

## BRIEFS



## AIR FORCE CHOOSES GPS

LAS VEGAS — The U.S. Air Force has selected Golf Planning Solutions (GPS) of Hacienda Heights, Calif., to provide construction management for the \$4 million expansion and renovation of the Nellis Air Force Base golf course here. An additional nine holes will be built on land adjacent to the existing course, while several existing holes will be realigned, a new irrigation system installed, cart storage building built and water features modernized. The project was designed by Halsey Daray Golf of La Mesa, Calif.

## TWIN BRIDGES SHAPING UP

DANVILLE, Ind. — Twin Bridges Golf Club is being developed by Heritage Golf Management, Inc., an Indianapolis-based development management and consulting company. The 6,975-yard layout was designed by Lohmann Golf Designs, Inc. of Marengo, Ill., and is expected to open in late fall of 1996. It will be the centerpiece of the proposed 800-acre recreational area being developed by the Twin Bridges Recycling and Disposal facility, which is owned and operated by Waste Management of Indiana.

## STILLWATERS ADDING TRACK

LAKE MARTIN, Ala. — The Golf Group, Inc. has been selected to build a second golf course at StillWaters on Lake Martin here. The new course at StillWaters, The Tradition, was designed by Kurt Sandness of Raleigh, N.C., and should be ready for play in the fall of 1996. This facility will serve the new course as well as the existing George Cobb-designed "Legend" course at StillWaters. The total project cost for the new golf course and clubhouse is approximately \$5 million.

## PRIMADONNA INKS FAZIO

STATELINE, Nev. — Primadonna Resorts, Inc. and Sheldon Gordon and Randy Brant, developers of the Forum Shops at Caesars complex, plan to build a 1 million-square-foot themed shopping facility on 100 acres here here



Tom Fazio

that will blend medium and upscale retail factory outlet stores with restaurants and the latest in high-tech interactive entertainment. The golf angle? A Tom Fazio-designed 18-hole championship golf course, with an additional 18 holes planned for the future.

## Q & A Casper & Nash flex their design versatility

PHOENIX, Ariz. — After winning 51 PGA victories, including two U.S. Opens and a Masters Championship, and Vardon Trophies with the PGA Tour's best scoring average for five years, Billy Casper took his playing credentials to the design table. In 1986 he joined forces with Greg Nash, who had already designed 37 golf courses, to create Casper/Nash & Associates. Since then, they have designed 50 golf courses worldwide. They have worked extensively for Del E. Webb Corp., Continental Homes, Gosnell Builders, Southwest Forest Industries and others. Managing Editor Mark Leslie caught them in a rare moment when they were both indoors and not out on the course.

**Golf Course News:** Billy, you'd accomplished enough in golf. Why did you decide to get involved in course design?

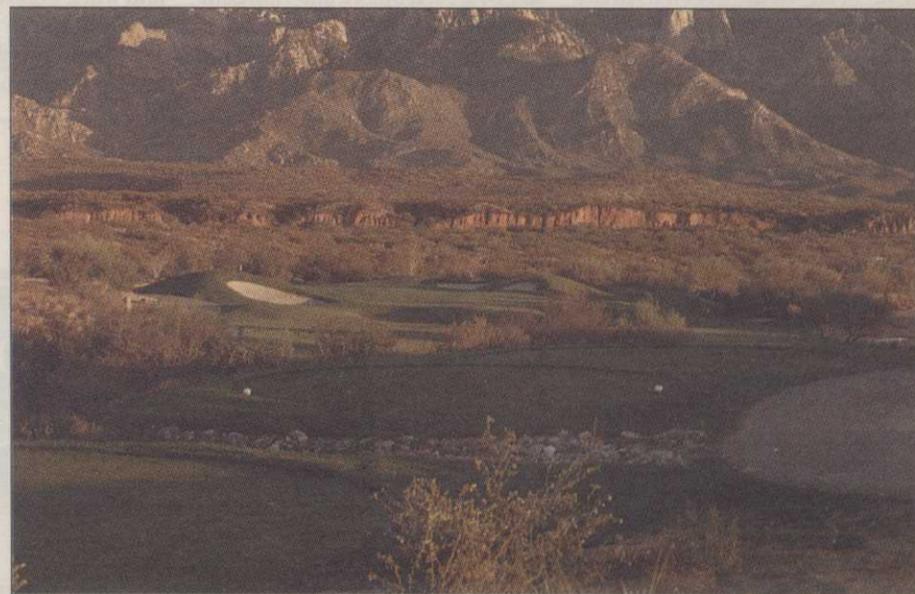
**Billy Casper:** I felt many of the architects were designing golf courses that were too difficult. Many courses were being designed for less than one percent of the golfers. I've always felt golf courses should be playable and enjoyable. I often tell people if their golf game gives them a headache or an ulcer they might as well turn professional. At many of the courses, it not only cost a substantial amount of money to play, but you'd better take three dozen golf balls with you... Consequently, your round would not take 3-1/2 to four hours, as it should take, but five and sometimes six hours.

