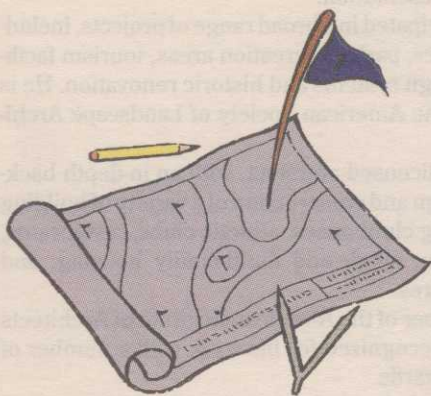


## BRIEFS



## LANDMARK GIVEN EXTENSION

CHARLESTON, S.C. — The federal district court here has extended Landmark Land Co.'s exclusivity period until Oct. 8, delaying any other company from filing reorganization plans for the troubled development firm until that date.

The court also gave Landmark until July 8 to file disclosure statements on its South Carolina and California properties. It is believed those disclosure statements will propose Landmark retain its "name" properties in South Carolina and California, while selling holdings in Florida, Oklahoma and Louisiana.

PGA West in La Quinta, Calif., and Kiawah Island, S.C., are among Landmark's properties and the firm has land available to build as many as six additional golf courses in the Coachella Valley of Southern California. But it can't proceed with any development until the court approves its reorganization.

Meanwhile, the court extended the filing date for a disclosure on Clocktower Place Investments Ltd., to July 23. A holding company, Clocktower has stock in all five Landmark subsidiaries. The Resolution Trust Corp. is a creditor of Clocktower.

## FREAM DESIGNING IN SIBERIA

Architect Ron Fream's firm Golfplan is designing a resort course and meeting center in Khabarovsk, Siberia. The 18-hole layout winds through a birch forest offering dramatic views.



Ron Fream

Golfplan is also involved with three Chinese projects — a 27-hole facility in Xiamen, an 18-hole course in Fuzhou and a 36-hole layout in Zhaoqing.

Six Fream designs are on the drawing board in Indonesia and another 63 golf holes in Morocco. Eighteen of Euro Disney's 27 Golfplan-designed holes are scheduled to open in August.

## DYE TO DESIGN YAMAGATA LAYOUT

Perry O. Dye Designs International, Inc., has signed a contract with Sumitomo Rubber Industries, Ltd. of Kobe, Japan, to design an 18-hole championship golf course in Japan's Yamagata Prefecture.

Additionally, Dye will provide other services including construction supervision, shaping, and a maintenance consultant beginning with grow-in.

The course will be named Yamagata Sakuranbo Country Club. Sakuranbo means "cherry" in Japanese. The Yamagata Prefecture is famous for its cherries.

Construction is anticipated to begin in September, with completion in approximately three years.

## ASGCA elects new members to association

Architects Weed, McCumber, Huntley, Commins, Harbottle and Fry join elite organization

By MARK LESLIE

Despite a competitive marketplace for their services, golf course designers must work closely together to overcome obstacles to development, according to one of the six new associate members of the American Society of Golf Course Architects.

