

## BRIEFS



## BUILDERS BUILD DATA BASE

CHAPEL HILL, N.C. — The Golf Course Builders Association of America (GCBA) hopes to be able to answer in early 1995 what it costs to build a golf course. A survey of GCBA member builders, on projects they have completed, divided the country into four regional zones and contained 25 areas of construction costs. GCBA Executive Director Phil Arnold said the data will be compiled by his staff, formatted for distribution as appropriate, and updated annually.

## HUEBER JOINS FLOYD GROUP

MIAMI BEACH, Fla. — David B. Hueber has been appointed president and CEO of The Raymond Floyd Group. Hueber has served as president and CEO of Accuform Golf Corp, Ben Hogan Co. and Ben Hogan Properties and the National Golf Foundation



David Hueber

The Raymond Floyd Group brings under one umbrella an organization of existing companies related to Floyd's golf course design work, acquisition and management of golf courses, sports marketing, tournament and event marketing, as well as corporate relationships and licensing.

## DOAK PULLS NO PUNCHES

TRAVERSE CITY, Mich. — Architect Tom Doak's "The Confidential Guide to Golf Courses", an update of a 1987 edition circulated to only 40 of his friends, is a no-holds-barred review of more than 880 courses around the world. Hundreds of courses are rated on architectural merits on a 0-10 scale in summaries from 50 to 500 words. List price is \$100. Order through Renaissance Golf Design, Inc. 10656 S. Timberlee, Traverse City, Mich. 49684.

## NIEBUR, BAIRD MOVE FIRMS

Gary Roger Baird and Joe Niebur have announced they have moved their respective companies to new headquarters. Baird Design International, Ltd. has moved from Nashville, Tenn., to Brentwood, Tenn., and opened a West Coast office in Santa Ana, Calif. Baird's Brentwood address is 5123 Paddock Village Court, Suite A21; telephone 615-373-9610. His Santa Ana address is 2807 Catherine Way; telephone 714-476-6878. Meanwhile, Niebur's golf course building firm, Niebur Golf, has moved from Medford, Ore., to Colorado Springs, Colo. Niebur is located at 655 Southpoint Court, Suite 100; telephone 719-527-0313.

GOLF COURSE NEWS

## A unique breed: supers-turned-designers

By MARK LESLIE

Their number is so small they do not even constitute a fraternity — these superintendents-turned-architects. But their perspective is unique in the world of golf course design, construction and maintenance.

"I ruined two golf holes when I was a superintendent," admitted Keith Foster, and the architect was none other than Robert Trent Jones, who had done "a wonderful job."

"I've had a couple of courses I've taken my name off because maintenance was so poor that I didn't want anybody to know I had anything to do with them," said Jack Snyder, a Class AA superintendent and a fellow and former president of the American

Society of Golf Course Architects (ASGCA).

"Being a superintendent is not one of the easiest jobs in the world," said Jan Beljan, a former GCSAA scholarship recipient who is now an ASGCA member and a lead architect with Tom Fazio Golf Course Designers, Inc. "As a golf course designer with a superintendent's background, you understand what the superintendent will have to face, what his budgets are now and what they will be, say, in the event the members buy the club in five years and won't maintain it the way it was designed."

The few supers-turned-architects "are not dealing with an ivory-tower approach, but with grunt-level determinations," declared Dr. Michael

Hurdzan, who not only was a superintendent at one time but holds master's and doctoral degrees relating to turfgrass. He is also past president of the ASGCA.

Snyder, 76, of Phoenix, Ariz., is the dean of this group who once punched the time clock as superintendents but now do business under the moniker "Golf Course Designer." The group also numbers Bobby Weed of Ponte Vedra, Fla., Craig Schreiner of Kansas City and Brian Silva of Uxbridge, Mass.

Some feel an education in turfgrass management is crucial for a golf course designer. One Southeastern superintendent called "the lack of understanding of maintenance complexes" a "glaring hole" in the golf

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## Dye teams with Landmark Golf, Paiute Tribe on 4-course project

LAS VEGAS, Nev. — The first of four championship-caliber, public golf courses at the Las Vegas Paiute Resort, all designed by Pete Dye, will open next March, according to a joint announcement from the Las Vegas Paiute Tribal Council and Landmark Golf Co.

