



ISSUE 52 // SPRING 2021

BY DESIGN

Excellence in Golf Design from the American Society of Golf Course Architects



CUTTING EDGE

Six golf projects highlighted by the latest ASGCA Design Excellence Recognition Program

LESS IS MORE

Ways to deliver maximum value and enjoyment on golf projects with a small footprint

ALSO:

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Forrest Richardson
ASGCA President

Both out and in the box

The challenges we face are sometimes solved by thinking outside the box; eschewing our usual methods and searching for an innovative approach to the task in hand. It's a helpful mindset to adopt in all aspects of life, as well as in golf course design.

I like to think inside the box too. By that I mean creating a great solution with the resources at my disposal, rather than always seeking more. I try to leave a lighter footprint and, in some cases, no footprint at all. While we embrace this concept, we can still go back out of the box for an innovative solution. The result, for golf, could be more flexible layouts that can be played in different ways, with fewer or shorter holes, and that don't necessarily conform to our existing perceptions of what a golf course is. These are the ideas we need to have on our drawing boards.

I always love reading the annual 'Design Excellence' issue of *By Design*, which showcases examples of innovative thinking by ASGCA members. And this year, it is encouraging to see how many of these projects are focused on maximizing the value of small spaces, or making existing golf courses less resource-intensive. Read about all six projects highlighted by the ninth annual ASGCA Design Excellence Recognition Program in our main feature on page 14, and more examples of doing more with less from Agustín Pizá, ASGCA, on page 28.

Data from the latest *Golf Facility Market Trend Watch* report (see page 30) shows that practice area renovations are among the most common projects for golf course architects. This gives us plenty of opportunities to step in and out of the box.

I hope you enjoy the read.

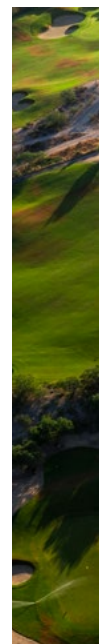
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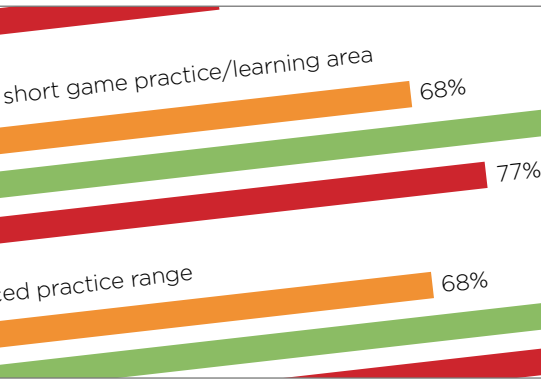
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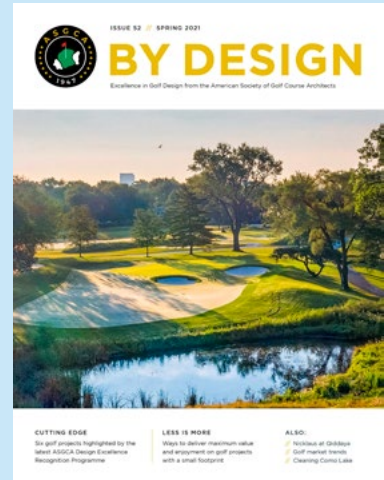
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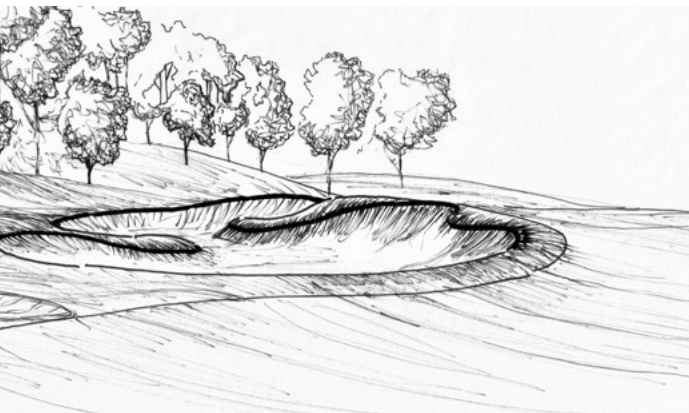


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Agustin Pizá, ASGCA, provides an insight into his approach to projects with a small footprint.



Schaumburg Golf Club in Illinois, where Todd Quitno, ASGCA, has renovated all 27 holes. Photography courtesy of Schaumburg Park District.



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Nicklaus to create new course in Saudi Arabia

Nicklaus Design will create a new 18-hole golf course as part of the Qiddiya development located southwest of Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

“I am excited by this project and my first golf course design in the Middle East,” said ASGCA Fellow Jack Nicklaus. “I’ve already spent time looking at the topography of the land, images of the backdrop and terrain, and discussing with our design team a strategy for

creating the golf course. The design will fully integrate the natural environment and the beautiful Qiddiya landscape, bringing together green spaces and mountainous terrain to form a picturesque canvas for both a beautiful and challenging golf course.”

Yasir Al-Rumayyan, chairman of Golf Saudi and the Saudi Golf Federation said: “To have the greatest-ever golfer commit to making his mark upon our

developing golf landscape in Saudi Arabia and at a project as significant and important as Qiddiya gives us great pride.”

Al-Rumayyan adds that having Nicklaus involved will help with “growing awareness of the sport at a domestic level, whilst increasing our national visibility as a vibrant new golf destination.”

The course, which is expected to enter construction in late 2021, will be framed by the Tuwaiq mountain



Image: Saudi Golf

A visualisation of the planned Nicklaus Design course near Riyadh in Saudi Arabia, framed by the Tuwaiq mountain range

range. The developers are also seeking a designer for a second course, with the aim of providing two world-class golf facilities.

“This project has been carefully planned to ensure an unmatched resort experience for both golfers and regular guests,” said Phillippe Gas, CEO of Qiddiya Investment Company. “We expect the Jack Nicklaus Signature Golf Course to provide the most entertaining challenge for golfers.”

R&A and USGA reveal ‘areas of interest’ for distance research

The R&A and USGA have released an update to their Distance Insights project, proposing three changes to equipment rules and revealing two specific “areas of interest” for future research.

The equipment rule changes are designed to “mitigate continuing distance increases” and include an optional local rule to change the maximum length of clubs – excluding putters – from 48 to 46 inches. The two other proposals concern the modernization of equipment testing protocols.

The areas of interest are to assess “the potential use of a Local Rule that would specify the use of clubs and/or balls intended to result in shorter hitting distances” and conduct “a review of the overall conformance specifications for both clubs and balls, including specifications that both directly and indirectly affect hitting distances.”

The response from professional golfers has been mixed, with last year’s US Open winner Bryson DeChambeau saying he is open to proposed changes in equipment regulations, while Rory McIlroy and Justin Thomas have been more critical.

Read [the full update from The R&A and USGA](#).



Gene Bates to renovate Circling Raven

Gene Bates, ASGCA, will begin renovation work this spring for Circling Raven Golf Club at Coeur d’Alene Casino Resort Hotel in Worley, Idaho.

In 2019, Circling Raven hired Bates, the original designer of the course, to develop a master plan.

“We wanted a plan that would allow us to continue to operate the course and not impact revenues,” said director of golf David Christenson. “Therefore, we started phase one by developing a plan for the expansion of the putting green, repositioning the tenth tees, and changing the presentation of the back tee on the first hole.”

