

BRIEFS

**WEITZ BUYS FAIRWAY CONSTRUCTION**

NORTH PALM BEACH, Fla. — Weitz Golf International here has purchased Fairway Construction, located in Temecula, Calif. No organizational changes will occur, and the current staff in the Temecula office will continue to service all existing clients. Weitz Golf International is a wholly owned division of The Weitz Co., Inc., a construction company established in 1855.



ACQUISITIONS

ERMISCH SETS UP DESIGN SHOP

SHAWNEE, Kan. — Chuck Ermisch Golf Design has opened an office here. Ermisch is a 1992 graduate of Kansas State University, with a bachelor's degree in landscape architecture. His career has concentrated on both design and field experience. Over his 10 years of industry experience, he has supervised projects for various golf course contractors and has been employed by Don Sechrest of Kansas City, where he was chief designer. For more information, contact Ermisch at 913-438-8422.



Chuck Ermisch

GOLFPLAN HIRES RAMSY

SANTA ROSA, Calif. — Golfplan, Fream and Dale, has hired Kevin Ramsy as senior golf course architect. Ramsy was previously a senior designer with J. Michael Poellot Golf Design Group and director of golf design with Walter Raleigh Stewart. He is working on the Serapong Golf Course at Sentosa Golf Club in Singapore, Barbarosa Golf Club in Texas and Yong Pyong Golf Club in Korea. Ramsy brings 11 years of golf course design experience to Golfplan.

COURSE TO MEMORIALIZE BING CROSBY

RANCHO SANTA FE, Calif. — Starwood Development, an affiliate of Starwood Financial, Inc., has reached an agreement with the family of Bing Crosby to name the company's property in northern San Diego County The Crosby Estate at Rancho Santa Fe. The Crosby Estate will encompass 722 acres and feature 501 houses and homesites. The Crosby Estate will include The Crosby National Golf Club, an 18-hole championship golf course designed by Masters champion Fred Couples and Brian Curley.

Snead opens design firm

STUART, Fla. — Sam Snead has formed Sam Snead Course Design, heralding the entry of the Hall of Famer into the golf development arena. Snead won 185 tournaments, including seven major championships on the regular Tour and 11 majors on the Senior Tour. He competed on 10 Ryder Cup teams, including four as a playing captain.

Heading up the firm will be Sam's son Samuel "Jack" Jackson Snead Jr., along with President Ronald Coruzzi and design associates Edward Carton and Scott Applegate.

Citing a desire to be more active in golf course design endeavors, Snead said: "I hear from players all the time about how difficult a course is and how they will never go back there again. The classic-styled courses that I love don't have those problems. Most of the courses being built today do. I'm just an old mountain boy from the hills of Virginia and I've probably played more golf than anyone alive. I know what it takes to design golf courses that are challenging for the low-handicapper as well as fun and enjoyable for the high-handicapper, for the guy who pays the freight."

Sam Snead Course Design will provide golf course architectural services for Sam Snead Signature course designs, redesigns, and renovations. Additionally, extensive consulting services will be available through Sam Snead Golf Management and Sam Snead Golf Academies.

Through countless rounds of golf Sam and Jack Snead have played together, Jack has been instrumental in the development of his father's course design philosophy, and endeavors to instill those ideas into every Sam Snead design.

Coruzzi has a comprehensive career in the business of golf, including golf real-

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Eng returns home for Hawktree

By MARK LESLIE

BISMARCK, N.D. — Native son and golf course architect Jim Eng, who gained fame in his hometown of Dickinson when he startled the world with The Sanctuary in Sedalia, Colo., surprised even himself when he beheld his finished product here — 18-hole Hawktree Golf Club.

"I had high expectations," Eng said of the course that opened May 1. "But when we finished, I 'missed it.' The course really blew me away. It's amazing how the site came together. It fits so well within the natural topography."

From the unexpected elevation changes to the tendrils of water, to

the black lignite coal slag that serves as bunker sand, Eng believes Hawktree stands out as a grand experience.

"The exciting thing to me is the diverse character of the site," he said. "Burnt Creek runs through the property and forms a small valley with a stream bed. The creek has fingers of very sharp or severe valleys that run perpendicular to the bigger valley. We ran holes up and down the valleys and used the open areas to create some ponding features."

Areas on both nines jump in and out of woods, and the 4,830- to 7,117-yard, par-72 layout features "open

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The new 4th hole at Samoset Golf Club runs down to the Atlantic Ocean, nearly meeting the resort's famous breakwater.

