

GOLF COURSE NEWS

THE NEWSPAPER FOR THE GOLF COURSE INDUSTRY

A UNITED PUBLICATION
VOLUME 9, NUMBER 11
NOVEMBER 1997 • \$5.50

INSIDE

Golf and the Environment

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Anti-golf activists are taking bold strides to halt development in the Asian market. 9



Photo by Kevin Frisch

WEISKOPF SURVEYS HIS FIRST TRACK IN MICH.

"You are only limited by your imagination," said PGA Tour great and golf course architect Tom Weiskopf, center, shown looking over the site for his design at Shanty Creek Resort in Bellaire, Mich. Weiskopf is flanked by his shaper Bob McClure, left, and Don Richards of golf course builder H&D, Inc. It is Weiskopf's first design in the Wolverine State. See story, page 26.

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Stormwater runoff battle rages on in Fla.

By J. BARRY MOTHES

SARASOTA, Fla. — A group of 27 Sarasota golf courses continues to battle the Sarasota County government over stormwater runoff assessment bills that have cost some courses as much as \$46,000 per year and in some cases seriously threatened their survival.

The courses, organized as the Suncoast Golf Course Association, say the rates are far too high and unfair when compared to lower rates assessed to other agricultural-related operations in the counties like farms, nurseries and pastures. The group has filed two lawsuits over the stormwater assessment issue which are still pending. One challenges the level of the assessment rate. The other seeks a re-

bate for what the golf courses contend is excess money they have paid in assessment rates for the past two years.

Stormwater runoff assessments became a hot issue for the Sarasota-area courses starting in 1995 when turf areas became subject to assessments. Prior to that, the courses paid assessments that related only to parking lots and other non-turf areas. The new rates, approved by the county's Board of

Continued on page 44



SAFETY BY DESIGN

Safety programs too often overlooked in planning

By MARK LESLIE

NEW YORK — A backhoe cracks into a natural gas line and — boom — the town of North Blenheim virtually blows up. A piece of heavy equipment cuts an underground electrical main, shutting down New Jersey's Newark Airport for a day. In cases around the country, laborers are struck by heavy equipment, caught in trench cave-ins, bedridden by Lyme disease contracted from a deer tick on a forested job site.

The "heavy-highway" industry, where these

Continued on page 32

TPC ON THE RISE



Photo by Stan Badz

The Tournament Players Club (TPC) at Scottsdale (Ariz.) above is among the growing stable of Tournament Players Club courses operated by the PGA Tour. See story on new TPC, pg. 23

Toro looks toward '99

By M. LEVANS

BLOOMINGTON, Minn. — The Toro Co. and Pinehurst Resort and Country Club, in cooperation with Pinehurst Championship Management, have inked a multi-year agreement that makes Toro the preferred golf course maintenance equipment and irrigation supplier for the Resorts for Pinehurst in North Carolina.

Under the new agreement, Toro will provide

Continued on page 40

Cart-path rule gets its day in court

By BOB SPIWAK

An incident at Lassing Pointe Golf Course in northern Kentucky may have far reaching implications for the future of "The Cart-Path Rule" around the country. Involving a handicapped golfer, the situation was resolved in October after a year and a half of controversy.

Don Duckworth of Covington, Ky., had a heart attack in 1993. He was not expected to live. Two years later, he had open-heart surgery twice and survived. His doctor told him

Continued on page 38



Greg Jones, founder of the ADMG, takes one out of the sand.

November

- 6-7 — GCSAA Seminar on Writing Successfully for Business and Publications in Somerset, N.J. *
- 10 — GCSAA Seminar on Employee Safety Training in Rhinelander, Wis. *
- 11-12 — GCSAA Seminar on Golf Greens: History, Theory, Construction and Maintenance in Wichita, Kansas. *
- 11 — GCSAA Seminar on Maximizing Turfgrass Disease Control in Lexington, Ky. *
- 11 — GCSAA Seminar on Options and Their Application in Pest Management in Industry, Calif. *
- 11 — GCSAA Seminar on Wetlands and Golf Courses in Novi, Mich. *
- 13-14 — GCSAA Seminar on Managing People for Peak Performance and Job Satisfaction. *
- 15-18 — Associated Landscape Contractors of America Landscape and Grounds Maintenance Conference and Green Industry Expo in Charlotte, N.C. Contact Elise Lindsey at 703-736-9666.
- 16-19 — Canada's First International Golf Business Conference in Barrie, Ontario. Contact 705-325-2740 ext. 3075.
- 17 — UMass Extension Biological Control Conference in Amherst, Mass. Contact Mary Owen at 508-892-0382.
- 17-18 — GCSAA Seminar on Plant Nutrition and Fertilizers in New Seabury, Mass. *
- 18 — GCSAA Seminar on Advanced Weed Management in Myrtle Beach, S.C. *
- 18-19 — GCSAA Seminar on Golf Greens: History, Theory, Construction and Maintenance in Garden City, N.Y. *
- 18 — GCSAA Seminar on Human Resource Management in Myrtle Beach, S.C. *
- 18 — GCSAA Seminar on Irrigation System Operation and Principles of Design in Myrtle Beach, S.C. *
- 18 — GCSAA Seminar on Lake and Aquatic Plant Management in San Marcos, Calif. *
- 20 — GCSAA Seminar on Employee Safety Training in New Rochelle, N.Y. *
- 20-21 — GCSAA Seminar on Managing People for Peak Performance and Job Satisfaction. *
- 21 — GCSAA Seminar on Irrigation System Operation and Principles of Design. *

