BRIEFS

FOREST HIGHLANDS TAPS KITCHELL

FLAGSTAFF, Ariz. — Kitchell Contractors will serve as construction manager/general contractor for infrastructure during the expansion of Forest Highlands, a golf community eight miles south of here. The $15 million project, developed by DMB Associates and the Forest Highlands Homeowners Association, includes lot development for 170 custom home sites with lot sizes averaging three-fourths of an acre, mass grading for a Tom Weiskopf-designed golf course and six miles of roads and utilities. It totals approximately 500 acres. The project began in May and should be completed by the summer of 1998.

PENN STATE HONORS LDR FOUNDER

COLUMBIA, Md.— Frederick D. Jarvis, president and co-founder of LDR International, Inc., has been selected by The Pennsylvania State University, Arts & Architecture/Performing Arts Alumni Board as a recipient of the 1997 Arts & Architecture Alumni Achievement Award. These awards are given annually to alumni of the college who have distinguished themselves in their profession.

Former Player chief to write own Signature

By MARK LESLIE

STUART, Fla. — After overseeing construction of 35 golf courses over the last 10 years for Gary Player Design Co., Jim Applegate now will put his own signature on golf courses. Applegate, the founder and former president of Player Design, already has two contracts on his desk for Signature Course Design and will finish projects already started with Player, he said.

"Rather than a sharp break in business, it's a very smooth, long-term transition," Applegate said. "In fact, I agreed with Gary last week to work on a project in New York State. We have four or five courses under construction and will finish those as well. It will take 1-1/2 to 2 years."

Jim Applegate

Signature Course Design, in fact, is "the same staff, same equipment, concepts and philosophy that were developed along with Gary," Applegate said from his offices here.

While the firm is working for its own accounts, if clients desire "name" architects for reasons of marketing, course style or demand, Applegate will put together the team, he said.

Indeed, Signature Course Design has "loose verbal arrangements" with three or four PGA Tour players, including one major LPGA star, Applegate said. "I personally think that's [female designers] been a missing element. There are so

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Clive Barber photo

Tom McBroom's Lake Joseph Club north of Toronto.

McBroom taking full advantage of Canada's 'strong, natural features'

Canadian Thomas McBroom is president of Thomas McBroom Associates, a Toronto-based design firm he founded in 1978. He has designed more than 60 courses, including such widely known layouts as The Links at Crowbush Cove on Prince Edward Island (PEI); Le Geant at Mont Tremblant, Quebec; and Camelot Golf Club in Cumberland, Ontario, all first- or second-place finishers in Golf Digest's *Best New Course in Canada Awards. Current work includes projects in British Columbia, Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, PEI, Vermont and Barbados.*

Q&A

• • •

Golf Course News: What is your design philosophy?

Thomas McBroom: Golf design begins with the land. Canada has many strong, natural features that allow an architect to do a lot with rock formations, water and undulating ground. That makes for bold, striking courses and often memorable holes.

GCN: Is there a particular course of yours that solidified your reputation?

TM: Crowbush Cove gained a lot of recognition. The land allowed us to design something similar to Pete Dye's Ocean Course at Kiawah Island [S.C.]. Any architect would be lying if he told you he didn't want to build a course by the ocean. You don't get sites like that very often. Politically and environmentally it took some time to get approved. But it was worth the wait.

GCN: In general, is it hard to get approval for a course in Canada?

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READY TO TEE IT UP IN GALENA

The General at Eagle Ridge, the new 18-hole addition at Eagle Ridge Inn & Resort in Galena, Ill., held its grand opening ceremonies over Memorial Day Weekend, May 23-26. Designed by two-time U.S. Open champion Andy North in collaboration with architect Roger Packard, The General might have been in play last fall — but discretion has once again proved the better part of valor. "The course had an excellent fall and winter to grow in," said Jon Comber, general manager at Eagle Ridge. "We made a tough choice late last summer to not sacrifice the integrity of play an open the course early. Over Memorial Day weekend, we saw the rewards of that decision."

No slowdown seen in Asia's hottest market

By ROB GLUCKSMAN

- Weiskopf juggles multiple projects
- Rodney Wright signs two solo deals
- Is anyone busier than Palmer?

QUEZON CITY, The Philippines — More than three years into the Filipino golf-development boom, construction companies are still building here and the market for memberships remains strong, despite overall concerns about a building glut and the 1998 presidential elections.

With at least eight major projects completed in the past five years and 20 more under construction — plus dozens more in various planning stages — the country remains Southeast Asia's hottest market for new construction. Despite apparent overbuilding, golf-industry leaders point to strong fundamentals which separate The Philippines from market disasters which have befallen, for instance, the Thai market.

