

Issue 19 | Summer 2014

BY DESIGN



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FOREWORD

Problem solvers

In years gone by I'm sure very few of us imagined, when designing a golf course, that big 15-inch cups would be cut into the greens. Or that Footgolf events would see players kicking soccer balls from tee to green. But the fact is, golf courses are beautiful, natural, open spaces—and we shouldn't be surprised that people want to use them in multiple ways.

As golf course architects we are now much more open-minded, and recognise that being creative and adaptive are essential elements within the modern architect's skillset. It is this type of approach that makes our clients view us not just as service providers, but also as problem solvers.

In the last edition of *By Design*, ASGCA Past President Erik Larsen talked about alternative uses for golf courses. In this edition our cover story focuses on alternative formats for golf, and we consider some interesting and innovative projects that ASGCA members are involved in.

It's been a few weeks since ASGCA members gathered together in Tulsa, Oklahoma for our 68th annual meeting. It was a particularly special occasion for me, having been elected to serve as ASGCA President for the year ahead. And while the dust may have settled on the meeting, the ideas and inspiration that it generated will continue to flourish and bear fruit long into the future.

I hope you enjoy the issue.



Lee Schmidt
President
American Society of Golf Course Architects

BY DESIGN

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The Challenge Course at Monarch Dunes designed by ASGCA Past President Damian Pascuzzo
(Photo: Aidan Bradley)


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ASGCA Annual Meeting 2014

Architects help clients with creative and adaptive designs

New ASGCA President Lee Schmidt called for members to help clients by providing creative and adaptive designs, at the recent ASGCA Annual Meeting in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

"I am proud that ASGCA members continue to work together to provide suggestions, solutions and innovative design concepts to make the game of golf better for future generations," said Schmidt, who was elected ASGCA President at the meeting. "Our new designs need to be creative, problem solving and adaptive in order to meet the environmental, economic and social needs of today's projects."

The meeting saw over 100 ASGCA members and guests gathering in Tulsa for a mix of discussion, education and golf. Speakers included various ASGCA members, golf course owners and developers, USGA staff, and representatives from ASGCA industry partners Toro, Rain Bird and Profile Products.

Some of the most pressing issues in world golf were addressed, from open discussions covering wide topics such as the popularity of golf and business models at golf clubs, to sessions

focused on topics such as bunker design and pace of play.

ASGCA Associate member and captain of the USA Ryder Cup team Tom Watson spoke about his own golf course design business and his preparations for the forthcoming Ryder Cup matches in Gleneagles, Scotland.

Class-A PGA professional golfer and Air Force pilot Maj. Dan Rooney was presented with the Donald Ross award for significant and lasting impressions to the profession. Rooney is founder of the Folds of Honor Foundation and Patriot Golf Day, and owner of The Patriot Golf Club in Tulsa, where architects gathered for golf and the Donald Ross Award Reception and Dinner.

Three members—Cary Bickler, Keith Evans and Dr. Michael Hurdzan—became ASGCA Fellows, and two new associate members were welcomed to the ASGCA, Gary Brawley, a partner at Tripp Davis and Associates and Troy Vincent, owner of Vincent Design.

Read our interview with the new ASGCA President Lee Schmidt on page 14. For more about the new ASGCA Fellows, turn to page 16



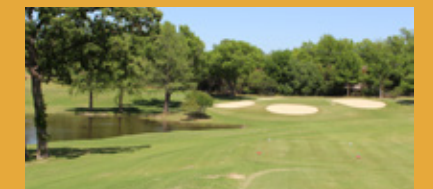
Tom Watson, ASGCA Associate, was among the wide range of speakers at the Annual Meeting

Golf in Tulsa

As part of the ASGCA's ongoing professional development programme, members were able to experience some of the most noteworthy golf courses in Oklahoma.

Southern Hills Country Club

Designed by ASGCA Founding Member Perry Maxwell in 1936, Southern Hills has a rich championship history that includes the hosting of three U.S. Opens and four U.S. PGA Championships, the most recent of which was won by Tiger Woods in 2007.



The Patriot Golf Club

Designed by the firm of ASGCA Past President Robert Trent Jones, Jr. and opened in 2010, The Patriot takes the player on a journey through marsh, woodland, prairie and limestone canyons. A dramatic opening tee shot with long views to Tulsa drops 160 feet to the fairway and sets the scene for a round that offers drama around every corner.



Tulsa Country Club

In 2011, ASGCA Past President Rees Jones completed a successful renovation of the golf course at Tulsa Country Club, which was originally designed by A.W. Tillinghast in 1920. The redesign achieved the club's objectives of improving conditions, aesthetics and playability, while also reducing the demand for city water.