December

- 2-3 — GCSAA Seminar on The Assistant Superintendent: Managing People and Jobs in Lincoln, Neb. *
- 3-4 — GCSAA Seminar on Managing People for Peak Performance and Job Satisfaction in Elicott City, Md. *
- 4 — GCSAA Seminar on Improving Your Negotiating Skills in Jacksonville, Fla. *
- 5 — GCSAA Seminar on Human Resource Management in Des Moines, Iowa. *
- 5 — GCSAA Seminar on Irrigation Water Quality in Sacramento, Calif. *
- 8 — GCSAA Seminar on Integrated Disease Management for Bermudagrass Golf Courses in Slidell, La. *
- 8-9 — GCSAA Seminar on Managing People for Peak Performance and Job Satisfaction in Albuquerque, N.M. *
- 8 — GCSAA Seminar on Maximizing Teamwork in Atlantic City, N.J. *
- 9-10 — GCSAA Seminar on Managerial Productivity in Milwaukee. *
- 9-11 — New Jersey Turfgrass & Landscape Expo in Atlantic City, N.J. Contact Richard Caton at 908-821-7134.
- 9-11 — Georgia Turfgrass Conference and Show in College Park. Contact Doug Moody at 770-975-4123.
- 11 — Massachusetts Recreation and Park Association State Conference in Sturbridge. Contact Carol Kilcoyne at 508-650-1126.
- 15-17 — Texas Turfgrass Conference and Trade Show in San Antonio.
- 16 — GCSAA Seminar on Employee Safety Training in Oklahoma City. *

FROM THE COVER

Stormwater runoff

Continued from page 1

Commissioners, were created in part to help pay the costs of capital improvements to the county's stormwater system. But many courses began receiving annual stormwater bills that increased anywhere from seven to 20 times. Foxfire Golf Club, a privately-owned 27-hole daily-fee facility, paid \$5,466 in assessments in 1993 but saw its bill jump to \$37,840 in 1995. Municipal golf courses are exempt from the assessments.

The Suncoast Golf Courses Association recently won a concession from the county in the ongoing struggle. The county agreed to reduce the annual assessment rate for 1997-98 from .148 to .037, a 75-percent reduction that will mean a combined \$250,000 reduction in the amount paid by the courses. But Linda Talbot, vice-president and manager of the Foxfire Golf Club and president of the Suncoast Golf Courses Association, said the .037 rate is still too high. The association would like to see the rate go down to at least .0257, a difference that represents thousands of dollars.

"It's still a slap in the face as far as I'm concerned," said Talbot. "It's outrageous. The figures they are getting are so out of whack compared with what agriculture is paying. They're paying 10 percent less than we are. We still have to continue the fight. We're sod farmers in the purest sense of the word ... We're being penalized because we allow people to play on the surface we cultivate."

Talbot said the county's assessment rate, even the recently reduced one, is "not based on scientific facts ... it was a politically expedient thing for them to do to send off the litigation..." She also criticized some of the standards used by the county to develop the rate level for golf courses. She said cart paths are factored in, for example, as if they were large-scale parking lots. In developing its original rate, the county also stated that it assumed golf courses irrigated at least 3.5 inches a week and that agricultural concerns did not irrigate, both of which proved to be untrue.

J. P. Marchand, the deputy director of transportation for Sarasota County who oversees the county's stormwater program, said the new, reduced rate for golf courses was the result of using more sophisticated methodology. He said it recognizes that golf courses do not contribute as much runoff as a neighborhood lawn.

"I think our initial rate was fair," said Marchand, the former manager of the stormwater program, "but maybe you could say the new rate is 'more fair.' As we move on we may make even more refinements... Maybe we could have gotten to this step sooner... but we've made some adjustments and some modifications."

Golf courses and government bodies in several other counties in Florida have been watching the Sarasota stormwater assessment controversy with great interest. Stormwater runoff assessments, like fire and rescue, are what are known as non-ad valorem and are assessed against individual property owners according to the benefits to that particular property.

In Florida, except for certain charter counties, non-ad valorem assessments like the stormwater runoff one may be made by the county without a public vote, which is what happened in Sarasota. The concern of golf courses across the state is that Sarasota County's treatment of privately-owned golf courses could become a pattern in other counties.

Talbot said even though her group's legal costs are rising, they will continue to fight the county, and if necessary, help golf course owners in other counties. Don Hemke, an attorney with the firm of Carlton Fields in Tampa, has been representing the golf course owners group since January. "I think we have a challenge and obligation to educate the County Board of Commissioners," said Talbot, "to educate politicians about what we do, and how well we do it, how much oxygen we supply, how much nature we support and how careful we are with the chemicals we do use."

Golf Course Marketplace

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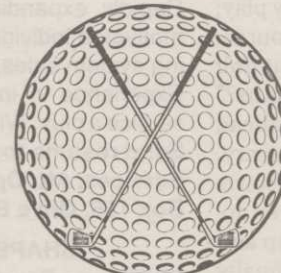
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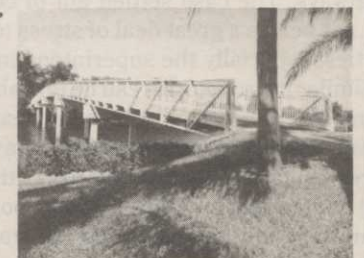
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