

Fathers & Sons

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jumping aboard their family design firms.

"I thought I'd always work on a golf course — in what role I wasn't sure," said Grant Puddicombe, who worked as a superintendent for two years before he and Mark confronted dad Sid, also a superintendent, at Christmastime 1980. They immediately set about opening their firm, headquartered in Nisku, Alberta, Canada.

"I've been around it [golf course design] my whole life," said Carter Morrish, "going out to Shoal Creek [in Birmingham, Ala.], living with Dad in the summers. It's always been in my head. It's just a natural thing."

A natural thing — in the genes, perhaps?

"I think it's a combination of genetics and/or background," Jay Morrish said.

Sid Puddicombe agreed about the influence of experience. "I think it's just what children are exposed to," he said. "Growing up on a golf course and being involved in it, you get attached to it. They've tried other work and the love of golf has brought them back."

"He knows the business inside out, by osmosis, growing up in it," Dick Nugent said of Tim. "He knows all the fundamentals of drafting and drawing and presentations — how to shake the ideas off your fingertips onto the paper."

"In my teen years I was drawing golf courses," said Bruce Matthews. "I think it comes inherent in a love of the land. We were an outdoor family. While hunting and fishing, you look at land forms and how and why they happen."

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In the various father-son businesses, there is give-and-take — both ways.

"There are a lot of things we've kept in perspective that our father taught us," said Grant Puddicombe. "Do it right. Do it once. For us the biggest way to keep quality control is not to do too much work, to limit what we can control and handle."

"I've got my own style," said Bruce Matthews, "but if you superimpose one of my greens over one of granddad's, an architect could say, 'I know where that came from.'"

The children have added various dimensions to their fathers' businesses and design projects as well.

"When we added Tim, we expanded our abilities greatly, in everyday business, helping clients with their *pro formas*," said Dick Nugent. "When you do a golf course, you do a business plan, a *pro forma*, to come up with how you're going to pay for it. It

helps if you're on the same page as your client... Tim also has a lot of ability in the design area. He has a good eye for things."

"I added maintenance and operations [know-how]," said Bruce Matthews, who has now opened his own company, Design 3, based in East Lansing, where uncle Jerry also has a practice. "I had a turfgrass degree. Jerry has landscape architecture and a master's in urban planning."

Carter "has taken a lot of pressure off me in taking field trips," said Jay Morrish. "We alternate trips and every third time we go together."

Yes, but who is the boss?

"I have the final say. I'm the boss," Dad Morrish said.

But Carter put his own spin on the situation: "He's the boss, but we're more partners than me working for him."

"I try to be," Sid Puddicombe

said. "In most instances we sit down and go over the project. We have a great relationship and we use [third son and superintendent] Todd as a consultant. Until we're all totally satisfied we don't go ahead with anything."

Nugent put the question in perspective: "You don't teach your son anything," he laughed. "All you can do is listen. They just become more courteous about listening to you."

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Gary Player Design Company has hired Kirk Roberts as a design associate. Roberts can be reached care of the Gary Player Design Company, located at 3930 RCA Boulevard, Suite 3001 Palm Beach Gardens, Fla. 33410; telephone 561-624-0300; fax 561-624-304.

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