

GOLF COURSE NEWS

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MASTER GREENKEEPER

Terry Buchen (right) has earned Master Greenkeeper status, as bestowed by the Right Honourable Lord Griffiths MC (left), captain of the Royal & Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews. Buchen is one of only three American superintendents to be so honored. See story on page 20.

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HOW TO SPEAK A THOUSAND WORDS

The Wade Hampton Club in Cashiers, N.C., never looked so good, thanks to photographer Mike Klemme. Klemme and colleague Tony Roberts talk about how to prepare a course for photography, and how to market a course with pictures. See pages 22 & 47.

Turf grads face crowded job market

By PETER BLAIS

The job market for turf school graduates shows few signs of improving while the number of wannabe superintendents continues to grow, according to educators and practitioners.

"It's been noticeably slower the past few years," said University of Massachusetts Professor Richard Cooper.

"During most of the 1980s, we'd graduate 40 to 50 students every year and all would find jobs as assistant superintendents. Now about half find assistant jobs, a quarter are able to find work on golf course maintenance crews and the rest end up doing something else."

The situation is a little better in the South. Lake City (Fla.) College Profes-

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Wadsworth Golf: The training ground for aspiring architects

By MARK LESLIE

When project director Glen Doutrich told Craig Schreiner to oversee finished grading of the irrigation heads for an upcoming walk-through of the Fazio Course at Barton Creek in Austin, Texas, the young apprentice said, "Yes, the owners will probably get real touchy about that." Doutrich responded: "I'm not worried about the owners. We far exceed their expectations. The walk-through you've got to watch for is Mr. Wadsworth's."

The Wadsworth Way, Schreiner calls it. It refers to Brent Wadsworth. It defines how he runs his Wadsworth Golf Construction Co. And it may explain why that nationwide firm has become the

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Openings maintain torrid pace

A third straight year of 350-plus courses

By HAL PHILLIPS

A whopping 358 golf courses opened for play during 1993, as public-access development continued to dominate a market that — despite a bevy of cool-headed forecasts — has sustained its considerable momentum.

According to a National Golf Foundation (NGF) report, a full 81 percent of those courses unveiled last year were either daily fee or municipal. Of the 14,639 courses now operating in the United States, 66.6 percent are public-access.

According to Rick Norton, vice president of the NGF, private course development is more adversely affected by recession, whereas public golf is more often aimed at a particular market segment.

"I think golf is being viewed more and more as a business," said Norton. "It was a very good year in 1993, and I think it shows courses are being built for the market. They're more

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Study: Labor trouble on horizon for private clubs

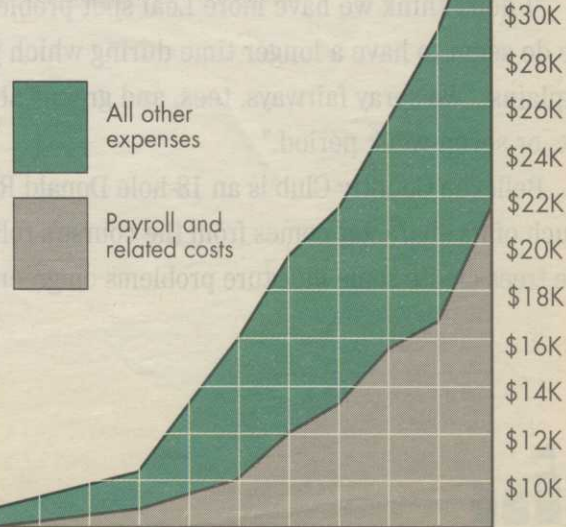
By PETER BLAIS

Increasing labor costs, declining membership and less money available for capital improvements are among the disturbing findings in an annual report on the health of private country clubs.

From 1972-82, private golf course maintenance personnel were paid less than the average income paid workers in that general labor pool. Since then, however, course employees have been and continue to be paid more than the pool average, according to Kevin Reilly, national tax director for the international accounting firm Pannell Kerr

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Average Annual Cost Per Hole



Source: Pannell Kerr Forster

Wadsworth: A training ground in excellence for aspiring architects

Continued from page 1

training ground for people aspiring to be golf course architects.

The numbers are legion: five former Wadsworth employees own design firms; 11 work for design companies; at least two own construction companies; and others are employed in related fields. At least five architects' sons have worked for Wadsworth and pursued careers in design.

"Some say we're the IBM of golf. People come to work for us,

Editor's note: In this report "Wadsworth" is at once personal and collective — standing for both the boss and his company.

then take what they've learned and start out on their own," said Paul Eldridge, president of Wadsworth.

"It was the most eye-opening experience I ever had," said Schreiner, who now hangs an architect's shingle, belongs to

the American Society of Golf Course Architects (ASGCA), and is doing very well, thank you. "You could take both my college degrees and throw them right out the window. What I learned from Wadsworth has been invaluable.

"Others work at the 'corporate' level. Wadsworth goes beyond dollars and cents," Schreiner said. "He works at the 'spiritual' level — in the sense of 'Do for others what you would expect them to do for you,' regardless of whether it is going to cost more and

You could take both my college degrees and throw them right out the window.

What I learned from Wadsworth has been invaluable.'

— Craig Schreiner

regardless if it is at a higher level."

Architect Art Hills had more than one reason for sending four of his six sons to work for

Wadsworth summers.

"Brent's goal is being absolutely determined to get the job done as well as possible," Hills said. "His philosophy is to get the job done the way the architect wants it done — of course respecting the owner's requirements — and making revisions as they are deemed necessary throughout the project, and not saying, 'Well, that will cost an extra \$5,000 or \$10,000.'"

