

Issue 24 | Fall 2015

# BY DESIGN



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



## Perfect practice

Unlocking a facility's potential to  
drive participation and revenue

Also: Celebrating variety • Master planning • ASGCA membership • Pete Dye on Twitter

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Chapter 1

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## The potential of practice

A really great practice facility can help to address some of the key challenges that golf faces: it can offer a version of the game that is low cost and doesn't take much time to play, and it can be a way for new and existing golfers to improve their skills.

In this issue of *By Design*, we find out more about how golf clubs are working with ASGCA member architects to overhaul their practice facilities, with some excellent results, including higher levels of participation and additional revenue. Many clubs throughout the United States and beyond may benefit from getting expert advice and unlocking the potential of their practice facilities. You can read more in our cover article that begins on page 8.

Elsewhere in this issue, we find out about the process of becoming an ASGCA member from the three architects that achieved ASGCA Associate status this year (page 18), Brian Idle of Peacock + Lewis gives us an insight into master planning (page 22) and I share my thoughts on why we should celebrate golf's variety (page 16).

Enjoy the read!



Steve Smyers  
President  
American Society of Golf Course Architects

## BY DESIGN

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## COVER



Tom Clark, ASGCA, designed 'A Tribute to Colt' for the short course at Hamilton Golf and Country Club in Ontario, Canada.

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## New course opening

## First Nicklaus design in Vietnam

The BRG Legend Hill Golf Resort near Hanoi has opened for play. It is Nicklaus Design's first layout in Vietnam and the first course in the country to adopt a 'twin green' design concept.

"Legend Hills is very special and unique in that it has been designed to offer a variety of strategic hole combinations that can be played in one 18-hole round," said Paul Stringer, president of the Asia Pacific section of Nicklaus Design. "We have created two separate green complexes playing from one primary landing zone on

each hole and from our perspective, the twin greens add interest, challenge, and a unique design feature to the golf course."

The course is located in foothills to the north of Hanoi, in the city's Soc Song district, and is adjacent to the famous Soc Temple.

Nicklaus Design—led by Jack Nicklaus, ASGCA Fellow—currently has five courses under development in Vietnam, as well as one in Cambodia and another in Indonesia. Four Jack Nicklaus Academies are also expected to open up in Vietnam over the next four years.



## Environment

## Flood resistance at Oak Meadows

A project aimed at creating a more flood-resistant golf course at Oak Meadows Golf Preserve in Addison, Illinois, is now under way.

The work, led by ASGCA Vice President Greg Martin of Martin Design, will help restore natural habitat and improve flood control along Salt Creek, which runs through the site, while creating flood-resistant golf operations.

Martin will be supported by architects Art Schaupeter, ASGCA, and Forrest Richardson, ASGCA, and will work alongside contractors Martam Construction and representatives from the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County—the course's owners and operators.

A new 7,100-yard course will be created, keeping portions of C.D. Wagstaff's original

1920s routing while also introducing a compelling assortment of new holes.

The 288-acre project footprint covers both the 18-hole Oak Meadows course and the adjacent nine-hole East Course at Maple Meadows Golf Club, which is also owned by the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County.

"The purpose is to develop a golf course that will respect the landscape, allowing the game to be played while carefully revealing the land's natural amenities, its history and charm and restoring its vital environmental function," said Martin.

The site's overall storm water storage capacity will be increased to more than 20 million gallons. Twenty-five acres of wetlands will be created, while 43 acres along Salt Creek will be restored.

### Greg Nash, ASGCA

Greg Nash, ASGCA, died in August 2015, aged 66. ASGCA members will remember Nash's relentless attention to detail, an intimate understanding of the development process, and a knowledge of environmental regulations, which helped mold him into a respected, successful architect. His firm, Greg Nash Design, was built on the foundation of creating beautiful, playable golf courses that provide fun, fair challenges to players of all abilities while blending seamlessly with their natural surroundings. Notable designs included Anthem Country Club, Anthem, Arizona and Club Terravita, Scottsdale, Arizona. Donations are being accepted in Nash's name to Hospice of the Valley, Phoenix ([www.hov.org](http://www.hov.org)).

