

BRIEFS



LAYTON JOINS PALMER GOLF DESIGN

PONTE VEDRA BEACH, Fla.—Newly graduated landscape architect Thad Layton has joined Palmer Design Company as part of the design staff. While studying at Mississippi State University, Layton interned with the Palmer group and also worked construction on several courses.

"Over the past three years, Thad has proven himself to be an extremely valuable player on our team," said Ed Seay, executive vice president and chief operating officer for Palmer Design.

"We look forward to having him around on a full-time basis." Palmer Design is a complete course planning and design organization with more than 250 active projects and open courses in 30 states and 20 countries.

SCHRICKLE JOINS TRENT JONES II INT'L

PALO ALTO, Calif.—Bettina Schrickel has joined Robert Trent Jones II International as a design associate. Previously, she was a design associate with Santa Rosa-based Bettina Schrickel Fream & Dale Golfplan.



Bettina Schrickel

TPC SNOQUALMIE VOTED TOP COURSE IN WASHINGTON STATE

SEATTLE—The Jack Nicklaus-designed TPC Snoqualmie Ridge Gold Club has been voted the number one course in the state by



Washington's golf professionals, the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* reported.

The private membership course, open for only a year, is located about 30 minutes east of Seattle. Western Golf Properties, of Scottsdale, Ariz., manages the course, which is focal point of the 1,343-acre Snoqualmie Ridge Weyerhaeuser Real Estate Company's golf community. It offers membership to community homeowners, non-residents and corporations. The superintendent is Tom Wolff.

Sanford ready to play in Big Dig's dirt

By ANDREW OVERBECK

BOSTON—After almost three years of work and more than 500,000 truckloads of dirt, developer Charles Geilich and architect John Sanford are finally ready to start construction on Quarry Hills Golf Course in Quincy.

In total, Boston's "Big Dig" underground highway project has supplied 7.7 million cubic yards of fill that was used by the developers, Quarry Hills Associates, to cap two former landfills and fill in an abandoned granite quarry to make the 450-acre golf course project a reality. In order to facilitate the delivery of materials, trucks made an average of 800 trips a day to the site—so many that the Massachusetts Highway Department built a separate exit off the highway just for the trucks.

Geilich and his group worked a deal with the highway authority and the towns of Milton and Quincy whereby they would be paid around \$12 per ton to take the material, cover the landfills and develop the golf course. The developers will lease the land from the city of Quincy for 50 years.

In the face of continued scrutiny over the \$1.4-billion cost over-run of the Big Dig project, the developers maintain that the highway authority has saved money by trucking the fill a mere eight miles to

Quincy. Geilich insists that all of the money they are being paid to take the fill is being eaten up by construction and engineering costs.

"By our estimates, we are saving the Big Dig \$150 million," he said. "We are working three shifts around the clock and the staff is enormous. Our engineering costs alone are upwards of \$7 million. Every dime [we've been paid] has all gone into the project."

Regulatory pressures have also added costs to the project, according to Geilich.

"There isn't a regulatory body that we haven't dealt with," he said. "Between federal, state and local authori-

ties, we have an inspection by somebody every week."

As a result, Sanford estimated that he has done more than 30 different routing plans for the project.

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It took an average of 800 trucks a day for three years to bring 7.7 million cubic yards of fill from the Big Dig to Quarry Hills. A view of the Boston skyline from the site. (inset)

New Tom Fazio complex in Virginia spotlights junior golf

By JAY FINEGAN

RICHMOND, Va.—When the Independence Golf Club opens here next summer, junior golfers will have an upscale course of their own, designed by award-winning architect Tom Fazio. The 9-hole layout is only part of a major new \$17-million golf center taking shape on 250 acres of rolling countryside southwest of this state capital.

The brainchild of the Virginia State Golf Association (VSGA) and 15 years in the planning, Independence also will feature an 18-hole, Fazio-designed championship course, complete with four man-made lakes. An elegant, Jeffersonian-style clubhouse, 20,000 square feet, will anchor the complex and house everything from the pro shop and grill to a museum of Virginia golf history and a library. An education center will provide a place for seminars and conferences for superintendents, golf professionals, and club

managers.

The so-called Kids' Course, however, along with other youth-oriented amenities, makes the new facility the first of its kind on the East Coast. "The emphasis on kids has been the focus from day one," said David Norman, executive director of the VSGA. "We think it's going to be a really neat atmosphere for them."

Measuring 1,326 yards, the Kids' Course is a par-3 layout, with multiple tee boxes on each hole. "It's going to be for everyone from toddlers up to the early teens," Norman said, "but it will look like a championship course. You will definitely have the feel of a regular course, with hazards and all. It has bunkers, but not pot bunkers, and it actually crosses a creek twice, but from the shortest tees you don't have to shoot across water. The holes range up to 192 yards, but we'll have some tees down to 60 yards for the

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Brian Ault voted new president of ASGCA

CHICAGO—Course designer Brian Ault, of Kensington, Md., was elected president of the American Society of Golf Course Architects at the group's annual meeting, held recently in Ireland.

