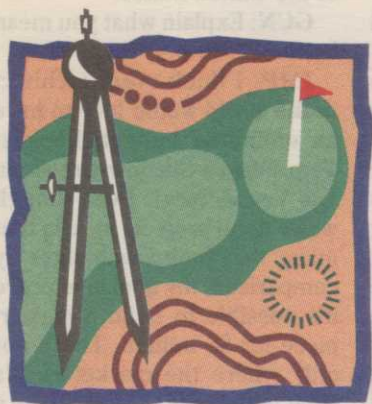


BRIEFS

**GERRISH HIRED AS DESIGN ASSOCIATE**

UXBRIDGE, Mass. — Tim Gerrish has joined the golf course architecture firm of Cornish, Silva and Mungam (CSM) as a full-time design associate. Over the past two years, Gerrish has worked part-time for CSM partner Geoffrey Cornish while earning his master's degree in landscape architecture from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst; he graduated in May. A native of Lisbon Falls, Maine, Gerrish earned his undergraduate degree in landscape horticulture from the University of Maine in 1991.

INC. CITES ENVIROTECH GROWTH

ENID, Okla.—Envirotech Services, Inc., an environmental consulting firm serving the golf course industry, based here, has been named one of the fastest-growing businesses in the nation by *Inc.* magazine. Less than 7 years old, Envirotech Services has experienced a 700-percent increase in sales from 1992 to 1996. This has placed the company 385th on the annual profile of America's fastest-growing privately held companies.

PALMER PROMOTES MINCHEW, LARSEN

ORLANDO, Fla.—Arnold Palmer and Ed Seay, chief operating officer of Palmer Course Design, have named Harrison Minchew director of design services and Erik Larsen director of sales. Both men are vice presidents and senior course designers for the firm. Minchew and Larsen are both regular members of the American Society of Golf Course Architects (ASGCA) and the Urban Land Institute.



Harrison Minchew

ROBBINS HIRES WESTMORELAND

CARY, N.Y. — Robbins & Associates International has hired Jeffrey Westmoreland as design associate. He had previously worked part-time with the firm while completing his master's degree in landscape architecture at Virginia Tech. He earned a bachelor's degree in turfgrass management from North Carolina State University. Upon graduation, he was employed with Jerry Pate's design firm in Pensacola, Fla., as a course designer and was in charge of its turfgrass program.

GOLF COURSE NEWS

Beauty from ashes

By MARK LESLIE

SEAFORD, Del. — Fortuitous. That is the operative word here, where Seaford Golf and Country Club opened a second nine holes on May 2. Fortuitous in terms of time and money.

Time: Because Seaford G&CC members had debated adding a second nine to their venerable nine for 15 years, and the government just happened to demand that the neighboring DuPont Corp. nylon plant dispose of acres of a byproduct, coal ash, that it had piled up over 30 years of operation.

Money: Because Seaford G&CC paid a mere \$800,000 for a brand spanning new nine-hole course, while DuPont paid the remaining \$1.2 million and still saved a couple million compared to the cost of disposing of the coal ash in another fashion.

"There is a 25-acre pocket of nylon



DuPont's manufacturing plant is visible in the background on the Seaford Golf and Country Club's par-4, 400-yard 3rd hole.

buried on the site 8 to 10 feet deep," explained golf course architect Rich Mandell of Whole in One Design Group in Durham, N.C., and Easton, Md. "They didn't know what to do with it.

"It was a wasteland. The ash was in a big pile in a field. They had three

holding ponds where it would go directly from the factory, sit for awhile, then be taken out and stored adjacent to the pond."

When the government mandate came down, the plan for a golf course seemed heaven-sent — for both sides. Orig-

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The par-4 4th hole at Long Island Golf and Country Club's North Course in Guangdong Province, China, is an example of J. Michael Poellot's recent work abroad.

Q Poellot's return to America & A stresses attention to detail

J. Michael Poellot's name is on golf courses from the People's Republic of China (the country's first private country club, Beijing Golf Club) to Japan and Thailand. But the 1966 Iowa State University landscape architecture graduate has done little in America since leaving a partnership with Dick Phelps and Brad Benz in Colorado 10 years ago. That is, until now. A former vice president of the Robert Trent Jones II Group, heading Jones' overseas division, Poellot and JMP Golf Design Group partners Mark Hollinger, Bob Moore and Brian Costello are concentrating heavily on the United States, with a half dozen projects in the works.

Golf Course News: You've undertaken a new relationship with Ernie Els. Can you tell us about it?

