

Portuguese development slow but unabated

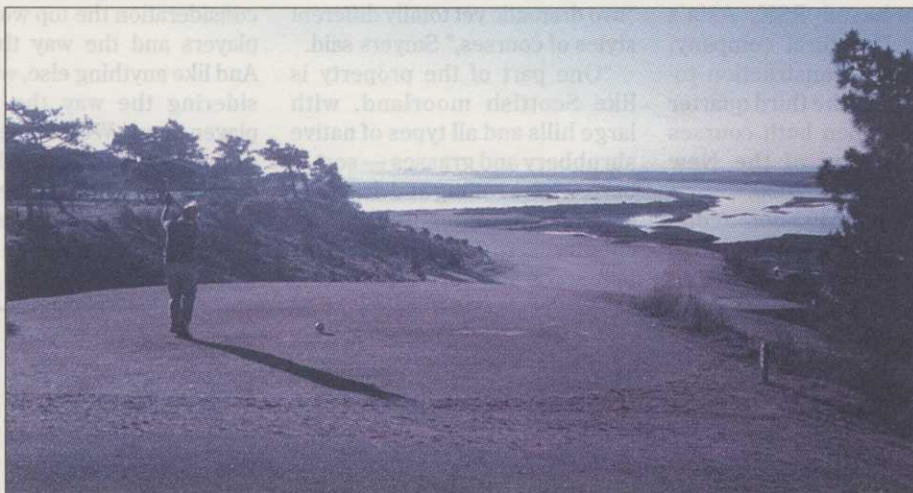
By MARK LESLIE

CASCAIS, Portugal — Elegance. The word entails grace, beauty, polish. It means being aesthetic, tasteful, luxurious. And golf course architect Arthur Hills uses it to describe Oitavos Golfe Clube in this community outside Lisbon — one of several golf courses under construction or being planned in this country.

Elsewhere, construction crews have finished the last two holes of the second nine at Belas Clube de Golfe in the foothills outside Lisbon, an as-yet-unnamed 36-hole project is planned in southwesternmost town of Sagres, a foreign developer is planning a leisure resort with 36 holes of golf in Alvalade between Lisbon and the Algarve coast, and developers are seeking permits for one seaside and one tidal river project in the Algarve south of here and one property north of Lisbon overlooking the ocean.

This all bodes well for developers and businesses here.

"Percentagewise, Portugal has more golf growth in the last few years than anywhere," said American Rocky



Sites like this at San Lorenzo Golf Club keep developers interested in continuing to build projects in southwest Portugal's Algarve region.

Roquemore, who has designed eight of Portugal's 40-odd golf courses including the recently opened Golden Eagle Golf and Country Club in Rio Maior. "When the recession started in Europe in 1990 or '91 golf just about shut down, whereas there had been a boon before. But Portugal stayed steady, building a couple or three courses every year."

Although golf projects have historically

been at resorts, some now are being built as high-end private clubs.

One of those is Oitavos Golfe Clube. Sitting on a property overlooking the ocean, Oitavos Golfe Clube will be the centerpiece of a development offering a hotel and high-end homes. The developer is Miguel Champalimaud, whose family has long owned the land and who intends for the course to be the best in Europe.

Construction is expected to start around mid-April.

The site, said American Hills, "is beautiful. It sits high among sand dunes overlooking the ocean a couple hundred yards away. Four or five holes are gently rolling, and the other 12 or 13 are among the dunes.

"We won't move much dirt at all. There's ample acreage for us to maneuver around the dunes and keep them intact."

Oitavos Golfe Clube is expected to open in 1999, some 70 years after the Champalimaud family planned it in the 1920s.

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Golf Strategies lands airport 18

ZHUHAI, China — Golf Strategies have been selected to design a new 18 hole golf course as part of the planned Zhuhai Aerotropolis development near Zhuhai's new international airport.

The development is a joint venture between Gold Bond Enterprises Co Ltd of Hong Kong and the Zhuhai Airport Group Corporation.

The 85 hectare site is quite open and is within 200 metres of the ocean. It comprises an area of old shoreline and sand dunes with casuarina vegetation, together with a large section of reclaimed land. Included within the site is a 2.8 hectare archaeological significant site which will be protected as part of the project.

