

# DEVELOPMENT & RENOVATION



## BRIEFS

### ALBANESE PROMOTED TO PRINCIPAL

PLYMOUTH, Mich. — Raymond Hearn Golf Designs Inc. has changed its name to Raymond Hearn/Paul Albanese Golf Course Designs Inc. to reflect the promotion of Paul Albanese to principal. Albanese has been a senior designer with the firm since it was founded in 1996. Prior to joining Hearn's firm, Albanese served as associate designer at Matthews & Associates in Lansing. Hearn said the name change is a "formal expression of our shared approach to design and our passion for golf course architecture."

### HARVEY, RBA GROUP JOIN FORCES

MORRISTOWN, N.J. — A. John Harvey, ASGCA, has joined forces with the RBA Group's Golf Services division. Harvey has been practicing golf course architecture for 14 years and formerly worked for Robert Trent Jones Sr., then with Roger Rulewich. With the RBA Group, a consulting firm practicing engineering, architecture, planning and environmental consulting, Harvey will help broaden the capabilities the firm can offer in the realm of architecture. Harvey has collaborated with RBA on several golf course projects in the past, most recently Berkshire Valley Golf Course in Morris County, N.J.

### RULEWICH TO EXPAND RTJ GOLF TRAIL

BERNARDSTON, Mass. — Golf course architect Roger Rulewich has been hired by Retirement Systems of Alabama to design two courses, Shannon Valley in Hoover, Ala., and Hunter Pointe in Mussel Shoals, as an expansion to the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail. These will be the first two courses in the trail that Rulewich, who worked on the other courses with Jones, will design alone.

### WEITZ GOLF COMPLETES JUPITER HILLS CLUBHOUSE

TEQUESTA, Fla. — Weitz Golf International has completed construction on the 40,000-square-foot clubhouse at Jupiter Hills Club. The project was completed in just 12 months and came in under budget.

## Davis, Stadler open 'heathland' course in Colorado

By ANDREW OVERBECK

GRANBY, Colo. — Tripp Davis and PGA Tour professional Craig Stadler have teamed to bring what they call "Scottish, heathland-style golf" to the mountains of Colorado. Their course at Grand Elk Ranch & Club opened Aug. 30 and is the centerpiece of the \$420 million, 437-acre resort community located 85 miles north of Denver.

For a mountain course, Grand Elk is unique. It sits in the Fraser River valley at 8,000 feet in elevation but the land is relatively flat.

"The entire back nine is down in a river valley, so it is low-profile," said architect Tripp Davis. "The front nine has some elevation change and has a little more movement. There

are not a lot of trees and there is a lot of scrub out there. It reminds me of the heathland courses outside London."

Although the land was relatively flat, construction of the layout was anything but easy. Niebur Golf, which is a partner in the project, built the course.

"When we came on in April 2001, nine holes had already been rough shaped by a previous developer," said Davis. "So it was kind of a design-and-build project. We had to deal with numerous wetland issues as they

came along. But this was as quick as I have seen a course built, especially considering the environmental issues that we had to deal with. We had to restore

25 acres of wetlands."

Stadler, who visited the course numerous times and met regularly with Davis to discuss the design,

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The 17th hole at the recently opened Grand Elk Ranch & Club in Granby, Colo.

Photo: Andrew Overbeck

## Renovated Ocean Course aims to be more walkable

By DEREK RICE

KIAWAH ISLAND, S.C. — When the Ocean Course at Kiawah Island Resorts reopened in mid-September after a three-month, \$2.5 million renovation, the resort hoped the project would result in an increase in the number of walking players on the course.

To that end, Kiawah is offering players the option to use walking caddies on the course.

One of the driving forces behind the decision to offer caddie services was architect Pete Dye, who oversaw the renovation at the club. Much of the renovation, which began in June, was aimed at making the course more walker-friendly.

"Without a doubt, the only way to fully experience the natural beauty and grandeur of the Ocean Course is to walk it," Dye said.

Part of that natural beauty lies in the fact that 10 of the links-style course's holes are



Architect Pete Dye was a proponent of making the Ocean Course more walkable.

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## Transforming brownfields into green links

By THOMAS FRALICK

BUFFALO, N.Y. — Contaminated industrial properties or hazardous waste sites often sit idle and abandoned for years in urban and suburban areas around the country. The restoration of these sites, called brownfields, to an environmentally acceptable state must conform to rigid federal and state standards. While such projects can prove costly and time-consuming, they offer tremendous opportunities.

