

GOLF COURSE NEWS

THE NEWSPAPER FOR THE GOLF COURSE INDUSTRY

A UNITED PUBLICATION
VOLUME 11, NUMBER 9
SEPTEMBER 1999 • \$5.50

INSIDE

Winter Prep

We've got it covered — from overseeding and dormant seeding to VFDs & irrigation systems 21-25

Post-traumatic Stress

Superintendents hosting the four Majors have tons to deal with in the aftermath, most of it not turf 38

Sandy Lyle Speaks Out

British golfer is taking his architectural thoughts from philosophy to reality 27



A NATIVE SON
George Frye, a native of nearby Pinehurst, S.C., has proven you can go home again, taking Kiawah Resort's The Ocean Course to new heights. See stories on page 13.

COURSE MAINTENANCE

Michigan State adds Espanol 13
International Environmental Summit planned 15

COURSE DEVELOPMENT

Survey shows growth in Canadian golf 3
Rulewich restores Yale University layout 27

COURSE MANAGEMENT

Pebble Beach sale finalized 6
OnTee.com provides one-stop shop 33

SUPPLIER BUSINESS

Lesco profits bounce back 39
New products unveiled in marketplace 41-42

NEWSPAPER

Geologists examine Ocean Trails; future unsure

By ANDREW OVERBECK

RANCHO PALOS VERDES, Calif. — In the weeks since the landslide at the Ocean Trails Golf Course here, geologists are still examining the geological substructure beneath the golf course to determine what exactly caused a 200-by 400-foot section of the 18th hole to slip towards the Pacific Ocean. However, the largest earth movement to hit the Palos Verdes Peninsula since the Portuguese Bend landslide in the mid-1950s, has unsettled more than just a fairway and a green complex. Environmental activists, regulatory bodies, planning commissions and even other golf course

Continued on page 5

Drought plagues East Coast

I just got back from New Jersey. You've got to feel for the superintendents down there. It's been so dry, even the weeds are brown.'

— Scott Cybulski, superintendent, Falmouth (Maine) CC

By PETER BLAIS

Scott Cybulski's sympathy for his fellow superintendents is well placed, according to Stan Zontek, agronomist for the United States Golf Association Green Section's Mid-Atlantic region.

During his travels throughout his five-state area — Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, Virginia and West Virginia — Zontek has witnessed the effects of what some are calling the worst drought in the past 100 years.

"It's a notch above awful," Zontek said. "Today [Aug. 5], the state of Maryland imposed mandatory water restrictions. Watering of fairways is only allowed with syringe irrigation with an 80-percent reduction in water usage required. Greens and tees are limited to the minimum necessary.

"Delaware is on voluntary restric-

tions and will probably go into mandatory water restrictions by noon on Friday [Aug. 6] north of Wilmington.

"Pennsylvania went to mandatory water restrictions last week. They allow watering of tees and greens only and syringing to a maximum of 15 minutes a day to heat-sensitive grasses, which are defined as bentgrass and *poa annua* fairways. Any irrigation of sodded or seeded areas can only occur from 9 p.m. to 5 a.m., which isn't going to help for sodding or seeding.

"In Maryland, they don't even allow that. No agricultural irrigation is allowed at all.

"West Virginia was just designated a drought emergency by the President. Virginia has voluntary restrictions, although in the far western corner of the state it's wet,

Continued on page 32



WALK, DON'T RIDE

Colleton River Plantation's Pete Dye Course hosts its grand opening in September, hailed as a cog in the trend towards walking and "core" golf courses, and full caddie service. Since the course's "soft opening" last Dec. 15, half the members have walked track, which stretches from 5,105 to 6,889 yards over Lowcountry property on Hilton Head Island, S.C. Above is the 135-yard 13th hole.

Mark Brown photo

Golf Communities files for bankruptcy

By PETER BLAIS

ORLANDO, Fla. — Golf Communities of America, a publicly held Orlando-based course owner and operator that recently filed for bankruptcy court protection, hopes to submit a reorganization plan by early fall, according to R. Scott Shuker, an attorney representing GCA.

GCA and its 21 subsidiaries operate five active courses, have three courses in planning or under construction and own property in Florida, Texas, Utah and North Carolina. Among GCA's courses are Cutter Sound Golf & Yacht Club in Palm City, Fla.; Hillcrest Country Club (under con-

Continued on page 38



Developers of Ocean Trails Golf Course in Rancho Palos Verdes, Calif., are still seeking a solution to repair the landslide that pushed part of the 18th hole toward the ocean in early June.

Ocean Trails

Continued from page 1

developers are wondering how much credence can be given to geological reports and surveys.

The potential for a landslide event at Ocean Trails was identified before construction began, said Greg Post, senior planner for the city of Rancho Palos Verdes. "Mitigation measures were taken to ensure that no problems took place," he said.

However, since preventive measures failed, it is now up to the developers and Post to find out what caused the slide.

More than 25 geologists are on site and have dug 26 monitoring wells to take borings and samples of earth.

"Of course we want to rebuild the 18th hole," said Ocean Trails Director of Golf Bobby Heath. "But the important thing right now is stabilizing the land mass and making sure that the fix that is put in will accomplish what the golf course, access trails and habitat require."

