

Florida man develops a maze-ing concept

NORTH PORT, Fla. — Charles Hamilton has figured out a way to make a miniature, putting golf course perpetually challenging, if not eternally frustrating and even a little spooky.

Hamilton, a sod farmer, is in the process of developing a putting course that will wind its way through a maze of 8-foot high viburnum hedges. There will be swinging gates within the maze to allow him to change the layout of the course every day. Hamilton has already secured a patent for the idea.

As if that's not enough, the patented course will also feature two fountains that players will have to duck under while playing and two fog machines that will blow a cooling mist around the maze that will temporarily disorient people lining up their putts.

Hamilton and his wife, Chris, recently opened the first phase of their \$500,000 Woodhaven Family Golf Center which will eventually include a lighted driving range, nine-hole pitch-and-putt course, and the unique miniature putting course in the maze.

Methane leaks force closing of N.C. golf facility

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — High levels of methane gas have closed the clubhouse at Renaissance Golf Course indefinitely. The course is part of the city-owned park where a methane explosion seriously burned a woman in 1994.

The course had reopened hours after the November 1994 explosion on a neighboring recreational soccer field. A woman looking for a soccer ball in a hole near a light pole lit a pocket lighter and methane in the hole exploded. No dangerous methane levels were found at the course at that time. Renaissance Park, off Tyvola Road near the Charlotte Coliseum, sits atop an old landfill, which generates potentially explosive methane gas.

In late December, alarms sounded at the clubhouse indicating a buildup of methane gas. Methane readings inside the concrete block walls of the clubhouse reached five times higher than safety standards. Officials suspect a problem with a system outside the clubhouse that is supposed to capture and vent methane from the soil and into the air before it reaches the clubhouse.

American Golf Corp., which manages the course, has closed the facility until late summer for ongoing renovations. It's possible a temporary clubhouse may be built. The course's front nine holes had already been closed for grading repairs when the dangerous methane levels were found.

CLUBCORP, SUDING TEAM TO WIN ENVIRONMENTAL AWARD

CORPUS CHRISTI, Texas — The team of Padre Isles Country Club and course superintendent Carl Suding are one of 19 U.S. merit winners for 1995 of the GCSAA fourth annual Environmental Steward Award. Created by Ciba-Geigy Chemicals and Rain Bird Golf, the award recognizes professionals whose efforts protect or enhance a golf course's environment and, ultimately, provides thousands of dollars to the GCSAA's Scholarship and Research fund. ClubCorp has overseen Padre Isles since 1994.

Rain delays opening of NC course

GREENVILLE, N.C. — Weather delays have pushed the Ironwood golf course community's planned December 1995 grand opening back to at least this March.

Construction of Ironwood, which features an 18-hole Lee Trevino signature golf course and private clubhouse, is virtually finished.

Sodding work, which has been pushed back by the wet weather, is moving closer to completion, according to developers.

The overall Ironwood project on Highway 43 will include a private 18-hole golf course and community on the north side of the highway, as well as a separate, and as-yet-unnamed 18-hole public layout.

Construction of the public course will begin in the next few years on the south side of State Highway 43.

Ironwood officials have said they will allow public play on the private course until the public course is completed.

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