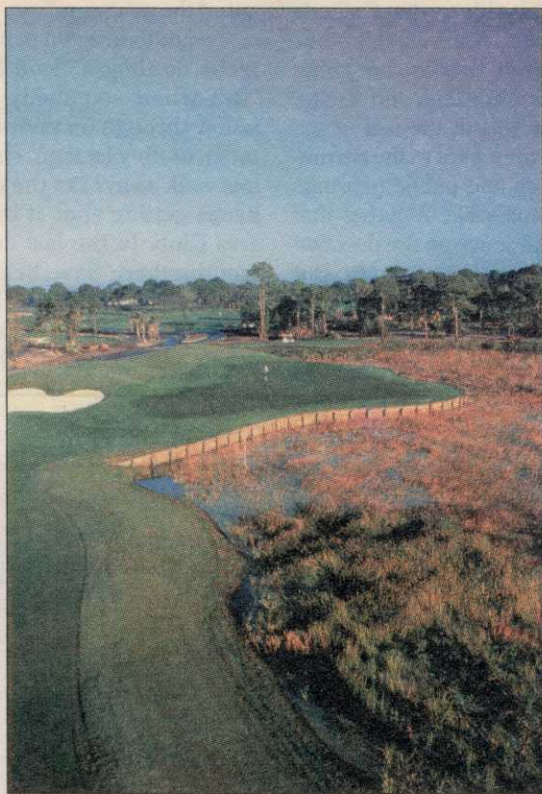


THE WORLD OF DEVELOPMENT IN '98

Much of the world has always revolved around children. Now the golf course industry has joined the rest of society — full-bore and with dedication. The overriding story of development in the past 12 months has been the full-tilt dive into building “beginners’ courses” to reach inner-city youths and others who have not had the opportunity to play the game. The new thrust is exemplified by The First Tee program, an effort spearheaded by literally the entire hierarchy of golf, from the PGA Tour and World Golf Village to the U.S. Golf Association, PGA of America and even Augusta National.

In the meantime, course construction in general continues at a 400-course-per-year pace. According to Judy Thompson at the National Golf Foundation, 396 courses had opened this year as of Nov. 4. This will be the fourth consecutive year that figure has topped 400. In October alone, construction began on 57 new courses and plans were announced for 48 others.

The boom continues all around.



The Indian River Club: an environmental winner.

Audubon cracks down on broken promises

By MARK LESLIE

SELKIRK, N.Y. — Probation. Excommunication. These terms that embody enmity are now part of the lexicon at Audubon International (AI), long a bastion of teamwork and cooperation.

While the majority of the 66 golf courses in the 4-year-old Audubon Signature Program are committed to it and swear by its effectiveness, others have fallen off the bandwagon, or perhaps were never aboard, according to AI President Ron Dodson.

Lamenting the fact that he had to, first, “place on probation,” then “excommunicate” one of the eight fully certified Audubon Signature facilities, Dodson said: “Our strongest program is only as strong as our weakest one, and we can’t allow people to make our name look weak. We already are being accused by

GCN MAY

other environmental groups of kowtowing to the golf course industry and giving away the Audubon name. But we don’t. People work for it and are proud of it.”

However, when The Champions Club at Summerfield in Stuart, Fla., did not correct some problems targeted in AI’s biannual audit, the club and the organization parted ways.

“We wrote and told them they are no longer to use Audubon International’s name or logo,” Dodson said. “They are to take their signs down and the Audubon print off the wall, and take all references to the Signature Program and Audubon International off their advertising materials and so on. More than that, we can not do.”

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Child’s Play in Kentucky

By MARK LESLIE

GCN JULY

LAWRENCEBURG, Ky. — A “kid’s course” built within the existing layout may prove a key option for golf facilities around the country, now that Bob-O-Link Golf Course has made the concept a reality.

On Father’s Day, Bob-O-Link opened its Kids Course within the 22-year-old track, thanks to owner Jack Ridge, who is also a golf course architect and president of a children’s golf-product company, Club Pro Products in Louisville.

“Golf has missed the boat,” Ridge declared. “Everybody’s mindset has been junior golf — teenagers — but no one has thought of kids up to 10 years old. That’s what separates this course.”

The idea for the Kids Course, he said, stemmed from parents who bought Club Pro clubs and bags, then asked

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Bob-O-Link Golf Course member Buddy Flora tends the 5-foot-tall flagstick for son Buddy Jr. as he puts into a Kids Course cup.

Notable Quotables

How much credit should land or design get in the top five courses in the world?



• ‘Very little is the design. Pebble Beach? Very little of the design. Pine Valley? Cypress Point? I have said a thousand times, Cypress

Point is the best piece of ground I’ve ever seen for a golf course. Take Cypress Point off that property and put it somewhere else, it’s just another golf course.’

— Jack Nicklaus, golf course designer and Tour pro

• ‘The bottom line is, this technology saves money, virtually eliminating change orders in renovations of existing courses.’

— Larry Rodgers of Larry Rodgers Design in Lakewood, Colo., concerning Global Positioning Satellites.