“We believe these changes will be meaningful to our guests and especially for the players who are coming out to the Symetra Tour event in August. The new putting green at 12,500 square feet should allow players plenty of space to work on their short game.”



Image: Circling Raven

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Como golf project reduces lake pollution

Como golf course in Saint Paul, Minnesota, is expected to reopen this spring following the completion of a four-month project to reduce pollution of Como Lake.

Kevin Norby, ASGCA, oversaw work on three holes and the creation of a new stormwater basin to capture and clean 11 million gallons of runoff from surrounding roads, parking areas and paths, preventing an estimated 55 pounds of phosphorus from entering Como Lake each year.

Prior to the project, the seventh was relatively flat and had turf issues, while water from 150 acres of land between holes three and eleven was draining into an existing stormwater pond.

Norby recontoured the seventh fairway to allow the club to improve surface drainage and create a more interesting and natural looking fairway. Between holes three and eleven, a new iron-enhanced sand filter was constructed to remove dissolved phosphorus, a pollutant

in the water that fuels algae growth. A smart control system has also been installed to help regulate the level of the pond and to optimize the effects of the iron-enhanced sand filter.



Photo: Capital Region Watershed District



“When Chambers Bay was selected to host the U.S. Open, it was like winning an Academy Award”

ASGCA Past President Bruce Charlton

The latest podcast from *Golf Course Industry’s* “Tartan Talks” series sees ASGCA Past President Bruce Charlton discuss his experiences from 40 years working across the world for the Robert Trent Jones II firm.

Charlton says the project he is proudest of is the municipal Chambers Bay, which was built on a former sand mine near Seattle. “When we first went on site, there

was sand everywhere. It was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.”

While Chambers Bay is a public course, the RTJ II firm hoped it would host tournaments. “When designing the course, we were thinking of how to use the public trail connections for gallery circulation,” said Charlton.

“When Chambers Bay was selected to host the U.S. Open, it was like winning an Academy Award.”

Charlton’s career with RTJ II has taken him to many countries, but the success of Chambers Bay led to even more opportunities. “We’ve had the chance to work on some great, sandy sites in Vietnam and Mexico,” he said. “Because of that project, people see that we can create some pretty cool golf experiences.”

Listen to the full “Tartan Talk” at golfcourseindustry.com.

Here are links to other recent “Tartan Talks,” now featuring over 50 episodes:

- ASGCA Past President [Jeff Brauer and Nathan Crace, ASGCA](#), talk about the ASGCA Foundation’s ‘Designs on a Better Golf Course’ book
- [Robert McNeil, ASGCA](#), discusses why he is promoting and creating fast, friendly and inclusive golf experiences

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Drew Rogers works with university on renovation

Drew Rogers, ASGCA, has been appointed to renovate the golf course at Atkins Golf Club in Urbana, Illinois, which is to be used by the golf teams at the University of Illinois.

The course was built in 1999 and was known as Stone Creek Golf Club. It was renamed in 2020 after developers, The Atkins Group, gifted the course to the university.

“We have been consulting with Drew to transition the Atkins Golf Club into a course with increased distance and properly repositioned fairway bunkers in order to accurately and fairly challenge the modern collegiate players,” said Mike Small, the men’s head golf coach at the university.



Photo: Illinois Athletics

Toro donates \$50k to Rounds 4 Research program



Photo: iStockphoto

The Environmental Institute for Golf, the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America’s philanthropic organization, has received a \$50,000 grant from Toro for its Rounds 4 Research program.

Rounds 4 Research is designed to address a critical shortage in turfgrass research funding by auctioning donated rounds of golf online.

“Toro’s support has been critical to the success of the program, which provides long-term benefit to the golf industry and the game,” said Rhett Evans, GCSAA chief executive officer.

Tripp Davis begins BraeBurn project



Photo: Tripp Davis, ASGCA

Tripp Davis, ASGCA, has started a renovation of the golf course at BraeBurn Country Club in Houston, Texas.

Davis’ shaper Jason Gold (pictured) is making progress with rebuilding all greens and tees, repositioning and renovating bunkers to a classic style, and making better use of the elevation created during a 1991 renovation.

A new irrigation system will be installed, old turf will be replaced with NorthBridge bermuda, the drainage system will be upgraded to improve playing conditions in the winter months, and the practice facilities will be renovated.

Renovation progresses at Highlands Falls

Bill Bergin, ASGCA, has moved on to the second nine holes of renovation work at Highlands Falls Country Club in North Carolina.

The project includes new green complexes, bunkers, irrigation and drainage. Work on the back nine was completed in October 2020.

“We are very pleased with the results we have achieved on the back nine,” said Bergin. “The par threes are truly a highlight as we bookend this nine with terrific holes along the lake, while having enhanced the view and magical feel of the waterfall par-three fifteenth.”

Work on the front nine is progressing well. “All golf course features are being updated, but the highlight of the front nine is the opening up of the second and sixth holes,” said Bergin. “These short par fours will keep players on their toes!”



Photo: Highlands Falls

San Vicente to reopen in April

San Vicente Golf Resort in Ramona, California, is reopening in April following a renovation by Andy Staples, ASGCA.

“Our vision from the beginning was to take this course to another level in terms of design aesthetic, playability, and of course, fun,” said Staples.

Work has been completed on greens and bunkers to increase their long-term maintenance efficiency. Staples has also expanded tee complexes as well as overseeing tree management and drainage work.

“I love what Andy has done in terms of how the new green complexes blend seamlessly into their surroundings,” said course superintendent Ben McBride. “It’s very similar to courses in my native Australia where shortgrass not only plays an integral role in how the course is presented, but how important it is for the design to match the maintenance regime.”



Photo: Michael Gainey, PGA

Benkusky ready to begin refresh of Palm Aire layout



Photo: Michael Benkusky, ASGCA

Michael Benkusky, ASGCA, will begin renovation work this summer on the Dick Wilson-designed Champions course at Palm Aire Country Club in Sarasota, Florida.

The project aims to “refresh” the course for modern play and includes regrassing, rebuilding bunkers, expanding tees and reducing maintained turf.

“Bunkers will be rebuilt to an updated Wilson look and their placement adjusted to accommodate today’s game,” said Benkusky. “Greens will be evaluated to incorporate new pin placement areas, while the new and forward tees allow us to both lengthen and shorten the course, letting us adjust the yardages in between and provide even more variety.”

Golf Industry Show held virtually for first time

The Golf Industry Show took place virtually for the first time in 2021. Online attendees were able to participate in a networking event hosted by the ASGCA as well as various education sessions, webinars and discussion panels. Among the experts featured were ASGCA President Forrest Richardson; ASGCA Past Presidents Jan Bel Jan and Tom Marzolf; Jerry Lemons, ASGCA; and Stephen Kay, ASGCA.


One of the most well-attended sessions was ‘Behind the Scenes at PGA Frisco’, where Gil Hanse, ASGCA, provided insight into the project for the new PGA headquarters.



Photo: GCSAA/ Golf Industry Show


SOCIAL UPDATE



 ASGCA
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Bobby Weed, ASGCA, designs new course near Jacksonville, Florida. “We’ll have things you don’t see on North Florida courses, such as sod wall bunkers, lay-down walls... they will be angled, with a much cleaner, elegant finish.”



 Evan Schiller
@evan_schiller_photography

Dreaming of the Cabot coast... and, there’s quite a lot to dream about. @coorecrenshaw



 Tim Liddy, ASGCA
@TimLiddy

We are pleased to announce, in collaboration with McDonald Design Group, our selection to prepare a master improvement plan for Mount Vernon Country Club in Alexandria, Virginia.

