

BRIEFS

WORLDWIDE ARCHITECTS
GROUPS TO MEET

ST. ANDREWS, Scotland — The British Institute of Golf Course Architects will mark the new century by returning to the Home of Golf for its International Conference, Sept. 27-29. A three-day program is planned at The Old Course Hotel here and the event will bring together the world's golf course architects in a global congress of golf course design. It is anticipated that not only will the Institute, shortly to include the Continental European groups in a newly merged organization to be known as the European Institute, but also members of the Society of Australian Golf Course Architects, and the American and the Japanese societies of golf course architects will take part. It is hoped that many other architects from around the world, together with representatives of the golf industry and allied fields, will join the unique celebration of the profession in St. Andrews. The conference is being supported by the Toro Co. and Barenbrug Co.

RAMSY JOINS GOLFPAN

Golfsplan, Fream and Dale, recently hired Kevin Ramsy as senior golf course architect. Ramsy was previously a senior designer with J. Michael Poellot Golf Design Group and Director of Golf Design with Walter Raleigh Stewart. Currently Ramsy is working on the Serapong Golf Course at Sentosa Golf Club in Singapore, Barbarosa Golf Club in Texas and Yong Pyong Golf Club in Korea. He brings 11 years of golf course design experience to Golfsplan.

BOULDER POINTE GC OPENS

OXFORD, Mich. — The Boulder Pointe Golf Club & Conference Center, a 27-hole layout designed by Conroy-Dewling Associates, Inc., opened here June 1. The three nines — The Dunes, The Peaks and The Bluffs — weave in, around and through a former gravel and sand mining quarry. "There are places along the Peaks course that you would swear are in a desert in the American Southwest," said developer Jim Dewling. Each hole features five sets of tees to accommodate all skill levels. The high-end, total service facility provides a players' bar and grill, a club cleaning service, and a PGA professional staffed golf shop. All carts feature the Proshot Global Positioning System.

GOLF COURSE NEWS

Architect Bill Love takes
environmental honorsQA
&A

The Turf and Ornamental Communicators Association (TOCA) has named Bill Love the winner of its Environmental Communicator of the Year Award. The presentation took place at TOCA's annual meeting, held recently in Boston.

TOCA is an association of editors, writers, public relations practitioners and others involved in green industry communications. The group honored Love for his work as primary writer and editor of a publication dealing with environmental sensitivity in golf course design and development.



Bill Love

The four-color book — "An Environmental Approach to Golf Course Development" — consists mainly of illustrated case studies of courses built with special challenges in such issues as shoreline protection, historical preservation, wildlife habitat, and water quality. It was published last year by the American Society of Golf Course Architects. Love's first version, with the same title, appeared in 1992.

President of W.R. Love Golf Course Architecture, in College Park, Md., Love has designed about 25 courses. Since 1990, he has chaired the Environmental Committee of the ASGCA. Editor Jay Finegan caught up with him at the TOCA meeting.

Golf Course News: What's the significance of your book in light of today's regulatory atmosphere?

AN ENVIRONMENTAL APPROACH TO
GOLF COURSE DEVELOPMENT

The cover from Love's book, which helped him win the TOCA award.

Love: All golf course architects have to be attuned to environmental issues, because they crop up on every single project that we do now. To design a course in ignorance of environmental concerns is just shooting yourself in the foot. If the regulatory review process doesn't catch up with you, then the inefficiency of the golf course will. If you're building in conditioning problems or operational problems, then the superintendent has to

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Garl's Wooden Sticks set for opening face-off in Canada

By PETER BLAIS

UXBRIDGE, Ontario, Canada — A handful of National Hockey League players is among the owners of an upscale daily-fee course that held its grand opening May 1 roughly 45 minutes northeast of Toronto.

Wooden Sticks Golf Club — named after the hockey equipment — is a Ron Garl design.

Twelve of the 18 holes, Garl said, have been "inspired" by some of the world's best-known layouts, including St. Andrews, Pine Valley and Augusta National.

"It is a true member-for-a-day course," Garl said of the facility. "It costs \$175 to play, but that includes your golf, cart, range balls, food and drink — everything but alcohol."

