Joneses tie design knot, yet remain independent

By Mark Leslie

MURRIETA, Calif. — A renewed father-son partnership that began almost as a whim with construction of Walt Disney Co.’s Celebration golf course in Orlando, Fla., is now a legal entity incorporated as RTJ Golf Ventures.

The Robert Trent Joneses — Sr. and Jr. — tied the corporate knot after the Southern California Golf Association (SCGA) and a development group both asked them to co-design their projects. Jones Jr. had been hired to add a new nine holes to the SCGA’s Jones Sr.-designed Rancho California Golf Course here and design an 18-hole track outside Sacramento for partners C.C. Myers and rancher Jerry Johnson.

But an opportunity Christmas-time visit by Jones Sr. with his son led to meetings with leaders of both groups. RTJ Golf Ventures was created and contracts with Jones Jr.’s RTJ II International were rewritten with the new firm. RTJ II International and the Jones Sr.’s Jones Companies will continue to design their own projects as well.

“Dad came out at Christmas to look over the SCGA project, and I suggested to them [developers] it might be fun to make the grand master a part of it,” Robert Jr. recalled. “It’s a collaboration and a wonderful, fun experience.”

Asked who’s the boss, Robert Jr., who worked for his father from 1960 to 1972, dismissed the idea of being “joined at the hip like Siamese twins,” saying: “No, it’s arm-in-arm.”

Describing a visit by his father to Disney’s Celebration course — built for families — Robert Jr. said: “He said everything had good flow of line, a linksland feeling, and he was very happy.”

Asked how much input his father had

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Jason Jones.

Building boom continues pace

TOMIOKA, Japan — The $200 million Lakewood Tomioka Country Club will welcome the public when the first round of golf is played here this month. The 27-hole facility will bring to Tokyo, where the number of holes Shigemitsu Omori has developed at Japan’s Lakewood golf course chain.

A stand-alone course in the foothills of the Japanese Alps, 90 minutes due north of Tokyo, Lakewood Tomioka is “a breathtaking property,” said golf course architect Ted Robinson, who has designed all five Lakewood facilities.

Meanwhile, in Bogor, Indonesia, the Jakarta-based Suryamas Group will open the Robinson-designed Rancamaya course this month. Also, on Korea’s Cheju Island, the Robinson-designed Pinnx Golf Club is now being planned. A stand-alone facility that calls for an 18-hole private course with a 9-hole public-access track, Pinnx will be Robinson’s first course design in Korea.

OSAKA, Japan — Stressing an “environmentally sound approach,” Greg Norman Golf Course Design has completed the 18-hole Himeji Shirasagi course here.

“Despite the significant earthworks (3 million cubic meters), through our ‘least-disturbance’ approach, we were able to maintain 40 percent of the property’s pine forests untouched,” said Bart Collins, international vice president of Norman Design. “The course has already received a great deal of attention in Japan as this approach has given Himeji Shirasagi an unparalleled aesthetic beauty.”

Mitsui & Co. built the project.

MEDAN, Indonesia — The Gary Player Group is reporting an "overwhelming response" to its Grand Village golf project here in Indonesia’s third-largest city. The 18-hole Player design is already under construction, close to the city center.

Upon completion, Grand Village will be Medan’s first “international standard” golf course, according to Player officials.

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Provo, Utah, has described the new facility as "the new jewel in Provo’s crown.""It is a unique and wonderful experience."
Asians building to meet demand

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best maintained golf course — is coordinat-
ing the final phase construction. A 1996 opening is planned.

MINDANAO. The Philippines — Con-
struction is set to begin on a pair of Rob-
bert Trent Jones Jr.-designed projects, one
here on the archipelago, the other in
the People's Republic of China.

Routing plans have been completed and
building should commence by early 1996
here on Cagayan de Oro. The 18-hole
resort is located near the airport on the
island of Mindanao south of Manila. Re-
gatta Properties of Manila is the devel-
oper. Plans are to open the golf facility in late 1997.

Meanwhile, Hainan Island will be the
site of Jones’ latest Chinese creation, Ya
Loong Bay. Jones and developer Henry
T. Fok Group of Hong Kong are working
their way through the planning process.
Full-scale construction on the 27-hole
resort course will begin later this fall. A
late-1997 opening is planned.

JOHORE BAHRU, Malaysia —
Nicklaus Design christened two Asia-Pa-
cific courses in December: Emerald One
Golf & Country Club in Bogor, Indonesia,
and Borneo Golf Resort in Kota Kinabalu,
Malaysia.

Another eight Nicklaus designs, includ-
ing The Legends Golf & Country Resort
here in Johore Bahru, Malaysia, should be
ready this year.

