

Hearn leading design course to Scotland

EAST LANSING, Mich. — Golf course architect Ray Hearn is teaming up again with his alma mater, Michigan State University (MSU), this time for a summer tour of the great courses of Scotland. The Old Course at St. Andrews, the Turnberry Golf Links and Royal Dornoch are three of the stops where partici-

pants will experience a blend of golf and course-design seminars.

The June trip comes on the heels of last summer's MSU-sponsored, sold-out tour of the great courses of Ireland. This time, participants will visit Scotland. Hearn, president of Raymond Hearn Golf Designs, Inc., of Plymouth, will co-host the expedition with Prof.

Warren J. Rauhe, director of MSU's Landscape Architecture Program.

"Scotland is so rich in the fabric and history of golf's development," said Hearn. "From the courses like St. Andrews and Dornoch to the characters such as Old Tom Morris, Donald Ross and Alister Mackenzie, it's a

place where you can never exhaust the list of topics to study."

This year's trip culminates the dream of Rauhe to take an academic look at Scotland's great courses while enjoying their splendor.

"What sets this venture apart from standard golf trips to the U.K. are the university certification program and the attention to detail which will make the journey so memorable," he said.

While in Scotland, Rauhe will oversee the academic portion of the program, including daily discussion and sessions on individual hole and course design, course routing and historical seminars.

It all begins with U.S. departure on June 12 and ends June 20, with return travel from Glasgow. There will be forays to such courses as Cruden Bay, Carnoustie and Prestwick.

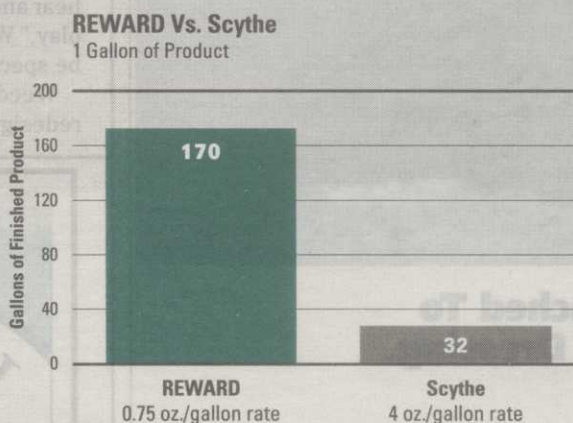
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Player

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the 27-hole Ria Bintan project on the island of Bintan. It is scheduled to open in May, although developers may delay opening until the golf market improves.

Two Player projects in The Philippines are on hold and another two scheduled to begin construction this year will likely be added to that list, Jacobs continued.

The Golden Greens project in Delhi, India, has been on hold for six months and will likely remain on the shelf into the near future, he added.

"The industry is going to take time to recover," Jacobs predicted. "There is a major oversupply of golf courses, especially where real estate is involved, and particularly in Indonesia and The Philippines. Japan is moving ahead slowly, but projects there take a long time to complete.

"The golf bubble moved from Japan to Taiwan in the late 1980s. They sold many memberships, but in two to three years that market was dead. From there it moved to Thailand, but most courses were tied to real estate. Speculators bought memberships, but not many golfers. The developers had to open the courses to public play to make up for the lack of golfers and the membership structure started to collapse.

"The Philippines is the latest problem area," he added. "It was just a matter of time before things came to a halt. Their currency lost half its value and the people who invested [in golf] were in trouble."

The Japanese golf boom of the late 1980s had a more solid foundation than ventures undertaken in other Asian countries, Jacobs explained. The Japanese had a firmly established golf tradition, large population and strong economy. But other Asian countries lacked Japan's golfing history. Membership values were driven upward by expectations of increased real-estate values and the status of golf memberships.

Will golf developers learn anything from this unfortunate situation? Not likely, Jacobs replied.

"I don't think developers will moderate their actions in the future," he said. "There's no coordination of effort from country to country. Before you know it, you have an oversupply. It's human nature."

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