Ault, Clark take to new heights

By MARK LESLIE

WILLIAMSBURG, Va. — "The best three golf courses I have ever designed," that is how Tom Clark describes three new tracks from the palette of Ault, Clark & Associates — Ledgestone Golf Course at Stonebridge Village in Branson, Mo., Diamante Golf Course in Rot Springs, Ark., and The Woods Course at Kingsmill on the James here.

"We're getting better and better sites, plus well-budgeted projects, good property and good contractors," said Clark, adding that with increased sodding, new courses are better from Day One.

The home of entertainer Kenny Rogers, Ledgestone was expected to open nine holes on Oct. 1 and the other nine the first of November.

Playing off Rogers' movies and songs, Clark has nicknamed holes Gambler's Revenge, Side-winder, Straight Shooter, Deception, Ruby, Ambush — you get the picture.

In the heart of the Ozarks, Clark called it a "true mountain golf course with tremendous elevation changes," plays from 5,000 to 6,724 yards, and includes the most-expensive hole Clark has ever built.

That hole, the 15th, is a 177-yard downhill par-3 that falls about 100 feet and required blasting the side of the mountain to create the green and a lake. The green is built on a rock shelf. Rogers' mountaintop home sits just to the right of the hole.

Ledgestone was totally sodded with bentgrass greens, zoysia fairways, tees and bunkers, several grass bunkers and 30 sand bunkers. About 325,000 yards of dirt will be moved to create elevation changes of up to 20 feet.

BURNS BUSY ON STATE PARK COURSE

WAYCROSS, Ga. — Construction has begun on Laura S. Walker State Park Golf Course. Designed by Steve Burns Golf Design of Fernandina Beach, Fla., the course is being built near Nugbur Golf, Medford, Ore. Yardage will range from 4,717 to 6,620 yards.

There will be three lakes, several grass bunkers and 30 sand bunkers. About 325,000 yards of dirt will be moved to create elevation changes of up to 20 feet.

FOREST RIDGES OPENS NINE

CABLE, Wis. — Play has commenced on the North Nine of Forest Ridges Golf Course, while the South Nine will open for play this month according to Phil and Kathy Rasmussen, co-owners of Lakewoods Resort, Lodge & Conference Center on nearby Lake Namakagon. Because of its adherence to environmental and wildlife preservation standards, Lakewoods' Forest Ridges has been approved for membership in the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary System.

THE PHILIPPINES: BB&T OPENS

TROY, Mo. — BB&T Development Co., Inc. and Mid-America Golf Management, Inc. have opened Woods Fort Country Club here. Open to the public, it features a 6,090-yard, par-72 layout. The course has multiple zoysiagrass tee boxes, bentgrass greens, 24 sand bunkers, four lakes and uses a double row automatic irrigation system. There are also 29 residential lots on the property. They average 1/2 acre plus and are currently being sold.

A view of Ledgestone Golf Course's 16th green viewed from the 17th tee. The par-4, 392-yard 16th, nicknamed The Big Chill, features a sharp dogleg right — and Kenny Rogers' new home on the hill.

Doak: A designer of the ages

Golf Course News: Tell us about your organization.

Tom Doak: Bruce Hepner is my number two designer, and Jim Urbina, my shaper out of Denver and worked for the Dykes for awhile. Both are invaluable as we start getting bigger and get more commitments in advance. Not knowing exactly when they will happen, I can't promise I'll be on every course every day. These guys understand and we're a real good team because we're not afraid to get down in the dirt a little bit and we have a lot of construction expertise among the three of us.

GCC: You've studied a lot of courses in the UK. But you must have special memories of caddying for a couple of months at the

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ASIAN ROUNDUP

Designers proliferate overseas

OSAKA PREFECTURE, Japan — Despite the decline in new golf course development here, Jacobson Golf Course Designs of Libertyville, Ill., has been asked to design two new courses — World Country Club here in Osaka Prefecture and Cherry Hills Country Club in Gunma Prefecture.

