

# GOLF COURSE NEWS

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## Practitioners cite success with ceramics

By MARK LESLIE

Arnold Palmer, who wants nothing but the best for his home course, has taken the plunge with porous ceramics. Old buddy Gary Player has, too. And arguably the most agronomically knowledgeable golf course architect, PhD-carrying Michael Hurdzan, has been an engineer on the putting-green-sans-peat train for years.

Now, even as the debate over organics-vs-ceramics in greens mixes boils in the golf industry, more superintendents, architects and builders are venturing into the world of custom-designed root zones.

"I think there is no question porous ceramics have physical characteristics that can be used to amend a sand to

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Warren Grant photo

### BREATHE IT IN

Mountain Air Country Club in Burnsville, N.C., is the latest design from Pete Dye disciple Scott Pool. Mountain Air ranks as the third-highest golf course east of the Mississippi River. In fact, it boasts both the highest nine holes, not to mention the highest airport runway east of the Mississippi. For story, see page 31.



### STRAIGHT UP, ON THE ROCKS

Keith Foster (right) and Thomas Patrick chart their new desert course. For story and photo, see page 31.

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### DEDUCTION REDUX

## Private clubs suffer under new tax code

By PETER BLAIS

ALEXANDRIA, Va. — More than a quarter of the nation's private golf clubs experienced a drop in membership sales and one-third reported a decline in gross food and beverage revenues one year after the federal government eliminated the income-tax deductibility for club dues and reduced deductions for business entertainment, according to a National Club Association (NCA) study.

The Government Relations Education Fund surveyed NCA-member city and golf and country clubs to determine what economic changes they had experienced since 1993,

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## Par-3 development gains popularity, viability

By PETER BLAIS

New golfers need a place to learn the game. Developers can't find reasonably priced land for larger facilities.

The solution: Build more par-3 golf courses.

That's just what's happening as the shorter layouts are springing up as both additions to existing courses and as stand-alone facilities throughout the country.

According to National Golf Foun-



Barry Frank

ation figures, the number of new par-3 openings increased from seven in 1989 to 24 in 1994. The most-recent figure represents 6.3 percent of the 381 courses opened last year.

"In a lot of cases, a par-3 makes sense," said Barry Frank, vice president of NGF Consulting. "You don't need much land, somewhere between 15 and 50 acres depending on the layout

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## GOLF COURSE



## EXPO

ORANGE COUNTY CONVENTION CENTER  
ORLANDO, FLORIDA  
NOVEMBER 9-10, 1995

CONFERENCE PREVIEW:  
MARKETING & MANAGEMENT  
SEE PAGE 46

## Public-access boom pushing existing courses to upgrade

By J. BARRY MOTHES

ORLANDO — Upgrade. Upgrade. Upgrade.

Get used to that word. It just might be the golf industry mantra for the rest of the decade, and into the 21st century. Consider the following items from less than a week's worth of national news clippings:

- A \$2.3 million upgrade is ongoing at the Salishan Golf Links, a 30-year-old resort course in Gleneden Beach, Ore. Holes have

been remodeled, a new irrigation and drainage system is being installed, and an 18-hole putting course is planned.

- The 27-hole, daily-fee Galloping Hill Golf Course in Union, N.J., opened in 1928, has embarked on a \$4.8 million upgrade that includes a

new automated sprinkler system, fairway reconstruction, new tees and greens, and new cart paths.

- The Golf Course Com-

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Expo "upgrade" panelist Rees Jones