The Ocean Trails slide has also raised the concerns of environmental activists.

"You have a lot of people in the city who want the golf course project to go forward," said Post. "But then there are people who have been against the project from the get-go and who are opposed to building anything along the coast."

The city is behind Ocean Trails, but remains cautious, according to Post. "The golf course is a financial boost to the city and we want it to go forward, but we are going to make sure that everything is looked at before we proceed," he said.

Ocean Trails is not the only ongoing golf course development project in Rancho Palos Verdes. The city is also working to increase golf-related revenue two miles up the coast at Longpoint, a proposed project that includes an 18-hole golf course, hotel and convention center close to the development moratorium zone at Portuguese Bend. While the city and the developer are still working to come to terms on the use of a sizable amount of public land, they are preparing an Environmental Impact Report (EIR), a zoning plan and coastal development permits.

Michael Moler, vice president of Destination Development Corp. and Longpoint's project manager, insists that the geology underlying the property is different than that at Ocean Trails. However, he acknowledges that the landslide incident has made his job much more difficult.

"It has required 25- to 50-percent more effort. We will be doing a bit more subsurface exploration, borings and strength tests as a result," said Moler. "And more public relations as well."

Dave Snow, principal planner for the city of Rancho Palos Verdes and in charge of the Longpoint project, agrees. "This project will undergo a little closer scrutiny because of the public nature of this issue and the interest sparked by the Ocean Trails slide," said Snow.

Moler maintains that initial geologic surveys reveal that the Longpoint site stands on stronger and more stable ground. "We don't have the same concerns," he said. "The property sits atop some very stable rock formations. Almost all of our site is on basalt formations and the bedding plains are level as opposed to dipping towards the ocean, like they do at Ocean Trails."

Geologic stability aside, Moler and Longpoint will have to deal with myriad additional regulatory concerns, the least of which is the California Coastal Commission (CCC).

NGF report focuses on state of junior golf

JUPITER, Fla.— The National Golf Foundation (NGF) has just released a new research report which provides golf courses and golf businesses with new information to help them develop their junior golfer customer base.

The seed for the report came from the NGF's recently released future state-of-the-game study, "A Strategic Perspective on the Future of Golf." Among other things, it suggests there are 8 million juniors (ages 5-17) in the United States who would like to play more golf, or take up the game for the first time.

Called "The Power of the Junior Golf Market," the study provides the reader with current quantitative and qualitative information on the junior market. In addition to statistics on participation rates, frequency and demographics, the report reveals why junior golfers play, the barriers juniors face when attempting to play golf, the actions necessary to encourage more play among current participants, and suggestions for attracting non-golfing juniors to the game.

For example, the report shows that high commitment to golf as a junior translates into high commitment to golf later in life. Specifically, nine out of 10 avid senior golfers today were avid golfers when they were juniors. And this adds up when considering that the economic impact of a committed or avid golfer is two-to-three times greater than the average golfer in any one year.

The report also shows that "Dad" is the most influential motivator during the trial and commitment phase for juniors. And now may be the most appropriate time to take advantage of this, given that the "Echo Boomers" (the children of the "Baby Boomers") are now into their teenage years.

Said Barry Frank, NGF vice president of membership services: "Golf is competing for the attention of juniors within a marketplace that is more crowded than ever before. The number of entertainment alternatives available to today's youth has never been greater and it only promises to get more cluttered. Thus, to be successful in the years ahead, golf entrepreneurs must have better information on the junior market and "The Power of the Junior Golf Market" is the most comprehensive report that the NGF has published on this important segment."

Copies of "The Power of the Junior Golf Market" can be obtained by calling the membership services department at 888-NGF-2500 or 561-744-6006. The cost is \$45 per copy for NGF members and \$60 for non-members, plus shipping and handling.

"The proposed course extends into an area that was reserved in the local coastal program for habitat, a buffer for geologic instability and a coastal public-access trail," said Pam Emerson, supervising planner for the Los Angeles County branch of the CCC.

Meanwhile, the CCC is also keeping close tabs on Ocean Trails. "We are working with them on the various plans to fix

the damage to be sure that the access and habitat go back in when the hole gets rebuilt," said Emerson.

According to Heath, the plan for fixing the 18th hole should be determined by early September. Then the real work begins.

"Even when we have the plan, we then have to go to the city and the CCC. There are a lot of fingers in this pie," said Heath.

GREEN LAWNGRER

Instantly Restores The Color To Dormant Or Discolored Turf!

Green Lawngrer™ Turf Paint from Becker-Underwood is the fastest way to restore the natural green color to turf which is dormant, discolored or damaged.

Ideal for golf courses and sports turf! Green Lawngrer helps keep fairways, tees and greens looking healthy and lush. Revitalizes worn areas of stadium turf and brightens up stressed or overplayed fields.

Easily applied with many types of sprayers, Green Lawngrer blends in beautifully with most grasses. Won't wash or wear off.

Call or write for more information!



BECKER UNDERWOOD INC.
THE COLOR OF INNOVATION™

801 Dayton Avenue
Ames, Iowa 50010 U.S.A.
515-232-5907
Fax 515-232-5961

Toll-Free 1-800-232-5907