



ISSUE 56 // WINTER 2021

BY DESIGN

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



FOREVER 18?

To what extent is the golf industry ready to embrace non-18-hole golf courses?

JASON STRAKA, ASGCA

The new ASGCA President discusses how his love of the outdoors led to a career in golf course design

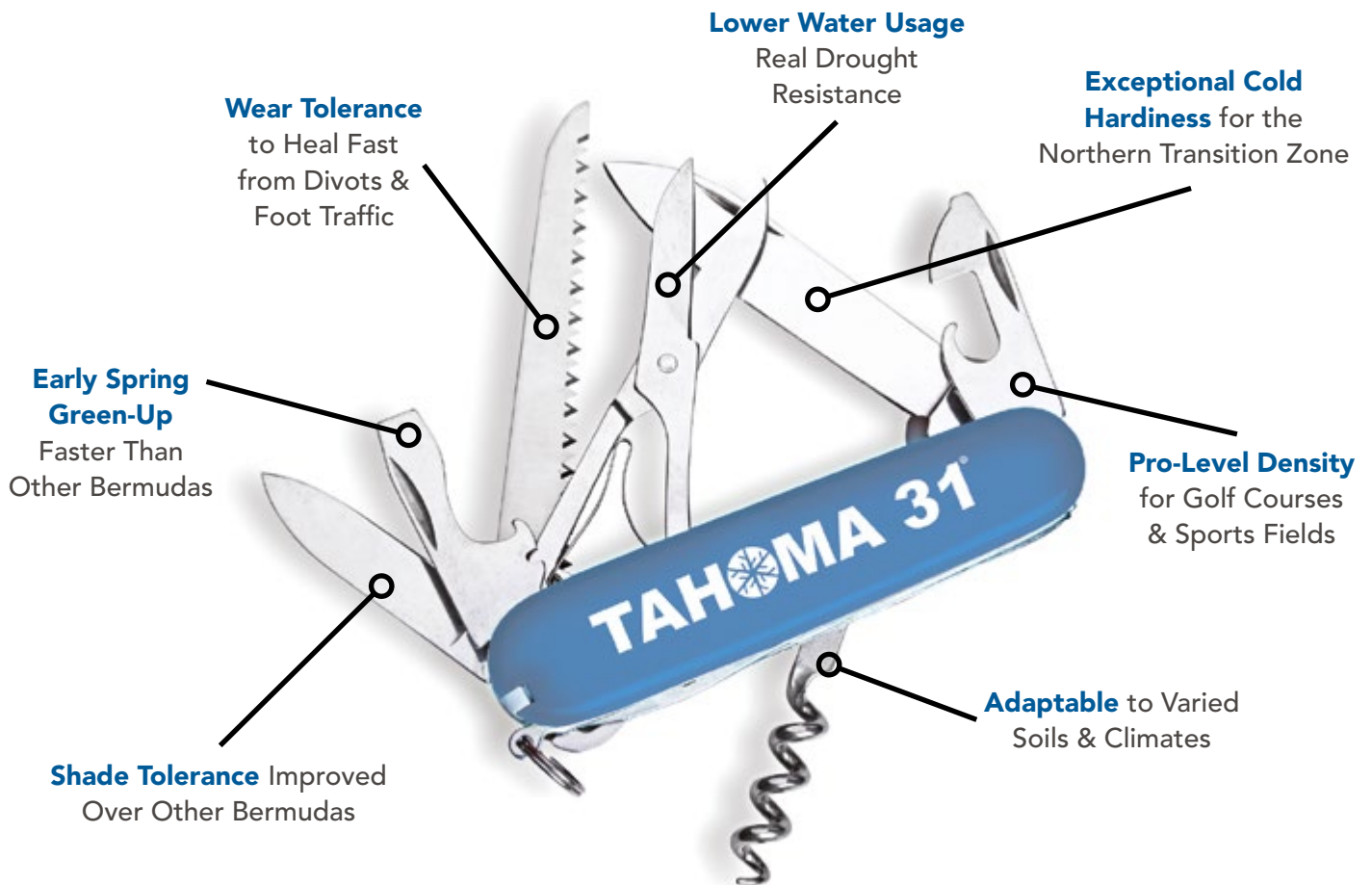
ALSO:

- // Environmental Excellence
- // Annual Meeting
- // Harrison Lake

TAHOMA 31[®]

B E R M U D A G R A S S

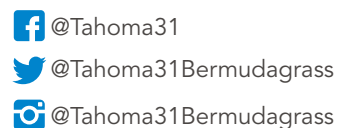
Like This, But in a Bermudagrass



Put This Powerful Tool To Work On Your Next Project
Learn More at GCSAA Booth #3951



Sod Production Services
18161 Sandy Point Road, Charles City, VA 23030
757.345.1120 | Tahoma31Bermudagrass.com



Tahoma31 Bermudagrass was developed by the turfgrass experts at Oklahoma State University



Jason Straka
President, ASGCA

Embracing alternatives

Golf is rich with traditions. Some are relatively recent, such as the Masters par three tournament, which began in 1960. Others have been around longer, like the presentation of the Claret Jug to the Open Championship winner; Walter Hagen was the first recipient in 1928. One tradition that was established in golf's formative years of the eighteenth century (although took much longer to gain a foothold), is the 18-hole round.

While I wouldn't want or expect this tradition to be lost in the coming years, there are times where it makes sense to put it to one side.

Golf course architects are often presented with sites that could yield far greater courses if we were not asked to accommodate 18 holes (or, for that matter, a par of 72). Not only might a different number make the best possible use of the land, it may also be far more appealing to a new generation of golfers that will become the future of the game. Our main feature, which begins on page 14, considers the case for courses that don't comply with golf's 18-hole standard, and looks at some recent examples that might encourage us to think differently a bit more often.

I am immensely proud to have been elected as ASGCA President, taking on the gavel from ASGCA Past President Forrest Richardson, who I thank for his visionary leadership over the past year. To mark the start of my tenure, in ASGCA's 75th year, I spent time with ASGCA Director of Communications Marc Whitney to talk about what inspired me to become a golf course architect, my design philosophies, and what I will focus on during my time as ASGCA President. Find out more on page 22.

I hope you enjoy the read.

By Design is sponsored by:



CONTENTS

6 Digest

The issue begins with news of a renovation at Nassau Country Club in New York, and our Digest section also includes news of the first golf course in Iraq and a six-hole project in Utah.



14 Forever 18?

Richard Humphreys asks golf course architects whether the golf industry is ready to embrace golf courses that do not comply with the tradition of eighteen holes.



22 At one with nature and golf

Marc Whitney sits down with ASGCA President Jason Straka, who discusses how his love of the outdoors led to a career in golf course design and what he aims to bring to his new role.



