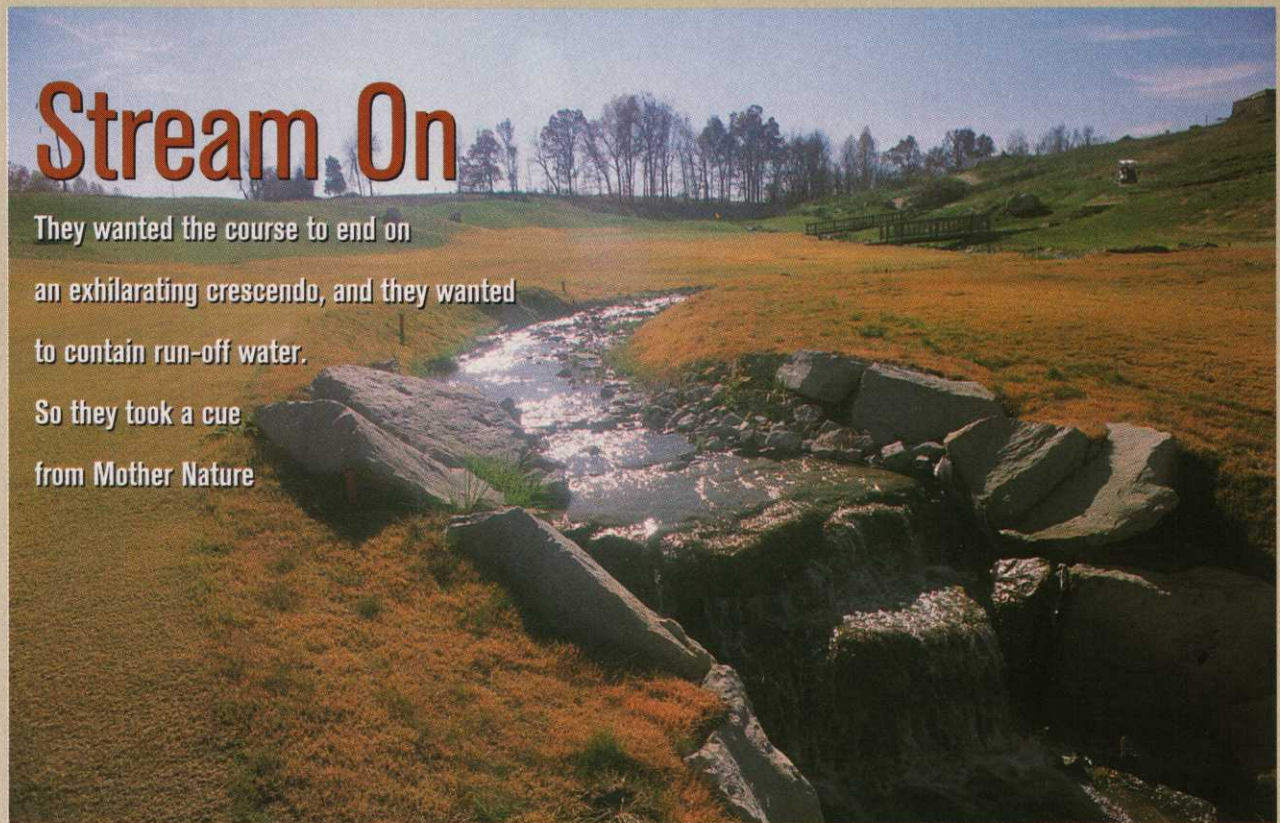


Case Study #2

■ MAINTENANCE



Stream On

They wanted the course to end on an exhilarating crescendo, and they wanted to contain run-off water. So they took a cue from Mother Nature

BY LARRY AYLWARD,
MANAGING EDITOR

They knew before construction that the 18th hole would be a popular meeting spot for run-off water, like McDonald's for teenagers on a Friday night.

Problem

Run-off water threatened to make an enormous sponge out of the 18th green at GreyStone GC in Dickson, Tenn. On top of that, the 18th hole lacked pizzazz.

Solution

Construction of a creek corrected the problem of run-off water and transformed the entire hole into an exciting golf experience.

The last hole at the McCumber Golf-designed GreyStone GC in Dickson, Tenn., which opened in September 1998, sat in a valley between two big hills. Welcome to watershed city.

