

BRIEFS

**WALKER REDESIGNING DAYTONA TRACK**

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. — Daytona has selected Robert C. Walker, Inc. of Atlantic Beach to redesign and oversee reconstruction of the North Course at the city's 36-hole facility, Daytona Beach Golf Club. Walker is also conducting a study of the South Course for future renovation. Plans and specifications are being developed and construction should begin this spring.

MARSH POINT A WHOLE NEW 18

KIAWAH ISLAND, S.C. — The revised Gary Player-designed course at Kiawah Island Resort should be ready for play this fall. The former Marsh Point



Gary Player

course, which will be renamed, closed late last year for a major renovation. Plans soon changed in favor of building an entirely new course. The par-72 layout will stretch to 6,800

yards from the back tees compared to its former 6,334-yard length. Wadsworth Construction is the builder. Virginia Investment Trust owns the resort and is financing the \$3.5 million construction effort.

GROUND BROKEN ON CC AT DC RANCH

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. — Scott Miller of Scott Miller Design has been selected by DMB Associates as the golf course architect for The Country Club at DC Ranch. The course is under construction and scheduled to open in January 1997. It will be a private 18-hole, 6,918-yard layout.

DYE UNDERTAKES KENTUCKY PROJECT

LEXINGTON, Ky. — Don Hensley, a 49-year-old retiree from IBM in Lexington, is developing The Peninsula Golf Resort on Herrington Lake near Dix Dam in northern Garrard County. Construction is about to begin on the 18-hole public-access golf course designed by Pete Dye. Hensley said he would like to see the golf course finished by spring 1997. Danny McQueen will oversee construction.

9-HOLE OCALA PINES DUE OPEN

OCALA, Fla. — Ocala Palms, a new nine-hole course designed by Steve Newgent, is expected to be open and ready for play by late April with a full-scale opening by September. The layout will measure close to 3,400 yards from the back tees but can also be played at executive-length.

REUNITED

Joneses tie design knot, yet remain independent

By MARK LESLIE

MURRIETA, Calif. — A renewed father-son partnership that began almost as a whim with construction of Walt Disney Co.'s Celebration golf course in Orlando, Fla., is now a legal entity incorporated as RTJ Golf Ventures.

The Robert Trent Joneses — Sr. and Jr. — tied the corporate knot after the Southern California Golf Association (SCGA) and a development group both asked them to co-design their projects.

Jones Jr. had been hired to add a new nine holes to the SCGA's Jones Sr.-designed Rancho California Golf

Course here and design an 18-hole track outside Sacramento for partners C.C. Myers and rancher Jerry Johnson. But an opportune Christmas-time visit by Jones Sr. with his son led to meetings with leaders of both groups. RTJ Golf Ventures was created and contracts with Jones Jr.'s RTJ II International were rewritten with the new firm. RTJ II International and the Jones Sr.'s Jones Companies will continue to design their own projects as well.

"Dad came out at Christmas to look over the SCGA project, and I suggested to them [developers] it might be fun to

make the grand master a part of it," Robert Jr. recalled. "It's a collaboration and a wonderful, fun experience."

Asked who's the boss, Robert Jr., who worked for his father from 1960 to 1972, dismissed the idea of being "joined at the hip like Siamese twins," saying: "No, it's arm-in-arm."

Describing a visit by his father to Disney's Celebration course — built for families — Robert Jr. said: "He said everything had good flow of line, a linksland feeling, and he was very happy."

Asked how much input his father had

Continued on next page

ASIA-PACIFIC UPDATE

Building boom continues pace

TOMIOKA, Japan — The \$200 million Lakewood Tomioka Country Club will welcome the public when the first round of golf is played here this month. The 27-hole facility will bring to 99 the number of holes Shigemitsu Omori has developed at Japan's Lakewood golf course chain.

A stand-alone course in the foothills of the Japanese Alps, 90 minutes due north of Tokyo, Lakewood Tomioka is "a breathtaking property," said golf course architect Ted Robinson, who has designed all five Lakewood facilities.

Meanwhile, in Bogor, Indonesia, the Jakarta-based Suryamas Group will open the Robinson-designed Rancamaya course this month. Also, on Korea's Cheju Island, the Robinson-designed Pinx Golf Club is now being planned. A stand-alone facility that calls for an 18-hole private course with a 9-hole public-access track, Pinx will be Robinson's first course design in Korea.

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OSAKA, Japan — Stressing an "environmentally sound approach," Greg Norman Golf Course Design has completed the 18-hole Himeji Shirasagi course here.



The elegant 9th hole at the Nick Faldo-designed Ocean Dunes in Phan Thiet, Vietnam.