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DIGEST

Golf participation

Positive trends in golf

PGA of America President Ted Bishop has highlighted positive trends for golf in a message published by the National Golf Foundation.

Highlighting golf's dependence on the weather, Bishop notes that "2013 had the fewest days open for golf in the past seven years," but that "golfers played more rounds of golf per day open than they had in previous years." 2014 appears to be continuing the positive trend, with Bishop adding: "Rounds played are up this spring in areas of the U.S. not affected by the weather."

Bishop also highlights growth segments in golf: "According to PGA PerformanceTrak, golf facility operators reported growth in three of four



Golf facility operators are reporting growth

key performance revenue indicators from 2012 to 2013, including golf merchandise sales (up 2.2%); food and beverage revenue (up 2.0%); and total facility revenue (up a modest 0.3%)."

The message also reports on positive uptake of golf growth initiatives such as Get Golf Ready, PGA

Junior League, Drive Chip and Putt and The First Tee program, as well as improved figures for televised golf.

Read the full message from Ted Bishop, President, PGA of America, at <http://ngfdashboard.clubnewsmaker.org/Newsletter/2pzaqpbe01f>

Fought starts work at Wilmington muni

Course renovations are under way at the municipal golf course in Wilmington, North Carolina under the supervision of John Fought, ASGCA. Originally designed by Donald Ross in 1926, Fought says "it will look and play like the wonderful design Ross intended it to be."

Crane Creek enters third phase of masterplan

The greens at Crane Creek CC in Boise, Idaho are to be rebuilt to USGA specification, beginning with the front nine later this year. This represents the third phase of a long-term masterplan created by David Druzisky, ASGCA, the first two phases involving bunker redesign, rebuilding of tees and tree clearance.

St George's to begin green rebuilding project

Ian Andrew, ASGCA will play a key role in a project to rebuild all the greens at ASGCA founding member Stanley Thompson's design at St George's in Ontario, Canada. The new greens will be based on Thompson's originals, addressing issues such as poor drainage and shrunken green sizes.

New course set to open in Gobi desert

Chinese golfers will be able to enjoy links golf when a new course designed by ASGCA President Lee Schmidt and Brian Curley, ASGCA opens later this year. Set in dunes on the fringes of the Gobi desert and close to the city of Hohhot, the course will include traditional links features such as a Redan hole, a punchbowl green and 'blowout' bunkers.

More information on all of the above projects and more by ASGCA members is available at the Golf Course Architecture website: www.golfcoursearchitecture.net

Pinehurst set for U.S. Opens



The world of golf is descending on the Pinehurst resort in North Carolina for the long-awaited dual U.S. Opens. 2014 is the first year in which the Men's and Women's championships will be held on the same course in consecutive weeks.

In 2011, Bill Coore, ASGCA and Ben Crenshaw oversaw a widely praised restoration of the No. 2 course at

Pinehurst, notable for its foundation on sustainability, including the removal of a large proportion of the course's irrigation heads and the replacement of Bermuda rough with exposed, unmaintained sandscapes between fairways.

Read a full article on the restoration from the *Spring 2011* edition of *By Design*



Image: Adam Bradley

And now for something completely different

The Challenge Course at Monarch Dunes has two flags on each hole, one with a bigger cup, providing multiple alternative ways to play

Throughout the world, golf clubs are experimenting with new ways to play the game that might attract new and returning players. Toby Ingleton considers the pursuit for alternatives.

There are few similarities between golf and cricket. Both sports involve a ball, and a bat, of sorts. But cricket is usually played in teams, the ball is moving when struck and, while a national obsession in many of the countries where the game is played, in large parts of the world it remains a complete mystery. However, the two sports do have one other thing in common. The traditional professional format of the game runs over multiple days. Even the more widely-played variants—an 18-hole round in golf and a one-day match in cricket—can take up a large portion of the day. For cricket, authorities recognized that this was somewhat at odds

with most other popular spectator sports—such as soccer, basketball and hockey—that are typically decided in two to three hours. In 2003, the England and Wales Cricket Board introduced a new format—Twenty20—which delivered a shorter burst of exciting cricket to appeal to fans who didn't have the time or inclination to attend the traditional format. Twenty20 was a near-instant success, and other cricketing nations quickly followed. The impact has been lasting, with Twenty20 now sitting comfortably alongside other formats of the game and attracting some of the largest crowds in the sport. Some professional clubs say that 70 percent of their revenue is generated by the new format.

