

Range growth expected to slow

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that more markets are achieving a balance of supply and demand. With some markets becoming saturated with golf ranges, it is becoming ever more critical for the developer to perform the proper market research. This research will indicate whether the market can support a new facility."

Buyers, meet sellers

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Joneses — Rees and Bill — unveil links layout on the Atlantic Ocean

By MARK LESLIE

SEA ISLAND, Ga. — The Jones Connection has proven a fortuitous one here. Enter the principals: Cloister Hotel president and owner Bill Jones III and golf course architect Rees Jones. Witness the results: Ocean Forest Golf Club — a links-style track reminiscent of the first courses in Scotland and possessing their elements.

"I think it's going to be regarded as one of the great golf courses in the world some day," Rees Jones said. "Mainly because it's on the type of land the game evolved from. It has all the elements: the ocean, the river, dunes, saltwater marsh and, on top of that, some magnificent stands of hardwoods and pine trees."

"It will intrigue people because every hole will be different even though it's on a piece of ground that doesn't change dramatically in elevation."

The Joneses, who had collaborated on a renovation of nine holes at the Plantation course at Sea Island, expected a winner — for golf, the environment and financially. The 300 club memberships were all sold before the March 30 opening, and Bill Jones III plans to build 180 townhouses.

The 380-acre property sits on the tip of the small island where the Hampton River meets the Atlantic Ocean — a parcel "that the Joneses wanted to preserve," said

Rees. And preserve, they did. Working with the Army Corps of Engineers, Rees routed the layout to fit and not ruin the environment. "We used all the natural elements to the utmost," he said. "In the old days, they used sites to their optimum, because they could not move dirt. When you get a site like this, you have to use what you have. We left every dune in place, like they would have done in the past."

Rees likened the course to Cypress Point, taking the golfer through various terrain and finishing on the ocean. It starts in the woods, comes out to the river on the 5th hole, goes back through dunes, then back by the salt water marsh on 10, then to the river on 12 and 13, back to marsh, and across a beautiful expanse of saltwater marsh at 16. The 17th hole is back to the ocean and the 18th is spectacular, right on the beach.

Its hallmark, Rees said, is its "links-style design with a lot of open entrances. When wind is blowing you can hit the ramps and run the ball on. If the wind isn't blowing, you can fly it in. It will play differently every day, depending on how dry and windy the course is. It has a lot of ramps, especially on longer holes, and on the shorter ones, the greens are better protected."

Pro, builder open 'one-stop' firm

ST. CLOUD, Fla. — Golf course builder Reed Berlinsky and PGA pro Barney Neal have pooled their talents in a partnership here to provide golf course investors with one-stop shopping for building, consulting and managing golf driving ranges and learning centers.

The partnership forms a division of Reed H. Berlinsky, Inc., the course builder primarily in the Southeast, which brings more than two decades of experience to the venture. It was established in response to a growing number of investors seeking to properly position their product while avoiding costly mistakes. Neal and Berlinsky are prepared to provide assistance on initial planning, permitting, design, construction, public relations, and management.

Neal was head pro at Cedarbrook Country Club in Philadelphia for more than a dozen years. Berlinsky, Inc. has in-house capabilities of clearing, earthwork, rough and finish shaping, irrigation systems, drainage, cart paths, and green construction.

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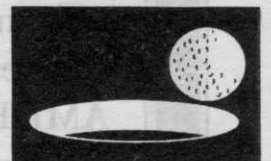
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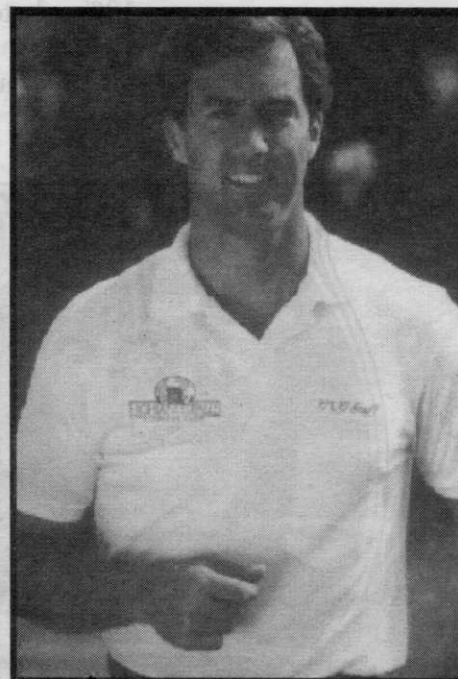
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