

Elevated teebox spurs zoning spat in Phoenix

PHOENIX, Ariz. — Is a golf tee a structure? How about a cart path with railings?

These are the key questions stirred up by the Phoenician Resort's plans to locate an elevated tee 25 feet above a Phoenix no-building line as part of a new nine-hole addition.

Both the Phoenix City Council and Planning Commission have already approved the plans of ITT Sheraton, the owner of the mountainside Phoenician Resort. Most of the proposed project was already allowed under existing zoning. ITT originally proposed building 10 luxury homes on the 2,305-foot-tall mountain but dropped those plans.

But the president of the Arcadia-Camelback Homeowners Association, some residents, and other local groups plan to contest the plans for the one elevated tee and a cart path to go with it. Phoenix planning laws say that no structures can be built above 1,440 feet, but neither the developer nor the two city groups that approved the project regard the tee and cart path as structures.

ITT has said it considered moving the holes downhill but decided it would bring them too close to existing homes.

Ohio farmer fills need, carves 18 from old dairy

GRANVILLE, Ohio — If the best known farmer in golf circles these days is Robert Landers, the former dairy farmer from Texas who is playing on the Senior PGA Tour, then Larry Bruce is a not-too-distant second.

Bruce, a 48-year-old farmer in Licking County outside of Columbus, has decided to build the 18-hole Links at Echo Springs on 220 acres of farmland he owns north of Granville and east of Johnstown.

Bruce's rise to golf prominence in central Ohio is a fast-moving tale. He started playing golf about five years ago because his new son-in-law played the game. When he had trouble getting on local courses, he built a single green with four tees of varying distances.

Bruce's wife next bought him a golf cart and people started telling him that one day he was going to build a golf course, which he laughed off at the time. Finally his visions of rolling fairways got the best of him.

Local golf course architect Barry Serafin did the course design. Bruce is a partner in the venture with owners of a construction company and a sand and gravel company that are supplying labor and materials. Bruce is the project manager.

Albertan layout to open this month

CALGARY, Alberta — A showcase 18-hole golf course in the Tirion Development subdivision in northwest Calgary opens this month, minus the smoke and ready to walk.

The course has instituted a strict no-smoking policy in and around the clubhouse. Carts will be required for the first year, but the club plans to go to a full caddie program in the future.

The highly sculpted, 6,280-yard layout was planned by Bill Newis and refined by Darren Young, who is executive professional at the club. Tirion's inaugural golf course superintendent is Dave Whitell.

Play this year will be restricted to members, all of whom have bought houses in the area and opted for a trial membership, and their guests.

Private track adds 9, goes public

ATTICA, Ind. — The nine-hole golf course here at Harrison Hills Country Club, owned by the Harrison Steel Co. and private since it opened for play back in 1923, will not only double in size this year but will also be open to the public starting in 1996.

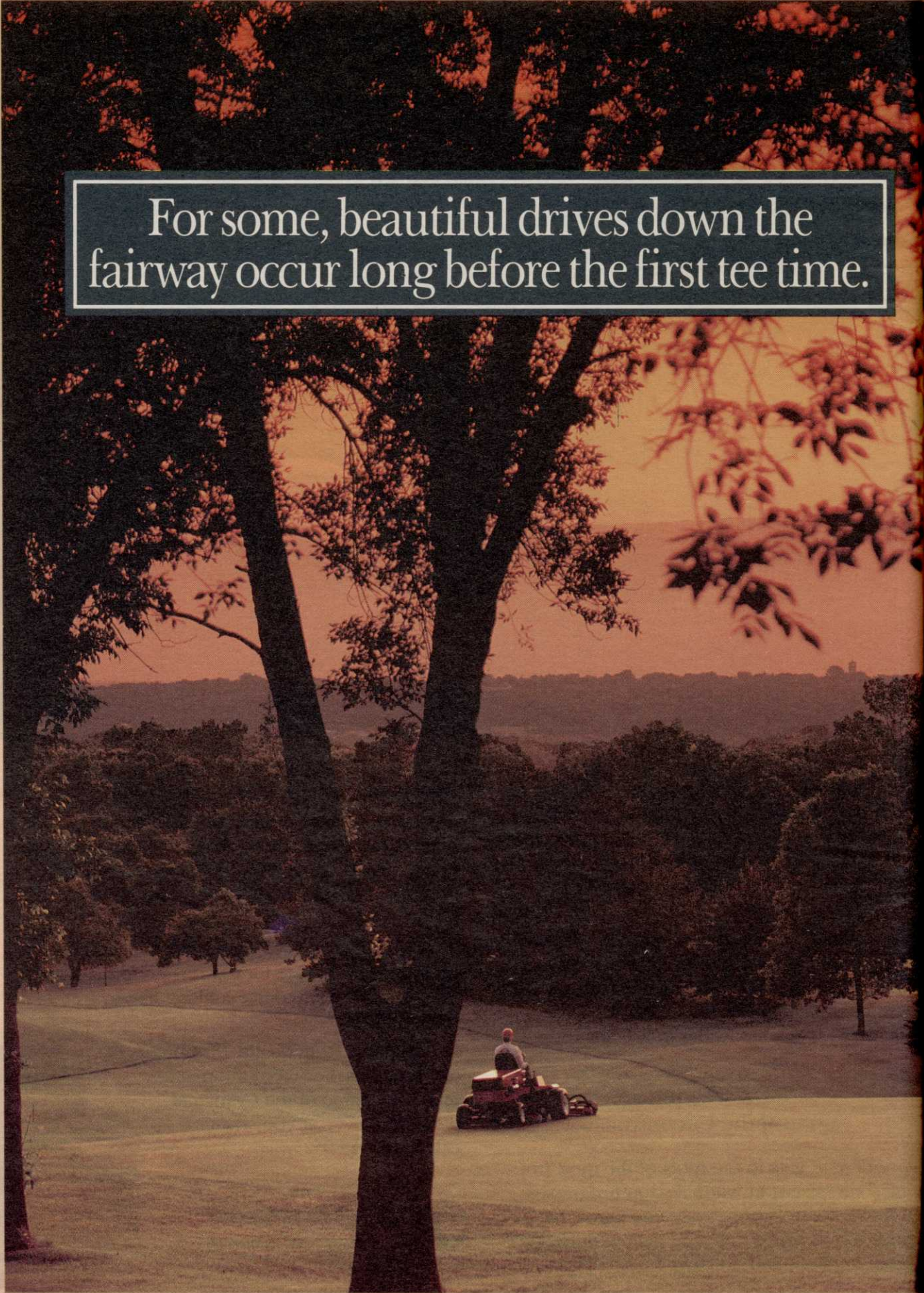
Construction on the expansion started in March, according to project manager Geoff Curtis, and is expected to be completed by early August.

The existing nine-hole course, on the east side of U.S. 41 in Attica, is approximately 70 acres.

The new nine holes under construction will add about 80 acres, Curtis said.

In addition to the new grass, tees and putting surfaces, the nine-hole expansion also includes a four-acre lake.

Harrison officials had been planning an expansion since 1991 due to the increasing popularity of golf and the growing viability of public-access golf operations. In late 1993, they bought farmland adjacent to the nine-hole course which set up the expansion.



For some, beautiful drives down the fairway occur long before the first tee time.