

MARK FISCHESSE
1956-1997

NAPERVILLE, Ill. — Mark Fischesser, 41, died at home on July 12 following a year-long battle with cancer. He is survived by his wife, Lauren, sons, Brian and Daniel, and his father, Bernard, retired general manager of The Village Golf Club in Royal Palm Beach, Fla., and a brother, Christopher.

A graduate of the turfgrass agronomy program at Michigan State University, Mr. Fischesser was director of golf construction and agronomy for North American Golf and Meadowbrook Golf Group, Inc. since 1994. He played a major role in the design and construction of several golf courses in the United States and Europe as a field design supervisor and project manager for Robert Trent Jones Sr.

His first construction project was Jupiter Hills Country Club in south Florida. His accomplishments in Europe

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U.S. golf development continues to put up staggering numbers

Edit Note: The following information comes from a brand new Golf Research Group survey of every new golf course built in the U.S. over the past eight years.

By COLIN HEGARTY

LONDON — More new courses have been built in America in the past eight years than have been built in England over the past 400 years.

The scale of the U.S. golf development business is truly amazing: \$3.2 billion of member initiation fees have been sold and a staggering \$75 billion of golf residential real estate has been sold.

Significant trends have emerged from Golf Research Group's latest study. Nine hole construction has risen from 21 percent to now account for 40 percent of all construction. This partly due to more developers building nine then adding nine a few years later.

Expansion of existing facilities has grown from 5 percent of all

Colin Hegarty is a researcher with London-based Golf Research Group.

development to 14 percent due to financial sources being more comfortable lending to existing operations with a track record as opposed to green field start-ups.

Development of private member clubs has fallen in a big way. They used to account for 22 percent of new courses but now represent just 9 percent. The trend is toward semi-private and very significantly public operations. The green fee is definitely on the ascendancy over the private membership. Membership prices are not slack, however. Private club initiation fees at the new courses average \$20,000 across the U.S. but this average more than doubles in Arizona. Initiation for semi-private courses is far lower, averaging \$1,200, and over half charge no fee. The most expensive initiation fee at a new U.S. course is \$350,000 at the Golf Club at Desert Mountain designed by Jack Nicklaus.

Greens fees can go into the stratosphere as well. While the U.S. average is \$25 midweek, Hawaii and Nevada average \$120

and \$75 respectively. Tom Fazio's The Hudson National in New York distinguishes itself with the highest green fee, a cool \$250 for 18 holes midweek. With 66 of the new courses charging green fees of more than \$100, the premium green fee market appears to thrive.

The golf real estate business can only be described as astonishing, with more than half a million new fairway lots created in the past eight years. While most states have some golf real estate, the major activity is very much a Sunbelt thing. Orlando, Houston and Phoenix are the big three cities for golf course home construction. Almost half the real estate developments are gated communities.

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The choice of golf architect is shown to deliver enormous extra value to new courses. Based on pricing and rates of sale, it has shown that developments that use golf architects achieve a Net Present Value premium 192 percent above developments that don't use architects.

A clear super league of 33 architects emerge whose projects delivery 423 percent more value than average. The top name on the super league is the fourth busiest architect in the U.S. but still delivers a value more than 1,146 percent over the average project.

Golf Research Group's publication "The U.S. Golf Development Report" is priced at \$495. For more information call 510-228-1589 or www.golf-research.com.

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FILTRATION

Who Needs It?

If you're a golf course superintendent, then you probably do.

The fact is, water quality is an issue for most superintendents. The fresh water you're pumping may still contain anything from Algae to Zebra Mussels. Or local regulations might require that your course use effluent as an irrigation water supply.

While effluent water is "safe" for irrigation it still contains a high level of nutrients. Sitting in your irrigation pond this water can quickly explode into an algae farm. If you're pumping unfiltered effluent, imagine having to remove and clean every clogged sprinkler head on the course. Now imagine doing it every month.

Proper filtration can remove these waterborne hazards before they start to clog heads and congest irrigation lines. So the question is not "why" but "when" will you need filtration.

WATER HAZARDS

The waterborne hazards your irrigation system might face depend on factors such as geography, climate and water quality. Once inside your irrigation system, these potential obstructions can be difficult and expensive to remove.

A partial list includes:

Zebra Mussels - Can colonize and close-off pipes. Adults can plug nozzles and valves.

Fresh Water Clams - Same dangers as Zebra Mussels, but take longer to colonize.

Algae with Silt - Sticky dark-green mixture coagulates into small sprinkler head-clogging clumps.

Fresh Water Snails - Can breed inside the system. Adults can plug nozzles.

Sand - Can plug small valve ports and cause wear inside nozzles, distorting application rates.



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