

THE FIRST TEE

Progresses in Minnesota

By MARGIE OSTLUND
Hennepin Parks

The First Tee was formed by the World Golf Foundation in the fall of 1997. In its first two years it has made great strides in accomplishing its objectives to support the development of 100 new, affordable and accessible golf facilities with a primary emphasis on serving youth up to age 18. The First Tee is managed by an oversight committee including representatives from the PGA Tour, the LPGA, the PGA, Augusta National and the USGA and has a talented marketing and program staff stationed in Ponte Vedra, Florida. Among the many supporting organizations is the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, which has actively come forward and committed its expertise to The First Tee facilities and programs. The Golf Course Superintendents Association is an important part of The First Tee. Nationally, the GCSAA has committed its membership to the following:

- Donation of quality used golf course equipment
- On-going maintenance and initial grow-in support and counsel
- Creation of environmentally friendly education programs
- Provision of a Best Practices Golf Course Maintenance and Operations Manual to all First Tee Sites

Many other vendors and associations are providing discounted and complimentary services to The First Tee chapters in order to keep the construction and operating costs down so that savings can be passed on to create the affordable golf to encourage youth participation

The Minnesota Amateur Sports Commission has worked to secure some state funding to provide grants for some of the Minnesota projects and is currently seeking additional funding from the legislature to provide grants to other amateur sports projects, including golf facilities not funded in the initial allocation.

A number of communities in Minnesota have been working with The First Tee to set up chapters within their communities. The following is a listing and description of Minnesota projects that are currently in the development or planning stages:

The National Youth Sports Center in Blaine

The National Youth Golf Center (NYGC) will be Minnesota's flagship junior golf facility. The facility will include an 18-hole bent grass green putting course opening in the spring of 2000, an 18-hole events course able to host major junior golf events, a 3-hole learning center with practice range and chip and putt area, and a 9-hole course. All components of the golf facility, with the excep-

tion of the 9-hole course, will open in the year 2002. The Minnesota Amateur Sports Commission has received funding for the project from the State of Minnesota, The First Tee and other contributions. Project contacts are Paul Erickson, Executive Director of the Minnesota Amateur Sports Commission, or Neil Ladd, Golf Programs Administrator at (612) 785-5643.

Hennepin Parks - Eagle Lake Regional Park Golf Center

Hennepin Parks is building a 9-hole executive course, 9-hole lighted pitch and putt course, lighted driving range and practice area. This facility is to be located in Plymouth, Minn., at the intersection of Bass Lake Road (County Rd. 10) and Zachary Lane. The golf course was designed by PGA Tour Design Services. The project will go out to bid in January and commence construction in the spring of 2000. Project contact person is Keith Greeninger, Hennepin Parks Golf Course Superintendent at (612) 473-3369 or Margie Ostlund, Director of Enterprise Operations (612) 559-6746.

City of Hibbing

The City of Hibbing is planning to build a 30-hole golf complex on a 1200-acre site in northern Minnesota. The First Tee component will be a 9-hole short course as well as different practice facilities. The city has selected an architect and hopes to start construction in the spring of 2000. Project contact person is Dale Gaasland, Hibbing Parks and Recreation Department, at (218) 263-8851.

City of Rochester Hawthorne Hills Golf Learning Center

The City of Rochester has built a large-scale driving range, 1,400-sq. ft. practice green, 3-hole learning center and renovated an old schoolhouse that will serve as the clubhouse. The projected opening is in the summer of 2000. Project contact person is Tim Higgins, Rochester Parks and Recreation Department at (507) 281-6160.

Ramsey County Productive Day/First Tee Golf Facility

Ramsey County is looking to build an expanded learning center with pitch and putt areas, driving range, 3-hole learning center and regulation 9-hole course to accommodate youth of all ages. The county will build the facility on 80 acres currently owned by the Ramsey

