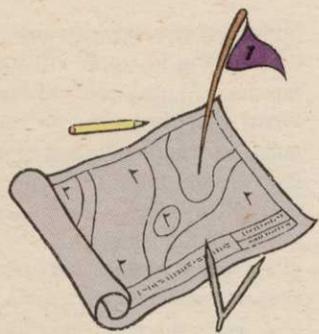


## BRIEFS



## POELLOT NAMES VICE PRESIDENTS

SARATOGA, Calif. — J. Michael Poellot, principal of JMP Golf Design Group, Inc. based here, has announced the promotion of three employees. Senior designers Brian E. Costello, Mark E. Hollinger, and Robert W. Moore Jr. have all been named vice presidents at JMP.

## FORSE MODIFYING LEHIGH CC

ALLENTOWN, Pa. — The William Flynn-designed Lehigh Country Club is undergoing a facelift. Ron Forse of Forse Design in Uniontown is handling the modifications, while MacCurrach Golf Inc. of Jacksonville, Fla., is the contractor. Forse said he is restoring the edges of the existing bunkers and "re-establishing" many fairway bunkers which had been covered over and lost since the course was built in 1928. The greens, which are about 90 percent poa annua, will be gassed and reseeded to bentgrass, in a program overseen by superintendent John Chassard.



Ron Forse

## FOSTER OPENS OFFICE

Keith Foster & Associates has moved to a new address. It is 3110 N. 16th St., Phoenix, AZ 85016; telephone 602-279-4232; fax 602-279-6115. Foster reported he has signed six contracts — two in Phoenix, two in Denver, and others in Las Vegas and Lexington, Ky. Meanwhile, he is working on projects in Columbia, Mo., and Seattle, Wash., and construction was ready to begin this fall at courses in Tucson, Ariz., and Laughlin, Nev. The Laughlin facility is being developed by Don Laughlin at a casino town on the Colorado River.

## DAVE FLATT JOINS DAD LARRY

OVERLAND PARK, Kan. — Flatt Golf Services, Inc. announces that Dave W. Flatt has joined the firm as golf course architect. He is responsible for golf course design, drafting support and construction inspection. Flatt has been working in the golf industry since he was 14. Before joining FGS, Inc., he was employed by the Wadsworth Construction Co. in Plainfield, Ill., a leading golf course construction company, from 1989 to 1993. While with Wadsworth, he prepared and placed bids on irrigation systems, supervised and coordinated installation of irrigation systems and coordinated irrigation inventories with irrigation suppliers.

GOLF COURSE NEWS

## Novice designers aim for lasting impressions

Course design a thing of dreams for many, but few get to try their hand at it

By MARK LESLIE

Whether a youthful dream or a mid-life business decision, golf course design is the child of many mothers. Among novice course architects, this is also true.

For William Bradley Booth, designing a golf course began as a dream when he would draw golf holes during 8th-grade study hall.

For then-52-year-old attorney Ken Tomlinson, his design of award-winning Tidewater Golf Club and Plantation was a business decision by a man with "an eye for balance."

For Randy Russell, a course manager with course construction background and a degree in turfgrass management, the design of his community's municipal track just fell into his lap.

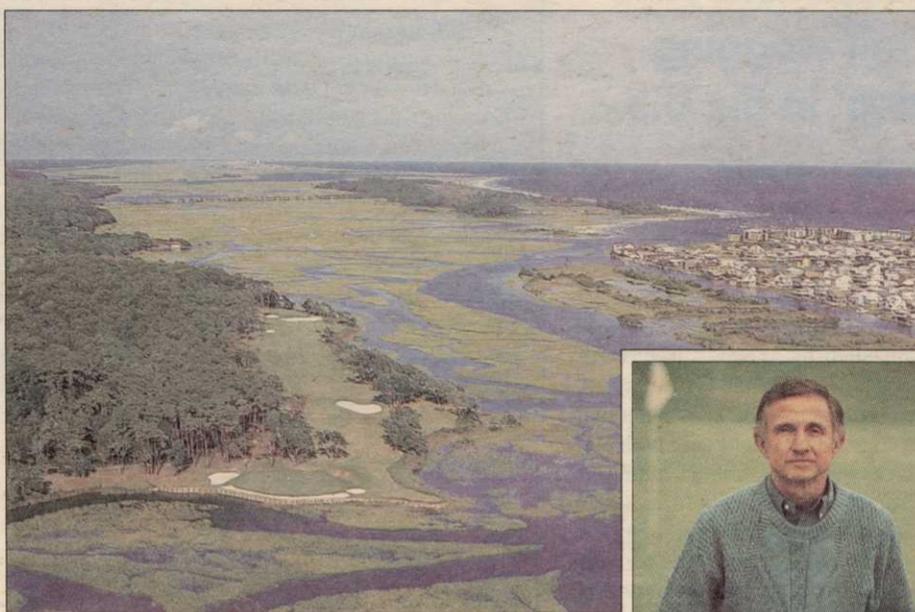
They join a small but famous band of amateur designers whose names live on in the courses they designed.