A member of the ASGCA since 1977, Ault has earned a reputation for developing award-winning residential and resort courses. Among the layouts he has designed or remodeled are: the Tournament Players Club (TPC) at Avenel, in Potomac, Md.; Eagle Ridge Golf Club, in Lakewood, N.J.; South

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Keystone's second 18-hole layout opens in Rockies

KEYSTONE, Colo.—The Rocky Mountains' newest 18-hole course opened last month at Keystone Resort. Situated at 9,300 feet above sea level and surrounded by soaring peaks, the River Course at Keystone was designed by Michael Hurdzan and Dana Fry to compliment the natural beauty of the area and also to minimize any impact on wildlife and native vegetation.

"With the opening of the River Course, Keystone will take its place as one of the premier mountain golf destinations in North America," said John Rutter, chief operating officer. Combined with the highly rated Ranch Course, Keystone now offers 36 holes of championship golf in a spectacular setting.

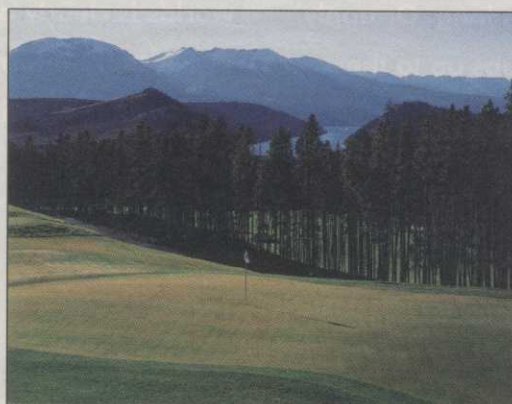
The par-71 River Course stretches to

6,886 yards, with a rating of 70.3 and a 131 slope. The front nine meanders along the Snake River, while the back nine provides superb views of the Continental Divide, Lake Dillon, and the Gore Range. The course also offers a 194-foot vertical drop on the par-4 16th hole and a challenging navigation through 12 bunkers on the 18th.

"There's a breathtaking view from every hole on the course," said Steve Corneillier, director of golf at Keystone. "It's more than just a natural design. We used environmental principles for this design. It looks as if the course was air-lifted in."

According to Corneillier, Hurdzan and Fry were selected because of their

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Keystone's back nine provides breathtaking views.

Independence

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wee kids."

In planning the Independence complex, the VSGA looked at other centers owned by state golf associations. The Kids' Course, for instance, was inspired by the 9-hole, par-3 Little Course at Aspen Grove, in Franklin, Tenn., built by the Tennessee Golf Association. The championship layout drew on the example of Poppy Hills Golf Course, at Pebble Beach, owned and operated by the Northern California Golf Association.

With five sets of tees on each hole, the main course at Independence will range from 5,086 yards, from the shortest markers, to 7,134 yards from the back tees. To make it even shorter for very young players, additional tee boxes will be set along some fairways. "We understand that the length of a regulation course can be a deterrent to kids," Norman said, "and we want to keep it fun for them."

A CLUBHOUSE FOR KIDS

The Kids' Course is just one of the highlights for junior golfers at Independence. Concerned that the younger set might feel uncomfortable dining in the

handsome grille room, for example, the planners decided to build a separate clubhouse for kids.

"We felt a need to give the kids their own place," said Norman. "The dorms are going to be at the far end of our double-ended driving range, down where the teaching center is, and it made sense to do food service and other activities near the dorms rather than making them walk up to the main clubhouse, 350 yards away."

"The South Carolina Golf Association actually has a little clubhouse in Columbia," Norman added. "We borrowed that idea. So we'll have a restaurant in there,

or at least a kitchen, where the counselors can prepare pizza or burgers – kids' food. It'll be a nice place for them to hang out and release some energy. We think it's going to work out real well."

For players age nine to 14, Independence plans to run the so-called Challenge Golf League, with uniforms, a regular season, and a tournament. "The kids will come for tryouts, and the coaches will draft their teams," Norman said. "They'll play a skills challenge one day a week, which means they putt, chip, and drive for points. They'll also play head to head against the other teams, and on another day of the week they'll play a four-hole scramble. It's a lot like Little League baseball."

CADDIE TRAINING PROGRAM

The Independence course will feature the usual fleet of motorized golf carts, but it will also encourage the use of caddies as a means of forging connections between adult golfers and the upcoming generation of players. Some of the older high-dollar country clubs protect the caddie programs they have, Norman noted, but seldom these days

"We didn't want to require players to take caddies, but we did want to offer it. So the idea we're pursuing right now is to set aside certain hours during the day as assigned caddie starting times."