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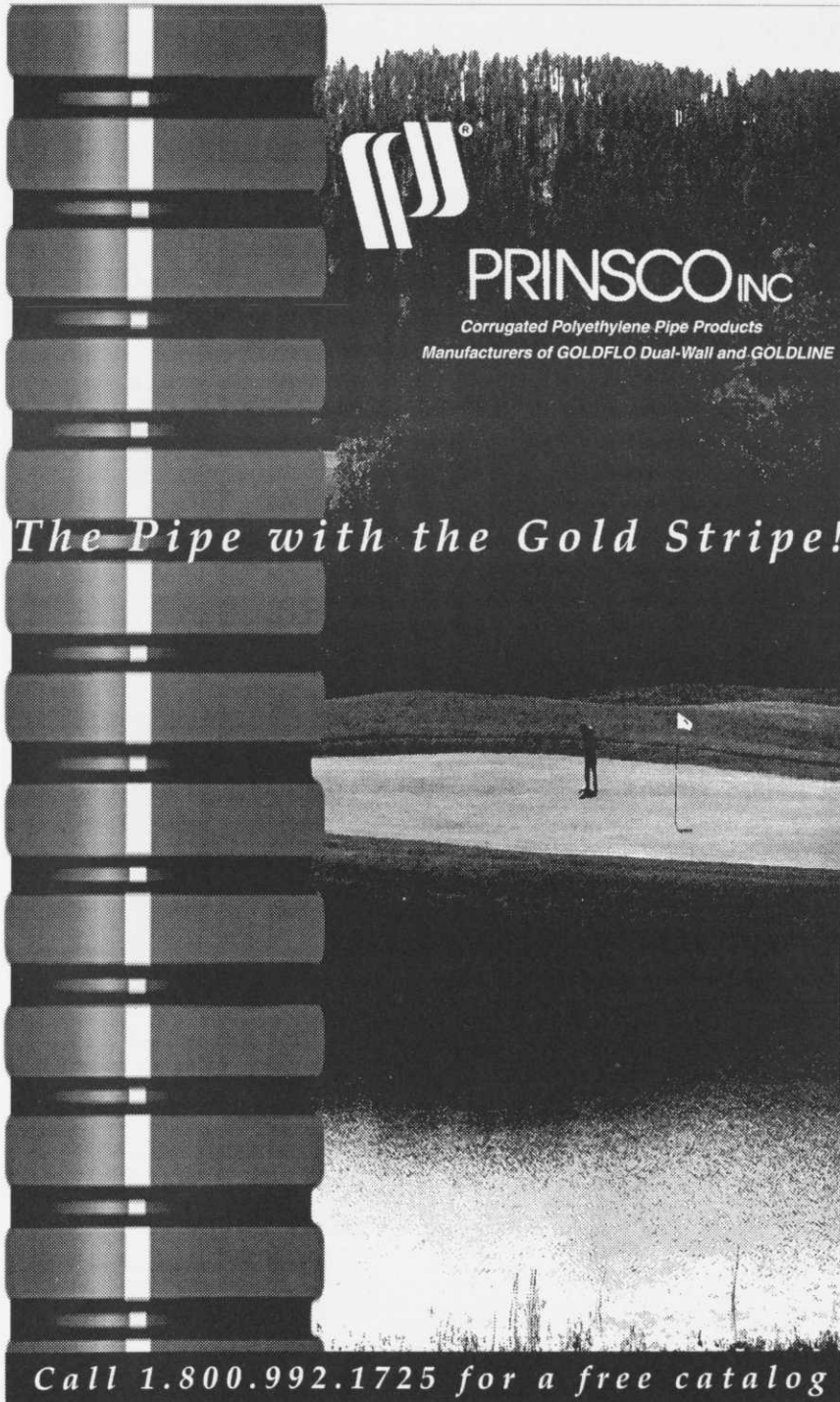
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County Community Corrections Department. the projected opening date of the summer of the summer of 2001. contact person is Harley Nelson, Ramsey County, at (651) 748-2508.

City of Minneapolis

The City of Minneapolis has also been selected for a future First Tee site. the city staff is currently in discussions as to the type of facilities that may be developed within the City of Minneapolis.

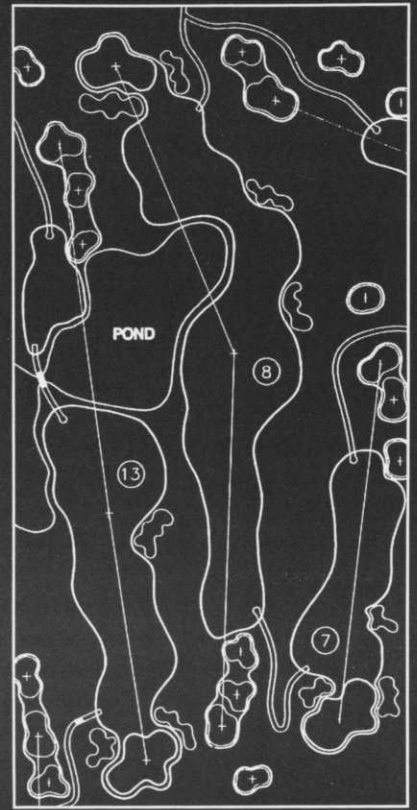


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