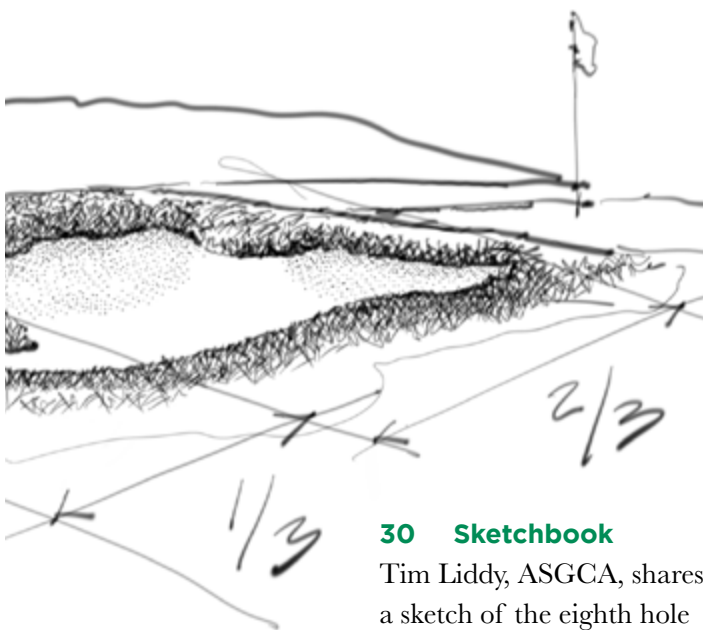
26 Sustainable landscapes

By Design looks at the three golf course projects recognized in the 2021 ASGCA Environmental Excellence Awards.



28 Scenes from Cleveland

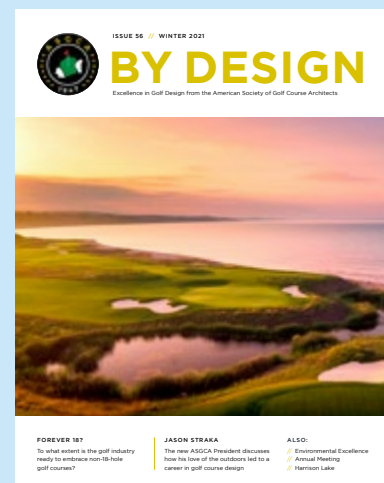
A selection of moments from the 2021 ASGCA Annual Meeting in Cleveland, Ohio.



30 Sketchbook

Tim Liddy, ASGCA, shares a sketch of the eighth hole at Harrison Lake Country Club in Indiana.

On the cover



Kyle Phillips, ASGCA, has redesigned the East course at Verdura, Italy, following flood damage. Read more on page 12. Photography courtesy of Verdura Resort.

ISSUE 56 // WINTER 2021

Editor and Publisher
Toby Ingleton

Editorial contributors
Richard Humphreys, Marc Whitney

Design
Bruce Graham, Libby Sidebotham

ASGCA Staff
Chad Ritterbusch, Mike Shefky,
Aileen Smith, Marc Whitney

Subscribe to *By Design* at
www.tudor-rose.co.uk/bydesign

© 2021 American Society
of Golf Course Architects.
All rights reserved.

www.asgca.org

Tom Marzolf focuses on strategy for Nassau renovation

A SGCA Past President Tom Marzolf and Bryan Bowers of Fazio Design have completed renovation work at Long Island's Nassau Country Club, famous for the matchplay format that bears its name and as the place Bobby Jones acquired his trusty 'Calamity Jane' putter, with which he won a grand slam in 1930.

The course at Nassau was originally laid out by club members in 1898, and also bears the hand of Golden Age architects Devereux Emmet, Seth Raynor and Herbert Strong. Marzolf first worked for the club in 2011 when he created a renovation master plan and rebuilt green complexes. The main aim of the 2021 project has been to

create more strategic interest by reassessing bunker placement.

"The course has dramatically turned into a shotmaker's strategic-thinking course," said Marzolf, who has reduced the number of bunkers from 114 to 48. "Before, the bunkers were all 180 to 225 yards off the tee and there were a lot of them, many in clusters. That



Photo: Evan Schiller

Greenside bunkers at the twelfth (foreground) and fifth have been rebuilt in a Seth Raynor style

was very tough on seniors, ladies and children playing the course. But those same bunkers weren't in play for the better player."

Fairway bunkers have been repositioned away from the rough and along the fairways, with some of them inching into the landing areas for bigger hitters. Work on greenside bunkers has

included converting those on the fifth and twelfth holes to a square-edged, rectangular form that Raynor is famous for.

Other work at Nassau has included tree removal, repositioning of fairways, new forward and back tees, reshaping green surrounds, and the removal and redirection of cart paths.

ASGCA names Marion Hollins as an honorary member



Photo: ASGCA

To commemorate Hollins's honorary membership, ASGCA Past President Forrest Richardson (right) and Brian Costello, ASGCA, (left) presented a plaque to her great-nephew Tony Grissim, at Cypress Point

Marion Hollins – a trailblazer for women in golf – was named an honorary member of the American Society of Golf Course Architects at the recent ASGCA Annual Meeting in Cleveland.

As well as being a successful golfer, winning the U.S. Women's Amateur in 1921, Hollins forged a remarkable career as a developer. She was instrumental in the development of both Cypress Point Club and Pasatiempo Golf Club in California, and worked alongside Dr Alistair MacKenzie at Augusta National in Georgia.

"Honorary membership underscores the respect ASGCA members have for Hollins' work and her impact on the game," said ASGCA President Jason Straka. "She contributed new thinking to golf course architecture, helping those in our practice think in expanded ways."

ASGCA and ASGCA Foundation are supporting the Marion Hollins Memorial Project. To find out more and to make a donation, visit www.marionhollins.org.

THE SPRINKLERS WORLD-CLASS COURSES RELY ON.



Toro® Irrigation Systems

The greenkeepers of the greatest golf courses on this planet trust in the skills of legendary toolmakers at Toro®. The INFINITY® and FLEX800™ Sprinkler Series are the masters of efficiency and reliability.



Join the conversation



Discover more at: toro.com/golf

©2020 The Toro Company. All rights reserved.

Dye McGarey designs Iraq's first golf course



Photo: Erbil Golf Club

Construction work is progressing on the first golf course in Iraq. Designed by Cynthia Dye McGarey, ASGCA, the course is located in Erbil, capital of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, in the north of the country.

The first phase was completed last year and included grassing holes ten to twelve and sixteen to eighteen. All other holes were rough-shaped in autumn, with Turkish contractor Daax Construction starting the second phase in March 2021.

“The course is routed through a valley,” said Dye McGarey. “Most holes border a meandering stream and lakes that flow from the north end of the site to the south. Mediterranean-style villas will surround the perimeter of the course on the adjacent hills.

“The site was previously planted with wheat and had several goat farms. It reminds me of the site at Paiute Golf Resort in Las Vegas, but Erbil has more topography, and the dirt is better.”

Fought plans new six-hole layout for Cedar Hills

Cedar Hills Golf Club, located between Provo and Salt Lake City in Utah, has hired John Fought, ASGCA, to design a new six-hole par-three course.

