

Frontier, Robinson collaborate on Costa Rican 18

SAN JOSE, Costa Rica — Frontier Construction Co. has broken ground on an 18-hole championship golf course here at Los Suenos Resort, an ambitious development that will include golf, resort housing, marina and a 300-room Marriott hotel facility. The golf course has been laid out by architect Ted Robinson. Marriott Golf will manage the golf operation. The hotel and course are scheduled to open in November.

"We expect to be finished with course construction in July," explained Nick Scigliano, president Frontier Construction Co., based in Jones Mills, Pa. "We will oversee the project through grow-in, though Marriott will manage the turf development program and ultimately manage the course."

Ground-breaking at Los Suenos follows hard on the November opening of another exotic Frontier project, Coamo Springs Golf & Tennis Club in Coamo. Designed by Ferdinand Garbin, Coamo Springs G&TC is the centerpiece of an upscale resort development focused around Banos de Coamo, a natural 105-degree spring which draws tourists and health-conscious bathers from all over the world.

Frontier turned its first spade of dirt in Coamo in February 1998. Ten months, two hurricanes and three rows of irrigation later, this 18-hole desert-style layout was accommodating resort play. "Seed

selection was one of the reasons this course grew in so quickly," Scigliano said. "Most folks would use 419 sprigs in a climate like Coamo's, but the folks at Jacklin Seed Co. convinced us to use their new seeded Bermudagrass, Jackpot, which came in incredibly fast. It germinated in five to six days. The club was mowing

in two weeks."

Frontier installed a triple-row Rain Bird system at Coamo Springs while addressing several complicated irrigation issues in this semi-arid environment. For example, after locating an abundant water source — 15 feet below a dry river basin some 7,000 feet from the course — Scigliano

and his team dropped submersible pumps in each of two wells. Frontier then pumped the water more than a mile uphill to the uppermost irrigation pond, which sits 150 feet above the river bed. Frontier's three-tiered pond scheme features a fully automated supplementation system, meaning inadequate water levels in the lowermost lake trigger flow from the river basin to the uppermost lake.

"There are no green-sand suppliers in Puerto Rico, so we were obliged to create the greens mix from scratch," Scigliano said. "In same river basin, we drilled test holes and found material that, through screening and washing, met USGA (U.S. Golf Association) specifications. So that's what we did: We mined it, prescreened it, triple-washed it, and, after exhaustive testing and approvals, hauled it to the green sites."

Flat pipe

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the top surface.

"With a 4-inch tile, you have 4 inches to play with. On a flat tile you have 1 inch," he said. "Your sub-base has to be compacted extremely well, and we paid strict attention to laser-shooting the subgrade."

For its part, ADS has pulled the sand-slotted, or thin-slotted, AdvanEDGE off the golf course market until it determines, scientifically, what was causing failures, according to Marketing Director Tony Radoszewski.

"Last summer we had a lack of performance in how the system was designed," he said. "What we believe is that the sand mixture used, although it seems to have been what was recommended, didn't work. Whether it was the particle size in the sand mix, we don't know. We took the conservative side and said because we don't know, and because we can't control the quality of the sand — a significant contributing factor to the success of the system — we are holding back sales of the sand-slotted AdvanEDGE.

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