

# GOLF COURSE NEWS

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#### DEALING WITH CONSOLIDATION

Anthony Williams has been director of golf operations at Renaissance PineIsle Resort in Georgia (the par-3, 250 yard, 15th hole is pictured above) for 14 years. During his tenure he has worked under three different owners, six general managers and three directors of golf. For tips on how to survive ownership changes, see his story on page 7.

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PERIODICAL

## Survey finds course values softening

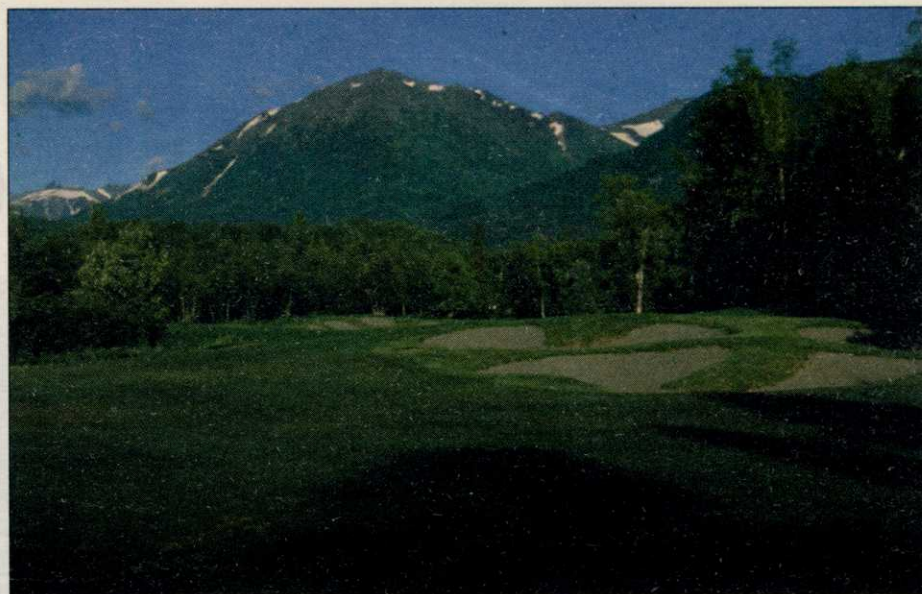
By JAY FINEGAN

HARRISBURG, Pa. — Golf course values are stable or declining. The northern states are the new land of opportunity for companies looking to buy golf properties. And private clubs have pulled even with daily-fee facilities as desirable targets in the course acquisition market.

Those are among the findings of a survey by Golf Property Analysts (GPA) here, which polled course management companies, investors and financial institutions involved in funding golf course real-estate transactions.

According to Laurence A. ("Larry") Hirsh, whose Hirsh Valuation Group owns GPA, the survey signals that the

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The 600-yard 18th hole at Robin Nelson's Moose Run in Alaska

## Wild Alaska: Robin Nelson opens course at aptly named Moose Run

By JAY FINEGAN

ANCHORAGE, Alaska — They call Alaska "the last frontier," and the motto seemed right on the money to golf architect Robin Nelson. He recently unveiled his newest creation, the Creek Course at Moose Run, and he's still talking about the bears, wolves, lynx, moose and other critters who took a keen interest in the new layout during construction.

Alaska is by far our largest state, and this is a course to match — 7,324 yards from the back tees, 5,183 from the reds, with two holes running to 600 yards or more, and a slope rating near the top of the charts, at 142. The cart paths alone stretch over five miles and cross two suspension bridges where the course traverses Ship Creek. All fairways are separated by at least 300 feet of towering trees and dense brush — there's no possibility of slicing a drive into an adjacent

fairway. The par-72, 18-hole design features dramatic elevation changes and stunning mountain views all around.

"The Creek Course is hardly your basic golf course," Nelson said. "Every time you come around a corner, there's a different look and feel to the course and its aesthetics. And there are many strategic options as to how to play each hole."

The course is situated on the sprawling Army base at Fort Richardson, next to the old Hill Course at Moose Run, built in 1951. The entire 36-hole complex, owned and operated by the military, is open for public play.

"The people in charge up here are real golf fanatics," Nelson said, referring to the base's top brass and senior civilian officials. "Four years ago they started soliciting bids for a second course. They had 700 acres and we were supposed to

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## Despite vandalism and fire, superintendent Szklinski prepares Southern Hills CC for next U.S. Open

By JOHN TORSIELLO

TULSA, Okla. — Golf fans attending next year's U.S. Open at Southern Hills Country Club here will likely marvel at the impeccable and challenging beauty of the Perry Maxwell-designed layout. But few will know of the effort and sacrifice made by golf course superintendent John Szklinski, his staff and the membership at Southern Hills, which made the staging of the prestigious event at the Midwestern venue possible.

The Open is back at Southern Hills after a 42-year hiatus. In 1958, playing in sweltering heat, club-throwing Tommy Bolt won his only Open title here, besting a young South African named Gary Player by four strokes. Bolt's skillful use of his driver on Southern Hills' tree-lined fairways, fringed by gnarly and deep rough, was the deciding factor.



The 13th hole at Southern Hills Country Club

Getting a golf course in shape to host a U.S. Open is a daunting enough task. But the staff and members

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## XS Inc. to extend ag model to turf market

By ANDREW OVERBECK

RALEIGH, N.C. — Following the successful launch of its agricultural-input e-commerce venture, XS Inc., based here, is primed to expand into the turf and ornamental marketplace with XSTurf.com, which is set to be introduced by the end of the year.

The company's two-year-old flagship, XSAg.com, has quickly become a market leader, ranking at the top of Promar International's Aug. 3 ranking of agriculture specific e-commerce websites. XSAg brings buyers and sellers together to trade chemicals, seeds and equipment parts.

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