

BRIEFS



BAIRD HIRES DESIGNER

BRENTWOOD, Tenn. — Gary Roger Baird Design International, Ltd. has hired Todd Eckenrode as a design associate. Eckenrode's responsibilities include primarily domestic design assignments, as well as production of the visual and artistic presentations for the Baird organization's overseas clients in Asia. He has a bachelor of arts degree in law and society from the University of California Santa Barbara, and a bachelor of science degree in landscape architecture from Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, Calif.

INDUSTRY NETWORK CITES GARL

HAINES CITY, Fla. — Ron Garl of Lakeland has been awarded the International Network of Golf Industry Honors for Golf Course Designer of the Year at the 5th Annual ING Fall Conference at Grenefe Golf and Tennis Resort. Garl's creativity, environmental awareness, and talent for designing courses that are challenging and memorable for golfers of varying skills is his trademark.



Ron Garl

PLAYERS ISLAND BREAKS GROUND

MESQUITE, Nev. — Construction of the Players Island Resort's 18-hole golf course began Nov. 1. The \$8.5 million facility, which is scheduled to open this fall, is being designed by architect Cal Olson.

BEST RANGE OF THE YEAR

TUALATIN, Ore. — *Golf Range Times* has given Tualatin Island Greens near Portland its Best New Range Award. Tualatin Island, a 26-acre facility, opened last March by developers Chuck Thomas and Charlie Johnson.

ULI APPOINTS VON HAGGE

SPRING, Texas — Golf course architect Robert von Hagge has been appointed to the Recreation Development Council for the Urban Land Institute. The council is a non-profit group that acts as a clearinghouse in establishing and measuring quality in amenity developments. It also deals with related issues concerning the environment, marketing, forecasting trends and funding in order to help developers.



Robert von Hagge



QA Variety spices Cupp's career

Bob Cupp, 56, holds a bachelor's degree in art, a master's degree in fine arts and an associate's degree in agronomy. He first started designing courses while a pro shop manager before joining Jack Nicklaus' design firm as a senior designer in 1973. He opened his own firm in Atlanta 10 years ago. He has collaborated with many PGA Tour pros and designed such widely acclaimed layouts as *Golf Digest* best new course winners *Crosswater* in Sunriver, Ore. (1995's best resort) and *Pumpkin Ridge* in Portland, Ore. (1992's best public). Cupp has four children aged 31, 29, 4 and 4 months.

Golf Course News: What distinguishes Bob Cupp from other designers?

Bob Cupp: Two things. First, I don't want all my courses to have a certain look. Pete Dye, Jack [Nicklaus], Tom Fazio, Rees Jones and many others basically do the same stuff on each course. That's not necessarily bad. They've all built some wonderful courses. But life is too short to be doing the same thing all

the time. It's more fun to design courses in new ways.

Second is the variety of golf shots. A typical course has four par 3s, four par 5s and 10 par 4s. Each par 3, for instance, should play toward a different compass point; the prevailing wind should come from various directions; and they should vary greatly in length. There should be

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Cornish chosen to receive Rossi Humanitarian Award

By MARK LESLIE

CHAPEL HILL, N.C. — Geoffrey Cornish, who has designed more golf courses in New England than anyone in history and co-authored the definitive history of golf architecture, will be presented the Don A. Rossi Humanitarian Award from the Golf Course Builders Association of America (GCBA).

The award will be presented at the GCBA banquet Feb. 9 during the International Golf Course Conference and Show in Orlando, Fla.

"I am gratified and flattered," said Cor-

nish of being chosen for the award, which is named for a good friend and the late executive vice president of the GCBA. He noted that Rossi arranged for Cornish to receive the NGF's Outstanding Service Award when Rossi headed that organization.

The 81-year-old Cornish, of Amherst, Mass., has collaborated with associates William G. Robinson, Brian Silva and Mark Mungeam on more than 240 courses in North America and Europe.



Geoffrey Cornish

His crowning achievement? "If one has a large family, he shouldn't mention his favorite child," Cornish said.

But among his best are International Golf Club in Bolton, Mass., Summerlea Golf and Country Club in Montreal, Center Valley (Pa.) Club, The New Ashburn Golf Course in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada; and The Quechee (Vt.) Club. With Ron Whitten, Cornish co-wrote *The Architects of Golf*, a survey

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Commins on his own

By MARK LESLIE

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — He cut his teeth working for one of the top "name" firms in the country. Now Chris Commins, senior vice president of McCumber (read: Mark McCumber) Golf, has opened his own golf course design practice here.

Sunshine Design opened for business Jan. 1 amid "unbridled enthusiasm" on the part of Commins.

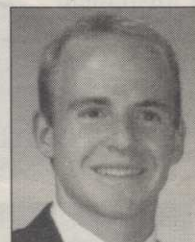
"This is something I've wanted to do for a long time," he said. "Now, my wife and my personal situation makes it possible."

Indeed, Commins' firm sits under the same roof as his wife's, Sunshine Marketing, which markets a

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Chris Commins



Dave Lazzari

Taking the plunge

Lazzari leaves Matthews

By MARK LESLIE

OKEMOS, Mich. — No sooner had he hung out his shingle as a golf course architect than Dave Lazzari was facing some unique — and major — challenges.

Lazzari, a design associate with Matthews & Associates in Lansing since 1992, has formed Terra-Link Inc., a multi-disciplinary firm specializing in master planning golf course/multi-use projects in North America.

