

## BRIEFS



## HEPNER JOINS DOAK

Golf course architect Bruce Hepner has left the firm of Forse Design to join Tom Doak and Renaissance Golf Design, Inc. of Traverse City, Mich. Hepner will collaborate with Doak on 18-hole projects as well as work on his



Bruce Hepner

own restoration projects. Hepner, who is working out of a West Leisenring, Pa., office until moving to Traverse City at the turn of the year, is restoring two Donald Ross

tracks in Michigan — Rackham GC in Royal Oak and Franklin Hills CC in Franklin. Hepner designed automobiles in Detroit for eight years before returning to college and earning a civil engineering degree in 1990 from Michigan Technical University. He joined Ron Forse in Uniontown, Pa., that year.

## BUSINESS, LEISURE SHOW SET

LAS VEGAS — Jim Colbert, Hale Irwin and others in the golf development industry will take part in the North American Golf Business & Leisure Industry Show, Oct. 19-21 at the Desert Inn and Bally's Resorts here. Impact from emerging market segments such as the baby boomers and busters, families, singles, dual-income professionals and women will be explored by industry leaders. Keynote speaker Colbert will share insights into both the game and business of golf, and Irwin will make a special appearance.

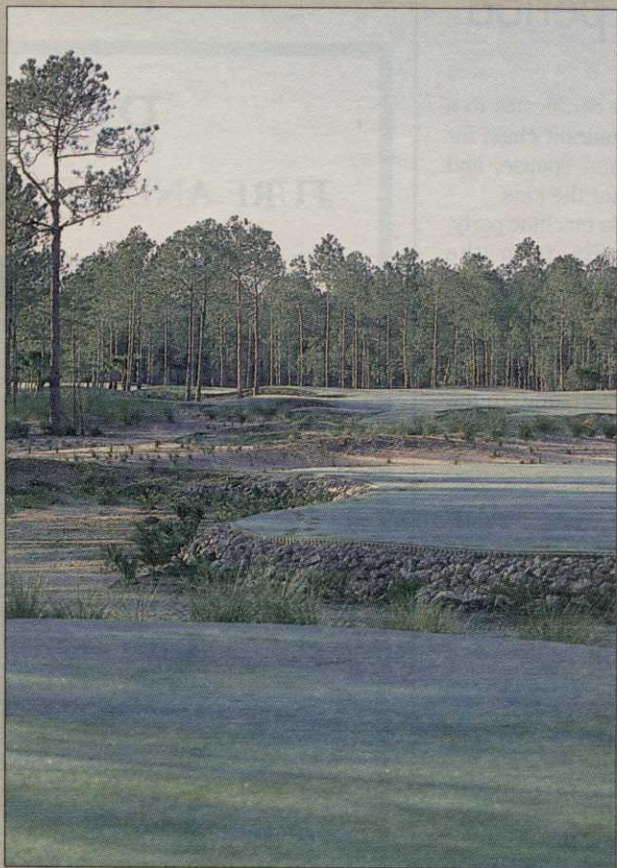


## GAINFIELD FARMS UNDER WAY

SHELTON, Conn. — Construction has begun on a new nine-hole course here. The daily-fee course will be known as Gainfield Farms. Opening is scheduled for the summer of 1994. The layout was designed by Al Zikorus and course contractor is Eastern Land Management, Inc., of Shelton.

## ASGCA RELEASES PAMPHLET

The American Society of Golf Course Architects has published its 1993-94 membership list featuring all the names, addresses and telephone numbers of the 117 members. The pamphlet also includes a state by state listing of members. To receive a free copy of the 1993-94 ASGCA Membership List, send a stamped, self-addressed business envelope to: The American Society of Golf Course Architects, 221 N. LaSalle St., Chicago 60601.



## Long-awaited Naples National opens, hosts major tourney

No sooner will Naples (Fla.) National Golf Club open Saturday, Oct. 9, than it will host the LPGA's World Championship of Women's Golf, Oct. 10-17. This Mike Hurdzan-designed track, with no residential development surrounding it, contains elements of Pinehurst #2 and Pine Valley, "but with a Florida flair." Fuzzy Zoeller is featured at the grand opening Oct. 9 during the inaugural round and a golf exhibition at the practice facility.