The city-owned club has an 18-hole layout designed by ASGCA Past Presidents Robert Muir Graves and Damian Pascuzzo.

Fought's short course will have holes ranging from 60 to 115 yards and will be built adjacent to the eighteenth hole. It replaces the driving range and addresses safety issues that have arisen in recent years.



Image: John Fought, ASGCA

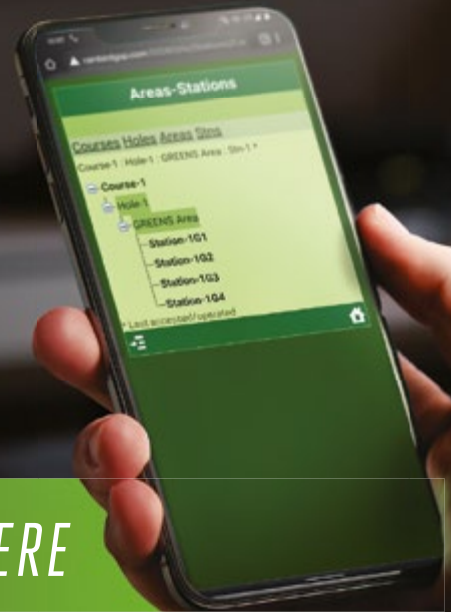
“Short courses have many advantages, and they are ideal for those with a shorter time window – a round can be completed in about 45 minutes,” said Fought.

Scan to Explore



Intuitive Intelligent Instant Integrated Control

...FROM ANYWHERE



Redefine Control with Rain Bird® IC System™.

- Save time and money by making your investment work smarter.
- Advanced design requires less installation and reduced interruption of play.
- Precise management and troubleshooting on or off the course.

See how you can bring new meaning to "control" at rainbird.com/IC2.



RAIN BIRD®

X marks the spot for Florida's Club at Ibis

The Club at Ibis in West Palm Beach, Florida, has opened its new 19-acre practice area to members, following a renovation by Nicklaus Design.

"The original practice area was very flat and drained poorly," said Chad Goetz, ASGCA, of Nicklaus Design. "Members wanted a more modern and interesting practice experience."

Five new target green complexes have been created. "An X-shaped fairway pattern was created between the target greens to allow players to practice all sorts of shots," said Goetz.

"The 14.8-acre range is nearly symmetrical from both ends, allowing golfers to spread out and enjoy a similar experience from either end. The north is focused more for shorter warm-ups prior to a round, while the south is focused more on practice and features Toptracer technology along the entire length of the tee."



Photo: The Club at Ibis



"What stuck with me the most is the impact a quality routing does to a golf course"

Trey Kemp, ASGCA

In the latest podcast from *Golf Course Industry's* "Tartan Talks" series, Trey Kemp, ASGCA, discusses the architects that have influenced him and the impact of his work on municipals in Texas.

Kemp has studied the work of George Thomas, Bill Coore, ASGCA, and Ben Crenshaw, but says he has been most influenced by ASGCA Founding Father Donald Ross, visiting many of his courses too.

"What stuck with me the most is the impact a quality routing does to a golf course," says Kemp. "That's the most important thing, having a routing that flows from one hole to the next."

The newly elected member of the Society has worked extensively in Texas, including on many municipal courses.

"In Fort Worth we worked at Rockwood about four or five

years ago," says Kemp. "It was in really bad disrepair; they were probably doing less than 20,000 rounds and losing approximately \$300,000 dollars a year. Now, after our renovation, they are making about half a million a year; their revenue has completely turned around."

Listen to the full "Tartan Talk" at golfcourseindustry.com.

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

- Todd Clark, ASGCA, [talks about sand greens and designing for multiple generations.](#)
- Harrison Minchew, ASGCA, [discusses his RainDance National project in Colorado.](#)

Redesigned East course opens at Verdura



Verdura Resort in Sicily, Italy, has reopened its East course following a redesign by Kyle Phillips, ASGCA.

In 2019, Phillips started work on 14 coastline holes – spanning the resort’s East and West courses – that

were damaged by a freak flood in late 2018. Nine holes of the East course were back in play in August, and the full 18 reopened earlier this month.

“Players returning to Verdura are most likely to notice the

changes that have occurred along the coastline and how we have incorporated them into the design,” said Phillips. “All of which will add to the drama and pleasure, of what is effectively a brand new course.”

ASGCA welcomes three new members

Three new ASGCA members – Gary Browning, Kipp Schulties and Joel Weiman – were welcomed to their first ASGCA Annual Meeting in October in Cleveland, Ohio.

Browning is the founding principal of Browning Design, and his work includes various projects in the Western Canadian Rocky Mountains, such as restoring the 36-hole Kananaskis Country Golf



From left, Gary Browning, Kipp Schulties and Joel Weiman

Course, originally designed by ASGCA Founding Father Robert Trent Jones Sr.

Florida-based Schulties began his design career with Couples Bates Golf Design before opening his own golf course design firm, which offers site analysis, feasibility

studies, financial administration and overall project management.

Maryland-based architect Weiman has been a senior designer with the McDonald Design Group since 1998, and mainly works along the east coast of the United States.

Tower Tee to open in 2022 following Schaufpeter redesign



Photo: Art Schaufpeter, ASGCA

The Tower Tee facility in St. Louis, which closed in 2018 with plans to convert it into a housing development, is now reopening in spring 2022 as a nine-hole par-three course, following a redesign by Art Schaufpeter, ASGCA.

Formerly an 18-hole par-three course, Tower Tee's new design includes a driving range, short game and putting areas, as well as a nine-hole course with greens

inspired by famous par threes such as the Redan, Biarritz, Eden and Golden Bell holes.

"There is a lot of interesting and fun golf packed into about a twelve-acre area," said Schaufpeter. "I was able to take advantage of some of the more interesting site attributes to create these specific holes, which allows the individual character of the holes to really come out."

USGA's "game changer" donation to First Tee

The United States Golf Association (USGA) has distributed \$200,000 in grants across 20 First Tee chapters through the inaugural Idea grant program.

Support initiatives include transport to and from First Tee program locations as well as recruitment and training of diverse staff and coaches.

"The USGA's support is a game changer for youths in the communities that we serve," said Greg McLaughlin, CEO of First Tee. "With these grants, our

chapters are opening the door to even more youth, especially in underserved and underrepresented communities, to explore the possibilities in golf and beyond as they build their character and life lessons through the game."



