

TOP NEWS STORIES OF 1999

The vagaries of the weather often dominate the news pages of *Golf Course News*. So it was again this year. The two major weather-related stories involved the drought that lasted from early spring through late summer in much of the Eastern United States, followed by the wind and water damage Hurricane Floyd and the subsequent rains visited along the East Coast, particularly in the Carolinas.

Some high-profile courses were in the news. Pebble Beach opened the year by breaking ground on a new 5th hole that officials believe will improve the layout immensely. This summer an American group, led by Arnold Palmer, purchased the Pebble Beach Co. for \$820 million from a Japanese firm that had owned the resort and its four courses since 1992. Farther down the California course, a leak in a sewer line was believed to have undermined a portion of Ocean Trails Golf Course in Rancho Palos Verdes, sending a 200-by-400-foot section of the course 50 feet toward the Pacific Ocean and leaving behind a deep ravine.

On the opposite coast, Southern New Jersey's Pine Valley Golf Club, annually ranked the top course in the

world, saw architect Tom Fazio break ground on a daily-fee layout called Pine Hill Golf Club less than a mile away.

The news was mixed on the golf course supply-and-demand front. The 448 new U.S. golf facilities opened in 1998, the second-highest number ever, may be matched or exceeded when the final count becomes available for 1999. Nowhere was the growth more evident than in Myrtle Beach, S.C., which witnessed the opening of the Grand Strand's 100th layout.

But while golf course supply headed up, the number of rounds played (the major measure of golf demand) took a slight dive, down 3.4 percent overall in 1998. Increased supply and decreasing demand is the type of news that bothers course operators. Still, that news was tempered somewhat by another NGF study that showed playing fees rising roughly 12 percent annually since 1994.

While it's too early to tell, anecdotal information from superintendents and others in the golf industry indicate that, Hurricane Floyd aside, 1999's generally dry weather resulted in greater demands for tee times.



Ocean Trails' 18th hole.

## Seaside course trying to stay out of water

By ANDREW OVERBECK

RANCHO PALOS VERDES, Calif. — Southern California's answer to Pebble Beach suffered a massive setback June 2 when a 200-by-400-foot section of the 18th hole shifted out 50 feet from the rest of the course leaving behind a 60-to-90-foot deep ravine between the 18th and 12th holes.

The section of the course that shifted sat on an ancient landslide, which was bisected by an aging Los Angeles County sewer line. It is widely speculated that a

JULY

leak in that sewer line touched off the land movement.

The Ocean Trails Golf Course, designed by Pete Dye, was only weeks away from opening and developers are now faced with the task of reconstructing the damage.

"It has always been complicated with this project," said developer Ken

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## Hurricane Floyd leaves mark on North Carolina

By PETER BLAIS

WILMINGTON, N.C. — Hurricane Floyd and the heavy rains that followed in mid-September left numerous courses submerged and forced many to close for a month or more.

Floyd came ashore here Sept. 13. The Wilmington area was hit full force by the hurricane, but

escaped the worst of the floods, according to Joey Hines, head pro at Cape Fear Country Club.

"We got 33 inches of rain, but never flooded to the point many other



courses did," Hines said. "Anything from Wallace to Kenston to Greenville was badly flooded. The perimeter roads leading into and around

Wilmington were washed out. But Wilmington did not have real bad floods.

"We lost quite a few trees. Everybody in the area had pretty much the same thing — a messy cleanup, a lot of standing water, trees and debris.

The worst of the flooding occurred farther north and west.

