

## BRIEFS

### GCBA GRANTS QUALITY GRASSING CHARTER MEMBER STATUS

LINCOLN, Neb. — The Golf Course Builders Association of America has granted Charter Member status to Quality Grassing & Services, Inc., a Florida-based general contractor specializing in golf course and athletic field construction, irrigation and renovation. Quality Grassing was founded in 1982 and became known for quality installation and production of hybrid Bermudagrass strains. The company, which is headed by president P. Howard Barnes, quickly expanded the scope of its business to include complete construction services and was named Small Golf Course Builder of the Year by *Golf Course News* in 1997. The company's current projects include Harmony Golf Course in St. Cloud, Fla.; Highland Walk Golf Course in Royston, Ga.; Lamington Farm Golf Club in Bedminster, N.Y.; and Coosa Bend Golf Course in Gadsen, Ala.

### JACOBSEN HARDY HIRES VANHOOSE

BEAVERTON, Ore. — Jacobsen Hardy Golf Course Designs has hired Rex VanHoose as its director of business development. VanHoose will be responsible for design, marketing and business development. Prior to joining Jacobsen Hardy, VanHoose worked for Keith Foster Golf Design and Lohmann Golf Designs. Throughout his career, he has been involved in all aspects of golf course design including conceptual planning and development of construction specifications, budgets and schedules.



### TUSCANY GC SET TO OPEN IN SPRING

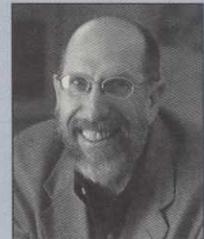
HENDERSON, Nev. — Development is continuing on schedule here at the Ted Robinson-designed Tuscan Golf Course. When completed, the 1,900-home golf course community will offer views of the Las Vegas strip. The 530-acre project will include an 18-hole golf course, a 31,000-square-foot clubhouse and a trail system linking individual neighborhoods with parks and recreational facilities. The golf course will be open to the public in early spring and home sales will commence this summer.

## RTJ II restructures to create legacy company

By ANDREW OVERBECK

PALO ALTO, Calif. — Golf course design firm Robert Trent Jones II, L.L.C., has undergone an internal restructuring over the last year and a half in a move to create a legacy company. New CEO John Strawn and president and chief designer Bruce Charlton have both bought into the company to protect the long-term brand identity of RTJ II design.

"We are looking long-term," said Strawn. "The history of design firms is that when the founder is gone, the company is essentially gone. We wanted to create a legacy company."



John Strawn

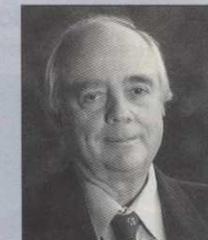


Bruce Charlton

"Mr. Jones is the inspiration and the master architect and his thinking is a part of the overall design approach," he continued. "The young architects are learning that history and that approach and as they mature they will be able to apply it."

Charlton likens the new company to Frank Lloyd Wright's Taliesin Design which carries on in the tradition of its founder.

"Mr. Jones wanted to develop an organization that would live beyond



Robert Trent Jones, Jr.

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## Adding length to combat technology is a costly proposition

By LAURENCE HIRSH

The impact of golf ball and club technology has been a hot topic of debate in the golf industry lately — and for good reason. In many ways, it has changed the way golf is played.

The ability of professional players to hit longer drives has made some of the game's greatest venues inadequate for major professional and amateur events. Tom Fazio added nearly 400 yards to Augusta National this year to ensure a "proper" challenge for the game's greatest players.

Many players, including designer/players Jack Nicklaus and Arnold Palmer, have called for modifications to the golf ball, while others have suggested a variety of equipment changes. The American Society of Golf Course Architects suggested that "a line be drawn in the sand soon" to avoid technol-

ogy rendering some courses obsolete. The society said future courses could exceed 8,000 yards if nothing is done to contain technology.

While many courses have undergone or considered renovations, there are many more with no opportunity to do so

**AN 8,000 YARD COURSE WOULD INCREASE LAND COSTS BY AN AVERAGE OF 14 PERCENT**

because of limited land resources, cost considerations, and political or environmental issues. The need for larger golf courses will lead to significantly increased construction and maintenance costs and will likely make the game more expensive to play. All of this would be detrimental to the growth of golf.

On average, the site for a 7,000-plus-yard, 18-hole

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The ninth hole at Von Hagge's Torreon Golf and Country Club

## Von Hagge sheds light on Torreon Golf and Country Club

By DAVID HUBBARD

SHOW LOW, Ariz. — It is by careful design that the natural sunlight is especially vibrant at Torreon Golf and Country Club, Desert Troon Properties' 1,387-acre master planned community here. Architect Robert von Hagge has allowed his artistic sensibilities to dictate his vision of the three closely connected nine-hole courses.