Search ASGCA on the below channels for more news:





Cutting edge

By Design profiles six innovative projects highlighted in the latest annual ASGCA Design Excellence Recognition Program.

Now in its ninth year, the annual ASGCA Design Excellence Recognition Program recognizes clubs that have worked with golf course architects to address unique design challenges.

The program highlights the innovation and problem-solving skills required of today's designers, with projects highlighted from 2020 including a new 18-hole golf course, renovations of 18- and 27-hole layouts, a new putting course, and new practice facilities. ●



Chris Wilczynski, ASGCA, renovated Blythefield CC to help prepare the course for modern-day golfers. Read more on page 22.



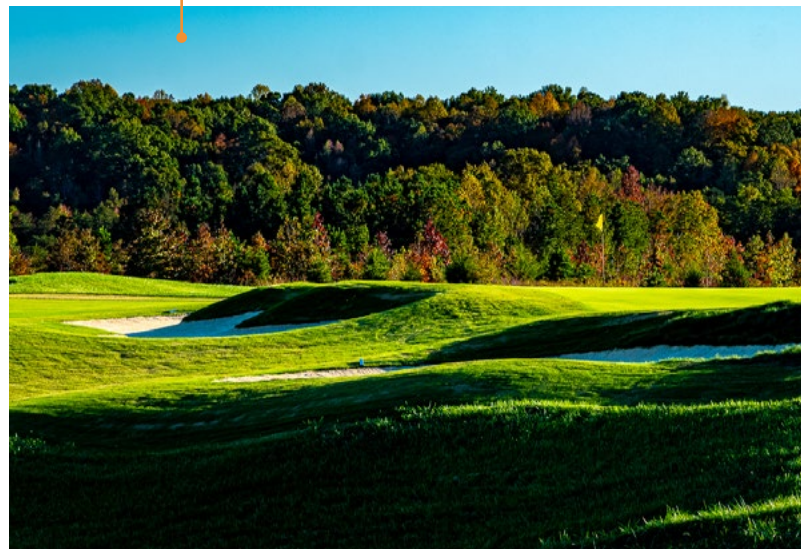
Todd Quitno, ASGCA, reduced bunker areas by more than half at the 27-hole White Eagle Golf Club. Read more on page 24.



Playing surfaces were regrassed, greens reconstructed and new forward tees built on all 27 holes at Schaumburg GC. Read more on page 18.



ASGCA President Forrest Richardson has created a practice area at Ping's professional demo center in Arizona, allowing tour professionals to hone skills and test new clubs. Read more on page 26.



The new Cutalong course designed by Tom Clark, ASGCA Fellow, has holes inspired by some of golf's best-known designs. Read more on page 16.



The Sagewood residential community hired Gary Brawley, ASGCA, to convert 50,000 square feet of open space into a new putting course for its 600 residents. Read more on page 20.



Inspired by the classics

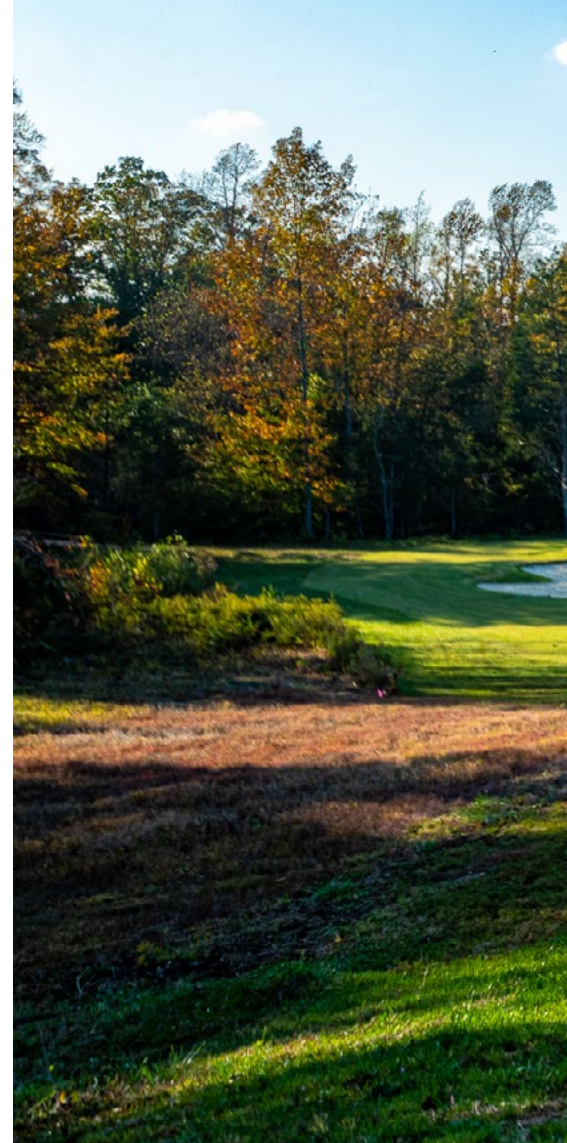
New layout in Virginia is based on interpretations of famous golf holes.

The new Cutalong Golf Course at Lake Anna, Virginia, opened for play towards the end of 2020, bringing a project that golf course architect Tom Clark, ASGCA Fellow, had been working on for over 20 years to a satisfying conclusion.

The project originally began in 1999 as a 27-hole course bordered by houses. Since then, the development endured multiple owners, a foreclosure and a

bankruptcy. The first construction began in 2012, with only three holes completed before financial difficulties brought work to a halt.

Utah-based lender Private Capital Group purchased the project, both real estate and golf, in 2018, and course construction started again that year. By the end of 2019, eleven holes and the practice facilities were complete. The final seven holes were finished in 2020.



“My original intention was to create another National Golf Links, similar to the great Charles Blair Macdonald’s layout in Southampton,” said Clark, who exchanged ideas on how to incorporate classic holes into the layout with golf journalist Ron Whitten. “With some of Ron’s input we not only have Macdonald to draw from, but a host of other famous designers and now we even have a Civil War component.”

Cutalong comprises variations of famous golf holes, including a Biarritz green on the par-three twelfth (left), and Alister MacKenzie’s Gibraltar hole at Moortown for the par-three seventeenth (main image).