"Despite the significant earthworks (3 million cubic meters), through our 'least-disturbance' approach, we were able to maintain 40 percent of the property's pine forests untouched," said Bart Collins, international vice president of Norman Design. "The course has already received a great deal of attention in Japan as this approach has given Himeji Shirasagi an unparalleled aesthetic beauty."

Mitsui & Co. built the project.

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MEDAN, Indonesia — The Gary Player Group is reporting an "overwhelming re-

sponse" to its Grand Village golf project here in Indonesia's third-largest city. The 18-hole Player design is already under construction, close to the city center. Upon completion, Grand Village will be Medan's first "international standard" golf course, according to Player officials.

Player's 18-hole Royal Jakarta project is continuing apace, as grassing is about to commence. Design coordinator Kosie Mentz, who assisted in the maintenance of the Gary Player-designed Fancourt golf course — recently voted South Africa's

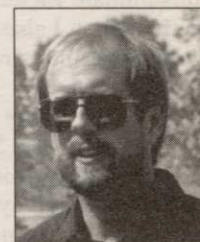
Continued on page 44



Shiun Golf Club in Niigata, Japan, was a collaboration between Denis Griffiths and his then-associate Tom Johnson.

Q & A ASGCA's 50th president, Griffiths, high on future

BRASELTON, Ga. — Denis Griffiths assumed the presidency in late March of the prestigious American Society of Golf Course Architects (ASGCA). Griffiths earned a bachelor's degree in landscape architecture in 1970 from Iowa State University, then immediately went to work for the Atlanta, Ga., design firm of Davis, Kirby, Player & Associates. In 1980 Griffiths became a full partner with Ron Kirby and one of his designs, Pole Creek GC in Winter Park, Colo. was selected by *Golf Digest* as Best New Public Course in 1984. In 1987 Kirby left to work with Jack Nicklaus in Europe and Griffiths continued his practice as Denis Griffiths & Associates. He has worked throughout the world.



Golf Course News: As the new president of the ASGCA, what is your focus?

Denis Griffiths: My platform is to listen the best I can to where our members feel we need to be going. I feel very strongly about keeping the costs of golf course construction down. I am polling our members about where they want the society to go. But we have so many levels of individuals — a strong influx of members over the last five, six, seven years, and others who

Continued on page 48

Q&A: Griffiths

Continued from page 37

have been there longer. It's quite a challenge to try to sort out the different ideas and philosophies of the society and where the business is going.

I personally have a major concern of where the golf industry is going. We have been very fortunate to have been in a golf boom since 1986. We had a lot of ups and downs through the 1970s and '80s. And I look with a bit of guarded optimism to where we're going.

If we can keep golf affordable and keep the market growing, then my concerns aren't as paramount. The more affordable golf is, the bigger our market is.

GCN: Much of it hinges on the green fee, then? Is that scary?

DG: If you look closely right now, to me it's a little scary. Our bread-and-butter is the more expensive golf courses.

GCN: Do you feel the cost of green fees is driving some people out of the game, and in the same way, a lower cost would draw those people into the game?

DG: I don't think it's driving them out of the game, but they're playing less than they would if it were more affordable.

The biggest challenge facing golf development is cost — no question. There are numerous things that are driving the costs up that aren't necessarily due to the architects' flair or flippancy. A lot of the increased costs relate to the difficulty of the sites we're working on. We're working on properties that deal with floodplain, environmentally sensitive areas, landfills, quarries, segmented parcels and other limitations that add to the time and permitting costs. If only every site were 200 acres of gentle, rolling meadow land that is partially open and partially cleared. It wasn't that many years ago that many of our courses were. But in the urban areas, where the majority of courses are being built, land is less and less available and you get technical difficulties as to how to design a golf course that's enjoyable, playable and maintainable.

GCN: Is it getting any easier to obtain

environmental approvals on the local level?

DG: I don't think so. If anything, it's probably getting more difficult — even though we are better prepared. We've been dealing with it longer and the majority of us are far better prepared than seven or eight years ago. We better understand how to work with the different individuals and integrate golf with environmentally sensitive areas. There is still a very strong green movement here in the U.S. I don't know how much they have accepted scientific findings showing the environmental friendliness of golf courses.

The USGA [U.S. Golf Association], GCSAA [Golf Course Superintendents Association of America], PGA [Professional Golfers' Association] and NGF [National Golf Foundation] have all really worked on promoting golf as a good partner with the environment. Laymen and the green movement don't necessarily agree with what we are advocating.

GCN: But shouldn't the agencies be better educated than the general public?

DG: For the most part, those individuals within the agencies are far better educated concerning environmental issues than the general public. But education is not necessarily the issue.