Stretching through natural canyons and pine forests, Torreon is von Hagge's first full-fledged design in the Southwest. In collaboration with his design partners, Mike Smelek and Rick Baril, their layout plays as a "natural light palette" where the strategic options are further enhanced by sheer visual impact.

On hand this summer for the opening of the third nine, von Hagge explained his design philosophies that seem to go hand-in-hand with his life as an artist and his penchant for show business.

*Golf Course News:* How did you come to visualize golf courses such as Torreon as fine art?

**Von Hagge:** As a young man, I intended to pursue a career in art. However, my father was a golf course architect, and the scope of his projects



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## BCG set to break ground at Oxford Greens in May

OXFORD, Conn. — Billy Casper Golf (BCG) has signed a multi-year management agreement to provide turnkey planning, construction and management services for The Golf Club at Oxford Greens. To be developed by Timberlake Development Partners (TDP), the new, semi-private golf club is currently in the planning stages with groundbreaking scheduled for May 2002.



Peter Hill

The par-72 layout will feature five sets of tees that range in length from 4,982 yards to 7,147 yards, and will serve as the centerpiece of the 630-acre Oxford Greens development. BCG will manage all aspects of the operation, from accounting and food and beverage to marketing and golf course maintenance. The grand opening is scheduled for July 2003.

"Billy Casper Golf's CEO, Peter Hill, is a New Haven [Conn.] native, which provides Oxford Greens with a unique combination of local knowledge and national industry perspective," said Andrew Tedford, managing partner of TDP.

Designed by golf course architect Mark Mungeam, based in Uxbridge, Mass., the Oxford Greens course will feature largely wooded holes — none that are parallel — and

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## RTJ II restructured to form legacy company

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his father, his brother and himself," Charlton said. "Like the Frank Lloyd Wright disciples, the concept is to have the RTJ II name, philosophy and design quality known throughout the world and have a group of young people to carry it forward."

Strawn refers to the changes as a "relaunch" and "re-assertion" of the company. The firm has a new logo and will be offering new marketing services. Mark Voss is the firm's newest designer.

### PROJECTS ROLLING WORLDWIDE

According to Strawn and Charlton, 2001 was a successful year and 2002 is shaping up to be even better. The company, which designs mostly high end golf courses, is involved in numerous projects worldwide, from Europe to Asia to the United States.

"We are probably a little better off than other firms because we do so much international work," said Charlton. "We have a strong stable in Asia, and Spain and Scandinavia have been strong. With interest rates low in the United States, we have been getting a lot of calls from people in the last 30 days."

In Asia, the firm is working on Dongbu Golf Club and Oak Valley Golf Club in Korea and has another course underway in China at Thompson Shanghai.

European projects are also progressing with three ongoing projects in Norway: Miklagaard Golf Club north of Oslo; Holtmark Golf Club in Drammen; and Kristiansand Golf Club in Kristiansand.

The firm's Aucanada Golf Club in Palma de Mallorca, Spain, is set to open in October and sits right on the city's harbor. The all-paspalum layout will use brackish irrigation water.

For overseas work, RTJ II requires owners to use the firm's shapers to oversee the work and build the tees, greens and bunkers. "We require they hire our implementation services," said Strawn. "They don't have the kind of high-quality builders internationally, like we do here in the United States."

### DOMESTIC WORK PROGRESSING

Back on the home front, the firm's Charter Oak Country Club in Hudson, Mass., opened late last year and work is underway at several other projects including Westrock in McCall, Idaho.

The golf and ski resort on Lake Cascade is in the permitting stages and construction is set to begin this spring. According to Strawn, the four-season resort has unbelievable views and the course will run in and out of existing meadowlands and stands of Ponderosa pines.

In addition to working on the Westrock project, architect Dwayne Steinke is carving a links-style golf course out of a former oil refinery in Casper, Wyoming.

"It is a total remediation project," said Steinke. "All of the underground pipes had to be removed and some of the con-

crete pads were 12 feet deep. So far they have dug up ten times more dirt than they anticipated."

In the southern half of the country, the firm is busy on the 36-hole Miramont Golf Club in Bryan, Texas, and is at work on an additional 18 holes at Rock Barn Golf Club in Hickory, N.C. Both will open this year.

Construction is also slated to begin this year on the firm's Rainmaker Golf and Saddle Club in Ruidoso, N.M., and Tracy Gateway Golf Club in Tracy, Calif. ■



The eighth hole at RTJ II's Charter Oak Country Club

Photo by Arthur Cicconi



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