

\$500M Chinese-style theme park in would include golf

Golf at a Chinese theme park?

A property owner in Blooming Grove, N.Y., is talking with the Beijing-based China State Construction Corp. about a half-billion dollar Chinese theme park project that would include expanding the existing nine-hole Lake Anne Country Club to 18 holes as part of the park.

The plan for what has been described as a Chinese-style Disneyland has had a chilly reception from local officials. Developers hope to begin construction in 1996 with completion set for 1999. Reportedly, "many major Chinese companies" as well as financiers from Asia and America are interested.

Meanwhile, on Long Island, the new operator of

a 210-acre estate in Sands Point is considering expanding an existing nine-hole golf course to an 18-hole layout.

The former home of the Guggenheim family will open in 1995 as The Village Club of Sands Point. Kemper Sports management will operate the course and recreation center for the owner. In addition to the Robert Trent Jones Sr.-designed layout, the facility includes a driving range, mansion, tennis courts, beach, hiking and bicycle trails.

The village bought the facility from IBM in November 1994. IBM had owned the property since 1953 and used it as a personnel development center.

Leslie on golf & the environment

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greens and fairways that way today if you had caddies rather than carts, and if your play was at 18,000 to 20,000 rounds.

And the superintendent could maintain the grass at a premium level. But start putting 45,000 rounds and carts, that generates the need for change.

"So now we've moved into more porous greens that drain better, and soil blends that don't compact as readily. The

reason is to get the optimum growing medium that will allow the grass to survive and repair itself from the traffic."

Research and advances in agronomics are in response to two things, Clute said — increased number of players and "clearly, over the last 20-some years, the greater expectations by the [television-watching] golfer.

"The only way I see that changing," he added, "is for more of the televised events to show some other, less-than-lush conditions."

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Across-the-Big-Pond Influence has reversed and is now heading east to the United Kingdom, Clute lamented.

"We would hope that we could educate the American golfer to a more natural condition, where even the fairways tend to change color and brown," he said. "But it's as if our manicured look is giving their way.

"It still may reverse, with more awareness of the environment and our need to be stewards of the environment in general.

"I'd like to see that happen, certainly. Meanwhile, the manufacturers of golf supplies and irrigation continue to improve efficiency, so courses do use less water and still look good, and pesticide manufacturers continue to make their products better and more friendly to the environment."

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In the November-December 1994 issue of *Audubon* magazine, Fen Montaigne interviewed Mikhail Gorbachev about Green Cross International, his group organized in 1993 to deal with environmental issues in a "nonconfrontational style."

Gorbachev said: "[Our] main idea is the search for a path toward a new civilization. And a new civilization would mean, above all, solving the problems that exist between man and the rest of nature. If these problems are not solved, the rest is nonsense."

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A personal note: Thanks to Joe Pantaleo of Fort Lauderdale Country Club, Rick Bright of Country Club of Coral Springs and Artie Lancour — my playing partners as we won second place in the Southern Florida GCSA's scramble in November. You guys are all winners and deserve a Red Badge of Courage. Thanks, also, to President Bob Klitz of Deer Creek Golf Club, Mark Richard of Greynolds Golf Course and host super Tony Ursolo of Golf Club of Plantation for the invitation to speak and for your Florida hospitality.

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