The society has pushed the last two years, and I will push subtly, that the golf industry has a tremendous challenge in promoting that golf is good, producing recreation and relaxation and preserving open spaces. Responsible golf maintenance certainly enhances the environment. It is not detrimental.

These are basic issues we can't back off. If you were to poll kids through junior high school, most people would be very surprised at the perception younger people have for development and golf development. You'd find many perceive that it is not positive. And you certainly do not change that perception with facts and figures.

It's very important that we do everything we can to promote that responsible golf development is good. This is not always done with facts, figures and tables.

To get across to the general public, we continually need to campaign for what we're doing. Golf development and parking lots are one in the same in many peoples' mind.

GCN: [Golf architect] Ed Seay said we will be seeing six-, eight- and 10-hole golf courses, depending on how much land is available. What do you think of that idea?

DG: I don't have a good answer. We looked at alternative facilities for varying acreage for years, those varying from par-3 to executive to nine-hole to a combination. We've done less than 18 [holes] or less than nine [holes]. But, still, you have to deal with the general public's perception and how they are accustomed to playing golf.

I would pose the question: "Are we allowed to have brown grass fairways and bump-and-run and all the nuances of Ireland and Scotland? Are they acceptable by the U.S. golfing market?" No. So, we as designers have some wonderful alternative solutions, but I doubt they will be accepted by the golfing public.

Two things here: I feel strongly that golf can be an excellent business venture. We work very diligently to make the facilities we design viable business ventures for our clients.

So when I talk about perception and will people use it, that's where I'm coming from. If I've got 30 acres and I want an 18-hole golf course and I'm able to support that out of my pocket book, that's a different issue.

We once did a course for a client who could afford it. He had 15 acres. We built five greens and 11 tees and have a wonderful 18 holes of golf.

Facilities like that are fun. They're built with small amounts of money, and they could be a great place to learn and to make golf available on properties that can't contain a regulation-sized course.

GCN: You may be best known for Bent Tree, Chateau Elan, Pole Creek and Fox Hollow. But what do you believe is your greatest accomplishment in design?

DG: Still being here. A peer said, "Our golf courses are like your children. Each one has its intricacies, something that's

special and it's unfair to pick a favorite."

GCN: What has been your toughest engineering challenge?

DG: The Legends at Chateau Elan [in Georgia] is one of my favorites because when we walked the property I said to [developer] Don Paintos: "It's a wonderful property and you've given us a relatively free hand in routing it to get the best golf course. We're getting ready to do a traditional golf course. We have these fantastic personalities who are going to work with us, and we are going to place restrictions on ourselves. Like the early 1900s, we will not use any scrapers to move dirt. So logistically we can't move dirt more than 150 feet." He said, "OK, and I'll do you one more. You won't knock down any trees. We'll move them all with a tree spade." We essentially did, and the process was great.

GCN: Working with Gene Sarazen, Sam Snead and Kathy Whitworth must have been fun.

DG: It was memorable, a wonderful opportunity. They were all great to work with. I couldn't learn enough from those three.

GCN: The course was to be a collection of their favorite holes. How did that work out?

DG: When we talked design and what they would like to see, in many cases they had very distinct, memorable images of golf holes — positive memories they wanted to pass on to the golfers.

GCN: More and more people are jumping into the field of course design — from Tour pros to former lead designers like Roger Rulewich and your own Tom Johnson. Is there enough work for everyone?

DG: No. It's very simple. In the 26 years I've been in business that's always been the case.

There is that individual who is going to do one golf course in his lifetime — whether he is a landscape architect, golf pro, or golf course owner. That segment has been there and will always be there. But to survive today just doing golf course design is going to be very difficult with all these people in the industry.



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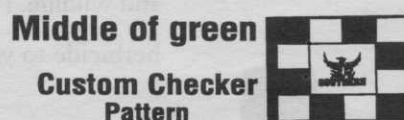
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The Ledges finally under construction

YORK, Maine — Construction could begin in April on The Ledges, an 18-hole, daily-fee course in this Southern Maine coastal community. Developer Pat Rocheleau hopes to complete a least nine holes this fall and open them late next spring or early summer. Bradley Booth is the course architect. No residential component is planned.

Booth is also beginning work this fall renovating two holes at Lincoln, (R.I.) Country Club.

Family builds public 9

HAMMOND, La. — Ponchatoula residents Art and Gus Zieske are building a small-scale, nine-hole public golf course in Hammond. The Zieskes planned to open Ironwood Golf Club for play in April.

The course has been carved out of a 35-acre tract of land about a mile east of the of the Zieskes' old Ironwood Driving Range. The new Ironwood course will include two par-4 holes and seven par-3 holes ranging in length from 100 to 230 yards.