

GOLF COURSE NEWS

THE NEWSPAPER FOR THE GOLF COURSE INDUSTRY

A UNITED PUBLICATION
VOLUME 14, NUMBER 6
JUNE 2002 • \$7.00

www.golfcoursenews.com

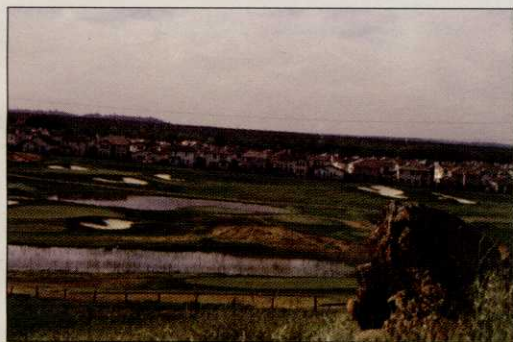
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EMPIRE RANCH'S LONG WAIT IS OVER

Seven years after its initial planning, Empire Ranch Golf Club in Folsom, Calif., is set to open. The project was delayed for a number of reasons, including problems with wetland mitigations and the rocky soil. Despite these obstacles, B and Z Property, working with architect Brad Bell and Wadsworth Construction, finally brought the ClubCorp-managed course to fruition. (see page 14)

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Damian Pascuzzo and Walter Uihlein square off over the impact of improving golf ball and club technology.

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COUNTERPOINT

Yamaha Golf Car to unveil \$31 million factory, '03 model

By A. OVERBECK

NEWNAN, Ga. — In a strong statement of its commitment to the golf market, Yamaha Golf Car (YGC) is set to open a brand new \$31 million manufacturing facility dedicated solely to golf cars, utility vehicles and off-fairway vehicles June 8. At the grand opening the company will also unveil its 2003 golf car model — reportedly the first of several new products slated to roll off the production line at the state-of-the-art, 220,000-square-foot factory.

"The first car to come down the line will be the '03

model," said Jon Bammann, division manager of new business development and off-fairway vehicles. "We will also be expanding our utility vehicle line. We feel we have a good medium-duty vehicle in the G21, but there is a spot in our lineup where we could have a heavy-duty and lighter-duty vehicle."

Yamaha officials also hinted at future products that will push golf's staid image.

"We have some fun stuff that we are going to leverage," said Stu Horlak, general manager for Yamaha Motor Co. "We have the



A sneak peek at the 2003 model Yamaha golf car

advantage of bigger markets and more diverse product lines [ATVs, motorcycles, watercraft]. The guys at YGC don't stop thinking with the traditional fleet golf car, [su-

perintendents] have needs from turf care to off-fairway vehicles."

HIGH-TECH FACTORY

To be certain, YGC's significant investment in a

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PGA Village foes face referendum deadline

By DEREK RICE

SAN ANTONIO, Texas — Opponents of the proposed PGA Village here were disappointed by the City Council's 9-2 decision to approve a deal with Austin-based Lumbermen's Investment Corp. to build the re-



sort on land that drains into the Edwards Aquifer, the city's sole source of water.

Hours after the April 5 decision, a coalition of groups that oppose the plan began scrambling to obtain the 68,023 signa-

tures that would be necessary to put the issue to citywide referendum. Under the city's charter, the groups had 40 days, or until May 13 to obtain those signatures, although the interpretation of the charter is open to debate.

"There are a number of different interpretations about what that date

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Editorial Focus: Utility Vehicles

New players enter utility vehicle fray

By ANDREW OVERBECK

MINNEAPOLIS and CLEVELAND — Unfazed by a slowdown in golf course construction, Polaris and Cub Cadet have made a bold entry into an already crowded golf course utility vehicle market.

The two companies are entering unfamiliar territory — Polaris' primary business is in consumer products such as ATVs and snowmobiles and Cub Cadet is a division of outdoor power equipment maker MTD Products. While the new players are still focusing on consumer products, both see a large growth opportunity in the golf market.

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Easement could spell large tax savings

By DEREK RICE

BRADENTON, Fla. — Despite the human nature to shy away from anything involving property tax valuations and the Internal Revenue Service, golf course management consultant Michael Kahn of Golfmak Inc. believes the financial benefit of conservation easements is



too good to pass up for golf course owners, operators and managers.

Under the program, if a golf course is situated on land that will be dedicated to the golf course forever and will never be subdivided or built

on, an owner can go to a recognized

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