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Golf course allied with nature

By FRANCES NIBLOCK
The New Tanner

Mother Nature rules at Blue Springs Golf Course where staff is committed to providing a natural and user-friendly game of golf with minimal pesticide use.

Like all ClubLink courses, Blue Springs' 27 holes on 540 acres of rolling land beside the Niagara Escarpment, must become certified under an Audubon Co-Operative Sanctuary System of Canada program.

Working with nature is second nature to Blue Springs superintendent Ted Ellis, who said they use a "curative" approach to weed control, with spot removal, not indiscriminate spraying.

"We're letting nature be a part of sports like golf," Ellis said on Friday.

"It's just a matter of working with the natural elements and incorporating them into golf. We have a lot of waste areas that we've allowed to naturalize. Five years ago the industry norm was to cut right down," he said, adding the Ontario golf association is

also working with the government on integrated turf management guidelines to reduce pesticide use.

Ellis said golfers like the natural and wild areas and wildlife, including foxes and hawks that swoop down on stocked fish from some of 22 ponds on the property.

A lion's share of the certification work at Blue Springs in the past year has been done by turf employee, Nancy Gilchrist of Acton.

She's compiled detailed workbooks on water, wildlife and habitat management, pesticide use, conservation, pest management, community involvement and publicity (hence this story).

"Part of the certification program is to educate and involve the community, members and guests in the Audubon program to show them that we are doing everything possible to provide challenging and environmentally-friendly golf," Gilchrist said last Thursday.

"Golfers come here knowing that there's a really limited amount of pesticide use, we've virtually eliminated in-



THE NATURAL WAY: Clublink turf employee Nancy Gilchrist and superintendent Ted Ellis are working to reduce pesticide use at the Blue Springs Golf Course.

secticide use, and we're encouraging birds and wildlife."

she said, adding in past years a helicopter sprayed for insects and now, bats and birds do the job.

As part of the certification process, Blue Springs built a Hummingbird/butterfly garden behind the 13th green. Local Girl Guides built 28 bird boxes and some were put in the new garden, fulfilling an Audubon requirement for community involvement and education in the certification process.

Blue Springs, built by members of the Dawkins' olde Hide House family 10 years ago, is home to the Canadian Professional Golfers' Association. ClubLink purchased it three years ago, and turned it into a private club, two years ago.

There are fewer than 10 Audubon Sanctuary certified golf courses in Ontario. Blue Springs hopes to have its certification for next year's season. 0 gorgeous acres, Blue Springs is a picturesque and exciting layout on the edge of the wildly undulating Niagara Escarpment just northwest of

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Acton Indoor Soccer starts on November 3

by Ian Watson

Acton Soccer Club's winter indoor season starts on November 3. The younger age groups (4-13 years) play their games on Saturdays in the McKenzie-Smith Bennett gym, while adults and older children's games take place in the Acton High School gym on Sundays.

Indoor soccer is played with small teams on a relatively small field. All age groups play with five on the field per team (including the goalie), and there are typically two or more substitutes per team to spread the effort. Because of the small field and

the small teams, each player tends to get more play with the ball than in the outdoor game. This makes indoor soccer ideal for keeping soccer skills sharp through the winter, as well as for generally staying in shape. It is particularly recommended for adults as an antidote to Christmas excesses.

The season lasts from November until March. There have been three registration sessions, but there are still some places available in all age groups, as well as some prestigious coaching positions (no experience necessary). Details are available from Ian Watson at 853-3265.

Minor novices struggle

The Carquest Acton Minor Novice Tanners travelled to Carlisle on Sunday the 14th, where they were thoroughly beaten by the Flamborough team, by a score of 10-1.

Leading the way for Carquest Acton was captain Jesse Spurell, who scored the teams only goal on an excellent individual effort. Assists on the goal went to Danielle

Cooper and defenceman Cameron Hryciw. The Spurell line also played well defensively, holding Flamborough to a single goal against during their shifts.

Also playing well for Acton was 7 year-old Mitchell Brake, who is adjusting well to the higher level of play, and to playing defence. Veteran centre Nicholas Eagan had his usual strong game for Carquest Acton, as did winger Jake Lewis, who kept battling the larger Flamborough players for the puck, even after the game was out of reach.

Carquest Acton has now lost three games in a row, after starting the season with a win and a tie. After the game coach Chiasson was philosophical about the loss, suggesting that the Flamborough team could have beaten many major novice teams. The team has two practices scheduled for the weekend to get things back on track. The next game is scheduled for Sunday the 21st, on the road.

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