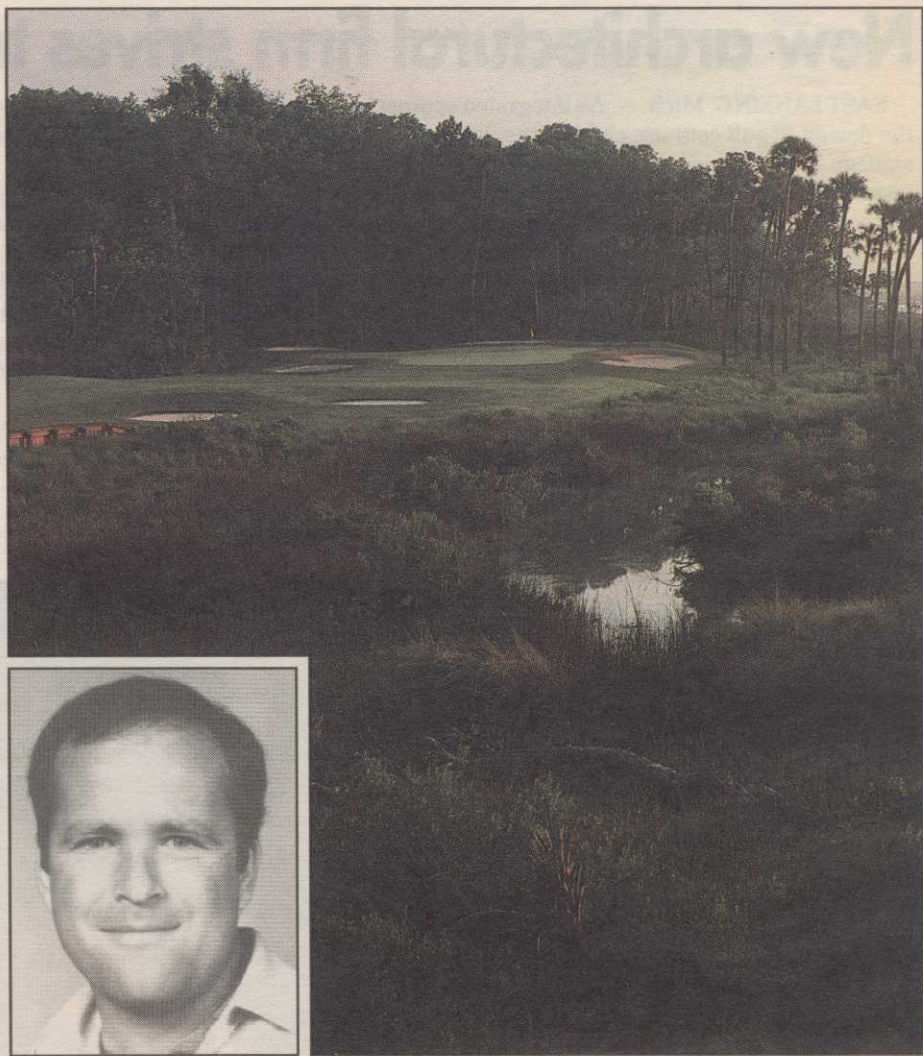
Robert Weed, chief architect for the PGA Tour's Design Services Inc. in Ponte Vedra, Fla., and a certified golf course superintendent, said: "Everyone involved in golf needs to become more allied to form a stronger group... Someone's got to take the lead role and I think the ASGCA can do it."

"We've got tremendous roadblocks ahead from environmental, development and regulatory standpoints that affect all of us. The only way we can address them is to be a group. There are a lot of lobbyists out there being heard. The squeaky wheel gets the oil."

Weed was speaking after being informed that ASGCA members had elected new associate members that included him; PGA Tour professional Mark McCumber and J. Christopher Commins of Orange Park, Fla.; Dana Fry of Hurdzan Design Group in Columbus, Ohio; John Harbottle III of Greenbrae, Calif.; and Brian Huntley of Toledo, Ohio.

Meanwhile, Jack Nicklaus, Jay Morrish and five other associate members were elected regular members. Others were Fred Bliss of Santa Rosa, Calif.; Bruce Charlton and Kyle Phillips of Robert Trent Jones II International in Palo Alto, Calif.; Ron Kern of Noblesville, Ind.; and Steve

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The 13th hole at Queen's Harbour Yacht and Country Club, designed by Mark McCumber (inset). "The last few years I've been getting some terrific sites," McCumber said.

## Second touring pro joins ASGCA

By MARK LESLIE

Make no mistake: The newest famous member of the American Society of Golf Course Architects will not take the rap for signing his name to course designs on which he has not worked closely.

While so many touring pros are criticized for putting their monikers on courses without getting involved in the day-to-day operations of a golf course architect, Mark McCumber is among the hands-on play-

ers/designers like Jack Nicklaus, Tom Weiskopf and Ben Crenshaw.

Indeed, McCumber was designing golf courses before he joined the PGA Tour. Before McCumber was accepted as an ASGCA member in May, Nicklaus was the only touring pro in the society's ranks. Now McCumber is the first member of the 45-year-old organization to first learn the design trade, then win PGA tournaments.

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## Harvard seminar focuses on successful course development

By PETER BLAIS

Helping developers avoid building inferior products, cost overruns, and lost revenues were the goals of a recent golf course development seminar at Harvard University in Boston.

The five instructors collectively possessed 70 years of development experience with more than 120 golf course projects.