### Profile Products gets growth boost

The acquisition of ASGCA Major Level Partner Profile Products by Platte River Equity is expected to help the firm—which supplies soil, water and vegetation management solutions to golf courses—increase market share and penetrate new markets. "Platte River has the financial resources and experience to help us execute new expansion strategies," said John Schoch, president and CEO, Profile Products. "In addition, Platte River's principals are major investors in the firm's investment funds, so they are motivated to increase the value of their portfolio companies. This puts us in the strongest possible position to keep the company on a continuous growth path."

The logo for Profile Golf, featuring the word "Profile" in a green serif font and "golf" in a green sans-serif font with a golf ball icon replacing the letter "o".

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## Environment

## Sustainable future for Glenview Park

The course at Glenview Park Golf Club has reopened for play following a renovation project led by Jacobson Golf Course Design.

Fairways have been regraded, turf conditions have been improved, tees and greens have been reseeded and the sand bunkers have also been renovated at the club in Glenview, Illinois.

The project had a significant focus on storm water management, and drainage areas have been improved in a bid to help enhance the golfing experience at the club and to protect nearby residential neighborhoods.

“The storm water management system was intricately woven into the site to fit seamlessly with the surrounding golf course and elicit an immediate sense of environmental sustainability,” said Rick Jacobson, ASGCA, the lead architect for the project. “A concentrated effort was made to incorporate native grasses in non-play areas of the golf course as a thematic design characteristic to reflect the vernacular prairie landscape of the upper Midwest.”



Updates have been made to the clubhouse, with work carried out on the café, golf shop and washrooms, as well as the changes to the course.

“This picturesque parkland golf course is punctuated with golf holes that present golfers with alternative options on how to conquer each hole and results in a fun and rewarding round of golf for golfers of all levels,” added Jacobson. “Forty-seven years ago I first stepped foot on Glenview Park as a young man just learning how to play the game of golf. What an honor it has been for me to be a part of the project team that preserved and enhanced this historic golf facility.”

## Renovation

## Stillwater renovation completed

A renovation of the course at the Stillwater Country Club in Stillwater, Minnesota, has been completed. Led by Kevin Norby, ASGCA Associate, the project focused on the course’s bunkering and reducing maintenance requirements.

Stillwater Country Club was established in 1924, with nine holes designed by Tom Vardon. Paul Coates designed an additional nine at the club in 1957.

Norby worked closely with Tom West of construction firm Hartman. One of the most significant elements of the project was the redesign of the thirteenth, which will now play as a Redan style hole.

Norby said: “The slope of the green set up perfectly for a traditional right to left Redan but the bunkering was all wrong and none of the historic photographs indicated that the hole ever played as a Redan.”

A center bunker on the seventh hole has been repositioned, while new fairway bunkers have been introduced on the fourth, fifth and twelfth holes.

Norby added: “Overall, we reduced the amount of sand, we improved drainage and we created something that will differentiate Stillwater Country Club from other private clubs in the area.”



### Pete Dye in Five Tweets

#### On designing a golf course:

“I never draw up plans. I go out and try to make everything different.”

#### On how Whistling Straits now compares to when it was originally designed:

“It gets shorter all the time from what the good players are able to do...if they shoot 64, 65 or 67, I’m not going to lose sleep.”

#### On his unique working relationship with Herb Kohler:

“I never listen to him. When we first met, he didn’t play much, just once or twice a year. Now he can play a little bit.”

#### On the changes in golf:

“Swing speed is no different, but now a 410-yard hole is a 300-yard tee shot and a wedge to the green. What was a 460-yard hole, now needs to be 530 yards, and is still drive + 5-iron to the green.”

#### On the reaction of pros to his courses:

“I don’t listen to them. A guy that plays real good is positive, the guy that plays bad is negative & the next day it changes.”

A transcript of the full Twitter conversation with Pete Dye, ASGCA Fellow, is available via [www.asgca.org](http://www.asgca.org). Follow on Twitter @ASGCA and @ILoveDyeGolf.





