

## IN BRIEF

**BROOKLINE, Mass.** — Architect Rees Jones has already met with officials at The Country Club to review preparations for the 1999 Ryder Cup to be held there. Jones, who frequently consults with courses in the U.S. Open rotation and worked with officials at Congressional leading up to last month's U.S. Open, is already very familiar with The Country Club, one of the oldest private courses in the country and the site of Francis Ouimet's legendary 1913 U.S. Open win as a young unknown amateur over famous British professionals Harry Vardon and Ted Ray. Jones handled the renovations to The Country Club course for the 1988 U.S. Open, which was won by Curtis Strange in an 18-hole playoff over Nick Faldo.

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**TULSA, Okla.** — Tulsa's public golf courses have joined the rapidly growing alternative-spike movement sweeping the United States. Metal spikes are now banned at all of the city's public courses — Page Belcher, Mohawk, LaFortune, South Lakes, Forest Ridge, Bailey Ranch, White Hawk and Battlecreek.



The 18th hole at Montlake Golf Club borders a former tourist attraction, a steep-sided sunken lake sitting atop a 2,000-foot mountain outside Chattanooga, Tenn. The 18-hole, par-71 course was designed by owners Earl and Fred Spear, who moved from Florida and opened the course in 1987. Due to health problems, the two brothers are selling the 5,845-yard public course and 4,800-square-foot clubhouse.

## Merion being considered for U.S. Open

**ARDMORE, Pa.**—The Merion Golf Club, host of four U.S. Opens, was played and reviewed by some of the world's most famous golfers this spring to help the United States Golf Association determine whether the legendary layout outside Philadelphia still has what it takes to host a U.S. Open.

According to the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, David Fay, executive director of the USGA, confirmed that "players of note" would play Merion in the late spring and report their findings. Sources told the

paper that Greg Norman and Nick Faldo were likely candidates.

Merion has hosted 15 USGA events, including the 1934, 1950, 1971 and 1981 U.S. Opens. It has been a candidate for the last two U.S. Opens awarded by the USGA, but was passed over for Southern Hills in Tulsa, Okla., in 2001 and the Black Course at Bethpage State Park in Farmingdale, N.Y., in 2002.

Fay said Merion's relative lack of extra space for exhibition tents, parking and

other inevitable modern U.S. Open activities has not been one of the deciding factors against its selection in recent years. But some USGA officials have reportedly questioned whether the 6,500-yard championship course is sufficient to challenge modern golfers and modern golf equipment improvements.

Fay told the *Inquirer* that some have specifically questioned the strength of Merion's finishing holes. But he also said that players he spoke to had been very enthusiastic about Merion and the idea of a future U.S. Open there.

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