Photo: First Tee-Greater Washington, DC

SOCIAL UPDATE



ASGCA Home Offices
@ASGCA

"When fishing, skiing and the outdoors is part of your upbringing, it is only natural the environment play an important part of your work as a golf course architect," @ASGCA President Jason Straka shares his story in an 'ASGCA Insights' podcast: <https://tinyurl.com/mdpyky9>



Jon Cavalier
@LinksGems

Congrats to Baltusrol Golf Club for the reappearance of the Lower Course on *Golf Magazine's* Top 100 Courses in the World list. After a short hiatus and a substantial (and excellent) restoration by Gil Hanse, this A.W. Tillinghast classic returns to the list at No. 57



Golf Course Architecture
@Golf Course Architecture

"We eliminated a lot of the bunkers in front of greens so you have shot options for the ground game or the aerial game," says Rees Jones

Search ASGCA on the below channels for more posts:





Forever 18?

Is the golf industry ready to embrace golf courses that do not comply with the tradition of 18 holes? Richard Humphreys investigates.

When members of the Society of St Andrews Golfers decided in 1764 that some of its course's holes were too short, little did they know they were on the verge of establishing a standard that golf clubs across the world would still be keen to observe more than 250 years later.

The few golf courses that existed at that point had different numbers of holes; Leith had five, Musselborough had seven. But by reducing its 12 holes to 10, eight of which were played twice, St Andrews established an 18-hole round that, within the 100 years that followed, became the norm.

Today's golfers still consider 18 holes to be the full format of the game, whether or not they are aware that the Old course was the first with this tradition.

The convergence to 18 holes gained pace over the past 100 years, as golf's rise to the mainstream brought with it standardization of



The 13-hole par-three Mountain Top course at Big Cedar Lodge in Missouri was designed by Jeff Lawrence, ASGCA

many aspects of the game. This is inevitably a constraint to golf's reach, as it necessitates an expanse of land that is simply enormous, compared to almost all other sports. Existing 18-hole courses are feeling the pinch too. The further the ball travels, the more they find their once-ample plots of land struggling to accommodate the modern game.

It's easy to understand why a club or developer would want 18 holes — they don't want to be perceived as

providing an inferior offering, even though that might only be in terms of volume, rather than quality. The vast majority of golfers, however, would probably find they would enjoy the game equally, if not more, if it had been conceived to be played over a different number of holes.

There is some evidence that golfers' appetite for something other than 18 holes may be increasing. Research on participation and engagement

by the National Golf Foundation found that the number of shorter rounds (as a percentage of total rounds) played in 2020 had risen by over 15 percent.

ASGCA Past President Forrest Richardson believes that change is coming. "Golf courses of the future should be different, and they will be. We have the opportunity to ensure that difference will be more fun, more enjoyable, more diverse and inviting."

NON-18 GOLF

“Golf in the coming decades will be different,” agrees ASGCA Past President Greg Martin. “Every industry needs to be flexible and change with customer needs. Let’s be clear, golfers will play golf, predominantly on 18-hole courses, but more and more golf will be offered and played in alternative venues.”

A primary driver for the development of courses with fewer than 18 holes, perhaps ahead of customer demand, is that fewer resources are needed for building and running them, says Todd Quitno, ASGCA.

Quitno has recently designed a 13-hole short course in Madison, Wisconsin, alongside PGA Champions Tour player Jerry Kelly. Pioneer Pointe opened for preview play in fall 2021. The site had been home to the 18-hole Tumbledown Trails course, but developer Haen Realty saw the opportunity to improve the economics of its



“The initial idea was for a nine-hole course, because father-and-son duo Jeff and Kyle Haen wanted half the site for housing,” says Quitno. “When we reviewed the initial land plan and saw the

subdivisions and the concept plan of our own subdivision within the development, we needed to get creative with the remaining landscape. The golf course and the residential development went hand in hand from the beginning but as the development plans started to finalize, we realized we had a unique opportunity to create a really fun and enjoyable golf course with the remaining acreage.”

Quitno was inspired by the success of the shorter courses at Sand Valley, Bandon and Pinehurst.

“We said why not here? It offers a completely different product that the Madison market didn’t have, plus the overall theme of the development is family recreation, so

“With land and water becoming more expensive, alternative golf options are a resourceful way to be successful”

development and appointed Quitno to oversee the transformation. His new 13-hole layout has greens inspired by some of golf’s most famous holes, including some of those originally laid out at St Andrews.

restrictions on corridor widths for golf, it became apparent to us that regulation holes wouldn’t work for reasons of safety.”

Kyle Haen says: “Due to certain setbacks from adjacent



Photo: Todd Quitno, ASGCA

Todd Quitno, ASGCA, has included famous template designs, such as the Biarritz, on his 13-hole Pioneer Pointe layout in Wisconsin

a shorter routing works well,” says Quitno. “With the owners having another course down the road, some of the maintenance labor and costs could be shared, which allowed for a scaled down budget.”

“The number 13 always seems to catch people’s attention,” says Haen. “Immediately, we received the question, ‘why 13?’ Nine holes often leaves golfers wanting just a little bit more and 18 holes can sometimes be too much, or people don’t have the ability to spend four to six hours at a facility.”

Jeff Lawrence, ASGCA, has also designed a 13-hole layout, the par-three Mountain Top course at Big Cedar Lodge in Missouri.

“When we started the project, there was no predetermined idea of

how many holes the course would be, it just evolved into 13,” says Lawrence. “My job was to design the best golf holes possible that would utilize the natural features of the site and create a memorable and playable course that can be enjoyed by anyone and everyone.”

Lawrence has worked on similar projects at Pickens Country Club and Greenville 3’s, both in South Carolina. And while he says he hasn’t yet seen a huge shift in clubs opting for a primary course that is something other than 18 holes, he has noticed an increase in the number of clients adding a non-traditional layout to their facility.

“Practice facilities, putting courses and par-three layouts all seem to be growing in popularity,”

he says. “These options are attractive to developers since it takes less capital and less land to incorporate a golf venue that can be successful and profitable.

“The funding needed to do something less than a traditional 18-hole golf course is much more attractive and easier to implement for most owners. With land and water becoming more expensive, alternative golf options are a resourceful way to be successful and introduce people to the game of golf and provide a wider variety of options for future members and potential customers.”

Nathan Crace, ASGCA, is currently working with a nonprofit organization on a 12-hole design for a site that previously had nine.

Of the 170 acres of land available for golf, the former layout used less than half. Crace looked at the possibility of creating an 18-hole course, but the project required some highway frontage for light commercial use and potentially a hotel, plus an area in the center of the property for residential development, which Crace says can provide additional revenue streams.

“The first stage of the project will see the client reopen the old nine-hole course and make infrastructure improvements,” says Crace. “In year two or three of the plan we will wipe out the old holes and create an entirely new 12-hole course that will feature options to play three, nine or 12 holes and return to the clubhouse.

“To reduce maintenance costs, there will be no bunkers, but a lot of fun and bold shaping with collection areas, hollows, slopes and shelves for creative shotmaking and recovery.

“Even though the project is along a busy four-lane divided highway, it

feasibility study that suggests golfers will be willing to drive a little further to play the course.