# Perfect practice

Practice facilities can offer a lot more than a pre-round warm up. Toby Ingleton finds out how ASGCA architects are helping golf clubs to revamp their ranges in a bid to attract more golfers



New practice facilities at Wigwam Resort in Arizona have helped generate additional revenue



Photo: Keith Alstrim, courtesy of Forrest Richardson & Assoc.



golfers will experience on the course. “The only limitation a golfer should have is his or her own imagination—especially practicing short game shots, from varying lies, angles, conditions, distances, elevations, turf or sand,” says Nathan Crace, ASGCA Associate.

One of a number of short game projects Crace has recently completed is at **Tupelo CC** in Mississippi. During the master planning process, he and superintendent Jim Kwasinski identified approximately six acres of scrub and brush between the back of the existing driving range and the fifth tee that had been unused since the club was founded. “Jim said ‘It’s too bad you can’t use this for something,’” says Crace. “I agreed, but while we stood there it came to me like an epiphany—we could put two double greens and a triple green in that area and make a short course out of it.”

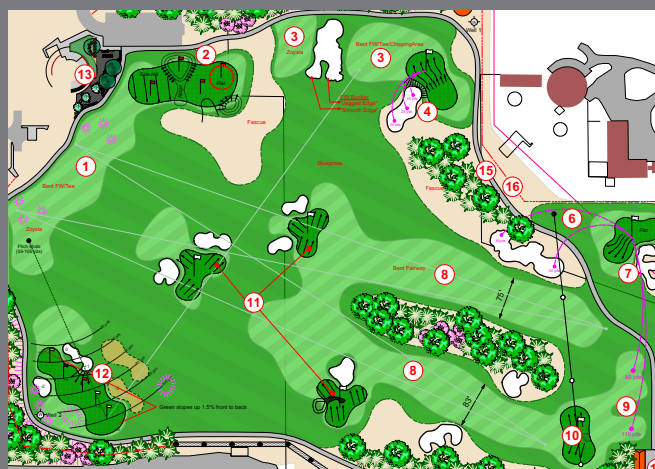
One particular innovation would set this apart from most short courses, as Crace explains: “As we got into the actual design studies, I decided to intentionally omit one thing that originally had the green committee thinking I was crazy: tees. This reduced maintenance and allowed the area to be more free-form and less structured. You practice what you want when you want at your pace. One day you could work on green side bunker shots, one day you can work on wedge approach shots,



## BEST PRACTICE

### Emulating Augusta

The **University of Illinois** has this year opened a new outdoor practice area to complement its state-of-the-art indoor facility. Golf coach Mike Small and alumnus Steve Stricker both admired the practice range at Augusta National, so ASGCA Past President Jeff Brauer started the project by placing an aerial image of the Augusta range onto their site. It was a good fit, and Brauer set about developing the design. “The key element was the dual fairways with trees between to set up both draw and fade options on the subtle dogleg,” says Brauer. “We then added tees on every corner so golfers could practice in any wind direction, and to target greens at multiple distances. While central Illinois is pretty flat, we did have one hill in the north east corner, so we put a green up there to practice the uphill lob shots. There was one tree, and we left it for practice over, under and around. The putting green is about 13,000 square feet, and configured from level, for stroke practice, to all sorts of rolls, tiers and valleys.”



Augusta National’s range was the inspiration for the new facilities at the University of Illinois

At Tupelo in Mississippi, the new practice facilities include a ‘free-form’ short course

BEST PRACTICE

## Getting a golf 'fix'

**Cascade Hills Country Club** in Grand Rapids, Michigan, decided to upgrade its practice facilities to address growing demand for a quicker golf experience. "With evolving time constraints for families and their use of the club, many turned to spending short periods on the driving range to get their golf 'fix' in, versus up to four hours on course," says Adrian Joliffe, head golf professional at the club. "In order to fulfil that demand, a redesign was necessary to maximize the entire space." Bruce Matthews, ASGCA, created a design that would transform its worn hitting area into a visually interesting and inviting space that could accommodate multiple golfers of all skill levels. Matthews has incorporated a 55-yard short game area, 6,000-square-foot green and 4,500-square-foot practice bunker, plus a dedicated lesson tee separated from the main practice tees. Brick pavers that were reclaimed from a previous clubhouse renovation have been used as surrounds for the artificial tees. The project has achieved its objectives: "The response was immediately positive from the first posted drawings to the membership," says Joliffe. "Use of the practice area continues to grow along with the membership. The ability to use the space in all weather conditions with the addition of the artificial turf space allowed us to stay open longer into the fall, open earlier in the spring, and open on Monday afternoons when the driving range had normally been closed for the day."



