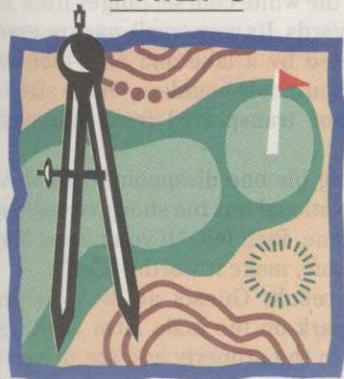


BRIEFS

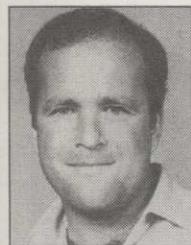


CURLEY, SCHMIDT PARTNERS

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. — Golf course architects Lee Schmidt and Brian Curley have agreed to form a new golf course design company. The new alliance, Schmidt-Curley Design, will be based here. The two designers are reunited after having worked together in the 1980s at Landmark Land Co., where Schmidt was the director of golf course design and construction. Since 1991, Schmidt has been a senior design associate for Jack Nicklaus, responsible for numerous projects worldwide. Curley recently made news with his buy-out of the Design Division of Landmark Golf Co., which he headed since 1992.

RESORT SIGNS MCCUMBER

SPARTANBURG, S.C. — The latest venture for McCumber Golf and Mark McCumber & Associates will be the design of a golf learning center for Renaissance Park in the city's downtown. Renaissance Park will also include a Doubletree Hotel, conference and exhibit hall and amphitheater. The learning center will include a 300-yard practice range, short-game area with bunker, putting course and nine-hole short course. Provisions will be made to incorporate nature trails around the perimeter of the course.



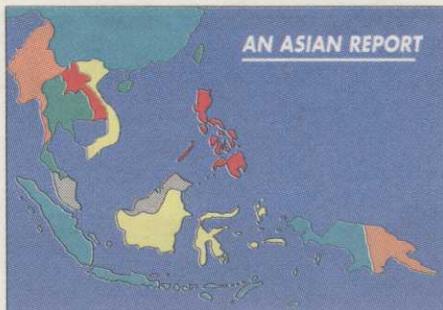
Mark McCumber

GRIFFIN JOINS FOUGHT DESIGN TEAM

AURORA, Ore.—Jimmie Griffin has joined John Fought Design, a division of OB Sports, as design/construction manager. Working with Bob Cupp Design in Atlanta since 1989, Griffin was primarily responsible for the contract management of projects in Canada and the United States. He has also worked with Jack Nicklaus Golf Services.

KAY INKS 5 COURSES

BRONXVILLE, N.Y. — Stephen Kay has been contracted to begin design on five courses. He will design three Jersey projects: Scotland Run National Golf Club in Gloucester County, which is scheduled to open in the summer of 1999; the Heritage Golf Club in Randolph, which will get underway this year; and The Grande at Holmdel — a housing development with an executive course, scheduled to begin construction in 1999. Kay will also design Logan's Reserve in York, Pa., and an 18-hole course for the I.G.A. Membership Co. in Dutchess County, N.Y.



Poellot maintains presence — for now

By MARK LESLIE

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia — Cringing from the threat of civil war in Indonesia and the continuing economic woes stifling development throughout Asia-Pacific, many golf course architects and others are pulling out of the region. Others in the industry are maintaining a toehold, hoping to ride out the crises. One of those is J. Michael Poellot, who has been designing golf courses in Asia since the early 1970s.

"We have weekly partners' meetings and we have to constantly discuss whether it makes sense to keep this office going," said Poellot, who has maintained headquarters here since the early 1990s. "We've committed to hang in there another 3-1/2 months and give the economy a chance to pick up."