George Crump stands as an equal next to the great names in golf design despite his creating only one course in his life. But that was Pine Valley in Clementon, N.J., considered by many the best course on the globe.

Jack Neville had a decade in the sun, designing Pebble Beach in 1918, but he never was truly a "professional" architect.

Polls invariably list Pine Valley and Pebble Beach among the top four or five courses in the world. Yet they were designed by amateurs in the art, science and business of golf course architecture.

When Tomlinson completed Tidewater in North Myrtle Beach, S.C., in 1990, his design won instant acclaim, becoming the first track ever to be named Best



The 12th green, foreground, and 13th fairway and green in the distance illustrate the environmental sensitivity of Tidewater Golf Club and Plantation in North Myrtle Beach, S.C. Cherry Grove Beach sits across the ocean inlet to the right.



New Public Course by both *Golf Digest* and *Golf Magazine*.

The three novice designers agree:

- Golf course architects are generally underpaid, not overpaid.
- Design is a science as well as an art form. Science plays a crucial role in design, adding a difficult major chore: education in the fields of agronomy, irrigation and engineering.
- Help from experts is critical to success.
- Courses should "naturally" fit into the land.
- They would "do it again" in a second.

## TOMLINSON CREDOS

Tomlinson has gained the most notoriety among first-time designers in recent years. He credits his success to an incredible seaside property, a bevy of

helpful experts, and "the good Lord blessing me with an eye for balance."

"They talk about the beauty of the course," Tomlinson said. "I just didn't screw it up."

A fine golfer who has long been involved in golf projects from the financial side, Tomlinson nevertheless said designing Tidewater was not a dream come true. "That would make a great story line," he said. "But I bought that land because a golf course and residential development made sense there. And I designed and built my own course because I felt it made good business sense.

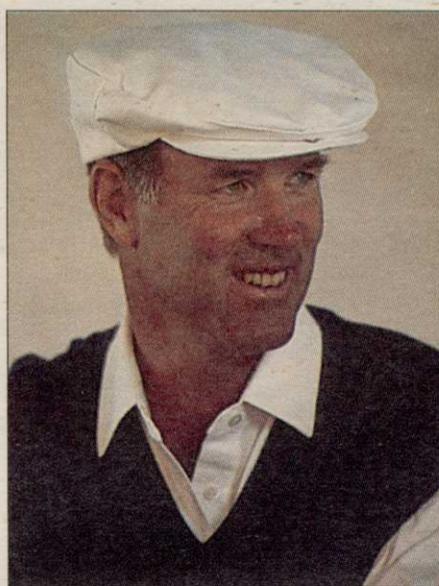
"In my judgment, courses that have stood the test of time were done without artificial mounds all over the place. When you looked at the green, you'd see putting surfaces. I was convinced people

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## Q &amp; A

Tom Weiskopf:  
As serious about  
design as play

Considered a serious threat to win every time he stepped onto the golf course during his PGA Tour prime, Tom Weiskopf, 51, has been winning accolades with partner Jay Morrish since they first teamed in 1984 to design golf courses. As a player, Weiskopf has shined in the "laboratory of golf," winning 15 PGA Tour victories, the 1973 British Open and many other championships. As a co-designer, he has won marquee billing with Morrish for such tracks as Troon Golf & Country Club in Arizona and Shadow Glen outside Kansas City, Kan. They became the first Americans to design a course in Scotland — the just-opened High Road



Course at Loch Lomond, which Weiskopf said is "absolutely the best course we've done or will ever do." Managing Editor Mark Leslie caught Weiskopf at home in Paradise Valley, Ariz., busy at work on a design project but looking ahead to his annual time of upland bird hunting with his hunting dog, Hawk.

**Golf Course News:** You have a reputation as being dedicated to learning the agronomy and technology of the course design profession.

Continued on page 27

## Mizuno trouble continues in U.S. and Japan

LAS VEGAS, Nevada, U.S.A. — Ken International Co., formerly owned by embattled Japanese golf tycoon Ken Mizuno, agreed in mid-October to forfeit about \$65 million in assets as part of a plea bargain on criminal charges, reports United Press International.

