

BRIEFS



FOSTER PROMOTES SCHAUPETER

Keith Foster Golf Course Design has expanded the role of associate designer Art Schaupter. In addition to his existing design responsibilities with Foster on two current projects, Schaupter will pursue new opportunities for the firm, primarily within the Midwest. Schaupter has been with the firm since February 1992, and has collaborated on most of the its golf courses, including Buffalo Run, Haymaker, Texas Star, The Bandit, Persimmon Woods and Gateway National Golf Links.



Art Schaupter

OFFICE PARK ADDS \$6.3M TRACK

BROOMFIELD, Colo. — Valley Crest, a landscape and site construction company, is building a 27-hole, \$6.3-million golf course in the Interlocken office park here. Interlocken Golf Course represents the single largest assignment in the 25-year history of Valley Crest's Colorado branch office. Construction of the course was commissioned by Interlocken Hotel LLC, a joint venture between the Interlocken Corp. and Omni Hotels. Work began last July, with completion scheduled for October, to coincide with the opening of the new Omni Hotel that will border the course. Architectural firm Graham & Panks International is responsible for the course design.

ASGCA MEETING IN LA

LOS ANGELES — The 52nd annual meeting of the American Society of Golf Course Architects will be held here April 25-30. President Alice Dye said the society is planning numerous informative and entertaining professional development sessions. Guest speakers include golf course architecture writer Geoff Shackelford, who will discuss the work of classic architect George Thomas, and Audubon International Executive Director Ron Dodson, who will provide information on the Audubon's Cooperative Sanctuary Program. ASGCA members will play their tournament on Riviera, Bel-Air and Los Angeles Country Club, courses designed by Thomas.

The Squire, The Slammer (and Weed) finish Village track

PONTE VEDRA BEACH, Fla.—The Slammer & Squire, the first 18-hole course at the World Golf Village in St. Augustine, opened March 1.

Bobby Weed, architect for the course, is pleased with the results. "I feel that we have created a course that is worthy of the location, and having input from two legends of the game contributes significantly to the overall importance of the project. The World Golf Hall of Fame at the World Golf Village represents a new era in the game of golf. To have all the world's greatest golf associations united in this wonderful effort certainly stirs the spirit of those who love to play," Weed said.

Gene Sarazen and Sam Snead were chosen as player consultants to the course, which will host The Legends of Golf tournament beginning in 1999. Both Sarazen and Snead will be enshrined in the Hall of Fame when it opens in May.



The 8th hole at the World Golf Village's Slammer & Squire course.

"Our charge was to create a 'fun and interesting' golf course. While it is always difficult to pick a favorite hole or holes on any golf course, I think that most players will find a number of holes to be unique and challenging," Weed said. "Overall, the design intent is strategic with risk and reward opportunities. Each golf hole has its own character and provides multiple tees and a diversity of options to fairly challenge every caliber of player."

The course meanders through an old pine forest plantation, typically referred to as flatwoods. Much of the surrounding property is set aside as preservation, with wetland corridors linked together to protect wildlife. The abundant native and indigenous vegetation of north Florida abounds and creates a recurring theme throughout the golf course.

The Slammer & Squire is a Signature Course of the Audubon International Cooperative Sanctuary Program.

Strantz leaps to the top

Mike Strantz is a world-class commercial artist, holds an agronomy degree from Michigan State University and understudied for eight years with Tom Fazio. But it wasn't until he returned to golf design from being a freelance artist that he burst onto the national golf scene as one of the most sought-after course designers of today. Strantz was lured back into golf by Larry Young of The Legends Group to design two courses in Williamsburg, Va. The result? Golf Digest picked both creations as Best New Upscale Public-access Course of the Year — Stonehouse in 1996 Royal New Kent in 1997. He has come a long way from working on the maintenance crew at the age of 15 and edging bunkers and shaping greens for Fazio from 1979-87, when he left to pursue his art interests. We caught up with him at his home in Mt. Pleasant, S.C., where he lives with wife Heidi and children.

Golf Course News: You studied art, then earned a degree in agronomy from Michigan State. How has that helped your design career?

Mike Strantz: Understanding maintenance of golf courses and about soils and the scientific aspect that affect the design process.

GCN: How much does your skill as an artist help you?

MS: Other than the overall feel for the basic design elements and what is appealing to the eye, it's a huge help communicating with shapers. I'll draw a whole perspective — eye-level views of dogleg to green, tee to dogleg and, if it's a par-5, first dogleg to second dogleg. It's a lot easier for those guys to understand. It reduces the down time, and you don't have constant re-doing.

I can use my days as a shaper and know what you have to do to get it to that point. It helps when you've been on a machine and know its capabilities.

GCN: Is there a Strantz trademark?

MS: I would think there are tendencies, but I hope each product has its own individuality. There are going to be cer-

Continued on page 44



Mike Strantz, above, on site at True Blue, his latest creation, on Pawley's Island in South Carolina. Below is the 11th hole.