This leaves golf as the only mainstream sport that hasn't widely adopted a version of the game where the winner can be declared within two to three hours of the event starting. Alternative formats for golf was a hot topic of discussion among delegates at this year's annual meeting of the American Society of Golf Course Architects in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Attracting new crowds to professional tournaments is one poetnetial benefit. But the bigger picture comes from bringing more people into contact with the game. Those who attend a popular, shorter professional event might be encouraged to try (or revive a past interest in) the sport. And golf clubs that offer a shorter version at their facilities might attract those

golfers who presently do not have time to play a full 18 holes. So what should that shorter version be? Twenty20 cricket has largely the same rules as traditional cricket, but with a limited number of 'overs' (in extremely simple terms, an over is a set of six attempts to hit the ball). And it was already a recognized format before formal Twenty20 events were played. Its closest equivalent in golf might be a nine-hole tournament with a shotgun start. Golf is not short of recognized formats that could be adapted for a shorter version of the game. There are a number of established golf clubs, such as Open Championship venue Royal St Georges in Kent, England, where two-ball formats like foursomes

(two teams of two players taking alternate shots) are at times insisted upon, in order to keep the game moving quickly. For Royal Worlington & Newmarket Golf Club a little further north, the rapid play enabled by a foursomes policy has allowed the club to accommodate a large membership on a nine-hole course. But a breakthrough might require a more radical approach. Reynolds Plantation Golf Club in Georgia—which has six golf courses, each designed by an ASGCA member—recently hosted an experimental event organized by Hack Golf, a partnership between TaylorMade and the PGA of America that is exploring ways to increase golf's fun factor. Standard 4.5 inch diameter golf holes were replaced with big 15-inch cups for a nine-hole exhibition tournament that featured professional golfers Justin Rose and Sergio Garcia. "A 15-inch hole could help junior golfers, beginner golfers and older golfers score better, play faster and like golf more," said Garcia. There are parallels between the big cup idea and another concept introduced in the 1926 book *Golf Architecture in America* by golf course architect George C. Thomas, whose designs include Riviera Country Club and Bel-Air Country Club in California. In the chapter 'Arbitrary Values', he proposes that putts count as "half strokes". Thomas felt that with less value assigned to putting, accuracy from the fairway would be greater rewarded. In match play in particular, holes are more likely to have been already conceded once players are on the green. One player who is reasonably close to the hole in two shots is unlikely to be matched by another who has taken three to reach the putting surface. For both Thomas's concept and 15-inch cups, the removal of some of the anguish around putting reduces the time spent on the green and speeds up play. And while Thomas's concept can be tried without any adaptation of a golf course, for both ideas greens could generally be smaller and require

a lower level of maintenance, reducing the cost of upkeep of a golf course.

Recognizing the benefits that alternative formats could offer, creative and forward-thinking golf course architects are working with their golf club clients on ideas that are suitable for their individual facilities and markets.

Pascuzzo and Pate Golf Design has introduced a ‘Challenge Course’ concept at two clubs, Monarch Dunes GC in Nipomo, California and The Club at SpurWing in Meridian, Idaho.

Consisting of 9-12 par three holes with multiple grass tees, bunkers, water features and all of the normal elements found on a typical golf course, the key feature of these courses are the oversized, undulating greens which have been carefully designed to create a variety of difficult and easy flag locations.

“This is key,” says ASGCA Past President Damian Pascuzzo, “because each green has two flags, one in an easy location and another in a more difficult spot. The underlying principle of a Challenge Course is to provide various ways to play that are only limited by the golfer’s imagination.”

Multiple objectives are fulfilled by the Challenge Course concept: Experienced players have the opportunity to work on their iron play in a fun environment that remains ‘real golf’; Players of all abilities can have a quality golf experience in a shorter period of time, often little more than an hour; multiple tees and angles provide an entry level option for people of all ages who are new to golf; and the courses appeal to older golfers who may not be able to play even nine holes of a typical layout, but want to keep swinging a club.

It doesn’t end there, explains Pascuzzo: “A 10-some of friends can play, drink a few cold ones during the round, and then head to the clubhouse to spend the same amount of time figuring out the bets!”

At Monarch Dunes, a daily fee facility, they have taken the concept a bit further, with the introduction of an eight-inch cup at all of the easier pin



Images: Paul Abell / AP Images for Hack Golf

Justin Rose and Sergio Garcia recently participated in an experimental 1.5-inch cup event



locations. “They have put an emphasis on introducing new players to golf though their Learn Golf program. Assuming that these new players have no golf experience whatsoever, Monarch Dunes offers clubs and balls at no charge, a ‘cheat sheet’ of instructions to guide players on what to do when on the course, and on weekends they have an on-course ambassador assisting players,” explains Pascuzzo.

