Wadsworth Construction voted #1

'Nobody does it better,' say golf course architects in national survey

By Peter Blais

There's a saying that goes something like an army is only as good as its sergeants. That could also be true of Wadsworth Golf Construction Co., runaway winner of Builder Briefs' annual survey of golf course architects and builders.

Cypress Point, Alister Mackenzie's masterpiece along the rugged shore of Northern California's Monterey Peninsula, was listed among the top five courses in the country by 60 percent (27 of 45) of those responding.

Pine Valley, through the sand dunes in the Philadelphia suburb of Cleves Point, California (45 percent), was among the top five courses in the country by 60 percent (27 of 45) of those responding.

While many mentioned Cypress Point and Pine Valley among their top five, others were avid fans of one or the other. Their choices seem to reflect the current 'playability' versus 'challenging design' debate.

"Cypress Point is pleasurably excitement," said Kansas City, Mo., architect Craig Schriner. "Pine Valley is treacherous at every turn. Pleasure is what golf is all about, more than challenge." "Cypress breaks all the rules — back-to-front," Wadsworth said. "They get along well with their employees. They build loyalty and trust in their work force. We're fortunate to have four such talented people running the various divisions of our company." Wadsworth's NCOs are:

- Paul Eldredge, Midwest. A Pekin, Ill., native. Eldredge, 49, first joined Wadsworth when the company built the Country Club of Pekin in 1982. Eldredge worked summers before graduating from Southern Illinois University with an engineering degree. He worked full-time as an irrigation specialist until 1983 when he was promoted to president of the Midwest office. He still consults on irrigation matters nationally.
- Jon Shapland, Southeast. The son of a champagne, III, course owner, Shapland, 43, worked part-time summers before graduating from the University of Illinois and joining the firm full-time in 1970. He organized and became president of the Oldsmar, Fla., office near St. Petersburg that same year. "He re-

Architects: Cypress Point best in U.S.

Continued from page 1
we're doing, 36 holes (Newport Coast) at Newport Beach, then Two Rivers Club at Governor's Landing in Williamsburg (Va.), one east of Charlotte on 17 miles of lakefront property (Unharrie Point on Lake Badin), 36 holes in Wrightsville Beach, N.C., (Porter's Neck Golf Course), and the Disney course next door to Pete Dye's (in Orlando, Fla.)," he said.

"All are going to be as good as those we've just done," Wadsworth said. "It used to be a Golf Club in Tennessee (which will open this spring in Nashville), or a Caves Valley (under construction in Baltimore), came along once every five years. That the one east of Charlotte was bad but they were either just real estate development or there wasn't as much total priority given to golf itself... Now there's such a keen golf interest that it's just tremendous.

Fazio rated 1990 a '10' on a scale of 1 to 10. "And I can say it's a 10 because the courses are done. The courses for 1991 should be a 10, but we're still working on those. We've got to work just as hard. A 10 doesn't automatically happen.

"It's like with Shadow Creek (which opened last year in Las Vegas). When I was there one that I wouldn't have said it was a 10. The concept is for a 10, the program, the commitment, but I can't tell you how good it's going to be until it's done... In 1991 these are all 10s in terms of planning.

The ones that are farther along, like Treetops... I can almost guarantee that people will put it as one of the best I've ever done. That one at Williamsburg is in the clearing and development stages; and though it's the desire of everyone to build a 10, you have to keep building and building. But it's fun. It's really hard.

"And, of course, the golfers go out there and their expectations are so high... If you've gone to Shadow Creek or the Vintage or one of the others and then you came to one of our new courses and it didn't measure up, you'd say, 'What happened here, guys? Did you have to cut back? Didn't you work as hard?'" Fazio said the pressure never eased.

"After 28 years of doing it, the pressure just builds and builds. But it's fun. It's not difficult. We've got such tremendous clients with such tremendous interest in golf that it's great for the game," he said.

Fazio said he can't help criticism that he only does expensive or high-end courses.

Continued on page 20
Continued from page 19

One that's dependable, yet economical. One that won't color your bahiagrass, though it's brutal and downright offensive. Apply Pennant non-selective, on stubborn weeds, beautiful, your central fairways as well as on fertilizer or simply spraying. Since weed protection lasts up to 4 months, all you'll have to worry about in the meantime is too much rain, too little rain, too many pests, and divot-digging golfers.

Golf Course News