## Effects of '93 flood to be felt in 1994

By HAL PHILLIPS

TOLEDO, Ohio — The effects of this year's Midwestern flooding will not be seen until next year, according to golf course builders working in the nation's heartland. But projects due to open next year will almost certainly be delayed by the damaging wet season in the Midwest and the severe drought in the Southeast.

Members of the Golf Course Builders Association of America indicated their workload had not suffered, despite the heavy rains of May, June and July.

"Usually it's so dry this time of year, you have to worry about clumps of dirt — but not this year," said Bill Kubly, president of Nebraska-based Landscapes Unlimited. "I think in terms of course openings, you're still seeing the results of last year's efforts."

"There's definitely been a [construction] slowdown because of all the rain this year. But you won't see the effects of that until next year."

Illinois-based Wadsworth Construction has been forced to go slow on projects in Minneapolis and Wisconsin, while another in St. Louis was abandoned altogether.

"We haven't had any projects in the direct area of flooding," said Brent Wadsworth of Illinois-based Wadsworth Construction. "But there's been so much rain all spring and summer, we haven't been able to get a whole lot done. I mean, a huge area of the country has been affected: From Illinois and Tennessee west to Colorado, New Mexico and Wyoming."

A Landscapes Unlimited project in Sioux Falls, S.D. — a Dick Nugent design called Prairie Green — has been delayed by Mother Nature. Another in Des Moines — a Tom Fazio project called Glen Oaks — is situated on high ground, but the flood conditions caused much more discomfort.

"My crew in Des Moines were without running water for two weeks," Kubly said. "People were telling them when to bathe and when not to. I went up to check on them and morale was still pretty high, but those aren't exactly ideal conditions."

## Americanization of Asian course design continues

YAMANASHI PREFECTURE, Japan — Despite the golf course development lull in Japan, von Hagge Design Associates are moving forward on two projects.

Von Hagge's Mike Smelek reports that, after three years of "political gymnastics," his firm has received approval to begin work on Minobu Golf Club here, in the shadow of Mt. Fuji. Local and national authorities requested a slew of modified routing plans before approving the project.

However, Minobu GC will be worth the wait, says Smelek. The rugged piece of property lies in the foothills just south of the Fuji River valley. To help negotiate the

severe topography, von Hagge will employ an extensive network of retaining walls between two and 15 meters in height. Smelek estimates that two million cubic meters of earth will be moved during construction.

Two more von Hagge Japanese projects are scheduled for completion this year: Maoi Resort in Hokkaido and Arima Royal near Kobe.

Meanwhile, the von Hagge Design team expects to break ground on Ajsu Country Club in early 1994. This 54-hole complex is owned by Ube Industries.

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CHUNG SAN, China — Not unlike many of his fellow designers, Jack Nicklaus has been busy on the Chinese Mainland. His first 18 holes — The Chung Shan Hot Springs Resort — will open here this fall.

Meanwhile, in Shenzhen, another 18 should open for play next year at the Mission Hills resort. Another 18 holes are planned for this southern Chinese project.

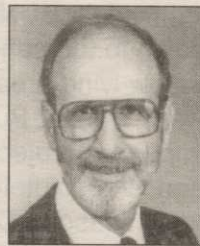
Construction has begun on another Nicklaus project in Shanghai, where a 1995 opening is expected.

Other Nicklaus projects scheduled to open this year include Chang An Golf &

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Q &amp; A

## Bill Amick: Champion of modified golf



Bill Amick

Bill Amick may be from Scipio, Ind., and maintain a house in Florida, but he could call Europe his home nowadays. The 61-year-old Amick, who has spent most of the last 40 years designing golf courses, has spent much of the last several years flying from Florida to Europe and back. He is popular in Belgium, Italy and Portugal. President of the American Society of Golf Course Architects in 1977, Amick was also the founding president of the American Modified Golf Association.

**Golf Course News:** Are you personally building more regulation- or Cayman-length courses?

**Bill Amick:** Far more full-length courses.

**GCN:** How has the Cayman idea been received?

**BA:** In general, it's positive. But it needs something that will promote it in the United States — like they have in Japan, where they've built several courses exclusively for the Cayman ball.

**GCN:** Why do you so strongly support

this idea?