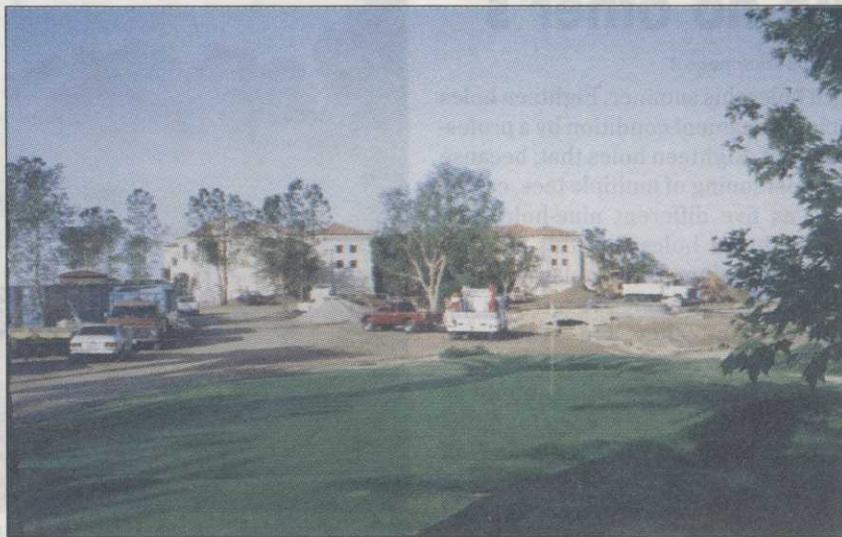
At this point, Poellot said, "virtually all of our projects in Asia are shut down except on mainland China, which seems to be somewhat immune to what is happening around it."

Although he had not predicted the economic downturn, he said: "We had a sense that it was coming because the market was over-heated. There was too much development too quickly, and you see that happen everywhere. We saw it in Japan."

Poellot said that in recent history the Asian-Pacific economy has been cyclical, going up or down every seven

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Not your normal backyard



One of three greens Carter Morrish designed for Bill O'Connor on an estate overlooking Malibu.

'Seven or eight years ago, when the madness was at its height, many so-called courses were laid out over private grounds...'

— Van Tassel Sutphen in *The Outing Magazine*, 1906

By MARK LESLIE

The current rage of building putting greens, and entire golf holes, on a person's property is not new, but rather a second coming of sorts. Two decades after Sutphen wrote those words in *The Outing Magazine*, Donald Ross laid out Overhills Golf Course on the Rockefeller estate at Pinehurst, N.C. But in the ensuing 70 years not much was heard of personal practice greens — until now.

Today's second coming of "estate golf courses" is one of often more modest pretensions and dimensions than their predecessors. While the very wealthy operate in their own stratosphere (see page 1 story), more people have the land for and can afford a single putting green, or a three- or six-hole practice facility.

"There is a big push everywhere to put in golf greens," said Rees Jones, who designed a course for an Atlantic Golf Club member across the road from the club itself in Bridgehampton, Long Island. "The impetus is not prestige. It's the love of the game. They love golf, and if they have enough property and money to do this... People landscape their yards and build patios or gardens. This is just another form of landscaping, but it's usable."

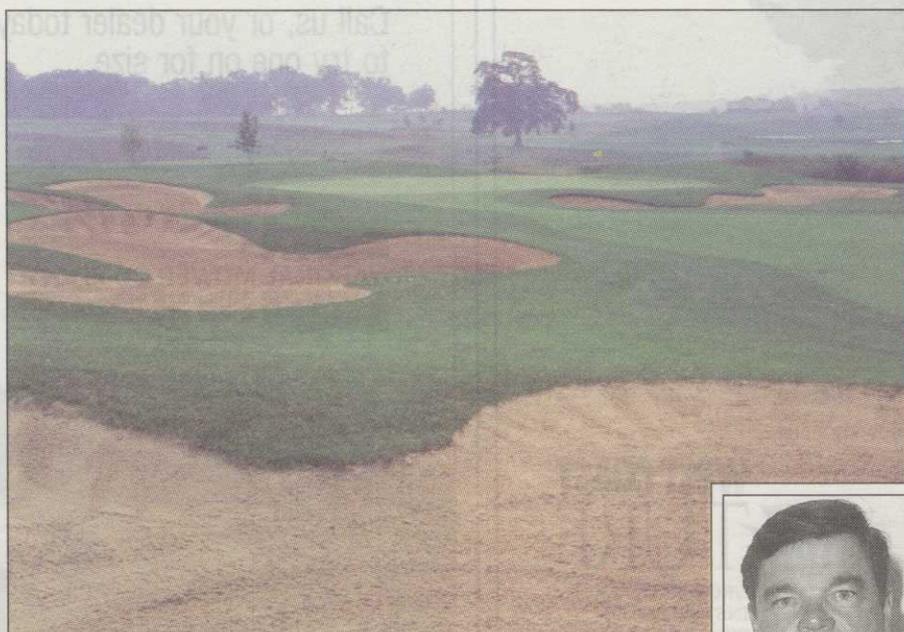
Others who have designed greens and short "backyard courses" agree.