Cascade Hills has seen a significant growth in the use of its practice facilities since the redesign

and another day take your kids out to play three or six or nine or however many par-three holes after work."

Clubs don't need to rely on an epiphany to work out how best to approach an overhaul of practice facilities.

**The Club at Mirasol** in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida commissioned a comprehensive study to determine how the entire facility was used and should be used. "The findings informed our work for the practice facility," says Drew Rogers, ASGCA, who oversaw a complete renovation and reorientation of the practice range, short-game facility and putting greens at this 36-hole club, formerly home to the PGA Tour's Honda Classic.

The new practice facility bears all the markings of a true collaboration of club, architect and superintendent. From a design perspective, there is elegance and efficiency: Rogers took a two-tier tee and made it single-tier, increasing square footage by 20 percent. He added a second putting green to reduce turf stress and provide players more elbow room. Perhaps most important, he created a seamless flow of traffic, where players park once and use the new range, short-game area and putting greens without getting back in a cart.

"The practice facility has become one of the primary drivers of golf usage here at Mirasol," says director of golf course maintenance Michael Thomas. "Members increasingly hang out with their buddies, have lunch, hit balls and don't necessarily even go out on the golf course—that's the trend we see.

"The new practice facility is right over the cart path from the new grille room, which is now under construction. That's no accident. The new grille won't be called the



19th hole, but it will serve that purpose. It's going to be a great place to hang out. I've got 795 golf equity members and almost 70,000 rounds of golf and I have a lot of people to whom that's a big deal."

Within Mirasol's two-acre short game area, every imaginable pitch to be found on all 36 holes has been replicated for practice purposes. "Drew even created a place to practice hitting out of a fairway bunker to a target green guarded by a bunker," Thomas said. "I've never seen that option. Being able to practice that shot? Pretty phenomenal."

"The real challenge was studying all these strategies on both courses, recreating them and giving the entire experience a sense of place and flow. Today, you can immerse yourself in that experience, before a round or merely as part of a practice session. And you can walk through the entire sequence—putting, short game, full shots—on foot, at your own pace. It's a complete golf experience all its own," says Rogers.

But do investments in practice facility design provide a return on investment?

At the **Wigwam Resort** near Phoenix, Arizona, an overhaul of the practice facilities has delivered substantial additional revenue. "The 54-hole facility suffered from an undersized practice range that could, at best, accommodate just 10 players at one time. Length was also an issue as the range area was wedged in between holes and limited to 225 yards," says Forrest Richardson, ASGCA.

The architect worked with the club to reconfigure portions of two of the courses, improving holes while freeing up space for new practice facilities. "Not only does the resort now have an improved golf experience, but the expanded



New practice facilities are helping to drive golf participation at The Club at Mirasol

## BEST PRACTICE

### Driving participation

**Traverse City Golf & Country Club** has a rich history that sees it celebrating its centenary in 2015 as one of northern Michigan's finest clubs, with an 18-hole course designed by Tom Bendelow. The club recognized that investing in its practice facility would help retain existing members and attract new ones. So with the help of Ray Hearn, ASGCA, it set about transforming all of its practice facilities—a driving range and a practice chipping and sand bunker area. "The club has seen an increase in range revenue and new member growth," says Hearn. "The range has also succeeded in introducing more women and juniors to the club."