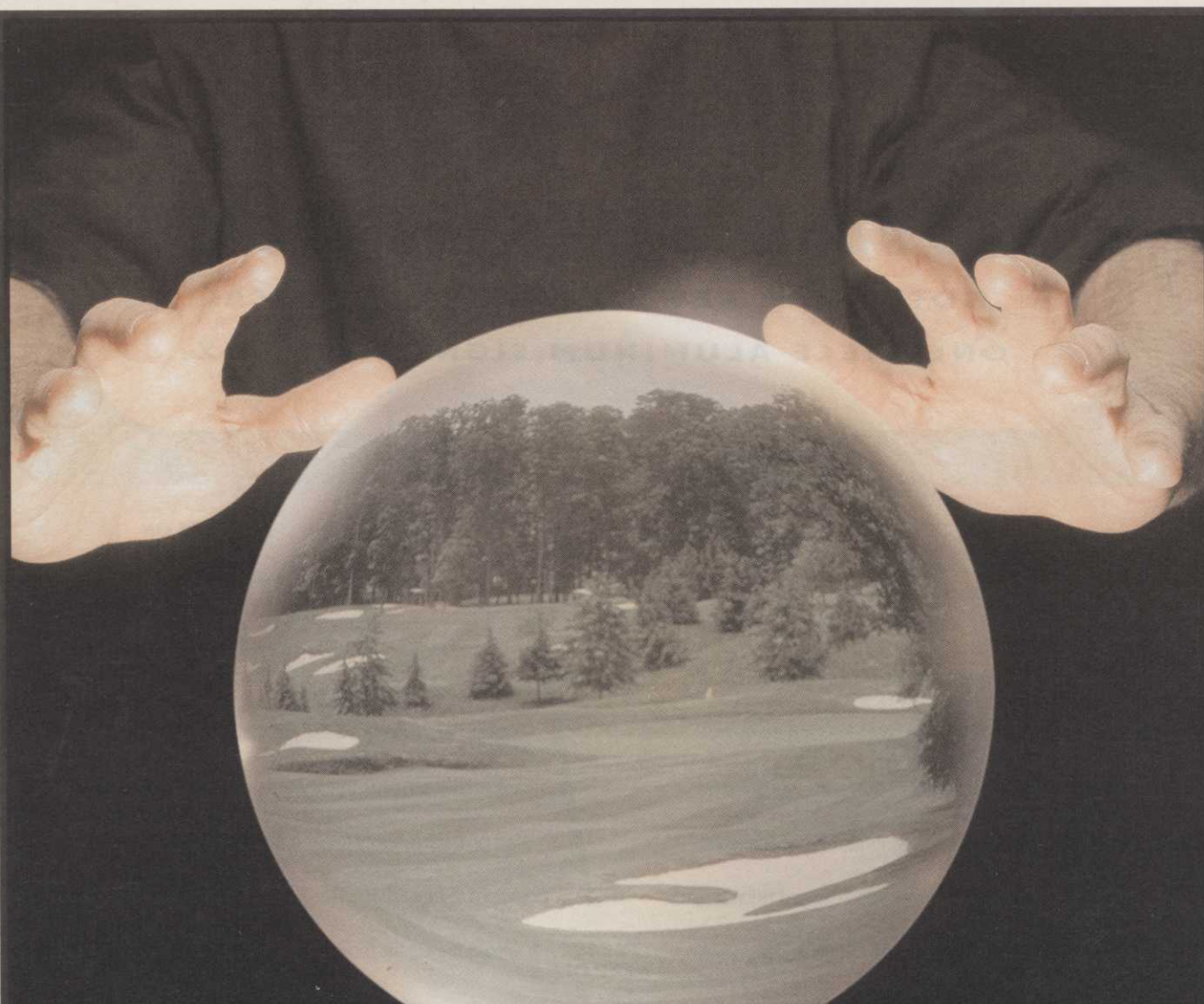
David Norman, executive director of the VSGA

does a new course come out of the gates with a caddie system.

He's aware of the pitfalls of caddie programs, and hopes to avoid them. "One of the problems with caddies now is that sometimes they don't show up, or sometimes they sit around and nobody takes a loop, and they go home without having done any work," he said. "It's a problem to match them up, unless you make it mandatory. We didn't want to require players to take caddies, but we did want to offer it. So the idea we're pursuing right now is to set aside certain hours during the day as assigned caddie starting times."

"For instance," he said, "you might want to tee off between 8 and 9 a.m., and that would be a caddie-only starting time. And then if the kids wanted to carry a double loop, we'd have it again from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. With a system like that, if a kid signs up to caddy, he knows he's going to get a bag, and he knows he's going to get paid. He also knows he'll get the benefit of being with a player he can learn from and make connections. That's the neat thing about caddie programs – how the older golfer helps the younger golfer. We're kind of losing that."

The caddie training program will focus on kids age 14 to 21. "We're not out here trying to train 40-year-old guys to be professional caddies," Norman said. "And we might not want to set the rates very high, but more than they'd make flipping burgers at McDonald's. Part of our goal is to help train caddies for neighboring golf clubs. We're an amateur golf association, and these clubs are our members. So we'd help our member clubs get back into caddie programs themselves." ▶



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