

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

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GOLF COURSE EXPO

USGA to address public-access concerns

By MARK LESLIE

ORLANDO — The U.S. Golf Association Green Section, having helped coordinate the maintenance track, is providing three speakers to Golf Course Expo — the only national conference and trade show held for public-access golf facilities.

Patrick O'Brien, director of the Green Section's Southeastern Region, will discuss "Maintenance on a Shoestring." His colleagues, Florida Region Director John Foy and agronomist Chuck Gast, will also share their expertise. Foy will reveal results of the last three years of USGA-funded research and Gast will talk on water, energy and wild-life conservation measures.

Also in the maintenance track, PGA Tour's Cal Roth, who oversees maintenance at the 14 Tournament Players Clubs, will talk on maximizing equipment use and life. Joel Jackson, superintendent at Walt Disney Co.'s Magnolia

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— USGA's Patrick O'Brien

Course, and Don Tolson of Fox Hollow at Lakewood in Lakewood, Colo., will discuss maintaining quality turf in the face of high traffic. And Pat McHugh, director of golf course maintenance and grounds for the five courses at Doral Resort & Country Club in Miami, will address staffing for success.

"Turf equipment, chemicals and fertilizers are very expensive," said the USGA's O'Brien. "It's critical to be very smart when you're buying equipment so that it matches the needs of your course. It is the same with pesticides and

fertilizers, and it's critical to use them properly and in the most efficient manner. Even when you're maintaining a course on a shoestring, you like to have it weed-free because that's one of the major things golfers expect."

O'Brien, who consults at courses throughout the Southeast and the Caribbean, said he intends to give conference attendees a lot of "take-home lessons." "Especially for those who have only \$150,000 to \$200,000 a year to spend on a course, I can help them get the most bang for their buck," he said.

Matching equipment purchases to a course's maintenance needs are make-or-break decisions, said O'Brien. He told of a course with a maintenance budget less than \$150,000 that had one fairway mower, a five-plex hydraulic unit. "Unfortunately, they had Bermudagrass fairways and were



AGRONOMY PROGRAM

maintaining 40 to 45 acres of them. They were only able to mow about twice a week because the mower is so slow," he said.

"Though it is great for private clubs, that equipment was not well-suited for 'maintenance on a shoestring.' That club needed a seven- or nine-gang mower pulled by a tractor, so they could mow the fairways five times a week, essential for Bermudagrass.

"They were sold a bill of goods. They spent \$40,000 for that piece of equipment and it was not for their situation. I see this sort of thing all the time."

Case study: Marketing advice that resulted in more revenue

By MARK LESLIE

F RANCESTOWN, N.H. — It's called guerrilla marketing, and Jeff Ojala says it works.

After the 1993 *Golf Course News* management and marketing conference, the predecessor to this fall's Golf Course Expo, Ojala "did some serious guerrilla marketing" at Torrey Pines Resort. "Using the ideas we learned, we have increased our green-fee income 100 percent — and we're 40 miles from nowhere," he said.

"I got a lot out of the conference," said Ojala, Torrey Pines' general manager, adding the facility has more than tripled its income from memberships and green-fee income "will increase significantly."

"We have turned this place around substantially, and we're very excited about its potential," he continued.

Among his coups in the last year, Ojala:

- Pursued and signed on the Roland Stafford Golf School, which was ending a relationship with a Vermont course. Newspaper advertising has brought "overwhelming business" to the school, he said.
- Parlayed free television exposure, including a travelogue and golf tips from Stafford that air three or four times a week on WMUR-TV, Channel 9.
- Offered special golf outing packages.
- Developed close relationships with area sports media, giving free club

memberships with all the privileges.

- Computerized the business operation, offering plastic member cards with charging privileges.

"We came away from that conference and got very aggressive," Ojala said. "I was able to network with a lot of great people and am excited about this year."

Golf Course Expo, which will be held Nov. 11 and 12 in Orlando, Fla., is the outgrowth of three years of marketing conferences *Golf Course News* has conducted. In addition to the Golf Course Expo trade show, the event will feature educational tracks in golf course management and marketing, development and maintenance.

The National Golf Foundation is co-



MANAGEMENT & MARKETING PROGRAM

sponsoring the development track, while the U.S. Golf Association Green Section has been instrumental in coordinating the maintenance track.

Jones to keynote Day II of Golf Course Expo

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devoted to superintendents, managers and developers of public-access golf facilities. Following Palmer's keynote address at 9 a.m. Friday, Nov. 11, the trade show will run all day both days while concurrent educational sessions will be held in the afternoons covering maintenance, development, and marketing & management.

Like his father, Jones can say the sun never sets on his golf courses. From North and Central America to Africa to Europe and Asia, he and his colleagues at Robert Trent Jones II International have designed more than 150 golf courses from their headquarters in Palo Alto, Calif.

While he is famous for such resort tracks as Princeville in Kauai, Hawaii, and the Links at Spanish Bay in Pebble Beach, Calif., Jones has made a major imprint on public-access golf in recent years.

"And now," he said, "with our own money, I am a major partner in a group that is building a public daily-fee course at Eagle Point, a suburb of Medford, Ore. We broke ground on July 15.

"This is not just words. I believe in it."

Jones has numbered among his recent clients counties, municipalities, public utilities and private entrepreneurs who have hired him to design their public daily-fee courses. And these courses illustrate the variety and success of courses from high-end to munis.

The town of Mountain View, Calif., the University of Wisconsin, DuPage County Airport, and the partnership of entrepreneur Ron Dalby and a public utility have all built Jones-designed courses.

The Mountain View project, Shoreline Park Golf Course, sits on a landfill and includes an amphitheater for outdoor events.

The University of Wisconsin's University Ridge Golf Course was built by a foundation of benefactors and given to the university. "They say, 'The borders of the golf course are the borders of the state,'" Jones said. "There haven't been many university golf courses built lately. We started a trend where the universities are beginning to look at new courses... Most of the university courses make as much money or close to as much as football, if they are properly operated."

The Orchards in Detroit, a high-end daily-

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