"I think these are people working on their game, to develop their skills," said architect Ron Kirby who, when he worked with Denis Griffiths, enjoyed a 1,000-square-foot green and a handful of tees 30 yards away outside their

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Q & A

Lohmann, Mr. Renovation, takes ASGCA reins



The Merit Club, above, designed by Bob Lohmann, right, was named 5th Best New Private Club in 1995 by *Golf Digest*, and will host the U.S. Women's Open in 2000.



MARENGO, Ill. — Bob Lohmann assumed the reins of the American Society of Golf Course Architects from outgoing President Alice Dye at the ASGCA's annual meeting in late April in Los Angeles. Well known for his renovation work in the Midwest, Lohmann also has designed a number of new courses. Forest Preserve National in Oak Forest, for which he worked as principle designer, was selected as one of the top new public courses in 1984. He graduated in 1974 with a degree in landscape architecture from the University of Wisconsin. We caught up with Lohmann at his offices here just before he succeeded Alice Dye for the ASGCA.

Golf Course News: What will you be focusing on as president of the ASGCA?

Bob Lohmann: We will keep going with what we've been doing the last couple of years when Denis [Griffiths, 1996 president] talked about affordable and accessible golf and Alice [Dye, 1997 president] picked up on that and added a stress on

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No ordinary backyards, these 'estate golf courses'

Continued from page 39
office. "We had a tournament, The Greater Norcross Open, on it every year, and invited Tour players, owners and builders. Gary Player loved it. We'd drive with a plastic ball and putt with a golf ball."

Having designed three courses on estates along the

Niagara escarpment in Quebec as "backyard improvements," David Moote said one of his clients was an elderly, non-golfing lady who simply wanted to look at a course in her back yard just to look at for its lines and aesthetics.

"This is not a prestige thing," Moote said. "The people I work

for don't want the word to get out."

Estate courses run the gamut from opulent to frugal.

In recent years Mark McCumber's and Steve Melnyk's design companies helped build nine holes on Gilman Paper Co. owner Howard Gilman's northern Florida property, surrounded

by endangered animals, equestrian trails and fishing.

Kirby designed "a spectacular" five-green, 13-tee course for Gulfstream jets owner Allan Paulson on seven acres in Savannah, built by Wadsworth Golf Construction Co.

Brian Silva designed a par-3 hole with a 5,000-square-foot

green that can be played from 130 to 190 yards over multiple tees on the property of a Winged Foot member.

But Jim Osborn, whose Estate Golf in Greer, S.C., installs putting surfaces with artificial grass, said his greens cost between \$22 and \$25 per square foot to install. And he expects his demand this year to double over 1997, citing demand from developers who "can now offer an amenity that was not available before, particularly with the level of performance the greens are at."

Usually given 130 or so acres of land to create regulations golf courses, the designers of these estate courses nevertheless have a soft place in their hearts for them.

"It looks really sharp," said Silva, who worked with Winged Foot superintendent Bob Alonzi on the member's practice hole. "I would kill for what he has in his backyard now. I would be proud to put it on any golf course."

Built on 1-1/2 acres, it contains one green — pear-shaped like those at Winged Foot — with a bunker on one side and grassy hollow on the other. The green is bentgrass and was built close to U.S. Golf Association specs. The tees directly line up with the green, but the tee to the right demands an off-angle shot.