The Challenge at SpurWing is an addition to a private club and helps retain older golf members, while being able to offer young families a membership that includes the Challenge course, swim, fitness, and clubhouse privileges. This not only helps increase the health of the club by additional food and beverage revenue but a fair number of these members are expected to graduate into full golf memberships.

The Challenge course has a parkland style that matches the regulation course and, importantly, real estate values of the surrounding lots also match those on the regulation course.

Other short course concepts have taken hold at individual facilities. A

well-known example is the Horse Course at The Prairie Club in Valentine, Nebraska, designed by Gil Hanse, ASGCA. There are 10 par-three holes, but no formal tee boxes. With similarities to the basketball game of ‘horse’, the winner of the previous hole gets to choose the starting point and green for the next hole.

A new concept that can be played on an existing, regulation course combines golf with fitness. Called GOLF-PT (for Personal Training), it is being developed by Forrest Richardson, ASGCA and began when he was working with the United States Marine Corps to find a way to get marines more interested in golf.

The United States Marine Corps operates 15 golf courses around the world as part of its Community Services and Recreation Program. GOLF-PT is a timed event in which players run throughout the round, going from hole to hole in an attempt to record the shortest time of the entrants. A typical 18-hole round by a trained and fit marine who possesses some golf skill will be completed in the 50-110 minute range.



Image: The Prairie Club



Image: The Club at Spurwing

The Horse Course at The Prairie Club in Nebraska (top) and The Challenge at Spurwing in Idaho

For GOLF-PT a golf course is temporarily configured with red, white and blue flags at each hole. Holes are reduced to one-shot lengths of between 70 and 200 yards. The red flag marks the start of each hole, which can be from a tee, fairway, rough or even a bunker. The white flag marks the point at which a player must physically enter a green. The blue flag marks the hole. Players begin with three golf balls. At each red flag there are right- and left-handed clubs. Time begins at the opening hole when

a player hits to the green. If the ball fails to remain on the green he re-tees and tries again. Players run from flag to flag. Golf skill remains essential because more time is consumed if shots to each green do not remain on the green. In essence, players are penalized by having to retrieve balls that do not remain on the green, and must run around the circumference of a green if all three attempts fail to reach their ‘mark’. Putting is still required to finish out each hole from the white flag position.

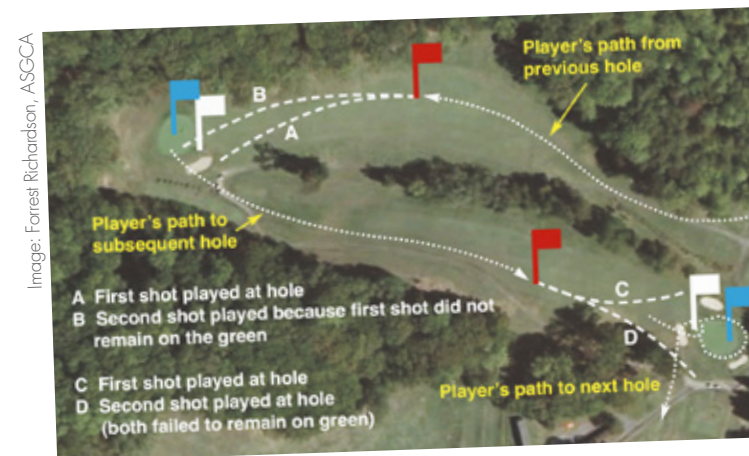


Image: Forrest Richardson, ASGCA



Image: Lance Cpl. DJ Wu

GOLF-PT combines golf and fitness, with participants trying to complete the course in the shortest time

“The concept is to marry fitness with golf, and to do it in a way that speaks to the endurance-minded Marine,” says Richardson. “It was important for us to make sure that golf skill was kept a part of the format and that the set-up was easy and painless.” Indeed, a GOLF-PT event can be set up in a matter of hours and may only need two to three hours of time to complete as players are sent off in rapid succession. While GOLF-PT has some way to go before being fully developed, the effort is bound to bring new uses—and users—to the Military’s golf course assets.

Golf has not yet, and may never need to, settle on a single version of the game that can be completed in the traditional two-to-three-hour timeframe of most other professional sports.

But the exploration and experimentation of alternative formats of the game does have the power to attract more visitors and revenue to existing golf clubs. Whether a 15-inch cup or GOLF-PT event, a challenge or horse course, or something completely different, what works best will likely depend on the club’s individual circumstances and market. ●

ASGCA member architects are well informed about the choices and viability of alternative formats of golf and share their ideas and success stories on a regular basis. They are ideally placed to consult with clubs about new concepts that might drive visitors and revenue. Find a member at www.asgca.org

Soil and seed | Joe Betulius

Working with nature

Seed establishment and erosion control are critical success factors for golf course projects. Joe Betulius explains how Profile Products works with golf architects to let nature thrive.

