

# Champion Hills subject of major N.C. regrassing effort

HENDERSONVILLE, N.C. — Golf course superintendent Bill Maynard has led a massive regrassing project here at the Tom Fazio-designed Champion Hills Country Club in the mountains of western North Carolina.

The course has been converted from bluegrass to bentgrass. The newly sodded front nine opened in April and the back nine, which was seeded, is expected to be ready sometime this month.

When Fazio designed and built

the private 18-hole golf course in 1990, it was almost immediately hailed as one of the top new golf courses in the southeast part of the country.

In 1993, The Branigar Organization — which has developed more than 80 golf courses throughout the country — purchased Champion Hills and decided it wanted to improve the golf course.

Branigar hired Maynard last April to be the course superintendent and to supervise

the regrassing project. Maynard had been an assistant superintendent at The Golf Club of Tennessee and in charge of maintenance at The Virginian Golf Club in Bristol, Va., both Fazio-designed courses that have earned plaudits.

Maynard worked with Joe Duich, a Penn State professor and turfgrass expert, to develop a plan to convert Champion Hills to bentgrass. Maynard and his crew have installed more than 8,000 linear feet of drain — plus

tons of gravel and sand in the eight inches beneath the top surface — to prevent the fairways from becoming soggy and spongy.

"When Mr. Fazio designed the course, he made it so that water drained naturally," said Maynard. "All we did was give every bit of water that hits the course a bus to get on and go where we want it to. That was one of our priorities. We want to have tight, firm bentgrass fairways."

## Hope for new par-3 course encourages Calif. golfers

SALINAS, Calif. — The city may not lose its only par-3 nine-hole golf course after all.

A city council subcommittee has found a possible site to replace the Sherwood Greens Golf Course: 55 acres of city property at the Salinas City Sewage Treatment Plant off Hitchcock Road.

Sherwood Greens is due to be replaced by football and soccer fields in about two years. The California Rodeo Association, which is headquartered at the site, is planning to remodel the grounds into a year-round sports complex beginning this summer.

Local golfers have been upset at the news that Sherwood Greens will be closing.

City councilor Jim Collins has said the sewer treatment plant site could work, even though the course would need to be designed around treatment ponds and basins, an underground pipe system and several buildings. Collins said a decision should be made soon to allow a new course to be ready when Sherwood Greens closes.

## La. expansion should be ready for Labor Day

ABBEVILLE, La. — The Abbeville Golf and Country Club here is quickly being reshaped into an entirely new golfscape.

The club's conversion from a 9-hole to an 18-hole course is well ahead of schedule, according to general manager Tom Carter. The target date for completion of the project is Labor Day weekend.

Dirt-moving was finished by the end of April and seeding started in early May, according to Carter.

Along with the work on an entirely new nine, seven of the existing nine holes are also being renovated. Carter has said it will be like a whole new golf course, though the name will remain the same.

Carter said he expects the new 18-hole course will significantly increase the membership of the club and usage of the course. Current membership is about 340 and Carter said he expects it to grow up to 500 in the next year.

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