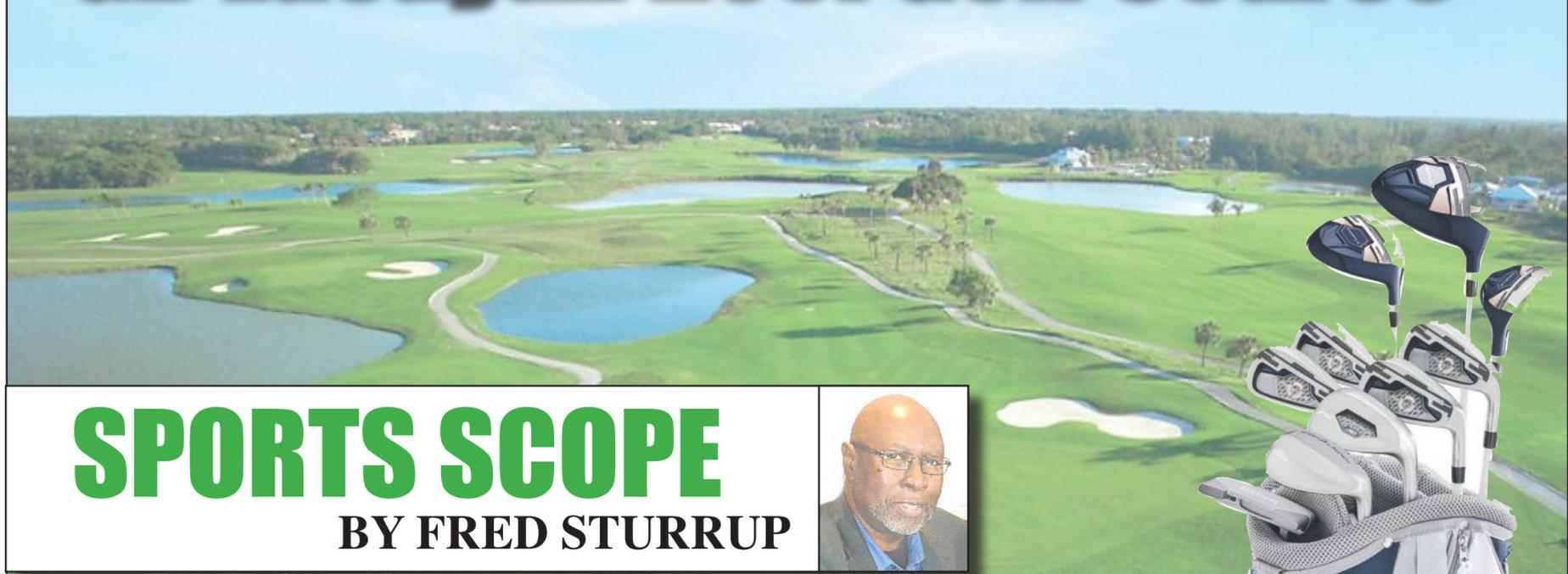


SPORTS

Government plans to renovate GB Lucayan Reef Golf Course



SPORTS SCOPE BY FRED STURRUP



LUCAYAN REEF GOLF COURSE

The Lucayan Reef Golf Course will soon be renovated and upgraded accordingly, to become attractive to the best golfers in the world.

Recently, the notice was sent out by Chairman Michael Scott of Lucayan Renewal Holding Company, the subsidiary entity of the Government of the Bahamas, that \$3.5 million has been allocated for renovations to the roof at the Lighthouse Pointe Hotel, Breakers Cay's roof, the Convention Center and the Lucayan Reef Golf Course.

The full breakdown of the specific works was not released by Scott, but some who observe the course closely are of the view that at least a third of the funds declared for renovations would be necessary to result in a proper upscale Reef Golf Course. Included in the upgrade of the Reef Course will be 12 more golf carts, bringing the total available for players to 60.

So, it seems that organizers of such as the annual Edward St. George Memorial Invitational Golf Tournament will soon be able to go all out in an effort to add a regional flavor,



MICHAEL SCOTT
Lucayan Renewal Holdings Company Chairman

with a much more attractive course to entice players out of the United States and the rest of the Latin American/Caribbean area.

Once Grand Bahama was the prime location in the Caribbean region for golf. Pristine 18-hole courses inundated the island.

Two Professional Golfers Association (PGA) tournaments took place in Grand Bahama some 40 years ago. The great players of the time; the finest entertainers; and noted celebrities played golf at courses that compared favorably with their social status in life.

Then there was a steep decline.

Presently there is just one 18-hole golf course that is ideal for tournament play, the Lucayan Reef. The Ruby Golf Course is in poor shape and golf carts are very limited. Harcourt Development Company, the investment entity responsible for properties in Grand Bahama, such as the old Princess complex, has done very little in recent years to enhance the Ruby Golf Course.

