

## NEWS IN BRIEF

**VALLEJO, Calif.** — There will be golf after the Mare Island Naval Shipyard closes down. The city council recently selected The #1 Golf Co. of San Rafael from among six companies to operate and expand the Mare Island Golf Course. The company's team includes Johnny Miller Design Ltd. of Napa. The plans include expanding the course from nine to 18 holes and developing a family fun center, a hotel and youth golf academy.

**YOUNG HARRIS, Ga.** — The Brasstown Valley Resort has opened its newest 18-hole golf course. With a slope rating of 141 and a course rating of 74.4, Brasstown's new track can boast the toughest numbers of any resort course in Georgia.

**ATLANTIC CITY, N.J.** — In the battle of super-developers over a former city dump site, Donald Trump lost with his bid to build a \$25 million 18-hole championship golf complex. An Atlantic City mayoral committee instead voted 9 to 0 to award development rights to a 178-acre former landfill to Stephen Wynn and his partner, Circus Circus. Wynn has proposed a massive, sprawling \$1 billion development with a hotel, casino, a shopping mall with three 1,500-seat theaters and an indoor rain forest. Wynn's proposal would create the largest casino complex in the Garden State and one of the world's largest.

## Klemme book touts golf's kinship with environment

By PETER BLAIS

Mike Klemme was 6 years old when he first realized how visually oriented people are.

"That's when I first picked up a copy of *National Geographic* magazine and started looking at the pictures," Klemme remembered. "When I got a little older I began reading the captions. But I still don't think I've read an entire *National Geographic* story. And I have every issue."

Given that tale, it's not surprising Klemme has gone on to become a professional photographer and one of the best-known snappers of golf course shots in the business. It was his love for the game and belief in the power of photos that led the Enid, Okla., resident to begin pitching his idea for a picture-laden coffee table book touting the environmental benefits of golf courses.

"Every course I've gone to has an environmental success story," said Klemme, who has been on the road as many as 300 days a year visiting golf courses. "Photos are such a great way to communicate those stories."

After receiving a cold reception for his idea from many in the golf industry, Klemme finally found a warm greeting at Sleeping Bear Press in Chelsea, Mich. The result is *A View from the Rough*, a 144-page testimonial to the positive environmental benefits of golf featuring 200 Klemme photos taken around the globe. The photos are backed up with brief statements from



An elk roams free over hill and dale at Banff Springs Golf Club in Banff, Alberta, Canada.

golfers and environmentalists along with a foreword by Tim Hiers, head superintendent at Collier's Reserve Country Club in Naples, Fla.

"*A View from the Rough* portrays the diverse efforts of people and institutions dedicated to enhancing the game of golf and the environment," Hiers wrote. "The courses shown are excellent examples of the ability to maintain some of the greatest holes in the world

in a fashion that supports and enhances the surroundings."

Klemme noted other books touting golf's positive environmental record are generally written for those already in the industry. *A View from the Rough* is targeted toward the general populace, which often makes decisions affecting golf courses.

"The idea is that it will provide

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## First University Club opens

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games, said partner Carl Espy. "Our premise was that, if we built an athletic facility in a community for the fans to use, they would use it."

"We consider it a resort destination. For example, people come to Columbia as an end destination. And if you can capitalize on that influx of people, that's great."

A partnership of Espy, The Robinson Co. President Ed Robinson and Central Florida

Turf (CFT) principals Jeff Harstine and Rodney Davis, the firm's mission is to involve the various university athletic booster organizations in developing a string of University Clubs.

The affiliation is mutually advantageous. Alumni and others can join the athletic support group at a university and pay a monthly dues to belong to the private University Club. Meanwhile, the club gives a percentage of its proceeds to the university athletic program

and makes the golf course available free to the golf teams.

"It's got to be a plus for both The University Club and the university," said Davis. "There is nothing that brings the university people together for functions and get-togethers. This brings them together on a golf course. They can wheel and deal on business and university matters, or they can just reminisce."

Here, the company approached the alumni-laden Gamecock Club, which has more than 12,000 members paying a yearly minimum contribution of \$150 — and some

pay many thousands — to support the athletic program. The result is a private club on 500 acres of land that will ultimately include 27 holes of championship-caliber golf, a nine-hole short course, 30-acre practice area, swimming and tennis facilities and resort-style housing.

"We will probably have one of the few golf teams [USC] in the country that is operating in a profit mode because of our financial obligations to the athletic department," Espy said. "Plus, we've generated 600 new members for the Gamecock Club."

He said The University Club

at USC has "created a dues scenario that puts us 40 to 50 percent below the market in terms of monthly dues."

Memberships are set up in geographic categories, with quotas established for four-county Metro Memberships and the statewide Regional Memberships, but no limit on memberships from outside South Carolina. "The chance of everyone from California coming in at the same time is remote," Espy reasoned.

As partners in The University Club, Davis and Harstine have first option to hire Central Florida Turf to building each course, as it did South Carolina's. The design work will vary. CFT designed the course here, but architect and LSU alumni Jim Lipe will design that track.

The University Club's agreement at LSU is with Tiger Athletic Foundation, and Espy has contacted several other organizations supporting universities in the Southeastern Conference. While not yet pursuing projects at schools outside the conference, the company will speak with other interested parties that approach it.

"Once one course gets in the ground, it makes all the difference in the world," Davis said. "We'll have something for [prospective clients] to look at."

That will also influence financing, Espy said. Funding has come with difficulty — from a bank and a few limited partners, he said.

Reluctant bankers, he said "are anxious now because they understand the concept better and see this as a real benefit since it reaches so many families."

"In future projects, we'll have a bank who will be the main underwriter and they will solicit local institutions based on the experience we've had here [at USC]."

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## View from the Rough

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people with some positive information about golf and accurate quotes they can use at cocktail parties, for instance," Klemme said. "We'd like to see superintendents make it available to the members at their club or have developers give it to city councils when they begin discussing plans for new golf developments."

Klemme said his favorite among the 200 photographs is the one that graces the cover. It is a shot of an elk standing in the middle of a fairway as the sun rises at Banff Springs in Alberta, Canada.

"It just seems to sum up the whole deal," Klemme said. "It has wildlife, trees, mountains and golf."

A *View from the Rough* will be available in late October for \$39.95 from Sleeping Bear Press, 121 South Main Street, PO Box 20, Chelsea, MI 48118, telephone 800-487-2323 or from the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, Technical Information Services Department, 1421 Research Park Drive, Lawrence, KS 66049, telephone 800-472-7878.