

Arkansas track should complete \$1m facelift by August '98

FORT SMITH, Ark. — Hardscrabble Country Club closed recently for a \$1 million-plus renovation project and the private 18-hole layout is scheduled to reopen in August 1998 — just in time for a possible Nike Tour event.

Nike Tour officials have reportedly focused their sights on staging a 1998 event at Hardscrabble, and club leaders have approved the idea.

The Nike Tour formerly held an event in Texarkana, on the Arkansas-Texas border, from 1990 to 1995 and has been looking to return to Arkansas since that event folded, according to Dale Antram, vice president of business affairs for the Nike Tour. Antram said the Tour usually likes to make a commitment for several years with a location, in order to build interest and local sponsorship.

Bunton to oversee opening of Tennessee's Bear Trace

HOUSTON — Nancy Bunton, a longtime golf operations manager and former LPGA club professional, has been named by Golf Services Group to oversee its management of four championship Jack Nicklaus-designed courses in Tennessee called The Bear Trace.

Bunton is headed to Crossville, Tenn., site of one of the four courses, to become director of golf operations for the four Nicklaus signature, daily-fee courses being built at state parks across Tennessee. One of the goals of the project, which is similar to the Robert Trent Jones Trail of public courses in Alabama, is to make world-class golf available to the public at an affordable price.

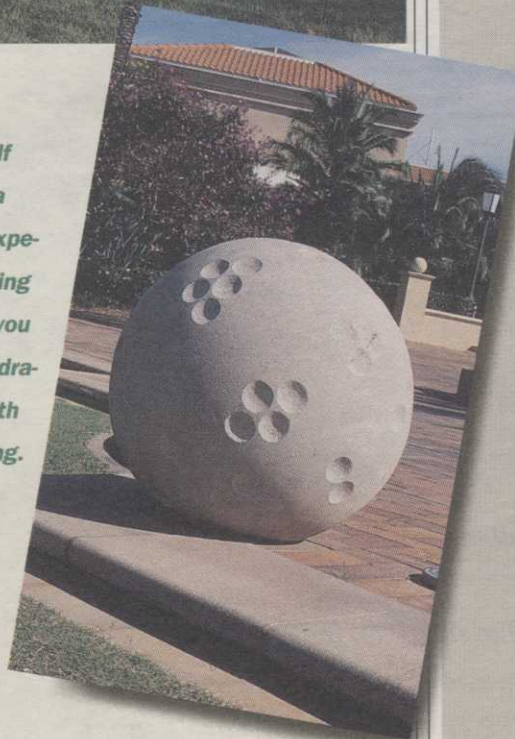
Bunton was most recently general manager and director of golf at Rio Colorado Golf Course in Texas. Her background includes all aspects of golf course and club operations, as well as personnel management. Bunton is a former LPGA Club Professional of the Year (Teaching and Club Division) and is also an instructor for the Gillette LPGA Golf Clinics for Women. She also has extensive experience with junior golf programs.

As preparations continue for the official opening of the first Bear Trace course at Cumberland Mountain State Park in Crossville, Bunton will set up all operating procedures and act as general manager/director of golf for the Cumberland Mountain State Park course.

The influence of architect Peter Thomson's five British Open wins is evident at Hope Island with the course's native vegetation, rolling terrain, and 118 British-style pot bunkers.



The Hope Island Golf Club offers guests a number of unique experiences — from floating driving range balls you hit into a lake to a dramatic clubhouse with beautiful landscaping.



After only three years, the Hope Island Golf Club was recognized as the top golf resort in Australia and one of the country's top 10 courses.



Superintendent Paul Bevan has been part of the beautiful Hope Island Golf Club since construction began five years ago.

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Cincinnati seeks private operator

CINCINNATI — The city's seven public courses are expected to be put out to bid to private operators by this month.

Cincinnati Recreation Commission President Daniel Gilday told the *Cincinnati Enquirer*, "We want to be the courses of choice for golfers in the general area."

The city's recreation commission decided earlier this summer that private firms will get the chance to make proposals to run turf maintenance and all other operations. Firms may pitch to manage both components or just one. City employees may also make a pitch to continue doing turf maintenance. Currently, the commission contracts with golf professionals to manage the courses, hires a firm to handle concessions and uses city employees to maintain the courses.

The move to privatize management of the seven facilities follows a consultant's report released earlier this year that criticized the current system and said a new approach could bring in more money. A city audit also found serious management problems with the city's golf program and led to the suspension of the program's manager and several other disciplinary actions.