How to be blessed by your grandchildren
by David White

Back in 1981 I fell in love with a book. Honestly, I'd never before been smitten so by a single, individual tome, though I'm blessed with over three thousand highly individual little beauties in my golf library. I loved the book and its subject so much that I persuaded its authors, golf course architect Geoffrey Cornish, and architectural editor Ronald Whitten, that a niche existed for a leather-bound, limited edition, and that I should produce it. That special book, 'The Golf Course', came into being and expanded edition, a survey of golf course design from its beginnings to the present, with copies now changing hands at two or three times the original price. If I'd only known, I'd have done a touch of 'laying down'...

So, what was so special about it? It covered a subject that had not to any great degree been examined before: a history of the men who practiced the art of golf course architecture and the way their art evolved. More than that, it profiled several hundred men who made important contributions to the history of course design. Not content, it also contained the most comprehensive listings of architects' works ever compiled, plus, to cap it all, another section containing a master list of golf courses, cross-referenced to their designers. In short it was, or soon became, the 'Bible' for all journalists working within the golf industry; dog-eared, coffee-stained, a copy was found on every desk.

That first edition representing some 40 years of research for Cornish, and it has been indispensable these past twelve years, the new edition will most certainly replace it as the 'darling' for all golf writers, by making us appear more knowledgeable than we really are, though we'll hardly discard the original, old friend that it is.

Make no mistake, this is no 're-hashing' exercise, for the new book, apart from quite properly gaining a new title, 'The Architects of Golf', is a completely revised and expanded edition, a survey of golf course design from its beginnings to the present, with an encyclopedic listing of golf architects and their courses (so bang up-to-date some of the courses listed are still at the grow-in stage). Described by its publishers, Harper Collins, as the ultimate reference source for anyone interested in golf, it contains a ton of new material. With unseeable million golfers world-wide, the market potential is enormous, but more than that, it's a hell of a good book. I urge you to buy a copy, your grandchildren will bless you for your foresight.

The Architects of Golf, by Geoffrey Cornish and Ron Whitten, (648 pp hardback) is available from Grant Books, Victoria Sq. Droitwich, WR9 8DE, price £42.75 including postage.

Costly British courses

It used to be that British courses were considered something of a bargain when it came to green fees. No more. For in a recent survey, Britain featured (ashamedly) in the six most costly, world-wide, edging out Canada, Ireland, USA, Mexico, Jamaica and Australia. It will come as no surprise that Japan topped the league, with $125 (US) as the average for a single (weekend) round, Spain at around $90, Taiwan at $82, France and Germany neck and neck at $65, whilst Britain averaged $45. The USA was at low as $30. (£1 = $1.46)

I suppose this explains why more and more Brits are making for Myrtle Beach, South Carolina; for with over 80 courses on a 30 mile stretch of coastline, all in spanking condition, and all welcoming the British invasion, the tourist/golfer there is seen as something of a 'treasure', rather than an infidel out to be fleeced.

Toro sales top £450m

Toro's worldwide sales for the fiscal year ended July 1993 were an impressive £456m.

"We are extremely proud of the tremendous strides by all within the company in helping achieve this solid platform," said chairman and chief executive Kenrick B Melrose. "We will aggressively pursue our strategies to maintain worldwide leadership in the turf machinery world."

Lely (UK) Ltd, distributors of Toro commercial products in the UK are naturally delighted with the news from the Toro company - particularly when considering the economic and competitive element in the industry. The release of new products to both golf and other commercial outlets has reflected in a healthy increase in sales for Toro products throughout the UK and it is anticipated that demand for the Toro range will continue in 1994.

Poking fun at pretension

Remember 'Caddyshack', one of the ten most rented movies of all time and regarded as one of the great storehouses of one-liners? In it, actors such as Rodney Dangerfield, Chevy Chase poke fun at country club pretention, adolescence and golf course bravado. Now, some 13 years after its release, Atlanta based Ford Trading Co. are to market merchandise including tee-shirts, hats, bag tags and so on, with Bushwood Country Club and 'Be the Ball' logo - a small brown gopher who digs tunnels and generally wreaks havoc throughout the course. Purchase of any Bushwood item carries lifetime membership of Bushwood, the motto of which is, "If you don't cheat, you're only cheating yourself." Testament to that fact came at their annual tournament played this spring, when one member turned in a scorecard posting an 18 hole total of 18!