The firm pleaded guilty to laundering millions through expensive pieces of U.S. real estate that were fraudulently obtained by over-selling memberships at Ibaragi Country Club in Japan. Ken International also agreed in its plea in U.S. District Court to forfeit \$260 million of assets, although the government can currently account for just \$65 million.

According to the U.S. Attorney's office, Ken International advertised it would sell only 1,830 full memberships in the Ibaragi club, but instead sold about 52,000 membership for the equivalent of \$800 million. U.S. federal prosecutors indicated Mizuno, now on trial in Tokyo on separate fraud and tax-evasion charges, used Ken

Continued on page 27

# Novice course architects have firm beliefs on design

By MARK LESLIE

Golfer-friendly, eco-friendly and economic — that's what novices in the design game believe in.

"I want to make sure I've used as many of the natural features as I can," said William Bradley Booth. "I want to enhance those features, as opposed to being contrary to them... I want the shot values to feel natural, too."

At Austin, Texas' new municipal course, designer Randy Russell will use 57 acres of manmade lakes as "wet ponds to filter out nutrients and pesticides if we make any mistakes." The course will be irrigated with reclaimed water. Prairie buffalograss, which requires little or no irrigation, will be planted in the roughs.

Environmental and natural sensitivity was tantamount at Tidewater Golf Club and Plantation in North Myrtle Beach, S.C., which has five holes on the Intercoastal Waterway and four on the ocean

inlet at Cherry Beach.

"Golfers [at Tidewater] are going to feel at peace, at harmony with nature, not like they're out in a violent ocean," said designer Ken Tomlinson.

Booth described his design philosophy as "naturalized."

"I like to see things blend. I think some of the greatest architects were able to make their courses look natural, but were also very subtle," said the Maine man, who described himself as a "foot-to-soil" designer.

"A lot of people can do a routing just looking at a contour map. But I find those to be very contrived golf courses. This particular site is extremely hard. It's a woodland site with an elevation change of almost 200 feet. When you have that kind of elevation movement, it's very difficult to find golf holes. And unless you put foot to soil you really can't know what it's going to feel like once you get a golf hole out there."



W. Bradley Booth

Tomlinson said: "My philosophy is, if it doesn't make sense don't do it. Tidewater has no buried elephants or chocolate drops. I tried to make it look like I didn't do anything — like it naturally flowed. In some places it didn't. I'm proud of the 3rd and 4th holes along the marsh. They were as flat as a pancake, so we had to work in some areas to make it look natural."

Tomlinson sees balance as crucial to his design. "I want to see if a hole is asymmetrical — in balance, but done so because of a mixture of shapes and forms," he said. "I think you're born with

*'I want to enhance [natural] features, as opposed to being contrary to them... I want the shot values to feel natural, too.'*

— W. Bradley Booth

that ability. I can look at a fairway or green and tell if it's in balance. You can't take credit for that."

Good golfers, all, these designers know another important factor to architecture: how to execute great golf shots.

"You have to know how to hit great golf shots in order to design great greens to reward the very best golf shot. That's the scientific part of the playing strategy," Tomlinson said.

"Every single shot at Tidewater is there for a purpose. You can elect to hit it to a place you get rewarded on the next shot, or you can bail out. But

I'm going to force you to have a good time. What appears off the tee to be an easier, safer place, could get your blood pumping on your next shot.

"I think I'm in a vast minority in that regard. Architects I've talked to say people don't want a hard golf course. If they shoot 80 at home they want to be able to shoot 80 elsewhere. I don't believe that. I think it's a game, it's for fun and I want to get their blood pumping."

Russell said his maintenance background is very important. "A well-maintained course will hide a lot of design flaws," he said. "If an architect gives a superintendent a lot of problems in order to make a course dramatic, the superintendent is left trying to make it look nice."

"On the other hand, it's going to be a dull world if you strive strictly for maintenance. You have to strike a balance and that's determined by the use."

## For some, course design is a dream come true, for some it 'just happens'

Continued from page 23

would love that look and feel. I saw courses people were building today. They were wonderful. But I don't like manmade obstacles. I wanted to make sure people liked my course and would play it. And, rather than asking celebrities to change their style of architecture while I was paying them, this was more simple."

Asked if he were going to design another course, the practical Tomlinson said: "It's a mistake that I haven't designed another here at Myrtle Beach. It would have networked well businesswise."

