

## The book no industry member can do without

Every occupation or profession has one. A favorite reference book. Each dog-eared page, smudged fingerprint, coffee stain, rip in the book cover (if the cover still exists) testifies to its usefulness.

The manager of the real estate office next door tells me the *Maine Multiple Listing Service Directory* is her favorite. My wife, the hospital social worker, constantly flips through the pages of *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual — Revision III*. And doctors, I'm told, keep the *Physicians Desk Reference* within easy reach.

At least once a day here in the editorial office of *Golf Course News* — where Mark Leslie, Hal Phillips and I sit within easy rubber band-flinging distance of one another — you're guaranteed to hear the words "Hey, who's got *Cornish's Book*."

If you've never heard of *Cornish's Book*, it's probably because there's no such thing. The actual title is *The Architects of Golf*. Being former newspapermen, a brevity-loving and basically simple lot, we've shortened it to *Cornish's Book*.

Once a week we pay homage to architect Geoffrey Cornish and *Golf Digest/Golf World* architecture editor Ron Whitten for assembling and occasionally updating this invaluable 648-page tome.

[Ron, hope you're not insulted we refer to this as *Cornish's Book*. But he is the architect after all. And besides, Geoff is a fellow New Englander.]

The first edition, which appeared about 10 years ago, represented 40 years of research for Cornish.

"Much of the history of architecture was in danger of being lost if someone didn't do this," said the Amherst, Mass. resident, who had tons of paper and photographs stashed in the boxes and closets of his home and office.

"Fortunately, there was a young writer from Kansas [Whitten] who was interested in doing something similar and had assembled much of the same type of information on a computer. We got together and this was the result."

Publisher HarperCollins refers to *The Architects of Golf* as "A unique and indispensable book for golfers." That's certainly a good pitch to the 25 million U.S. club swingers out there. But if it's indispensable to them, then it should be mandatory reading for the 22,000 subscribers to *Golf Course News*.

The book is divided into three sections — one nice and two vital.

The first describes the history of golf courses, how their design evolved and the influence some of the more innova-

tive individuals had on the playing fields. Chapters have been added and a few dropped in the latest redesigned and updated version. It is well-written, thoroughly researched and certainly interesting.

But the Mother Lode of necessary information, at least for people in the golf course industry, is mined from sections



Peter Blais,  
associate editor

two and three.

The second section is 252 pages of bibliographies. Every architect from Englishman John Frederick Abercromby to German Herwig Zisser can be found here. Included are comments on their designs and how they influenced course architecture. More important is a listing of every course they

have originated or designed.

Being able to authoritatively write that in 1906 Abercromby designed the Golf de Chantilly's Old Course, one of France's finest layouts, makes the golf writer appear more knowledgeable than he probably is.

The latest version includes photos of some architects. If you want to see what Jeff Brauer looks like before you make that sales call or he comes to your course to pitch his firm as the one to do that long-planned

redesign, then check page 213.

Section three is equally essential, listing almost 14,000 courses throughout the world and the architects who designed them.

Again, having someplace to go for such information makes our jobs much easier. And I can easily imagine that knowledge, properly exhibited, making the golf equipment salesman appear he's done his homework when calling on a superintendent or club president.

The first edition ruffled a few feathers 10 years ago.

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## Tipping our caps to Messrs. Cornish and Whitten

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"A lot of courses claimed to be Donald Ross designs that weren't. When that first edition came out, I got many calls from club presidents and members upset that we'd dare publish something saying Ross hadn't done their courses," Cornish said.

But it's hard to imagine anyone staying angry with the affable Cornish. And it's even harder to imagine anyone coming away a winner in an argument regarding architectural history once confronted

with the knowledge he's gained in his 79 years.

We're all extremely grateful to those who assemble such valuable publications as the National Golf Foundation's *Directory of Golf*, the *Farm Chemicals Handbook* and GCSAA's *Who's Who in Golf Course Management*.

Here's just an extra tip of the hat to Messrs. Cornish and Whitten.

•••

*The Architects of Golf* costs \$50. It is available in bookstores or by calling 800-331-3761.

## Golf an unfair target of water pricing

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Which earns money for hotels, restaurants, gas stations, what-have-you... Which generates taxes for, guess who? — all levels of government.

Since farmers haven't been using CAP water, repaying the billions of dollars for the canal system is extraordinarily difficult.

The search for other people to foot the bill seems to have ended at the front door of golf courses. (See story, page 1)

You can almost hear the bureaucrats saying, "Golf courses can still afford the water. How much can they afford? How

much can we get away with bleeding them? Ah-hah! Let's find out!"

It's time some definitive studies were made public showing the economic impact of golf courses on local economies. Then those studies should be publicized, plastered on bulletin boards and television screens, hammered home in golf publications and your hometown newspaper — whatever-and-wherever.

Then, it will be time to apply those figures to government decisions and create a level playing field — or should I say a level cornfield?

There will be no excuses for unrighteous judgments and one-sided decisions that dog golf courses across the nation. There will be no more whipping-boy status for golf. There may even be a "thank you" from an official or two for the money pumped into local economies.

Then, perhaps, "No Hunting" signs can go up at the doorposts of those golf courses.



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## Phillips comment

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first — i.e., before the hiring decisions have been made. Kudos for Peter, who also makes his debut on the editorial page this month. (Questions about the *Letter* can be directed to Peter at 1-207-846-0600.)

- Recently played a true hidden gem in the Portland, Ore. area — Oswego Lake Country Club, an old H. Chandler Egan design. The layout was the hilliest I've seen on the West Coast, and the greens — thanks to superintendent Richard Fluter — were quick and true. Each hole was a treat, but the majestic views of nearby Mt. Hood sealed the deal.

- Still nothing doing on the military course bill.

- During June, I was out in Oregon for the many seed company field days. Some colleagues and I learned a valuable lesson in Canby, Ore., where I stayed in the Willamette Valley. If you want to bowl a few strings on a weeknight, get there early. We showed up at Canby Bowl at 7:30 p.m. on a Thursday, only to find a two-hour wait! The place was absolutely packed and, no, it wasn't league night...

## Quote of the Month

"Frankly, golfers care more about maintenance than they do about design. You give a guy a choice between playing a well-maintained but poorly designed golf course or a well-designed, poorly maintained one, and he's always going to take the good maintenance. So maintenance is more important than design. It's a fact of life.

"So when you construct a golf course, you construct it for good maintenance. And zoysia is a constructive tool. You know the old saying: *As ye sow, so shall ye mow.*"

— DR. MICHAEL HURDZAN