Crenshaw, Coore on top of their ‘design’ game

Ben Crenshaw has been in demand this year. Most people are following his captaincy of the American team leading up to September's Ryder Cup. The challenges were intriguing. But the PGA Tour great also has been busy designing golf courses, including the recently opened Cuscowilla in Eatonton, Ga., and tracks at Notre Dame University and on Long Island [East Hampton Golf Club, see accompanying story], which will open next spring. Crenshaw and design partner Bill Coore have achieved their greatest acclaim for Sand Hills in Mullen, Neb., Kapalua Golf Club's Plantation Course in Hawaii and Barton Creek in Austin, Texas, where Crenshaw was born. Editor Mark Leslie caught up to Crenshaw and Coore on a job site in Texas, just before the Ryder Cup.

Golf Course News: Coore and Crenshaw are no longer rookies of golf course design. Have you changed your designs over the years?

Ben Crenshaw: We continue to do a couple projects at a time and still feel comfortable with that and with the people who work for us. We can't see that changing too much in the future...

Bill Coore: If you look at the work we did 14 years ago, you'll see some differences. We make each course different. We don't want a stereotyped style.

When we did Kapalua and Barton Creek, they had some sizable greens. The tendency was for people to say, 'These guys do big fairways and big greens.' We only did that because of the

Green, Aaron and Mahaffey design 9s for 27 in Florida

LADY LAKE, Fla. — Hubert Green, Tommy Aaron and John Mahaffey are designing separate nine-hole golf courses as part of the new Glenview Champions Country Club being developed by The Villages retirement community here.

They have designed separate nine-hole golf courses as part of the new Glenview Champions Country Club being developed by The Villages retirement community here. H. Gary Morse, chief executive officer of The Villages, selected Green, Aaron and Mahaffey to collaborate with The Villages Golf Architecture Group of Clifton, N.J., and the Pensacola National Golf Club, which is being targeted as the venue for future professional tournaments. The Villages recently hosted the 1998 LPGA Samsung World Championship. It is also home to the 1999 Villages Charity Challenge between Juli Inkster, Nancy Lopez and Helen Alfredsson.

This scenario is part of the dream that Gary and Lea McClung envisioned for Quintero Golf & Country Club in this Phoenix suburb.

Carefree travel: no luggage or cleanup

By Mark Leslie

LAKE PLEASANT, Ariz. — Serendipity made this ‘private resort’ happen for mega-Ford truck dealer

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LAKE PLEASANT, Ariz. — Serendipity and a passion for the game of golf. Those two factors have led Ford truck mogul Gary McClung to the verge of opening a unique golf community here, boasting courses designed by Rees Jones and Greg Norman along with memberships in a "private resort."

"The way this whole project has come together has been a bit of serendipity," said McClung, who is the world's largest Ford truck dealer with his Midway Ford/Sterling Truck Center in Kansas City, Mo., and six other locations in Missouri, Kansas and Arkansas. "You have a problem and walk around and bump into the answer."

Examples abound around this project, called Quintero Golf & Country Club:

- The Rees Jones Connection: McClung and wife Lea are members at Troon Golf and Country Club in Scottsdale, where they met course architect Cabell Robinson at a dinner party. Robinson introduced the McClungs to Jones, who not only jumped aboard the project but helped select the property.

- The Greg Norman Connection: When searching for a way to contact Norman, McClung received a free gift in the mail, a subscription to a newsletter which told readers Norman's phone number. Lead architect Jason McCoy was in the office when McClung called, and, with Norman, visited the property shortly afterwards, both declaring they were ecstatic with the site.

- The Tony Roberts Connection: Who also happens to be...
Couples, Bates collaborate

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. — PGA Tour star Fred Couples and Palm Beach Gardens-based golf course architect Gene Bates will design an 18-hole golf course at Southwood, Arvida’s master-planned community underway in southeast Tallahassee. Bates and Couples expect to break ground on the course late this year.

"I'm looking forward to working with Gene on the layout for Southwood," Couples said. "Every course has its own personality and our goal is to create a design that complements the natural flow of the land, and presents a fun and challenging golf experience for players of all levels."

"We are delighted to have such a talented team designing the first course at Southwood," said Timothy D. Edmond, president of Arvida’s Capital Region, who is responsible for developing the 3,200-acre community four miles southeast of the state capital. "We intend to operate it on a semi-private basis and hope to see the first ball teed up in early 2001."

The holes will meander around groves of massive forests of old oaks, play past natural lakes and marshes, over rolling hills and meadows.

Quintero adopts 'The Jerk Rule'

LAKE PLEASANT, Ariz. — To maintain courtesy and decorum between club members and employees, owner Gary McClung will institute a special rule at Quintero Golf & Country Club. We’ll call it ‘The Jerk Rule.’ Every year, McClung said, the staff will have the opportunity to vote for "The Jerk of the Year" among club members and declare the reasons he or she earned that honor. The club will give that person the option of 'adjusting themselves to proper decorum, or we'll pay them off,'" McClung said.

The hope, he added, is that there will be no "Jerk of the Year."

Quintero financing

Continued from page 27

four-bedroom homes; rental homes as an investment; and one- to three-bedroom time shares.

McClung is financing the project in an unusual way. Normally people must purchase property to buy memberships at high-end private clubs.

"We're backwards," McClung said of Quintero. "You have to buy a membership before property. So with these membership sales, my risk in construction, interest, etc. is significantly less than most developers."

McClung's fee structure is unique as well.

Memberships started at $50,000 and go up $5,000 after every 25 members.

Founding memberships (15 of the 18 available have been sold) may, in fact, earn big paybacks. The cost is $150,000, but when the 401st membership is sold, the first founding member will get $200,000 and still retain his membership. The second and successive founding members get their money back, and more, when other levels are reached.

"It's not an equity club," McClung said, "but as the price of membership increases, when a member sells his membership back to the club he gets 90 percent of the going price... The reason I'm doing that instead of equity is that member-owned clubs are often the most poorly operated businesses in the country. There is no focus of ownership, members change, and there is no means of discipline; employees can't uphold the rules because a member can get them fired.

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"A benevolent ownership is the best way." McClung hopes to top out at 700 members for the two courses — 350 for each course.

McClung described Troon Chairman and CEO Dana Garmany as "a visionary.

"I'm not going to live forever and I want the course to live forever," McClung said. "We're ensuring continuity of leadership through Troon Management."

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― Jason McCoy
Greg Norman Course Design

“We will be doing a lot of blasting,” said McCoy. “When it gets done, it will be spectacular.”

Norman’s designs average around 70 acres of turf, and this track will fit that mold. “There will be a lot of carries over rock quarries, but not into the greens. The approaches will be bump-and-run,” McCoy said.

Yardage on the Norman track will be 7,200 to 7,300 yards from the back tees and 5,800 to 6,000 from the front.

Construction of the Norman course will follow completion of Jones’ 18. The two will share a common clubhouse.

“The main reason we’re doing it,” said McCoy, “is because of Gary and Lea McClung. I have never met two individuals so devoted to making something happen.”