

Course design curriculum being developed

BY PETER BLAIS

Bud Lenz stares at the map in front of him and shakes his head.

Someone calling himself a golf course architect has sent him a routing plan with a hole that heads out 150 yards before taking an almost 180-degree U-turn back toward the tee.

"Some of the stuff that comes across my desk assures me there is a definite need for some sort of college curriculum in golf course architecture. You might expect something like this from a land planner, but not someone with a shingle out there reading 'Golf Course Architect,'" said Lenz, an associate designer with von Hagge Design Associates. The Houston-based architectural firm is trying to develop a golf course architecture college curriculum.

As the game's popularity has increased, so have the number of people calling themselves golf course architects, said Lenz. Where do these people get their training?

College landscape architecture programs, followed by an apprenticeship with an established architect, continues to be the primary training ground, Lenz said.

Architects Robert Muir Graves of California and Geoffrey Cornish of Massachusetts conduct occasional two-day workshops on course design.

Crittenden News Service, Inc. offers seminars, but they are aimed primarily at developers, Lenz said.

There is no college program designed specifically for golf course architects.

"We've worked with the people

Lakeover ready after remodeling

BEDFORD, N.Y. — The former Lakeover Country Club, sold in September, 1989, to a Japanese company for \$24.9 million, may be open for play this spring as a "world class" golf course.

Daiichi America Real Estate Corp. is putting several million dollars into course improvement without altering its original character, said project engineer Leonard Bibbo.

The work is under the guidance of a golf course construction consultancy firm owned by veteran South African golf professional Gary Player.

Improvements include moving several tees, siting new bunkers and altering the approach to and elevation of a number of greens.

Also planned is a new two-floor clubhouse of about 60,000 square feet that will replace the present 45,000-square-foot structure and overlook four fairways.

Tokyo-based developers Mitsui Fudosan Inc. and Kajima International Inc. plan an 18-hole golf course on 239 acres in Lincolndale, northern Westchester. The Japanese companies bought the Somers property in 1989 for a reported \$8.3 million.



at Texas A&M," Lenz said. "They have a good landscape architecture program. But like other programs, students don't learn the basics of good golf course architecture — things like distances between tees and greens or from the center of the fairway to houses.

"They can tell you what the mean

depths and widths of housing lots should be. But they have trouble working the golf in, even though they might be golfers themselves. They have to learn the relationship between golf and development."

The Houston firm took a step closer to its dream of developing a college curriculum this year. Japanese exchange student Hiroshi Kamezawa is helping the von Hagge staff compile pertinent information from periodicals and staff experience that will hopefully establish the basis for a college-level curricu-

lum.

"Most of the information we have is up in our heads," said Lenz. "We're trying to put it into a curriculum with Hiro. We want to set down on paper what's in his and our heads. It's going to be a long process."

It's much too early to tell whether what emerges from this exercise consists of one or two courses, a concentration in golf course architecture within a landscape architecture program, or an actual major in golf course architecture. But whatever happens will help.

"There's definitely a market for individuals trained in golf course architecture," said Don Austin, a Texas A&M landscape architecture professor.

Austin favors a masters- or doctorate-level program that includes course work within the existing landscape design program, student internships and practicing architects serving on advisory committees and as instructors.

"Designing a golf course is one of the best learning experiences a student can have," Austin said.

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