

GOLF COURSE NEWS

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INSIDE

BASF closes Cyanamid deal

With the deal done, BASF is now working on integrating American Cyanamid's product line 3

Old Brockway certified

1924 layout becomes first nine-hole course west of the Mississippi to win Audubon certification 11



IRRIGATION AND PUMP STATION FOCUS

As existing courses (including Pebble Beach, above) strive to keep up with new competition, irrigation upgrades and retrofits are at the heart of most renovation work. See pages 17-18 for a complete look at what's new in the irrigation renovation marketplace.

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PERIODICAL

Simplot consortium wins bid for ABT's assets

By A. OVERBECK

HENDERSON, Nev. — The bid for AgriBioTech's (ABT) Professional Turfgrass Division submitted by a consortium led by J.R. Simplot Turf and Horticulture was approved here June 10 in federal bankruptcy court.

However, the deal, which reportedly closed for less than the original asking price of \$65 million, required a lengthy day of negotiations after Central Garden and Pet (owners of Madison, Ga.-based Pennington Seeds) submitted a rival bid for this parcel of ABT's assets.

"After the overbid we left the hearings and spent the rest of the day in meetings with Development Special-

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The 12th hole at the Ritz-Carlton managed White Witch Course at Rose Hall in Jamaica

Ritz-Carlton barrels into course management with high-end clubs

By JAY FINEGAN

ATLANTA — There's a new player in the competitive field of golf course management, and this one comes loaded with cachet: the Ritz-Carlton Hotel Company, headquartered here.

For now, the company has only three courses in its portfolio, but that will grow to at least 17 over the next few years, as the number of Ritz-Carlton hotels grows from today's 37 to 63. Fourteen of the 26 new properties will feature courses ranging from 18 holes to 45. "We're basically doubling the size of the company over the next three years," said Stan Waterhouse, a Ritz-Carlton vice president and head of the club and golf division.

Waterhouse, formerly with ClubCorp, said he hopes to bring to the courses the same levels of quality and service that distinguish the company's famous hotels. "We believe we'll be the benchmark in the industry," he said. "By extending the Ritz-Carlton imprint of excellence to man-

aging existing and new golf facilities, we have an opportunity to make an impact on the market and deliver a product with a difference."

Waterhouse plans to employ a three-pronged growth strategy. First, his division will manage courses affiliated with Ritz-Carlton hotel and resort properties. It also will enter into management agreements with independent, top-caliber country clubs. And, third, it will look to develop an interest in courses not yet built. "We'll work with residential developers who have an interest in having a golf club to enhance their residential community," he said.

WHITE WITCH IN JAMAICA

In the first case, an example is the White Witch Course at the Ritz-Carlton, at Rose Hall, Jamaica, which opened in June. It sits near the company's new 428-room resort, 10 minutes from Montego Bay.

The White Witch, designed by architects Robert von Hagge and Rick Baril,

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Pete Dye finds gold at Lost Canyons

By MEGHAN FOLEY

SIMI VALLEY, Calif. — Take one look at the vast array of hills, slopes, meadows and rolling canyon floors, and it is no wonder why Lost Canyons Golf Club could become one of Pete Dye's greatest design achievements. Despite the fact that the famed architect does not like to compare his courses, he does admit that Lost Canyons is going to be special. The sheer terrain will see to that.

The 36-hole layout is currently in the final phases of construction and grow-in in the Santa Susana Mountains here, just north of Los Angeles. Landmark National, one of the leading golf real estate investment



The rugged terrain at Dye's Lost Canyons design near L.A.

companies, provided 1,600 acres of land, located on a portion of the historic Big Sky Ranch, and commissioned Dye to create two 18-hole public golf courses.

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Supers in Southeast coping with drought

By JAY FINEGAN

HILTON HEAD, S.C. — How bad is it?

Here in the southeast corner of South Carolina, only 10.3 inches of rain had fallen as of mid-July. A normal year would have brought 36 inches

by Independence Day. And that's after a dismal 1999, when the area came in 10 inches below normal.

"We're real dry," said Steve Wright, superintendent at the Long Cove Club, a private, 18-hole, Pete Dye

facility here on Hilton Head Island. "The greens are fine but the green banks are burnt. The edges are bad. We have effluent and water from the lagoon, where we trap rainwater. But now the

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Tobago Plantations

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in house for PGA with Hunt being joined by golf architect Marcus Blackburn. With ideal growing conditions for the Bermudagrass, around 1,000 acres available on the estate and the top specification for USGA greens, Hunt and Blackburn be-

lieve that they have delivered "the goods."

"The Bermudagrass course winds along beaches, around coral peninsulas, through mangroves and down to a hidden lagoon," said Hunt, clearly enthusiastic about the picturesque layout.

A 200-room Hilton Hotel is due for a July opening, with another hotel to start construction later this year. All 120 con-

dominiums and 85 villas of the first phase have been sold, and work on a third nine holes will start within the next few months, including at least 100 more villas.

Elsewhere in Tobago, the Mount Irvine Golf Club - formerly a 'Top 100' course in the world, according to Shell - is in the process of being refurbished, giving Tobago Plantations "good company," said Hunt. ▶

Dye's Lost Canyons to open in fall

Continued from page 1

Under the supervision of PGA Tour star Fred Couples, both courses are scheduled to open this fall.

"It's the property that will make this course so special. I have never in my life seen a property like this one," Dye said. "Pebble Beach has the Pacific

Ocean, and you can't duplicate that kind of ambiance, but this place will have unmatched views of up to 20 and 30 miles from some points."

The two tracks will feature distinctive looks. The Shadow Course will follow the terrain of the rolling canyon floor, and the Sky Course will run along the ridgelines of the canyon. As Dye explained, "The golf courses are both totally connected. It's all self-contained. From a gallery point of view, you can put all of Los Angeles out here."

"There was no need to try to trick up anything at Lost Canyons," Dye added. "The ambiance and the challenge are already here. You just have to make it as playable as possible. If they held a Tour event here, you would have players shooting 64 or 65, but there's also going to be a few 82s thrown in there, too."

Both courses will measure about 7,000 yards from the back tees, and the daily fees will range from \$115 to \$135, with reduced rates for seniors. Included in the fee will be a forecaddie, who will greet players on arrival and provide them with information that includes strategy from any of the five tees, direction and club selection. The crowning jewel in the center of it all will be an 11,000-square-foot ranch-style clubhouse, including a pro shop, executive conference rooms and a bar.

Dye, who has designed eight of the top-20 ranked modern courses in the United States, believes that his new creation will move to the top of the list.

"Lost Canyons should be among the best courses I've designed because of the topography," he said. He believes that golf should be accepted more in its natural state, and that is the case here. "There are no fast greens in Ireland or Scotland. They all have different mixtures of grasses and the sand in the bunkers. I really don't agree with courses that are so artificial that if there is a blade of grass out of place, there's something wrong. Lost Canyons is such a great place to build a golf course because everything is so natural. You don't have to try to wiggle in a bunker; all we're trying to do is combine a golf course with what's already here."

"I think this is a great thing for people in L.A. who just see buildings and cars," he said. "We're so close to 20 million people here and you don't see a soul - nothing but hills and greens."

Lost Canyons represents Landmark National's debut in Los Angeles. The company currently has golf properties under development in Houston and Padre Island, Texas and in Maryland, Mississippi and Ireland. ▶

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