Samoset's 4th meets ocean

By MARK LESLIE

ROCKPORT, Maine — One of the top-ranked resort courses in the country just got better. On June 1 Samoset Resort Golf Club here will unveil new oceanside 4th and 5th holes that golf course architect Brad Booth and superintendent Gregg Grenert feel transform the layout into a tougher and more eye-catching venue.

Winter work has become Grenert's trademark over the last six years as he has taken advantage of frozen ground to dig ponds, create bunkers and completely rebuild long lengths of breakwater to dramatically upgrade Samoset.

Although he has more work ahead that will, in the end, mean eight or nine rebuilt holes on the 1973 Robert Elder design, the crowning creation could be the new 4th and 5th.

"That whole complex now is unbelievable," said Grenert, "with the contours and the sloping we put in."

Booth and Grenert brainstormed and Booth drafted a final product which sends the golfer almost into the ocean to the green on the par-5 4th, then along the rugged shoreline on the uphill, par-3 5th.

Shaper Bill Wilkes of Bill Wilkes Inc., in Jaffrey, N.H., "did a fantastic job," Grenert said.

The stonewall breakwater along the left side of the 4th hole now continues on toward Rockland Harbor. Above the 4th green, three new sets of tees face up the hill, with a series of bunkers stepping up the slope to a green impregnated into the hill.

The bentgrass approach frames the bunkers. As Grenert said, the green "looks like it has always been there; a heckuva hole."

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Samoset retooling nearly half course

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While Samoset Resort Golf Club opened for the season in mid-April, golfers will play temporary 4th and 5th holes until the new ones are ready on June 1.

Meanwhile, during the winter, Booth and Grenert oversaw a major transformation to the 14th hole. The 14th flows downhill to

an oceanfront green bracketed by bunkers — a green complex that was recreated in 1998-99. It was a par-4 350-yarder, but the tees were pushed back 200 yards into a grove of woods, creating a tee shot over wetlands and onto a landing area near the old teeboxes. The result: a 550-yard par 5.

That move was necessary to bring the course back to a par 70, since the former 5th hole was a par 4 and the new one is a par 3.

Samoset's facelifts began six years ago when the resort was owned by SRI, then continued when Ocean Properties Ltd. of Portsmouth, N.H., bought the

resort in January 1999 and began sinking \$1 million into the golf course.

• Winter 1994: Construction began along the front entrance to the property, which was flat and unexciting.

With golf course architect Geoffrey Cornish consulting, Grenert made substantial changes to the overall playability, flow and rotation of the golf course and the main entrance.

"We created a beautiful entrance coming in, with activity," he said.

Two wells, which were needed for irrigation, feed the newly constructed ponds on holes 10 and 11, which gravity-feed to the ponds on holes 1 and 9.

Mirror-image ponds were dug, creating a complex with double fountains, a bridge, greens on either side and contours around the greens.

• February 1995: The 12th and 16th holes were targeted, as well as the fairway of the 4th hole. Grenert added a gold tee to the 12th hole. Crews dug ponds and used the earth hauled out to build fairway bunkers, mounding and movement around the course. A lot of bunker work was done around the first and second landing areas of the 12th hole.

Next came mounding and fairway bunkers on the 16th.

"The work was done when the ground was frozen, so we caused minimal disruption to the course," Grenert said. "We did the final shaping in the spring and seeded it then."

Also built that winter was the 18th green complex and a pond fronting it.

• Spring 1998: Grenert's crew redid all the bunkers on the 14th hole and all the tees on the 15th. "The old tees were set up way to the right, off-center. You couldn't draw the ball, so we pushed earth to move the tees and center everything," he said. "We also created two shorter tees. That work we actually started in March."

• Spring 1999: John Miller of Miller Construction in Massachusetts did major bunker work and reshaping on the 13th hole, "which made a dramatic change to an already great par-3 that plays 225 yards from the tips," Grenert said.

Another finish crew has also been brought in on various projects for fine-tuning and sodding, which Grenert has supplemented with his crew.

Despite all the work, Grenert promised, "This is just the tip of the iceberg."

Other changes have been mandated that will ultimately also improve the layout.

"We have sodded as much as we can," he said, "to have it all ready this spring. In the meantime, we're trying to convert the greens to L-93 bentgrass."

Most of the work has been contracted out, although Grenert used his crew members when needed, including the irrigation system and the lasering of the tees, since Ocean Properties has its own construction company.

And, Grenert added: "Brad [Booth] has instrumental. He is the architect for the future. He does great work. He works with you, listens to your ideas, and he comes up with a final product." ▶



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