"You can make one green play as if it's a number of different holes," Silva said. "From the regular tee you can role the ball on. But on the right you'd have to hit a cut shot."

Jones recalled a short-game practice area he built for a client in Nantucket, Mass., that boasts two bunkers, a chipping area, 7,000-square-foot green. Guests are invited to a little competition from the various tees, the longest distance being 90 yards.

Carter Morrish, who designs golf courses with his father Jay, vividly recalls the "unbelievable landscaping" on a property upon the cliffs above Malibu to which he added four par-3 golf holes for highly ranked amateur Bill O'Connor. The three greens were designed to be played from both directions and the holes were from 50 to 100 yards long. The design featured rock formations, several sand bunkers and a pond that fronted one green and pooled off into a creek.

Oftentimes, the problem with estate courses, Silva said, is "if you don't intensively maintain them, they deteriorate."

"I had a three-hole pitch-and-putt in my backyard and I never took care of it," Silva said. "I had 95- and 100-yard-long holes. I'd rotary mow it as low as possible. But putting greens are very different from your yard."

A lot of times, property owners/golfers find used equipment to maintain their courses, yet

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New book, *Microgolf Primer*, reveals the ropes for a backyard track

By MARK LESLIE

"Fifty feet or five hundred yards make no difference: the challenge is the same, the reward just as satisfying when the ball finds the bottom of the cup."

With this in mind, and with his micro-course layout in place, Brian L. McGonegal decided he would share what he had discovered about building and maintaining a backyard 18-hole "micro

course." The result: the book *The Microgolf Primer: Raise Golf Acres in Yards*.

Using a plot of land 65 by 50 feet, McGonegal shaped two greens and 18 teeing stations, affording chip shots from 17 to 50 feet.

Working with writer David C. Enger, McGonegal lists the necessary equipment (amazingly little) and the par-

ticulars of creating a green and keeping it and its surrounds in playing condition. Hazards, green contours, angles and distances are all considered in these pages.

McGonegal said his personal Dream Links Microgolf course "is for me the reality of a daydream and a rebuttal to the naysayers."

Saying he has offered avid golfers a

challenge and improvement of their short game, he added that a few golfers ever appear intimidated by his course's difficulty.

...
The Microgolf Primer: Raise Golf Acres in Yards by Brian L. McGonegal with David C. Enger, 87 pages, softcover, \$24.95. Available from Microgolf Press, 209 Rockwell St., Jackson, MI 49203.

Estate golf courses flourish

Continued from previous page

even walk-behind mowers can be expensive, Silva said, adding: "You have to spray the green, or use a granular fungicide. It will need some form of top dressing at some point. Because they don't get much foot traffic, don't get necessary top dressing, and are getting cut higher, they can thatch up."

In the case of Rees Jones' client across from the Atlantic Golf Club, who hired his own superintendent, or the Winged Foot member who has a landscape company care for his grounds, maintenance may not be a concern. But even the wealthier people don't always keep up with maintenance. Paulson, for instance, sold his property and the buyer has not maintained the three holes to golf course quality, Kirby said.

Osborn feels he has the answer with his Estate Golf greens, which he has been installing for three years. The artificial turf, he said, putts like real turfgrass and its speed can be set even after it is installed.

The speed of the ball roll can be changed by rolling the green with a sod roller to make it faster or brushing it to slow it down. "Our average is nine to 10 [Stimpmeter speed]," Osborn said.