True Blue opens next to Strantz's Caledonia

MYRTLE BEACH, S.C. — True Blue, the fourth Mike Strantz-designed golf course, opened for play Feb. 1. Strantz designed the award-winning Caledonia Golf & Fish Club on plantation land adjacent to True Blue.

True Blue is a 6,875-yard, par-72 course on the site of True Blue Plantation, a

famed 19th-century indigo and rice plantation. The course features bentgrass greens, an 18-acre practice facility with a learning center, and an emphasis on the natural beauty of the area, using native grasses and vegetation and maintaining much of the character of the property.

Continued on page 37

Q&A: Strantz

Continued from page 35
tain things people can pick out as me in my designs. But I'm probably known more for being very selective and doing one job at a time. I turn down at least one job a week.

GCN: What design concepts do you stress?

MS: A lot of strategy, especially for the better player — the player

who wants to think around the golf course. There is also a lot of subtle contours that can be used once you start to learn the course. I never try to demand that a golf hole be played a specific way. Let a golfer be creative. I feel that way especially after playing some courses overseas, and others like The National Golf Links [on Long Island]. That's a prime example. Depending on how you're hitting the ball, there are

18 ways to play a golf hole.

Strategy's always an underlying current. I think if you were to dissect every project I've done on my own, you will see that every piece of property has either one, or several distinguishing features. That's what I try to play upon. So, hopefully, the course takes on an individual look and feel.

A job is basically functional artwork to me. I want to build a

product that's not just another golf course. There may be a segment of people who don't like it. That's fine. But the people who know golf, who love golf and appreciate the historic aspects of the game, I want them to get out there and say, "Man, it's unbelievable. It's not just a golf course, it's an environment. It's an environment for you to be challenged in and to enjoy yourself, to take in some beauty."

It's not just to go out and knock the ball around. There are plenty of places to do that. There's no need for me to add to that list.

The more time you spend on a property, the more it tends to speak out to you. The little nuances — whatever it has going for it — jump out at you or, over time, subtly come to you. And it's up to the designer to highlight those things. You take the best natural features on the ground and incorporate them into a strategic design. That's the way the old guys did it. They didn't have the technology to move earth, so they were forced to think their way through it. I spend a lot of time on routing plans, walking the site before we start construction. And I'm on site four days a week. I feel more comfortable working that way, and my clients appreciate that.

It takes a year to a year and a half to do the job. Some guys visit a site three or four times. If a client is willing to pay big bucks to get a big name to help the marketing, that's fine. There are all kinds of clients. Somebody like me wouldn't appeal to them.

GCN: Obviously you appealed to the Youngs.

MS: The Youngs' track record at Myrtle Beach was that the average guy could come to any of their facilities and feel special. It was like a private club to him, and they were great at that. They weren't about to change that outlook in Virginia. They wanted to create a very special place for people to come and play golf. That's why the Youngs and I got along so well.

What I do to me is a passion. I love doing it, and I love the interaction with my clients, having them have a say in what I do. I try to enjoy the process as well as the end product.

I have three or four shapers who work with me on every job — Mark White, Luke Kinder and brothers Mike and Jeff Jones. They're the whole reason I'm doing as well as I'm doing. A lot of the laborers also go with us. It's like a little community. I really like these guys and we have a lot of fun together.

GCN: Were you golfing when you were young?

MS: I worked on a golf course ever since I was old enough to work. I wasn't a serious golfer, but we played a lot after working on the course.

GCN: How important was working for Fazio?

MS: That was lucky. I had graduated from turf school and was working at the Inverness Club in Toledo getting ready for the U.S. Open in 1979. George and Tom [Fazio] had changed some holes there to accommodate more people and I just fell in with them, really. I was just

Continued on next page

Seeding? Knock out the competition ...

Now labeled for control of bermudagrass encroachment in all species of bentgrass!



with the only pre-emerge that prevents establishment of undesirable grasses in newly seeded stands.

- Can be applied prior to, at the time of, or after seeding.
- Highly effective crabgrass control.
- Convenient, sprayable formulation.
- Labeled for use through hydroseeders.

FOR SEASON LONG CONTROL IN ESTABLISHED TURF AREAS, USE BENSUMEC™ 4 LF PRE-EMERGENT GRASS & WEED HERBICIDE.



ALWAYS READ AND FOLLOW LABEL DIRECTIONS.

TUPERSAN®

WETTABLE POWDER HERBICIDE

G pbi/gordon corporation
An Employee-Owned Company

www.pbigordon.com

Bensumec is a trademark of PBI/Gordon Corporation.
Tupersan is a trademark of Gowan Company.

© 1998 PBI/GORDON CORPORATION.

T036/0398
Revised

Q&A: Strantz

Continued from next page

working on the crew. I was just doing bunker edges with the Fazio guys, laying sod, work that was not that design-oriented. They saw I had a knack for this and asked me to go to work for them. They hired me as a shaper and that's the work I did for the first five years with Tom. At that point in Tom's development, the shapers were doing all the on-site design work themselves. That was a big break.