This area is unique in that it contains habitation sites of early man dating back some 6,500 years. Site investigations have revealed a significant number of artifacts, as well as remains of shipwrecks which may provide evidence of the earliest known Chinese use of sea-going vessels.

The golf course will be routed around this protected area to allow further studies to occur.

The 18 hole course is envisaged as a traditional links course which will be enhanced by the breezes of its maritime setting. A number of lakes are planned within the course to serve multiple purposes, including: acting as attractive course features and hazards to play; acting as water storage bodies for irrigation; acting as nutrient stripping basins/wetlands to cleanse course run off; and acting as

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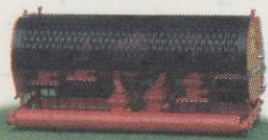
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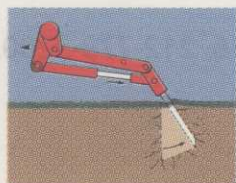
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Portugal

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When complete, it will contain a practice facility and golf school and boast bentgrass greens and Bermudagrass fairways.

In Sagres, the southwestern-most point on the continent, British golfing great Nick Faldo will team with American Steve Smyers to design two 18-hole courses as

the foundation for a 1,000-acre second-home golf community.

Developer Albert Hung of Singapore-based RSK, Asia's largest architectural company, hopes to start construction toward the end of the third quarter of 1998 and open both courses on the first day of the New Millennium: Jan. 1, 2000.

The exclusive, 400-home community will devote more than 500 acres to the two courses, with no

housing along the fairways.

Sitting about 5 kilometers from the ocean, the facility will offer "two dramatic yet totally different styles of courses," Smyers said.

"One part of the property is like Scottish moorland, with large hills and all types of native shrubbery and grasses — sort of barren but a rolling and dramatic setting. The other is in a low-country setting with marshes, pine trees and cork trees."

Since Hung intends to host a major golf event there, Smyers said he and Faldo "are taking into consideration the top world-class players and the way they play. And like anything else, we're considering the way the average player plays. We believe we will design courses that will attract women and elderly golfers."

The leisure resort in Alvalade between Lisbon and the Algarve will boast 36 holes of golf de-

signed by Brit Martin Hawtree.

Hawtree called it a "huge site, situated on a reservoir," which will help add water-based activities to its amenities. A hotel and rental cottages are planned for the project, which will begin construction in mid-summer 1999, with a projected opening in 2001.

Meanwhile, the private Belas Clube de Golfe is the first in the area with wall-to-wall bentgrass. "You can putt on the fairways. It sets the standard for the neighborhood," said Roquemore.

While the first nine holes opened the summer of 1996, the full 18 are expected to open by June, and perhaps as early as April.

Calling the course one of the more expensive he has ever done, Roquemore said: "The property was solid marble. We carved more marble than Michaelangelo ever saw. We crushed it down to prison-size rocks so we could cover it with 6 inches of sand."

Construction of the high-end private track consumed three years.

Placing the course distance at 6,800 yards, Roquemore said: "Don't let the shortness deceive you. If you miss the green you're in the rocks."

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Meanwhile, Roquemore has signed three other design projects in Portugal, all in the permitting process: Quinta do Ria on the seaside at which Portuguese developer Jose Lisboa will include a hotel only; a river-side facility being developed by Englishman John Knott; and an as-yet-unnamed project in the Algarve developed by Brit Harry Baden-Powell, grandson of the founder of the Boy Scouts.

Golf Strategies

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a significant habitat for wildlife providing a source of fill material to allow building up and shaping for the golf holes.

The development will include and 18 hole championship golf course, golf practice facilities, clubhouse, course maintenance centre, serviced apartments and residential allotments

Golf Strategies' principal Neil Crafter will head up the design team with support from design associate and landscape architect Paul Mogford.

"We are very pleased to have been chosen by Gold Bond to design this new course," said Crafter. "This will be our second project in China and we look forward to contributing to its success," said Crafter, the current President of the Society of Australian Golf Course Architects.

Construction of the course is expected to commence in mid 1998.

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