

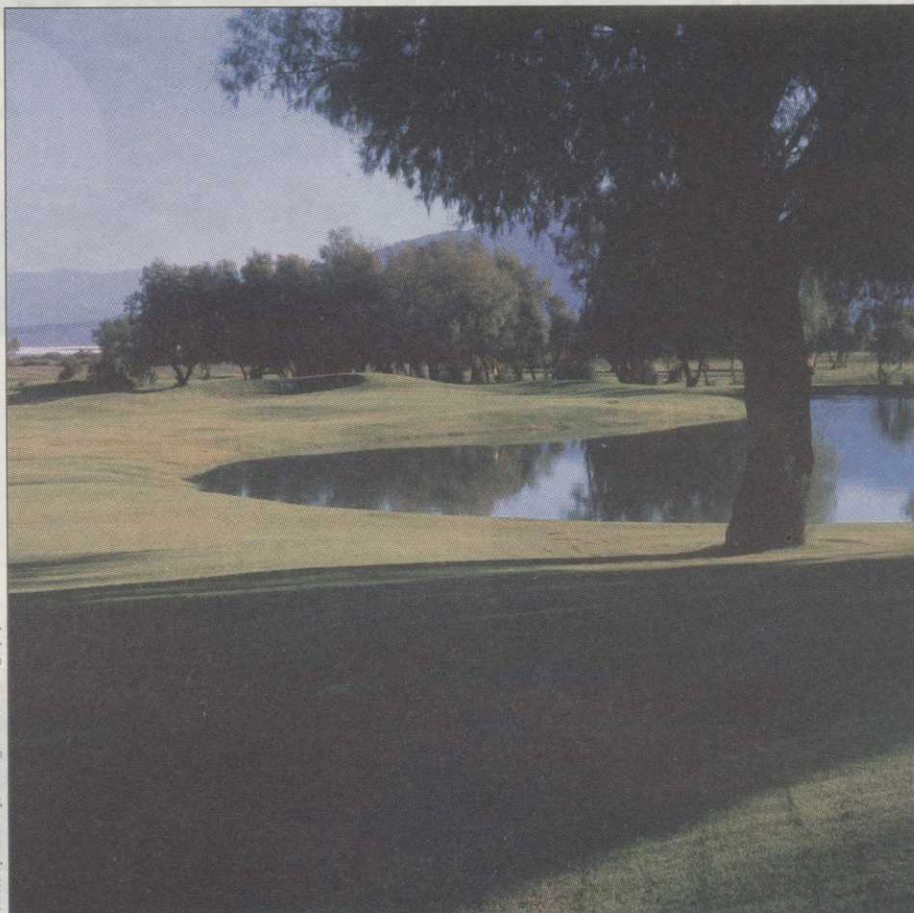
## Death Valley given new life

DEATH VALLEY, Calif. — The Furnace Creek Inn & Ranch Resort's 18-hole golf course has undergone a \$1.3-million renovation. Headed by Perry Dye of Dye Designs, the renovation includes five completely redesigned holes and a new irrigation system.

At 214 feet below sea level, the track is the lowest grass golf course in the world. Its fairways are lined with palm and tamarisk trees, and it offers breathtaking views of the surrounding Panamint Mountains from anywhere on the course.

The five redesigned holes include two par-3s, two par-4s and one par-5. The irrigation system has been designed to insure wall-to-wall green even while enduring Death Valley's celebrated heat. Other renovations include improvement of the tee boxes on all holes and additional design modifications and bunkering throughout the course.

In addition to working on the lowest grass course in the world at Furnace Creek, Dye also designed the highest-elevated course in the Western Hemisphere.



The lowest golf course on earth gets a Perry Dye-designed facelift.

Photo by Ken May/Rolling Greens Photography

## Rees Jones' Rio Secco track opens

HENDERSON, Nev. — Rio Hotel & Casino, Inc. subsidiary, Rio Development Company, Inc., opened Rio Secco Golf Club in late October in this Las Vegas suburb.

Designed by Rees Jones, Rio Secco Golf Club plays to a par 72 over 7,250 yards. It is planned that there will be at least 15 minutes between tee times, to provide an enjoyable experience for all players.

Company President James A. Barrett Jr. said: "The Rio Secco Golf Club was developed by us as an additional amenity for customers of the Rio, a destination resort. The course is now available for play. Individuals who are not Rio hotel/casino customers may call the golf course for available tee times and rates. Presently, the course fee for customers of the Rio will be \$190 per round, and for others the course fee will be \$300 per round.

The clubhouse is scheduled to open in April.

## Architect's on-staff permitting specialist speeds process

Continued from page 49

sign a pretty decent golf course," said Almini. "In order to set ourselves apart, we decided to provide a service that other firms were not providing."

The key to making this new service work is based on Almini's ability to give clients access to the permitting, political and environmental realities that revolve around a given project. Once those parameters are established, the designer steps in to illustrate what sort of golf course the client can expect to achieve on

that particular property.

By eliminating the layers of outside consulting, Almini said that the firm can save clients time and money with this congealed, in-house team.

"In most cases, developers would have to buy that service through land-use attorneys or environmental consultants. We can go through now as a team, and assess that for them. We can tell them how long it may take, who will oppose them and how to diffuse that opposition."

Time, in most cases, is of the essence.

Permitting can take anywhere from one to five years. The average hovers around 24 months.

"Politically, we can save them years," said Almini. "We know how to go into a community and quickly establish relationships with officials, if we don't have them already. Most developers don't have the time to go and do the coffee sessions in someone's kitchen. I do that."

Almini's new position is starting to make a difference. Orlando, Fla.-based

Signature Resorts Inc. recently signed on with Graves & Pascuzzo for a project in Napa County due to the new service.

"It was a project that Dianna had intimate familiarity with," said Eric Lambdin, senior analyst at Signature. "She has a very strong knowledge of the political dynamics of Napa County. If you don't have that knowledge it can be quite treacherous for a developer."

According to Lambdin, the established development services team gave the project, which has yet to be named, an edge.

"A developer typically ends up with kind of a team anyway, but they end up taking a piecemeal approach. Not to say that those teams can't be successful — they can be very successful. But you can enhance your possibility of success by having a team that has worked together. Their level of communication is 10 times better than when you bring in a couple people together and hope that the dynamics work."

Almini, who started out doing similar work for subdivisions, shopping malls and hospitals, thought that getting away from those large, commercial projects and into golf would be a breeze.

"It was a slap in the face," she said. "I see more opposition to golf courses than the commercial projects I've permitted. Golf and the environment don't mix. The golf industry has done a great job of informing those inside the golf industry. We have lots of trade publications that tell us all these great movements toward pesticide reduction and the Audubon programs. But American households aren't aware of these movements. They believe we're going to be contaminating their backyards."

In those cases, Almini will be called upon to put out the fire.

"The key to this business is to assess the issues before they blow up," she said.

When players hit your course, it's only natural that they expect the greens to be, well, green. If they're not, it could be time to treat with Sprint® 330, the iron chelate micronutrient from Becker-Underwood. Sprint's strong chelates protect iron availability in soils with pH levels up to 7.5 for beautiful, long-lasting green turf. It also brings out the color in flowers, ornamentals and shrubs. For easy measuring and mixing, Sprint is available in a highly soluble, concentrated powder that offers excellent tank mix flexibility with NPK and plant growth regulators.

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