Among the National Hockey Leaguers involved in the course are Gary Roberts of the Carolina Hurricanes, Joe Nieuwendyk of the Dallas Stars, and former Hurricane Steve Rice. Other investors, Garl said, include local Toro and E-Z-GO distributor Turf Care Canada. Greg Seeman and Alan Chud are the managing partners.

Construction began in January 1998. The course held a soft opening last summer with about 2,000 rounds played before winter. "We spent a long time looking for the right site," Garl said. "We caught a good winter and had good soils

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The 17th hole at Wooden Sticks.

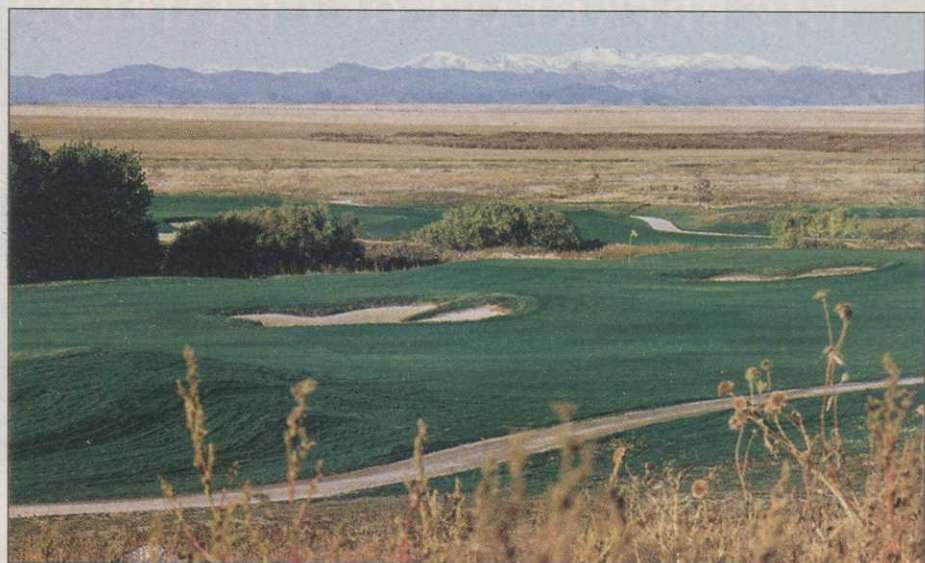
New Colorado layout
aims for rustic flavor

By DENNIS LYON

AURORA, Colo. — Murphy Creek, the city of Aurora's latest addition, will open this July. The 7,457-yard course, with multiple tees, was designed by Ken Kavanaugh of Tucson, Ariz.

Kavanaugh and the project team's goal was to provide a golf experience that surrounds the player with great golf and nostalgia. The clubhouse complex creates the feel of the old family farm from the 1920s. The steel-wheeled antique farm implements scattered throughout the course, for instance, remind the golfer of the hard times the eastern plains experi-

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Murphy Creek, a new Ken Kavanaugh design near Denver.

Bill Love

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overcome something that wasn't done properly to begin with, and will require extra time and money.

We always have environmental consultants as part of the team on a job. Getting a golf course built these days is very much a team effort, requiring engineers, land planners, sometimes even zoning lawyers. There's a whole slew of people that get involved.

GCN: How would you characterize the regulatory climate today versus 10 years ago?

Love: You now go through a more refined process. And today it spans all jurisdictions, whereas before there were still parts of the country where you didn't deal with as many layers of regulatory review. Back then, you might have dealt only at the federal level. Now you will deal with organizations at the federal, state and county level, and sometimes you deal with a local community group or a local environmental board.

GCN: How have golf course developers responded to tighter environmental controls?

Love: A decade ago, we had not amassed the database and enough scientific evidence to prove we can develop a course in an environmentally compatible manner. Proper application of certain fertilizers, pesticides and so forth can be done without having a negative impact on the environment. The data we have in hand now, from the United States Golf Association's Green Section and the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, show that when those things are done properly, it's very controllable. I don't like to even imply that there's a chance of contamination unless it's a question of flat-out mismanagement.

But anytime we go in to discuss doing a new course, there usually are a couple of key issues that pop up. One is, people don't want to see loss of sensitive areas, like wetlands or habitat. And then there's water quality, whether it's intrusion of chemicals into the water supply, or runoff into the surface-water supply, or even the impact of irrigation on existing water supplies.

