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Design and Construction

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A Second Chance

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CALIFORNIA'S COYOTE MOON

Former professional golfer Brad Bell has opened his third course, Coyote Moon, on a one-time logging tract in the High Sierras. The course is a rarity in California, as it was built strictly for golf, not to sell housing lots. Builders rushed the construction through in six months to beat the snows of the high country. Pictured above is the par-3 13th hole that features an 88 foot drop. See story page 15.

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PERIODICAL

BASF readies specialty product unit

By A. OVERBECK

RESEARCH TRIANGLE PARK, N.C. — Following the July 1 closing of its acquisition of American Cyanamid, BASF has completed the integration of product lines and management teams to form BASF Specialty Products Division (BASFspd). The new division will be responsible for the company's turf, ornamental and pest control business.

"In the past, BASF was more focused on the agricultural side," said Bill Baxter, business manager for turf, ornamental and pest control. "With the acquisition of American Cyanamid, which had a separate specialty products division that focused on turf and ornamental and pest control, it made sense

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Florida's Ocean Hammock, opening in December, will host a U.S. Open qualifying round in May.

On the beach: Jack's new Ocean Hammock seems destined for fame

By JAY FINEGAN

PALM COAST, Fla. — Florida's first true oceanfront golf course to be built in 70 years will make its highly anticipated debut on December 5, with designer Jack Nicklaus scheduled to hit the inaugural drive off the first tee.

Located between St. Augustine and Daytona Beach on Florida's northeast coast, with six holes playing right along the Atlantic, Ocean Hammock Golf Club is guaranteed to be something special. Indeed, the U.S. Golf Association has already named the course to host regional qualifying rounds next May for the 2001 U.S. Open.

"It's a magnificent piece of property," said superintendent Tray Maltby. "I feel very fortunate to be here. Sometimes I have to pinch myself."

The 7,200-yard, par-72 layout is being developed at a cost of \$12 million by Lowe Enterprises, of Los Angeles, which operates four other courses in the Palm Coast

area, including such standouts as Pine Lakes, Cypress Knoll and Palm Harbor. The new layout also features two driving ranges, practice greens and a teaching tee.

Ocean Hammock appears destined to take its place among Florida's elite resort courses. In fact, head professional Chuck Kandt predicts it will become one of the most highly regarded courses in the country. "It's going to provide a golfing experience like no other on the East Coast," he said. "We have a goal to draw big-name tournaments here, and I'm confident it will happen."

'A TOUCH OF PEBBLE BEACH'

Nicklaus has put his stamp all over this course. Strategy and scenery intersect at nearly every turn, with great care taken to ensure the terrain works in harmony with its surroundings.

"You might say it joins a little of the West and East coasts by combining a

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Pine bark beetles wreaking broad devastation across the South

By JOEL JOYNER

TEMPLE TERRACE, Fla. — Already stressed by heat, drought and increased urban development, pine trees in the Southeast are falling victim to widespread devastation by pine bark beetles. Alabama, Florida and South Carolina have been especially hard hit by the lethal pests.

Pine bark beetles, also known as engraver beetles, are small cylindrical insects that attack and kill pine trees by feeding and laying eggs in the inner bark of the tree. Once a pine is colonized by



Evidence of a large infestation of southern pine beetles in eastern Texas

these beetles, it will soon die.

Alabama is experiencing its worst drought on record with the northwest region of the state being the most severely affected. So far this year, Alabama has lost a record 1.5 million pines to the insects, 51 counties were classified at "epidemic" levels for the southern pine beetle (SPB), according to the Alabama Forestry Commission.

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Injured golfer wins \$7.5 million settlement

By JAY FINEGAN

ALEXANDRIA, Va. — Lansdowne Resort Golf Club in northern Virginia has settled out of court for \$7.5 million to compensate a player who was struck in the neck by a stray golf ball. The settlement agreement came in late September, two and a half years after James Tobin was hit on the practice putting green at Lansdowne, a public 18-hole course in Loudoun County.

At the time of the accident, Tobin was a sales manager for General Electric. He was 42 years old, and a 2-handicap player. A stroke has left him unbalanced and unable to walk

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Ocean Hammock

Continued from page 1

touch of Pebble Beach with design characteristics that have made Florida seaside golf famous," the designer said.

This is hardly a routine job for Nicklaus. "Jack thinks this project is awfully special," observed Doug Morey, the on-site design coordinator for Nicklaus Design. "With so much ocean frontage, you get to play with the wind and have the elements play a big part in the course. It's different for Florida, too. Typically you're working on flat land here, around lakes and wetlands."

Morey has coordinated construction of Nicklaus courses far and wide – Japan, China, California, Hawaii – and he's seldom seen the boss more enthused about a project.

"Jack came in last winter when we were working on the 15th hole," Morey said. "That one will be similar to the British Isles somewhat, with big dune formations playing back into the ocean – a strong golf hole. He was on all fours, playing in the dirt, trying to show us what he wanted to do with shaping, molding the dirt a little bit. He doesn't do that very often. He's very excited about this piece of property."

THE BEAR CLAW

And why not? There aren't many sites like this one left on the U.S. coast.

"This course was permitted 10 or 15 years ago," said Maltby. "If you tried to get it permitted today, I doubt you'd succeed. This was a thousand acres of pristine, natural woodlands, untouched until construction got started."

Builders began by excavating land for fill-soil to build up certain parts of the layout, creating 25 lakes in the process. "The lakes are all connected as part of a water-management program we have here," Maltby said. "They laid in miles and miles of 72-inch concrete pipe under the course at the very beginning."

Those numerous water hazards only add to the challenge of Ocean Hammock. The classic Nicklaus design hallmarks are all in place to make the course a strategic masterpiece – multiple options off the tees, a beguiling mix of reachable and unreachable par-5s, a variety of holes that dogleg left and right and flow uphill and downhill.

Most players, however, will remember the last four holes – "the Bear Claw," as Nicklaus calls it.

"It's not quite 'amen corner,' but it presents quite a challenge for the average golfer," Maltby said. "Hole 15 plays right out to the ocean, through some big dunes. It's uphill from the second landing area to the green, which you might not be able to see from the fairway. Most people won't reach it in regulation."

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"Sixteen is another par-4," Maltby said, "a hard dogleg left that plays off the dunes, with water running all the way down the left side. Seventeen turns around and plays back into the dunes – it's a testy little par-3, over water to a small green. And 18 is a long par-4, running parallel to the dunes and the surf. It's a good strong finishing hole."

GOING THE EXTRA MILE

Planners overlooked nothing in

rigging out this course. For instance, Nicklaus wanted bunker sand that matched the reddish sand on the beach. "You can't see the ocean from 12 holes," Maltby said. "Jack wanted to still bring the ocean inland. We finally found an orangish, reddish bunker sand that met the specs. We'll have 83 bunkers."

On irrigation, too, developers went the extra mile. The average course uses 900 to 1,000 sprinkler

heads. Ocean Hammock has 1,386. "We need extra ones here because we're so close to the ocean," said Maltby, who added that the course will be irrigated with effluent. It's a high-tech system – he can turn the sprinklers on or off at any moment, or pinpoint coverage areas, even from his home computer.

The course should be ready for the December kickoff. "The front nine is playable right now – it

looks great," said Morey, the design coordinator. "The back nine is coming together. We're doing the punch list now, the tweaking of bunkers and drains, doing finishing touches on landscaping and the starter house. We hope to get some limited play in late November."

Ocean Hammock will be a resort course – a hotel and condo complex will be built on the property's south side – but the public will be welcome. ■

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