

Up a Creek

With the effort some architects expend crafting a golf course, it's easy to forget Nature was there first. Not so at the 9th hole at CordeValle GC in San Jose, Calif., which opened in September.

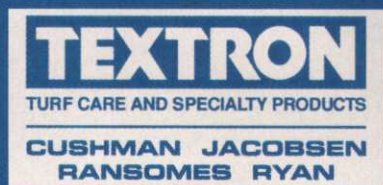
A creek that predates the course bisects the fairway of the 425-yard par 4, providing golfers with two options, according to superintendent Jim McPhilomy. Heroic golfers aim right if they believe they can carry the creek at 230 yards, leaving them an easy 165 yards to the pin, McPhilomy says. Play-it-safe golfers aim left to avoid the creek entirely.

"If I've got a tailwind, I'll play to the right," McPhilomy says, laughing. "If I'm playing into the wind, I'll play to the left. Wind conditions often determine how you're going to play the hole."

McPhilomy says the creek's risk/reward contribution to No. 9 makes it one of the more challenging holes on the golf course, for both golfers and maintenance crews. McPhilomy's crews spend 20 hours a week hand-trimming the grass surrounding the creek and pulling weeds from it to prevent its natural beauty from deteriorating.

"You walk a fine line on the maintenance side on a creek like that," McPhilomy says. "You want to keep the creek looking clean, but you don't want to destroy what nature put there in the first place."

