

BRIEFS

98 COURSE CONSTRUCTION STARTS REPORTED IN 1ST QUARTER

JUPITER, Fla. — According to the National Golf Foundation, 20 new courses came on line during the first three months of 2001. The first quarter also saw a total of 98 construction starts and the announcement of plans for 92 others.

FIRST NATIONAL FUNDING TEXAS COURSE

SAN ANTONIO — First National of America, based in New Jersey, has made a construction loan of \$6.2 million to developer Imarra Ltd., which plans to build Century Oaks Golf Course. The 7,155-yard, par-72 layout will be set on 744 acres in northeast San Antonio. In addition to funding the construction, First National will provide permanent financing of the course once it opens, according to Jerry Sager, the bank's managing director.

PALMER ADDING NEW 18 AT IRELAND'S KILDARE

STRAFFAN, Kildare, Ireland — An air of anticipation hangs over the K Club here in Ireland following the announcement that a second 18 will be added to the current Arnold Palmer-designed layout here, which opened in 1991. The K Club is soon to be a Ryder Cup venue. Palmer is again to be the designer, and a masterplan has been submitted. The K Club is 20 miles southwest of Dublin.

FRANK JOINS GEORGE GOLF DESIGN

RICHMOND, Va. — Driven by a widening call for his work, Lester George has hired Andy Frank as a design associate with George Golf Design Inc. George cited Frank's "exceptional background," which includes



Andy Frank

a degree in landscape architecture from California State Polytechnic University at Pomona and four years as assistant superintendent at highly regarded Industry Hills Golf Course in Industry, Calif. Frank also spent two years with golf course builder Landscapes Unlimited of Lincoln, Neb., and three years at Williamsburg Environmental Group, a company in Williamsburg, Va., which is heavily involved in the environmental aspects of golf projects.

Rulewich's Saratoga National opens in Adirondacks

By JAY FINEGAN

SARATOGA, N.Y. — This Adirondack resort town, best known for its thoroughbred race track and 19th century Victorian architecture, finally has a high-end daily-fee course. Saratoga National Golf Club, designed by Roger Rulewich, opened over Memorial Day weekend and should be in good trim for the affluent crowd of "summer people" who flock here for the cool mountain air.

Set by the shores of Lake Lonely, the 7,200-yard track plays through a former horse farm. Rulewich navigated the routing around a complex pattern of wetlands, traversed by 23 wooden bridges that lend the course a special charm.

Extensive stonework gives strong definition to green complexes, wetland edges and the clubhouse. Multiple tees, wide fairways and generous targets create an inviting atmosphere for each hole. A creek flows lazily through the property.

WRITING CHECKS

All told, it's a sharp new layout with plenty of interesting features. According to Rulewich, owners and developers Tom Newkirk and Bob Howard spared no expense in building the best course possible.



The 15th hole at Saratoga National, on the shores of Lake Lonely

"They turned out to be some of the easiest clients we've ever worked with," he said. "They've been excited about this project from day one and have been out on the site a great deal, watching it happen. And when anything came up that

looked like it might help the course, they were ready to write a check. We couldn't ask for anything more."

To avoid some of the grow-in issues, for example, they agreed to sod 74 acres.

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The third green at Tullymore Golf Club

Engh's new Tullymore Golf Club will challenge long-ball hitters

By JAY FINEGAN

STANWOOD, Mich. — The first time he saw the land for Tullymore Golf Club, Jim Engh knew he had to put on his thinking cap. The 600-acre parcel contained 350 acres of wetlands.

Tullymore opens later this month, and golfers will discover how the designer dealt with the swampy terrain that predominates across the property. He built 2,500 feet of boardwalk and set some back tee placements that require bodacious drives over the wetlands.

"The land has fingers of protruding hills coming down into the wetlands," said Engh, a golf architect based in Castle Rock, Colo. "You're playing over and around wetlands, but always into sandy hillsides with mature forest of

oak, ash and some pine. So it's the combination of the wetlands and the forest that adds an intriguing element. We carved into a lot of hills and preserved the wetlands in their natural state. It allowed us to do some unusual, dunesy holes."

