

BRIEFS



PITTMAN/FLOYD PICKED

GREAT EXUMA ISLAND, Bahamas — Bland Pittman and Raymond Floyd will design an 18-hole golf course as a cornerstone of a 518-acre luxury resort community which will be built here beginning this summer. The Bahama Club, Ltd. of Coral Gables, Fla., is developing the project, which is being designed by Sandy & Babcock International and master-planned by Pittman Poe & Associates. Ritz-Carlton oceanfront hotel is also a centerpiece of the project.



Raymond Floyd

COUNTY, HICKMAN HILLS ENTER PACT

DUTCHESS COUNTY, N.Y. — The Dutchess County Economic Development Corp. (EDC) has entered into an agreement with Hickman Hills Corp. for construction of an 18-hole golf course to be financed with EDC bonds. HJM Corp., active in the golf world for 30 years, advised Hickman and structured the bond financing. Designed by Lee Trevino, the course should be under construction this spring and open for limited play in mid-season 1996.

GOLFDATA CREATES NEW SERVICES

ROCKVILLE, Md. — GolfData International, Inc. has initiated a new high-tech information retrieval service — a fax-back system that offers “instant access to key golf market intelligence” it believes is crucial to business planning and development. The service includes golfer demographic profiles, consumer spending information, market data and financial statistics. CEO Scott Marlowe said the firm is also introducing GOLFax • letter, an online newsletter. More information is available from GolfData at 15012 Red Clover Drive, Rockville, Md. 20853.

LAGREE JOINS BARBARON

CRYSTAL RIVER, Fla. — Black Diamond Ranch General Manager and Vice President Terrill A. LaGree has left to join golf course builder Barbaron, Inc. as vice president and equal stockholder. LaGree is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin with a degree in landscape architecture.

FOSTER PROMOTES SCHAUPETER

ST. LOUIS, Mo. — Arthur Schaupeter has been promoted to lead design associate with Keith Foster Golf Course Design here. Jason Hollen, a landscape architecture graduate of West Virginia University, has joined the design staff.



Engh leaves the safety net of anonymity

By HAL PHILLIPS

CASTLE ROCK, Colo. — Instead of that Dye character, perhaps American Express should have considered designer Jim Engh for its trademark “Do you know me?” campaign.

Yet the window of opportunity may have passed.

After working under respected architects like Dick Nugent and Britain's Cotton Pennink, then designing courses on behalf of Bernhard Langer and Isao Aoki for International Management Group (IMG), Engh is working under his own name as part of his new firm, Global Golf Design.

“I'll be honest: I got to some of the top projects around

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Designer Crenshaw takes little time to savor his second Masters victory

By MARK LESLIE

AUSTIN, Texas — With his second Masters victory tucked snug in his bank of “memories to keep,” the question in the golf development world is, what effect might it have on Ben Crenshaw's course design career?

When Hale Irwin won the U.S. Open in 1990, his course design business soared. On the Wednesday after Crenshaw donned the Masters' green blazer, his design partner Bill Coore reported that his Austin office had been deluged with congratulatory calls.

“It's reasonable to expect that some people who were considering us may be swayed now,” Coore said, “but it's too early to tell. We try to keep a separation between Ben's playing career and what we do. But, obviously, there's carryover.”

That night, Coore and Crenshaw were on a plane enroute to Tembagapura, Indonesia, where they face some unique “life situations.”

Impressed by Crenshaw and Coore's golf course design at Barton Creek in Austin, Texas, as well as Crenshaw's victory at their own Freeport-McMoRan Classic last year, Freeport-McMoRan officials hired the design team to craft an 18-hole track for their mining crews in Tembagapura.

With a complete community built around its copper and gold mine, Freeport-McMoRan decided a golf course would be fitting, as a respite for its employees and visitors from abroad, Crenshaw said.

“It will provide play for the miners and for the Americans, Australians and others who come from elsewhere who are involved in the operation,” Crenshaw said. The facility will be geared more toward being recreational than money-making, he added.

Clearing of the site began last fall, and Crenshaw, taking a break from the PGA Tour, said, “We hope to start grassing in the summer and try to have an opening in the fall.”

Building the course in concert with Freeport-McMoRan's engineering team, Coore and Crenshaw will import their own shapers to fine-tune their design. “Their equipment is there

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Is this the Twilight Zone or the Third World?

Reflections of a ‘vacationing’ super at the top of the world

By GORDON WITTEVEEN

KATMANDU, Nepal — My vacation in Nepal was meant to be just that: a get-away-from-it-all month without golf courses or superintendents. The combination of a radically different culture and the clean mountain air would surely cleanse my brain and remove the cobwebs. A fresh outlook and a deeper appreciation full of life in general would surely result.

