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SUPERINTENDENT'S GUIDE TO SURVIVING A COURSE RENOVATION, PART 2

In August, Tim Moraghan provided Part 1 of his guidelines to making the best of a course renovation. This month, Tim's column (Part 2) picks up where he left off. To read Part 1, enter <http://bit.ly/pAyuBu> into your browser.

Know the architect. If you do get lucky and the managers allow you to have some say in the architect selection, be aware of the special concerns of your course in your research. Here's what the smart superintendent should look for in an architect.

- Ability. It sounds obvious but isn't always, and won't be to the committee, either. Besides checking with the American Society of Golf Course Architects (ASGCA), learn as much as you can about the designer's other work, both new courses and re-dos. Check his references.

- Visit his work. Get a feeling for what he did with the land and features. It's very important that you talk to other superintendents and get a feel for the working relationship between them and the architect.

- Talk to course builders the architect has worked with. Ask if the designer has a good sense of the game and cares about those who will be affected by the results.

- Ask the other supers and builders if the designer actually gets on a piece of equipment and does some work, some shaping, himself. How good is he at transferring a thought from paper to ground? Is he willing to be flexible and admit when something doesn't work?

ASK QUESTIONS TO PREPARE AND EASE THE PROCESS.

- Watch out for design plans that

are overly technical and engineered; not transferring well from paper to dirt. Will the end result be a course that is both playable and easy to maintain? Review each hole with the architect, watching in particular for difficult agronomic scenarios, so problems can't come back to bite you.

- Other items to watch for:

High-faced bunkers in areas subject to heavy rain; too many catch basins in lieu of surface drainage; greens in heavily shaded areas and adjacent to creeks. I'm sure you can think of others on your course.

With the new plans in hand, **walk the course with a critical eye**. Where has it lost its zest? If it were up to you, what would you do to make it exciting again?

- Is there someone around who witnessed the original building of the course? If so, talk to him. Who knows what you'll learn?

- With the new plans in hand, walk the course with a critical eye. Where has it lost its zest? If it were up to you, what would you do to make it exciting again? What does the architect suggest? If you are restoring lost features, use your soil probe and dig for treasure in finding those lost shapes and edges.

BE A PART OF THE SOLUTION. Once you're good with the project and have let everyone know that you'll do all you can to make it work, here's how to proceed.

- Forge a good relationship with the designer. Reach out, talk, show that you are knowledgeable, caring and want to help. It would be nice if you become friends, but it's more

important that you can work together for the greater good of the course.

- Become the go-to person for your club members, particularly the committees and the board. Educate them on what they have now (good and bad) and what they can expect. Keep them informed, talk to them as often as you can and if you say you're going to do something, do it.

- In talking to the committees, establish one consensus opinion. Make sure everyone buys into it. If not, you'll be the one who loses out.

- If you've done historical research,

use it. Show the architect and members the old photos, architectural drawings and renderings you found.

- You're on-site more than the designer, so bring committee members onto the course and show them how the work is progressing. Don't wait for the architect's site visit. Take the initiative!

- Remember to keep your staff up to speed, as well. You'll need them more than ever. And you probably want to tell them how much they can and cannot say to members about the work going on.

- No matter how much work you do, remember that it's not your course or your club. You're still an employee and you do not have final say in what happens. If you have a strong opinion about something, only you can judge your relationship with the members and committees and then determine if you want to speak up. **GCI**



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AWARDS



A word from the GCBAA

The Golf Course Builders Association of America is proud to participate in the annual Golf Course Industry Builder Excellence Awards program. As the premier association representing the interests of golf course builders and their allied professions, the GCBAA is dedicated to not only serving the interests of our members, but also advancing and improving the profession of golf course construction. Our members, through their dedication to the highest industry standards, are involved in the construction of quality golf courses in the United States and around the world. These annual awards reflect their hard work and serve as testament to the important role they play in the game of golf.

On behalf of the GCBAA, we congratulate our winning builders for 2011 and pay tribute to their accomplishments and the accomplishments of all within our industry. We eagerly look forward to next year's program.