Nothing is more exciting than walking on a beautiful site and imagining what a golf course architect will create. Good designers will leverage the natural features Mother Nature provides, crafting a design and experience that golfers will appreciate.

Enhancing the natural beauty of the landscape is truly an art in the hands of a good designer. But taking extra consideration to protect the natural environment is critical to the sustainability of the golf course industry.

Architects can extend a friendly hand to Mother Nature in many ways, including: designing terrain to work with forces of nature, a key for water management on a golf course; selecting plants that provide the desired look and playability, while becoming a positive influence on the environment; analyzing the soils to understand what amendments are needed to help it sustain plants, conserve water and withstand compaction from people and machines, and; protecting exposed soils to prevent erosion and runoff during construction, while providing fast and effective germination and establishment of the plants.

This was the approach taken by golf course architect Jason Straka, ASGCA, while working on a major upgrade to one of two 18-hole courses at the JW Marriott Camelback Golf Club in Scottsdale, Arizona.

The Ambiente course, which featured in the 2013 Design Excellence Recognition Program, originally opened as Indian Bend in 1970, and had never undergone a significant renovation. Straka teamed up with course builder Integrity Golf and contractor Sunwest Golf & Reclamation, and brought in Profile Products as a consultant and materials supplier to assess and address the unique features of the course, which rested on an Army Corps of Engineers flood plain. It was critical for the design to work with the natural flow of water across the property.

Straka and his team were sensitive to properly selecting native plants and grasses for the site, and elected to utilize Profile Porous Ceramics to improve the sand for the right balance of porosity, nutrient retention and water holding properties. Testing of the root zone mix was completed by Hummel Labs and a blend of 90 percent sand,

10 percent Profile was selected to ensure optimum performance.

To assure soils stayed in place and plants germinated and thrived, Straka specified effective hydraulic mulching products to stabilize slopes, promote vegetation, and improve the long-term viability of the plants. Fairways were hydro-sprigged with Bermudagrass and Profile's Terra Wood mulch, while the perimeter areas were hydroseeded with native grasses. A wildflower mix was used in select areas to blend and enhance the beauty of the landscape. Typically, native grasses and wildflower seeds will require a hydraulic mulch that boasts a good functional longevity, protecting the surface for several months to allow these seeds to germinate and establish before the mulch decomposes and becomes a part of the soil.

"The native areas germinated and grew in quicker than we expected, largely in part due to the excellent performance of Profile's Terra Wood product," said Straka. "The putting greens were exceptional for a first year course."

Selecting the right product is critical for any course looking to stabilize a

site and promote healthy vegetative establishment. In the case of the Ambiente course at Camelback, a good base soil, combined with a climate that was favorable for growing, allowed hydroseeding contractor Rob Everhart to be successful with the Terra Wood product, which is classified as a 'base mulch.' Everhart applied material at a rate of 2400 lbs/acre (2,690 kg per hectare). He also added a tackifier when applying the native grasses and wildflowers, particularly on the steeper slopes.

"During Phase 1 it was amazing to see a bare floodway wash transform into a beautiful, playable golf course in only 60 days," said Everhart. "I use only Profile's wood fiber mulch products because they are very versatile and dependable," he added. "They are the only products which allow me to use a variety of equipment and any application rate needed, and still be very easy to shoot and achieve great results every time."

In cases where slopes are more severe, or heavy rainfall an imminent threat, Profile recommends alternative hydromulch products. This was the case at Trump International in 2013, when Esie O'Mahony of SOL Construction

needed to stabilize dunes and prevent erosion against the elements that batter the Scottish coastline.

"Shifting dunes and strong winds meant that we had to find a solution to stabilize the site as well as guarantee establishment of hand sprigged marram grass, said O'Mahony. "We trialed a number of mulches, including Flexterra HP FGM. The paper mulches disintegrated within a week but Flexterra HP held the dunes in place and continues to protect the hand sprigged grasses."

At Profile, we are fortunate to work with some of the best golf course architects around the world, including famed ASGCA members Jack Nicklaus, Pete Dye, Dr. Michael Hurdzan and many others. Our expertise extends throughout the US and beyond, with thousands of projects including international gems such as The Wave in Oman, Aspire Zone in Qatar and the previously-mentioned Trump International Golf Links in Aberdeen, Scotland.