In addition to environmental restoration, there are also economic benefits derived from the conversion of a brownfield. For example, these properties are less costly to acquire if one is seeking an area to be developed into a recreational facility such as a golf course, and brownfield properties often include large parcels of land that are difficult to come by in urban settings. In addition, most states provide monetary incentives and in some instances even grants for brownfield projects.

As a consequence, there has been a recent trend to convert these properties into recreational facilities, particularly golf courses. The development of brownfields into golf complexes offers many advantages, including substantial environmental and economic benefits. Cleanup criteria are less stringent for recreational areas than for residen-



An artist's rendering of the Ault, Clark-designed Hyatt Hills complex detailed in the story below.

tial use. Zoning issues are also eased. If the property is in an urban setting, the creation of green spaces is usually well-received by planning boards. Finally, turning an idle piece of industrial property into a golf facility adds commercial as well as recreational value to a community.

### BROWNFIELDS VS. GREENFIELDS

The main difference between a

normal parcel of land (sometimes called a greenfield) and a brownfield is the presence of regulated substances in the soil or groundwater. These substances are generally

chemicals that were used in an industrial process or the waste products that remained and were determined to be harmful to human health or the environment.

Therefore, before the property can be restored, the nature of the substances and the degree of contamination must be determined and any risks mitigated. The approach

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## Hazardous waste to water hazards

CLARK, N.J. — The Hyatt Hills golf complex recently opened on the 87-acre site of a former General Motors bearing plant that had been in operation since 1938.

URS Corp., retained by General Motors, began decommissioning the facility in 1987 for conversion to a golf course and

recreational facility. The first step was the preparation of a site investigation work plan to determine the extent of contamination for the above-ground portion of three buildings totaling more than 1.2 million square feet.

The investigations uncovered

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## Walkability

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directly on the Atlantic Ocean shore, while the remaining eight traverse surrounding marshes and dunes.

Tommy Cuthbert, Kiawah's director of golf, called many of the changes "substantial," but also pointed to the less obvious changes Dye suggested to draw more walking players to the course.

"Many subtler changes, including enlarging tee areas to better handle players and caddies and creating walking paths, will make the Ocean Course a much more walkable venue," he said.

Players will be charged \$40 per bag plus gratuity for the caddie service, which complements Kiawah's longstanding forecaddie program to accompany riding players.

Dye originally designed the Ocean Course in 1991 to host the Ryder Cup. It is one of five courses located at the Kiawah Island Resort. The remaining four were designed by Jack Nicklaus, Tom Fazio, Gary Player and Clyde Johnston. ■

## Grand Elk opening

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said the resulting layout offers a good test of golf.

"The front nine is more like a ranch-style course and the back nine is shot-to-shot, point-to-point nine with lots of wetlands," he said. "It plays fair, but when the wind comes up the course is damn near impossible from the back tees."

According to Davis, Stadler was very involved with the design concept.

"He made philosophical suggestions," Davis said. "He liked smaller greens with a little less movement and wanted play around greens to be more varied. So we have a lot of chipping areas around greens. It is a shot-maker's setting."

The resort-style course also features bunkers that are backed off the greens, and all par-5s are reachable in two.

"You will have to hit a very good shot to make eagle though," Davis said. "Because the greens on the par-5s are smaller and

have more movement."

### GROW-IN CHALLENGES

In addition to the wetland issues, Colorado's harsh weather conditions this year challenged the grow-in schedule. The layout has bluegrass tees, fairways and roughs and Dominant bentgrass greens.



Craig Stadler was "very involved" with the design of Grand Elk, according to architect Tripp Davis.

"This spring it was cold and windy and we couldn't get the soil temps up to where they needed to be to start germinating grass," said superintendent Greg Chambers, who

oversaw the grow-in and will handle the ongoing maintenance at the club. "This summer has been really dry and windy which has made things interesting. It has been hard to irrigate because the wind is blowing so hard that the irrigation isn't even hitting the ground."

The hard work has paid off however, and the surrounding resort property is humming with activity.

Grand Elk LLC has already notched \$12 million in home lot sales in its initial offering and is building 26 cottages near the clubhouse to serve as the property's four-star hotel. The developers are also considering building a second higher-end 18-hole facility on property.

Customers who purchase home lots at the four-season resort receive a golf membership, use of the clubhouse facilities, use of pontoon boats at the resort's \$55 million marina on Lake Granby, two annual ski passes at Sol Vista or Winter Park, and use of the club's Alpine Club at Winter Park. ■

## Transforming brownfields

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used to determine how to clean up the substances varies from site to site and from agency to agency.