Sometimes there's objection to development of any kind, whether it's houses or a golf course. You're talking about 200 acres that either gets built on or doesn't get built on. I make the argument that a golf course can qualify as open space.

GCN: Do you advocate any special strategies in dealing with environmental agencies?

Love: We focus our attention on communication. We try to be proactive. We want to get the regulatory people involved early, so they have a better understand-

ing of what we're trying to do. You can't just walk in and slap your paperwork on the desk and say, 'Here it is. We think it should be approved.' We try to work with them because they can provide valuable input. They're going to know exactly what the most important issues are at that site, because they're the ones who are out there regulating in that region. So you can cut right to the

chase when you meet with them. If you understand the issues and incorporate them into your design process, you don't run into a lot of frustration. These agencies are there for a reason. They aren't there to single out golf development. This applies across the board.

GCN: Right now you're developing a course in Richmond, Va. - Hunting Hawk Golf Club. Can you

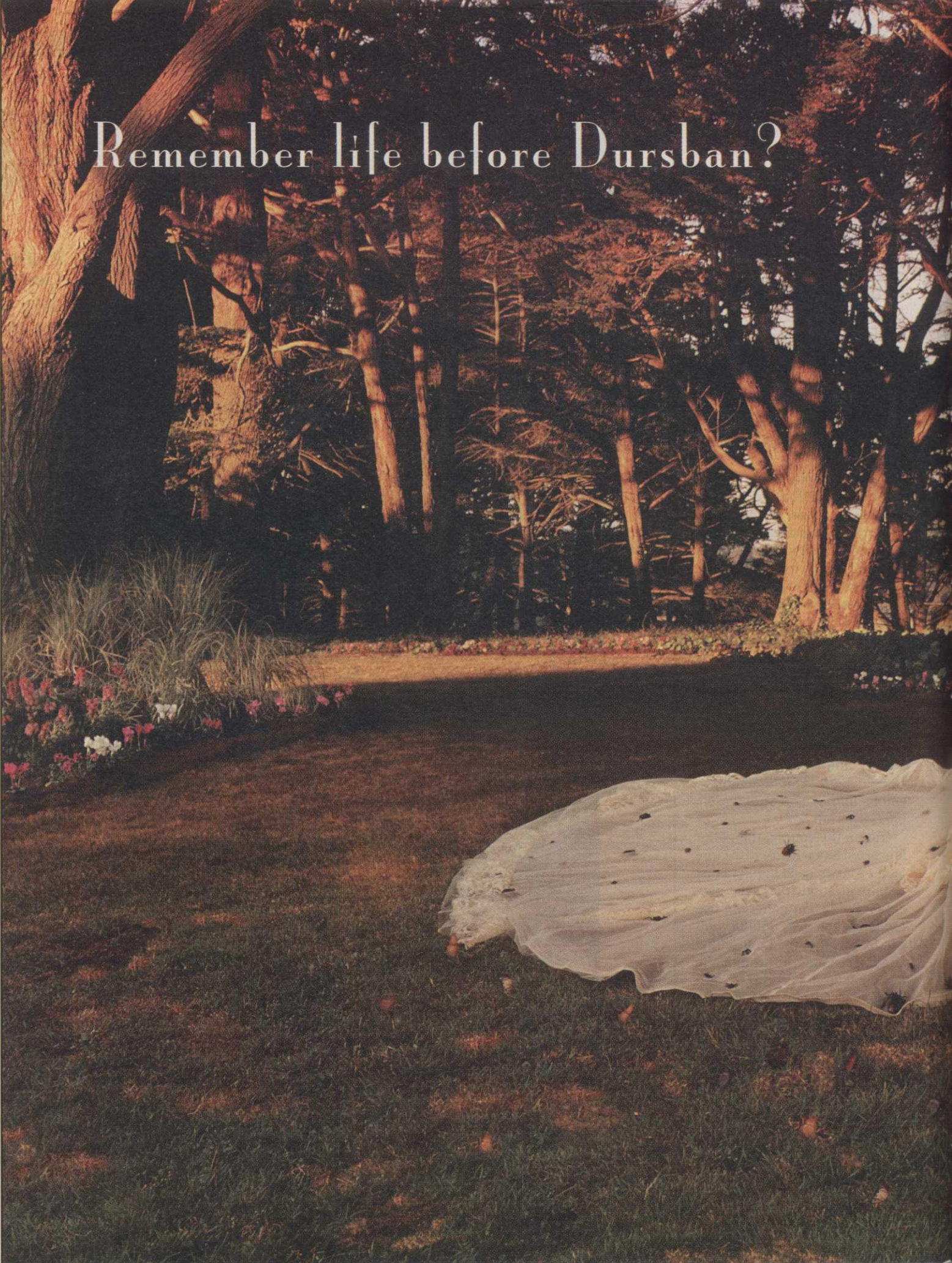
'We want to get the regulatory people involved early, so they have a better understanding of what we're trying to do.'

