

BRIEFS



BAIRD HIRES DESIGNER

BRENTWOOD, Tenn. — Gary Roger Baird Design International, Ltd. has hired Todd Eckenrode as a design associate. Eckenrode's responsibilities include primarily domestic design assignments, as well as production of the visual and artistic presentations for the Baird organization's overseas clients in Asia. He has a bachelor of arts degree in law and society from the University of California Santa Barbara, and a bachelor of science degree in landscape architecture from Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, Calif.

REYNOLDS, FAZIO TEAM UP

GREENSBORO, Ga. — Tom Fazio will design the third golf course at Reynolds Plantation, according to an announcement by Reynolds Plantation President William Peacher. The yet-unnamed third course will join the original Plantation Course, designed by Bob Cupp in conjunction with touring professionals Fuzzy Zoeller and Hubert Green, and Great Waters, designed by Jack Nicklaus. Construction of the Fazio design is expected to begin in February and be ready for play in 1997.

JMP APPOINTS RAMSEY

SARATOGA, Calif. — J. Michael Poellot Golf Design Group (JMP) has appointed Kevin Ramsey senior designer. With the firm for seven years, Ramsey has been involved in a number of projects throughout Asia and the United States. He will focus on developing projects through North and Latin America.

ULI APPOINTS VON HAGGE

SPRING, Texas — Golf course architect Robert von Hagge has been appointed to the Recreation Development Council for the Urban Land Institute.



Robert von Hagge

The council is a non-profit group that acts as a clearinghouse in establishing and measuring quality in amenity developments. It also deals with related issues concerning the environment, marketing, forecasting trends and funding in order to help developers.

QUARRY OWNERS SET NEW SIGHTS

SAN ANTONIO, Texas — Jay Eddy, Jack Parker and Bill Ellis, the principals of the successful Quarry Golf Club here, plan to develop a new golf course project called Courage Creek. They have retained course architect Keith Foster of St. Louis and Scottsdale, Ariz., who designed The Quarry.

GOLF COURSE NEWS

Course pipeline hot into future

By MARK LESLIE

YARMOUTH, Maine — The pipeline of new golf courses does not show any signs of drying up, according to the vast majority of golf course architects and builders responding to a Golf Course News survey.

Answering the questionnaire, 74 percent of the respondents said there is no indication of the reservoir going dry. Fourteen percent felt the number of new courses being built would begin to slow. Twelve percent felt the backlog is indeed diminishing.

More than 350 courses have opened

in the United States each year since 1991, and the number topped 400 in 1995. Another 743 are under construction, according to National Golf Foundation statistics.

Asked about the financial marketplace, 62 percent responded that clients are finding it easier to secure financing for golf projects, while 27 percent said financing is not easier to get. The remaining 11 percent felt the situation has not changed.

"I converse with many of our members on a fairly regular basis, and most

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Tim Cate's debut design — Panther's Run, the newest golf course addition to Ocean Ridge Plantation in Sunset Beach, N.C. — has opened for play. See story, page 72.

Survey reveals costs of course construction

By MARK LESLIE

CHAPEL HILL, N.C. — A nationwide survey spelling out ranges of costs for specific elements of golf course construction will be released Feb. 8 by the Golf Course Builders Association of America (GCBA).

"This is a vehicle to help the first-time developer to estimate what his project will cost," said Bill Kubly, chairman of the GCBA committee that oversaw the survey and resulting 12-page document that will be made available to potential developers. "It's been a need in the industry, and is a plus for the developers more than builders."

"One of the problems is that people get the opinion of what a golf course costs. If you tell a developer it's somewhere between \$3 million and \$5 million, invariably \$3 million ends up in the budget," said W. Tom Sasser, president of Paragon Golf Construction, Inc. in North Palm Beach, Fla., a member of the survey committee. "The purpose of the survey was to allow a prospect to try to understand the variables that affect this process."

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Illumined alum takes golf to Mississippi State

By MARK LESLIE

STARKVILLE, Miss. — With University Club golf courses taking shape at the University of South Carolina and Louisiana State University, a favorite son of another Southeastern Conference school will not be outdone.

Former Mississippi State University (MSU) football lineman and 1987 political science graduate Carl Middleton has broken ground on Dogwood Golf Club

and Residential Community on property two miles from campus.

Middleton, 31, who owns Dogwood Development Co. with partner Michael Moseby and subsidiary Middleton Golf Course Construction, expects the 18-hole golf course to be the cornerstone of the 614-acre development.



Carl Middleton

"It is part of ensuring the property values," he said. "We're shooting for one of the top golf courses in the state."