Although he likes the idea of working for himself ("I got paid very well."), Tomlinson said that "without question" he would design another course — in an area that does not compete with his.

"I've enjoyed what I've done very much," he said. "Now that I've done it and sacrificed as much as I have to learn the technical aspects, it makes sense from a business standpoint to do it, especially here. People would say, 'Let's see what this crazy lawyer has done this time.'"

What about elsewhere? "That, I would love to do. For someone who would appreciate the natural look of Tidewater," he said.

Tomlinson does admit to other reasons than business for wanting to put his fingerprint on another tract of land.

"It's lasting. Most of my life has been spent in generating money. Once you spend it, it has no lasting effect. A golf course is there forever," he said.

### NOT A NEW GAME FOR RUSSELL

The idea of designing a municipal golf course for his employer — the city of Austin, GOLF COURSE NEWS

Texas — was a welcome challenge for Russell, division manager of operations for parks and maintenance.

Russell put his turf management degree to work with O.M. Scott and for five years with [Ron] Kirby-[Gary] Player and Associates. He then joined Austin's payroll 15 years ago. He said he had input into design concepts with Kirby-Player, but mostly field work.

When Austin decided to reclaim a 194-acre sewage treatment plant property, the golf advisory board decided to keep project costs down and name someone inhouse to design the course.

"It sounded like the most fun," Russell said. "I have done a couple of small remodeling jobs on my own out here — one to correct drainage problems, and a full-scale remodeling of Swope Park in Kansas City."

Russell said the board also believed he "understood golf in Austin and we'd get the right kind of course... Having operated golf courses, I have an added perspective: making the course maintainable and fitting it to your clientele and purpose. Golf course architects know that and understand that. But it's harder to relate to unless you've worked on the other side. I've been a pro, an architect and an operator."

Does Russell envision Austin's new course, on which construction began in mid-October, as a springboard to a new career?

"It depends on how this one comes out. If it's successful, like I hope and think it will be, I wouldn't rule that out," he said. "Getting the first one in the ground is crucial, and 'remodels' don't do that. As for a career change? I'd think about it very seriously. There's no question

I'd enjoy doing it. The other question is, could I make a career doing it?"

### BOOTH TAKES PLUNGE

A career is exactly what Booth intends to make out of designing — and earth hasn't even been turned on his first job.

A club assistant pro 20 years ago and the owner of the turf management company, Lawn Technologies, in York, Maine, Booth said course design "has been a life-long ambition of mine and probably of a lot of people. But I've felt I had the talent for it. The thing about golf course architecture is, you need the first one."

"Many people get to the point in their financial careers where they can do it themselves. I was never in that position. So I feel very fortunate to have an opportunity — and an opportunity in my backyard to boot."

The developer of The Ledges in York heard that Booth had remodeled the 18th hole at York Golf and Tennis Club while he was green chairman. "He called me in. We interviewed. He liked my philosophy (I'm a very foot-to-soil person — foot-to-soil). And he hired me," Booth recalled.

Ground should be broken on The Ledges next spring.

Booth gives major credit to his "mentor," former American Society of Golf Course Architects President Geoffrey Cornish of Amherst, Mass. "Geoff came in for a consultation at York Golf and Tennis Club," Booth said. "When we asked him to remodel the 18th hole he looked at me and said, 'I think you should do that.'"

Cornish has continued to help Booth. Booth took the Cornish-Robert Muir Graves golf course design class at Harvard University, and Cornish has advised on routing and other specifics.

### DEMANDING JOB

Golf course design is taxing physically as well as mentally, and that is exacerbated when you don't have scientific background, these three found.

"I studied night and day," Tomlinson said. "I may have learned more in the last eight years about golf courses than others do in a lifetime because I worked so hard. And I had a lot of help. I talked to everybody. I constantly relied on the USGA [United States Golf Association] and its books for help. Now I'm on

the USGA Green Section Committee."

Golf course architects are not overpaid, Tomlinson added. "If I were trying to build \$1 million homes, a Nicklaus or Palmer name, for instance, would sell them. If you want to appeal to the more affluent market, I can't imagine going any other way."

"I think you just have to evaluate each instance. You can't generalize. There were times when I would have loved to have Rees or Bobby [Robert Trent Jr.] Jones, or [Jack] Nicklaus there to help me."



Redhawk Golf Club, Temecula, California, Hole #12, 168 yard, Par 3

Rated by California Golf Magazine as #7 of "Best California Public Courses" and #19 of "Best California Courses - Overall"

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