

## NEWS IN BRIEF

**BROOKTRAILS, Calif.** — The saga of the Brooktrails redwoods appears to be over. And some trees won't be happy. The board of directors at the nine-hole Brooktrails Golf Course recently voted 3-2 to cut down a number of redwood trees to save some dying greens and fairways. There are nearly 1,000 trees in the playing area of the northern California course. Arborist John Phillips recommended removing the trees because they keep sunlight from the playing areas and cause greens and fairways to die of excessive moisture. Cutting will begin in the fall.

**EDINBURG, Texas** — The 18-hole Monte Cristo Golf Course has reopened with a new name, the Palacio Real Golf Course. PalBros Inc. of Edinburg, a city of about 30,000 in southern Texas just a few miles above the border with Mexico, bought the former Monte Cristo in July 1994.

**GREENVILLE, S.C.** — A proposed lighted, 18-hole, par-3 course near Greenville Downtown Airport has led about 70 neighboring homeowners to sign a petition opposing the project. Residents are concerned with the effect of lights and increased traffic in their secluded neighborhood. The developer and officials of the Greenville Airport Commission, which owns the 29-acre tract, said the \$1 million course would disturb residents less than any other development that can be put on the land, which is restrictively zoned because it is so near the airport.

**SHERBURNE, Vt.** — Construction of Vermont's first municipal 18-hole golf course here near the Killington ski area is running ahead of schedule. The \$2.8 million Green Mountain National Golf Course could be open by mid-June 1996. J. J. McDonald Inc. of Lyndon Center is the project's general contractor. Gene Bates is the designer.



The 5th hole at Rick Smith's highly touted, debut design at The Treetops Resort in Gaylord, Mich.

## Smith: Teaching pro-turned-designer

He's known as golf's Renaissance Man these days. Rick Smith, 37, is perhaps best known as a swing guru for some of the PGA Tour's top players — Jack Nicklaus, Lee Janzen, Billy Andrade and Rocco Mediate. He also instructs amateur golfers as director of golf at Treetops resort in Gaylord, Mich., hosts the Rick Smith Signature TV series on ESPN and writes instructional pieces for GOLF Magazine. But lately Smith has received more acclaim for his golf course design work. Among his best-known layouts are the Rick Smith Signature Course and Threetops par-3 design at the Gaylord facility. The Signature layout was named Best New Course of the Year by Michigan Golfer and Debut Course of the Year by Golfweek. He is currently working on an 18-hole walking course at Treetops and the golf-only Wuskowhan Player's Club in Holland, Mich., both of which are scheduled to open in June 1996. Associate Editor Peter Blais caught up with him shortly after Smith's return from the Masters.

**Golf Course News:** When did you first think about becoming a course architect?

**Rick Smith:** When I was a kid playing



Q & A

golf in national junior tournaments, I guess.

**GCN:** How did you prepare for the job?

**RS:** I was the golf pro here when Robert Trent Jones Sr. did the first course. I was one of the people who recommended Tom Fazio when we built the second. I learned a lot about the technical side of design from them. I also got to know Nicklaus when he was building a course down the road at Grand Traverse. During the past seven years, I've gotten to travel and study some of the great courses in the world.

**GCN:** How did your teaching background help your design work?

**RS:** I am a very visual teacher. I like to build a golf swing from nothing into what I should be seeing. The creative process

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## Name change reflects broader Audubon effort

By MARK LESLIE

**S**ELKIRK N.Y. — The Audubon Society of New York, which has pioneered wildlife and ecological preservation efforts at golf course facilities in North America and abroad, is breaking off those programs that go beyond its borders to reflect their international umbrella.

New York Audubon President Ron Dodson said the society has created the self-standing Audubon International Center for Sustainable Resource Management.

The move was made, Dodson said, "because of the rapid growth we've seen, and the interest in our program well beyond the borders of New York State. We have more members in Florida, Michigan and other states than in New York... For instance, the 22 golf courses involved in the Signature Sanctuary System are all outside New York State, and the more than 1,400 that belong to the Cooperative Sanctuary System are all over the country.

"Essentially, New York Audubon will take over the role of running Audubon programs within the state," Dodson added. "Audubon International will take over those activities that go beyond the borders."

The organization's mission statement, which is being written, will focus on research and development of printed and educational materials, he added. "Essentially, it will become the think tank or research arm of the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary System," Dodson said. "It will look at issues from emerging technologies to natural resource management, to position ourselves to be the thinkers and

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