The Legends is a 1,200-acre resort in
southern Malaysia that will eventually
include four, 18-hole courses. Nicklaus,
Arnold Palmer and Gary Player will each
design one. The official opening is
slated for mid-1996.

Other Nicklaus projects set to open
in 1996 are Juredong Resort in Nagara
Brunei Darussalam, Brunei; Borneo in
Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia (Jack Nicklass
II); Antipolo in Manila; Lakelands in
Surfer’s Paradise, Australia; Mission
Hills in Sitenzen, China; Bintan Lagoon
on Bintan Island, Indonesia; MacGregor
and Oshige country clubs in Japan.

KUNSHAN, People's Republic of China —
The first 18 holes of the planned 36-
hole Grand Shanghai Golf Club are sched-
uled to open in June, Designed by
Golfplan, the Ronald Fream architecture
group, the Grand Shanghai project is lo-
cated on a 400-hectare site here in
Kunshan.

Fream also has two projects underway
in Brunei.

• A major renovation is planned for Pan-
taiimenti Golf Course at Bandar
Seri Begawan. Fream designed the
original course in the early 1980s. "But
golf technology has advanced tremen-
dously since then and we have the op-
portunity to make some changes," Fream
said. Among the improvements will be
recontoured fairways, subsur-
face drainage and a 30-centimeter sand
base that will be applied under all fair-
ways.

• The second Brunei project is an 18-
hole daily-fee course planned near the
Brunei liquefied natural gas loading plant
at Lumut. Construction of the seaside
layout is scheduled to begin early this
year with a tentative opening slated for
late 1997.

Fream is also wrapping up the design
phase for a 36-hole resort course called
Ravenswood Sanctuary in Mandurah near
Perth, Western Australia. The 1,200-acre
resort and residential community has
been going through the environmental
permitting process for the past 18 months.

Plans are to begin construction this sum-
er.

The Oberoi Hotel Group has contracted
with Fream to design golf courses as part
of a pair of five-star resort operations
planned in India. The first, Nandi Hills
near Bangalore, will include a 27-hole
layout scheduled to begin construction
early this year and to open by mid-to-late
1997.

XIAMEN, Peoples Republic of China —
Southern Wood, a Lee Chang-designed
course in Xiamen, opened for play late in
December. The 18-hole resort layout
includes a driving range and practice facility.

Chang, a former associate of Willard
Byrd, has several other projects in various
stages of completion in mainland China.

After a lengthy delay, construction of
the Royal Fortune Golf Club in Guilin
began in October. The 18-hole resort
course is being developed by FIDE Inter-
national of Taiwan and is scheduled to
open mid-1997.

An exclusive private course called Shun
Feng Golf Club started construction in
December. Shun Feng Construction of
Taiwan is the developer. The course
should be ready for play by summer 1997.

Construction also began last month on
San Shui Spring Golf Club in Guangzhou,
China. The first nine holes could be ready
for play next summer, but the official
opening for all 18 holes will not occur
until mid-1997. Kary Enterprises of Hong
Kong is the developer.

MANILA, The Philippines — Golf
course developers in The Philippines con-
clude their commitment to "signature
designs" with two new courses in the
General Trias area, south of Manila.

Steven, not to be confused with Steven R.
Miller, developer of the highly successful Orchard courses that
hosted the 1995 Johnny Walker Asia
Classic, are set to begin construction of
Nick Faldo and Isao Aoki courses
side by side — the first in The Philip-
ippines by a signature designer.

Construction will begin in Novem-
ber, with potential openings as early as

Philippines busy

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dment to design an 18-hole course in the
picturesque highland city of Baguio, a city
famous for its cool climate and university.
The developer, Santa Lucia Realty, also
developed the top-rated Orchard Golf and
Country Club near Manila, which features
an 18-hole Player-designed course and an-
other 18 holes by Arnold Palmer.

Meanwhile, Alta Vista Golf Club in Cebu
and Puerto Azul Golf & Country Club in
Cavite are under construction.

• Aoki, Faldo and Norman are each
designing 18 holes for Eagle Ridge in
General Trias, while Langer is the archi-
tect with IMI for an 18-hole track at
Riviera Golf & Country Club in Silang
Cavite and Weiskopf is designing 18 at
The Country Club in Canlubang.

The notoriety of Filipino golf is appar-
ently spreading — both through satisfied
tourists and via television.

IMG’s Ricly attributed Palmer Course
Design’s success in The Philippines as
largely due to “the excellent reviews” it
received at its Orchard Golf & Country
Club, site of the 1995 Johnnie Walker
Classic. Likewise, audiences watched the
Dunhill Masters, held on Palmer’s Emer-
ald One in Jakarta last November.

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