By investing in its practice facilities, Traverse City has retained existing members and attracted new ones

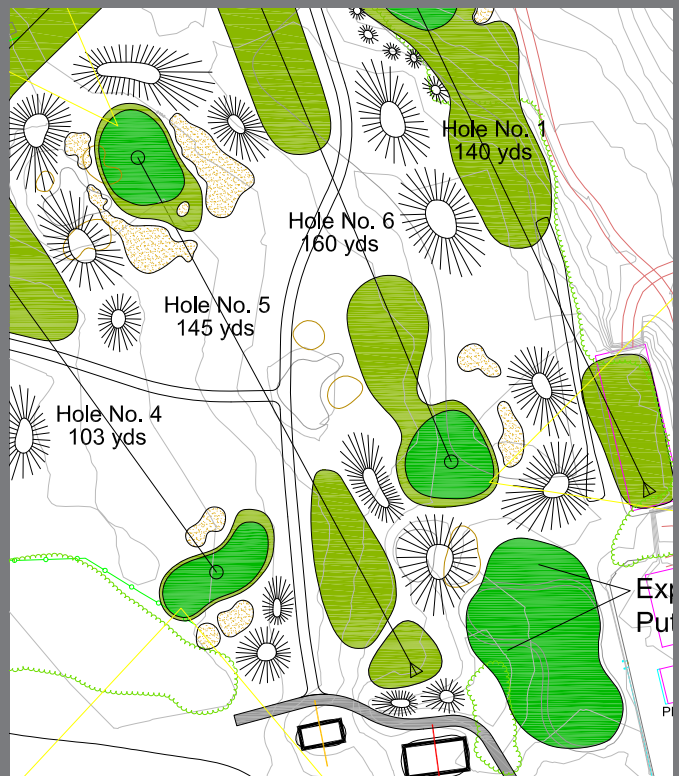


Wigwam Resort in Arizona has created a Village Green putting course with a large Tee Pee centrepiece

BEST PRACTICE

## A tribute to Colt

Tom Clark, ASGCA, has served as architectural consultant to **Hamilton Golf and Country Club** in Ontario, Canada, for more than 25 years. The West and South nines of the 27-hole club were designed by Harry Colt and are considered to be one of Canada's finest courses. The club had moved its driving range, initially for the Canadian Open, onto a natural basin where part of its original short course was located. The members enjoyed the new range so much that it became permanent, and they asked that a new short course be designed. Clark's idea for a tribute to Colt was well received. With the help of *Golf Digest's* architectural editor Ron Whitten, Clark created six new holes that include many of the legendary designer's ideas and concepts, and can attach to three holes left from Colt's original short course. The short course includes some of Colt's most famous par threes, including the tenth at Pine Valley and 'Calamity,' the 14th at Royal Portrush. "The new holes are utilized not only by beginners, women and children, but also seasoned practitioners to hone their short game," says Clark. "The majority of play is in late afternoons and evenings when the kids are out of school or the sun is lower down, but it is definitely an attractive addition around the club area and is utilized by the pro shop for all kinds of clinics."



Clark's short course design at Hamilton was inspired by the great holes of Harry Colt



practice area can now accommodate more than 90 players when using both ends of the 330-yard range area,” says Richardson.

Among the most innovative additions was

The Village Green putting course. This special event area is used for corporate outings, weddings and overflow resort dining. The centerpiece is a large Tee Pee that houses a bar and grill.

“What was once a money loser in terms of practice amenities, grew to more than \$350,000 in new annual revenues from the combined range, golf school and event area.” adds Richardson.

Schaupeter’s work at Plum Creek has also contributed to rising club revenues. The club’s golf manager and head professional Ken Holubec explains: “Our range revenue has increased by 40 percent, junior camps and clinics have tripled, and we were

able to attract Texas State University to use the club as their home course,” he says. “Without question we’re growing the game, with more dads and moms coming out with their kids to practice and play. Golf outings have increased by 12 percent, and our player development program, non-existent in 2012, now has 130 members.”

