

Joe Jemsek, Chicago's Mr. Golf, dies at 89

CHICAGO, Ill. — Joe Jemsek, Chicago's Mr. Golf and public golf pioneer, died April 2 after a long battle with cancer. He was 89.

Jemsek got into the golf ownership business in the 1950s with the goal of making a private country club experience available to a public golf audience. His com-

pany, Jemsek Golf, owns and operates eight public golf courses in Chicago, including Cog Hill Country Club and St. Andrews Country Club. He bought Cog Hill in 1951, and brought the Western Open to Cog Hill's Dubsdread No. 4 Course in 1990.

Jemsek began his career in golf at age six as a caddie in in the

Chicago suburbs, and worked his way up to golf pro and eventually golf course owner.

Jemsek won numerous accolades over the years including the William D. Richardson Award from the Golf Writers Association of America and the National Golf Foundation's Herb Graffis Award. He was also cho-

sen as the Professional Golfer of the Year by the PGA of America and was inducted into the Chicago Sports Hall of Fame.



Joe Jemsek

— Staff reports

Harding Park renovation

Continued from page 3

commission will have the final say. But it is certain that a sliding fee schedule will be implemented that will keep greens fees lower for city residents and will see fees for out of town players increase substantially.

A COMPLETE REBUILD

The year-long project will implement a redesign that was drawn up by the Palmer group with input from Tatum and PGA Tour course consultant Chris Gray. After eliminating the current turf stands of broadleaf weeds, the layout will receive a new irrigation and drainage system, soil improvements, greens rebuilt to USGA specs, and new bunkers and tees. Some holes will be lengthened to accommodate the Tour Championship. In addition, the Fleming Nine will be completely rebuilt, a new driving range will be located near the new clubhouse, and a First Tee Program sponsored by the PGA of America will be added to the complex.

Shawn Sweeney, an area supervisor for the department of parks and recreation, will oversee the renovation project.

"We have several firms bidding on the renovation work at this time. Our city workers will be sent to other projects while the major construction work is done. Once we start planting the new courses, we will increase our staff at Harding from 12 to 17 workers. It is important the city finally took control of this much-needed project," Sweeney said.

PGA Tour officials have agreed to bring the Tour Championship to the new Harding Park every third year starting in 2006. Earlier plans called for the Tour to pay \$500,000 in fees for each visit, which will help to pay off the bond loans. It is estimated that each visit by the Tour will generate over \$20 million to the local economy.

No one will be happier when work begins than Tatum, whose vision has remained true to save a great public course for his hometown.

"I understand how much it matters to play a really great golf course in wonderful condition, what it does to the entire experience," Tatum said. "I also understand there's a concept about municipal golf that it's okay for municipal golfers to be given a third-rate experience. One of the things this project can do is demonstrate just how dead wrong that is." ■

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