"The character of the course is very different. There are 202 acres where it is links-style. Condos will be built around five of those holes. In the hillside, where the estate lots and

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Q&A NWH at home in Pacific, eye stateside projects

When golf course architects Robin Nelson and Rodney Wright of Honolulu needed a designer to establish an office in Singapore, they chose a young man who had five years of experience under his belt as senior designer for the Montreal-based Graham Cooke & Associates, Neil Haworth. Haworth performed so well they named him partner in February 1994. A 1986 graduate of the University of Guelph, Canada, majoring in landscape architecture, the 33-year-old Haworth has been the firm's project architect for such projects as Kuala Lumpur Golf and Country Club, The Tiara Melaka G&CC in Malaysia and Hwasing Golf Club in Shenzhen, China. We caught up with him for this interview at his Singapore office.

Golf Course News: Do you notice golf growth in Asia-Pacific increasing, decreasing or staying steady, and where is the most activity?

Neil Haworth: Growth in the region is steady. Every year there seems to be a "boom" economy in a certain country. In 1990 it was Thailand. In 1991 it was Malaysia; 1992 Indonesia; 1993 China; and in 1994 The Philippines, where we signed up several jobs. In the years after, a steady growth typically follows.

GCN: Opening new territories, like China, to golf must be exciting.

NH: Opening territories is definitely exciting and challeng-



NWH principals (from left) Robin Nelson, Rodney Wright and Neil Haworth.

ing. It is extremely interesting to get to know and work with people of different cultures. The fact that golf is new in these countries is the challenging part since none of the people have seen a golf course before, let alone built one.

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Building survey

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The report divides the United States into four geographical zones. In each zone it states the minimum, median and maximum cost of 20 phases of construction — from layout and staking to erosion control, excavation, irrigation and drainage, shaping, cart paths and seeding. A narrative description accompanies each category.

A worksheet breaking down these costs is also provided for each region.

The diverse climatic zones of the country impact costs, GCBA Executive Director Phil Arnold points out in the document's foreword. "These conditions affect the length of the construction process, the grassing dates, and the complexity of certain elements such as irrigation and drainage," he said. "For instance, in areas of mild winters and well-drained soils, the construction schedule may be half of the time necessary for construction in sites with severe winters."

Beyond this, each site has its own characteristics affecting construction — from topography to vegetation, soils and governmental rules and regulations.

Whereas construction costs are site-specific, the GCBA document allows a developer "to look at the items and their description and apply the ranges [of cost] to the site," Sasser said. "Then they can come up with a rough estimate to start a financial analysis and decide whether the project makes sense. We also hope it helps architects for the same reason."

Generally, Zone 1 — roughly the Mid-Atlantic to the Northeast — is the most expensive region in which to build a golf course, while Zone 2, the South, is the least expensive. But the total construction cost is surprisingly close in all four zones. For instance, some items of construction may be lower in Zone 1 than Zone 3. While the minimum for erosion control is \$45,000 in Zone 1 compared to \$35,000 in Zone 3, irrigation in Zone 3 carries a minimum \$430,000 cost compared to Zone 1's \$370,000 minimum.

"You may find that you would use the high side of those ranges in the Northeast more than in the South," Sasser said. "In the Northeast, regulations are much more strict. In Birmingham, with all its rock, you would use high numbers for earthmoving. In Atlanta, which has very strict erosion-control laws, those figures would be high."

Kubly pointed out the figures do not include grow-in costs. They are generally higher in the North because of the region's shorter construction season, and the longer time cool-season grasses take to grow.

Arnold said he expected to release the construction document at the International Golf Course Conference and Show in Orlando, Feb. 8-11.

SUNRIDGE CANYON OPENS

FOUNTAIN HILLS, Ariz. — SunRidge Canyon Golf Club has opened, already receiving recognition for its challenging design and breathtaking canyon setting. Tom Patrick, vice president of golf operations for Sun Cor Resort & Golf Management, said: "For every aspect, from course design to development and construction to golf operations, our goal was to have the best in the industry involved with the project. I believe we have achieved our goal."

RTJII takes plunge into public golf ownership

EAGLE POINT, Ore. — Robert Trent Jones II (RTJII) has embarked upon its first solo venture into golf course ownership and operation, with the development of the Eagle Point Golf Club here.

Eagle Point is the first high-quality, championship golf facility to be completed in southern Oregon by RTJII. It is scheduled to open for public play this summer.

The course will be the centerpiece of a 350-acre golf and residential community master-planned by RTJII.

The golf course portion of the project features an 18-hole championship layout, state-of-the-art practice facility and 7,000-square-foot

clubhouse complete with pro shop and dining facilities. RTJII, which operates under the direction of President and Principal Designer Robert Trent Jones Jr., will operate and manage the golf facility.

Grassing has been completed, and the entire course reflects the RTJ2 design philosophy of providing the golfer with a challenging and playable golfing experience.

Various points on the course offers spectacular views of the Rogue Valley, Mount McLoughlin and the Table Rocks. Eagle Point can be played at 5,245 yards from the forward tees or stretched out to 6,970 yards from the championship markers.