Shorter courses might initially need to offer something extra to compete with their 18-hole counterparts. Greg Martin says the concept of a nine-hole replay course became evident to him after playing The Dunes Club in southwest Michigan. “After playing the same course a second time, it was apparent that a great nine-holer was achievable.”

He points to the success of the nine-holers at Sweetens Cove in Tennessee and Winter Park course in Florida, as well as the reversible 18-hole Loop at Forest Dunes course in Michigan. “These projects are no longer outliers,” he says. “They are interesting to the current and future golfers because they are unique, quirky, flexible and engaging.”

Martin is looking to add a design of his own to that list, on the site of a former sand mine in Chicago.

The ‘Foxhop’ concept, created by ASGCA Past President Greg Martin, includes holes with two greens, others with double greens, split fairways and multiple tees, allowing the design to be played in two different ways



too, and by using less land it could leave more available to develop accommodation and additional amenities. It also offers an opportunity for golf course architects to work with clubs that need to change, perhaps by selling land and reimagining how a club can thrive.

“The golf industry is notoriously slow to change,” says Martin. “But when change is accepted, it happens fast.”

This sentiment is shared by Quitno. “We are still fighting the notion that golf needs to be 18 holes,” he says, adding “preview play at Pioneer Pointe has revealed that private club

“Golf has and will continue to change to meet the needs of the new generation of golfers”

would be considered rural by most standards, so the thinking is that having something unique not only in the design, but also in the routing, would help to attract golfers looking for alternatives to the standard nine or 18-hole course.” Indeed, his client recently completed a market

His ‘Foxhop’ plan includes holes with two greens, others with double greens, split fairways and multiple tees, to create a hybrid design that gives golfers a distinctly different experience on the second play.

Martin says his Foxhop concept can be replicated at other facilities



Photo: ASGCA Past President Greg Martin

folks are having a much harder time with this than the public golfers. The latter has really loved it because it is something different.”

Resistance is to be expected, for now at least. “We were looking at a site in northern Wisconsin recently with a family that wanted to do an 18-hole course, and the site was wonderful, but we told them they only had enough land for a shorter course,” says Quitno. “That idea didn’t fly with them. The mindset is still a work in progress.”

Quitno reiterates Lawrence’s sentiments. “I think folks are fine with odd hole combinations if it is a

secondary offering, say a par-three course at a larger resort or club. But many are still trying to grasp the idea of it being the sole offering. We are working on a project right now, though, that is an 18-hole executive course which might lose some land and would force us to change to 12 holes. I think it is a wonderful opportunity to be different and cater to a beginner clientele. The notion of losing holes and not being regulation is not going to be any easy sell for many of the stakeholders, at least from what I can tell early on.”

Crace is seeing some signs that attitudes are shifting. “I’m

comfortable with thinking outside the box when the opportunity presents itself,” he says. “The challenge for me has always been finding clients who are comfortable trying something that’s not standard protocol and I think that has been changing and getting better in the last five to 10 years.

“Right now, we have a 12-hole project, a six-hole par-three course in planning, a possible three or five-hole project in the center of a residential development, a standalone par-three course, and a client is floating the idea of a three-hole fully synthetic course that is part of a development.



“The game
is saying hello
to a new crop
of designers.
I’m a voice of
the ASGCA.”

— BRANDON JOHNSON



asgca.org



Nathan Crace, ASGCA, is currently working with a nonprofit organization on a 12-hole design for a site that previously had nine

“I think clients are coming around to thinking about new ideas and part of the reason for that is that we are seeing more clients who are not traditional golf owners as well as some real estate developers who don’t even play golf, but they do recognize the value of having golf as part of their development.”

“It is so important for clubs, municipalities and resorts to think creatively about how we can develop interesting and captivating golf that reaches every demographic,” says Lawrence. “As an industry, we need to engage and provide innovative and resourceful ways to make golf accessible and fun for everyone to grow the game.”

“Golf has and will continue to change to meet the needs of the new generation of golfers. Whatever we can do as golf course architects to encourage and grow the game is an obligation we have to support the game of golf.” ●



On the clock

Even tiny pieces of land can become a ‘course’ with a bit of innovative thinking. ASGCA Past President Bill Amick describes his 12-shot ‘Par 3 Pitching Clock’ concept.

A Par 3 Pitching Clock has a target in its center surrounded by 12 tees. The target is surrounded by three scoring zones and the tees are located on the perimeter, somewhat like the numbers on a clockface.

The scoring zones are set up by their mowing height. The largest scoring zone is a ring mowed at tee height, the middle zone is at fairway height, while the smallest zone is at tee height with a cup at the center.

Starting from the first tee and working their way around (clockwise) to the twelfth, golfers hit their shot towards the pin with each zone designated with a score. The outer zone means a four (or a bogey), middle zone is three (par) and the small center zone is two (birdie). A hole-in-one score a one (eagle), and missing the clock completely is a five (double bogey). No other shots are hit on the layout apart

from the single tee shot from each of the 12 tees.

Design is very much involved in the setup of a clock layout, whether it regards the length from each tee to the target, the shape of the target, the width of the scoring zones, or considering the undulation of the site.

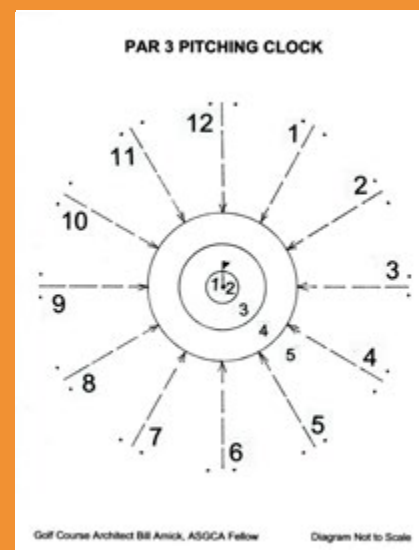


Image: ASGCA Past President Bill Amick

At one with nature and golf

Marc Whitney sits down with ASGCA President Jason Straka, who discusses how his love of the outdoors led to a career in golf course design, what impact the Society and its members have had on him, and the ideas he aims to bring to his new role.

It's the 'chicken and the egg' question for golf course architects: 'which came first, a love of golf that led you to appreciate the environment, or a love of the environment that impacts how you view golf course design?'

For ASGCA President Jason Straka, it is undoubtedly the latter. "The great outdoors was something I really cared about and continue to do so," he said. "I spent countless days as a young man fishing, wilderness camping, hunting, canoeing, hiking and skiing. That was an important part of my upbringing. I became enamored with the natural environment and its importance to mental and physical health, recreation and ultimately its protection for all of us as well as future generations. When I began to play golf, I really enjoyed the artistic and creative aspects of the game. It made perfect sense to marry my love of the outdoors and golf."

Wilderness canoe trips throughout northern Minnesota and Canada, camping in New York, Ohio and Pennsylvania, and skiing in Vermont all impacted the Ohio native's view of both the beauty and value of nature, as well as the importance of maintaining it so it may be enjoyed by others.