Every job site is different and considerations should be made for the environmental conditions impacting each course. Our team of engineers and agronomists can help select the right mulches and

soil amendments. And we always endeavor for recommendations to be made following collaboration between the architect, golf course owner, superintendent, consultant and the contractor, to ensure that all parties have confidence in the decisions taken. It is especially satisfying to have the products and knowledge to help designers bring their projects to life in an environmentally sound way. ●



Joe Betulius

Joe Betulius is the vice president of marketing for Profile Products. He has worked with golf course architects around the world, most recently focusing his efforts on Europe and the Middle East.



New frontiers

By Design speaks to new ASGCA President Lee Schmidt about his career, ambitions and outlook for the golf design business.

Lee Schmidt took his first steps into golf design in the 1970s, working for Pete Dye, ASGCA Fellow. Positions with Landmark Land Company and Nicklaus Design followed, before he teamed up with Brian Curley, ASGCA to form what is now one of the foremost international golf design businesses. With an extensive global portfolio that ranges from Bali Hai in Las Vegas to the Mission Hills resorts in China, Schmidt Curley Design continues to explore new frontiers, with its first project in Myanmar now in construction.

Congratulations on becoming the new President of ASGCA. Can you summarize what this means to you?

I am honored to be the president of the ASGCA and lead our organization this coming year. Golf course design has been my career for many years and I am glad that I have the opportunity at this time to give back in a small way to my profession. As I stated in my acceptance speech, many people contributed to my success and career path through the years and hopefully my leadership along with other members of our Executive Committee can help others in the same way.

What goals do you have for your time as ASGCA president?

I see three main goals for the coming year. The first is to increase the visibility of our many talented ASGCA members. A new committee has been established on 'thought leadership'. This will look into ways ASGCA can strengthen our reputation as creative problem solvers in the golf industry. Our membership is very diverse with an enormous amount of expertise as it relates to golf design and construction. Showing decision makers at courses that we are problem solvers will benefit both our members as well

as golf courses that are looking for answers at their individual clubs.

Secondly, a committee of members will look into ways that we can "Build Community." We are looking for ways to work more closely with the media and other golf organizations to keep the game of golf healthy. Giving our members more opportunities to interact with other influencers in golf will make ASGCA and the game stronger.

Finally, I will be working closely with our Membership committee to reach out to prospective members who meet our admission criteria. We want to make sure potential members know about ASGCA and, and we're investigating ways to help mentor those who are working to enter the profession.

In Pete Dye and Jack Nicklaus, you have worked with arguably both the greatest architect and greatest player in modern golf. What did you draw from these experiences?

No matter the profession, everyone has individuals in their lives that help us grow in our professions and Pete and Jack are two key individuals to my career growth. I started working

for Pete out of college and he is very 'hands on' to his approach to design. His detailed plan work is minimal, but he spends a great deal of time onsite looking at the land, exchanging concepts with the construction team and finding ways to challenge golfers but also make the course playable. Many may dispute my 'playable' comment, but he truly wants for all levels of golfers to be able to enjoy the course. His courses are very strategic in design and unique in style.

Jack's course design company is more structured. As design associates, we were assigned to specific projects and would then keep Jack involved as the design progressed. Plan work was much more detailed at Nicklaus Design. The majority of hole strategies were set early on with adjustments made through the construction phase. I learned so much from these two individuals and could not have had better mentors for my career in golf course architecture.

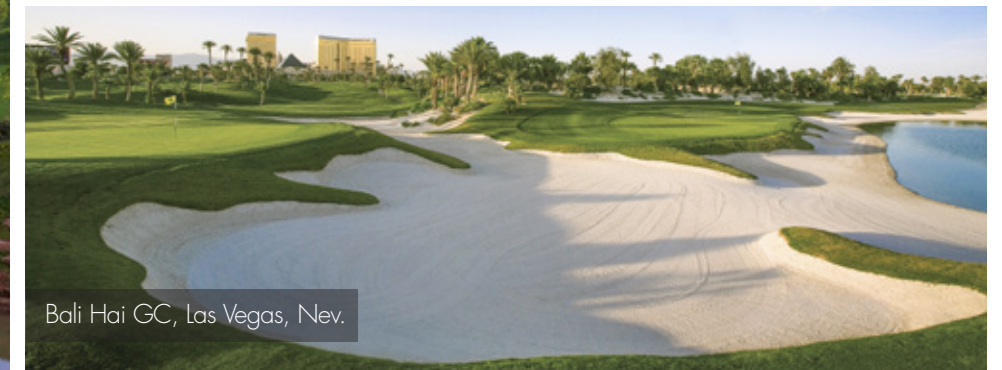
Schmidt-Curley is known for its prolific activity in new golf markets, particularly in Asia. How much of your time is spent working internationally, and how does this compare to work in the USA?

