

BRIEFS



ASGCA RELEASES SUPPLIERS DIRECTORY ON CD

The American Society of Golf Course Architects (ASGCA) has introduced its first-ever Suppliers Directory on CD-ROM — an interactive, electronic version of the group's printed directory. By using the CD-ROM directory, people in the golf industry can quickly search and select information on more than 90 product and service providers, including contact information on the 139 member architects of the ASGCA. Data once submitted by suppliers in printed format, is now electronically scanned and categorized under one or more listings including: Irrigation System and Equipment; Seed, Sod & Nursery Products; Consultants & Professional Services; and Golf Course Builders. From the supplier listings, users can also link directly to live URL's (web site addresses) and can send e-mail directly to key individuals. The electronic directory will be published annually. The CD-ROM can be ordered by sending a check for \$25 (U.S.) to the American Society of Golf Course Architects, 221 North LaSalle St., Chicago, Ill. 60601.

TPC LAS COLINAS REDO NEARS COMPLETION

LAS COLINAS, Calif. — TPC Four Seasons Resort Las Colinas is nearing completion on Phase I improvements. Nearly one-third of the \$3 million worth of improvements has been completed since the plans were announced last March. The work has been led by course architect Jay Morrish, the original designer of the TPC.

HARBOTTLE'S BANBURY OPENS

EAGLE, Idaho — BanBury Golf Club, designed by John Harbottle III, has opened for play here. Located on the Boise River, the 18-hole course is part of the BanBury Meadows real-estate development. It is operated by Tradition Golf, a new company owned by PGA of America member Jerry Breaux superintendent Clint Travis.

PRESIDIO CONVERTS TO BENTGRASS

SAN FRANCISCO — Arnold Palmer Golf Management has begun converting existing greens to bentgrass at Presidio Golf Course. The conversion began last October and will conclude in early 2000. Currently, the course's putting surfaces are poa annua.

Superintendent Sapochak's first golf course design called a hidden gem

By PAUL L. KAUFMAN JR.

GEORGETOWN, S.C. — About 30 miles south of Myrtle Beach lies Winyah Bay Golf Club, a hidden gem opened a year ago as the first design effort of former golf course superintendent Matt Sapochak.

Sapochak had honed his design skills as a shaper and construction superintendent for Pete and P.B. Dye at Debordieu Golf Club in Georgetown and Prestwick Country Club in Myrtle Beach, and had done a substantial in-house renovation while superintendent at Deertrack Golf Course in Surfside Beach.

The current general manager of Winyah Bay, Sapochak said: "When I had the opportunity to design Winyah Bay, I

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Winyah Bay Golf Club south of Myrtle Beach is receiving international acclaim.



Austria's venerable Innsbruck-Igls Golf Club faces major renovations.



The 15th hole at Grosse Ile Golf & Country Club, before (inset) and after renovation.

Matthews busy at home and abroad

VILLAGE OF IGLS, Austria — Golf course architects Matthews & Nelhiebel have begun their first European project: design of renovations to the Innsbruck-Igls Golf Club, in the Austrian Alps here.

America's Bruce Matthews and Vic Nelhiebel traveled to Austria at the invitation of the club's agronomy consultant, Josef Leinauer of Peiting, Germany. Leinauer is a pioneer in the use of combined subsurface irrigation and drainage systems for golf greens and athletic fields.

Innsbruck-Igls Golf Club is one of the older courses in Austria, founded in 1935 as a nine-hole course. Its 18-hole course in nearby Rinn lies on the forested lower slopes of the Patscherkofel Mountain, site of the 1964 and 1976 Winter Olympics downhill ski venue. In fact, the community of Rinn's local ski slope crosses several holes. From almost anywhere on the course, there are views of the Inn Valley below and 10,000-foot Alpine peaks beyond.

Nearly all members of the club prefer to walk the course, despite the challenging terrain. Played from the championship tees, Innsbruck-Igls measures 5,945 meters, with a par of 71.

