

GOLF COURSE NEWS

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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 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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Allied associations: Strong public sector crucial to golf industry

Continued from page 1

track in Maintenance and the National Golf Foundation is co-sponsoring the education sessions on Development, while Golf Course News is conducting the Management & Marketing conference.

The Golf Course Builders Association of America (GCBA), American Society of Golf Course Architects (ASGCA) and National Golf Course Owners Association are also participating in the trade show.

"Since the majority of golfers and golf courses are public facilities, it's important to try to reach as many of them as we can," said USGA Green Section National Director

Jim Snow. "We visit a significant number of new public courses throughout the country. But we want to reach out to even more of them, to put information in their hands pertaining to facets of our program that can benefit them and the game."

"Currently, the growth is [in public golf] and, from what we can see, it will be there for the next decade," said ASGCA Executive Director Paul Fullmer. "Public" has a broader definition now because you have so many different types of ownership — from municipalities and other government bodies to strategic alliances between developers and

property owners. It's not as simple as it used to be. I think you need a forum such as this [Golf Course Expo] for people to learn the best ways to do things, so that everybody doesn't have to spend a fortune to reinvent the wheel..."

"As it relates to our mission — to foster the growth and vitality of the game, we see public golf as the most important component to growing and fostering the growth of the game," said NGF Vice President Richard Norton. "The more access the general public has to golf, the more the game will grow. And that's what we're all about."

Pointing to the recent success of public golf facilities, GCBA Executive Vice President Phil Arnold said owners and managers of existing facilities are especially good candidates as future clients.

"I think it is a trend that people running public courses, and doing them fairly successfully, are building additional courses. And we want them to know about the GCBA and our certification program..."

"The renovation and remodeling business is going to be a very good source of work for golf course builders in the next 10 years — just by virtue of how the stakes have risen. People are demanding a little bit more from their local golf course. They want a little bit better this, and a little bit better that, and they want to redo this, or put in irrigation or drainage systems..."

THE MAINTENANCE ANGLE

Regarding the Green Section's Turf Advisory Service, Snow said: "Most public courses are on a tight budget and don't want to spend the money. In general, they hesitate to pay consultants when they think they can get by themselves. They have hired a superintendent, so they think they need no more help."

"But, if we can identify areas where they are wasting money or spending more than they need to, or spending it in a way that is not as productive as they could, we can save them many thousands of dollars in many cases."

Snow recalled a visit to a nine-hole course in Maine years ago, when the cost of his consultation was \$500. "The course had a \$57,000 budget and \$20,000 was fertilizer," he said. "I saved them about \$15,000 a year just on fertilizer. All that for one measly \$500 visit."

OF DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

"In the '80s golf was heavily real estate-driven. But now it's economically driven, which is good," Norton said. "And most of the growth has been fueled by daily-fee development."

More developers and financial organizations are discovering golf is a moneymaker, "but it's not a slam-dunk," Norton said. "It's in the industry's best interest to educate these people so they don't make mistakes. They need to know how to position a product and make sure the investment side matches the income potential."

"There's no doubt the public sector is the most important sector in golf," Fullmer added, "and that's not just because it is around 80 percent of the new course business. More importantly, it demonstrates that golf is truly a game for everyone and not an elitist sport."

CANADIANS OK EXPO CREDITS

WESTON, Ontario, Canada — The Canadian Golf Superintendents Association (CGSA) has approved certification points for people attending the education sessions at Golf Course Expo, according to CGSA Executive Director R. Vince Gillis. The CGCS board voted in September to extend the points to members working toward master superintendent status, Gillis said. Canadians must be superintendents for five years before they can begin work toward the master designation. The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America had earlier approved continuing education units (CEUs) for Golf Course Expo.



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