— Justin Apel, executive director



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2011 JUDGES

Golf Course Industry and the GCBAA would like to thank the following 2011 judges for their time and assistance in choosing this year's winners: Tommy Sasser, Recreational Community Consultants; Chris Schiavone, RDC Golf Group; Bill Prest, Sweet Briar Golf Course; Todd Voss, Double Eagle Golf Course; Gary Grigg, Grigg Brothers and Chris Wilczynski, C.W. Golf Architecture.

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and contributions to the Links Across America short
course initiative for affordable golf, especially for
youth.**



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Golf Creations – Jim Lohmann / Golf Works – Frank Hutchinson /
Landscapes Unlimited – Bill Kubly / MacCurrach Golf Construction /
Mid-America Golf & Landscape – Rick Boylan / NMP Golf Construction Corp. – Yves Brousseau/
Turf Solutions Group LLC / Wadsworth Golf Construction – Patrick Karnick

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Dave Whelchel / Jemsek Golf Design / Paul Loague Golf Design / David Johnson /
Lohmann Golf Designs / Greg Martin Golf Design / Nicklaus Design /
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Structures – Small Clubhouse Structures / Synthetic Turf International / Thompson, Dyke & Associates – Rec-
reation/Sports Complex Design / The Toro Company / Tour Edge Golf / Turf Solutions Group LLC / Wilson Golf
/ Wittek Golf

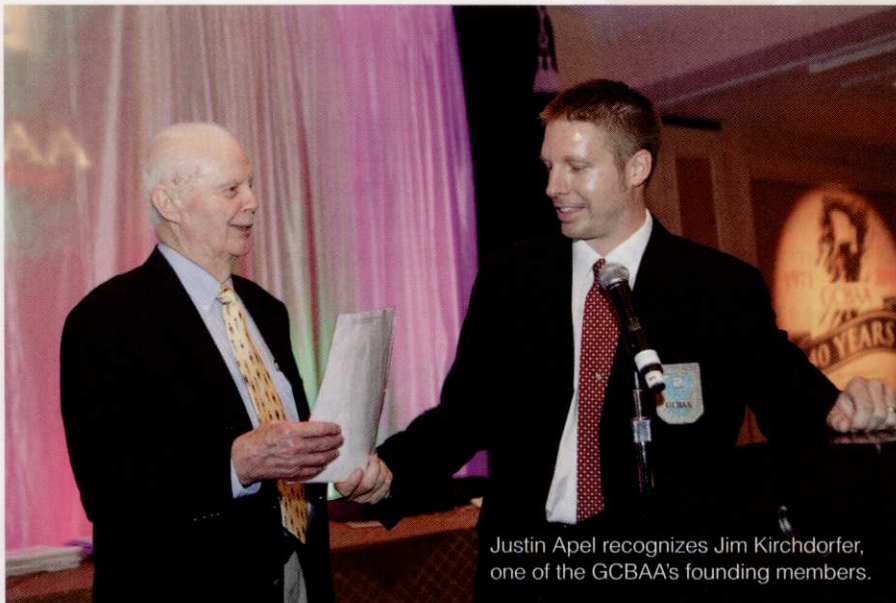


For further details contact Leon McNair at leonm@wadsworthgolf.com

Golf Course Builders Association of America

URNS 40

Builders group will continue its four-decade mission, as well as seek new ways to support its members.



Justin Apel recognizes Jim Kirchorfer, one of the GCBA's founding members.

BY JEFF SALEM

The Golf Course Builders Association of America (GCBA) is celebrating its 40th anniversary in 2011. It is also starting a new chapter under newly-appointed executive director Justin Apel.

Only in his 30s, Apel may be younger than someone you'd expect to see heading up one of the industry's largest associations. But Apel plans to use his youthful perspective to help members weather the economic doldrums and prepare for better days.

