

BRIEFS



THE ROCK GETS A \$3-MILLION FACELIFT

GREENVILLE, S.C. — The partners of Waterhead LLC recently unveiled plans for a major renovation and construction of the former Table Rock Golf Community. Under the new name, The Rock at Jocassee, the community is undergoing a \$43-million development over the next eight years to upgrade and build new roads, expand recreational amenities, develop homes, and improve the cornerstone of the property, a championship style golf course called The Rock. Nestled in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains on highway 11 in Pickens County, S.C., The Rock at Jocassee is a complete, year-round family retreat. The developers are investing more than \$3 million to reshape and improve hole design, build new tee boxes and make the course entertaining for players of all ages and skill levels.

DAVIS LOVE III OPENS WINDERMERE

ATLANTA — The South Forsyth community officially opened its Davis Love III signature golf course at Windermere this summer. The 18-hole, daily-fee golf course, designed by 1997 PGA champion and Georgia resident Davis Love III, and his brother, Mark, embraces the natural terrain and scenic woodlands of the Windermere Valley. The course includes many challenging hills and ridges. Several of the picturesque holes are lined by forested areas. The Windermere Golf Club will feature a full-service pro shop, a practice range and greens, the Plateau Bar & Grill, and a veranda overlooking holes 10 and 18.

ORANGE BROOK SPIFFS UP BACK NINE

HOLLYWOOD, Fla. — Quality Grassing & Services Inc. is working with Sanford Golf Designs, Golf Hollywood, and the city of Hollywood on the Back Nine West renovation project at Orange Brook Golf Course, a 36-hole municipal facility opened in 1936. Rough shaping has been completed on holes 10, 11 and 12. The renovation includes new designs of all green complexes, including all contours and slopes, new bunkers with drainage, and the installation of USGA "spec" greens. Quality's Tifdwarf will be installed on all greens and collars. The course should be ready for play by early October.

Old Brockway first 9-hole western course to be certified by Audubon

By DOUG SAUNDERS

TAHOE CITY, Calif. — Since 1992, when Audubon International's Sanctuary Program was launched, more than 2,500 courses nationwide have been certified as members. The concept of designing and maintaining courses in an environmentally friendly way continues to gain strength, but so far only three courses in the Sanctuary registry are 9-hole facilities.

These smaller layouts, usually family-owned, are typically run with tighter budgets. While many of them are ecologically superb, they haven't seen great value in investing the time, money and toil required to obtain Audubon International's stamp of approval.

Old Brockway Golf Course, located along the shores of Lake Tahoe in the High Sierra of California, is one small course that saw value in making the effort. When it obtained full Audubon certification recently, it became the first 9-hole course west of the Mississippi to do so.

Why did Old Brockway's high command decide to shoot for

GOLF AND THE ENVIRONMENT



The 8th hole at Old Brockway Golf Club, located on the shores of Lake Tahoe

certification? What sort of benefits did they envision? The answers became clear once operations began to upgrade the 76-year-old course in an area with some of the most stringent environmental controls in the country.

Silver magnate Harry Comstock — of the legendary Comstock

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ERNIE ELS UNVEILS FIRST DESIGN

IJAMSVILLE, Md. — Whiskey Creek Golf Club, the first golf course designed by two-time U.S. Open champion Ernie Els, opened here outside of Washington, DC June 17. Els collaborated with course architect J. Michael Poellot on the layout, which features springs, streams, stone walls, wetlands, rock outcroppings, broad meadows, pine forests and dramatic views of the Catoctin Mountains. Pictured above is the strategic 18th hole, a par-5 that forks around the stone ruins of an old farmhouse.

Tobago Plantations opening in December

By TREVOR LEDGER

TOBAGO, West Indies — December 15 has been inked for the unveiling of Tobago Plantations Golf Club, designed and managed by PGA Golf Management of Bristol, United Kingdom.

"This is such a beautiful site," said PGA technical director Bob Hunt, who continued, "there is no decorative planting, everything about the design is wild and natural, very similar to a British links course in that respect."

Situated on an old sugar and coconut plantation, Tobago Plantations required a fair bit of "muck shifting" — 350,000 cubic meters to be exact — a lot of this being involved in the construction of several huge freshwater lakes.