As Straka embarks on his ASGCA presidency, he spoke with *By Design* about the path that has taken him around the world, yet always brings him back to the Buckeye state.

"I come from a big golfing family and started playing at age five or six," he recalled. "I played in junior events and through high school, but realized college play was a whole different level."

"At an early age I considered building architecture because the creative aspect of design appealed to me, however it didn't fulfill my desire to stay involved in the outdoors, not did it focus on protecting our environment. Then I learned

about landscape architecture while considering Cornell University. I always wanted to get my hands dirty. I love the study of trees and grass, the whole horticulture element of design. And I learned I could take classes in natural resources, agronomy, wetland science, ecology and more. Utilizing my study of landscape architecture alongside environmental classes was my window toward designing golf courses. Golf course architecture is about engineering and drainage, but it is also about agronomy and a living environment. I chose to focus on environmental design not because I had to, but because I wanted to."

The importance of education has been a constant through Straka's life and career. He comes by this naturally.

"My father was an educator for 38 years," he said. "Watching him and what it meant to mentor students and have an impact on their lives

“I love the study of trees and
grass, the whole horticulture
element of design”



INTERVIEW



Photo: Evan Schiller

Straka has worked alongside his design partner Dana Fry, ASGCA, for almost 30 years



was special. You always remember a special teacher; that was my father.”

At Cornell, Straka met several others who would positively impact him, including Tom Doak, Jim Urbina and Gil Hanse, ASGCA. The three oversaw a six-credit senior design project that Straka crafted, and they were tough graders. “I walked through the final project for them and when I got to the fourteenth hole, Jim said, ‘finally, a hole I would consider building.’” Straka laughs when recalling that moment nearly 30 years ago. “Jim was right, but at the time I was petrified!”

Dr. Norm Hummel, the well-known industry agronomist, took Straka under his wing and soon the then-Cornell graduate school professor was overseeing the student’s work in a testing lab focused on greens construction, testing everything from soils to fertilizers.

“Dr. Hummel introduced me to Dr. Mike Hurdzan, ASGCA, as part of a professional course they developed on green construction.

At one point, Mike gave me a list of steps I should complete if I wanted to become a golf course architect, probably figuring he would never hear from me again. Well, six months later I had completed that list, so he gave me another... and I completed that, too.

“To complete my graduate studies in agronomy and environmental design I needed to write a master’s thesis. Mike was starting to work on Widow’s Walk Golf Course in Massachusetts – the first environmental demonstration golf course designed and built in North America. My master’s project thesis studied the design for Widow’s Walk.”

Not long after, Hurdzan suggested Straka come back to Columbus, Ohio, and join his team of golf course architects.

“We had an incredible office of talented designers,” said Straka. “I learned from Mike on the technical and environmental side, along with how he ran his business and lived his life. Bill Kerman, ASGCA,


was with the company, along with David Whelchel, ASGCA, and CAD and IT specialist Scott Kinslow. So many talented designers and staff members. You try to learn from them all to become a better designer.”

Included in that group was the man who would become Straka’s business partner in 2012, Dana Fry, ASGCA.

“Dana’s background is very different from Mike’s, and that helped make the company strong,” said Straka. “Dana is an artistic genius. I knew I had some design talent, but not like Dana; I wanted to learn and observe. I traveled with him for two or three years right after I started the company to learn as much as I could.”

Straka’s first ASGCA Annual Meeting experience happened before he was even a member, coming at the 2001 event in Columbus, Ohio.

“Mike hosted a barbecue at our office for all the members and I attended,” he said. “Jack Nicklaus, ASGCA, told the story of how



Straka's designs include the Ambiente course at Camelback GC in Arizona and, pictured on the previous page, Union League National GC in New Jersey

Muirfield Village was designed. I remember how nuanced his description of the course was, along with how welcoming all the members made me feel.”

Straka became an ASGCA member in 2005. Today, Fry/Straka Global Golf Course Design remains devoted to environmental golf course design, and its projects have won many environmental accolades. And Straka now serves as ASGCA President.

“I am honored to serve ASGCA, my colleagues, the golf course design profession and the game of golf during ASGCA’s 75th-year anniversary,” said Straka. “It is my charge to carry on the success of my predecessors, lead where there is no roadmap, and continue to help the golf industry grow and nourish the game.”

Straka continues his philanthropic commitment to educating others. He has served as an instructor at a variety of professional institutions around the world, including The Graduate School of Industry

and Environment at Kyungwon University (Seoul, South Korea), the Brazilian Golf Confederation, the Brazilian Superintendents Organization, the Portuguese Greenskeeper’s Association, the Polish Golf Properties Conference, the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, the Canadian Golf Superintendents Association, the Canadian International Business Conference, and the Golf Course Owners Association of America, among many others.

At U.S. universities, Straka has led educational courses at Cornell University, Purdue University and the University of Idaho, as well as Lakehead University in Ontario, Canada. He also served for a decade as an adjunct professor at The Ohio State University. His affiliation with OSU also included serving nine years as a trustee of the Ohio Turfgrass Foundation, including a term as president.

Wherever his travels take him, Straka can be found in Ohio every

July 4th weekend to compete for the Straka Cup – “The Stanley Cup of Golf,” as he calls it. For more than 25 years, the weekend is part family reunion and more than a little competitive golf, with folks traveling from all parts of the United States to play, reminding Jason Straka what makes the game great.

“I’ve been gifted by golf, and golf continues to be the glue that keeps us together.” ●

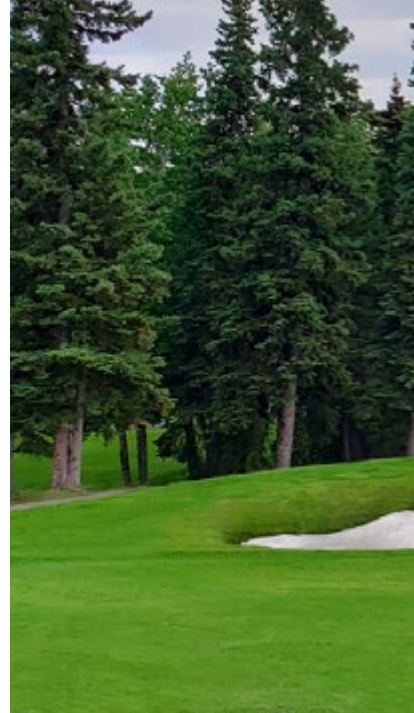
A varied career

Straka’s design portfolio includes courses for Fry/Straka as well as Hurdzan/Fry, featuring dozens of projects, including:

- Ambiente Course at Camelback Golf Club in Scottsdale, Arizona
- Georgian Bay Club in Ontario, Canada
- Los Robles Greens Golf Course in California
- Shelter Harbor Golf Club in Rhode Island
- Union League National Golf Club in New Jersey

Sustainable landscapes

By Design looks at the three golf course projects recognized in the 2021 ASGCA Environmental Excellence Awards.



