

BRIEFS

RAINMAKER TO DEVELOP STONY POINT

COLUMBIA, Md. — Rainmaker Golf Development, based here, has reached agreement to develop the Stony Point Golf Club for the town of Stony Point, N.Y. The 18-hole layout will be designed by Jacobson Golf Course Design. Rainmaker's selection came after the municipality's national search for a project manager to shepherd the development. The town has established a budget of about \$15 million and hopes to break ground on the course this month, with an opening date in June 2003. No builder has yet been named. Stony Point is located along the shores of the Hudson River in southern New York. The course will incorporate many granite ridges and bluffs, offering some 150-foot elevation changes from tee to fairway.

Retooled Bay area layout reopens as Monarch Bay

By JAY FINEGAN

SAN LEANDRO, Calif. — An \$8.1-million renovation has transformed the San Leandro Golf Complex into a sparkling 27-hole layout now called Monarch Bay Golf Club.

Set on San Francisco Bay, the remodeled facility gives Bay area residents a retooled championship layout and a spiffed up nine-hole executive track called Marina Golf Course.

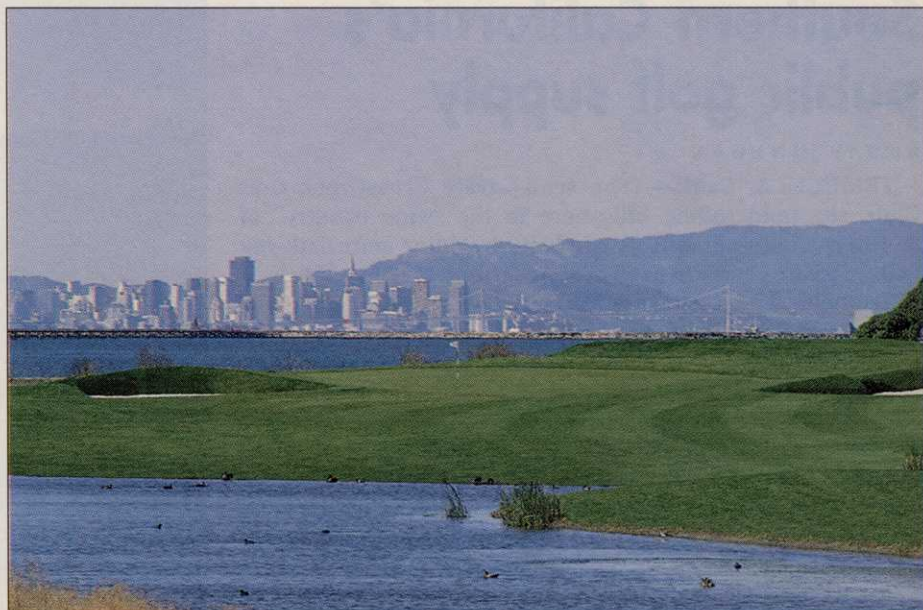
Architect John Harbottle completely redesigned both courses in this project undertaken jointly by the City of San Leandro and American Golf Corp. It's believed to be one of the largest privately funded renovations ever on a municipal golf facility. "American Golf brought the money to do the development and the city guaranteed the lease," Harbottle said.

Measuring over 7,000 yards, the 18-hole daily-fee track — the Tony Lema Course — holds the distinction of being the second longest and most difficult par-71 layout in the state. However, multiple tees give players a range of options.

Named after local hero and British Open champion Tony Lema, the links-style layout meanders over gentle terrain. Sixteen of 18 holes enjoy views of San Francisco Bay, with some parts of the course bordered by natural wetlands.

FIRM, FAST FAIRWAYS

The executive nine-holer was closed for a year for its renovation, followed by



The Monarch Bay Golf Club looks out on San Francisco and the Golden Gate Bridge.

Photo by D2 Productions, Murphy/Scully

the year-long shutdown of the Lema layout, which reopened in March.

"We renovated both of them top to bottom," Harbottle said. "There wasn't a blade of grass left unturned. The Tony Lema Course is totally different now. A lot of the layout remains the same, because the holes fit the terrain very well. But green locations have shifted, and the bunkering is completely changed."

Steep, sod-faced bunkers placed throughout the course create a complex

design, where careful strategy is rewarded with shortcuts and open approaches to the greens. The firm, fast fairways and prevailing winds make for a true links feel. The challenging layout is already scheduled to host the USGA Mid-Amateur Championship qualifying round in August.

LANDFILL LOCATION

The \$8.1-million budget wasn't as large as it sounds, according to Harbottle.