NOVEMBER

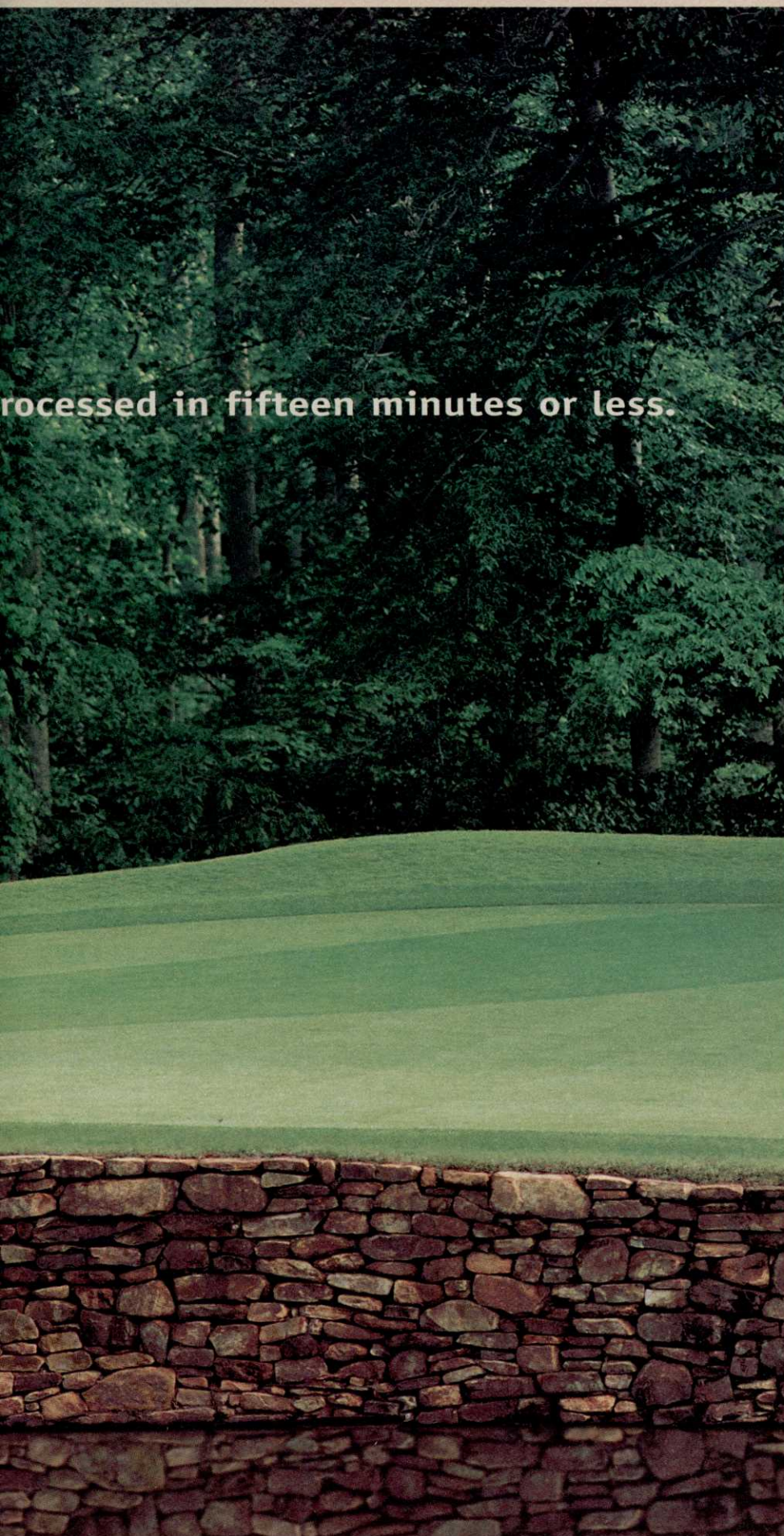
MARCH

### MYRTLE BEACH OPENS 100TH COURSE

MYRTLE BEACH, S.C. — The recently opened Tournament Players Club of Myrtle Beach has the distinction of being the 100th course along South Carolina's Grand Strand.

The high-end daily fee facility will debut as the site of the Ingersoll-Rand Senior Tour Championship in November and is a joint venture between PGA TOUR Golf Course Properties and Myrtle Beach Golf Holiday (MGBH).

The TPC of Myrtle Beach is the 16th Tournament Players Club.



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CIRCLE #103



## Ocean Trails

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Zuckerman, who has spent 15 years trying to turn the Ocean Trails concept into a reality.

Zuckerman knew about the ancient landslide prior to construction and took the following measures to ensure that golf course irrigation would not affect the stability of the land.

"We put down a three-foot layer of impermeable clay and six inches of sand and then a herringbone drainage system," said Zuckerman. "That fed into a sump pump, which pumped the water to an irrigation lake on the course." Unfortunately, the leaking sewer line was buried beneath the clay cap.

Dye, who was on his way to Ocean Trails the day of the slide to give the course his final stamp of approval, has already examined the damage.

"When I got there the next day it looked like the shoreline had been there for a million years, you could see the fairway, the bunkers and the green," said Dye. "I have been around for 73 years and I have never seen anything like it."

There are a couple of repair options available to the developers, according to Dye. "They can put the hole back where it was without a great deal of fight, or you could leave it out there," said Dye. "All you really have to do is clean out the valley, grass the thing and fix what has been broken out of 18."

Whatever is decided, the ground will have to be stabilized. Although preliminary reports from geologists suggest that major earth movements are unlikely to happen again along the ancient landslide and the leaking sewer line has been repaired, Zuckerman plans to proceed with great caution.

"We would like to get the work done by the end of the year," said Zuckerman. ▽

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