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A PRESIDENTIAL VISIT

While in town for the Republican Convention in Philadelphia, former President George Bush paid a visit to Eric Bergstol's latest project — Pine Hill Golf Club in Pine Hill, N.J. Bergstol, president of Empire Golf, plans to officially open the Tom Fazio-designed layout this spring.

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PERIODICAL

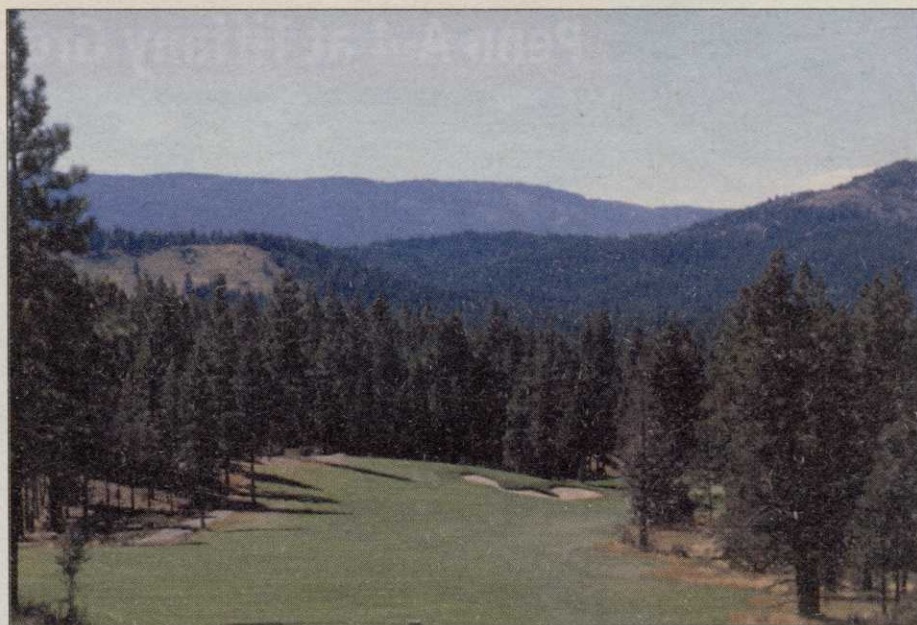
Water crisis looms in S. California

By JOEL JOYNER

SANTA ANA, Calif. — Radical changes in California water policy could leave Southern California golf courses in “a world of hurt,” according to agronomist Mike Huck, of the U.S. Golf Association’s Green Section. From his base here in the southwest region, Huck has been tracking a complicated battle between environmentalists, farmers, municipalities, government officials and others over the future of water distribution in the Golden State.

Indeed, the unfolding situation portends such dire consequences that one water-resource specialist, engineer Dana Ripley, is urging that Southern California

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The 1st hole at the “Dragon” course at Gold Mountain

Dramatic new Dragon course opens in remote ‘Lost Sierra’

By DOUG SAUNDERS

CLIO, Calif. — The surging economy has been the catalyst for numerous golf-driven real estate developments around the country. Every region has seen the creation of new golf courses, including some areas where you would least expect it. A prime example is Gold Mountain, located in this tiny hamlet in California’s Sierra Nevada mountains.

Here, in a town of 200 located in a county that has only one stop light, is a 1,300-acre development situated on a two-lane mountain road overlooking ranch land, the Feather River, a solitary railroad track, and the towering Sierra peaks.

Is this where you want to retire? Why not, is the philosophy at Gold Mountain.

The developers, Dariel and Peggy Garner, have made their mark in such various business ventures as marketing wood by-products overseas, developing bank-

ing software, and growing specialty vegetables. Their diverse interests and imagination lead them on a search for a natural setting, a place to settle down. They stopped looking when they found this remote area of Northern California known as the Lost Sierra.

“We were trying to find a place that we could retire to, but what we found was a place of such solitude and natural beauty that we felt we should share it with others,” explained Peggy Garner.

SELLING SOLITUDE

To make that dream a reality required a different approach to development. From the beginning, the Garners would make their remote mountain setting the cornerstone of its appeal. To incorporate these features the Garners took careful steps in the design process by bringing together an interesting mix of collaborators.