They were Jim McLoughlin, principal in his own golf consulting firm; Thomas Boczar, a leading public finance lawyer; Richard Barber, former director of economic development for the state of New Hampshire and currently a land development consultant; Jerry Pierman, president of the Golf Course Builders Association of America and principal in his own golf construction



Jim McLoughlin

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## GCBA to test and certify members

As many as 40 of the nation's leading contractors may become the world's first certified golf course builders this summer at the Golf Course Builders Association of America's summer meeting in St. Louis, Aug. 12-14.

Before a builder may use the designation "certified golf course builder," he first must complete an application packet and pass an examination of 100 questions covering 14 topics related to course construction.

The examination will be the final event in the three-day meeting, which will feature two days of educational programs and social events in conjunction with the PGA Championship at Bellerive Country Club.

Examination topics will include history of golf course design and layout, clearing, earthmoving, finish grading, drainage, green construction, trap construction, irrigation, fertilization, seeding, soil structure, regulations, building structures, cart paths, and grow-in.

Before taking the examination, a builder must:

- establish that he has been in the golf course construction business for at least five years and has completed three golf course projects within the last five years;

- provide references from individuals in five of the following categories: course owner/developer, golf course architect, engineer, irrigation designer, golf course superintendent, municipality, certified golf course builder;

- provide references from each of the following: financial institution, creditors, insurance company, bonding company.

To retain certification, a builder will have to attend at least one GCBA education session per year.

"Builders will have to re-certify periodically — at least every five years and maybe as often as every three years," said Phil Arnold, GCBA executive vice president. "The board hasn't set the term yet."

Education programs at the summer meeting will focus on the Allied Associations of Golf and technological developments in construction and golf course operations. Among the speakers lined up is Jim Snow, director of the United States Golf Association Green Section.

"The point of the certification program is to identify competent, trustworthy golf course builders," Arnold said. The examination shouldn't be considered like a bar

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# Master site plan said key to successful golf course project

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firm; and Terry Trim, director of research for Van Kampen Merritt Advisory Corp.

## FEASIBILITY STUDIES

Most feasibility studies are flawed, McLoughlin said. They rely on an old National Golf Foundation formula that takes the number of potential golfers in an area multiplied by the average number of rounds they would play to determine the total capacity for golf. Subtract the existing capacity, and what is supposedly left is the capacity for new golf holes.

The problem with the old formula is that it does not take into account golfers' willingness to travel outside their immediate area nor their desire to play more than one course, McLoughlin explained.

Consequently, feasibility studies and financial projections are often too conservative, McLoughlin said.

"The best thing you can do for a client is be realistic. You can kill a good project by being too conservative," he said.

Probably more important than a general feasibility study, McLoughlin said, is a master site plan analyzing the potential of a golf course at a specific location.

"The master site plan can affect the feasibility study by 30 to 50 percent," making a general feasibility study almost worthless, McLoughlin said.

A master site plan ranges from \$10,000 to \$30,000. That might appear expensive for a low-budget project. But it should be viewed as an insurance policy that can save developers hundreds of thousands of dollars in miscalculations, McLoughlin said.

Practice facilities are often overlooked in the master site plan, McLoughlin noted. A well-designed practice facility can cost \$1 million, but return that much in annual profits.

A practice range is but one of eight potential profit centers in a well-designed golf course operation, McLoughlin explained. The others include a teaching academy, golf cars, short-play (3-to-5-hole) practice area, putting course, food and beverage operation, pro shop and the course itself.

"The bottom lines are attractive if you're hitting on all eight cylinders. The key is to properly manage them all. You're looking at as much as a 10-to-1 difference in profitability between a well managed and a poorly managed operation," McLoughlin said.

## REGULATORY/PERMITTING PROCESS

The first and most important step in the regulatory process is figuring out what government agencies, special interest groups and neighbors will be affected by a project, then getting them involved before a plan is put to pa-

per, Barber said.

The worst mistake a developer can make is not allowing those groups to take part in the process, he added.

Developing an environmental baseline that assesses the physical and environmental features of the land is the next step. Included is a listing of the physical features (slopes, woodlands, wetlands, easements, utilities, roads), ground water supplies, archaeological and historical artifacts, animal habitats, plant species and

aesthetic qualities.