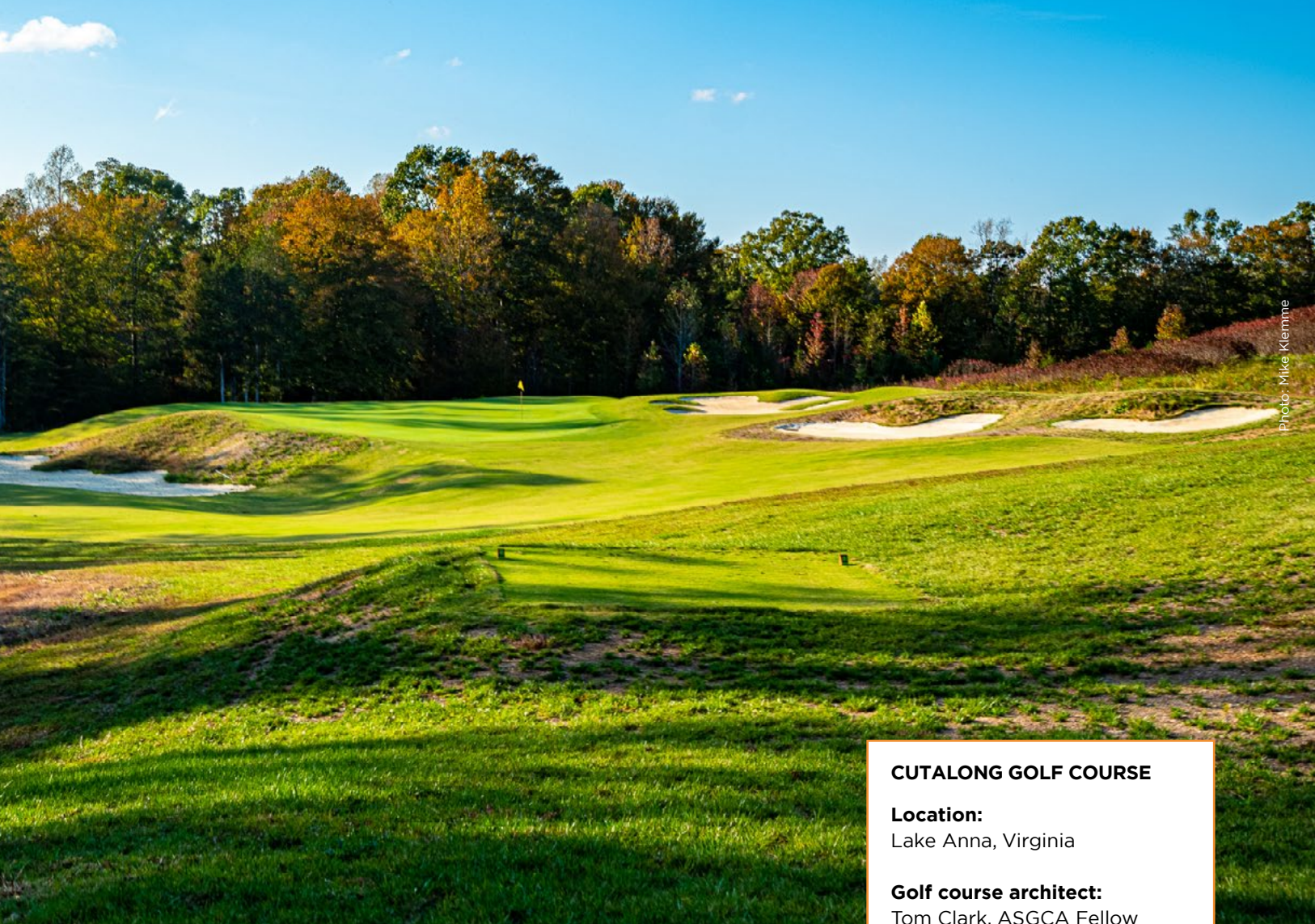


Photo: Mike Klemme

CUTALONG GOLF COURSE

Location:

Lake Anna, Virginia

Golf course architect:

Tom Clark, ASGCA Fellow
www.acagolf.com

Project summary:

Tom Clark, ASGCA, completed a project that was 20 years in the making when Cutalong opened for play. Its holes are inspired by some of golf's best-known classic designs, by designers including Donald Ross, Alister MacKenzie, Harry Colt, Hugh Alison, Tom Simpson, Old Tom Morris and William Flynn.

Partners:

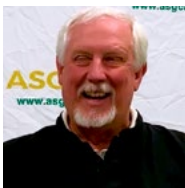
Rain Bird (irrigation); Verde Sports Construction (contractor); Hydrolinks (irrigation); Gonzo Shapes Golf (shaper); Luck Stone (bunker sand); The Greenery Group (earthmoving); Green Corp (sod); Bridge Builders (bridges); AKB Concrete (cart paths)

The layout emphasizes the site's mining history, featuring abandoned mine shafts, ruins and a rail line.

Clark's Cutalong layout includes an opening hole based on Robert Trent Jones's fourth hole at

William Flynn, James Braid, Pete Dye and others.

Wide fairways allow for multiple angles of approach and are designed to play firm and fast. "All greens have a minimum of six

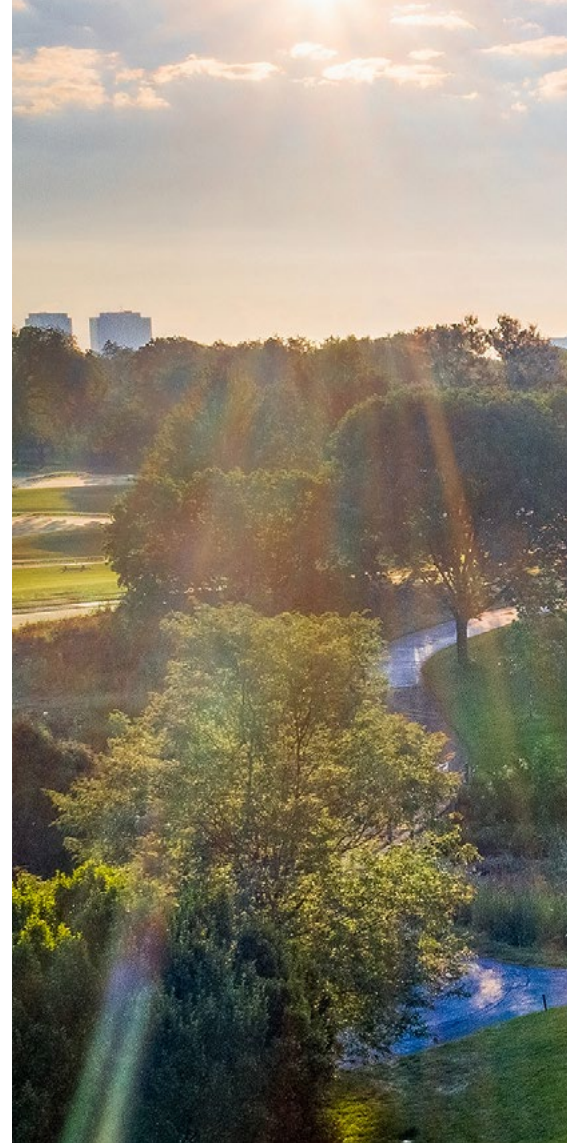


"My original intention was to create another National Golf Links, similar to the great Charles Blair Macdonald's layout"

Spyglass Hill, a par-four ninth based on Alister MacKenzie's fourteenth green at Augusta, as well others inspired by the work of Harry Colt, Hugh Alison, ASGCA Founding Father Donald Ross, Tom Simpson, Old Tom Morris,

strategic sections with plenty of pinnable areas," said Clark.

The design team also aimed to minimize earthmoving, which subsequently created a few blind shots, another feature associated with historic courses. ●



Updating a Chicago gem

Redesign project transforms infrastructure and aesthetics at Illinois club.

Schaumburg Golf Club in northwest Chicago was experiencing a range of course issues, including a lack of water and air flow on greens, bunkers in poor condition and problems with fairway drainage.

The club hired Todd Quitno, ASGCA, who drew up a plan of improvements that would see one of its three nines – Tournament, Baer

holes and created two really fun holes by flipping them from a par four and three, to a par three and four,” said Quitno. “This allowed us to move an existing lake and solve a major drainage issue while expanding the range.”

The project also included regrassing the playing surfaces, rebuilding greens, and building

says the bunkers now have more visual impact, their playability has improved, and the club has saved money on maintenance.