J. Michael Poellot: This initial opportunity with Ernie Els was a desire on the part of Kemper Sports and their local partner doing a project in the Washington, D.C., area. It so happened that Ernie had been looking for an architect he could be associated with whose work he would be confident in. We had just had an interview with Ernie at Winged Foot at the

PGA Tournament last fall and we seemed to be on the same page in terms of our philosophy of golf. It was Ernie's intent that he would not get involved, as some other professionals had, in doing a tremendous number of projects. He wanted a limited amount and to do them well and to be intimately involved.

I found him to be very thoughtful, and he listened well, which opened a great insight into our compatibility. We were both able to listen as opposed to dictate, which will result in a better relationship and a better product. We have met a number of times since then. We hiked the whole property in D.C. for hours trying to identify green and tee sites and let our imaginations run wild and see what the site would yield in terms of a great golf experience.

Subsequently, we have gotten together to talk further about bunkering strategy and other aspects of the playability of the course.

GCN: How involved will Els be in your work?

JMP: At this moment the Washington project is the only one we are working on.

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Rapid assessment, national survey on Audubon agenda

By MARK LESLIE

SELKIRK, N.Y. — A nationwide survey on environmental issues and a book enabling "rapid environmental assessment" of property for development appear on the horizon for Audubon International (AI) and may jump-start stalled attempts to build Audubon Golf Courses.

The Audubon courses, thought last fall to be on the verge of reality, still await that moment. Offered land from various private and public sources around the country, AI last fall formed the Audubon International Golf and the Environment Land Trust to develop courses that would also serve as environmental research and demonstration centers. Last September, with \$300 million to \$500 million in pledges from its principles, The Golf Co. was formed to partner with AI and identify and build Audubon Golf Courses.

The two parties expected to have two or three contracts in hand by the end of the year.

Admitting a long "period of frustration" finding the right property and circumstances, AI President Ron Dodson is still waiting for the first.

"We need the first one to be a home run," he said, "but more than that: We need people to know these will be Golf and the Environment 'research facilities' that happen to be golf courses, and they will be built in locations where we can test environmental issues in long-term research."

To that end, Dr. Larry Woolbright, dean of science at Si-

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Beauty from ashes

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nally built for DuPont employees, Seaford was a fine nine designed by Alfred Tull, who first built courses for Walter Travis, A.W. Tillinghast and Devereux Emmet before designing scores of tracks on his own. Seaford members long desired another nine holes, but did not have the land. Neighboring DuPont, however, did own enough property and leased it to Seaford when the course was built.

Meanwhile, DuPont fulfilled its obligations to the government environmental agencies and, in fact, awarded Whole in One Design Group its Safety, Health and Environmental Excellence Award for DuPont Nylon North America.

The project was indeed a challenge for Mandell and partner Robert Rauch.

They not only faced dealing with this huge pile of coal ash, but also working around monitoring wells and electric and water lines throughout the property.

"We incorporated 500,000 yards of the coal ash as fill," Mandell said, "then added a 1-foot cap of soil over that. On green sites we used 4 feet of soil on top of the ash."

The ash, he said, resembles a sandy loam. "It's a decent growing medium, but not necessarily for golf courses," he said.

The property, part of which had been a DuPont company airstrip, was flat, with 12 feet of fall from one end to the other. Mandell and Rauch added contour by moving another 95,000 yards of material.

Part of the material for the cap came from the five ponds that were built — all connected to create a drainage system.

The end result, Mandell said, is a new nine that resembles Tull's philosophy — exactly what Seaford's members wanted.

The original design is "a neat nine holes," he said. "In keeping with it, we kept the flavor of the plateau-style greens and paid a lot of attention to the approaches. Sometimes the greens were

plateau, and in other spots flush with the edge of the fairway. I kept close watch on having no tiers.

"The bunkers all had sand laying flat in very serpentine shapes. We replicated those shapes pretty successfully."

The exception, he said, was that some of the original bunkers were 5 and 6 feet deep, and the most severe on the new nine are 3 to 4 feet deep.

The project was an engineering challenge, Mandell said. With only 12 feet of fall "there was not enough gravity and positive drainage. We had to finagle the earth to make it drain."

Whole in One built two large ridges to create rolling terrain. In many places it is 20 feet high, and a 40-foot-high berm runs along the 17th hole, blocking the view of the factory parking lot. And pipes interconnect the five ponds to maintain the water level.

The result — a 5,505- to 6,612-yard, par-72 18 holes with bentgrass greens and ryegrass tees and fairways.