**GCN:** What drew you to Greg as a partner?

**BC:** I searched for somebody who had a reputation as a good designer. I didn't have the tools of an architect. But I had a lot of ideas as a golfer. I've played since I was 4-1/2 and I've played in 36 countries. I have a lot of likes and dislikes, and I felt I could add something as an architect. I was drawn to Greg because of his work with a large corporation headquartered in Arizona [Del Webb]. They told me he was pretty good. And, by golly, he was.

We've had a wonderful time together. We communicate well.

**Greg Nash:** We had that conversation before we got together: Basically, we



The 11th hole at Casper/Nash-designed Sun City Palm Springs.

found out that we had the same goals. We're not into mass production, doing 30 courses a year, but we wanted quality and playability. I'm not a professional golfer, but I've played for over 30 years, and the average golfer wants to be challenged but not get beat up.

**BC:** Another thing we like to bring to the table is flexibility in a golf course. By having a series of tees that are not in a straight line, but island tees, you get a different concept of each hole... With that

flexibility, they can play the same course but get a different feeling each time out.

We love to point to Terravita in North Scottsdale as a course that is not only playable but very flexible.

**GN:** They held the U.S. Open qualifier there this May and the average score was 74.9. Yet, for members playing the different tees, it doesn't play that way. When we had the opening, the members told us: "You designed this for us." That

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## Doe Valley a family affair

SOUTH FULTON, Tenn. — Fulfilling a longtime dream to own his own golf course, PGA professional Lynn Newton has gone one step further, adding a learning center to his new public, family oriented facility here.

Built by Lynn and son Kyle, Doe Valley Golf Center Inc. features an 18-hole, executive-length course, 15-acre, state-of-the-art lighted driving range for 25 players, four covered tee stations, lighted target greens and a practice putting green. Plans call for lighting the first nine holes of the course; electronic teaching aids such as swing analysis monitors and video equipment; more covered tee stations; a miniature golf course; and a video game room.

The Doe Valley staff, including Kyle's wife Tari, has taken steps to include all individuals in activities regardless of age, skill level, gender or race, Lynn said. "Doe Valley will fill a void for citizens of our area who are interested in golf but cannot



Doe Valley Golf Center's 3rd hole, featuring a forward island tee.

afford, do not desire or are not welcome at private clubs. It is also for golfers who are already members of private clubs with regular Bermudagrass greens and desire to play during the winter. It will be the only public, bentgrass course available in this area [8 miles from Martin]."

Kyle said the 3,203-yard track will appeal to beginning and advanced golfers.

"Beginners, seniors and kids

are at a disadvantage on normal-length courses because they haven't developed adequate skills and the strength needed to reach the green within regulation," he said. "The shortness of Doe Valley will alleviate the number of strokes it takes to get to the green, creating a more competitive game for the beginner."

Yet, Lynn's layout is a challenge to experienced golfers

as well, he maintained. Six holes require play across water. The course contains four ponds, three island tees, a peninsula green, woods, hills and flat land. There are 11 par-3 holes, six par-4s and one par-5.

"The most competitive part of golf is mainly 200 to 150 yards in, because that is mainly where you do most of your scoring," Lynn said. "A good golfer can show his stripes, because these are usually the points that make or break par. Continuously practicing those shots and honing those skills, the advanced golfer will be able to cut his score down, even on a longer course, with chipping and putting."

"I think any golf pro who has served as a professional always has the dream in the back of his mind to build his own course," said Lynn, a 25-year pro. "I thought to myself, 'There is no better time to do it than now.'"

He, his son and hired hands, including an experienced golf course shaper, fought mud, rain and inclement weather to get the course built and, one year later, open on Aug. 25.