A ‘Life Tee’ system was introduced on all three nines to expand the forward teeing options, with the shortest set (on the Player’s nine) totalling just over 1,900 yards.

“During the last phase, I got to see the use of our Life Tee program,” said Quitno. “The local high school’s girls’ team was playing from our very front tees in the fairway. The coach said it matched their abilities well and gave them the chance to hit some of the greens in regulation, which they ordinarily couldn’t. It was good to see our efforts paying off to maximize fun and relevance for all skill levels.” ●



“We took two very difficult and underperforming holes and created two really fun holes”

and Player’s – transformed each year between 2017 and 2019.

A crucial aspect of the renovation, completed in the first phase, was to reroute the seventh and eighth holes on the Player’s nine to alleviate flooding. “We took two very difficult and under-performing

new tees. Greens were grassed with Pure Distinction and golf course superintendent Shane Ritchie said they are showing “greater consistency and improved playability.”

Bunkers were rebuilt using Better Billy Bunker liner and white sand from Pro/Angle. Ritchie



Photo: Schaumburg Park District



Photo: Lohmann Quitno Golf Course Architects

SCHAUMBURG GOLF CLUB

Location:
Schaumburg, Illinois

Golf course architect:
Todd Quitno, ASGCA
www.lohmannquitno.com

Project summary:
Todd Quitno, ASGCA, has overseen a project on all three nines at Schaumburg GC with the aim of addressing issues including a lack of water and air flow on greens, bunkers in poor condition, fairway drainage problems, and flooding on several holes.

Partners:
Golf Creations (construction);
Wadsworth Golf Construction;
Better Billy Bunker (bunker liner);
Rain Bird (irrigation);
Profile Products; Waupaca Sand Solutions; Pro/Angle (sand)

A 'Life Tee' system was introduced to expand Schaumburg's forward teeing options; Top, the 27-hole club has been transformed thanks to regrassed playing surfaces, rebuilt greens and bunkers, and new tees



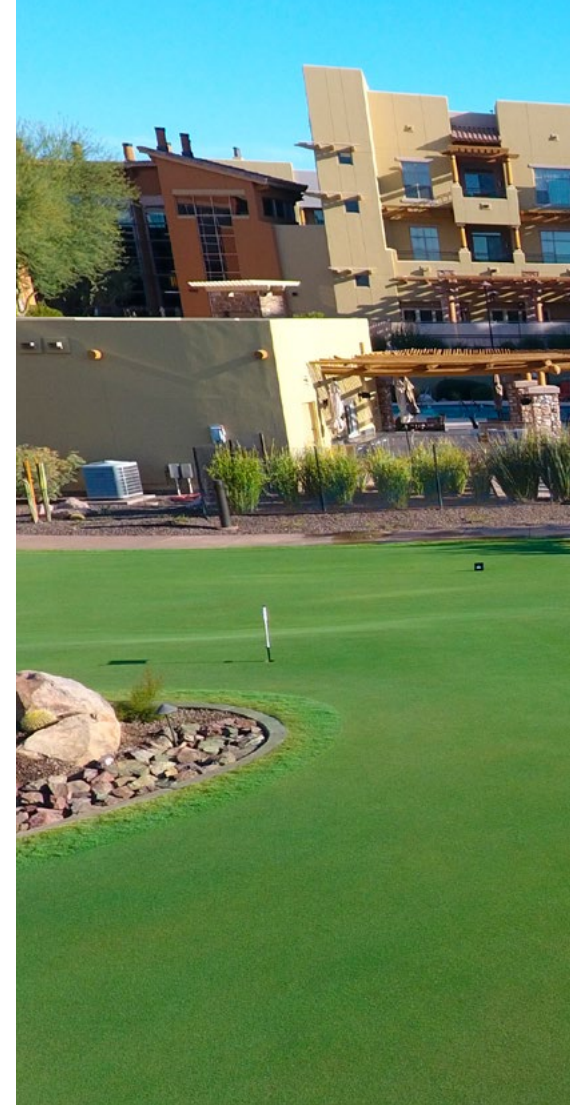
Golf rises again in Phoenix

New putting course brings residents of Arizona senior living community back to the game.

Sagewood – a senior living community in Phoenix, Arizona – was embarking on the second phase of an expansion in 2016 when it decided to transform a little-used open space into a world class amenity for its 600

residents. It hired golf course architect Gary Brawley, ASGCA, to design a new putting course for the 50,000-square-foot area.

Brawley visited four putting courses in Arizona prior to starting work at Sagewood. “The owner and I had



discussions about the positives and negatives of single hole routings, artificial turf versus natural turf, construction means and methods, all of which were foundational in the design directives given to me,” said Brawley. “The owner’s directive was to build the highest quality, natural playing surface putting course that would be both a fun and unique challenge for the residents.”

Brawley knew that the residents would quite likely play the putting course multiple times a week, so the design, dubbed The Links at Sagewood, had to be engaging.

The new putting course at the Sagewood retirement community provides residents with a “fun and unique challenge”



Photo: Gary Brawley, ASGCA



Photo: Gary Brawley, ASGCA

“I felt that creating a large putting surface versus 18 individual holes would lend itself to more playing options in the daily setup,” said Brawley. “The result was an 18-hole layout that can be played in reverse.

point, there is plenty of slope and character to give golfers a different challenge every day,” said Brawley.

“This has been one of the most unique and fun projects I have been involved with. Just the other day I



“There is plenty of slope and character to give golfers a different challenge every day”

“In addition to the 18-hole layout, golfers can play a nine-hole routing and a ‘superintendent’s choice’, so over a four-week period, the course will play differently each week.”

The green was built to USGA specification. “With eight feet of elevation change from the low to high

was on site and spoke with three residents who play the course twice a week. Two of them are in their eighties and the other is 95 and uses a walker to get around. Their smiles and enthusiasm were contagious. The 95-year-old lady said we had ‘brought golf back into her life.’” ●

THE LINKS AT SAGEWOOD

Location:

Phoenix, Arizona

Golf course architect:

Gary Brawley, ASGCA
gary@gbgolfdesign.com

Project summary:

Gary Brawley, ASGCA, was commissioned to design a new putting course as part of an expansion of the SageWood senior living community in Phoenix. The goal was to convert 50,000 square feet of open space into a world class amenity for the 600 SageWood residents.

Partners:

Wadsworth Golf Construction (contractor); Hunter Industries (irrigation heads and controller); Profile Products (soil); Ewing Irrigation (golf supplies); CMF Global (AquaFuse piping)



Blending the old and new

Renovation of Langford and Moreau course combines traditional styling with modern play.

The golf course at Blythefield Country Club in Belmont, Michigan, was designed in 1929 by William Langford and Theodore Moreau, and has hosted the Meijer LPGA Classic on the LPGA Tour since 2014.