When Brian Curley and I formed Schmidt-Curley Design 18 years ago, the majority of our work was in the USA. As we all know, the growth of new golf facilities in the USA has declined in recent years due to many factors; oversupply, an economic downturn and decline in active golfers. Prior to this slowdown, we were fortunate to have expanded our

presence into Asia. Presently we have two offices in China and the majority of our work is in the Asia region. We have been very fortunate to work with some great clients and interesting sites that have allowed us to create new designs and also help grow the game in other parts of the world. China, in particular, has grown from less than twenty courses to over one thousand in a relatively short period of time. This growth translates to more golfers playing worldwide and also having golfers traveling more to see and enjoy courses.

What is your outlook for the golf design business?

There are design opportunities both in remodeling work and new designs. Existing courses are looking for ways to attract new members by upgrading their facilities, and the entire industry is focused on attracting and keeping players. As I mentioned earlier, we want to use our skills as creative problem solvers—thought leaders—to help owners envision ways to make the game healthy. Increasing water use rates coupled with water availability issues worldwide are also creating opportunities to redesign courses to make them more efficient. The demand for new designs is fewer than in years past, but these courses need to be more adaptive to tougher terrains and more environmentally sensitive. We have currently started a new project in Myanmar, which shows there are still new frontiers available for expanding golf worldwide. We have many very talented members in the ASGCA who can help developers and owners with their projects. ●



Lifelong learning

Marc Whitney shines a spotlight on the continued education of ASGCA Fellows



“I believe that change equals learning, and learning equals growth

Cary Bickler, ASGCA Fellow

For nearly 70 years, golf course owners and operators have made a point to look for ‘ASGCA’ following a golf course architect’s name when there is work to be completed. They know American Society of Golf Course Architects members have a proven past record of success designing and renovating properties, and are committed to continued professional growth to provide the most thoughtful problem solving a project requires.

Three examples of what makes ASGCA members unique are the newest ASGCA Fellows, Cary Bickler, San Diego; Keith Evans, Lainsburg, Michigan; and ASGCA Past President Dr. Michael Hurdzan, Columbus, Ohio.

“Cary, Keith and Mike have given so much to the game, and their design work has evolved and grown over time,” ASGCA President Lee Schmidt said. “They are not only fine ASGCA

members, they are examples to the entire golf industry of the positive impact that can be made through thoughtful dedication to craft, and commitment to doing things the right way.”

The positive impact each Fellow has had on the golf course architecture profession is impressive.

- Bicker is the principal and owner of Cary Bickler, Inc. Golf Course Design. He has completed over 100 golf course projects throughout his career, including: La Jolla, Country Club, La Jolla, California; Duneside at Baywood Greens, Longneck, Delaware; and The Country Club at Soboba Springs, San Jacinto, California.
- Evans spent more than 30 years with Rees Jones, Inc. Golf Course Design. His design work across North America includes: Baker Hill Golf Club, Newbury, New Hampshire; Huntsville Golf Club, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania; and

Thousand Oaks Golf Club, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

- Hurdzan has spent 50 years in golf course design, construction, maintenance and ownership. The author of six books (printed in English, German, Korean and Chinese), Hurdzan co-designed Erin Hills Golf Course, Hartford, Wisconsin, which will host the 2017 U.S. Open Championship. His numerous other courses include: Devils Pulpit Golf Course, Caledon, Ontario, Canada; Willowbend Country Club, Cape Cod, Massachusetts; and Naples National, Naples, Florida.

By Design asked each new Fellow about the value of being ‘lifelong learners’.

“Life-long learning is a natural by-product of ever-present change,” Bickler said. “Change invites, and even compels us to explore new ideas. In the golf course design industry, this means we have an opportunity to be creative in new ways that never occurred to us before.

“Ancient philosophy has taught us: ‘No man ever steps in the same river twice, for it’s not the same river and he’s not the same man’. This wisdom holds true for rivers, golf courses, and all of humanity. I believe that

change equals learning, and learning equals growth.”

Hurdzan also chose to quote the written word in his response.

“To slightly corrupt a line written in the 1890s by Robert Forgan, ‘Golf (course architecture) is a science, a study of a lifetime, in which you may exhaust yourself but never your subject.” he said.

“Many ASGCA members are lifelong learners, borne out of the competitive nature of our business that requires incorporating new technology in irrigation, drainage, grasses, green construction, environmental concepts, etc. in order to stay competitive.