The adventure had started with a trans-Atlantic flight to London and a continuation to New Delhi, the capital of India. From there it was just an hour and a half to the top of the world. We landed here in exotic Katmandu. The name of Nepal's capital had intrigued me ever since my first geography lesson on Asia. Actually, the place is a bit of a disappointment. There are no cats in sight; instead, it is loaded with dogs. I suppose if it was called Dogmandu no one would go there.

On the way from the airport I got blurry-eyed from a speeding taxi view of a small red flag in a vacant field but immediately

Gordon Witteveen is superintendent of five Metropolitan Toronto Board of Trade golf courses.



“Doing it my way” takes on a whole new meaning in Nepal.

banished the words “golf course” from my mind. I had made a sacred vow to stay away from golf courses.

Two days later, after visiting five temples and three museums, I snuck away from the group, hired a rickshaw and headed for the Royal Nepal Golf Club. It was noon time on a warm, sunny day in November when I climbed a fence to

have a closer look at the grass. Imagine my surprise when the first green I came to was not green at all, but black, since the putting surface was made from used oil and sand. Greens such as these I had not seen since the '60s in Saskatchewan. The tees were small, elevated and rectangular. They had recently been top-

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Harvard plans design courses

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. — Harvard University Graduate School of Design will offer five summer courses related to golf course and resort planning and design.

The course work will include Golf Course Environmental Considerations, July 31 to Aug. 1; Golf Course Design, Aug. 2-3; Golf Clubhouse Design and Site Planning, Aug. 4-5; Golf Course Development, Aug. 7-8; and Golf/Residential Site Planning, Aug. 9-10.

Instructors will include course

architects Geoffrey S. Cornish and Robert Muir Graves; course architect Dr. Michael Hurdzan and environmental scientist Dr. Stuart Cohen. In addition, golf development consultants Barbara Hanley and Pamela McKinney; and developers Van Tengberg and Garth Chambers will offer their insights.

For more information is available from the Office of Development and External Relations, GSD, Harvard University, 48 Quincy St., Cambridge, Mass. 02138; 617-495-1680.

GULF HARBOUR REOPENS

FT. MYERS, Fla. — Florida Design Communities opened Gulf Harbour Yacht & Country Club on March 11-12, unveiling its half-redesigned 18-hole golf course. Gulf Harbour, formerly known as River's Edge Y&CC, was purchased by Florida Design Communities in July 1993. Since that time, FDC has redesigned nine of the golf course's 18 holes to form a more challenging layout.

Nepal: where greens are black & golf is — well — something new

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dressed, evidence that a greenkeeper must be around somewhere.

I nosed my way to the clubhouse where I was met by Mr. Spacharya, the manager, who welcomed me and gave me a guided tour of the premises.

The Royal Nepal Golf Course is just nine holes and only 2,600 yards with four par-3 holes. In spite of these modest qualifica-

tions, Royal Nepal is the best of the three courses in the entire country. The members are mostly diplomats and Western visitors, but more and more native Nepalis are taking up the game.

Five of nine greens are sand but recently four greens have been converted to grass. This is a cumbersome process. There are no machines and all the work is done by hand. The sub-grade is spaded and raked, then the top mix is carried in by basket or wheel barrow. Progress is slow and it may take more than a month to rough grade just a small green. But time is plentiful and labor is cheap since the workers earn just a few rupees a day. Women do much of the work. They toil in the fields, carry heavy loads tied to their foreheads, and have hoards of children, while frequently the men play cards and smoke the water pipe.

Once the new greens are established, explained Mr. Spacharya, the maintenance of the golf course becomes more complicated. Last year the club appointed a supervisor to direct the workers on the course. One of the biggest problems is to water the new greens. There was no money for pipes or a pump. The only other way was to carry the water from a small stream to the greens. Sturdy workers carried two 5-gallon pails on a yoke and splashed the water on the grass.

The club had recently purchased an English walk-behind greens mower. It was their proudest possession and it was stored in the clubhouse for safekeeping. A small rotary mower rounded out the equipment inventory.

"How do you cut the fairways?" I asked. Mr. Spacharya patiently took me back out on the golf course and introduced me to the herdsman who was in charge of the mowing machines: a dozen hungry cows who splattered fertilizer as they nipped the grass on the fairways. The herdsman, protected by a large umbrella, kept track of his charges with a whispy little cane.

There were few golfers out on this particular day, but all had caddies to carry their clubs. Each golfer was also accompanied by a ball boy who keeps an eye on errant shots. Even poor golfers rarely lose their balls on this course. If a ball boy does a good job, he may eventually become a caddy and also have an opportunity to play the game in the annual caddy tournament.

Golf has a future in this small faraway country. "Does the King of Nepal play golf?" I asked Mr. Spacharya.

"When he was Crown Prince he would come out occasionally, but now that he is King he is obviously too busy," explained my host understandingly.

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