Noting the many members who learned construction management under Wadsworth, ASGCA Executive Director Paul Fullmer said: "That made the transition into the design field easier for them. They weren't reinventing the model. The model had been established by Wadsworth and accepted in the industry."

Impressions left on then-employees/now-architects by the Wadsworth company have been indelible — first, in how a job should be done physically; second, how it should be approached philosophically.

Physically, Wadsworth taught:

- "Being able to spot opportunities to make a hole better while you're building it. You only get one chance." — Mike Dasher, who worked with Wadsworth from 1973-79 and is now a lead designer for Hills.

- "The information coming in [while at Wadsworth] was unbelievable... Everything I teach now in construction management is a reflection of the exact things I learned at Wadsworth." — Schreiner.

- "As an architect I was always form-driven. You design courses and work out strategy and concepts on paper. But when you go out in the field, there are subtleties that need to be adjusted. Working with Brent gave me confidence in my ability to look at details, make a quick decision to do something, do it once and do it right." — Keith Foster, a six-year employee now president of his own firm in Phoenix, Ariz., and St. Louis.

- "I learned a lot about looking at plans, surveying, 'balancing' dirt, and making grades work... Also, about teamwork. Everybody and everything [at Wadsworth] works as a team. You learn what equipment can and can't do." — Carter Morrish, a four-year employee who is now a designer for father Jay.

- "You can only do so much with [scale drawings of] one inch equals 50 feet or 100 feet. They really know how to relate to different architects and their styles." — Tim Nugent, who worked for Wadsworth briefly at Desert Highlands and The Boulders projects in Arizona and now is a lead architect for his father Dick.

Philosophically, the Wadsworth effect may run deeper:

- "No doubt, Brent's philosophy has affected me in my life and business. I've always

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THE WADSWORTH PHILOSOPHY

Do the job the way you'd want it done for you

By MARK LESLIE

Reflecting on the 16 people who have worked for him and gone on to golf course design, Brent Wadsworth said, "Yes, there are quite a few." But the ultimate question is, What did they expect to learn?

"First, they're trying to learn all the construction practices — all the little details — that go into making a golf course," he said. "Beyond that, they observe and bring up questions, ideas and thoughts relative to the designer's skills and the elements he projects into a course.

"They are constantly looking at those types of things. This is probably what leads them into

the next step — which is working for an architect."

Wadsworth singled out Keith Foster and Craig Schreiner as aspiring architects who "laid it on the line. They said up front that they wanted to some day be designers. They weren't hiding anything. They weren't going to leave without you knowing it. And they were very interested in learning everything they could about our business. You could feel that happening. What they were contributing to was not only our work but their own learning processes. And you could tell that by the way they handled themselves."

Qualities he looks for are "high

integrity and decent moral character," Wadsworth said. "Those things you don't always find out until later. But they surface with those who stay with us.

"We have an opportunity to hire people all over the country simply because we travel. We have a broad spectrum to look at. The ones we end up with are people who are going to further our concepts of good business and who like to work. They remain because of the intense human efforts that they make and we require."

Wadsworth was an architect in
Continued on next page

Would-be architects learn trade with Wadsworth

Continued from previous page

thought, 'Is this the way I should conduct myself? Is this the way Brent would conduct himself?' I value his honesty, integrity and sincerity above anyone else's in the business." — Foster.

• "You're going to get the same product no matter who in the company you work with or where you are. They have an ingrained corporate philosophy: Brent always wants the job to finish with everybody happy. If he has to spend more money that wasn't in the contract, Brent will go the extra mile to get the whole thing turnkeyed. Others might say, 'Here are the keys. You can drive it away. But it's missing a hubcap.'" — Nugent.

• "In the construction business you want to perform at a high-quality level, yet you still have to get the job done and on time and under budget. Blending all that has made Brent successful. If he came out on a job and saw something that would make a product better, he wouldn't rest until it was done." — Dasher.

Dasher even has a list of "Brentisms" gathered during his work for — and now with — Wadsworth:

The right way — Means you always have time to go back and fix something.

Work hard to get lucky — Means you can put yourself into position for big jobs, great opportunities and good fortune by making sure you do your work thoroughly and completely.

Equalizers — Refers to sometimes small, sometimes large design elements that help swing the advantage from the long hitter to the short hitter.

Sometimes you do your best work by accident — Be smart enough to recognize when an unplanned or unexpected element is just what you need, knowing when you have done enough is very important.



If he came out on a job and saw something that would make a product better, he wouldn't rest until it was done.'

— Mike Dasher

this kind of background," Dasher said. "The wealth of knowledge a young man could get is staggering — first as a trainee and then as superintendent working with a number of architects and difficult projects."

"A lot of what architects lack in field construction experience in terms of schedules, times, drawings, specifications — everything," Schreiner said, adding that with his Wadsworth experience, "Builders can see when they come out on my site that I have

the contractor in mind in addition to the superintendent and the owner. I learned how architecture applies to the construction, especially natural drainage and downtime because of rain."

As for Foster: "I had always considered myself a very detailed person... But Brent and I would look at mounds and he would talk about shaving off 3 inches — and that was over a distance of 200 yards. We'd look at a golf course through a microscope, Brent's eyes."

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When the American Society of Golf Course Architects gave Brent Wadsworth (front, fourth from left) the Donald Ross Award last year, all members who had worked with him posed for a picture. All but a few in the banquet hall joined in.

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