Both projects, backed by Japanese investors, are expected to be open for play in 1996. Principal Rick Jacobson cut his architectural teeth with Nicklaus design before forming his own firm in 1992.

QINGDAO, Peoples Republic of China — The Qingdao Golf Club in the southeast part of the Peoples Republic of China is still awaiting final approval, according to the builder.

It could be another month, it could be three," said William Kubly, president of Landscapes Unlimited of Lincoln, Neb. Japanese architect Shiro Tashiro is working with American designers Greg Nash and Billy Casper on the 18-hole resort layout. Casper Golf Management opened its Asian office here Sept. 1.

Qingdao GC was originally scheduled to open in late 1995. It will include a hotel and villas, Kubly said.

YONGIN-KUN, Korea — Palmer Golf Design Co. has completed one golf course here, which is awaiting grand-opening ceremonies along with two in the Philippines and one in West Java, Indonesia.

Arnold Palmer's architectural team, which has designed dozens of courses in Asia-Pacific has put its final design touches on Eunwhasam Country Club here. The Philippine facilities now ready for golfers are Orchard Golf and Country Club's Legacy Course in Manila and Evercrest Country Club in Nasugbu, Batangas, which is near Manila.

Emerald One, in the Cimanggis District of West Java, is also complete, while Palmer Design continues construction of eight other projects in the region.

MANILA — Make it two Johnny Walkers in a row for Gary Player Design. Arguably Asia-Pacific's most prestigious professional tournament, the 1995 Johnny Walker Classic will be held at The Orchard Resort, which features a Player-designed course.

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designed course and an Arnold Palmer track.

Player's Blue Canyon course in Phuket, Thailand, played host to the 1994 Johnny Walker Classic.

At Player projects elsewhere in the region, ground has been broken on the 18-hole Beihai Golf Course, located in the southern Chinese city of the same name, in Guangxi Province. China's "official" freeze on golf course building permits was issued directly after Beihai received its go-ahead.

In Indonesia, construction continues on Royal Jakarta, an 18-hole course integrated with the Royal Sentul Highlands development. A summer 1996 opening is planned.

JAKARTA — Construction crews are halfway finished on Imperial Golf Club course outside Jakarta, a private 18-hole track designed by Desmond Muirhead.

"We've got nine holes rough-shaped out," said Ed Easley, Muirhead's director of construction. "They've grassed No. 10 and are ready to grass the practice range. We're trying to get construction done by the end of the year.

Owned by Lippo Bank, the 88 million course will have six sets of tees and cover more than 7,000 yards from back tees, Easley said. "Due to the cause of heavy clay soil, crews are performing the rare task of spreading 3-1/2 to 4 inches of sand over most of the course. "It's really going to help because the clay is so bad," Easley added.

KOBE CITY, Japan — Six years after developer Shigeru Matsuji dreamed up Mailbu International Golf Club, ground is scheduled to be broken here in October.

The 18-hole Robert von Hagge design received government approval in 1993, but delays have dogged the project until now, according to von Hagge design associate Mike Smekel. Kajima Construction Co. is handling the course building process.

Just north of Kobe, von Hagge Design Associates has finished a 9-hole addition to Arima Royal Golf Club. The new nine should be open for play come spring 1995. Renovation of Arima's fourth nine — another von Hagge project — begins in November.

Elsewhere in Japan, in Yamanashi Prefecture, construction at von Hagge's Minobu Golf Club should be completed by October, said Smekel. The first five holes are ready to plant and the course has scheduled a summer 1995 opening.

SINGAPORE — Golden Bear International, which includes Nicklaus Design, has moved its headquarters here. Mark Hesemann, general manager of Nicklaus Design, can now be reached at 133 New Bridge Road, #21-01 to #21-10 Chinatown Point, Singapore 0105. Telephone: 65-538-6912; fax: 65-538-2648.

