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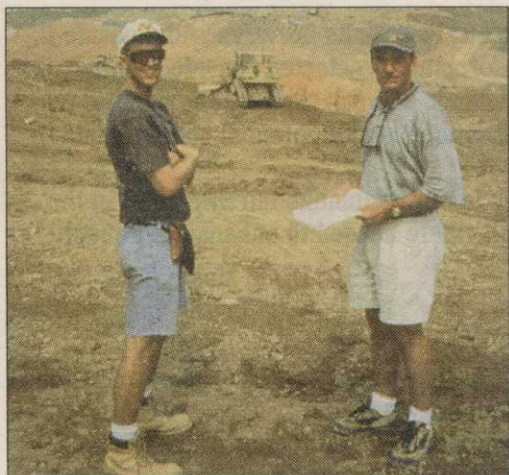
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NICKELS GETS A JUMP START ON KOREA
Doug Nickels (right), of Nickels Golf Group, and shaper Cliff Hamilton on the fairway at Club 200. See story page 33.

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Texas seeks shelter from the heat

By MARK LESLIE

DALLAS — A typical day in August: The heat climbs to 101 degrees at noon, reaches 104 around 4 p.m., drops back to 101 at 7 p.m., and slowly descends to 90 by midnight. The low for the day is 82, recorded at 3 a.m. Water levels on Falcon and Amistad lakes along the Rio Grande are 50 feet below normal; boat ramps look like they are sitting on a cliff.

With four to five hours above 100 degrees nearly every day from July deep into August, and with an inch or so of rain in more than two months, Texas cooked on a high simmer — to the point that lives were in danger when precautions weren't taken.

That's the human side.

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N.C. State/Fazio next with research & teaching course

By MARK LESLIE

RALEIGH, N.C. — North Carolina State University is on the verge of building an 18-hole golf course on its Centennial

Campus here that will serve as a research, teaching and extension facility.

The Tom Fazio-designed course will be part of a hotel conference center complex that will be developed and operated by private enterprises, according to Dr. Charles Peacock of the Department of Crop Sciences and NC State's point man on the project.

The private companies

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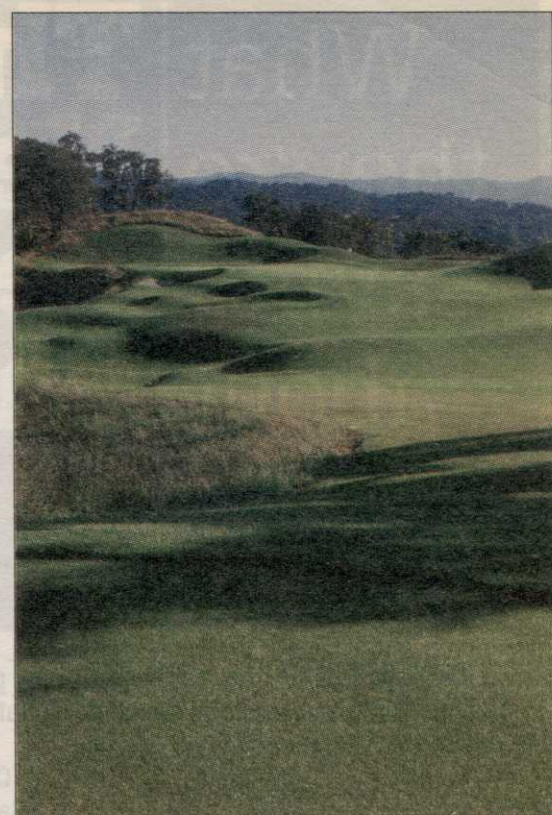
Golden Bear Inc. hits hard times

NORTH PALM BEACH, Fla. — At the beginning of July, Donald Trump dismissed Jack Nicklaus' construction company, Paragon Construction, from the job of building Trump's \$40 million resort just South of Palm Beach International Airport.

That was just the beginning of Golden Bear Inc.'s trouble.

At the end of July, Golden Bear said that it would restate its 1997 results after discovering that former managers of Paragon deliberately falsified reports, misrepresented

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GOTTA HIT IT FAR AT CINNABAR

SAN JOSE, Calif. — Cinnabar Hills Golf Club's #8 is a dramatic 222-yard par 3 perched atop the Canyon course. See story page 30.

Creative management ideas abound at PGF

By PETER BLAIS

The "Build It And They Will Come" philosophy may work in the Iowa ballfield business. But in golf, it takes efficient management and creative marketing to get golfers past the bag drop area as the speakers at this year's Management/Marketing Track of the Public Golf Forum can attest.

Six management/marketing sessions are on the line-up card at this year's *Golf Course News*-sponsored business conference and expo for superintendents, owners, managers and developers of public-access golf facilities on October 26-27 at Rancho Las Palmas Marriott Resort in Palm Springs, Calif. The Management, Development

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GLOBAL GOLF: NEPAL'S 'NEW MONUMENT'

KATHMANDU, Nepal — Proof that golf is truly global can be found here in the King of Nepal's 800-acre, walled hunting park which also contains the Royal Summer Palace. A staff of women plant a green blade by blade on the King's new course (above). The organic matter consists of composted rice husks and fresh, local elephant manure, the latter being collected daily from the jungle by a team of 60 laborers.

Management track

Continued from page 1

Maintenance tracks will run concurrently over the two days.

Returning speaker Gregg Gagliardi, whose past sessions have traditionally been among the most popular, will open the Management/Marketing Track with a discussion of the business factors changing the face of public golf management. Gagliardi is a longtime course general manager who recently started his own management firm, Diamond Players Club, in partnership with Texas Rangers' starting pitcher Todd Stottlemyre.