The final goal, actually obtaining the permits, results from developing a project design acceptable to all parties through an ongoing dialogue between owner, designers, regulators and other interested parties, Barber said.

The actual steps in obtaining a permit include conducting preliminary meetings with all parties, preparing interim plans, conducting meetings on the interim plans, finalizing plans and submitting them to the agencies for

final permitting.

Hiring experienced professionals increases the chances of success, he said.

"Education is the key to overcoming any objections to a project," Barber said. "Don't force regulators into making a decision they aren't comfortable with. Give them the opportunity to make easy decisions."

## FINANCING

Capital has been difficult to raise in both the private and public sec-

tor for the past few years, Boczar said.

With funds limited, reputation and experience have been increasingly important in the private sector. A builder with a track record of developing successful golf projects can get his equity requirements down in the 10-percent area, while less experienced developers are struggling to come up with 30 to 50 percent of project costs, Boczar said.

As for individual investors, they compare golf course projects with

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# Golden Bear involved throughout Pacific Rim

Golden Bear International has formed a venture with Fil-Estate, Inc., whereby all golf courses Fil-Estate develops in the Philippines will be designed by Jack Nicklaus and his organization. As part of the agreement, Nicklaus will design only Fil-Estate courses in the country.

"The natural terrain of the island country and the tropical climate provide a great opportunity for quality golf course design," said Nicklaus. "We are excited to play a part in the rapid



Jack Nicklaus

a 36-hole project under construction outside the country's capitol. Manila Southwoods will host the 1992 and 1993 Philippine Open as well as the 1994 Johnny Walker

growth of the game in the Philippines."

Nicklaus has already designed the first course, Manila Southwoods,

Classic.

"Phil-Estate plans to build eight golf course facilities in the next five to 10 years, making the company the premier golf course developer in the Philippines," said Mark Hesemann, vice president of GBI and general manager of Jack Nicklaus Golf Services.

Nicklaus will also design a golf course on Bintan Island in Indonesia. The Nicklaus design will be the first golf course built for Bintan Lagoon Beach & Golf Resort.

"We are excited to be the first

to build a golf course on such a rare and beautiful piece of island property," said Nicklaus. "This resort promises to be one of the best in the Far East."

The property is part of the 19,000-hectare Bintan Beach International Resort. SAFE Bintan Resort signed a letter of intent last September to lease 240 hectares on the northern coast of Pulau Bintan. Nicklaus will design the first of three championship courses. Construction will begin in the fall.

## GCBAAs testing

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exam. A competent, experienced golf course builder should have no trouble passing it."

The questions will be drawn from a pool of 300 gathered by a committee whose members sought advice from scientists, engineers, superintendents, developers and architects.

"Some of the best questions came from our own members," Arnold said.

The certification program comes on the heels of the successful launch of the charter membership program designed for companies that wish to support the GCBAAs programs.

Less than a month after the directors approved the new membership category, five companies had paid the one-time charter fee (minimum \$5,000): Perry O. Dye Designs International, Inc.; Dye Construction of California; Wadsworth Golf Construction Co.; Jacklin Seed Co.; and Irrigation Supply Co.

Arnold announced that the GCBAAs has agreed to continue the tradition of conducting its summer meeting in conjunction with the PGA Championship for at least the next three years.

## Harvard seminar

Continued from page 38

what they could get by investing in the stock market. Consequently, they want returns on investment of 25 to 30 percent. They also want a strong cash flow to cover any debt, he added.

With interest rates below 7 percent, their lowest point in years, municipalities are finding revenue bonds a more attractive way to finance golf course projects, Trim said. More than 85,000 government bodies can issue tax-free bonds.

### CONSTRUCTION

The first question developers always ask is, 'How much does a course cost?', Pierman said.

"It's the same as asking how much it costs to buy a car. It depends on what you want," Pierman said.



Jerry Pierman

What generally stays the same are the cost percentages. In general, the make-up of a final construction bill looks like this:

Clearing and earthwork — 30 percent

Shaping — 15 percent

Irrigation — 15 percent

Greens materials — 10 percent

Drainage — 10 percent

Grassing — 10 percent

Cart paths — 10 percent

"But a good golf course is never really finished," Pierman said.

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