

BRIEFS



FOSTER PROMOTES SCHAUPETER

Keith Foster Golf Course Design has expanded the role of associate designer Art Schaupeter. In addition to his existing design responsibilities with Foster on two current projects, Schaupeter will pursue new opportunities for the firm, primarily within the Midwest. Schaupeter has been with the firm since February 1992, and has collaborated on most of the its golf courses, including Buffalo Run, Haymaker, Texas Star, The Bandit, Persimmon Woods and Gateway National Golf Links.



Art Schaupeter

OFFICE PARK ADDS \$6.3M TRACK

BROOMFIELD, Colo. — Valley Crest, a landscape and site construction company, is building a 27-hole, \$6.3-million golf course in the Interlocken office park here. Interlocken Golf Course represents the single largest assignment in the 25-year history of Valley Crest's Colorado branch office. Construction of the course was commissioned by Interlocken Hotel LLC, a joint venture between the Interlocken Corp. and Omni Hotels. Work began last July, with completion scheduled for October, to coincide with the opening of the new Omni Hotel that will border the course. Architectural firm Graham & Panks International is responsible for the course design.

ASGCA MEETING IN LA

LOS ANGELES — The 52nd annual meeting of the American Society of Golf Course Architects will be held here April 25-30. President Alice Dye said the society is planning numerous informative and entertaining professional development sessions. Guest speakers include golf course architecture writer Geoff Shackelford, who will discuss the work of classic architect George Thomas, and Audubon International Executive Director Ron Dodson, who will provide information on the Audubon's Cooperative Sanctuary Program. ASGCA members will play their tournament on Riviera, Bel-Air and Los Angeles Country Club, courses designed by Thomas.

The Squire, The Slammer (and Weed) finish Village track

PONTE VEDRA BEACH, Fla.—The Slammer & Squire, the first 18-hole course at the World Golf Village in St. Augustine, opened March 1.

Bobby Weed, architect for the course, is pleased with the results. "I feel that we have created a course that is worthy of the location, and having input from two legends of the game contributes significantly to the overall importance of the project. The World Golf Hall of Fame at the World Golf Village represents a new era in the game of golf. To have all the world's greatest golf associations united in this wonderful effort certainly stirs the spirit of those who love to play," Weed said.

Gene Sarazen and Sam Snead were chosen as player consultants to the course, which will host The Legends of Golf tournament beginning in 1999. Both Sarazen and Snead will be enshrined in the Hall of Fame when it opens in May.



The 8th hole at the World Golf Village's Slammer & Squire course.

"Our charge was to create a 'fun and interesting' golf course. While it is always difficult to pick a favorite hole or holes on any golf course, I think that most players will find a number of holes to be unique and challenging," Weed said. "Overall, the design intent is strategic with risk and reward opportunities. Each golf hole has its own character and provides multiple tees and a diversity of options to fairly challenge every caliber of player."

The course meanders through an old pine forest plantation, typically referred to as flatwoods. Much of the surrounding property is set aside as preservation, with wetland corridors linked together to protect wildlife. The abundant native and indigenous vegetation of north Florida abounds and creates a recurring theme throughout the golf course.

The Slammer & Squire is a Signature Course of the Audubon International Cooperative Sanctuary Program.

Strantz leaps to the top

Mike Strantz is a world-class commercial artist, holds an agronomy degree from Michigan State University and understudied for eight years with Tom Fazio. But it wasn't until he returned to golf design from being a freelance artist that he burst onto the national golf scene as one of the most sought-after course designers of today. Strantz was lured back into golf by Larry Young of The Legends Group to design two courses in Williamsburg, Va. The result? Golf Digest picked both creations as Best New Upscale Public-access Course of the Year — Stonehouse in 1996 Royal New Kent in 1997. He has come a long way from working on the maintenance crew at the age of 15 and edging bunkers and shaping greens for Fazio from 1979-87, when he left to pursue his art interests. We caught up with him at his home in Mt. Pleasant, S.C., where he lives with wife Heidi and children.

Golf Course News: You studied art, then earned a degree in agronomy from Michigan State. How has that helped your design career?

Mike Strantz: Understanding maintenance of golf courses and about soils and the scientific aspect that affect the design process.

GCN: How much does your skill as an artist help you?

MS: Other than the overall feel for the basic design elements and what is appealing to the eye, it's a huge help communicating with shapers. I'll draw a whole perspective — eye-level views of dogleg to green, tee to dogleg and, if it's a par-5, first dogleg to second dogleg. It's a lot easier for those guys to understand. It reduces the down time, and you don't have constant re-doing.

I can use my days as a shaper and know what you have to do to get it to that point. It helps when you've been on a machine and know its capabilities.

GCN: Is there a Strantz trademark?

MS: I would think there are tendencies, but I hope each product has its own individuality. There are going to be cer-

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Mike Strantz, above, on site at True Blue, his latest creation, on Pawley's Island in South Carolina. Below is the 11th hole.



True Blue opens next to Strantz's Caledonia

MYRTLE BEACH, S.C. — True Blue, the fourth Mike Strantz-designed golf course, opened for play Feb. 1. Strantz designed the award-winning Caledonia Golf & Fish Club on plantation land adjacent to True Blue.

True Blue is a 6,875-yard, par-72 course on the site of True Blue Plantation, a

famed 19th-century indigo and rice plantation. The course features bentgrass greens, an 18-acre practice facility with a learning center, and an emphasis on the natural beauty of the area, using native grasses and vegetation and maintaining much of the character of the property.

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