

Beale AFB course to go 18, open to the public

MARYSVILLE, Calif. — Since it opened for play in 1968, the nine-hole course at Beale Air Force Base served functionally as recreational space for officers and enlisted personnel. With help from Santa Rosa, Calif.-based Golfplan, Aspen Meadows Golf Course will soon offer 18 holes of golf, all of them open to the Greater Sacramento playing public.

Work begins this fall on a new nine at

Aspen Meadows, where Golfplan, The Ronald Fream Design Group, has developed a master plan which creates nine new holes and integrates them with the existing nine. The new track is scheduled to open in spring 1998.

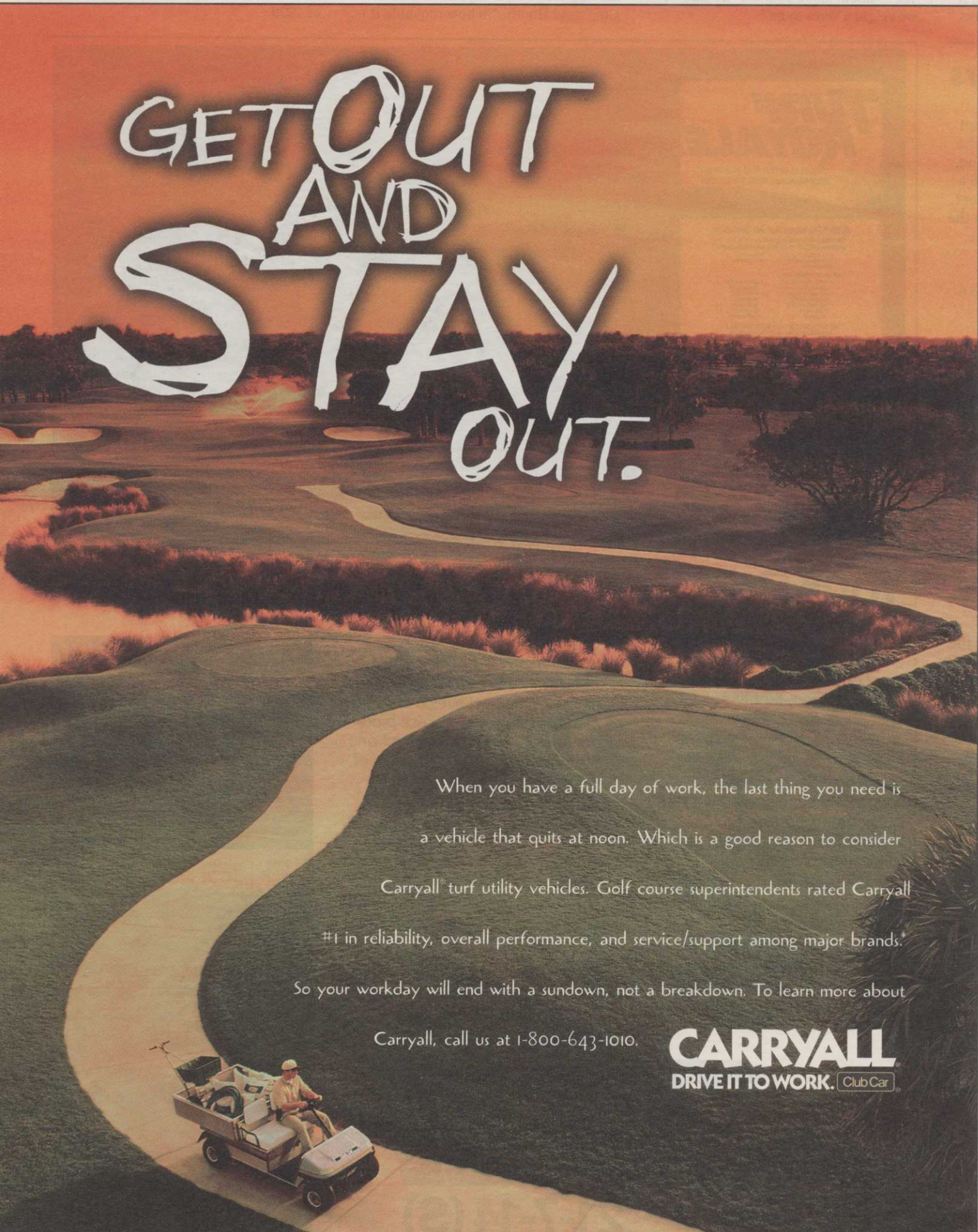
"Our work here is far more substantial than simply designing a new nine holes," explained Doug Kuebelbeck, a senior architect with Golfplan. "The nine new holes

will be beautiful, as they are routed up into the rolling hills and play around stream channels. However, in addition to integrating the old nine into the new nine, we've touched up and lengthened several existing holes. When it opens next year, Aspen Meadow will be a completely different, far superior golfing experience."

The old nine at Aspen Meadows measured 3,000 yards and played to a par of

35. The new, par-72 layout will measure 6,809 yards from back tees, 5,202 from the front. In concert with transformation of its golf course, Beale AFB has chosen to convert Aspen Meadows into a "tri-club," meaning the unique facility will serve as an officers' club, enlisted club and golf club.

Another uncommon aspect of Aspen Meadows' development is the speed with which it gained approval. Expansion of Aspen Meadows went from design stage to ground-breaking in just 24 months.



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Non-profit group hopes to build on government land

VAIL, Colo. — A unique plan to build an affordable public golf course has been devised here, where a non-profit organization is trying to build a course on government-owned lands.

According to Porter Caldwell, director of the non-profit Public Golf Association of the Eagle Valley (PGAE): "The Department of Interior's Bureau of Land Management has a program where they will sell or lease land for recreational purposes." The Recreation and Public Purposes Act of 1974 authorizes the conveyance of government lands for recreation and it has been used several times for golf courses.

"The conveyance of BLM land is the key to obtaining this affordable public golf course," Caldwell said.

Access to affordable golf has become the rallying cry of the local communities. The town of Avon, for instance, is concerned about the future of public golf. Mayor Jack Fawcett spoke on behalf of the PGAE: "The town is responsible for meeting the recreational needs of its citizens and would like to help provide comprehensive recreational opportunities, including golf. We would like to see golf become consistently available to all our residents at a reasonable price. Presently, public tee times represent a small percentage of those available and these come with a significant price tag."

With community support, the PGAE feels a top-quality course can be built with rates similar to those at city courses. The organization hopes to raise funds through contributions from individuals, corporations, foundations, vendors, golf supporters and civic and social groups. PGAE will solicit grants and in-kind contributions. It is the goal of the non-profit group to be debt free by opening day. "The support for the non-profit association has been incredible," said Caldwell.

In order to keep low green fees, the group will operate the course as a not-for-profit public golf facility.