

# GOLF COURSE NEWS

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### THE TEAM APPROACH

At Francisco Grande Resort & Golf Club in Casa Grande, Ariz., superintendent Juan Rascon (right) and head pro Kent Chase work together to shore up the bottom line. See this month's Public Arena, page 54.

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### SIGN O' THE TIMES

## GCSAA actively pursues public-access members

By HAL PHILLIPS

LAWRENCE, Kan. — To keep pace with changing demographics in the industry, the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) is poised to more actively include superintendents at public-access golf facilities.

The GCSAA's newly formed Public Golf Resource Group met in October to discuss ways the association could reach out more effectively to superintendents at daily-fee and municipal golf courses, according to Chief Operating Officer Joe O'Brien.

"We talked about better providing services to our members in the public sector and attracting new members from it," said O'Brien. "The numbers speak for themselves."

Two-thirds of the nation's golf facilities are public access: daily-fee, municipal and resort. The percentage is climbing higher: From 1990 through 1993, 80

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## Noise laws drown out bottom line

By PETER BLAIS

SOMERS POINT, N.J. — Rounds are down, overtime pay is up and the prospect of spending thousands of dollars on new equipment is looming at Greate Bay Country Club, all because of the town's noise ordinance here.

Up the coast at Greenwich (Conn.) Country Club, the grounds crew spent many days and lots of money creating a berm to muffle noise from its power equipment to try to keep ahead of the noise laws the suburban New York community is considering.

Farther south, Lochmere Country Club's revenues dropped the past two summers when it was forced to hold golfers off

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## GOLF COURSE



EXPO  
ORANGE COUNTY CONVENTION CENTER  
ORLANDO, FLORIDA  
NOVEMBER 11-12, 1994

A NATIONAL EXHIBITION AND CONFERENCE FOR OWNERS, SUPERINTENDENTS, MANAGERS, AND DEVELOPERS OF PUBLIC-ACCESS GOLF FACILITIES

Sponsored by: GOLF COURSE NEWS  
Conference co-sponsored with: NGF NATIONAL GOLF FOUNDATION

## Allied golf associations back Expo

By MARK LESLIE

ORLANDO, Fla. — Hailing public-access golf as the fuel driving golf development and the game's key component, leaders in the industry have high expectations for Golf Course Expo.

The Expo, to be held at Orange County Convention Center here Nov. 11-12, is the only national trade show and conference targeting superintendents, managers and developers of public-access facilities. The U.S. Golf Association Green Section has helped develop the education

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### MIRROR, MIRROR...

Who's the fastest growing management company of them all? A strong argument could be made for KSL Recreation, which owns and manages La Quinta Hotel and Resort, seen above. Sixteen months ago, KSL owned nothing. But after purchasing LaQuinta and other high-profile resorts, then acquiring The Fairways Group, KSL has established itself as a player in the ever-growing club management market. See page 43.

## Experts decry inconsistent root-zone mixes

By MARK LESLIE

The contractor building a Texas sports field rejects the root-zone materials delivered for construction. The material is then trucked to a nearby golf course under construction, where it is accepted.

This incident, experts say, points to a problem infecting golf course construction: Sand and root-zone mixes shipped to project sites differ — sometimes wildly — from samples approved in soil laboratories.

"It happens all the time," said Dr. Norm Hummel of Cornell University, who spent a sabbatical year in 1992-93 checking the status of the nation's soil testing for the

U.S. Golf Association. "In most cases, it's not intentional. But I'm sure there are situations where some maliciousness is involved."

"This is a tremendous problem," agreed Glen Watkins, president of Root Zone Mix in Muleshoe, Texas, who does quality-control work on sports field and golf course construction. "It can be a total nightmare to go on a job and check the sand and, lo and behold, it's entirely different than what it is supposed to be."

In the wake of court cases over failure of golf greens, course builders and soil

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## Nicklaus, Desert Mountain hook up on 4th course

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. — Construction has begun on Jack Nicklaus' fourth signature golf course at Desert Mountain, a private residential and recreational community here. When Nicklaus hits the inaugural drive to the planned 18th green, Desert Mountain will become only golf community in the world to boast of four Nicklaus-designed championship courses, joining Renegade, Cochise and Geronimo courses.

"Not only will we have four Nicklaus courses, we will have four completely different golf experiences," said Dick Neyrey, president of Desert Mountain Properties.

"This will be our friendliest course. Not any less challenging than the other three, but wider,

so a bit friendlier. With Renegade's dual in placement, Cochise's target layout, and Geronimo's dramatic elevation changes, we already offer a full range of golf options for our members. The fourth course adds yet another golf experience.

The site of the fourth course is approximately 3,000 feet above sea level on the east side of the development. Similar in character to authentic Scottish links, a Nicklaus objective is to incorporate as much grass-to-grass transition area (tees to fairways and fairways to greens) as possible, given the topographical challenges of the natural desert. The course is planned for completion in late 1995 or early 1996.

## GCSAA targets members from public-access courses

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percent of the record 1,360 golf courses opened for play were public-access.

By the same token, private clubs account for no more than 34 percent of the 14,648 golf facilities now operating in the United States, according to the National Golf Foundation. NGF figures also show the number of private clubs to be falling — by

seven percent over the past five years; from 5,232 in 1990 to 4,915 in '93.

"The association has, in the main, been a private association with membership from the private clubs," O'Brien continued. "It's an overall goal of the association to attract and maintain membership. And we plan on fulfilling that goal."

O'Brien explained the Public Golf Resource Group is an ad hoc committee with no formal standing position within GCSAA. Its findings must first be presented to and approved by the GCSAA board of directors before action may be taken.

"We're going to examine what the special needs of a superintendent at a public golf course might be — in their employment as well as what public courses might need as an organization," he said. "In other words, we don't want to approach the public superintendent saying, 'Here's what we have to sell.'"

"Rather, it's 'What do you need that we could deliver more effectively?'"

...

One week before the Public Golf Resource Group met, in late September, representatives of more than 70 golf course superintendent associations gathered here in Lawrence to share their ideas and views with members of the GCSAA board of directors and the Chapter Relations Planning Resource Group.

GCSAA has formed a new Chapter Relations Department, managed by Donn Bretthauer. The September meeting served to create an agenda for this new department, said O'Brien, who explained that various GCSAA chapters will also play a major role in the expanding national membership.

"Because it's nearly always the case that chapters have more members than the national, it makes sense," said O'Brien, who spent many years with the Professional Golfers Association of America, prior to joining GCSAA early this year.

"I was surprised that an association with as many chapters as we have — and with those chapters doing as many important things as they do — was not dealing with them more officially. It's normally the case that large associations have chapter relation departments. It was visible here by its absence.

"One of the major changes here is the view of national serving as a resource to the chapters... Chapters are a foundation of this organization. They really are."

## FROM THE LEADER BOARD TO THE DRAWING BOARD

"Palmer's Aviara course is a masterpiece of beauty and function! It truly is, as **Golf Magazine** says, 'One of the ten best new resort courses in the U.S.'"

Larry Clemens  
Vice President  
General Manager  
Hillman Properties

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