**BA:** There is a market for it, for a place for people learning the game at much less cost, quicker and easier because the Cayman ball is easier to get airborne and easier to learn with. Since it gets airborne easier, you don't have to hit it as hard to get satisfactory results. Then golfers can move on to a heavier, harder golf ball.

**GCN:** So you play it the way you would regulation golf except with shorter holes? About two-thirds the length?

**BA:** Exactly. About 60 percent.

**GCN:** Have they perfected the design of the BALL to the point where wind won't cause so much of a problem?

**BA:** The ball has been improved a great deal since [Jack] Nicklaus and Britannia started it back in 1985. But all of us involved believe it could be improved even more. MacGregor sold its patent rights and all

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GOLF COURSE NEWS

## Q&A: Amick

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rights to the Cayman Golf Co., which is Troy Puckett.

**GCN:** What ignited your interest in this in the first place?

**BA:** Bill Diddel, who I was working for in 1955 in Indianapolis, had come up with this idea in the early 1930s. He got a patent on a **Ball** in the early 1940s. He was a proponent of the concept that there could be a place for a game similar to golf and introducing golf, but with a ball less lively on courses that were much smaller, more economical, with faster play.

**GCN:** Is it the aura of golf as we've known it traditionally and historically, that has slowed the idea?

**BA:** Cayman golf is competing with 500 years of accepted, established golf. And it will never replace it. None of us involved believe that. It is more like softball to baseball, or badminton to tennis. That's where it fits — as less serious, less expensive, more of a family game than golf.

**GCN:** You've been a golf course architect for about 40 years.

**BA:** I started working for Bill Diddel in 1955. I established my own firm in '59. With the exception of being in the Air Force two years, this is what I wanted to do.

**GCN:** Most of your work used to be in the United States until the last seven or eight years. What drew you to Europe?

**BA:** I had some inquiries and answered them and visited the sites. A few inquiries led to other jobs, which continue today.

**GCN:** How does building a golf course in Europe compare to building in the United States — from permitting to construction?

**BA:** You're going through the same process, but the permitting is a different system. In the United States, it can be different to a certain extent from state to state. We have federal and state and county and regional agencies. In Europe, the permitting process is more interested in the look. In the United States, it tends to be more centered on wetlands, water, runoff. In Europe, it's preserving the vegetation, mature trees, and, in some countries such as Italy, it's not so much a matter of content, or policy or regulation.

Germany has the most rigid requirements. For instance, you are not supposed to cover fill over one meter in height. And they have very specific requirements. Even on open farmland they require planting of vegetation. They go by the book, not by need.

**GCN:** In your years in design have you noticed an evolution in golf course design in America?

**BA:** I don't know if you'd call it evolution. There have certainly been changes. When I worked for Bill Diddel and got on my own, there were hardly any regulations, which was the other extreme. We needed some.

**GCN:** You're saying courses built 40 years ago would never have been built today.

**BA:** In Florida, particularly, because that's where I've done more of my work. Swamps were drained for housing and golf courses that absolutely could not be touched today.

**GCN:** Were the architects who designed those courses partly at fault?

**BA:** I was one of them.

**GCN:** Would you do it again?

**BA:** No. First, we can't do it again. And we wouldn't do it again. **Basically**, the regulations have logic. What frustrates all of us — developers and architects included — is the paperwork, the hearings, the sometimes irrational public

emotionalism. Also, the fact that some of it is bureaucracy that has no direct value. It's the system. But the system has been established and we must deal with it.

**GCN:** You've dealt with the activists in America. Do you think that with the testing being done on effects of pesticides and runoff, will the activists accept it if the facts come down on the side that golf courses do not pollute?

**BA:** What's being done as far as studying is valuable to us all. The regulators are certainly ahead — and often much ahead — of the public. In the state of Vermont there has been a lot of emotionalism and

a lot of pure-and-simple anti-growth. And any basis — real or imagined — is sometimes used against individual projects. That will probably always be.

