

Marketing track touches all bases at Public Golf Forum

By PETER BLAIS

CHICAGO — With more new courses opening every year, owners and operators must find new and inventive ways to attract golfers to their facilities. That's why marketing is expected to be one of the most popular tracks at the 1996 Public Golf Forum scheduled for Oct. 27-29, here at the Marriott-Lincolnshie Hotel.

Sponsored by *Golf Course News*, this national event will draw owners, managers and superintendents of public-access golf courses seeking better ways to manage their courses from a nationally acclaimed line-up of guest speakers.

Recent news that rounds were finally heading in the right direction — up 5.5 percent in 1995 according to the National Golf Foundation — was welcome news to an industry that has seen demand remain stagnant while the supply of courses has increased dramatically in recent years.

"There hasn't been any material change in rounds played, though we have been adding 2 or 3 percent each year to the course supply," NGF President Dr. Joseph

Beditz said of the pre-1995 statistics.

Courses that have survived and prospered are those that have done the best job of selling their facilities to the golfing public. Among the speakers who will instruct attendees how best to do that are former National Golf Course Owners Association President Vince Alfonso; professional golf photographer Mike Klemme, president of Golfoto Inc.; Mike Petty, president of Communication Links, a public relations firm; Laurence Hirsh, president of Golf Property Analysts and past president of the Society of Golf Appraisers; Dave Richards, president of Golf Marketing Services; Paul Beachnau, executive director of the Gaylord (Mich.) Golf Mecca; and Peter Hill and Rich Katz, chief executive officer and director of sales and marketing, respectively, with Billy Casper Golf Management.

Alfonso, president of Alfonso Creative Golf Enterprises Inc., will kick off the marketing track on the morning of Monday, Oct. 28, with a session titled *Turning on to TV and Radio*. Following Alfonso on the first day schedule are:

- Klemme, whose work has appeared

in numerous national consumer and trade golf publications, will speak on *Using Photography to Sell Your Course*.

- Petty, whose Scottsdale, Ariz., PR firm represents some of the top courses in that part of the country, will give a talk on *Making Public and Community Relations a Marketing Advantage*.

- Hirsh, who has appraised golf courses throughout the United States, will discuss *10 Ways to Upscale Your Course*.

The second day will begin with a general session on customer service. Following lunch and the exhibitors' floor show, the marketing track will resume with:

- Richards, known for his expertise in destination marketing, will discuss *Non-Traditional Marketing Techniques*.

- Beachnau, who oversees the marketing of 21 courses and a \$200,000 promotional budget for Gaylord-area facilities, will give a talk entitled *Group Marketing: More Together Than We Are Alone*.

- Hill and Katz, who together head one of the most-respected management companies in the country, will talk on *Bartering: The Cash Flow Lifesaver*.



PUBLIC GOLF FORUM

A NATIONAL BUSINESS CONFERENCE AND EXPO FOR SUPERINTENDENTS, OWNERS, MANAGERS, AND DEVELOPERS OF PUBLIC-ACCESS GOLF FACILITIES
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- For a preview of the Maintenance program, turn to **page 39**.
- Architect Dick Nugent has earned national honors for his golf course development atop a Chicago landfill. He'll offer a case study of the project at the Forum. See **page 38**.
- Keith Foster has made a name for himself in the municipal market, taking unorthodox sites and developing award-winning courses. He'll speak on the subject in Chicago. See **page 3**.



The 6th and 7th greens at Jacobsen/Hardie-designed Oregon Golf Club in West Linn, Ore.

Jacobsen to keynote Forum

Continued from page 1

and Torrey Pines in 1995, Jacobsen is one of the PGA Tour's most versatile, affable characters. Not many pros, for example, have competed for the Ryder Cup, authored best-selling books ("Buried Lies") and played lead guitar for Jake Trout and the Flounders, a group that used to perform at PGA Tour events.

Despite his strongest play in years — he finished 7th on the 1995 PGA Tour money list with two victories, two seconds and third — Jacobsen has stepped up design schedule this year. Portland, Ore.-based Jacobsen/Hardie Design has five projects in the works: the 27-hole Cypress Ridge development near San Luis Obispo, Calif.; The Oaks, an 18-hole project under construction near Sacramento; Fox Hills, an 18-hole course in Los Banos, Calif.; an still-to-be named 18-hole project in Mendocino, Calif.; and a 36-hole project in Houston.