Hurdzan continued: “We have seen remarkable attitudes shifts in what golfers want and expect from their golf courses, what golf writers and course raters see as desirable qualities, and what television and travel consultants hold out to be a worthy golf course. It is a moving target that is as much fad as fashion, but there are still some timeless qualities that underlie even somewhat garish golf courses. It is the search for the holy grail of ‘timelessness’ that causes us to continue to observe, learn and adapt.

“A Lewis Carroll quote from *Alice in Wonderland* says: ‘Now, here, you

see, it takes all the running you can do, to keep in the same place. If you want to get somewhere else, you must run at least twice as fast as that!’ That is how I see golf course design and why I am a committed lifelong learner.” ●



“It is the search for the holy grail of ‘timelessness’ that causes us to continue to observe, learn and adapt

Dr. Michael Hurdzan, ASGCA Fellow



Erin Hills GC, Hartford, Wis.



La Jolla CC, San Diego, Cal.

Photo: Ron Kobayashi

Curb appeal

The impression a golf course gives from the road can be critical to its success. Jeff Blume explains how he took this into account for the design of the golf course at his alma mater.

How often have you caught a glimpse of a golf course from a road and then had the urge to play? It's exactly those feelings I wanted to evoke when redesigning the golf course at Texas A&M University.

The Campus Course is surrounded on all sides by roadways, and is the 'front door' of the university campus. Consequently, on site and off site views were critical to the success of the design. The placement and shaping of all of the golf course features—most importantly the bunkers—had to consider their presentation from 360 degrees.

Bunkers and features are the descriptive signals of the golf course, communicating to the player how to play each shot. But at Texas A&M I changed my usual philosophy and created many bunkers that are not visible from the player's perspective. This was to provide interesting and beautiful views from the surrounding roadways. We also removed much of the existing vegetation on the site to open up these vistas.

The design concept for The Campus Course pays homage to early American courses such as National Golf Links and Maidstone. Architects like C.B. Macdonald and Willie Park, Jr. made prolific use of bunkering, many of which are not visible to the player. National Golf Links, for example, has over 350 bunkers, many of which are not within view. Bunkers on these golf

courses are often small in size, and they are clustered to communicate the desired tactical examination. The Campus Course at Texas A&M has 158 bunkers in the design, clustered together, with all but one small in size. This eases the maintenance burden because the superintendent is able to hand rake each one.

The views into the site help to market the course to the thousands of vehicles that pass by the facility each day, but the views from the course keep them coming back. I rerouted all or part of 14 holes. This made better use of existing topography and allowed for the expansion of the practice range and for two new holes used by golf classes, for turfgrass research, and for construction method

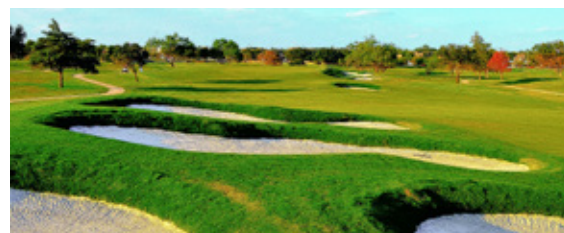
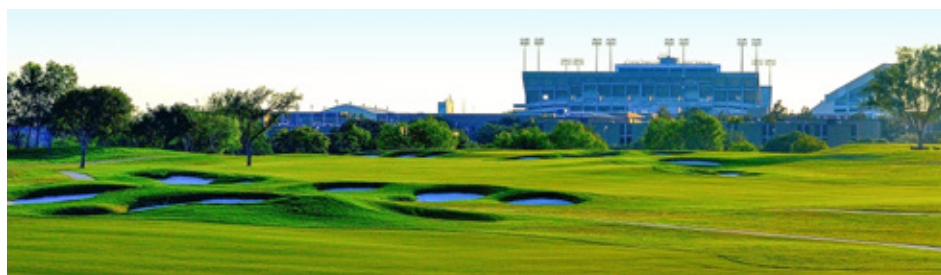
testing. But most importantly, the rerouting takes better advantage of the offsite views of the campus landmarks. The finishing holes have the iconic Kyle Field as their backdrop. Others garner views of various campus landmarks such as the Administration Building and the Bonfire Memorial.

At Texas A&M there is an old saying about the school's spirit and traditions: "From the outside looking in you can't understand it, and from the inside looking out you can't explain it". The views into the course from any perspective are captivating, and the views from the course give the facility a true 'sense of place' that is appreciated by all—but especially memorable to those fortunate enough to call themselves Texas Aggies. ●



Jeff Blume

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