The new facilities at Tupelo CC have also driven participation. “A number of new members at the club have mentioned that the practice facility and short course were the determining factor in their decision to choose the club over the competition and the existing members are proud to show it off to their guests,” says Crace. “The facility is used heavily by members, new members have joined because of the facilities, and juniors are making use of the short course daily, both with their families and on their own.” ●

*An ASGCA architect can reconfigure your club’s practice facilities to help drive participation growth. To find an architect in your area, visit [www.asgca.org/members](http://www.asgca.org/members)*

### First Links program provides cost-free evaluation by ASGCA member

The ASGCA Foundation/USGA First Links program was created for golf course owners/operators interested in reconfiguring their layouts and/or devoting open land to smaller scale facilities to allow new players to ease into the game. First links provides grants—more than two dozen thus far—to applicants to pay for visits by ASGCA members to evaluate golf facilities for their potential to develop a short course or practice area, or to otherwise modify their existing layouts to welcome new players. ASGCA member consultants follow up their one-day visits with a site evaluation report describing ideas for layout or open land reconfiguration.

Complete information is available at <http://asgca.org/first-links>

## 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



# Celebrating golf's variety

The unveiling of a cutting-edge golf design often triggers heated debate. ASGCA President Steve Smyers considers the value of diversity in design

*“Variety is not only ‘the spice of life’ but it is the very foundation of golfing architecture. Diversity in nature is universal. Let your golfing architect mirror it. An ideal or classical golf course demands variety, personality and, above all, the charm of romance.”*  
Charles Blair McDonald

This quote, alongside several others from the forefathers of our profession, hangs on a wall in my office. Their purpose is to continually remind me of what makes our game so special—and why golf courses are both criticized and loved by all who play the sport.

The staging of the 2015 U.S. Open championship at Chambers Bay attracted a tremendous amount of attention and courted no small degree of controversy. It certainly generated a great deal of discussion among the board of the ASGCA. As members of our association traveled across the country we encountered comments that were both complimentary and critical: these comments were directed at the design of the course; its set-up and conditioning; the grass selection for the playing surfaces; spectator viewing areas, as well as the new format of televising the event.

The USGA determined to make two bold moves: for the first time in its history it took our nation's championship to the Pacific Northwest, and for the first time in 45 years the event was contested on an ostensibly ‘new’ golf course. Chambers Bay, designed by two ASGCA Past Presidents, Bobby Jones and Bruce Charlton, occupies a spectacular site adjacent to Puget Sound. The creation of the course is itself a great story of how a golf development revitalized a distressed parcel of land and an economically stagnant area. In another ‘first,’ fescue grasses were utilized across the entire golf course, and most notably on the putting surfaces.

It was a historically significant week as the USGA was breaking with some very time-honored traditions in not staging the country's premier event at an already established ‘old school’ type venue. For the past several years, the Open course set-up has typically followed a formula of narrow verdant fairways, thick punitive rough, and ultra-slick and ultra-smooth putting greens. This year's championship exposed to millions a quite different way that the game can be played and also a different version of how good golf courses can be designed and

maintained—and indeed how very differently they can look.

In all that I have read, studied and experienced about the game of golf—and specifically as regards course design—heated debate has seemingly always accompanied the unveiling of a cutting edge design and/or its hosting of an important tournament. Pine Valley was declared to be Crump's folly by many who first visited his innovative masterpiece. And I remember Jerry Pate throwing Pete Dye into the lake at the conclusion of the inaugural Players Championship at the TPC at Sawgrass—Dye's novel and original ‘stadium’ layout not being to the taste of the majority of the competitors. Since that first event, Sawgrass has been somewhat refined but it is essentially the same layout and is now one of the PGA Tour's most popular and esteemed venues. And you can go further back, too: the putting surfaces on Donald