Starting a new business was "fairly daunting," Lazzari said, "But I think I can look at a project from a unique perspective. Our focus will be on larger-scale, more complex projects because I think I can

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Cornish honored

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of course design from its beginnings to the present, with an encyclopedic listing of architects and their courses.

He has also spoken widely on golf course design and development. He and colleague Robert Muir Graves presented a seminar at the University of California in 1978, another for the GCSAA in 1984, and in 1985 began what has become an increasingly popular seminar at the Harvard Graduate School of Design.

"It's exciting," Cornish said. "People come to the Harvard seminar from all walks of life. Doctors attend, saying they are golfers but also realize the part golf is playing in society. Many are interested in our art form, which is gratifying... When

a course's architect is dead and gone, the superintendent attends our seminar to get an idea of what the architect had in mind when designing his course."

Cornish holds a bachelor's degree in soil science from the University of British Columbia; a master's in turfgrass science from the University of Massachusetts, and in 1987 was presented an honorary doctorate from UMass.

He has received the 1982 Donald Ross Award from the American Society of Golf Course Architects, which he served as president in 1976; the Distinguished Service Award from the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America in 1981; the John Reid Lifetime Achievement Award from MetGCMA; and the John B. Steel Award from the Canadian Golf Course Superintendents Association.

Q&A: Bob Cupp

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reachable and unreachable par 5s. And with 10 par 4s, you have numerous options. Many architects use bunkers to add difficulty to a hole. But you can do just as much by just sloping the ground, giving players side-hill, uphill and down-hill lies. Trees, wind and other things can add just as much difficulty as bunkers.

GCN: Was Pumpkin Ridge a watershed effort for you?

Cupp: From a public recognition standpoint. But I've done others that are just as good, if not better. Beacon Hall, Port Armor and Settindown Creek (Woodstock, Ga.) are excellent tracks. Usually you need a PGA Tour event before their strengths are made apparent to the public.

GCN: What's your favorite course that you designed?

Cupp: That's a hard question. I'm really attached to Beacon Hall [Aurora, Ontario] because it was one of the first ones I did on my own after I left Jack. It was sort of a personal watershed because it convinced me I'd done the right thing in going out on my own.

GCN: Who are your favorite contemporary and classic architects?

Cupp: Pete Dye and Donald Ross. Pete really understands the importance of designing golf shots into a course. He knows where the pros hot buttons are and how to push them.

The Ocean Course is a great example. Pete's just a wonderful character. And despite what he says, he knows exactly what he's doing at every instant.

I've always been a great admirer of Ross because he also understood the importance of creating golf shots, even more so than [Alister] Mackenzie or [A.W.] Tillinghast. Seth Raynor was wonderful, but we didn't get to see enough of his work because he died so young [52].

GCN: Who are the key people in your office and how do you keep them?

Cupp: [Former U.S. Amateur champion] John Fought's going on his own more and more, but we're still doing some things together. John has great talent, as

a designer and player. [Design associate] Mike Riley is where John was three or four years ago. And [agronomist] Billy Fuller has forgotten more about agronomics than I'll ever know. Jimmie Griffin used to be at Nicklaus and is one of the best construction guys anywhere.

I've taken an ownership interest in several of the courses we've done. Each of those people also has a share that stays with them as long as they're here. It gives them a nice cash flow and an annuity that is growing faster than anything they could invest in elsewhere.

GCN: What projects are you currently working on?

Cupp: We've got courses set to open in Oak Ridge, Tenn., the University of Oklahoma in Norman, and John Kile State Park in Mississippi (45 minutes south of Memphis, Tenn.).

GCN: How much longer do you want to design courses?

Cupp: We're committed to projects in Oregon, Nashville, Raleigh, N.C. and a couple here in Atlanta. I may take an ownership interest in a few of those and get more involved in running the ones I already have a financial interest in. I'll probably cut back some on design after that and concentrate on those where it makes sense for me to get involved financially. I know a lot more about the financial part of building a course than I used to.

GCN: What's the best way for someone to break into course design?

Cupp: You're got to be pushy and have a ton of talent because there are so many good people who want to get into the business. I won't make many friends among my peers saying this, but the last skill you need is in landscape architecture.

You've got to be able to play the game to appreciate design. All the better architects are also excellent players — Bobby Jones, Rees Jones, Art Hills, Tom Fazio. Jay Morrish taught himself to play left handed because the polio he had as a kid robbed him of his strength on one side.

The magazine rankings are fine. But what makes a course great is the pro competitions it is able to attract. To design a course that's challenging for a pro, you have to be a good player yourself.

GCN: What would you like to have been if you hadn't been a course architect?

Cupp: I originally wanted to be a touring pro. When I was younger, I took a golf team down to Redland Golf & Country Club [Homestead, Fla.]. I shot a 72 and was feeling pretty good about myself. A few minutes after I finished, Gibby Gilbert came into the clubhouse and announced he'd just shot a 62. I got the picture.

I've always appreciated the pros and how good they really are. Realistically I'm a 4-to-7 handicap. Trying to break 72 always caused me all kinds of anxiety. Sitting down and drawing plans for that first golf course was easier than playing in any tournament I'd ever entered.

GCN: What do you do when you're not designing golf courses?

Cupp: I'm a dad [Cupp has a 4-year-old and a 4-month-old]. My wife [Pamela Amy-Cupp] and I are overrun with hobbies. We're both musicians and singers. I used to sing spot ads when I was younger and played back-up for some groups.

We both sing in the church choir and are avid symphony-goers. I love model railroading and I still paint occasionally. I'd love to get into sculpting if I had more time. And I read everything I can get my hands on.

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