"This site is extremely sensitive environmentally," explained Hunt. "We had to be very careful not to contaminate the mangrove swamps with any run off. The wonderful side effect of this extreme care



The 14th green at Tobago Plantations

is the incredible flora and fauna of the course — orchids through to 'Naked Indian' trees, and lizards through to these birds that are constantly flapping around and chattering."

Design of the course was undertaken

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Cal Olson on fast design pace out West

By MEGHAN FOLEY

SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO, Calif. — With three new courses already opened and four more scheduled to debut in the near future, Cal Olson Golf Architecture, based here, is on a hot streak in California, New Mexico and Nevada.

The newest construction project, which broke ground recently, is Diamond Hill Golf Course, an 18-hole, upscale public course nestled between two hills in Fullerton, Calif. The course measures 6,890 yards from the tips, but has five tees per hole, making it friendly to both big hitters and beginners.



Cal Olson

"At Diamond Hill, we're planning on using bentgrass on the greens and Bermudagrass in the roughs," said Olson. "I think all this will work best within the constraints of the natural environment."

According to Olson, the well-drained soil should provide an excellent turf growing media, which should keep the surface as dry as possible. Diamond Hill GC will also feature seven lakes, as well as four to five acres of waste bunkers created for overall drainage needs.

"When all is said and done, the project will probably end up costing \$8.5 million, excluding the clubhouse and the maintenance building," Olson said. The course is expected to be complete spring of 2001.

INTRAWEST RUNNING SIERRA STAR

Sierra Star, an 18-hole, par-70 golf course layout in Mammoth Lakes,

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DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

Olson on roll

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Calif., opened late last year, just before the snows hit. The site sits at an 8,000-foot elevation and incorporates tree-lined fairways, well-trapped greens and numerous lakes, ponds, waterfalls, and streams to make it the ideal mountain retreat for golfers. "It is designed to challenge all skill levels, and it was by far

the most difficult to construct," Olson said.

A resort course open to the public, Sierra Star is being managed by Intrawest and is the centerpiece of one of the new Intrawest villages.

In Las Cruces, N.M. the Olson group celebrated the grand opening of the Sonoma Ranch this spring. This 7,000-yard championship course sits at an elevation of 4,000 feet and

is considered a "high desert" course. The layout has water on only two holes, but the real test of the rolling terrain rests in the variety and strategy of the course itself.

"Sonoma Ranch GC has spectacular views – it is really a great looking project," said Olson. "The course has many interesting holes, each unique within the site, and it provides an interesting challenge to the player. It has the



The 8th hole at Sierra Star GC in Mammoth Lakes, Calif., which opened last fall

feel of a links course."

ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN

Mandated by the philosophy to develop aesthetically pleasing and optimally playable golf courses, Olson and his team also aim to create construction techniques that maximize the harmony of the natural environment. His Coyote Hills Golf Course in Fullerton, Calif., which was completed in 1996, was recently certified by Audubon International as a wildlife sanctuary.

According to Olson, it's the only California course south of San Francisco to receive this honor. Coyote Hills GC is carved from the hills of an operational oil field, which is precisely why Olson believes this course runs the gamut of design challenges: endangered species, pumping oil wells, soil reclamation, and 150-foot elevation changes. "It was the toughest course to design from an environmental standpoint," he said. "All my courses are committed to environmental integrity. Nowadays, if you're in California, it's an automatic."

Since no two Cal Olson golf projects look or play alike, Mountain Falls Golf Course in Pahrump, Nev., is ready to set a new standard for golf design. The hotel and casino resort course is scheduled to open this month, and will open many eyes to creative golf layout in "flat" areas.

"The 7250-yard course is carved out of flat desert and sculpted to challenge players of all abilities," said Olson. Among some of the course's attributes include two holes on each nine having alternate green placements, one for regular play and one for tournament play.

Other projects underway are the Hemet Valley Inn and CC, a 6,600-yard course primarily for seniors, which begins construction this month. Also, Reidy Creek, an 18-hole, par-3 course in Escondido, Calif., is scheduled to start construction in September and will open next summer for play.

Since its inception in 1979, Olson's company has designed golf projects in the continental United States and Hawaii, and overseas in Japan, Korea, Singapore, French Polynesia and Spain. ▽

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