The Environmental Excellence Awards program, presented by Ewing Irrigation & Landscape Supply, was introduced by the ASGCA in 2019 to recognize innovative work being done at golf facilities to address their environmental needs.

Submissions are reviewed by a panel of golf industry and environmental leaders, including representatives of GEO Foundation, Golf Course Superintendents Association of America and National Golf Course Owners Association. These projects in Alaska, Florida and Michigan were selected in 2021.

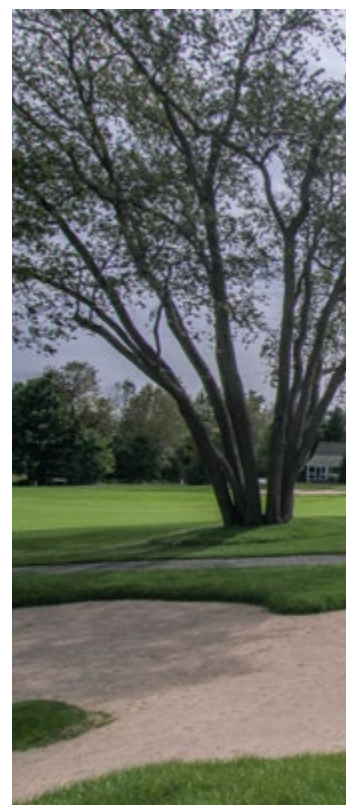
“It’s great to see the unique projects recognized through the Environmental Excellence program each year,” says ASGCA President Jason Straka. “I congratulate these facilities and the cooperative efforts from operators and golf course architects to improve the environmental landscape. The long-term prospects for each to remain sustainable and profitable is increased by this work.” ●



Club: Sailfish Sands, Florida

Golf course architect: ASGCA Past President John Sandford

Florida’s Martin County sought to reduce the 18-hole footprint of its municipal golf facility in the city of Stuart. It wanted to remove golf holes from the adjacent airport’s Runway Protection Zone and reduce inputs required to maintain the course. The solution was a nine-hole reversible course that has 18 unique holes. Native trees and palms were preserved while nuisance vegetation was eradicated. The new reversible nine-hole course reduced overall area requiring maintenance inputs such as fertilizers, chemicals and mowing by 40 percent. Site drainage was improved by raising low areas and removing nuisance vegetation that was preventing runoff from reaching critical outfall points. Twenty acres of unirrigated native areas were preserved to further reduce the actively maintained area.





Club: Anchorage Golf Course, Alaska
Golf course architect: Forrest Richardson and Jeff Danner, ASGCA

Preparations for Anchorage Golf Course hosting the 2022 USGA Women's Senior Amateur Championship involved the development of a non-traditional construction plan to achieve less carbon emissions. Using local equipment, available supplies and regional labor, the Municipality of Anchorage, in cooperation with their operating lessee, completed a bunker renovation program, turf reduction and drainage plan designed to conform to the Anchorage Climate Action Plan. The combined efforts are resulting in a recharged aquifer, reduced turf footprint and carbon emissions, habitat restoration, and improved drainage.



Club: Crystal Mountain Resort, Michigan
Golf course architect: A. John Harvey, ASGCA

A forestry management program on the 1,400-acre property was completed to open up playing corridors and encourage healthy woodland development. The first step in the project was the development of a course improvement master plan. This included measures to protect and encourage healthy tree growth, considering species desirability, health and vigor, as well as balancing and recouping costs for vegetation management and renovations with logging monetary values, and managing golf and property impacts and constraints. The team also put forward imaginative visual and strategic treatment of the ground plain by creating sand waste areas and reshaping several tee complexes. Planning and implementation of the renovations focused on making the course more enjoyable for all players with new aesthetic, strategic and functional features.



Scenes from Cleveland

A selection of moments from the 2021 ASGCA Annual Meeting in Cleveland, Ohio.

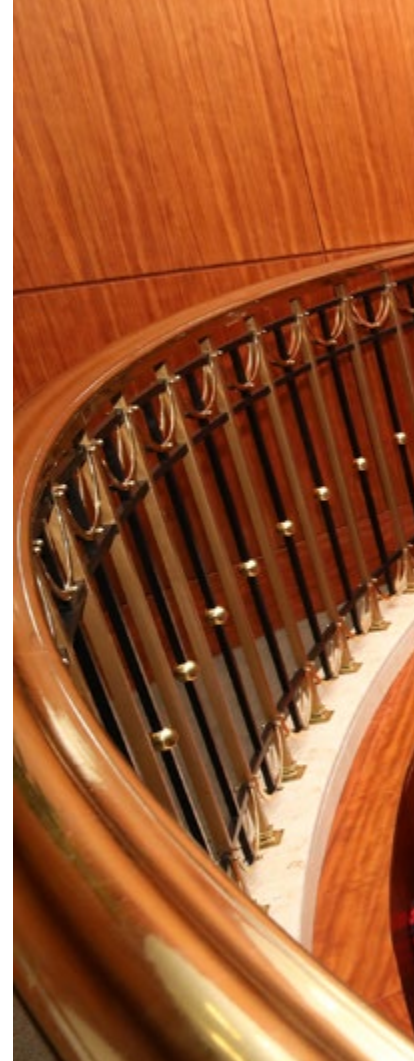


ASGCA held the opening reception for its 2021 Annual Meeting at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, which marked the occasion by customizing its signage

The incoming ASGCA President Jason Straka presented Forrest Richardson (left) with a plaque to mark his term as ASGCA President



2020 Donald Ross Award winner Renee Powell, pictured here with ASGCA Past President Jan Bel Jan





Members gathered for their traditional group photograph



The ASGCA Annual Meeting provides members with an opportunity to share knowledge about various aspects of the profession



