new 18 that will make a total of 90 holes. Stonehedge, shown here, was designed by Charles Scott, as was Gull Lake View East. Darl Scott designed Gull Lake View West and Bill Mitchell laid out Bedford Valley — both of which Charles Scott later remodeled.

Weed definitive on need for superintendent early on in construction

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a superintendent onto a new project?

BW: He should definitely be brought in before the irrigation starts. It wouldn't bother me to bring him in during clearing. He could be another set of eyes for protecting trees, making sure you don't over-clear. The superintendent should be not only the owner's representative, but also the eyes for the architect.

GCN: How did you get involved with the PGA Tour?

BW: I came down to the TPC at Sawgrass in 1983 at the request of Pete Dye. He and [PGA Tour Commissioner] Deane Beman wanted me to take over, manage and make the necessary changes to the golf course. I had just been working on Long Cove. Pete, P.B. [Dye] and I had basically been living up there together. Pete was running back and forth between the two, P.B. was on top of the bulldozers and I was trying to help lay out the work and stay on top of it. I came down to Sawgrass because the players were complaining about the conditions and the Tour wanted to make some changes.

GCN: Did you consider yourself a golf course architect at that point?

BW: Not at all. At best, all I'd been involved in was some miscellaneous construction, getting an agronomic background and working with Pete. That opened my eyes to the fact there was a lot more to this business than just maintaining turfgrass.

GCN: How do you feel about today's course designs?

BW: In some instances, we got a little too radical in the mid- to late-1980s. You're seeing some softening back to more maintainable designs. We interviewed 150 Tour players in 1991 and asked them what their favorite courses were. They all picked Golden Era [early 1900s] courses, except for Muirfield Village [a Jack Nicklaus design in Columbus, Ohio] and Harbour Town. At that point I thought we might have gone a little too far with the sharpness and angles and contrived golf courses. But, the sites we're given today are often inferior to those of the past. Look at PGA West. It was flat. And look what they created. It's a masterpiece. They had to build something dramatic to get people out there. You couldn't build the type of course Donald Ross would have done in 1921. It wouldn't have gotten any recognition. Times have changed. But there are still opportunities to combine the traditional values with today's standards.

GCN: What's the key to a good design?

BW: You need a recurring theme, something a golfer sees four to six times during a round. At Sawgrass, it was the pine straw areas and native vegetation.

Flowers would be out of place there. At PGA West and TPC at Summerlin [Nevada] we stayed with drought-tolerant, low-growing shrubs. At Old Marsh [Dye] in Palm Beach [Fla.] the marsh is the overriding theme.

GCN: Are today's golf courses less playable than older layouts?

BW: Many of the golf courses built during the Golden Era were considered difficult for their time. Advances in high-tech clubs that get the ball in the air quicker and farther have made a difference.

You have to know who you are building the golf course for. If it's a resort, it needs to be playable, scenic, photographable and memorable, with enough tees to accommodate different ability levels. Most golfers simply don't play the tees they should be playing. They often go back one more level than they should and it slows the game. No course should force players to put the ball in the air too much. They should be able to run it to the green.

GCN: How did you get involved

in course design?

BW: I grew up on a farm. I talked my dad into letting me build a driving range and putting green on some extra land when I was in the 10th grade. In fact, it's still operating. I played golf in high school and a little in college. I knew I wanted to be in the golf business and got my training at Lake City (Fla.) College. I met Pete and Alice at Amelia Island. They took me under their wings.

GCN: Who had the greatest influence on your career?

BW: Pete and Deane. They've given me most of the opportunities I've had. I've never known two individuals with such an affinity, love and obsession for the game. A day doesn't go by, either, when I don't thank my father for the work ethic he instilled in me.

GCN: How long will you remain with the PGA Tour?

BW: My contract runs through the end of the year. I appreciate my affiliation with the Tour. It's been great exposure for me and I

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Architects choose Watson for honor

Continued from page 1

"Another area I've had some influence in is water use. I've spent a lot of time on conservation of water, irrigation practices that minimize the use of water, use of brackish waters and blending of brackish waters with fresh waters."

"Everyone in the ASGCA and the golf industry has benefited from Dr. Watson's efforts," said ASGCA President Jerry Matthews. "His work in applying scientific research to improve the quality of turfgrass is exemplary,

especially with regards to course construction and maintenance."

The ASGCA presents the Ross Award to an individual who has made significant contributions to the game of golf, and especially golf course architecture, and Jim Watson "fits that description as well as anyone in the country," Matthews said.

"It's darn good company to be in," said Watson, who joins the list of Ross Award winners that includes Royal and Ancient Secretary Michael Bonallack,

then-USGA Executive Director Frank Hannigan, former USGA Green Section Director Al Radko, PGA Tour Commissioner Deane Beman and ex-Commissioner Joe Dey, National Golf Foundation founders Herb and Joe Graffis, and ASGCA founding member Robert Trent Jones Sr.

A fellow of the American Society of Agronomy and the Crop Science Society, Watson received the Distinguished Service Awards from the U.S. Golf Association Green Section in 1976 and the GCSAA in 1983.

He is a founder of the International Turfgrass Society and

the USGA Green Section Turfgrass Research Committee, serving as the ITS president from 1989 to 1993.

Landscape Management and Landscape and Irrigation magazines selected him as Man of the Year in 1986.

The Toro Co. recently agreed to fully underwrite the Dr. James R. Watson Fellowship, a new scholarship and research program the GCSAA designed to identify and reward young researchers and instructors in fields related to golf course management.

A Louisiana native who served in World War II, Watson obtained a bachelor's degree in agronomy

from Texas A&M in 1947 and a doctorate from Penn State in 1950.

He took the post as director of agronomy with Toro in 1952.

Being recognized by the ASGCA, Watson said, is "a professional achievement of the highest degree."

Q&A: Weed

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hope to continue in some capacity. But I believe I'll be doing more work on my own in the future. The Tour has some specific target areas in mind. But it has scaled back the design staff to two — me and a landscape architect named Chris Gray.

GCN: Does any project give you special pleasure?

BW: I've enjoyed them all. I'm thrilled with the TPC at River Highlands [Cromwell, Conn.] It was my first New England course. Other than the U.S. Open at Pebble Beach a couple of years ago, it's about the only tournament course where the winner shot single digits [below par].

GCN: How do you react to criticism of TPC courses or criticism in general?

BW: It's easier to be critical than to be correct. I don't think architects are given enough respect. We take a project from Day 1 to opening day. It's a tough job.

GCN: How do you feel about Tour players getting involved in design work?

BW: I think it's great. Competition is good. But there is more involved than just lending your name to a project. The two pros who are members of the architects society — Jack Nicklaus and Mark McCumber — are very involved with their projects and know what's going on. Tom Weiskopf is another player who has worked hard to understand design. I think there will be more pros getting involved. But if they think they can make four or five visits to a site and that's it, they're wrong. The ones who are successful at it have scaled back their play to accommodate their design work. You can't be in this business in a passive manner. It's a full-time job.

GCN: What does the golf industry need to improve on?

BW: The different groups in the industry need to be more allied. I said that five years ago. It's improving, but we are still too fragmented. Each association has its own agenda. There must be a way to blend those varying interests together.

GCN: What can superintendents do to help the industry?

BW: The best thing they could do is talk to students at the elementary schools. Have them visit your course, explain what you do and how the course serves the environment. You'll be lobbying for the industry's future. If there are 30 million golfers today, those students will push it to 50 million in the future.

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