Tullymore's debut will add a second daily-fee layout to a complex owned by Canadian Lakes Development Group. The other course here at Stanwood, an hour north of Grand Rapids, is St. Ives, which enjoys a five-star rating from *Golf Digest*. "They're going to have two very interesting and diverse courses," Engh observed.

250-YARD CARRY

The 7,000-yard Tullymore track
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Cupp designing Bonita Bay Group course at Verandah

BONITA SPRINGS, Fla. — Golf course architect Bob Cupp has been chosen to design the first 18-hole championship golf course at Verandah. The 1,456-acre master-planned community is being developed by The Bonita Bay Group along the Orange River in northeastern Lee County, Fla.

Cupp previously designed both 18-hole championship courses at Shadow Wood Country Club in The Brooks, another



A view of Cupp's Shadow Wood CC, another course he designed for Bonita Bay Group.

Bonita Bay complex. At Verandah, he is creating what he describes as a "distinct design" that will complement the locale.

"This location is very different from most areas in south Florida," Cupp said. "I don't know of another golf course in this area that has the same look and feel of this one, with the numerous old-growth live oak trees and river frontage."

Kitty Green, general manager of Verandah,

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Saratoga Nat'l

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"We sodded everything except the fairways and the green surfaces, which we seeded with bent," Rulewich said. "All the roughs were sodded, and we carried that sod all the way to our edges."

Saratoga Sod supplied the turf and Chesapeake Turf, of Salisbury, Md., rolled it in.

CLUBHOUSE OF STONE

Similarly, Newkirk and Howard admired some of the stonework the designer used to buttress one of the greens, and consequently authorized a liberal use of stone throughout the property.

"Many of the pond banks and wetland edges, as well as greens and tees, are reinforced and stabilized with stacked stone walls that lend a strong visual element throughout the course," said Rulewich.

"They [the owners] seem to have the wherewithal to do all the nice touches," he added. "They're also building quite a nifty clubhouse for themselves, also using a lot of stonework. It has some unusual features, like a 'zero edge' pool. It's not contained but drops off to a waterfall. They even consider the clubhouse a second home. Upstairs, they have some private quarters for themselves and their golfing buddies."

CARRIES OVER WETLANDS

Working with general contractor Delany Construction, Rulewich's own construction company, a partnership called The Golf Group Inc., handled much of the heavy lifting. "We did the shaping and put the features together and did a lot of the grading on the course," he said.

Starting with a fairly flat piece of ground – open pastures separated by hedgerows of mature

trees and brush – work crews moved between 600,000 and 700,000 yards of earth, in the process creating some additional lakes and ponds on the course. Everything eventually drains back into Lake Lonely.

"The tricky part was dealing with the wetlands, which are scattered throughout the site," Rulewich said. "There are some optional carries across the wetlands that are going to give you

a feeling of being somewhere else rather than in the Adirondacks."

'ISLAND' GREEN ON 14TH

Indeed, with wetlands at every turn, against the backdrop of a large lake, the layout and setting of this course take on a coastal marshland character. "We thought Lake Lonely would be a major feature of the course," Rulewich explained. "But it was buffered by a major, wooded