NOT AN INDUSTRY INSIDER. Apel has played the new-kid role before. Prior to his time with the

GCBA, Apel was one of the youngest legislative aides when he worked for Nebraska State Sen. Merton "Cap" Dierks from 2000 to 2002. After leaving the senator, Apel went into lobbying, where he was the state's youngest registered lobbyist, too.

"Age has always been a challenge for me, so this is nothing new," Apel says. "It can be intimidating being the youngest in the room, but I have found being truthful, prepared and fair levels that playing field."

Apel wasn't brought up through the traditional golf industry ranks, either. His background and degree is in agricultural science,

not golf. When Apel worked for Sen. Dierks, the senator chaired the state's Agriculture Committee. Apel then spent four years as the information and education director for the Nebraska Association of Resources Districts – the trade association for Nebraska Natural Resources Districts – before heading to the GCBA, located in Lincoln, Neb., in 2006. Before being promoted to GCBA executive director in February of this year, Apel served the association as executive assistant and assistant executive director.

Apel says his unconventional background for a golf industry association leader works to his benefit.

"Most would think my little experience in the golf industry would be my biggest disadvantage," Apel says. "However, I think it is my edge. I have a fresh look at both new and old ideas."

Missing out on the days when golf course building was booming was actually a good thing, according to Apel.

"I obviously don't like to see what the economy has done to many fine individuals and companies. But for me to start working in this industry during the worst of times gives me a different mind-set of what's normal," Apel says. "Because of that, I have a tremendous motivation to help our members climb out. I really don't think I would have the same level of knowledge, key experiences or way of thinking if my first five years in the industry were during the glory days."

EDUCATION IS THE KEY. Education is Apel's top priority for the association and its members.

It's the only way to perfect your craft, he says.

It's about sharing knowledge from the association's 375 members with one another. Any situation or problem a builder may encounter on a project has probably been tackled or overcome before by another builder, Apel says.

"Education is the key. Being proactive with our members' collective knowledge and experience base and making it available for others will be important," Apel says. "Construction methods and techniques – including best management practices from real case studies and experiences – to state of the art technologies that can solve nearly any problem in landscape construction are at our finger tips. We want to share that knowledge."

LOOKING FAR TO THE EAST FOR OPPORTUNITY.

As the GCBAA provides education to keep members at the leading edge of their profession, Apel says he will be looking for new opportunities to help builders climb out of a dark period for the industry.

While the GCBAA has had international members since the early '80s, Apel has started a series of initiatives since he was named executive director in February earlier this year aimed at positioning the association on a global scale.

Apel intends to build on the association's base of 50 international members in 15 countries.

In March, the GCBAA Board of Directors announced it would form two steering committees designed to explore what role the GCBAA should play in specifically-identified regional markets.

The International Members Enhancement Committee will evaluate and promote current membership benefits. It will also focus on developing new value-added programs as part of the effort to attract additional members to the GCBAA international membership category.

The Regional Market Committee will be more strategic in nature, Apel says, and has the responsibility of identifying various international initiatives. That committee is divided into three sub-committees in order to address the diversity of the three most active international markets: Asia, South/Central America and Europe.

"We want to fully evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of those regional markets, understand the challenges and opportunities of each, and independently develop ideas for GCBAA's potential role in those areas," Apel says.

Even more recently, the GCBAA an-

GCBAA at a glance

The GCBAA has accomplished a lot in its first 40 years as an association dedicated to advancing and improving the profession of golf course construction. Here are a few of the highlights of the association's first four decades:

- The GCBAA was founded in 1970 by nine individuals in Washington D.C. under its original name, the Golf Course Builders of America (GCBA).
- The GCBAA adds an executive director for the first time in 1984, Don Rossi.
- In 1991, the group officially changed its name to Golf Course Builders Association of America.
- The creation of the Don A. Rossi Humanitarian Award in 1991 for the president of the National Golf Foundation from 1970 to 1983. The award is given annually by the GCBAA to honor individuals who have made significant contributions to the game of golf and its growth.
- The association began publishing its Earth Shaping Newsletter in 1991.
- Established in 1992, the GCBAA's Builder Certification Program quickly became known in the industry for its recognition of high-quality golf course builders.
- The association's first Certified Builders were announced in 1993. Both recipients, Golf Development Construction and Wadsworth Golf Construction, still hold that title today.
- In 1994, a year when the National Golf Foundation reported 484 new courses were under construction, the first GCBAA Guide for Estimating Golf Course Construction was released.
- Sticks for Kids, a GCBAA Foundation program that seeks to teach the game of golf to children, was created in 1996. In 2010, Sticks for Kids taught golf to more than 100,000 children at more than 500 sites worldwide.