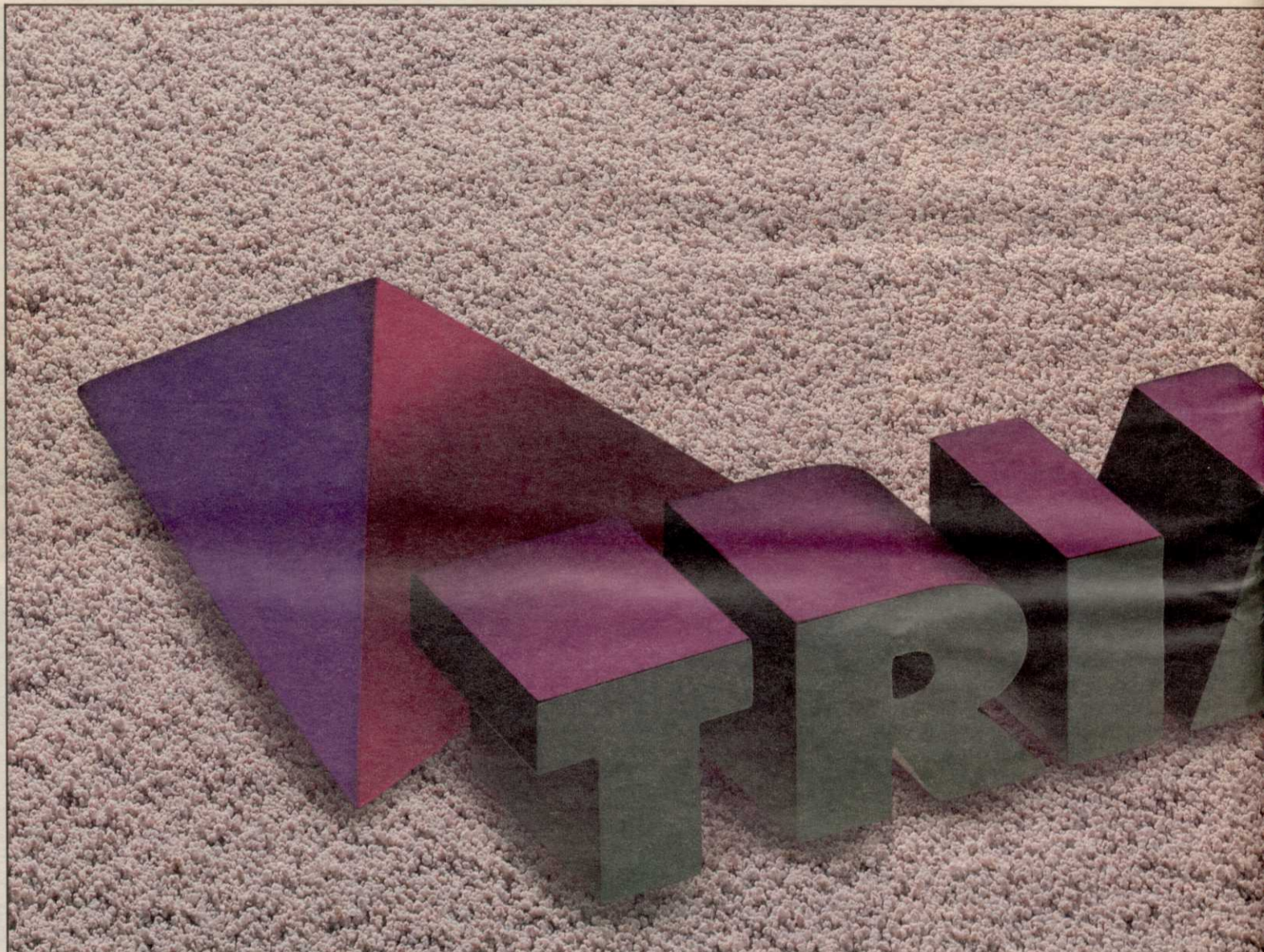
**GCN:** You are saying government officials are ahead of the public. But they are the ones who did the Cape Cod Study, which had positive results in the golf industry's eyes.

**BA:** What's frustrating the golf course architects is not so much dealing with the staff of the Corps of Engineers or the state. We can deal with it as long as we know what the regulations are and what we need to do to satisfy them. What frustrates us is when we get into public

hearings and they go on and on and on. It becomes an emotional issue, and the people have an influence on the elected or appointed officials. And decisions are made not on staff recommendations, and not based on fact.

**GCN:** What has been your greatest joy designing golf courses?

**BA:** The reason I got into it, and what continues to please me most, is the process of fitting the best golf course possible onto the available piece of land — like a puzzle. That, I love to do. Solving the problems posed by each site and each situation. The uniqueness turns me on.



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