Andy Banfield is the person most responsible for getting me in the business. I owe it all to Andy. I tried to spend as much time with Andy as I could. He is brilliant.

GCN: Did Stonehouse and Royal New Kent propel you into the top echelon of golf course architects?

MS: I never stopped to think about it. Publications still write about them. But the job I had after those two — the one we just finished at Pawley's Island — was one for a former client. Clearly, the phone has rung more since those projects. But, hopefully, each previous job sells the next job.

GCN: You say you turn down a lot of proposals. Do you get intrigued by the land on some projects — by the developer who says he has a piece of ocean-front land, or property on a mountaintop, for instance?

MS: For anyone who likes the business and likes to get creative juices flowing, it's very hard to say, "No" when someone dangles something like that in front of you. But it has to be close enough for me to be there four days a week.

The promise I made to myself and my family, and my clients, is I can't fit you into my schedule until after the year 2000. Quite honestly, that will be the end of the conversation for a fair percentage of those who call me. I had three of four people who've said they'll wait three or four years if that's what it takes.

GCN: Do you think you'll ever do more than one course at a time?

MS: I seriously doubt it. There is always some overlap. This early summer we will be grassing True Blue now and starting to clearing the next in Sanford, N.C., about 20 miles north of Pinehurst. This is in sandy hills and could be one of the best projects I've been involved in. It's called Tobacco Road and is 18 holes with no housing. Lee Paving owns it and has been mining sand out of this property for 20 years. It has great contours, scrubby-looking pine trees that are 50 years old and 2 feet high. It has 70 to 80 feet of elevation difference. We'll try to open it in late fall.

It will have Bermudagrass fairways, zoysiagrass roughs and bentgrass greens. We did that with New Kent and at True Blue. It's a nice contrast. It's what Pete Dye was trying to do years ago with centipedegrass: emulate the Northern courses with different texture. But zoysia is a lot more prolific and stands up better than centipede.

GCN: What is your new course you're breaking ground on this spring?

MS: Tot Hill Farm in Ashborough, N.C., about 20 minutes south of Greensboro. It's in the same town as North Carolina's only zoo. It's a gorgeous site. It has 250 feet of elevation change, natural waterfalls, huge rocks everywhere. It takes up

240 acres and the golf envelopes are nice and wide. That will have some housing around it, mostly above the course up in the hills.

GCN: What is your professional relationship with Forrest Fezler?

MS: He is an basically an associate. But Forrest just loves this work. He has been infatuated since we did Golden Eagle in Florida. He is one of the few guys who did not use his stature to bypass all the work and learning to get into design. He realized you have to learn it from the ground up. He's out there with shovels and rakes, anything you ask him to do. He'll be the dirtiest

guy to leave the job at the end of the day.

He came to work for the Youngs in Virginia. The Youngs struck a deal where he was director of golf at both courses. But it was a year prior to opening, so he helped with construction, which he loved even more than being director of golf. He left that position to come work with us.

GCN: Do you have a favorite classical architect?

MS: I like quite a few of them, and there are strong points about each one. But if I had to pick a favorite it would be Mackenzie. I like his attitude — his philosophy. He told it like it was. He was the

same thought that the golfing people in the British Isles had: forget telling me the golf course is too hard, it's this or that, there it is, just go play it to the best of your ability. After he built Cypress Point, nobody was criticizing it, so he got back on the train to go out there and see what in the world was wrong.

I'm trying to appeal the guy who can be a scratch to a 30-handicapper who look at an almost insurmountable shot and make it happen. Even if it's only one shot a round. He was into competitiveness and character-building. Forget about the score. He said medal play has ruined golf.



What other mowers dream of becoming.

Nestled in their sheds at night, ordinary mowers dream of only one thing: growing up to be a Kubota F-60 Series. And it's easy to see why.

The Kubota F-60 Series features our exclusive Auto Assist 4WD with Dual-Acting Overrunning clutch. It automatically transfers power to the rear wheels when the going gets tough. Or, you can manually engage 4WD on the go. Either way, it gives you unequalled traction and maneuverability while reducing the damage to your valuable turf.

The durable, independent hydraulic PTO clutch lets you engage and disengage PTO driven implements on the move. A real time-saver in tight situations.



Available with 60" or 70" side discharge mower or 60" or 72" rear discharge mower.



Visibility and maneuverability will increase your productivity.

Kubota's advanced E-TVCS diesel engines are designed to deliver maximum power with minimum vibration and noise. Plus, these super-efficient powerplants go a long way in cutting fuel costs and emissions.

Available in 22, 25 and 30 horsepower 4WD models, the Kubota F-60 Series also comes in a 25 horsepower 2WD model.

So if you're looking for a front-end mower that handles like a dream, see your authorized Kubota dealer today.

For more information please write to:

Kubota

KUBOTA TRACTOR CORPORATION

P.O. Box 2992-GCN
Torrance, CA 90509-2992
1-888-4KUBOTA ext. 407

Financing available through
Kubota Credit Corporation

©1998 Kubota Tractor Corporation

