

Off The Fringe

The 'Step of Fame'

CC OF MOBILE HONORS ITS VETERAN GOLFERS

By Mark Leslie

Having watched as a major Ron Forse-designed reconstruction of his beloved Country Club of Mobile (Ala.) took place, octogenarian T.J. Bender Jr. thought it a minor thing to ask that a new step be



T.J. Bender Jr. plants his hand in the wet cement of the Country Club of Mobile's new gazebo step, initiating the procedure for a dozen octogenarian buddies.

built at the club's gazebo, where he and his buddies hang out.

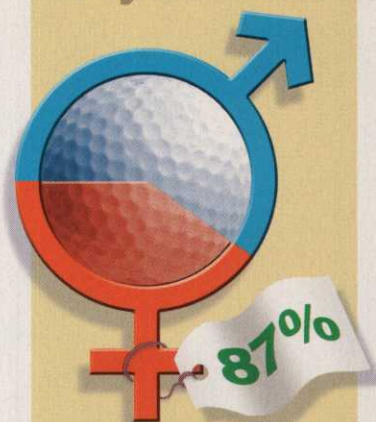
Taking the call from Bender, General Manager Don Vance experienced a flash of brilliance: Bender and his buddies would each plant their hands in the wet cement of the new step and, a la Hollywood's Walk of Fame, create CC of Mobile's own "Step of Fame."

"These 13 gentlemen, all World War II veterans, are part of a tight-knit group and have known one another all their lives," Vance says. "They have shared a common bond, and that is their passion for life, family, friendship and, of course, golf."

The step was built, and the hands were laid on it Oct. 1.

"We poured the concrete step, I

Did you know...



...that even though only 40% of all new golfers are women, they influence 87% of all sales in the golf shop?

SOURCE: NATIONAL GOLF FOUNDATION
ILLUSTRATION: DAN BEEDY

brought some champagne and we had a ceremony," Vance said. "Now it's a reminder of part of our history."

Vance said Bender and his friends are members who "ran the country club back" when they were in their primes. "They are long-time prominent residents of the city and are now taking that step in life down memory lane."

Take the Major Challenge with Deere and *Golfdom*

So you have a brilliant hunch about which Tour players will dominate the Majors this year. You're dreaming about Tiger or Vijay and you've even got a good feeling about Freddie. Here's a chance to play out that hunch ... and maybe even win big.

John Deere and *Golfdom* have joined forces to present the Major Challenge, an online fantasy golf competition for superintendents and other turfheads who want to test their luck against colleagues around the world.

The object of the contest is simple, says Mike Scaletta, advertising manager for Deere's golf/turf division. "You pick the six players you think

will score best in each of the four Major tournaments and their combined stroke score is your score in the Challenge," he says. "You can change players and tinker with your team any time up to the day before each event. It's fun, and it's free."

The Major Challenge contest events are, of course, the Masters, U.S. Open, British Open and PGA Championship. Fabulous prizes await winners

of each of the events, and the grand prize is an expenses-paid trip to stay and play at the John Deere Team Championship in Scottsdale in November.

You can also win prizes when you "Beat the Big Guy" by pitting your

team against teams selected by *Golfdom*'s Pat Jones and Deere honcho Gregg Breningmeyer. In a joint statement, Jones and Breningmeyer said: "You wanna a piece of us? Huh? Bring it on!"

You can register online now by visiting www.majorchallenge.com or by clicking on the Major Challenge link at www.golfdom.com. Contest information, complete rules, eligibility, standings, stats and player information are also available on the site.

BONUS: You'll receive a special early-bird gift if you register before St. Patrick's Day, March 17, but you can still modify your team before the Masters begins in April. Look for more details in the March and April issues of *Golfdom*.

So log on, sign up, have fun and win.