Once the regulatory framework is established, environmental remediation follows the same basic steps:

- characterization of the site, including a description of its physical properties, sampling and analysis of soils, surface water, groundwater, sediments, and other media suspected of having been contaminated, risk assessments for human health and ecology, and identification of applicable, relevant and appropriate requirements;

- remedy selection, which is the process of determining which remedial measures, if any, are required to meet clean-up levels;

- remedial design, which follows the selection and approval of a remedy and provides the plans and specifications a contractor will follow;

- construction of the remedy by the contractor; and operations and maintenance, which includes the tasks needed to ensure that the selected remedy operates as anticipated.

### SAVINGS IN COST AND TIME

Because the regulatory criteria associated with the development of a golf course are less stringent, remedial costs and the time required for completion of the environmental remediation process can be greatly reduced. However, the fact that clean-up criteria are more easily met does not mean the

clean-up level is lower; it merely indicates that there is a restriction on the use of the property that allows a different risk model to be used.

If the site is to be used as a driving range rather than for residential purposes, for example, a cap can be designed into the development plans that would achieve the necessary separation. The contaminated soil could be placed under a parking lot or a clean soil cover with the driving range built on top. In such an instance, the construction of the golf facility would be an efficient and cost-effective remedial action.

While the expense of remediation is included in the cost of constructing the driving range, the total construction cost will likely be 10 to 20 percent higher than normal. However, the added expenditure will be offset by a



Hyatt Hills Golf Club was built on the site of an old GM plant in Clark, N.J.

lower purchase price for the property or absorbed by an owner who was under an order of consent to clean up the site.

Converting brownfields to golf courses also can offer design advantages. If soil excavation is used for remediation, a pond or topographic feature that will become an eye-pleasing part of the course can be created instead of backfilling the excavation. It is worth considering the use of a lined pond for golf course construction since that would ease regulatory agency concerns regarding groundwater recharge. A lined pond can be used to accept treated groundwater and establish best-management practices for stormwater control and can be useful as a source of irrigation water. In addition, if groundwater remediation is required, the layout of tees, greens, and fairways can be used to hide monitoring or extraction wells from the public, reducing any affect the groundwater remedy may have on the recreational use.

Converting brownfield sites to recreational use makes both economic and environmental sense. The added cost for design and construction of a remedy that includes a golf course or driving range is small compared to the total remedial construction cost. In addition to remediating the area at reduced cost, it adds green space to urban areas, provides recreation for the public and, in some cases, may even be eligible for federal and state funds. ■

Thomas Fralick is project manager for URS Corp., located in Buffalo, N.Y.

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## Turning hazardous waste into water hazards

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asbestos, petroleum hydrocarbons, heavy metals, PCBs, acids, caustic powders, lead batteries, PAHs, volatile and semi-volatile organic, and mercury switches. Based on these findings, URS prepared bid specifications and cost estimates for required work, evaluated bids, assisted in the selection of the contractor and provided oversight during a 21-month demolition period between 1989 and 1990.

Since the contamination extended over an area greater than 30 acres, capping and monitoring the site was determined to be the most cost effective and protective remedy. URS proposed that the site be used as a golf course-centered recreation facility and performed the design work, including cap/cover and drainage systems. A portion of the golf course is built over a multi-layer cap system which includes a waterproof barrier that is cushioned by three to eight feet of fill and topsoil.

The golf complex includes a regulation nine-hole public golf course, driving range and miniature golf course. The nine-hole course, designed by Ault, Clark and Associates of Kensington, Md., fea-

tures various tee locations that create different angles that make it playable as an 18-hole course. It features bentgrass greens, tees and tree-lined fairways, and as well as a 5.4-acre pond, providing attractive views and a challenging hazard on the seventh hole.

The course consists of two par-3 holes, five par-4s, and two par-5s, with paved golf cart paths throughout. A 1,500-foot, year-round clubhouse serves both the players and the public. It provides a full-service restaurant, pro-shop, lockers, lounge and storage space for electric golf cars.

The New Jersey State Golf Association recently announced that the USGA has given Hyatt Hills a course rating of 69.5 and a slope rating of 130. This makes Hyatt Hills one of the most challenging nine-hole courses in the state.

The Hyatt Hills golf complex earned public approval from the start for remediating a contaminated brown-field site in a cost-effective manner while providing the community with a recreational facility that enhances the area. ■

— Thomas Fralick