It is the first time Dye has created four golf courses at the same site, and he said: "It's hard to top yourself. But I'm going to try."

The courses will be built around a central resort core and have real-estate within them. The site, on the Paiute Reservation at Snow Mountain, about 18 miles north of downtown Las Vegas, is "a beautiful, natural desert setting," Dye said.

The first course, measuring 7,130 yards, features expansive views of

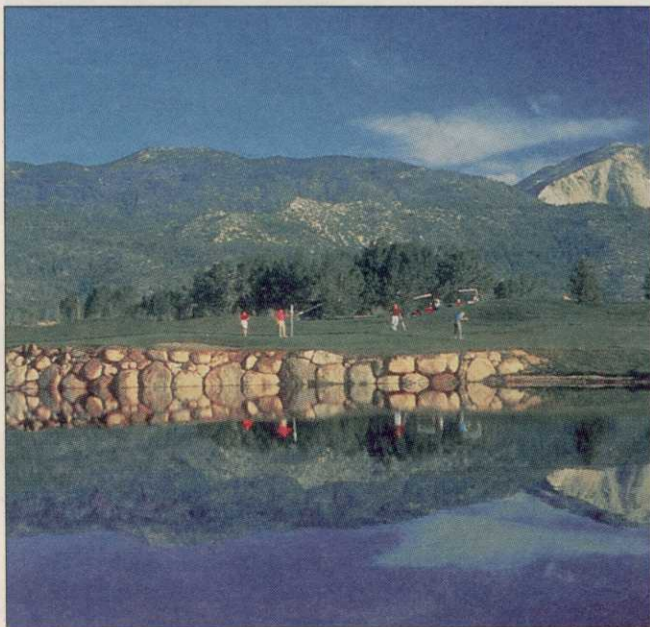
Mount Charleston to the west and Sheep Mountain to the east.

In addition to the four courses, there will be a 42,100-square-foot resort clubhouse with views of the golf courses and surrounding mountainscapes.

Dr. Tom Climo, economic development director of the Paiute Indian Tribe, said the master plan calls for casinos, hotels and a 20,000-square-foot smoke shop.

Johnny Pott is project director and director of golf.

Landmark Golf is also involved in planning, development and management of Palm Springs Classic in Palm Springs, Calif.; Paradise Ridge in Phoenix, Ariz.; The Plantation in Indio, Calif.; Circle T Ranch in Dallas; and Rancho Vistoso in Tucson, Ariz.



## STRIKING THE BALL AT LIGHTNING

The Golf Club at Lightning W Ranch, Washoe Valley, Nev., designed by Robert Muir Graves, opened Oct. 1. The 18-hole, 7,200-yard par 72 layout includes extensive practice facilities and a 20,000 square foot clubhouse. It is the first equity private club in northern Nevada in four decades. Chris Thomson is the golf professional.



Dick Nugent at the site of one of his projects.

## Q &amp; A Dick Nugent: An anchor in heartland

Dick Nugent, 63, has been around golf courses his entire life. He was a caddy in 1940 and later worked on the maintenance crew at Bob-O-Link Golf Club in Highland Park, Ill. Robert Bruce Harris hired Nugent after the aspiring young architect graduated from the University of Illinois in 1958. Six years later, Nugent and Ken Killian opened their own firm. The pair designed dozens of courses together, including Kemper Lakes in Long Grove, Ill., before parting professionally in 1983. Nugent formed his own company, which includes son Tim and daughter-in-law Andrea. While widely known for his Chicagoland layouts, Nugent has expanded his reach worldwide, designing courses in Hawaii, Europe and elsewhere.

**Golf Course News:** What differentiates your company from other architectural firms?

**Dick Nugent:** I guess you'd have to look at our long-term record. We've been in the business 36 years and hopefully we've learned something along the way.

We are also one of the few firms that practice true construction management. We make sure the project stays on schedule, remains within budget and that moneys are spent properly. That's Tim and Andrea's area of expertise. Tim has a degree in engineering construction management and a master's in business administration. Andrea graduated number one in her industrial engineering class.

