

Court rules against golf facility in liability case

LOS ANGELES, Calif. — An appeals court here ruled that a golf course owner has a duty to design and maintain a golf course to minimize the risk that players will be hit by golf balls.

William C. Morgan had filed a complaint against Fuji Country USA, the owner and operator of a golf course, after he was hit on the head by an errant golf ball as he walked from the 5th tee box to a nearby bench.

Morgan contended Fuji was negligent in removing a pine tree which had deflected or otherwise protected players from balls hit from

the 4th tee. Fuji asserted that Morgan knowingly assumed the risk of being struck with a golf ball.

A trial judge agreed with Fuji's assertion. But on appeal, Justice Daniel Kremer of the 4th District Court of Appeal found otherwise. Citing a 1992 case, Kremer found that being struck by a golf ball is an inherent risk in playing golf, but it does not remove all responsibility for a golf course owner or operator, especially if there are dangerous areas on the course caused by poor design or without adequate safety protection.

Fla. city evicts course operator

HOLLYWOOD, Fla. — An nasty feud between Hollywood officials and a private operator over who would run the Hollywood Beach and Country Club (CC) is over.

City officials were successful in evicting course operator James Duffin, whom they accused of ruining the course.

Duffin — who had operated the facility since 1993 — had vowed to stay. Eviction proceed-

ings began in February after Duffin failed to pay rent for nine months. The city received \$159,000 in back rent as part of the recent court decision but is

battling with Duffin over more money it feels he still owes.

Southern Golf will be the interim operator of the 18-

hole golf course. Hollywood Beach and CC also has a hotel and restaurant.



Els opens course design office in Palm Springs

PALM DESERT, Calif. — Golfer Ernie Els has fulfilled many ambitions on the golf course, but now he's into something else. "For a long time, I've had an ambition to design courses," he explained.

Els, playing largely in America, has launched a new design company and has an office here. He is joined in his company, Els Clark Design, by Olive Clark, a former Ryder Cup player and broadcaster, who has concentrated on design over the last eight years.

"Our philosophy will be to work only on two or three courses at once," Clark said. "We intend to give each course maximum personal attention, but our fees will still be extremely competitive."

Els' and Clark's philosophy is to provide "user-friendly" courses coupled with designs which reflect dramatic interest, enjoyability and great variety.

Clark may be contacted in the United States at 619-771-0400.

Agreement puts Minn. layout back on track

PAYNESVILLE, Minn. — The developers of a proposed nine-hole expansion at the Koronis Hills Golf Course and the owners of an abutting biological preserve have reached an agreement to allow construction: a 17.3-acre buffer strip of wetlands and woods.

The buffer strip between the golf course and the Highgrove Bio-Reserve Lands preserve owned by Larry Ellis and Linda Liestman will be placed in a land trust easement to give it perpetual protection from development.

Ellis and Liestman had opposed the 70-acre expansion until the particulars of the buffer strip were agreed on.

If all goes as planned, the second nine, designed by Joel Goldstrand, could be ready for play in 1996.

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