POELOTT NAMES VICE PRESIDENTS

SARATOGA, Calif. — J. Michael Poeoett, 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 Bentgrass, in a program overseen by Flynn-designed Lehigh Country Club is modifying, while MacCurrach Golf Inc. of Jacksonville, Fla., is the superintendent John Chassard.

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

TOMLINSON CREDOS

• Courses should “naturally” fit into the land.
• They would “do it again” in a second.

New Public Course by both Golf Digest and Golf Magazine.

The three novice designers agree:

• Golf course architects are generally underpaid, not overpaid.
• Design is a science as well as an art form. Science plays a crucial role in design, adding a difficult major course education in the fields of agronomics, irrigation and engineering.
• Help from experts is critical to success.
• Courses should “naturally” fit into the land.

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 up in 1984 to design golf courses. As a player, Weiskopf has shined in the “スポーツライダー”(golf world)’s winning PGA Tour victories, the 1973 British Open and many other championships. As a co-designer, he has won marquee billing with Morrish for such tracks as Tpoon 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 will ever 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, Hank.

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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 U.S. and Japan court to forfeit $300 million. U.S. federal prosecutors indicated Mizuno trouble continues in U.S. and Japan.

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Q&A: Weiskopf

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Tom Weiskopf: I think it's very important. If you're going to put your name on something that represents your feelings and personality, you don't want it to change. Money should not be your primary motivation. Your name is on it forever. It's not like putting your name on a golf club.

GCN: It might be said that with the Troon courses, Double Eagle, Shadow Glen and other courses you've designed, that as a great player as you are, your design career may eclipse your Tour career.

TW: I hope it does.

GCN: Which do you enjoy most: playing or designing?

TW: I don't think you can separate the two. They are similar. They are both competitive, challenging, and demand a lot of hard work. Execution is involved in both. Unless you could win a major (tournament) or make majors play better, you won't stay in history. With golf course design, if you can create an acceptance and reputation, it will outlast you far beyond what your golf could ever do. That's because the personality, the part of you that still remains.

GCN: How has being a great golfer affected your design? Some pros have been changed and others have remained the same.

TW: I take a 180-degree stand on that. My input into the strategic aspect of what goes into our golf courses is nothing more than experience of playing the greatest courses and, probably more importantly, remembering and watching other players and the types of shots they hit on the greens and under very demanding conditions; watching the ball roll, either in its entry into the fairway corridor or its movement along the green while either being putted, chipped or pitched; or watching the ball trying to stay in a certain area where the pin was, regardless of the contour of the green and the area they were playing to with that specific club. A great golfer is a fair challenge that demands proper execution but is not overly demanding. The average player can play it.

GCN: What effect have your playing and design careers had on one another?

TW: My playing career will never be substantial as long as I remain as involved as I am in design. By substantial I'm talking about a full schedule of 20 to 25 events. I played only 12 this year.

GCN: Do you have a Tom Weiskopf fingerprint?

TW: No. Nobody has a fingerprint, like that. "I think it is only fair to question something if you think it is too penal or too fair in regard to strategic value. For instance, if you're asking a guy to hit a 2-iron to the 7th hole at Pebble Beach, then you've got a right to say something.

GCN: You've seen penal holes that should have never been built?

TW: I've seen a lot that are much too demanding even for the best to ever play the game. Still, you should never sacrifice the potential for a potential hole just because the average guy can't play it. The high-handicapper can't play the 8th hole at Pebble Beach. Do you sacrifice the potential of a marvelous, aesthetically dramatic and challenging golf hole because some people can't play it? I say, "No, don't ever do that." But let's hope there's only one or two on a golf course.

GCN: Do you take maintenance into consideration?

TW: We've never built a golf course that's a maintenance nightmare. Our style doesn't dictate that.... We're all trying to get back to the way they were building golf courses in the '20s, '30s and '40s — maintainable courses that are natural looking and playable. It's a cycle and we ought to stay there.

GCN: Do you think you will?

TW: I think everybody will. Five years ago, I said the best golf courses that will compete and be compared to those after World War I will be done in the 1990s. That's because we are back to that style. There are unions, hourly wages, construction costs, maintenance costs, equipment costs, water availability — everything else. And we'll all smarter. The more you do, the smarter and better you should become.

There are also more great teams out there — teams with the professional with the architect. There are [Tom] Kite and [Bob] Cupp, [Ben] Crenshaw and [Bill] Coore, [Arnold] Palmer and [Ed] Seay. Two heads are always better than one.

GCN: What would be the perfect future for you?

TW: What I'm doing right now. Being highly selective. We only do three or four courses at a time. I want to play some, and do a lot of hunting and fishing — which I do — and be with my friends — which I do. That's all I've done the last 10 years and I've never been happier. I've found my niche, finally.

GCN: Have you thought about going into broadcasting?

TW: No. I have no interest.

GCN: Teaching videos?

TW: No.

GCN: Putting your names on clubs and golf shoes and shirts and jackets?

TW: No.

GCN: Nothing outside of designing and playing?

TW: That's it.