

Dye donates design to Wis. monks

By ANDREW OVERBECK

SPARTA, Wis. — Architect Pete Dye has teamed up with monks at the Our Lady of Spring Bank Cistercian Abbey, here, to design a public access golf course on 200 acres of monastery property.

Local businessman David Colbert has committed the remaining 100 acres to the project, which is tentatively set to begin construction this August.

Dye agreed to waive his design fee for the course, which is being built by the monks as a means to remain self-supporting.

The monks, who are now living off the interest from a trust fund, recently figured that the trust income will eventually fail to sustain them.

Along with Colbert, the monks conducted a feasibility study that

showed that a public, daily-fee course could be supported by the community and tourism traffic. The monks are betting that the golf course will provide them with a steady source of income for years to come.

The 18-hole course will be all bentgrass, feature five sets of tees and is slated to be 7,475 yards long, one of the longest courses in the Upper Midwest.

"They have a beautiful piece of land, and it has nice sandy soil," said Dye.

Dye has already drawn out the preliminary routing for the course, but maintains that the next step in the development process is going to hinge on getting the construction financed.

"The only way the course is going to work for them is if they go into golf course operation

debt free," Dye said of the proposed golf course facility.

"They have to be able to run that thing and make a living off it. I'm not about to go in there and get them into debt and have them lose their land."

Dye plans to work with other golf-related companies in the coming months to raise funds to finance the construction of the golf course.

New courses

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more and more nine-hole courses today are expanding to meet increased local demand." As Kass is quick to point out, roughly 35 percent, or 5,600 of the nation's total golf course supply, is comprised of nine-hole layouts.

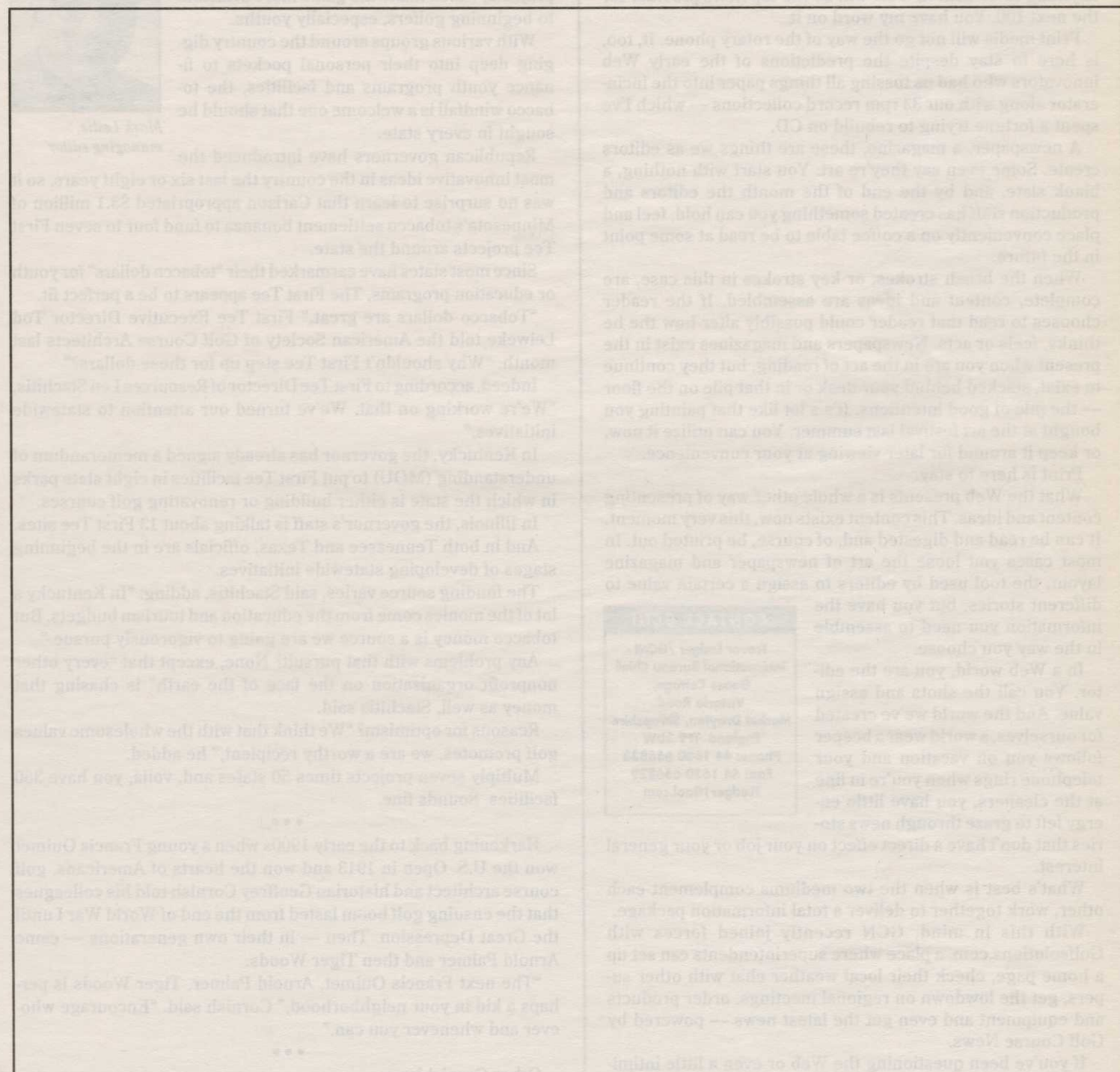
The new NGF facilities report provides updated information and a number of other statistical insights into the health and direction of golf course development in the United States. Among them:

• **18-hole Equivalents**—Because it contained such a high number of nine-hole courses, the 448 courses coming on line in 1998 were equivalent to 327.5 18-hole courses.

• **Hot Spots** — Michigan, Florida and California were once again the leaders in new construction activity. As has been the case for several years now, these three states accounted for roughly 20 percent of all projects that were either completed or began construction in 1998. Also among the top 10 in both categories for 1998 are Pennsylvania, Georgia and Wisconsin.

• **Public vs. Private** — Following the trend of the past 25 to 30 years, the vast majority [86 percent or 386] of the new courses built last year were public access and, of these courses, more than 90 percent were daily-fee. The report also shows that the number of private courses in the United States increased by only 10 in 1998, the lowest net gain in several years.

• **Real Estate** — Approximately 40 percent or 178 of the golf course development projects completed last year were part of housing developments. Although this percentage is somewhat less than the 60 percent it was 10 years ago, it underscores the fact that the real-estate market continues to be a significant force in golf course development. As it has for many years now, Florida once again led all states with 30 new real-estate related courses. Michigan and North Carolina were next with 13 and 10, respectively.



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*NTEP data available upon request. Based on 1997 report.

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