It sits in the once elite South Bahama sector, far too derelict for the likes of the top tournament organizers.

It is good indeed that the decision has been made to upgrade the Lucayan Reef Course. The suggestion to the government, through Lucayan Renewal Holdings, though, is that prior to spending a dime towards the renovations of the sports facility, a quality golf course designer should

be brought in, if only as a consultant, to ensure that the money is spent sensibly.

A golf course is to be treated far differently than a home garden, of course, because of unique playing dimensions, designed accordingly. Also, once this is done, a maintenance schedule should be crafted in order to ensure the healthiness of the grass and appropriate upkeep through all seasons, rainy and dry etc.

By normal standards of successive recent governments, the taxpayers' money would be spent on the course, and in a short space of time, it would be in need of renovations once again, just as with the schools.

Quite frankly, Lucayan Holdings Renewal should seek to meet with the prime stakeholders of golf in Grand Bahama; a few top players and noted organizers of tournaments, before detailing the renovations at the Reef Course.

Good advice, Chairman Michael Scott, is helpful.

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Hield's Kings best Ayton's Suns in 1st season clash

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The game Bahamian basketball enthusiasts had circled on their calendars, was no nail-biter but still possessed a historic aspect.

For the first time in Bahamian history two of the country's prominent basketball players and NBA Draft lottery picks -- 'Buddy' Hield (No. 6 - 2016) and DeAndre Ayton (No. 1 - 2018)-- went head-to-head as the Sacramento Kings took on the Phoenix Suns at Talking Stick Arena in Phoenix Arizona this past Tuesday night (December 4).

A white-hot start for the now 12-11 Kings helped them roll to a 122-105 victory over the 4-20 Suns.

Hield led all Kings' scorers with 20 points (Seven-for-13 from the field) while he shot three-for-five from three-point range. The Eight Mile Rock native also corralled five rebounds and finished with one steal on the defensive end. His backcourt running mate, point guard De'Arron Fox added 16 points on Five-for-11 shooting, all while dishing out seven assists.

The Kings had five other scorers finish with double-digit scoring efforts. Forward Bogdan Bogdanovic poured in 14 points off the bench, and forward Harry Giles III added 13 points. Kosta Koufos and Troy Williams each amassed 11 points, while Justin Jackson contributed 10 points.

Ayton, who averages a double-double for the season, nearly added another double-double to his rookie resumé. The number one draft pick mustered 10



HIELD AND KINGS ROLL - Sacramento Kings' guard 'Buddy' Hield rises over Phoenix Suns' center DeAndre Ayton as both Bahamians faced each other for the first time in the regular season. Hield finished with 20 points on the night as the Kings rolled to victory, 122-105.

points (Five-for-Eight shooting) and pulled down nine boards in the blow-out loss. De'Anthony Melton led all scorers with a game-high 21 points off the bench and dished out five assists.

Forwards Josh Jackson and Trevor Ariza added 14 points each, while guard Troy Daniels

supplied 13 points. The Suns were without their lead shooting guard Devin Booker.

The Kings hung 68 points on the struggling Suns to lead 68-40 at halftime. The hot shooting for the Kings continued as they put the game out of reach by the end of third period, when they led 99-67.

As Hield spoke briefly with the media after the game, the 6'4" shooting guard emphasized that the plan was to be aggressive on both ends of the court, which proved evident from the team's outburst in the first quarter.

As it pertains to the historic spectrum of the contest, Hield said that regardless of the out-

come it was great for the country to witness both sons of the soil go head-to-head. It's the first, very likely, of many matchups for the pair as they both play in the same conference and division (Pacific).

More importantly, Hield said a game of this magnitude for the country should serve as motiva-

tion for young persons with the same aspirations.

"I think it was good especially for where Bahamas basketball is going. I think it's just a blessing to just encourage the youth back home to keep working and put God first.

"It's not easy. You've got to go out there and put in the work and put a lot of time and energy in the classroom to get here. Being on an island is tough but if you really want it bad you have to sacrifice - whether it be in basketball or not."

Hield was efficient in the minutes he stepped onto the floor in this one. With a season average of 29.40 minutes played thus far the former Oklahoma Sooner needed just 18 minutes in this contest, to compile the most points for his team.

"We just wanted to come out and be aggressive, get stops and get openings to make the right plays and score the basketball the way we do best," he shared.

In reference to his individual performance, Hield attributed it to just being in the flow of the game.

"It was the game-flow - just being in the right spots at the right time. My teammates were able to find me and we were able to capitalize off that. Everyone did a good job moving the ball around and finding the right spots to pick the defense apart."

The win pushes the Kings back over the .500 mark. As of this writing, the team sits in ninth place in a stacked Western Conference. Every game becomes crucial as teams jockey for a play-off spot as the season goes on and this win was a confidence boost for the young

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