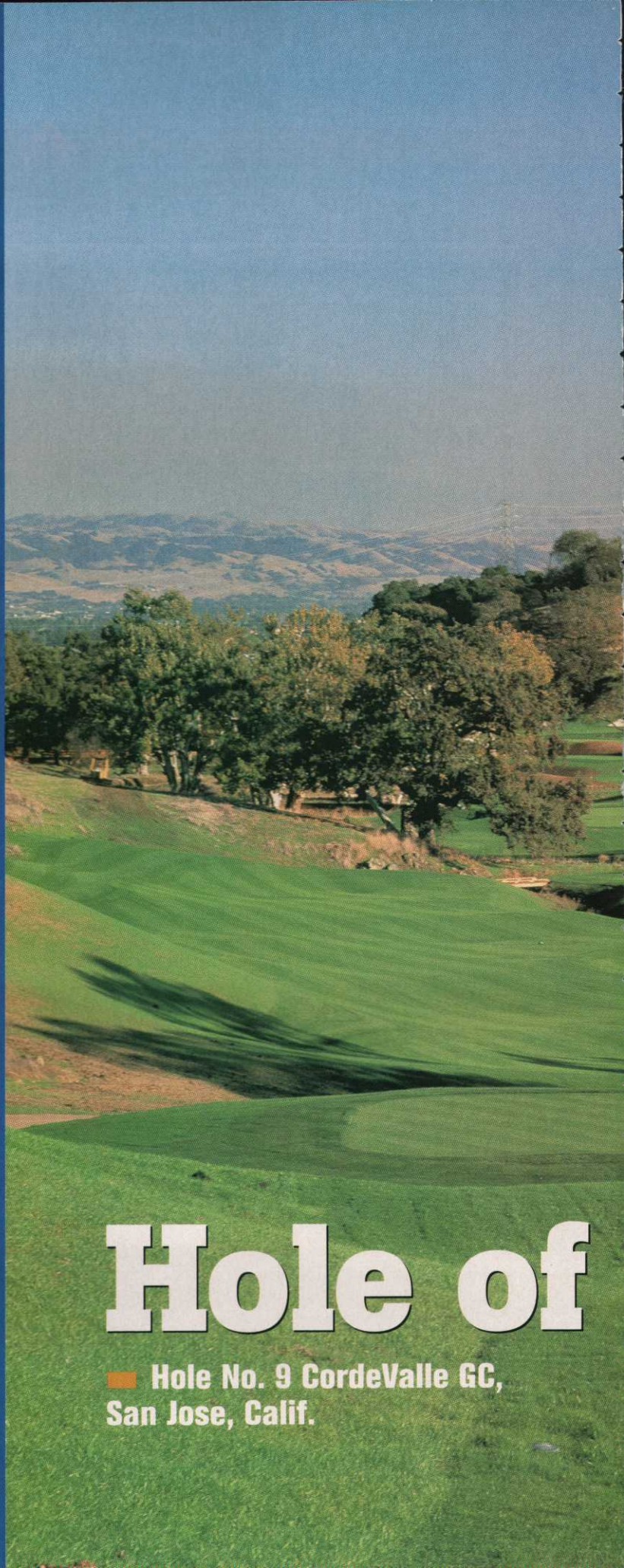
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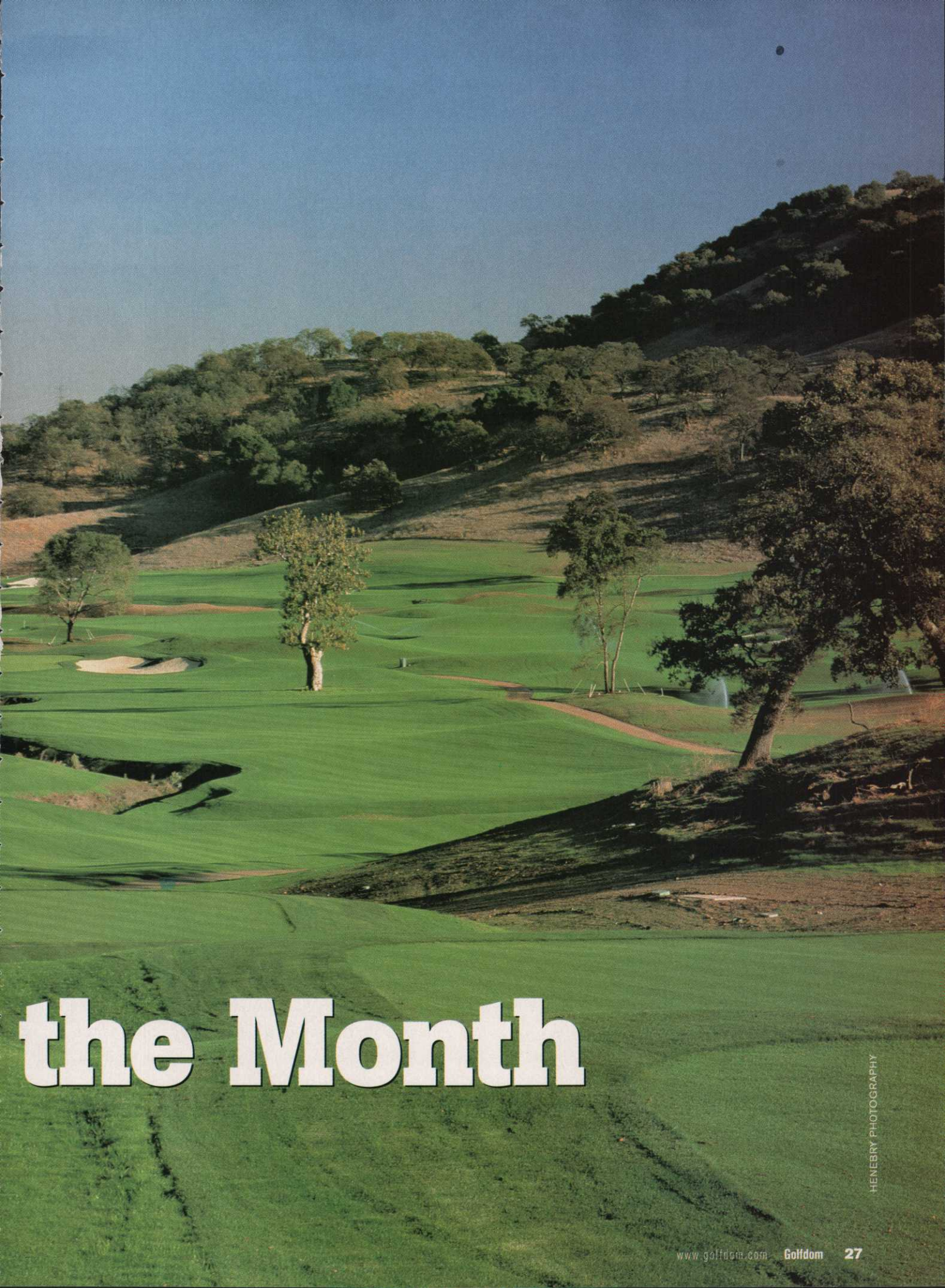


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Hole of

— Hole No. 9 CordeValle GC,
San Jose, Calif.





the Month

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