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Photo courtesy of the ehls collection

(Left to right) Mickie Gallagher, Dave Ogilvie, Bobby Jones, and Alfred S. Bourne at Augusta Country Club, where Jones kicked off his 1930 Grand Slam.

Silva restoring Ross' Augusta CC

By PHILIP HALL

AUGUSTA, Ga. — Architect Brian Silva will break ground this July on a thorough restoration of Augusta Country Club, a Donald Ross design with a rich golf history that actually predates Ross and stretches back to the 19th century.

Augusta Country Club will close for the summer and fall and reopen for play next January, according to general manager Henry Marburger. When the restoration is complete, Augusta CC will feature a layout as true to its Ross plans as any course in the Southeast.

Silva first visited the club two years

ago. "At that time, the discussions centered mostly around restoring the bunkers," recalled the architect, whose extensive Ross restoration portfolio includes Seminole Golf Club in North Palm Beach, Fla., Biltmore Forest Country Club in Asheville, N.C., Old Elm Golf Club in Chicago, and Charlotte (N.C.) Country Club, host to last year's USGA Senior Amateur.

"After that initial visit, the club got hold of Ross' original, working drawings from the Tufts Archive in Pinehurst," Silva continued. "And I mean drawings straight from the source: Ross' hand-written notes are

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Barbaron, Southeastern co-building the North Course at Bonita Bay's Mediterra

NAPLES, Fla. — Last December, on the same day the Bonita Bay Group opened the South Course at Mediterra, the company broke ground for its second layout, the North Course, two years ahead of schedule.

Now, in an innovative move to ensure the opening of the North Course this December, the company has hired two

"This is the first time we have worked side by side with another contractor on the same course," said Danny Moman of Barbaron, "and it's working out extremely well."

According to Mickey McSwain, this is also the first time that Southeastern Golf has worked on a course in conjunction with another contractor.



Construction is under way at the North Course at Mediterra.

separate golf course contractors to build the Tom Fazio-designed layout.

Barbaron Inc., out of Inverness, Fla., and Southeastern Golf, based in Tifton, Ga., have been brought in to pioneer this tandem approach.

MOVING AHEAD OF SCHEDULE

"The two-contractor approach is definitely outside of the norm, but it's something that our team felt would make the construction process much more efficient,"

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Nevada desert

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per probably added 20 percent to the \$16 million construction costs, but it turned into a huge time saver. We were able to build the course and completely sod it in around 12 months."

The soft sand was conducive to digging and shaping, but special care had to be taken for drainage as heavy rains could lead to flash flooding. A complex system of drains carries all runoff to a drain line that runs under the center of the course.

The course boasts a state of the art dual-pumping system that handles the natural water for water features and collection ponds and keeps that water separate from the reclaimed water that is used for irrigation. Every effort was made to keep these surroundings a perfect natural habitat for the desert tortoise, desert fox, hawks, roadrunners, Gila monsters, tarantulas, and scorpions that thrive here.

HARVESTING STRAY BALLS

The entire course was covered with hybrid Bermuda sod and Dominant bentgrass sod for the greens. The 49 bunkers are filled with crushed white sandstone that was ground specifically to Rider's specifications for proper color and texture to keep it from blowing away. No extra dirt had to be brought in, as the natural sand was an excellent sub soil for the sod.

"We stress that golfers must stay on the maintained fairways and the golf cart paths because of the fragile nature of the desert," Hughes said. "We provide ball retrievers on the golf carts. If you can't reach a ball that you hit into the desert, you must leave it, as footprints cause immediate destruction of the landscape. We have two workers that go out every month to carefully harvest balls in the sensitive areas so they don't become an unsightly collection."

WOLF'S NATURAL HABITAT

Rider named the course after the Mexican Wolf that was hunted to near extinction by settlers. He feels that as man nearly eliminated the wolf, man should do something to protect the wolf's natural habitat. This continues to be the driving force behind the course's creation. That sense of wildness exists throughout the layout and will inspire golfers as they enjoy playing in this surreal setting.

"It took nature millions of years to carve out this landscape and we could destroy it in the blink of an eye," Rider said. "Wolf Creek will help to preserve this ecosystem for years to come, while giving people an opportunity to enjoy the desert's great natural charms." ■

GOLF COURSE NEWS

Monarch Bay

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"When you're dealing in this part of the world, that's not a huge amount of money," he said. "Also, it included some work on the clubhouse and driving range."

The location of the complex — it lies atop an old landfill —

also drove up the costs. "We weren't allowed to cut an ounce of dirt on the property because of the landfill cap," Harbottle said. "We had to import all the materials we used to form bunkers and greens."

