POELLOT NAMES VICE PRESIDENTS
SARATOGA, Calif. — J. Michael Poelott, principal of JMF Golf Design Group, Inc. based here, has announced the promotion of three employees. Senior designers Brian E. Costello, Mark E. Hollinger, and Robert W. Moore Jr. have all been named vice presidents at JMF.

FORSE MODIFYING LEHIGH CC
ALLENTOWN, Pa. — The William Forse-designed Lehigh Country Club is undergoing a facelift. Ron Forse of Forse Design in Uniontown is handling the modifications, while MacCarruch Golf Inc. of Jacksonville, Fla., is the contractor. Forse said he is re-storing the edges of the existing bunkers and “re-establishing” many fairway bunkers which had been covered over and lost since the course was built in 1928. The greens, which are about 90 percent poa annua, will be gassed and reseded to bentgrass, in a program overseen by superintendent John Chassard.

FOSTER OPENS OFFICE
Keith Foster & Associates has moved to a new address. It is 3110 N. 16th St., Phoenix, AZ 85016; telephone 602-279-4232; fax 602-279-6115. Foster reported his has signed six contracts — two in Phoenix, two in Denver, and others in Las Vegas and Lexington, Ky. Meanwhile, he is working on projects in Columbia, Mo., and Seattle, Wash., and construction was ready to begin this fall at courses in Tucson, Ariz., and Laughlin, Nev. The Laughlin facility is being developed by Don Laughlin at a casino town on the Colorado River.

DAVE FLATT JOINS DAD LARRY
OVERLAND PARK, Kan. — Flatt Golf Services, Inc. announces that Dave W. Flatt has joined the firm as golf course architect. He is responsible for golf course design, drafting support and construction inspection. Flatt has been working in the golf industry since he was 14. Before joining FGS, Inc., he was employed by the Wadsworth Construction Co. in Plainfield, Ill., a leading golf course construction company, from 1989 to 1993. While with Wadsworth, he prepared and placed bids on irrigation systems, supervised and coordinated installation of irrigation systems and coordinated irrigation inventories with irrigation suppliers.

Novice designers aim for lasting impressions

Course design a thing of dreams for many, but few get to try their hand at it

By Mark Leslie

Whether a youthful dream or a mid-life business decision, golf course design is the child of many mothers. Among novice course architects, this is also true.

For William Bradley Booth, designing a golf course began as a dream when he would draw golf holes during 8th-grade study hall.

For Randy Russell, a course manager with course construction background and a degree in turfgrass management, the design of his community’s municipal track just fell into his lap.

For Tomlinson, completing Tidewater in North Myrtle Beach, S.C., in 1990, his design won instant acclaim, becoming the first track ever to be named Best New Public Course by both Golf Digest and Golf Magazine.

The three novice designers agree:

• Golf course architects are generally underpaid, not overpaid.
• Courses should “naturally” fit into the land.
• Help from experts is critical to success.
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They join a small but famous band of amateur designers whose names live on in the courses they designed.

George Crump stands as an equal next to the great names in golf design despite his creating only one course in his life. But that was Pine Valley in Cllemonent, N.J., considered by many the best course in the globe.

Jack Neville had a decade in the sun, designing Pebble Beach in 1918, but he never was truly a “professional” architect.

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• Design is a science as well as an art form. Science plays a crucial role in design, adding a difficult major chore to design in the fields of agronomy, irrigation and engineering.
• Help from experts is critical to success.
• Courses should “naturally” fit into the land.
• They would “do it again” in a second.

Tomlinson credits Tomlinson has gained the most notoriety among first-time designers in recent years. He credits his success to an incredible seaside property, a bevy of helpful experts, and “the good Lord blessing me with an eye for balance.”

“They talk about the beauty of the course,” Tomlinson said. “I just didn’t screw it up.”

A fine golfer who has long been involved in golf projects from the financial side, Tomlinson nevertheless said designing Tidewater was not a dream come true. “That would make a great story line,” he said. “But I bought that land because a golf course and residential development made sense there. And I designed and built my own course because I felt it made good business sense.