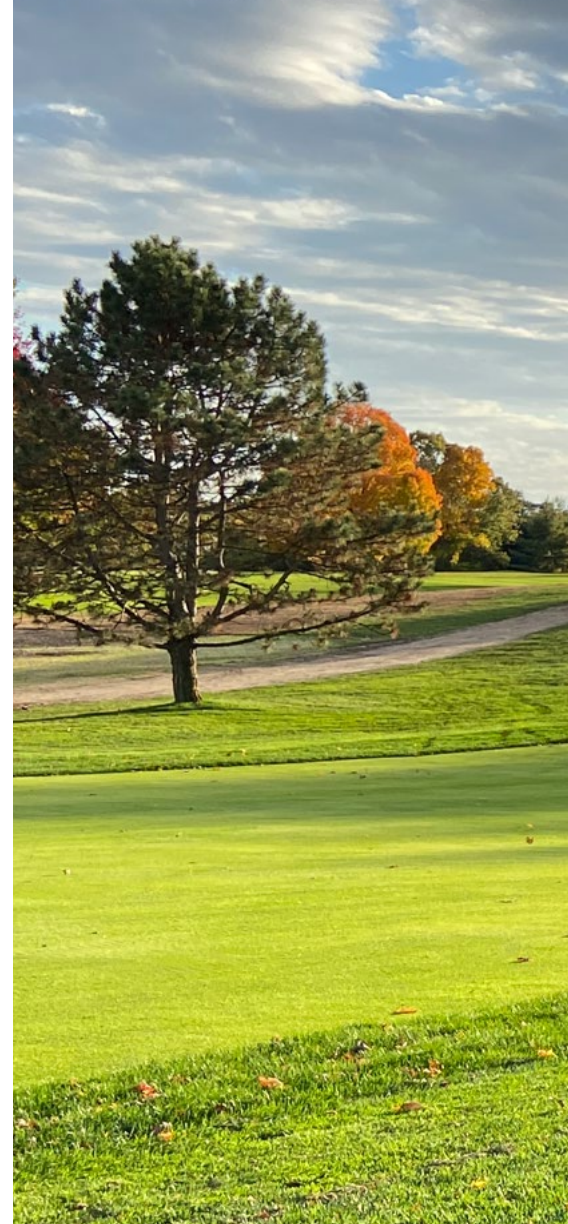
Chris Wilczynski, ASGCA, was hired in 2017 to develop a long-term master plan that would both respect the course’s history and prepare it for the modern game.

intended line of play and wider playing corridors to provide options for golfers of all abilities.”

MacCurrach Golf Construction began work in July 2020, and completed the project in November.

All bunkers have been rebuilt and lined with Better Billy Bunker.

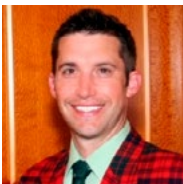
Greens have been expanded to their original shapes and sizes, and every green has had a new internal drainage system installed.



to Wilczynski, “opened the site panoramas, restored a cleaner look and created the width for each hole that Langford and Moreau intended.”

“Improving the bunkers and greens drainage will make for an improved experience for our members and better conditions and quality of play for the LPGA tournament,” said general manager Bob Crissman. “We needed this plan so that we can remain one of the premier golf courses in the Midwest.”

A new two-acre short game practice facility has also been built as well as a new 12,000-square-foot putting green and putting course. ●



“We have opened the site panoramas and created the width for each hole that Langford and Moreau intended”

“Our work has been to renew the course to what Langford and Moreau designed, with a modern approach,” said Wilczynski. “That includes bolder bunkers that are positioned at strategic angles to the

Fairways have been widened and realigned, and new tees have been added to every hole to shorten and lengthen the total course yardage. Several trees have also been removed, which has, according



Photo: Chris Wilczynski, ASGCA

BLYTHEFIELD COUNTRY CLUB

Location:

Belmont, Michigan

Golf course architect:

Chris Wilczynski, ASGCA
www.cwgolfarch.com

Project summary:

Blythefield CC's golf course has been renovated to suit today's golfers, while also respecting the original 1929 design by William Langford and Theodore Moreau.

Partners:

MacCurrach Golf Construction (contractor); Michael Kuhn Irrigation; Thielen Turf Irrigation; Better Billy Bunker (bunker liner); Golf Preservations (drainage); Mavis Consulting (agronomic consultant)



Image: Chris Wilczynski, ASGCA

Chris Wilczynski developed a long-term master plan to respect Blythefield CC's history and prepare it for the modern game; Top, the renovated par-four eighth hole



Less is more

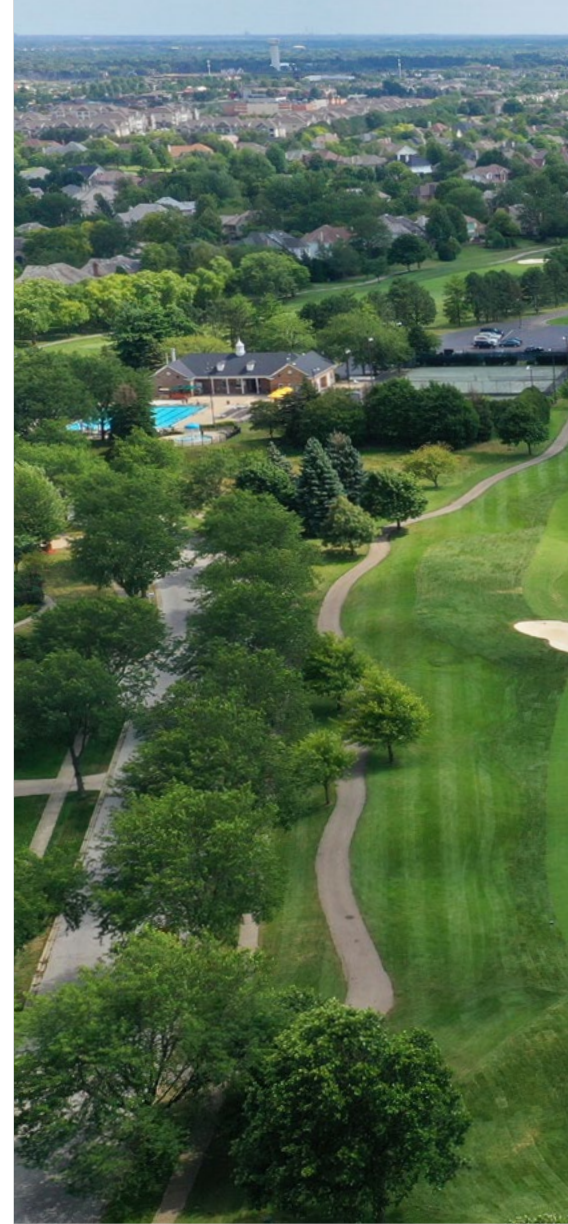
Bunker areas have been reduced by more than 80,000 square feet at 27-hole Illinois club.

In 2019, the 27-hole White Eagle Golf Club in Naperville, Illinois, turned to golf course architect Todd Quitno, ASGCA, to complete a bunker renovation on all three of its nine-hole loops. The project was needed because many bunkers were in poor condition, while others were outdated for the modern game due to their positioning being based on 1990s ball flight data.

Prior to the renovation, the club told Quitno that the bunkers were

cumbersome for staff to maintain and had been contaminated with years of washouts and storm damage. Others were so big that they often extended into areas where balls simply never went, meaning the club was maintaining a lot of sand area that never came into play.

Between May and October 2019, Quitno oversaw a renovation that reduced the bunker areas over 27 holes by more than half to less than 80,000 square feet, and



equipped them with Better Billy Bunker liner and Pro/Angle sand.

“The club wanted a clean-edged, high-flash look of the bunkering,” said Quitno. “Bunkers were cut in immediately off the edge of the green collars and fairway edges.

“We added rolling contours within the bunker bottoms and faces to give them a little character and to provide some distinct shadowing when sun angles are right. I love the final look of what we did, it is unique

Bunkers at White Eagle now feature a clean-edged, high-flash look



Photo: White Eagle Golf Club



Photo: White Eagle Golf Club

to the Chicagoland area. I think this gives the club a competitive advantage when it comes to member recruitment, which is already bearing fruit.”