"The big difference here is that you've got real estate underpinning the value of the shares," said Rudy Anderson, regional managing director for ClubCorp, manager of The Orchard Golf & Country Club outside Manila. "It's not a 'right of access' like you have in Thailand. Members actually own the project, the land and improvements, and share values are based on that net asset value."

"All the projects under construction are solidly financed from what we can see," agreed Ed Johnson, area manager for East Asia for Rain Bird Irrigation. "Our business is good, and there are none

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Weiskopf with at least three Archipelago projects

MANILA — The Country Club, an ultra-exclusive course venture south of the city designed by U.S. Senior PGA Tour pro and architect Tom Weiskopf, was grassed in April and is expected to open in December. The project is being developed by Country Club Development.

Weiskopf is involved in at least two more projects in The Philippines, including 18 and possibly 36 holes at the former Clark Air Force Base, and another Country Club Development project: the first 18 holes of an eventual 54-hole facility in Manila. This project will begin with a private 18-hole course, followed by a public 18 and, at a later date, a second private layout, Weiskopf said.

Developer Tomas Consunji, president of Global Clark Assets Corp., expects to begin construction in early 1998 on what will be the second 18-hole course at the Clark AFB site. The site is flat, but "with great mountain views," Weiskopf said, and so he will be creating a lot of the course's "flow." The private facility, not yet named, should open in early 1999, he said.

The Philippines

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of the financial troubles you see at some of the projects trying to get off the ground in China, for example. The developers are established companies, profitable long-term entities in their own right. If things stay stable, then these projects can be completed."

Developers in The Philippines generally consolidate land plots to construct a golf course and clubhouse, spinning off lots around the layout for housing. The key difference is, those club memberships are actually shares in the corporation which owns the course land, clubhouse, and other improvements. Once all the shares are sold, the developer is no longer involved in the operation. That contrasts sharply with most Southeast Asian projects, in which the developer owns the property, which nearly always remains semi-public, and memberships are merely preferred rights to play the course.

That said, golf remains targeted to the exclusive club of super-rich, and membership shares are expensive — as much as P3.5 million (US$130,000) at some clubs, though at least some of these higher-end memberships are rumored to be supported in the secondary market by their developers. Orchard, which according to Anderson does not support its price, has 3,000 shares outstanding valued at P1.6 million (US$60,000) apiece, making the club's current market value a hefty US$180 million. One way or another that's going to cause a shakeout, but for now prices of memberships in the secondary market are holding steady.

"I think they will for the foreseeable future," said Anderson. "Word of a real-estate downturn here [based on an overabundance of new building projects targeted at the upper-middle-class and expatriates] is not universally accepted. But there is some downward pressure on membership prices now, and particularly as you look at projects coming on line in the next four years, it's simple math.

"If you figure each project issues 2,000 shares, conservatively, and you've got a total of 17 projects. Realistically at these prices you've got the same pool of wealthy people buying one membership for use and a couple for speculation. Some of these new clubs are going to suffer from lack of use, and there will be an operational reckoning.\

The smarter clubs are looking at positioning, long-term value, and building memberships rather than short-term speculation."

Supply is ahead of the demand curve and, sooner rather than later, it appears most clubs outside of the oldest and most exclusive are going to have to open for daily play, if only during the week.

"Well, we certainly see some projects and say, 'Who the heck's going to drive out here to play golf?,' " said one industry veteran who didn't wish to be named. "We see the momentum holding for now, but it could easily shut down."

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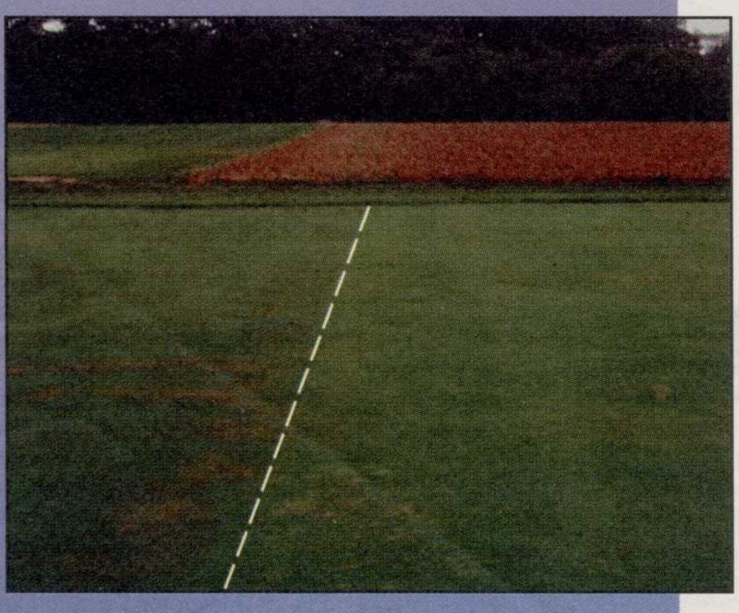

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