

Hilton Head course delays plans

HILTON HEAD ISLAND, S.C. — In the ongoing battle of the new golf maintenance shed, a developer for the Sea Pines Co. has temporarily backed off on its plans to build a facility on 1.5 acres between the 6th and 9th fairways on The Ocean Course.

In order to build the maintenance shed, the Sea Pines Co. needs the Hilton Head Island Planning Commission to change the land-use designation of the 1.5 acres from open space to golf course maintenance.

Several area residents and

property owners oppose the maintenance facility saying it would block their golf-course views and lower property values. One resident sued to stop the project but a judge ruled in Sea Pines' favor last October.

Sea Pines says extensive landscaping would lessen the building's impact on surrounding properties.

The project is expected to come before the planning commission again in March or April, when Sea Pines is expected to respond to concerns.

Coastal Ala. course now seems unlikely

BAY MINETTE, Ala. — Two years ago, the 588-acre site on Orange Beach was a battleground for two deep-pocketed golf-course developers. Now, only environmentalists are clamoring for the land.

A legal clash between the two prospective developers — Retirement Systems of Alabama (RSA) and H/M Partners of Point Clear — and increasing federal environmental regulations have sunk any current hopes for golf course development at the site.

Almost 400 of the nearly 600 acres are wetlands. Much of the remaining land is classified as maritime forest, severely limiting the chance of a golf course ever being built at the site that once looked like it might become part of the RSA's highly-marketed Robert Trent Jones Trail.

Two school layouts set to open in S.C.

CLEMSON, S.C. — Two of South Carolina's best-known universities will soon have new golf courses they can call their own.

The new 18-hole layout at Clemson University, where construction started in November 1993, will be called the Walker Golf Course after the late Col. John Emmett Walker, whose son, John Jr., is contributing \$1 million toward construction.

Meanwhile, at the University of South Carolina, the University Club, a 450-acre resort with a 27-hole championship course, tennis and swimming, a 30-acre practice facility and housing is set to open 18 holes this summer with the third nine ready by fall.

GARL'S FLORIDA DESIGN SHOULD BE READY FOR PLAY BY APRIL

VERO BEACH, Fla. — Ron Garl-designed Indian River Club has opened for play on 13 holes with the remaining five due to be finished in April. The course is already in the process of applying to become Florida's fourth Certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary.

GOLF COURSE NEWS

Jekyll Island Authority forced to halt Ga. project

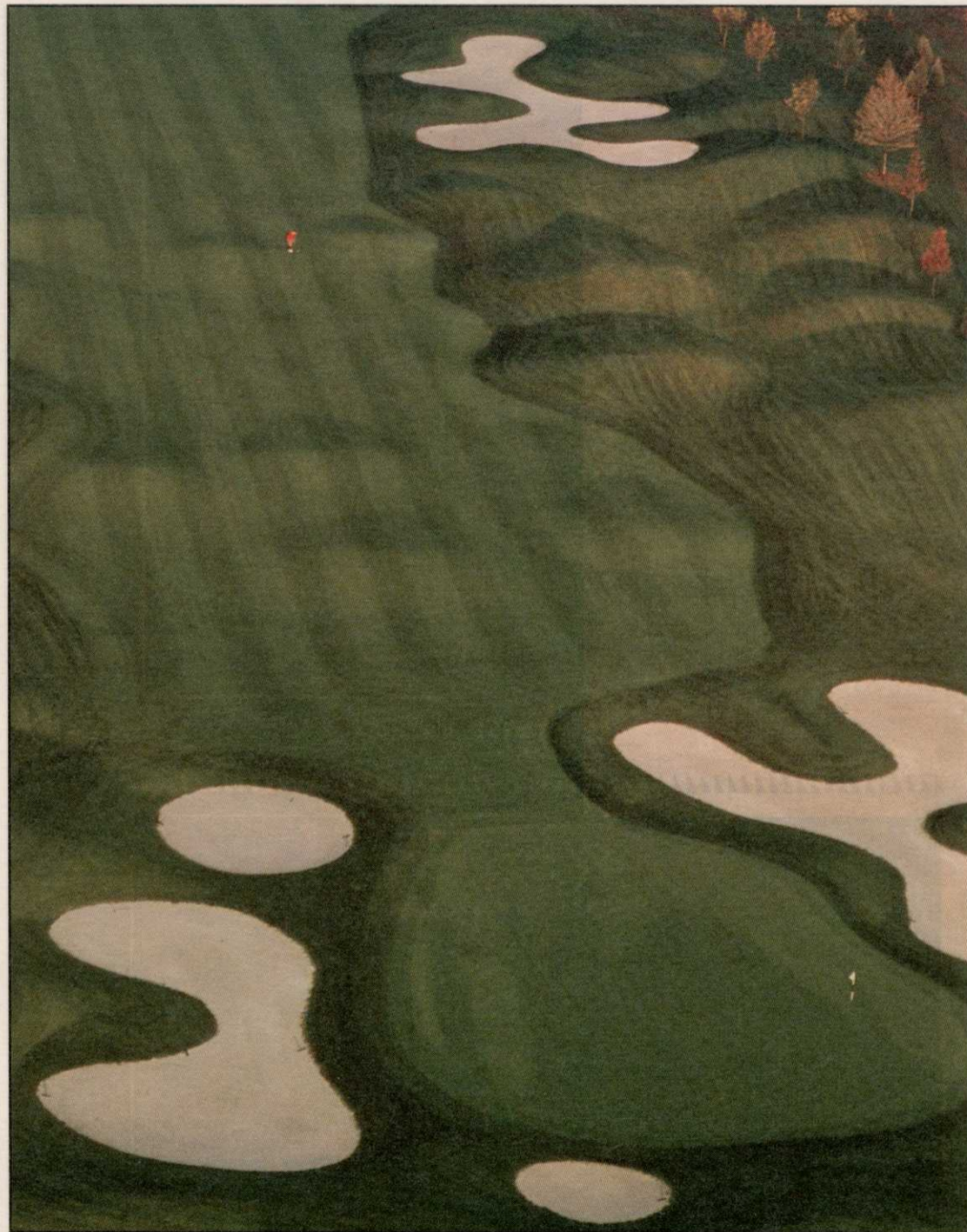
JEKYLL ISLAND, Ga. — The state authority in charge of protecting one of Georgia's coastal barrier islands has violated the law by bulldozing 20- to 65-foot-wide swaths in or near sensitive coastal marsh wetlands to build a golf course, according to environmental officials.

The Jekyll Island Authority, by bulldozing the land without first obtaining required state and county permits, has drawn the wrath of environmental groups and Gov. Zell Miller. The state's Environmental Protection division ordered the authority to halt all construction of its new nine-hole course, pending a review.

Authority Executive Director George Chambliss said the bulldozing was necessary to conduct surveys and make topographic maps. Any violations were unintended, he said.

Joe Tanner, Commissioner of the state's Department of Natural Resources, said the bulldozing was illegal without permits required under the state's Erosion and Sedimentation Act, from local county officials, and under the Coastal Marshlands Protection Act.

The course expansion incident is the latest in a series of battles over the future of Jekyll and other barrier islands.



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