The initial design renovation focuses on improved bunkering and green visibility, as illustrated by the 12th Wildbach hole, a 345-meter par-4, playing uphill. Because of the sidehill locations and surrounding fir forest, drainage of spring water and defining the fairway limits in

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Austin course recreated from memory

By FRANCES G. TRIMBLE

The task was straightforward: Take readers of a club history back in time to 1924 and show them a golf course that has not existed in its entirety since the late 1940s and, to the best of anyone's knowledge, was never represented on a scorecard or in the local newspaper.

Without the recreation, modern golfers would have difficulty believing that the course where teaching legend Harvey Penick once caddied, and early Southwest Conference golf

championships were contested, once featured tee shots over a now-bustling north-south thoroughfare called Red River Street. The holes on the east side of Red River were replaced by a shopping center in the early 1950s, after the course was sold to the city of Austin. The land west of Red River remains a nine-hole municipal layout known as Hancock Park.

All agreed a recreation was historically important, though golfers who played the course in the 1920s and '30s were in short supply.

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Sapochak

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jumped at it. I felt it was a chance that not a lot of people get in a lifetime. Plus, the possibility that it could turn into other design jobs, which I would love to do.

"Having worked for the Dyes and accumulated design and construction experience," he added, "there was never a doubt that I could build a great course on

such a small piece of property and make it safe to play."

Winyah Bay Golf Club was an existing nine-hole course set on a portion of 85 acres along the picturesque Winyah Bay when owner George Marlowe approached P.B. Dye about redesigning it and adding nine holes.

Dye directed him to Sapochak, who set out to make his vision a reality on the property which

possessed Southern magnolias, live oaks, towering cypress trees and mature dogwoods.

With limited acreage and resources, Sapochak knew a thoughtful design was needed. The first order of business was to lay out the course using as much of the original nine-hole layout as possible without making it obvious where the old course ended and his work began. He settled on

using four existing holes and six existing green sites.

Because the existing nine was predominately flat, Sapochak gutted out areas in the fairways to add roll and generate material to be used in other areas. He rerouted several holes and added auxiliary tees to gain length and add difficulty. All the bunkers were renovated, enlarged with smooth sweeping edges so none

had to be hand-raked. The traps were also ringed with emerald zoysiagrass to decrease the frequency of edging.

Sapochak knew the front nine only offered a hint of the spectacular vistas of Winyah Bay that the new back nine would possess. He set out to design nine holes that would unfold like the chapters of a great novel. Each one gets closer and closer to the climax that would be the unobstructed view of the bay.

The back nine meanders around and through wetlands on its way to the marsh front. The par-5 14th hole gives the first unobstructed view of the bay from a green surrounded by 200-year-old live oaks. The final hole is a tight par-4, bordered on the right by the bay and on the left by wetlands.

The modest length of the 6,055-yard par-70 track can be misleading.

"My philosophy was to create a shot-maker's course," Sapochak said. "People who hit good shots, not super-long drives, would do well. Someone who hits it long could post a score of 63 or 78, depending on how straight they hit the ball.

"Also, I wanted it to be fun to play. I wanted women and seniors to have as few forced carries as possible and the ones they did have to be short. I wanted every golfer to have the chance to run the ball up on the green from out of trouble, not to make it easy but to make it inviting for the player to go for the shot because they see an opening, not trouble."

The former superintendent aimed for versatility, wanting to accommodate "different looks around the greens, such as a manicured Pinehurst look or the heavy-roughed look of Firestone. Off the tee, golfers should be able to hit a draw or a cut on 14 or 15 of the holes."

Now, as general manager of Winyah Bay, Sapochak said: "It is a great feeling to have people come into the clubhouse and hear their comments about the course. Everyone seems to really like it, but the best is when men's groups come to play and, because of the length, they jump back on the blue tees although they're white tee players. It beats them to death. They come into the clubhouse and say, 'That's the longest 6,055-yard course I've ever played.' And I say, 'What do you think of it? Is it too tough?'"