GRI puts finishing touches on Iwaki design

Turf matures on the 8th hole on the West Nine at Byron Nelson Country Club in Iwaki, Japan, just north of Tokyo. The 27-hole Iwaki club — which opens for play this month — was designed by Dallas-based Golf Resources, Inc. (GRI) which has now completed two projects in Japan. GRI's Le Petaw opened in Hokkaido last fall.

At a site meeting in July 1990 the STRI recommended the importation of the said material. "If you were in a drought situation where you were watering every day, these could see how it might be more awkward," said McWhirter. "What we're doing is actually accessing the main computer, OSIAM, on a station or two for water — we're going back to the central controller. One of the buzzwords today is flow management. We're able to do that. It lets us go back through the central.

We both [Toro and RainBird] might have a super standing there in the field with a radio in his hand. The difference is, Freedom comes with telephone connect, digital key pad and transceiver. So you can reprogram over the phone... The super has access to the irrigation system with any touch-tone telephone.

Kiser's COPPS system has also won its share of converts. "With COPPS, basically you have a receiver that plugs into a single controller," explained Jim Hodge, superintendent at VaHalla Golf Course in Cumberland, Maine. "Then you can operate any station with one controller. I can still communi- cate with my crew via the same radio.

"If I like it a lot. I don't use it a lot. I use it when I'm working like a fertilizer and don't have to stand right there. I also use it when I'm doing repairs. Saves travel time running back and forth from the controller."

Pumping stations: Stopping the hammer

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Patty Krages, superintendent at Hazeltine National in Chaska, Minn., is a Watertronics fan. "I inherited one and it's been great," said Krages. "It does all the things VFD does and their service has been fantastic."

Of course, the current technology can outstrip a superintendent's needs — and sometimes exceed his budget as well.

Pat Lewis is superintendent at Portland (Maine) Country Club, where the city water main runs right by the club entrance.

Lewis uses no pumphouse, much less variable frequency drive — and doesn't plan on acquiring either one anytime soon.

"We don't have to tell any pumps to come on," he said with a laugh. "We don't have a pumping system because we simply don't need one. Straight city pressure. I've checked with the city, and our water source will never dictate to us.

One of the hard parts is my highest pressure is 80 psi. So I can't turn on all the heads at once, but we can do the whole course in two shifts."

Ross, on the other hand, couldn't be happier with his VFD. "It's been absolutely awesome since we bought it," said Ross. "Three pumps: two big ones and one small jockey pump. They used to be on and spin at the same speed, but VFD changed all that."

"I'll be honest with you: I used to visit my pumphouse every single day. Now I'm feeling a bit guilty because I hardly ever go out there."

British lawsuits

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Formerly a somewhat routine and lack- luster (albeit situated in striking Thomas Hardy country) 18-hole course known as Lakey Hill, the East Dorset course was founded by local farmers in the late '70s and sold in 1985 to a new owner, who added a driving range with artificial grass lawns and an end of season pro shop. In 1989 the club was again sold, this time to the Count and Countess Lerche, who wanted three men and women, as well as appealing to following for equal competition between Hawtree's work was to expand and re-model 21 holes. As "engineer" he was brought further to design and see constructed six additional holes.

The plaintiff claims that once the holes had been designed and built to a poor quality. I've checked with the city, come on," he said with a laugh. "We plan on acquiring either one anytime soon."

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as test, and concluded that the sample identified would be entirely suitable for use on its own as a golf green growing medium and "would provide the ideal growing medium."

At a site meeting in July 1990 the material recommended by STRI was considered unsuitable and unfit for its purpose.

The Count and Countess Lerche have gone on record as saying, "We wanted the best, we ordered the best, we paid for the best, but the best was not delivered."

The trial date was set for March 6, 1995.

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Radio-controlled irrigation systems

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Florida, I check with the water program every day before I leave."

"If you were in a watering situation where you were watering every day, these could see how it might be more awkward," said McWhirter. "What we're doing is actually accessing the main computer, OSIAM, on a station or two for water — we're going back to the central controller. One of the buzzwords today is flow management. We're able to do that. It lets us go back through the central.

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