## Q&A: Casper-Nash

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was exactly our direction. Yet pros definitely got a challenge.

**GCN:** Do you see a move back to the chip-and-run game?

**BC:** We like to visit with clients for a period of time and find out what they want in their golf course. For instance, Sun City West's golf committee said they wanted a roller course — meaning that there was no trouble in front of any of the greens. All the hazards were on the sides of the fairways and greens and in back of the greens. These people were retired and wanted to roll the ball onto the green. They issued 200 invitations for a walk-through and 1,200 people showed up. We have gotten tremendous comments on how people enjoy playing this course. You go to the back tees and it is one tough test of golf, even though no hazards are in front of the greens.

**GN:** We typically design greens larger than normal. You skew the shape of the green and put in pin placements that bring the hazards into play. Most of our greens are 7,000 to 8,000 square feet. I agree about the bump-and-run... Over here, you don't have the ability to do that because of the design of greens and fairways and because the turf here is so lush.

**GCN:** What is the fingerprint of a Casper-Nash golf course?

**BC:** Our trademark is playability. Greg was adding multiple tees some time ago, and we have expanded on that.

**GN:** The philosophy is this: Tees are fairly cheap to build and use. Why not build them, maintain them as tees, or let them go and bring them up to quality just for certain events? Also, you can use tees not only to shorten or lengthen a hole, but you can go laterally with them. It totally changes the perspective of the hole.

**GNC:** Billy, is retirement in your lexicon?

**BC:** My 11 children are finally grown and gone. My wife has wanted to do some traveling for 30 or 40 years. If I retired, it would disappoint her. And, too, it's fun to go to different sites and see the raw land and how it can be developed into a beautiful facility that brings a great deal of enjoyment to a lot of people.

**GCN:** You mentioned your family. Do you have any children who will join your design firm?

**BC:** My oldest son, Bill Sr., is in business with us. He helps coordinate projects, in marketing, and the business end.

**GCN:** Billy and Greg, your names have become almost synonymous with community and resort golf courses. Has this painted you into a corner, designwise? And do you intend to broaden your palette?

**GN:** It's a concern to us when people say we are retirement golf course architects. But I say be-

cause it's in a retirement community, it doesn't mean our design philosophy and the design quality and challenge is different than we would do for anyplace else.

We're building a course for Del Webb in Henderson (Nev.) (McDonald Ranch). The people out here are not knowledgeable about executive courses. Their misconception is that it is like a pitch-and-putt. But you could take any of those par-3s or par-4s and put them on a championship-caliber course. It's just a different combination of pars.

**GCN:** Billy, you are considered perhaps the best putter of all time.

Do you put particular care into making challenging greens?

**BC:** Greg and I sit down and talk about everything that we do...

**GN:** I've had a few lectures about it, yes.

**BC:** I make recommendations and if Greg does something and I ask why, he has to have a very valid reason. Or else, I'll make a recommendation and he'll say every once in awhile, "I never thought of that; that ought to work nicely." We communicate and work together and have a lot of fun doing it.

I'm reminded of Jim Murray's article a year or so ago, talking

about good players involved in golf course design. He commented that the designer today is designing courses for Fred Couples, not married couples. Is that true, is that true?

**GCN:** Has any of your special attention to the mid- and high-handicapper come from now being part of that older group?

**GN:** Over the 25 years of doing work with Del Webb, it's been interesting to watch the evolution of the golfers and their communities and golf in general. A lot of people 50 or 60 didn't play, or if they did they weren't very talented. We've started to see a swing

to people — now 50 or 60— who are good golfers. They come from good country clubs and expect more challenging golf.

**BC:** Let's do a comparison between that and the modern-day teaching of golf. There are so many interesting features that can be brought into the teaching program today. Each teacher makes it a little more complicated than the teacher before him. Compare that to golf course architects.

Everything in business is the same: the computer world, for instance. We have so much going on to improve. Not necessarily is it better but it seems to be better.

## You have to start pretty early to get the pick of the crop at the orchard.

*5:30...5:20...5am. Course Superintendent, Ted Woehrl, couldn't believe it. But shortly after the Workman® arrived at The Orchards Golf Club in Washington, Michigan, his staff started coming in earlier and earlier to get the Workman for the day. "We had other work vehicles," recalled Ted, "but everyone wanted the Workman."*

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