• ‘Donald Ross was no fool. He used all the good land back in 1917.’

— Brian Silva, golf course architect



• ‘I honestly don’t think anything unique has happened in course design in the last 20 years.’

— J. Michael Poellot, golf course architect



Certainly not your average backyard: the 2nd hole at Rich Harvest.

The back 40: Not your typical backyard

‘Seven or eight years ago, when the madness was at its height, many so-called courses were laid out over private grounds.’

— Van Tassel Sutphen in The Outing Magazine, 1906

By MARK LESLIE

The current rage of building putting greens, and entire golf holes, on a person’s property is not new, but rather a second coming of sorts. Two decades after Sutphen wrote those words in The Outing Magazine, Donald Ross laid out Overhills Golf

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Estate courses on the rebound

By MARK LESLIE

SUGAR GROVE, Ill. — Disappointed in Augusta National’s famous par-3 12th hole at Amen Corner, Jerry Rich came home to his 2,000-acre estate and

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built what he calls a better one. Disappointed in Augusta’s 200-yard-long Magnolia Lane, he built a Magnolia Lane of his own. It meanders across two miles.

This is Rich Harvest Links. This is Jerry Rich’s dream — a dream that grew from the idea of a modest couple of practice holes to a stunning facility that will open 18 championship-length holes this summer. Eighteen holes kept in tournament condition by a professional staff. Eighteen holes that, because of the positioning of multiple tees, can be played as five different nine-hole rotations. Eighteen holes that this 4-handicap golfer designed to display what he calls “purposefully eclectic to show the Scottish, Pine Valley and Traditional looks.”

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Flat pipe

Continued from page 17

sense to us," he said. "With its bigger surface area, it does a better job of taking water out of the bottom of the all-sand California green profile than conventional round pipe and gravel."

But the main reason flat-pipe technique is attracting attention, according to Welchel, is that "it saves a lot in construction costs. Although the material cost of AdvanEDGE is higher than round pipe, no trenches need to be dug, no gravel backfill to buy, and no trench spoils to dispose of.

"Our experience," he said, "shows that the installed cost of flat pipe is about half the cost of traditional drain pipe, maybe even less. This can add up to \$30,000 to \$40,000 in savings for 18 holes."

AdvanEDGE pipe is normally sold with a geotextile fabric wrap to filter out soil fines. If the greens mixture and surrounding soils are relatively free from migratory fines, Hurdzan-Fry permits the pipe to be installed without the filter wrap. ADS can produce the pipe with narrower "sand slot" perforations. ADS also offers a standard line of couplings and tees designed specifically for horizontal installation.

Kids course

Continued from page 15

where they could take their children to play the game.

"I always suggested a par-3 course or driving range," Ridge said. "Where else was there?"

"We're very excited because this will be testing the waters [for similar, future projects]," said Mike Ridge, his cousin Jack's vice president in Ridge Golf Design and assistant to the president of Club Pro. "The whole idea behind this is to let kids experience the

game and fall in love with it by actually playing it. It gives them goals, thrills, the challenge, a perception of the game. They're not taking a dozen shots to the green with daddy. They want a chance to make a par or birdie. That's what will keep them coming back."

Although they fought horrible weather, the Ridges said a layout like the Kids Course at Bob-O-Link could be built in a span of two weeks in perfect weather. At Bob-O-Link they simply added far-forward tees on 13 holes and used five ladies' tees that are in strategic places, then built bunkers situated for children's play. Kid-sized benches and ball-washers at the tees, and 5-foot-high flag sticks for a second set of kids' holes on the greens add to the built-for-children feeling, as do the kids' scorecards.

The opening on Father's Day was special, Mike Ridge said, because "we wanted the kids to feel it is their course in a sense that Dad is their guest."

Jack Ridge explained: "By installing new sets of tees and the strategic location of new bunkers, hazards and mounding, a routing was being created which, in essence, resulted in a course within a course, with its own distinct character that does not compromise the integrity of the existing full-sized layout."

A PGA professional who has given hundreds of lessons to children, Jack Ridge designed the Kids Course with a good feel for how far they hit the ball. He and Mike figured 85 yards on a drive. Therefore, a hole from 85 to 160 yards long is a par-4. Longer than 160 yards is a par-5. An adults' straight-away par-4 of 385 yards can also be a double-dogleg 275-yard par-5 for kids.

Bob-O-Link's Kids Course is a par-74 layout measuring 3,100 yards. Looking forward to other kids' courses, Mike Ridge said more than one set of children's tees can be built per hole — perhaps having one for 3- to 6-year-old and one for 7- to 10-year-olds.



TO: Robert Sackman, GCS

FROM: The Greens Committee, Tall Oaks Country Club

RE: CONGRATULATIONS!

Dear Bob,

We want to thank you for the exceptional job you and your staff did with the course this past year. Despite some rather harsh weather conditions, you were able to keep play at its all time best. In fact, guests from surrounding clubs frequently commented on what great shape our course was in and wondered what your secret is. We know it's a lot more than magic, but whatever you do — aside from your hard work — it has made the membership very proud.

We look forward to another season with you at the helm!



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