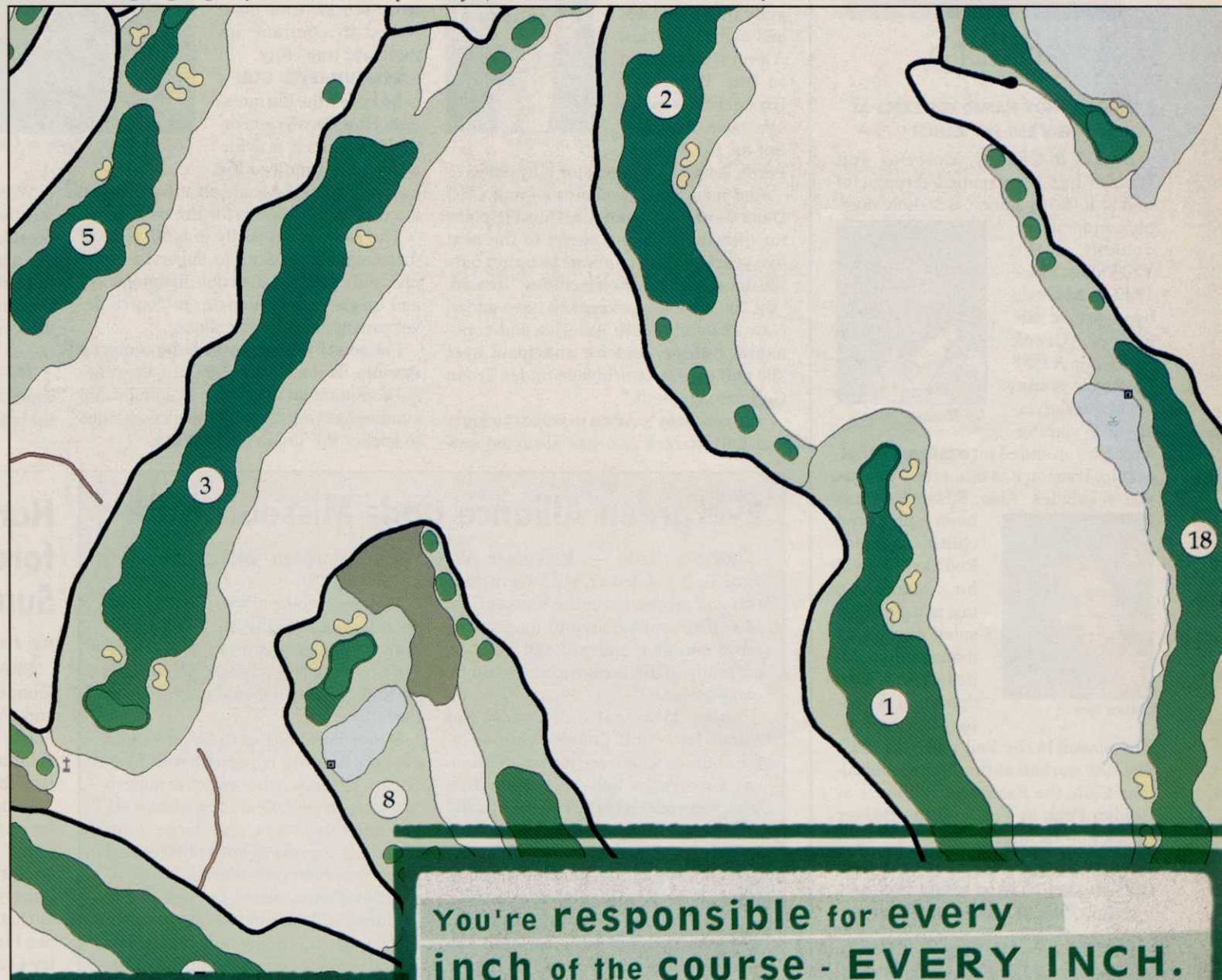
wetland area, which we were not allowed to go into.

"We brought a couple of holes up to the edge, but we made very limited intrusion into that shoreline," he said. "The 14th hole plays right at the lake, and the 15th is a ponded par-3 that almost looks like an island green. You have to bridge across to it, and the cart path runs behind the green, and you bridge back across what is really a wetland

but at times looks like part of the lake.

"We tried to figure out how to bulkhead the 15th green itself, and ended up using some large, very blocky stone," he said. "It has a stone edge all the way around – it's a pretty hole. You're looking at water running around both sides, so it really is, in effect, an island green."

The superintendent at Saratoga National is Joe Lucas. ■



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Tullymore

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healthy and great, but it happens to be young, carts will knock it down pretty fast," he said. "I think the sod will pay for itself many times over, just by keeping conditions good, cutting down on erosion, and keeping cart traffic at a manageable wear level."

RBI Golf out of Denver, which also built Engh's The Golf Club at Redlands Mesa, handled the construction, and Engh had high praise for the firm. "Wayne Metcalf was the on-site supervisor for RBI, and he did a great job," he said.

Superintendent Alex Greenacre will have his hands full keeping this environmentally sensitive site in good trim. Head professional Kevin O'Brien will oversee Tullymore as well as St. Ives. ■

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