In areas where bunkers were

to the extended bentgrass areas that were developed around greens and along bunker edges,” said Quitno. “We also ended up with a zero-sum in total bentgrass square footage by borrowing sod from the fronts and



“I love the final look of what we did, it is unique to the Chicagoland area”

removed, bentgrass was added to expand fairway landing areas and create roll-off and roll-on features around greens. “We allocated a lot of maintenance labor that was previously used on bunkers to attend

edges of existing fairways. Overall, we moved about five acres of bentgrass sod around on site.”

Since the renovation, the club has successfully hosted the 2020 Illinois State Open. ●

WHITE EAGLE GOLF CLUB

Location:
Naperville, Illinois

Golf course architect:
Todd Quitno, ASGCA
www.lohmannquitno.com

Project summary:
Todd Quitno, ASGCA, rebuilt the bunkering at White Eagle due to the existing bunkers being unnecessarily large, in poor condition and their positioning being based on 1990s’ ball flights. The club’s goals also included making the course more interesting for the entire membership by adding more playing options.

Partners:
Leibold Irrigation (construction); Better Billy Bunker (bunker liner); Toro (irrigation); Waupaca Sand Solutions; Pro/Angle (sand)



Putting with precision

New green with highly accurate slope increments allows Ping tour professionals to hone skills and test new clubs.

Ping, the golf equipment manufacturer, wanted a new practice green at its professional demo center in Phoenix, Arizona, which would provide highly accurate slope increments so its tour professionals could hone skills and test new clubs.

ASGCA President Forrest Richardson was appointed for the project and tasked with transforming an area of 8,000

square feet into a putting surface suitable for elite player practice.

Richardson was asked to design the practice green with slopes at various increments between 0 and 2 percent. He was also asked to create a practice bunker with sand that can be easily removed and replaced with another type, for club testing.

“The putting and chipping area must offer a variety of slopes and breaks with surrounding terrain that

approximates real-world chipping conditions,” said Richardson.

“The 350-square-foot bunker is purposefully small and lined with a Better Billy Bunker hard liner so sand can be quickly removed and replaced with any variety needed for specific testing. For example, Augusta ‘white marble’ sand may be in place during the months leading up to the Masters, while different sand types may be installed prior to



Photo: ASGCA President Forrest Richardson



Photo: ASGCA President Forrest Richardson

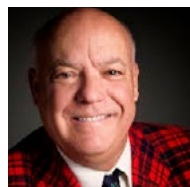
The new practice area at Ping's professional demo center in Arizona allows tour professionals to practice shots and test new clubs

other tournaments. The PermaEdge bunker system helps contain sands from the green surface.”

Richardson’s design also needed to accommodate the robotic Ping Launch Monitor that is housed in

areas when prototype equipment is being demonstrated or tested. Thus, the presence of security fencing had to be considered during the planning of irrigation and controls.”

The project also included detailed



“The putting and chipping area must offer a variety of slopes and breaks”

the test building adjacent to the green area. “Safety, relative to this area, was paramount to the design, requiring a layout that allows access to the adjacent practice range while also permitting security to isolate all

GPS slope analysis of the completed green surface so that it is aligned with putting tracking technology, allowing putts to be measured and compared to cross-slope, gradient and green speed metrics. ●

PING PROVING GROUNDS

Location:

Phoenix, Arizona

Golf course architect:

ASGCA President
Forrest Richardson
www.golfgroupltd.com

Project summary:

Golf equipment manufacturer Ping tasked ASGCA President Forrest Richardson with the creation of a practice green and bunker at its professional demo center in Arizona, with the required precision to enable tour professionals to hone skills and test new clubs.

Partners:

Wadsworth Golf Construction (construction); Better Billy Bunker (bunker liner); Toro; Ewing Irrigation; Hunter Industries (irrigation); IVI-GOLF (PermaEdge)

Less resource, more fun

Agustín Pizá, ASGCA, provides an insight into his approach to projects with a small footprint.



I couldn't agree more with ASGCA President Forrest Richardson, who encouraged a 'less is more' approach in his *Ahead of the Game* video, saying: "Playing the game does not rely on hundreds of acres. That model will live on, but we need to plan smaller footprints or even not leave a footprint at all."

Golf courses are an important setting where people can improve their physical and mental health. Playing golf helps people's fitness, mental well-being and social skills, so when clubs, resorts and communities have the chance to develop a small, unused parcel of land into a golfing outlet, they need to take it. Also, these small parcels can have the added benefit of being able to bring people closer to nature and enhancing the area's sustainability.

ASGCA Fellow Jack Nicklaus has said a pitch-and-putt course is "the most wonderful way to introduce people to playing golf." For some, this type of golf is appealing as it isn't as time-consuming as playing a 7,000-yard layout, while

for clubs, having a short layout is advantageous as the cost of running one is less and it provides an additional revenue stream.

Small footprint projects can be approached from a multi-purpose perspective, by thinking of ways of maximizing the land and attracting a broad range of visitors. Weaving the existing environment into fairways and hazards is important, not only from a sustainable aspect, but it also helps create appeal for golfers and non-golfers alike.

For golf course projects, the driving range is sometimes overlooked in the design process, resulting in a space with no excitement. But this is an opportunity to create something interesting, with less investment, that not only serves the purpose but is aesthetically beautiful, easier to maintain and fun.

Last year, we designed a new multi-purpose practice facility for El Cortés Golf Club at the Puerta Cortés Resort near La Paz, Mexico. We redesigned the club's abandoned driving range into a golf academy,



Photo: Rafael Navarros

At Puerta Cortés Resort in Mexico, Agustín Pizá, ASGCA, redesigned the driving range so it could also be used as a short course

10-hole pitch-and-putt (with holes varying between 30 and 130 yards) and a new range.

This design helps to grow the game, reduces maintenance cost and produces extra income for our client. Prior to this design, the use of the driving range was included with the green fee. Now the client charges a fee when used for pitch and putt and academy purposes.

While return on investment is important, the environment and sustainability are central to our design philosophy. Working with small footprints means that sustainability becomes an inherent part of the project as we like to combine the golf course with natural elements. Fewer resources can sometimes mean more fun.

This is demonstrated at Chablé Resort & Spa near Mérida in Mexico, where we created a unique

space for guests to connect with the natural elements, including the surrounding Mayan forest. The layout encourages players to expand beyond the mental and physical aspects of the game and connect on a spiritual, emotional and environmental level. People can play barefoot and connect with nature.

We always try to think how we can do something extra with what we have: how can a project be more than just a golf course? How can it come alive? We try to give our projects a heartbeat.

We brought that approach when designing a ‘golf lounge’, also known as The Pit, for a private client. It centers around a large green incorporating multiple pins and surrounded by a variety of bunkers and short grass areas. Its name is a nod to the fire pit that is incorporated into the design, a space

that can be enjoyed at night, whether playing golf or not. We’re now working on a second iteration of the concept for a private community in Valle de Bravo, Mexico.

We’re providing a diverse offering through a multi-use and multifunctional design that can be enjoyed by kids and adults. There are rolling hills and big sandboxes for kids to enjoy. I want them rolling around in the grass, making sandcastles in the bunkers – that’s how I want to grow the game. Then we flip the switch at night and bring out the disco ball, the fire pit and the surround sound system, with groups of friends, husbands and wives all socializing together.