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Going East: Simplot buys Lange-Stegmann, to extend POLYON deal

By ANDREW OVERBECK

BOISE, Idaho — Simplot Turf and Horticulture (Simplot T&H) continues its eastward march with the acquisition of the professional product line from St. Louis-based fertilizer formulator Lange-Stegmann. The deal includes the Lange-Stegmann production facilities for its professional products in the golf, landscape and lawn-care markets. The financial terms of

the agreement were not disclosed.

Located on the Mississippi River, the newly acquired production facilities provide Simplot T&H with efficient intermodal distribution service to a large segment of the United States east of the Rocky Mountains.

“This allows us to move east,” said Bill Whitacre, Simplot T&H president. “The

mountains are a natural barrier for our operations in the West. The Lange-Stegmann facility has a phenomenal location right on the Mississippi and has access to an intermodal barge terminal. The efficiency of having that location right in the heart of the United States is really an opportunity for us.”

Simplot T&H will also add Lange-branded greens-grade and

Continued on page 35

Safety-minded lawyer urges ‘mulligan’ ban

By JAY FINEGAN

NEW YORK — “NO MULLIGANS!” If there is one sign that every golf course should post prominently, that would be it. So says lawyer Robert D. Lang, who has drawn fresh attention to the dangers — legal and otherwise — of wild golf shots.

In a recent cover story in the Journal of the New York State Bar Association (NYSBA), Lang cites numerous personal injury cases in which errant shots struck golfers, caddies, spectators and even motorists. Among the potential defendants, he said, are the golfer who hit the shot, the course or club owners if a suit alleges negligent



Robert D. Lang

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Dragon course

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In the layout, design, and construction of the 472 homesites, the Garners formed an alliance with Taliesin Architects, based in Scottsdale, Ariz. The firm is the continuation of Frank Lloyd Wright's architectural practice. The layout of the project and the homes themselves are created

from Taliesin plans that stress Wright's concept of organic designs that connects a structure to its natural surroundings. Roads, homesites and golf course all blend together to form a striking design plan.

DRAGON COURSE MAKES BOLD STATEMENT

To create a golf course that fits this organic philosophy, the Garners interviewed several

firms before settling on Robin Freeman, the Hawaiian-based golf architect whose internationally acclaimed designs include Mauna Lani, home of the Seniors' Skins Game.

"Robin Freeman has a tremendous sensitivity to the land. He came here on numerous occasions to make sure the construction of the course would blend in with our overall

concept. What he has created is a very bold statement," said Darien Garner.

Freeman's golf course offers five tees on every hole and a rolling serpentine layout that slips over a variety of elevation changes. The course captures the rugged terrain with intriguing uphill and downhill shots. The large fairways give the golf course a bold and in many ways



The 18th hole at Gold Mountain

a very intimidating look. The shape and challenge of the course are summed up in its name - "The Dragon."

After many years of designing golf courses in Hawaii, Malaysia, The Philippines and China, "The Dragon" at Gold Mountain is the first course built in the United States by California native Freeman. He took great care to create an exceptional course here, and his treacherous bunkers and challenging carries form a distinctive signature.

Grass grow-in at a 4500-foot elevation presented a challenge, but the much-anticipated layout finally opened in July.

The mountain setting dominates the landscape. Some holes offer spectacular vistas of the Sierra, while others provide the serenity of pine forests. It is a natural feeling that the Garners have worked to preserve by becoming involved with the Audubon International 'signature program,' which dictates strict criteria to preserve wildlife habitat and monitor course management from the beginning.

FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT CLUBHOUSE

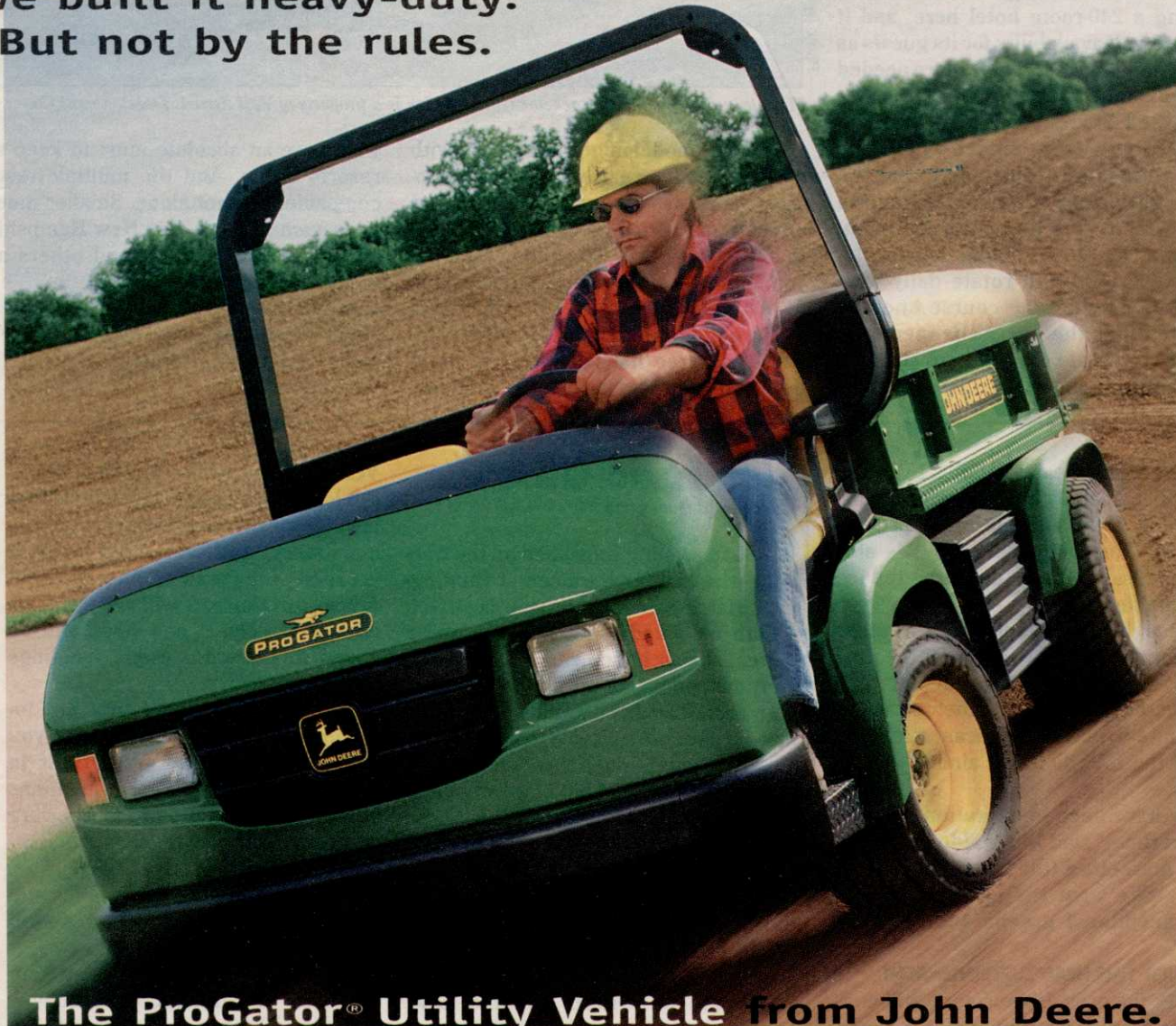
The final blend of the two influences of Freeman's golf course and the design philosophy of Taliesin is the clubhouse now under construction and scheduled to open this year.

The unique, 22,000-square-foot structure is being built from unrealized plans that Frank Lloyd Wright created back in 1924 for a clubhouse at the Nakoma Country Club in Madison, Wis. Now this building is coming to life on the hillside that overlooks the project. Its six teepee-like spires, with a central spire soaring to 60 feet tall, will just add another forceful presence to the entire complex that is "The Dragon" and Gold Mountain.

But can this creative blend of mountains, lifestyle, and architecture be enough of a draw to bring prospective buyers to this remote corner of California?

The Garners think so, and initial interest bears them out. Though remote, the Gold Mountain project is 50 miles from Reno, Nev., 140 miles from Sacramento, and 225 miles from San Francisco. Even though the nearest big supermarket is an hour away, the tradeoff for tranquility draws a certain clientele. If there is truly a market for golf and homesites for the rugged individualist, they have found a way to offer it. ■

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