

The heat must be getting to me. Just when I'm able to leave my house without bodyguards, just when I've let go of my personal security system, just when I can go out to dinner again without fear of attacks, I'm about to revisit the beloved "10 stupid things" theme.

This time, though, I'm not taking on superintendents or green committee chairmen. I've decided to hit a little closer to home. It's time our friends in the design business took some heat. So without further ado, here are the 10 stupid things golf course architects do that make us laugh out loud (now where did I put the phone number of that body-guard service?):

1. You wear those red plaid jackets: Hey, Donald Ross was a great architect and he's the ASGCA's main man. But how do you get those Ross family fabric coats through airport security?

2. You strike a pose: What are you and your followers pointing at in those lame "in-the-field" photographs? How about taking off the Rolex, dropping the borrowed blueprints, losing the stiff new logoed cap the developer gave you that morning and posing like normal people?

3. You channel dead architects: How do you know precisely what A.W. Tillinghast would have done were he still alive? You always assert something like that as you "restore" his work by installing a \$2 million water motif augmented by petunias planted in a symbolic shape. Hear that? It's the sound of Tillie spinning in his grave.

4. You never admit your mistakes: Why do you complain about governmental agencies when your last project eliminated all existing features and moved 2 million cubic yards of earth just to create Ballybunion-like conditions?

5. You design fairways tighter than drums: If fun golf is having every ball bounce off massive boards and funneling everything back to the fairway middle, why have tee shots? Design wider fairways, with more subtle contouring that rewards well-placed drives and can actually be mowed with something other than a Flymo.

6. You claim full credit for a successful restoration when the superintendent and his crew found some old

Let's Get Stupid: Mad About Plaid

BY GEOFF SHACKELFORD



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photos and did the work: Isn't there enough credit to go around? I can see the mail already: This has never happened before, right? Right — and I'm Mother Theresa.

7. You compromise short holes to reach the magical 7,000-yard plateau: Have you ever considered explaining to the client that forcing 7,000 yards on the property eliminates things like fun short holes and design variety for the customers? I know the client demanded seven big ones, and the latest Callaway driver forces you to build it long, but it's worth a try.

8. You call me to ask which player-architect might be a good match: Why do you cater to the whole player-architect craze? It's usually a waste of money and everyone in the golf business knows players add little in the field. Recommend your client meet with Scott Hoch — and the developer will never ask for a player-architect again.

9. You're the invisible man/woman: Couldn't you sneak in a few more site visits when the crew is trying to get your blueprints translated into a course? I know you are all busy jet-setters, but for those big six- and seven-figure fees, you might want to make the extra effort. Also, should you decide to visit, do not argue about the site conditions with the superintendent that you failed to support during construction and who is actually on-site every day.

10. You tell plaid jacket jokes: As if it's not bad enough that you wear the Ross tartan as a jacket, do each of you have to crack a joke about it every time we see you in one? On second thought, perhaps that's a good thing. At least you can make fun of yourselves. Keep that in mind next time we run into each other.

Geoff Shackelford is enjoying the company of his new Rottweilers, Colt and Alison, so don't bother to come to his home. You can e-mail him, however, at geoffshackelford@aol.com.