•••

Meanwhile, Whole in One opened a second course on May 2: an 18-hole executive track that joins a Lindsay Ervin-designed nine-hole par-3 at Greenfields Golf Park in Berlin, Md., outside Ocean City.

General Manager Ed Colbert and Director of Golf Buddy Sass own the facility and plan to have Whole in One add a nine-hole regulation course at some time in the future.

The new executive course plays to a par 65 and ranges from 3,977 to 5,210 yards.

Because of a tight site, Mandell and Rauch designed one triple tee and a 13,000-square-foot double green.

"We built really neat greens and a lot of mounding for protection," Mandell said, adding that golfers will use all the clubs in the bag when they face par-3s greatly varying in distance, seven par-4s, the longest is 405 from the back. Two long par 5s: 590 and 575.



COLUMBIA POINT OPENS

RICHLAND, Wash.—James J. Engh, Golf Design Group, Inc., has opened its latest project here, Columbia Point Golf Course. The course is owned by the city of Richland and managed by I.R.I. Golf Group of Plano, Texas. Columbia Point has been nominated through Golf Digest as one of the country's Best New Affordable Public Courses for 1999. *The Tri-City Herald* described Columbia Point as "spectacularly unique."

New Vista Bella owner hires Snyder, Richardson

KINGMAN, Ariz. — Golf course architects Arthur Jack Snyder and Forrest Richardson have been selected to design Vista Bella Golf Course here. An 18-hole regulation layout previously announced to begin construction in 1996 with a routing by Gary Panks, Vista Bella has undergone an ownership change along with significant site plan and routing revisions.

"We started with an almost blank canvas," said Richardson, of Phoenix. "The objective was to work with the previous site plan, yet add new thinking that would better suit the growing Kingman market."

New design plans reduce the project's reliance on ground water with less formal turf areas, and feature fewer

on-course lakes.

"Things are changing fast in Kingman," said Richardson. "Our goal is to develop a course with tremendous character, yet preserve at all cost the charm and simplicity that makes Kingman such a unique place."

Snyder described the Vista Bella site as having "views so spacious and beautiful it may be difficult to keep your mind on the game. In any direction one gets the feeling the view just goes on forever."

The course is scheduled to begin construction this year as part of improvements to new phases of the Vista Bella master-planned community. PrimeStyle Development Inc., of Phoenix, is the owner/developer.

The First Tee and BLM

Continued from previous page

Foundation to identify public lands suitable for development of golf teaching and playing facilities.

The agreement provides for the World Golf Foundation to:

- Encourage environment-friendly management of golf facilities;
- Work with BLM to identify potential sites for golf facilities;
- Assist in planning and developing golf facilities, ensuring ongoing support and maintenance;
- Design facilities to meet community needs and site constraints;
- Share expertise and experience in environment-friendly design, development and management of golf facilities;
- Incorporate wildlife habitat preservation, enhancement and interpretation into design, development and management of golf facilities;
- Provide opportunities for women, minorities and especially youth, to learn to play golf and participate in the golf industry;
- Participate in activities that encourage inner city and other youth to play golf and pursue careers in golf, recreation or tourism.

Valparaiso moves ahead on course, training center for youth

VALPARAISO, Ind.—Don Childs Associates (DCA) will master plan a golf course and training center for the city here in a project aimed at reaching youth.

"We believe we are the first municipality in the nation to successfully take the golf training center concept as embraced by the Tiger Woods, First Tee, and Hook-a-Kid Foundations to the construction phase," said John Seibert, director of Parks and Recreation for Valparaiso. "Our staff has been working hard for two years on this project from initial ideas to where we are today. With founding and council approvals in place, we are targeting construction to start in late August, with all aspects of the facility open in the spring of 2000."

The City Council has approved the project and the sale of \$3.5 million in municipal revenue bonds to pay for development and construction.

The teaching and training center will feature a 55-station range, putting course, chipping green and sand bunker, and a three-hole training course with par-3, -4, and -5 golf holes. The clubhouse will be designed to feature an indoor teaching center with state-of-the-art video equipment for instruction and swing analysis.

Meanwhile, DCA will soon be designing the new headquarters and training center of the Minority Golf Association of America (MGAA) in Miami. Developers of the site are poised to break ground later this summer with the facility fully operational in 2000. The academy is the project of Tibor Hollo, Hank Thomas and John David, president of the MGAA.

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— Gary Femrite, Golf Superintendent, Pebble Creek G.C., Becker, MN

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