I want more people playing golf. I want them to have fun. Creating these multi-purpose complexes on small parcels of land is a great way of achieving it. ●

Golf industry remains resilient

Jon Last of Sports & Leisure Research Group tells us about the factors that are driving decision-making at golf facilities.



Jon Last

Jon Last is the founder and president of Sports & Leisure Research Group, a full-service marketing and research consultancy.

At the start of 2021, we released the latest *Golf Facility Market Trend Watch* report, the fourth iteration of the annual study we produce alongside the American Society of Golf Course Architects (ASGCA). The report is designed to help understand what people within the golf industry consider to be the most significant challenges, opportunities and issues in golf facility design and operations.

The report is based on a survey of golf course architects, superintendents, general managers, facility owners/operators, golf professionals and industry leaders.

One aspect of the 2021 report that makes it stand out from previous years is that the data was collected amid the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic. With this in mind, we added some new questions to gauge what people working in the golf industry were feeling in terms of the pandemic's impact.

We have all seen and heard about the increased numbers of golfers taking to the course during the

pandemic. In the summer issue of *By Design*, I read about entire tee sheets being booked up in seconds. These observations are reflected in our findings, with 85 percent of superintendents identifying a surge in play as one of the most notable aspects of 2020, a great contrast with the experiences of many other industries. Sixty-six percent also highlighted a meaningful increase in the number of new players at their facility, with a similar proportion reporting that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a positive effect on operations.

Around half of owners/operators have said that this increased play has created additional stress on their course maintenance programs during 2020. From their perspective, this has had little impact on timescales for capital projects, but 56 percent of golf course architects say they have seen delays in decision-making on projects to improve the golf course.

Despite this, the volume of renovation business over the past

24 months shows nearly half of golf course architects reporting a year-on-year improvement, up from 36 percent reporting an increase last year. Course renovations continue to generate the strongest interest among potential facility enhancements, with the next most desirable areas being expanded junior golf programs and an enhanced food and beverage experience.

This desire for renovation work has been stable at private clubs, but it is notable that it is increasing among public facilities, from 39 percent in 2019 to 46 percent in 2021.

Golf course architects and superintendents are aligned on prioritizing ranges, with 70 percent of golf course architects and 64 percent of superintendents including ‘allocating 10-12 acres of land for a range is a worthwhile investment’ among the top three statements they agree most strongly with, from an extensive list.

Practice area improvements have become the most prevalent type of project for golf course architects and 92 percent consider a dedicated short game area to be a top five amenity for today’s golfers.

As well as a 13 percent spike in practice area projects, there have also been increases in bunker projects, greens renovations, tee redesigns and projects to add more-forward tees. ●

Find out more in the full [2021 Golf Facility Market Trend Report](#) produced by Sports & Leisure Research Group for ASGCA

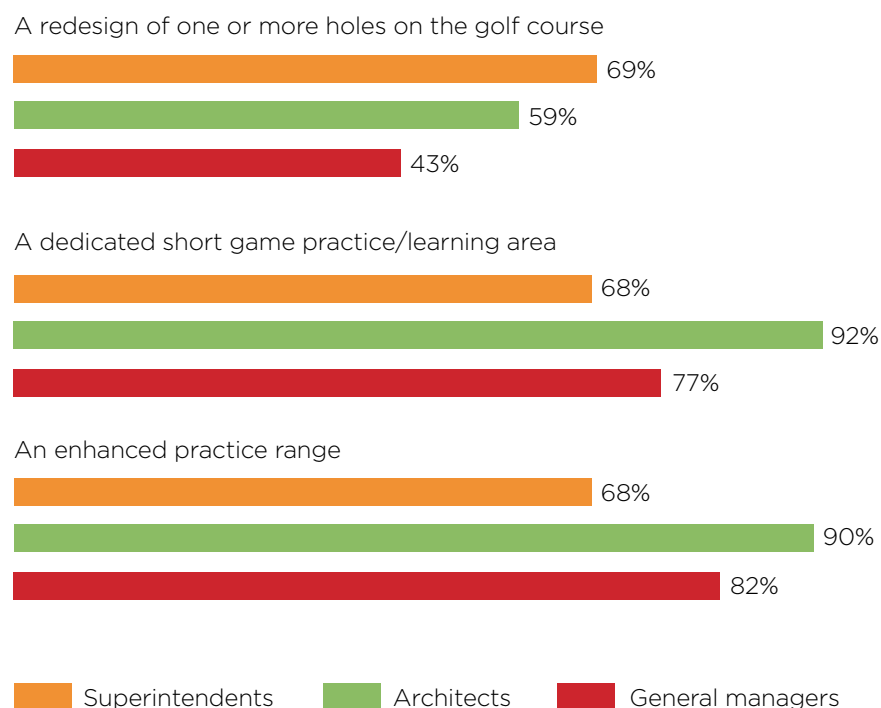
What have golf course architects observed in 2020?

Strong agreement that making land available for a range is a worthwhile investment

Allocating 10-12 acres of land for a range is a worthwhile investment	70%
Private clubs will need to evolve over time to continue to be relevant	69%
Golf facilities have made concerted efforts to attract younger members in the past few years	52%
Over the past five years, resource availability (e.g., water usage) has become a more important factor in the courses that I’ve designed or renovated	51%
Golf facilities have been putting more emphasis on junior golf programs recently	46%
I have a good understanding of the impact of ADA laws on golf facilities	43%

How important are different amenities?

Superintendents, golf course architects and general managers all place short game areas close to the top





The Reserve at Lake Keowee

Troy Vincent, ASGCA

JMG
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In 2020, The Reserve at Lake Keowee in South Carolina was making plans to regrass greens on its Jack Nicklaus Signature golf course to a warm season variety. At the same time, the club also wanted its bunkers reviewed.

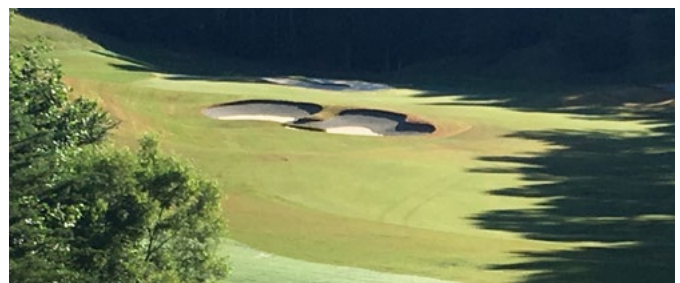
Troy Vincent, ASGCA, who had worked for Nicklaus Design on the original project, prior to setting up his own firm in 2009, was hired to work alongside Nicklaus Design's Chris Cochran, ASGCA.

The pair agreed on a simpler bunker style, as illustrated in Vincent's pencil sketch for a new bunker on the par-four third hole. This design retains the original strategy and allows for easier maintenance. Vincent says he kept Augusta National's bunker style in mind due to its simplicity and how it diverts water away.

"The optimum tee shot requires the player to carry three bunkers on the left," says Vincent. "This allows for a better angle into the green that is positioned left to right with a greenside bunker that protects the front portion of the putting surface.

"The new concept eliminated two of the three bunkers on the inside of the dogleg and created one bunker. This allowed us to locate the new bunker farther away from the left hillside and orientate it on a better angle. It still requires a carry for a better angle into the green and is not as deep as the previous bunkers, making a recovery shot more palatable.

"We typically provide sketches to clearly convey concepts, in addition to detailed grading plans," says Vincent. "There are always tweaks once in the dirt, but for the most part, the sketches are very close." ●





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Tahoma31Bermudagrass.com



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