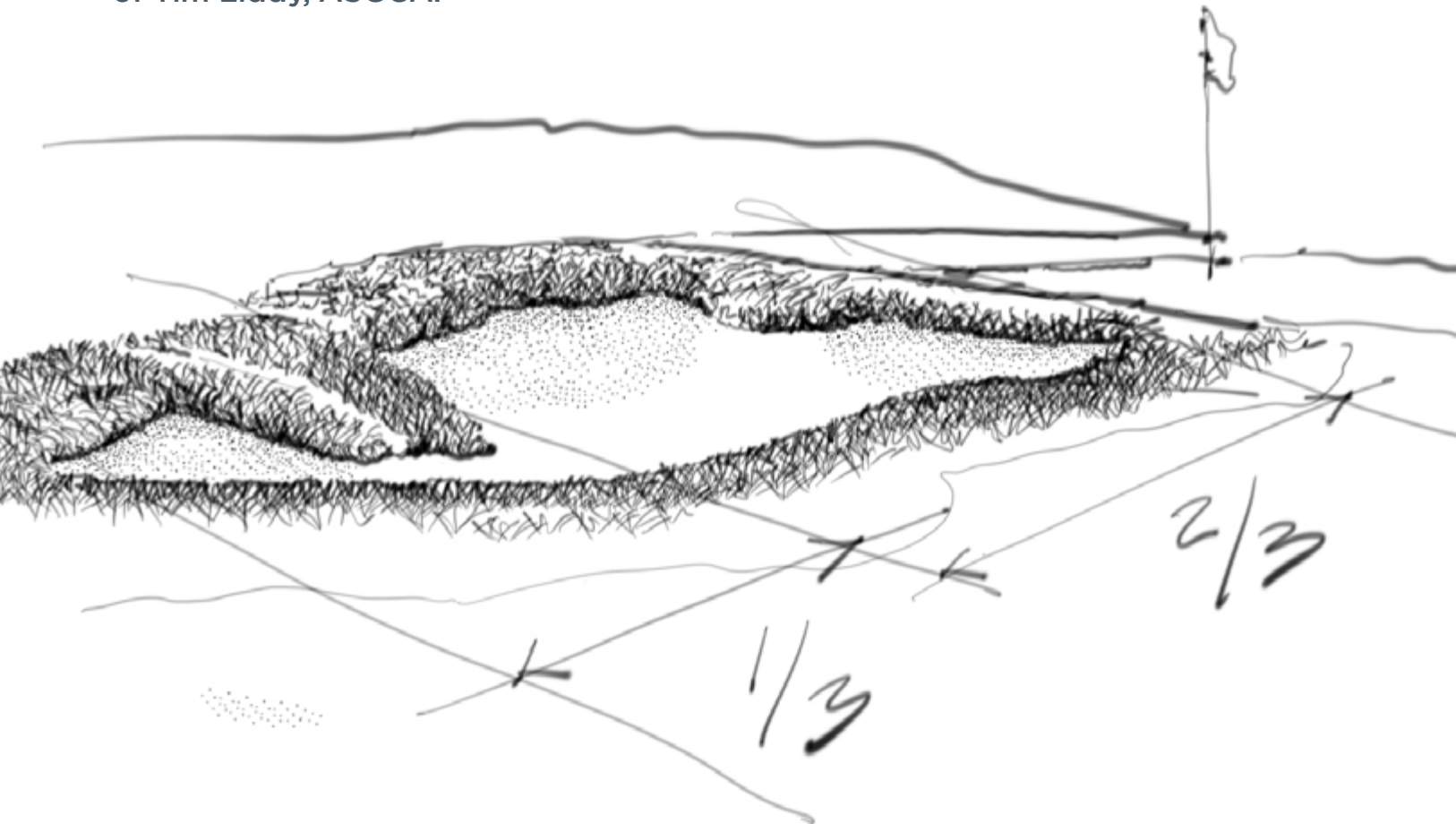
The new ASGCA President Jason Straka, flanked by his design partner Dana Fry, ASGCA, and mentor ASGCA Past President Dr Michael Hurdzan



Ben Crenshaw and Bill Coore, ASGCA, received the Donald Ross Award for their significant and lasting contributions to the profession of golf course architecture

Harrison Lake Country Club

By Design inspects a page from the sketchbook of Tim Liddy, ASGCA.



Tim Liddy, ASGCA, has been overseeing a renovation at Harrison Lake Country Club in Columbus, Indiana.

“The project is a remodel with a new routing,” said Liddy. “The eighth (Liddy’s sketch, pictured) was an important hinge point for the rerouting. This is a short par three of 165 yards, playing over a deep swale. The green site was lowered approximately eight feet,

benched into an existing hill. It has similar design qualities of a ‘visible’ Dell hole.”

Work at Harrison Lake has also focused on bunkers. “The course is located in a rural area, and I felt that natural looking bunkers combined with updated bunker infrastructure would improve the layout,” said Liddy. “Our work has aimed to add strategy and artistry along with addressing safety issues.

One other hole where strategy has been improved is at the third which now has a risk-reward element to it. We have increased the challenge for bigger hitters around the landing areas, while allowing plenty of width for the shorter hitters.”

Grassing is now complete at the renovated Harrison Lake course, which is scheduled to reopen in July 2022. ●



Rain Bird Corporation

Since 1933, Rain Bird has built a reputation on delivering irrigation systems that combine performance with efficiency. Rain Bird leverages state-of-the-art technologies to innovate and develop products that apply water in the most effective and efficient manner possible.

From highly-efficient sprinkler nozzles to cutting-edge control systems and pump stations, Rain Bird is widely recognized as the leader in golf course irrigation control system technology. We take the challenge of using water responsibly very seriously. That's why our over-arching philosophy, The Intelligent Use of Water™, guides everything we do. The revolutionary Integrated Control System™ provides innovation at a lower overall cost to golf courses enabling the user to maximize system efficiency and conserve water with a smaller environmental footprint.

For more information, please contact 1-800-RAINBIRD or visit: www.rainbird.com



Tahoma 31® Bermudagrass

Developed by the turfgrass experts at Oklahoma State University, Tahoma 31 Bermudagrass pushes the geographic boundaries of bermudagrass into the northernmost reaches of the Transition Zone. Highly cold tolerant, the name "Tahoma" comes from the Native American word that means "frozen water," and the grass lives up to its name. Golf courses as far north as Chillicothe Country Club in Ohio (fairways and tees), and Liberty National in Jersey City, NJ, (driving range tee), benefit from Tahoma 31's ability to stand up to cold winters yet thrive in hot summer temperatures. Tahoma 31 creates a sustainable and maintainable golf course with dramatically lower disease pressures compared to cool-season grasses. A tight, dense turf generally mowed as low as ¼ to ½-inch for excellent playability, with notable wear tolerance to heal quickly from divot damage, and strong drought tolerance to save water, its deep blue-green color offers stunning visual contrast for golf course design.

Tahoma31Bermudagrass.com



Toro

The Toro Company is proud of its legacy of quality and innovation. Customers around the world rely on Toro for high performing products that include precision fairway and rough mowers, greens mowers, compact utility loaders, commercial zero-turn mowers, bunker management machines, and water-efficient irrigation systems.

In 1919, Toro provided a motorized fairway mower to the Minikahda Club, in Minneapolis, Minnesota, to replace horse-drawn equipment. By mounting five individual reel mowers onto the front of a farm tractor, Toro developed the Toro Standard Golf Machine and helped create the motorized golf course equipment industry. Today Toro continues to lead the global market with best-in-class turf maintenance equipment and precision irrigation solutions. Approximately two-thirds of the top 100 courses in the world use Toro irrigation systems. The company also leads the way in environmental innovations, making products safer, cleaner and quieter whenever possible.

www.toro.com



ASGCA Leadership Partners

Supporting Education in the Golf Course Industry

ASGCA thanks the following companies for their continued support of golf course development and renovation – helping ASGCA members do their jobs better, for the good of the game.

// MAJOR LEVEL PARTNERS



// MERIT LEVEL PARTNERS



// SPONSORS

