

Harvard plans design courses

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. — Harvard University Graduate School of Design will offer five summer courses related to golf course and resort planning and design.

The course work will include Golf Course Environmental Considerations, July 31 to Aug. 1; Golf Course Design, Aug. 2-3; Golf Clubhouse Design and Site Planning, Aug. 4-5; Golf Course Development, Aug. 7-8; and Golf/Residential Site Planning, Aug. 9-10.

Instructors will include course

architects Geoffrey S. Cornish and Robert Muir Graves; course architect Dr. Michael Hurdzan and environmental scientist Dr. Stuart Cohen. In addition, golf development consultants Barbara Hanley and Pamela McKinney; and developers Van Tengberg and Garth Chambers will offer their insights.

For more information is available from the Office of Development and External Relations, GSD, Harvard University, 48 Quincy St., Cambridge, Mass. 02138; 617-495-1680.

GULF HARBOUR REOPENS

FT. MYERS, Fla. — Florida Design Communities opened Gulf Harbour Yacht & Country Club on March 11-12, unveiling its half-redesigned 18-hole golf course. Gulf Harbour, formerly known as River's Edge Y&CC, was purchased by Florida Design Communities in July 1993. Since that time, FDC has redesigned nine of the golf course's 18 holes to form a more challenging layout.

Nepal: where greens are black & golf is — well — something new

Continued from page 45

dressed, evidence that a greenkeeper must be around somewhere.

I nosed my way to the clubhouse where I was met by Mr. Spacharya, the manager, who welcomed me and gave me a guided tour of the premises.

The Royal Nepal Golf Course is just nine holes and only 2,600 yards with four par-3 holes. In spite of these modest qualifica-

tions, Royal Nepal is the best of the three courses in the entire country. The members are mostly diplomats and Western visitors, but more and more native Nepalis are taking up the game.

Five of nine greens are sand but recently four greens have been converted to grass. This is a cumbersome process. There are no machines and all the work is done by hand. The sub-grade is spaded and raked, then the top mix is carried in by basket or wheel barrow. Progress is slow and it may take more than a month to rough grade just a small green. But time is plentiful and labor is cheap since the workers earn just a few rupees a day. Women do much of the work. They toil in the fields, carry heavy loads tied to their foreheads, and have hoards of children, while frequently the men play cards and smoke the water pipe.

Once the new greens are established, explained Mr. Spacharya, the maintenance of the golf course becomes more complicated. Last year the club appointed a supervisor to direct the workers on the course. One of the biggest problems is to water the new greens. There was no money for pipes or a pump. The only other way was to carry the water from a small stream to the greens. Sturdy workers carried two 5-gallon pails on a yoke and splashed the water on the grass.

The club had recently purchased an English walk-behind greens mower. It was their proudest possession and it was stored in the clubhouse for safekeeping. A small rotary mower rounded out the equipment inventory.

"How do you cut the fairways?" I asked. Mr. Spacharya patiently took me back out on the golf course and introduced me to the herdsman who was in charge of the mowing machines: a dozen hungry cows who splattered fertilizer as they nipped the grass on the fairways. The herdsman, protected by a large umbrella, kept track of his charges with a whispy little cane.

There were few golfers out on this particular day, but all had caddies to carry their clubs. Each golfer was also accompanied by a ball boy who keeps an eye on errant shots. Even poor golfers rarely lose their balls on this course. If a ball boy does a good job, he may eventually become a caddy and also have an opportunity to play the game in the annual caddy tournament.

Golf has a future in this small faraway country. "Does the King of Nepal play golf?" I asked Mr. Spacharya.

"When he was Crown Prince he would come out occasionally, but now that he is King he is obviously too busy," explained my host understandingly.

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