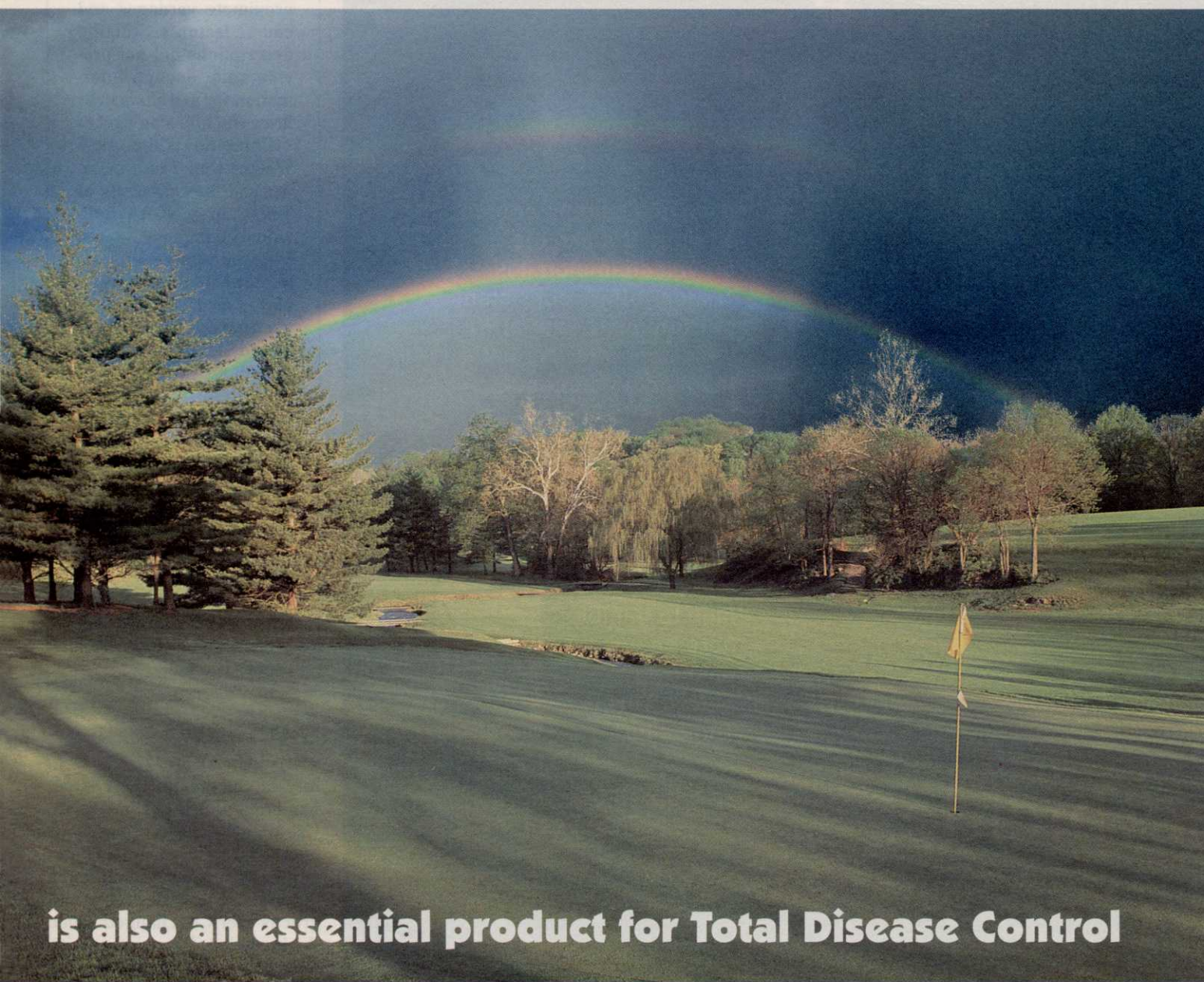
"I always get the same answer: 'No, you just have to hit good, solid, straight, smart shots.'"

Nevertheless, the course remains a work in progress as Sapochak plans changes that would push the distance to 6,300 yards. All construction costs were kept very low, he said, and the course is maintained for less than \$350,000 annually.

GOLF COURSE NEWS

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