The problem

The initial problem, of course, was run-off water, which threatened to make an enormous sponge out of the 18th green. But McCumber designers, including Jeff Lucovsky, determined that a storm drainage system would help solve the problem.

Still, there was another problem. The 18th hole was boring, like cheese pizza, and everyone knew it.

"You want to do something special on the 18th hole," Lucovsky says. "We

had a good set of holes, and we didn't want the 18th to be a letdown."

Superintendent Larry Arnold agreed. "It was a fine hole, but there was nothing interesting about it."

Lucovsky and his peers originally planned to install and bury an 18-inch drainage pipe running from the top of the hill behind the green along the length of the 450-yard, par-4 hole.

"But it wouldn't have been dramatic," Lucovsky admits. "It wouldn't have left you with that 'Wow' feeling when you walked off the 18th green."

And if the drainage pipe wasn't wide enough?

"If there was a storm that provided more water than the pipe could handle, water would wash down in

the fairway and greenside bunkers, creating a mess," Lucovsky says.

Like a fine classical music tune, Lucovsky and company wanted the course to end on an exhilarating crescendo. With a large buried pipe stretched along the 18th hole, there was nothing uplifting about the finish.

The solution

So one day, everyone headed out to the 18th green, including Lucovsky and other McCumber designers, the course's owner, John Duke (president of GreyStone Properties), and its builder, Bob Pinson (president of Course Crafters).

It was time to brainstorm.
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storm about what could be done to spice up the 18th hole. Soon they were talking about building a creek to run along the right side of the hole, instead of buried drainage pipe. A stream, they agreed, would take the ho-hum out of the hole.

"The creek would not only beautify the hole and make it memorable, but it would be able to handle the drainage that would be naturally occurring between the two hills," Lucovsky says.

As fate would have it, the owner of the golf course, Duke, also owned a rock quarry next to the course.

"A lot of golf courses spend a million dollars on rock work," Lucovsky says. "Here, the rock was available to us for free."

Elements of the course, such as tees, already featured the rock. So building a creek from the same material was fitting and would match the rest of the course.

Outcome

Arnold, who joined Grey-Stone about six months before the course opened, was in charge of implementing the building plan and making sure "the creek looked like it had been there a long time." It took Arnold and six crew members about

three weeks to construct the creek. It was an intense job that required constant attention to detail.

"I spent a lot of time in that creek," Arnold says. "We worked slowly. We had to build waterfalls and get water to flow where we wanted it."

The creek is about 15 feet across from edge to edge. "It looks natural, like a babbling brook," Lucovsky says.

Even when it's not raining, the creek is running — fed by waters from a nearby lake used for irrigation and recirculated. A cart path runs to the right of the creek and five bridges were in-

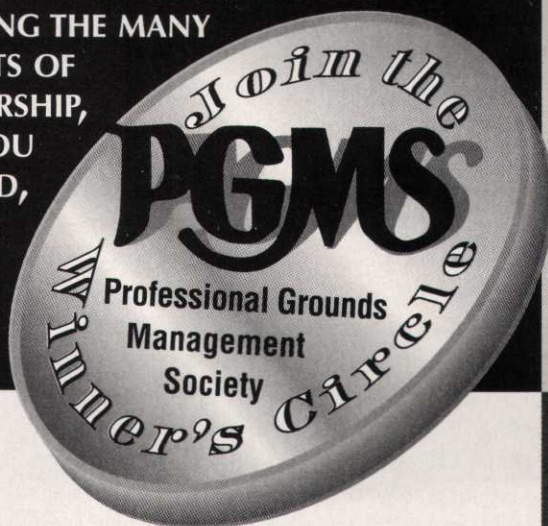
stalled along the hole so golfers could cross it.

"It has added immensely to the hole," Lucovsky says. "It has changed the entire complexion of the hole."

It has made the hole more challenging, Arnold says. The creek is about 20 feet to the right of the green, so there's not much room for a slice on the second shot.

At first, Arnold says he didn't like the creek. It appeared too new and manufactured after it was built. But after a good rainstorm — and a strong flow of water to muddy it up — the creek looked like the real deal, he says. ■

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