

Bama mulls new Jones Trail stop

PRATTVILLE, Ala. — It appears this town is close to becoming another stop on the state's highly regarded Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail, a group of seven, daily-fee golf facilities designed across Alabama by Robert Trent Jones.

Deborah McGill, director of economic development at the Prattville Area Chamber of Commerce, told the *Montgomery (Ala.) Advertiser*, "We have met all obligations with the exception" of obtaining a lease for some property from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers."

Several city and county commissions have signed on to the proposed \$22.5 million project.

David Bronner, chief executive of the Retirement Systems of Alabama, which manages the Robert Trent Jones courses, said leasing a large parcel of federal land along the Alabama River will be crucial to the project's viability. He said the wilderness setting and wetlands beauty are critical to the success of the envisioned 1,100-acre, 36-hole facility.

Prattville, which is just outside Montgomery with easy access to Interstate 65 and the Alabama River via riverboat, is seen as a well-positioned location for another Trail stop.

According to a multi-faceted arrangement between Prattville and several area county commissions, Prattville would be responsible for the land purchase while paying for an access road, water and sewage lines to the golf course.

The Retirement Systems of Alabama would be responsible for the debt of the golf course itself and the only entity to profit directly.

Dog solves goose problem — again

GARDNER, Mass. — Officials here at the Gardner Municipal Golf Course have contributed to a growing maintenance trend at Northeast golf courses — they've hired a border collie.

The city council recently approved using \$3,500 from golf course funds to buy, house and insure a one- to two-year-old, professionally trained dog to chase away Canada geese from the golf course.

The dog will live with golf professional Michael Egan, who will supervise the dog's seven- to 10-hour work day patrolling the course that is home to as many as 200 birds during the warm months. The geese migrate south in the winter and return in growing numbers each spring.

N.Y. town shows expanded patience

HAMBURG, N.Y. — The new back nine here at Hamburg Town Golf Course will not be ready for play until late summer or early fall. The new nine holes were seeded last autumn, but town and golf course officials are waiting several months before sub-

jecting the new grass to hundreds of golfers. "Dry conditions and warm temperatures would be a boost for this grass to mature," Superintendent Gary Nelson told *The Buffalo News*. "I really can't say when it will open. The weather is the biggest factor."

Soon: Not so soggy in Schenectady

SCHENECTADY, N.Y. — A \$215,000 project is underway to improve drainage here at the Schenectady Municipal Golf Course. The popular course has historically suffered from soggy, swamped holes in the spring and after heavy rains. Officials have usually been forced to close a hole or two and keep golf carts off the course for days.

At least seven holes are expected to improve dramatically with the improved drainage. A new holding pond behind the 11th tee is also being built as part of the project. Along with the drainage project, work will also start on a full system of paved cart paths. City officials are also planning \$200,000 in improvements to the clubhouse.



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