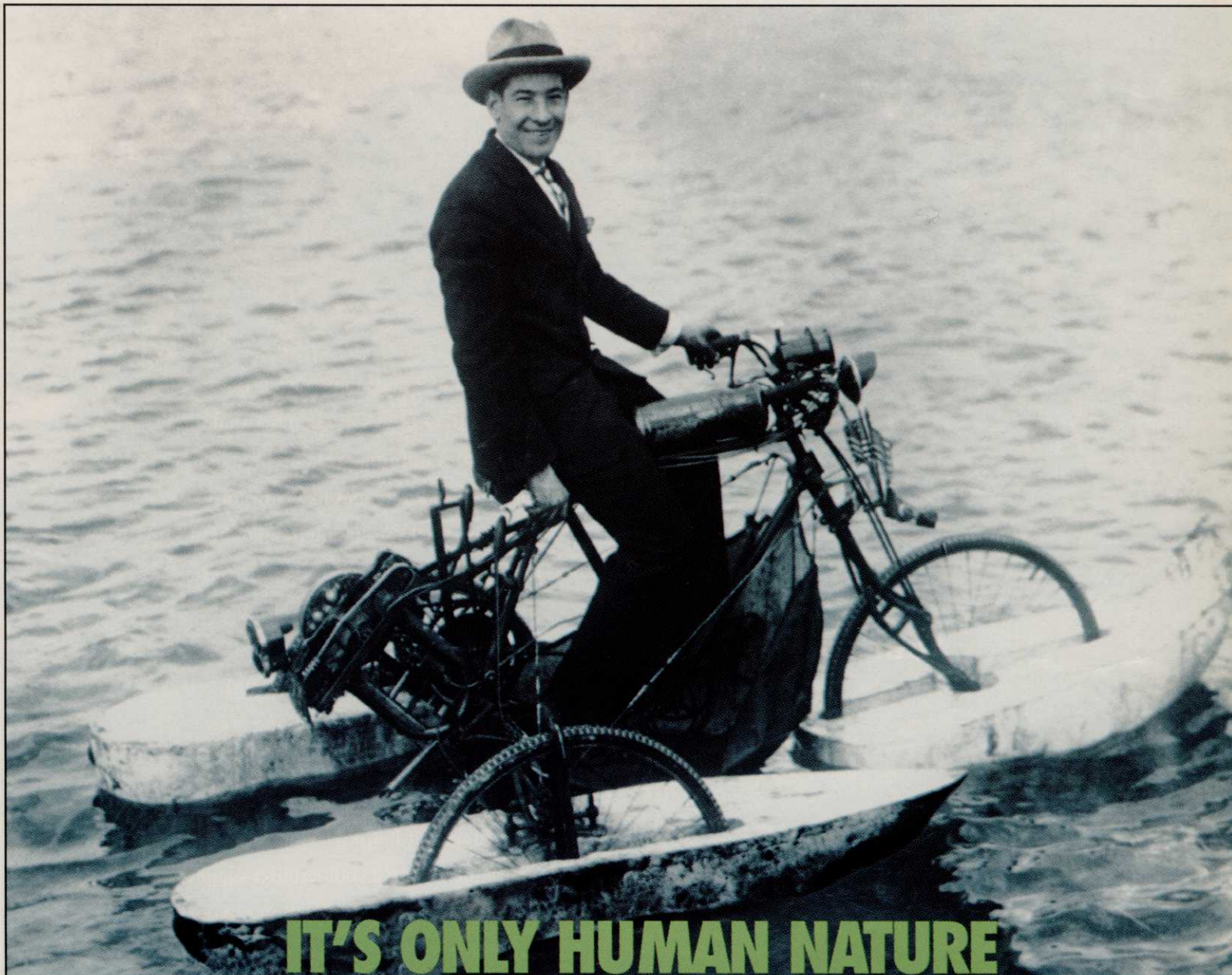
Moreover, the native soil on the fairways was nearly useless as a turfgrass base. "You couldn't grow a thing on it,"

the designer said. Some 90,000 cubic yards of sand were brought onto the site and spread to a depth of six inches. "We placed it everywhere we were going to plant to get a good firm playing surface," Harbottle said. "The fairways are rye, and the greens are L-93 bentgrass."

Wadsworth Golf Construc-

tion handled the heavy lifting.

John Harbottle Design, based in Tacoma, Wash., specializes in new golf course design as well as renovation and restoration of existing courses. A member of the American Society of Golf Course Architects, Harbottle lectures on golf course architecture throughout the country. ■



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