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Tom Weiskopf: As serious about design as play

Considered a serious threat to win every time he stepped onto the golf course during his PGA Tour prime, Tom Weiskopf, 51, has been winning accolades with partner Jay Morrish since they first teamed in 1984 to design golf courses. As a player, Weiskopf has shined in the "laboratory of golf," winning 15 PGA Tour victories, the 1973 British Open and many other championships. As a co-designer, he has won marquee billing with Morrish on such tracks as Tour of Golf & Country Club in Arizona and Shadow Glen outside Kansas City, Kan. They became the first Americans to design a course in Scotland — the just-opened High Road Course at Loch Lomond, which Weiskopf said is "absolutely the best course we've done or ever will do." Managing Editor Mark Leslie caught Weiskopf at home in Paradise Valley, Ariz., busy at work on a design project but looking ahead to his annual time of upland bird hunting with his hunting dog, Hauk.

Golf Course News: You have a reputation as being dedicated to learning the agronomics and technology of the course design profession.

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Mizuno trouble continues in U.S. and Japan

LAS VEGAS, Nevada, U.S.A. — Ken International Co., formerly owned by embattled Japanese golf tycoon Ken Mizuno, agreed in mid-October to forfeit about $85 million in assets as part of a plea bargain on criminal charges, reports United Press International.

The firm pleaded guilty to laundering millions through expensive pieces of U.S. real estate that were fraudulently obtained by over-selling memberships at Ibaragi Country Club in Japan. Ken International also agreed in its plea in federal court in September to forfeiture of $260 million of assets, although the government can currently account for just $65 million.

According to the U.S. Attorney’s office, Ken International admitted it would sell only 1,830 full memberships in the Ibaragi club, but instead sold about 52,000 memberships for the equivalent of $600 million, U.S. federal prosecutors indicated.

Mizuno, now on trial in Tokyo on separate fraud and tax-evasion charges, used Ken

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November 1993 23
Novice course architects have firm beliefs on design

BY MARK LESLIE


"I want to make sure I've used as many of the natural features as I can," said William Bradley Booth. "I want to enhance those features, as opposed to being contrary to them... I want the shot values to feel natural, too."

At the new municipal course, designer Randy Russell will use 57 acres of manmade lakes as "wet ponds to filter out nutrients and pesticides if we make any mistakes." The course will be irrigated with reclaimed water. Prairie buffalograss, which requires little maintenance, will be planted in the roughs.

Environmental and natural sensitivity was tantamount to Tee

days at the Bank of America Plantation in North Myrtle Beach, S.C., which has five holes on the Intracoastal Waterway and four on the ocean inlet at Cherry Beach.

"Golfers [at Tidewater] are going to feel at peace, at harmony with nature, not like they're out in a violent ocean," said designer Ken Tomlinson.

Booth described his design philosophy as "naturalized." "I like to see things blend. I think some of the greatest architects were able to make their courses look natural, but was very subtle," said the Maine man, who described himself as a "foot-to

designer." A lot of people can do a routing just looking at a contour map. But I find those to be very contrived golf courses. This particular site is extremely hard. It's a woodland course with a lot of elevation change of almost 200 feet. When you have that kind of elevation movement, it's very difficult to find golf holes. And unless you're a master your courses really can't know what it's going to feel like once you get a golf hole out there.

Tomlinson said: "My philosophy is, if it doesn't make sense don't do it. Tidewater has no buried elephants or chocolate drops. I tried to make it look like I didn't do anything — like it naturally flowed. In some places it didn't. I'm proud of the 3rd and 4th holes along the marsh. They were as flat as a pancake, so we had to work in some areas to make it look natural.

Tomlinson sees balance as crucial to his design. "I want to see if a hole is asymmetrical — in balance, but done so because of a mixture of shapes and forms," he said. "I think you're born with that ability. I can look at a fairway or green and tell if it's in balance. You can't take credit for that."

Good golfers, all these designers know another important factor to architecture: how to execute great golf shots.

"You have to know how to hit great golf shots in order to design great greens to reward the very best golf shot. That's the scientific part of the playing strategy," Tomlinson said.

"Every single shot at Tidewater is there for a purpose. You can elect to hit it to a place you get rewarded on the next shot, or you can bail out. But I'm going to force you to have a good time. What appears off the tee to be an easier, safer place, could get your blood pumping on your next shot.