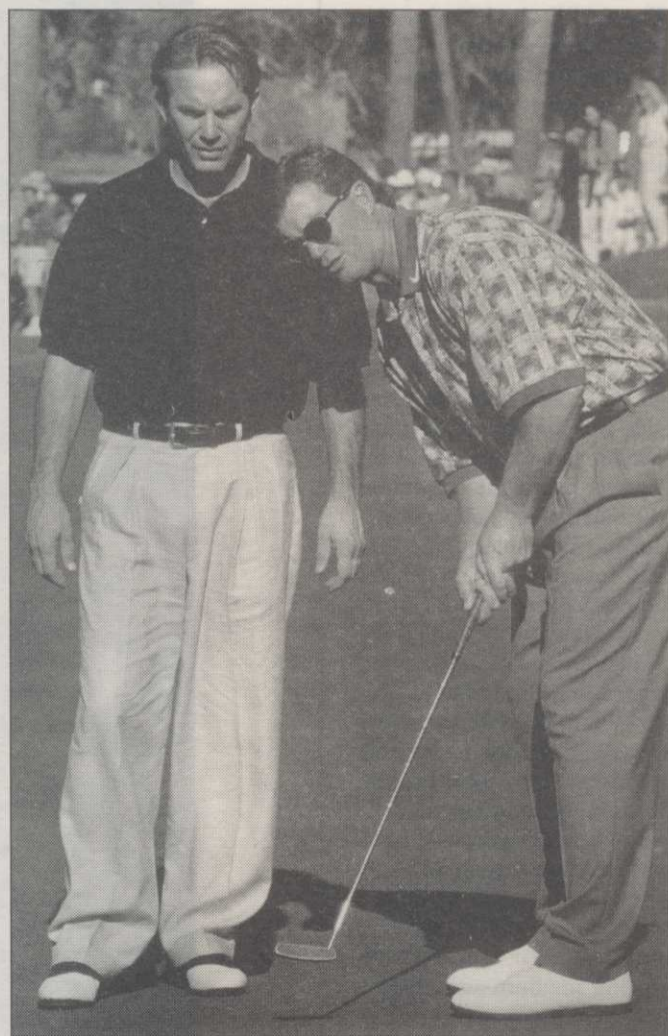
Jacobsen is also responsible for a quartet of finished products now garnering acclaim in the Pacific Northwest: Oregon Golf Club in West Linn, Genoa Lakes in Lake Tahoe, Creekside in Salem, Ore., and Eagle Point in Medford, Ore. Oregon GC has received considerable praise while Genoa Lakes was named 1994's third best public course, according to *Golf Digest*.

Like Genoa Lakes, all Jacobsen/Hardie Design projects — those in planning, under construction and open for play — are public-access.

"We couldn't be happier to have Peter keynote The Public Golf Forum," said *Golf Course News* Publisher Charles von Brecht. "Peter's a star on the rise in the design field and it's gratifying to see he has displayed such a commitment to public-access golf. Further, I can't think of a more witty, interesting speaker in golf today."

Jacobsen's commitment to affordable, accessible golf is also good business, as the U.S. golf course market has been dominated by public-access development since 1990. Of the 2,000-plus courses which have opened for play during this decade, an astounding 80 percent have been either daily-fee, municipal or resort. Public-access facilities now account for more than two-thirds of the nation's 15,000 golf courses.

By sponsoring the Public Golf Forum, *Golf Course News* has also shown its commitment to the increasingly competitive public-access market. With record numbers of daily-fee, municipal and resort courses openings each year, only sophisticated operations that emphasize customer service, manage efficiently, market aggressively and maintain for quality will thrive. The application of these sound business principles to public-access course operations will dominate the four-track education conference at The Public Golf Forum.



JACOBSEN ON THE SILVER SCREEN?

Actor Kevin Costner (left) pays close attention to the putting stroke of Peter Jacobsen during filming of the movie "Tin Cup," which opens at theatres nationwide on Aug. 9. Jacobsen is one of several PGA Tour professionals who helped tutor Costner and also made cameo appearances in the film. The film, which also stars Don Johnson, Renee Russo and Cheech Marin, follows the fortunes of Roy "Tin Cup" McAvoy (Costner), a gifted golfer spinning his wheels at a West Texas driving range. In an attempt to gain professional redemption, not to mention "the girl," McAvoy qualifies for the U.S. Open and embarks on his own "Cinderella story." The film was shot in Houston at Deerwood and Kingwood country clubs, and in Tuscon at Tubac and La Paloma country clubs.

With Marketing, Management, Maintenance and Development programs designed specifically for owners, managers, superintendents and developers of public-access facilities, The

Forum will provide attendees the edge they need.

For information on attending or exhibiting at the Forum, contact the Golf Course News Conference Group at 207-846-0600.