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According to the Orlando, Fla.-based executive, increased affluence, business factors and media coverage have all contributed to a burgeoning golf industry. He will discuss the problems created by the game's growth — such as inadequate facilities and inaccessibility due to high costs — and how well-managed operations have turned those problems into niche opportunities.

"Great opportunity exists for companies with the right approach," Gagliardi said. "We believe we have it."

Another individual with the right approach is Vince Alfonso. Alfonso is a 40-year golf-industry veteran who has managed everything from nationally acclaimed golf courses such as The Rail in Springfield, Ill., to rock-and-roll bands. One thing Alfonso has learned is that good managers and good golf courses must change with the times if they are to prosper.

Two years ago, Alfonso purchased a troubled nine-hole course in the Branson, Mo., marketplace. In a few short months, the management/marketing consultant made numerous changes and turned Kimberling Golf Club into the place to golf in that growing market. Alfonso will share some of his insights during his

session titled, "Developing new markets: Resurrecting a 9-holer in a resort marketplace."

Efficient management and creative marketing have been the keys to success for the growing number of management companies. Arnold Palmer Golf Management has been one of the leading players in the ongoing consolidation of the golf industry. The Orlando-based firm has purchased, leased and/or taken over management of numerous courses nationwide. Course owners of attractive properties have struck lucrative deals with Palmer and other firms.

But what makes a course attractive to one, or preferably, many management firms? In his talk, "Owner Focus: What do top management companies look for in a public-access course," Bill Hunscher, Palmer's vice president of acquisitions, will discuss how to set up a course to pique the interest of several firms and let attendees in on the secrets to obtain the best deal they can for their properties.

Once the offers are on the table, how does a course operator, particularly a

municipality, choose among the various proposals? Gene Burress, Golf Operations Director of the Brevard County (Fla.) Parks and Recreation Department, will guide course operators through the maze

of options during his talk "How a municipality should select a management firm."

Other management/marketing speakers appearing at this important national event will include John Henry, who will speak on how the PGA strives to develop course pros who know as much about how to create a healthy bottom line as they do about how to cure a slice during his session titled "PGA of America's Career Links Program: Golf pros as golf course managers."

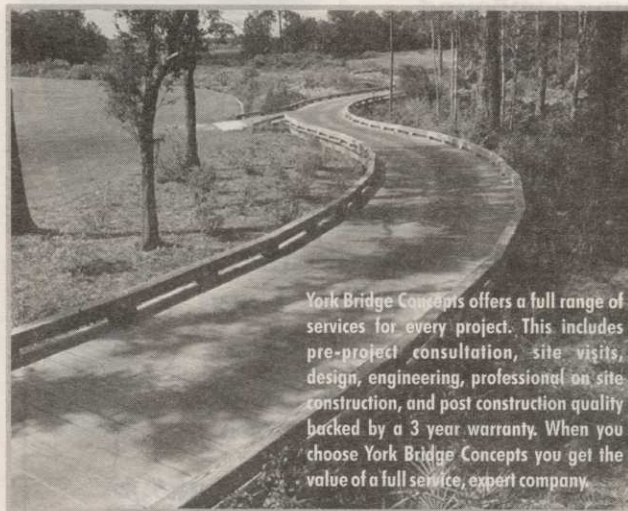
Also on the card is a session entitled "Leasing vs. buying: What's best for you?" A representative from a leading golf course equipment supplier will discuss one of the biggest decisions operators of existing or new golf courses make, whether to buy or lease their course equipment.

For more information on Public Golf Forum, please contact United Publications at 800-441-6982 ext. 262.



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Vietnam's growing pains

Continued from page 42

membership from a two-year time frame to a six-year time frame. While this means that the club will have to wait longer to regain investment costs, it should make golf more accessible to locals by simplifying the process and making it less costly.

Furthermore, they are working in tandem with the Asian Commercial Bank to offer special memberships to their customers and card holders. Although these new strategies have only been in place for two months, interest is reportedly quite high.

The other two clubs in the area have a significantly smaller membership base.

The Vung Tau Paradise Golf Club was the first golf project licensed by the MPI in 1991. However, the Taiwanese investor has been unsuccessful in creating a quality product. The 27-hole golf course fails to take full advantage of its seaside location. Further, Vung Tau has not materialized into a major tourist destination for golfers and the expatriate community in Vung Tau is hardly adequate to support the project.

The owner has recently brought in a young New Zealander, Michael Davies, who is filling the roles of maintenance supervisor, pro, and director of golf. He certainly has the energy for the job, but it will be a tough road ahead if he is to have any lasting impact on the quality of the golf course.

Certainly Vung Tau will need much more if it is to move beyond this initial stage of development.

The Dong Nai Golf Resort is the newest project in Vietnam situated about an hour and a half up Highway One from HCM City in the Dong Nai industrial area. The first 18 holes opened in March of 1997, and the third nine holes are currently under construction.

The course has the most spectacular topography of any golf course around HCM City and American Ward Northrup has done a terrific job on the design.

However, the course — owned by the Taiwanese BoChang group — was closed for three months this spring, remaining open only on weekends for members. The claimed reason was that they need more time to adequately train their staff, but it may have been a short-term cost cutting measure instead.

The next two golf courses are in Dalat and Phan Thiet and are close enough to be weekend courses for Ho Chi Minh City residents, but they are best positioned to attract resort golfers and other Asian members.

To be continued in GCN October