"I think I'm in a vast minority in that regard. Architects have talked to say people don't want a hard golf course. If they shot 80 at home they want to be able to shoot 80 elsewhere. I don't believe that. I think it's a game, it's for fun and I want to get their blood pumping."

Russell said his maintenance background is very important. "A well-maintained course will hide a lot of design flaws," he said. "If an architect gives a superintendent a lot of problems in order to make a course dramatic, the superintendent is left trying to make it look nice.

"On the other hand, it's going to be a dull world if you strive strictly for maintenance. You have to strike a balance and that's determined by the use.

For some course design is a dream come true, for some it 'just happens'

Continued from page 23

would love that look and feel. I would have networked well businesswise." Tomlinson does admit to other mistakes that "let's see what this crazy lawyer says," Tomlinson said that "If a course architect is well manged and its books for help. Now I'm on my first job."

Russell put his turf management degree to work with O.M. Scott and for five years with [Ron] Kirby [Gary] Player and Associates. He then joined Austin's payroll 15 years ago. He said he had input into design decisions with Kirby-Player, but mostly field work.

When Austin decided to reclaim a 394-acre sewage treatment plant property, the chairman of his advisory board decided to keep project costs down and name someone inhouse to design the course.

"It sounded like the most fun," Russell said. "I have done a couple of small remodeling jobs on my own out here — one to correct drainage problems, and a full-scale remodel of Swaps Park in Kansas City.

Russell said the board also believed he "understood golf in Austin and we'd get the right kind of course... Having operated golf courses, I have an added perspective: making the course maintainable and fitting it to your clientele and purpose. Golf course architects know that and understand that. But it's harder to relate to unless you've worked on the other side. You've got to be an architect and an operator."

Does Russell envision Austin's new course, on which construction began in mid-October, as a springboard to a new career?

"It depends on how this one comes out. It's successful, like I hope and think it will be, I wouldn't rule that out," he said. "Getting the first one in the ground is crucial, and remolds don't do that. As for a career change? I'd think about it seriously. There's no question I'd enjoy doing it. The other question is, could I make a career doing it?"

A career is exactly what Booth intends to make out of designing — and earth hasn't even been turned on his first job.

Russell is the owner of the turf maintenance company, Lawn Technologies, in York, Maine. And its books for help. Now I'm on

Tomlinson said: "I may have learned more in the last eight years about golf courses than others do in a lifetime because I worked so hard. And I had a lot of help. I talked to everybody. I constantly relied on the USGA [United States Golf Association] and its books for help. Now I'm on

the USGA Green Section Committee."

Golf course architects are not overpaid. Tomlinson said that they were trying to build $1 million homes, a Nicklaus or Palmer name, for instance, would sell them. If they were trying to appeal to a more affluent market, I can't imagine going any other way.

"I think you just have to evaluate each instance. You can't generalize. There were times when I would have loved to have Rees or Bobby [Robert Trent Jr.] Jones, or [Jack] Nicklaus there to help me."

DEVELOPMENT

I want to enhance [natural] features, as opposed to being contrary to them... I want the shot values to feel natural, too.'

— W. Bradley Booth

Booth said course design "has been turned on its first job."

"I'm not one of those types who can design another course, the practical Tomlinson said: 'It's a mistake that I haven't designed another hole at Myrtle Beach. I would have networked well businesswise.'

Although he likes the idea of working for himself ('I got paid very well'), Tomlinson said that "without question" he would design another course — in an area that does not compete with his. "I've enjoyed doing very much," he said. "Now that I've done it and sacrificed as much as I have to learn the technical aspects, it makes sense from a business standpoint to do it, especially here. People would say, 'Let's see what this crazy lawyer has done it.'"

What about elsewhere? 'That, I would love to do. For someone who would appreciate the natural look of Tidewater,' he said.

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For some course design is a dream come true, for some it 'just happens'

DEMANDING JOB

Golf course design is taxing physically as well as mentally, and that's exacerbated when you don't have scientific background, these three found.

"I studied night and day," Tomlinson said. "I may have learned more in the last eight years about golf courses than others do in a lifetime because I worked so hard. And I had a lot of help. I talked to everybody. I constantly relied on the USGA [United States Golf Association] and its books for help. Now I'm on

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