

Non-profit formed to protect water rights in Arizona's stingy supply

By PETER BLAIS

PHOENIX — Protecting the Arizona golf industry's water rights is one of the main purposes of the Golf Industry Association (GIA), a new non-profit corporation formed to preserve the quality and promote the growth of the game across the state.

"There is a significant need for this type of united advocacy on behalf of the game of golf," said Tom Patrick, president of the GIA and vice president of Phoenix-based SunCor Resort and Golf Management.

"Over the years, golf has made tremendous contributions to our quality of life in Arizona. However, recently many legislative and regulatory issues have arisen which could adversely affect all levels of our industry as well as the spirit of the game."

Many of those legislative and regulatory issues have revolved around water. Strict regulations limit the amount of irrigated turf on Arizona courses, Patrick noted. However, a recent University of Arizona study indicates that traditional

formulas for estimating golf course water use may be faulty.

"The study indicates we need to look at increasing golf course allocations," the GIA president said. "The test plots used to estimate water use don't take into account the edge effect of having golf courses border the desert. On a golf course, there's nothing to stop the

Continued on page 36



WATERING HOLE

With Camelback Mountain at their backs and water hazards ahead, golfers negotiate the third hole of The Phoenician's Desert Nine, the new Ted Robinson-designed layout at the Scottsdale, Ariz. resort. The original Phoenician resort opened with 18 Homer Flint-designed holes in 1988. The new nine opened last April. ITT Sheraton Corp. of Boston owns and manages the facility. The Phoenician and other Arizona courses should benefit from the non-profit Golf Industry Association formed recently to champion water rights and other issues of concern to the state's many golf facilities.

Pebble Beach effluent study ready to go

By J. BARRY MOTHES

MONTEREY, Calif. — A critical, long-term "demonstration trial" to study the effects of reclaimed water on annual bluegrass putting greens — like those at Pebble Beach and several other well-known Monterey Peninsula golf courses here — will start by the end of this month.

Over the next few weeks, 28, 15-by-15-foot field plots will be installed near the 11th and 12th holes at the Pebble Beach Golf Links. Each plot will have different combinations of grass types, soil mixes and construction styles and will be irrigated with reclaimed water. A main goal of the trial will center on finding ways for peninsula superintendents to maintain world-class putting surfaces while using water with a salt content that has proved troublesome.

"There are all sorts of things that people don't know about using reclaimed water on golf courses that get lots of traffic and use low-mowing heights," said Mark Mahady, an agronomic consultant based in Carmel Valley, Calif., who is leading the study. "We think this study will help us figure that out."

The reclaimed water research project was developed in the wake of problems on putting greens at seven Monterey Peninsula golf courses. In 1994, a \$34 million recycled water project was launched by the Pebble Beach Co., whose courses started using reclaimed water to irrigate its tees, fairways and greens. Within a year, however, superintendents started noticing discoloration, wilting and disease on their greens.

The problems have been linked in part

Continued on page 37

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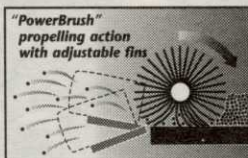
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