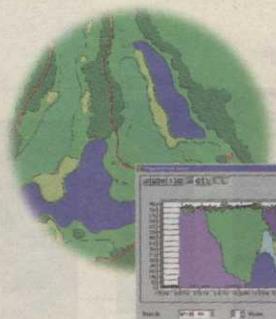
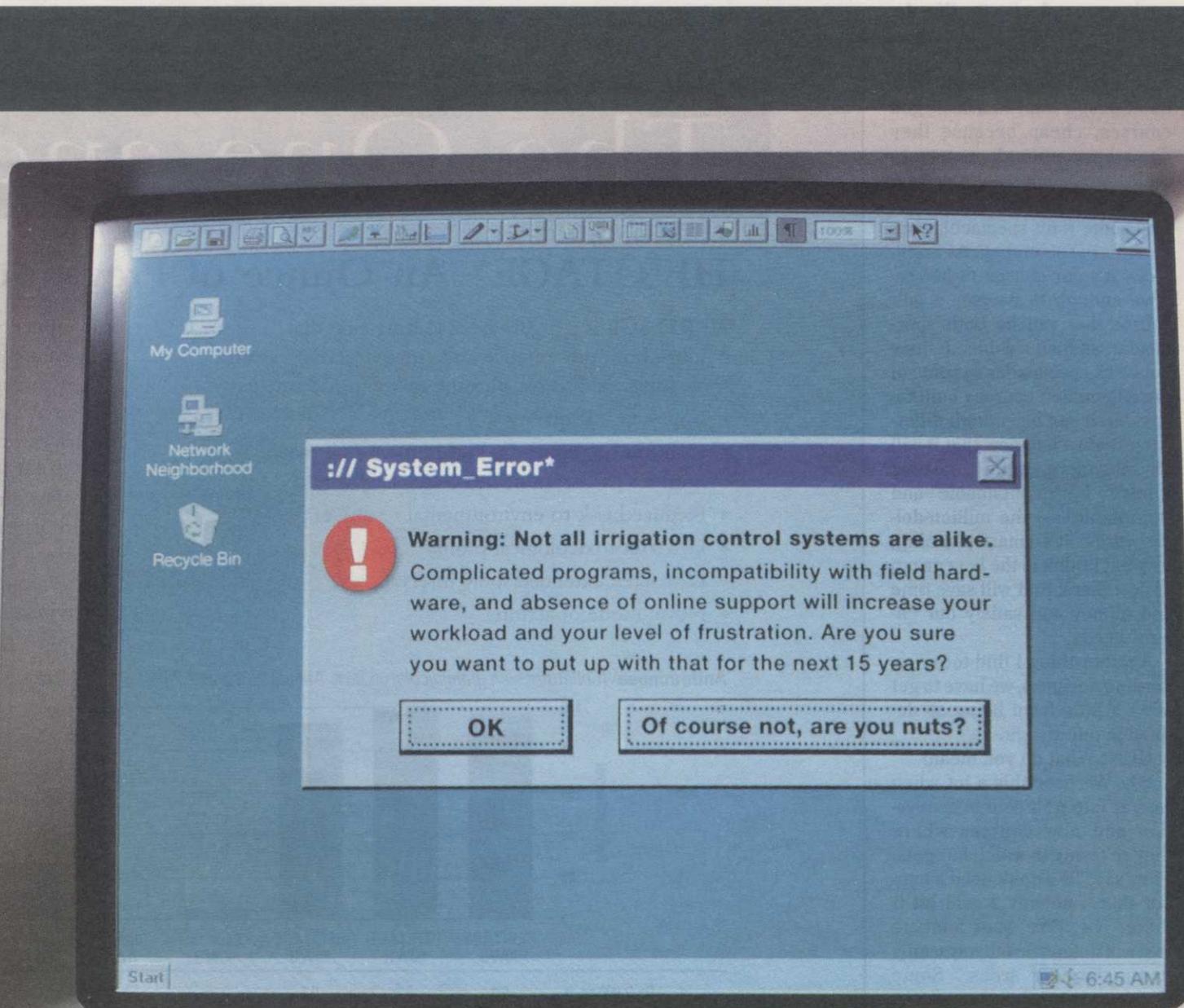
Osborn said a 4,000-square-foot artificial green "will accept a 190-yard shot."

"We try to build it within the undulations you would get on a normal green," he added. "We don't want to get into wacky golf. The majority of our customers are low-handicap golfers and they want the true green. We give them uphill, downhill, sidehill and straight putts."

Furman University agreed, hiring Estate Golf to help build its new women's golf facility.

But most backyard courses are still built by single homeowners and apartment complex developers.

"Instead of a pool, they put in a green in the backyard," Osborn said. "You can have a hard time selling a house with a pool, but not with a green. That's the hottest amenity."



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