We put an on-site construction manager on every job. Dan Cunningham and Eric Wadsworth [Brent Wadsworth's son] are our project managers. Tim and Andrea oversee their work.

**GCN:** How involved is Tim in the business?

**DN:** Tim is in the process of taking over the company. I'd like to always be around to meddle a bit, but we're moving toward a full partnership. I have a house in Phoenix. I'm there half the time and here [Long Grove] the other half.

**GCN:** You're considered one of the dominant architects in the Chicago market. Would you consider that your area?

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## Once a super...

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course design business. As an example of the lack of priority some architects give course maintenance, he pointed to a project that was designed without a maintenance building.

"They had to take out two prime house lots for that building, after the fact," he said.

How has turfgrass education helped this clutch of architects?

"I think it's quite important," Snyder said. "The experience I had as a kid working on a golf course and doing all the nasty

jobs around a place — cleaning the sand traps on the course and the grease traps in the clubhouse — all helped prepare me for this."

Some of the lessons:

- Snyder's Law, according to Jack, is "there are slopes beyond which you should not design."

"Look at the Flymo work that's being done on steep slopes," Snyder added. "It's not reasonable, or practical, and it has caused a lot of problems at lots of courses that are just not maintainable — or if they are, you do it by hand, and what does that cost you?"

- "A lot of designers may have worked on a course or caddied,"

said Beljan, "but I spent years growing up riding all the maintenance equipment. And when you're out there yourself, dawn to dark, and know what the equipment can and can not do, you design accordingly."

Many advances in equipment over the last 20 years have made a difference in both turfgrass maintenance and design, she said, including new grasses for greens and those steeper slopes Snyder spoke of: Flymos and weed-eaters for hard-to-get-to places; and irrigation systems with heads around greens that help avoid over-watering.

- Foster's training has led him to "always look, not at what I shouldn't do but what I should do: positive drainage, surface drainage, air circulation around greens — all the things that allow a superintendent to do his job. What an architect can do is design something that is impossible to maintain, like place a green in a valley surrounded by trees. That was done for many years."

- "To me," said Hurdzan. "my background has been the greatest help in being able to deal with superintendents at a peer level, to break from the norm in the kinds of grasses

and fertilizers we use and the kinds of greens we build, and to deal with environmentalists."

He added that architects without a background in turfgrass management are at a disadvantage "when dealing with an environmental hearing or group and having to justify why golf courses are good neighbors to the environment. Those of us who have that background are able to speak forcefully about it because we have used those materials, and understand all the ramifications and interactions of turfgrass management and, more importantly, how to avoid problems and implement Integrated Plant Management."

Yet, Hurdzan tempers help-the-super talk with the admonishment that golf designers are in the entertainment business. "I look at us as being in the entertainment business and we're trying to sell value to the golfer," he said. "We want the golfer to come to our golf course, give us 4-1/2 to 5 hours of his time and \$30 to \$50 of his money and walk away saying, 'God, that was worth it.' So, what I think personally [about design], and what I think for a golf course to be profitable and for a golfer to feel like he has gotten the value out of a project, may clash.

"If you're trying to make golfers happy — I don't care how difficult a feature is for the superintendent — it should be in there. I'm not a big fan of flowers, as an example. But if that makes people choose one course over another, put them in there. They can help tee complexes. You may have to hire a horticulturist, but that could be the difference between success and failure in some places."

Yet, like his colleagues, Hurdzan maintains a healthy respect for the needs and desires of superintendents.

"I don't think many superintendents try to cross over and do what I do," he said. "I find supers recognize the professional relationship we have. They know more about growing greens to the level of perfection golfers want, and they recognize I know how to build a golf course to how the owner wants it. That's a neat equilateral triangle between the three of us. I defer to the superintendent in technical matters. And he defers in matters I should know about."

## Maintain integrity

Continued from previous page  
a conscious decision to make the greens smaller," he said.

"One other thing is where we have a bluegrass collar and bentgrass green, a green chairman will decide he wants a bentgrass collar. So they start moving in on the green for a bentgrass collar. That also makes the green too small."

"Superintendents, for better or worse, have a major impact on golf course design," Foster said.

All agree the good impact can far outweigh the bad, especially if the superintendent is brought aboard a project early.

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