Mastroleo wins Distinguished Service Award

The board of directors of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) has selected David Mastroleo, superintendent at Hillcrest Country Club in Los Angeles, to receive the 1998 Distinguished Service Award. The honor recognizes Mastroleo's outstanding contributions to the superintendent profession and is an expression of gratitude by GCSAA for his many efforts and achievements in advancing the golf course management industry.

The award will be presented Feb. 4, during the Opening Session of GCSAA's 69th International Golf Course Congress and Show, to be conducted Feb. 2-8 at the Anaheim Convention Center.

A second-generation superintendent and 44-year GCSAA member, Mastroleo took his first superintendent job at Arrowhead Country Club in Wheaton, Ill., in 1953. He moved to Los Angeles to Continued on page 86.
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No architect would disagree with me when I say that a great builder can make your work look outstandingly good, and a poor contractor can butcher the greatest design in the world. Some builders have taken bad golf course plans and made enough field adjustments to fashion a good golf course, and it is just as likely to have the designer get all the credit.

These are good times for golf course builders, for many courses are being built. However, not so long ago when the country was facing high inflation, the interest rates and rising wages made it difficult to make a profit, or even stay in business. This affected every golfer who appreciates a fine golf course. Each time we lost one of these artisans, the evolution of course design was set back for we lost the subtleties of interpretation so necessary to produce a great golf course.

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struggle to justify expenditure on golf course construction.

Once more, the perceived image of golf is causing problems. “Golf has the wrong image, it is seen as being exclusive, elitist and discriminatory. If we are to provide for a wider base of golfers we must overcome this,” said the BIGGA spokesperson.

Another way forward is for existing private clubs to open its doors to the general public on a pay as you play basis with no discrimination against non-members. Prime Minister Tony Blair made clear before the general election in May that he wanted the Lottery Funds to be run in the spirit of public good.

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MacCurrach honored
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GCSAA Foundation, is open to undergraduates. Each applicant is required to demonstrate excellence, appropriate career preparation and potential to make an outstanding professional contribution. Applications are distributed in December and January to all colleges and universities that offer turfgrass management. Applications are also available on the GCSAA Website (www.gcsaa.org). The application deadline is June 1, with the judging process to be completed by July 15.

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manage Fox Hills Golf Course in 1959. Eleven years later, he became superintendent at Hillcrest Country Club, where he has been for nearly 30 years.

“Dave Mastroleo is the epitome of what golf course superintendents are all about,” said Bruce R. Williams, certified golf course superintendent at Los Angeles Country Club and GCSAA immediate past president. “He has spent a long career giving and sharing while asking for nothing in return. Dave is a shining example of the spirit of volunteerism, with over 40 years of contributing his time and talents to various GCSAA chapters and allied turfgrass organizations.”

MacCurrach began his career as golf course superintendent at Valley Country Club in Warwick, R.I., in 1962. In 1972, he became the 45th person to receive the title of Certified Golf Course Superintendent from the GCSAA. MacCurrach became the PGA Tour’s first agronomist in 1974, then was named senior agronomist in 1988. In 1994, he received the GCSAA’s Distinguished Service Award.

Allan’s contributions to the PGA Tour specifically, and the turfgrass industry in general, have been indelible. In 1994, PGA Tour Commissioner Tim Finchem said, “As senior agronomist, he played a leading role in establishing the standard of excellence for course conditioning at Tour events. The scholarship is an appropriate way of honoring Allan’s years of dedication to the PGA Tour and the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America.”

Fream: Golf in Asia
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continue to plan, build and open a golf course, having inventory on stream as the local economy recovers and pent-up economic demand expands, puts upward pressure on membership and greens-fee prices.

Daily-fee courses can manage current situations by greens fee adjustments and smart marketing of existing facilities. As player demand expands again, and it surely will, daily-fee operators or semi-private clubs with excess capacity, can attract new players. As demand increases again, there will be upward pressure on greens fees. For the in-place existing operator, this pressure of increased play and higher greens fees will clearly add to the profit margin. Membership values will increase as player demand increases.

Tourism golf will be a beneficiary as the various Asian economies recover. Tourism is here to stay. It is the single largest industry in the world. A couple of years of staying “home for the holidays” will surely rekindle the desire to play elsewhere when the confidence in the income stream and local economy has returned.

Existing resort courses or those now in construction that are open as the tourist demand returns, will benefit.

Since Southeast Asia has many of the world’s most attractive seaside-sunshine locations, tourist arrivals from elsewhere, primarily North America and Europe, will see business now and in the future. There are some bargains at hand where recent currency devaluations have made local prices more attractive. Smarter managed tourist resort courses can see direct benefit from increased international tourist travel.

Regional tourism will also benefit as Japan finally gets its economy back in equilibrium. Traveling Japanese golfers, because they cannot afford to play golf at home, constitute a considerable percentage of the 1.5 million or so Japanese players and the approximately 5,000 driving ranges that continue to produce more players. In the future, the Japanese golfer will be even more important. Cost factors, politics and environmental issues will prevent Japan from ever again building huge numbers of courses as happened in the 1980’s. This means ever more Japanese will be seeking out other locations to play their golf. Korea, Guam, Saipan and the Philippines can be the earliest beneficiaries. China also can accommodate the Japanese golfer conveniently.

The Chinese are observers, not avid participants in the current Chinese golf market. Expatiate and speculative buyers drove much of the recent Chinese market demand. A large number of new courses across China is unlikely due to limited land availability, water availability problems, population pressures and other economic and political concerns. Chinese travelers will increase in number geometrically in the coming years. Golfers will be among those travelers. Expatiate and speculative buyers will move to the Pacific Basin will benefit from the Japanese and Chinese tourist golfer. Korea and Taiwan can benefit most easily. The Philippines can certainly gain tourism golf visitors from China, Japan, Korea and elsewhere. More tourist-quality destinations for eager golfers must be provided, however.

Those who can develop new courses in China in the next few years will clearly benefit, so long as the site selected for the new course is a solid one in a good location with adequate market analysis and with experienced planning and design. Excessive development costs are the last thing a smart golf developer will want. The correct location is vital. Medio cre design and construction results will not be financially successful. It has been repeatedly viewed that the overall Asian golf market for more than 25 years, that these recent and ongoing economic readjustments will have considerable benefit, in spite of near-term hardship. The desire to play golf will overcome financial concerns.

Overbuilding of courses using ill-sited locations, grandiose design schemes and eccentric clubhouse goals, will cause bankruptcy and distress for some. Overly expensive courses built more at the whim and ego of a signature player, or optimism based on the clearly focused on financial reality, will decline.

If future golf courses are master planned and designed in logical locations, with a clear understanding of the specific market target, with reasonable construction costs, with modest, yet comfortable, functional clubhouse facilities, golf can be offered that will accommodate the vast majority of present and future players.

It must be recognized that Asia is diverse in very many ways. The effects of the current economic turmoil will impact each country differently while the timing of the impact, the duration of the downturn as well as the severity, will vary and may rotate. The emergence from adjustment and correction actions will surely vary. Politics and strength of conviction on the part of the various national leaders will have direct bearing on the timing and rate of recovery.

The ongoing dip in golf play and golf development activity will be viewed in the new millennium as but a pothole in an otherwise profitable and expanding industry. There will be more that 60 million golfers around the world by 2001. That is a major market to target.