describe the steps you're taking to make it environmentally friendly?

Love: We're in the process of grassing that course right now. Part of what happens during the grassing and what we call the

establishment or growing phase, is that we'll start doing all of our environmental enhancement. In some areas we're planting aquatic vegetation. We're also

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Remember life before Dursban?

Bill Love

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vegetating the site with understory material to promote habitat and to supply visual quality.

We've also taken a lot of areas out of maintenance. We've reduced the amount of irrigated and highly maintained turfgrass. In order to make that successful, we have this ascetic layering of the course, where you have the highly

maintained areas – the playing areas – and then you go into the more native types of grasses, and then into the larger plant material, which not only looks good but also requires practically no maintenance. It's not maintenance-free, but it's very low.

GCN: Can the right kind of course design revitalize the animal population?

Love: Part of what we do in

the analysis phase is study the types of wildlife that existed on the site prior to the project, or what wildlife is suitable or desirable for that area. If the site had been mismanaged in the past, sometimes the wildlife isn't there. Very often we'll get a site and it's not a virgin stand of timber. This particular site in Richmond [Hunting Hawk] had been cut over for timber, and it had a

mono-stand of pines left on it when they got done. Part of our program is to bring back some hardwoods. We know that by reintroducing certain types of plant material and things like hedgerows and forest-edge conditions, we can introduce a much wider spectrum of wildlife habitat and enhance the site from that standpoint.

GCN: New golf courses are

opening at a record level in the United States – about 500 a year. But the number of golfers has hit a plateau at about 26 million. Two questions: Can this rate be sustained, and how do you bring in more players?

Love: Everything we see in our side of the industry indicates that the growth of the game is still there. When you talk about the number of players leveling off, you also need to look at how much pent-up demand there was. How many times have you had to wait two hours for a tee time, or you couldn't even get one because it was too crowded? I think there's a lot of that out there now, so many of the courses being developed are sort of catching up to that demand. I don't see how, with the popularity of the game as it is today, the number of golfers won't increase – especially if we're able to provide more affordable golf. That's a very key thing.

GCN: And how do you make it more affordable?

Love: Well, it gets back into design. I don't want to make it sound like everything begins with design, but it sort of does. The overhead cost of maintenance and other operating costs – if you can drive them down, you can charge a lower green fee. When you design a course so the operating costs are lower, you can survive a lower fee, and thus be attractive to a greater number of people. ▶

Wooden Sticks

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to work with."

Gateman Milloy of Kitchener, Ontario, which built nearby Devil's Pulpit and Devil's Paintbrush, was the construction firm.

Greens, tees and fairways are planted in bentgrass, with a mixture of bluegrass, fescues and ryegrass in the roughs.

"There was a stream flowing through the property we had to work with," Garl said, when asked about environmental concerns during construction. "There is a well that pumps into the lake."

While the developers had to go through the environmental review process to obtain permits, Garl said: "One of the refreshing things about Canada [environmental agencies] is that they are tough, like everywhere, but the people are more concerned and interested [about the site] than most places. They listen to you. They want to know why you're doing this, how you're doing this, and is it the best way. They want to know if you're doing the best thing for the environment, not just meeting the law."

"It's not a case of 'We're going to show you how tough we can be on you,' or 'We'll slow you down as much as we can.' They want to do the best they can for that piece of property." ▶

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