The Golf Course Builders Association of America celebrates 40 years of assisting and improving golf course construction, having started with just nine members in 1970.

nounced a new partnership with the Asia Golf Show, held in October in Guangzhou, China. Under the agreement with the show's organizer, Reed Guanghe, GCBAA members will participate in educational panels aimed at examining core industry issues.

The GCBAA Foundation, the association's charitable arm, has been expanding globally as well. The foundation's best-known initiative, Sticks for Kids, has programs in place teaching the game of golf to underprivileged children at 550 facilities around the globe, including 130 programs in 32 cities throughout China.

MEASURING SUCCESS. Still young in his tenure at the helm of the GCBAA, Apel says he will

be evaluating his performance often.

That evaluation will be directly tied to the level of participation of the association's members, Apel says. He'll have a measuring stick of sorts each year when the association holds its general election of officers.

"The first year that we have to recruit or possibly appoint someone to an open seat on the Board will tell me that I have failed," he says. "I want to have a waiting list of members wanting to join the team of their peers to work with me on driving this association into the future." **GCI**

Jeff Salem is a public relations associate for Swanson Russell, based in Lincoln, Neb.

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Viking Classic
Annandale Golf Club
Madison, Mississippi
July 14th-17th
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Navistar LPGA Classic
RTJ Golf Trail, Capitol Hill
Prattville, Alabama
September 15th-18th
CHAMPION greens planted 2011

Administaff Small Business Classic
Woodlands Country Club
Houston, Texas
October 7th-9th
CHAMPION greens planted 1996

AT&T Championship
TPC San Antonio
San Antonio, Texas
October 14th-16th
CHAMPION greens planted 2009

Sherwood LPGA Taiwan Championship
Sunrise Golf & Country Club
Taiwan, Republic of China
October 20th-23rd
CHAMPION greens planted 2001

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A Tale of Two Courses

Landscapes Unlimited built two distinct 18-hole courses in five months, overcoming sandy soils, high winds and a remote location to create a destination for golf purists.

BY JASON STAHL

So begins the tale of two courses: so different, in fact, that the builder, Landscapes Unlimited, treated them as two different projects, even though they were being built simultaneously in the same area. As different as they were, perhaps the most amazing feat was that they were built in five months.

“Ideally, to build a course in most parts of the U.S., it would take us six to 12 months, so given that we were on a five-month schedule, the architects, contractors, developers and everyone else had to be focused to stay on schedule,” says Bill Kubly, CEO and founder of Landscapes Unlimited.

The land each course was built on was vastly distinct. The Dunes Course, designed by Tom Lehman and Chris Brands, had a lot of natural features that didn’t require much shaping other than bunker work. It was simply routed through the existing sand dunes and left to be a natural, links-style course.

The Pines Course, designed by Graham Marsh, had some sand dunes as well but also featured plenty of pine trees and dramatic bluffs, which is unique to the sand hills area of Nebraska.

“Both courses are very dramatic,” says Kubly. “They’re different, but they blend well together and make for a great golfing experience.”

One of the major challenges of the site was its remoteness. Kubly says they were literally in the “middle of nowhere,” and that presented many problems, one of which was the acquisition of labor.

“When you get into these remote parts of the U.S., the ranchland, there is no labor available, even with the high unemployment rate,” he says.



Though full of dramatic views, the Pines Course also provided plenty of challenges for building, thanks to its remoteness in the sand hills of Nebraska.