Photo: USGA/John Mummert

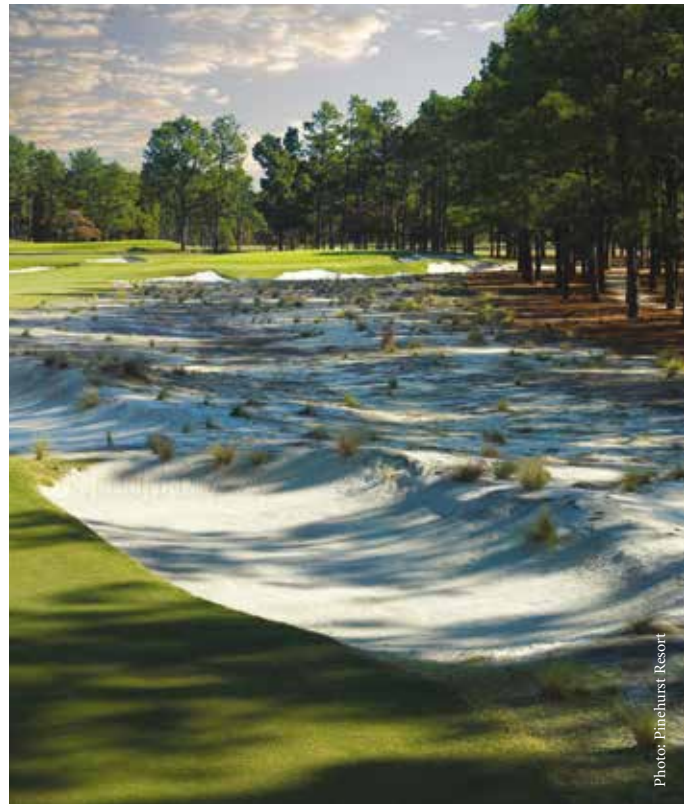


Photo: Pinehurst Resort

As major championship courses, Chambers Bay (left) and Pinehurst #2 (above) have both been heavily scrutinized

Ross's renowned Pinehurst #2 Course confounded most contestants in the 1935 PGA Championship, with many wondering (and complaining) how a ball could land so close to the hole and yet end up in such an awkward place.

As an architect and a golfer who enjoys both the competitive and recreational aspects of the game, I can usually find something that makes me feel uncomfortable with a golf course or a tournament set-up—'uncomfortable' simply because it is unfamiliar and not what I am accustomed to. Whenever I feel this way, I remind myself of how the legendary Bobby Jones reacted on his first visit to St. Andrews where he stormed off the links and vowed never to return. Of course Jones did return (and conquer the links) several times, and in a speech in 1958 at the University of St. Andrews he recounted the story of his first visit. He then revealed how over a passage

of time he had grown to love the Old Course, stating: "The more I studied it, the more I loved it, and the more I loved it, the more I studied it."

The distinctive nature of this year's U.S. Open put a spotlight on how diverse and captivating this game of golf can be. By highlighting such a style of venue, and contrasting it to the great and established championship courses such as Merion, Oakmont and Winged Foot, it triggered widespread discussion regarding some very fundamental aspects of the game—the way it's played, the way courses are designed and the way they are maintained, and this is surely a healthy thing?

If we can create bold, imaginative and innovative designs we will capture people's interest and encourage them to do precisely what Donald Ross invited them to do all those years ago and "rise to the challenge of the course." ●




**Steve Smyers, President, American Society of Golf Course Architects**

Steve Smyers has designed many courses throughout the world, including Wolf Run in Indiana and Chart Hills in England. He has also served as a member of the USGA Executive Committee, and has played in US Golf Championships from junior to senior level.



# The height of professionalism

For golf course architects, membership in ASGCA represents the pinnacle of the profession, requiring many years of experience and a track record of outstanding golf course design work. We find out more about this journey from the three architects who achieved associate membership status this year.



Chad Goetz, ASGCA Associate, of Nicklaus Design, was on the design team for the third course at Golf La Moraleja in Madrid, Spain, a Jack Nicklaus Signature Course

**I**n 2015, the American Society of Golf Course Architects welcomed three new associate members to its ranks. To achieve this status, each had to complete a rigorous, multi-phase application process that includes peer review of four completed courses, discussions with project owners and a personal interview to assess the candidate's professional capabilities.

This process typically takes two years for an applicant to complete, but more often than not, ASGCA membership has been a goal for far longer than that. Take new associate member Nathan Crace, for example. He established Watermark Golf/Nathan Crace Design in 2002, but his ambition to attain ASGCA membership was formed long before then. "I was about 10 when I built a three-hole course on my parents' land in southern Indiana, because there was no

golf course in my home town. I studied books about golf courses intently, either from the city library or bought for me by my mother. In one of those books, I came across a reference to the ASGCA and I told my parents that when I grew up, I was going to be a member. Imagine that: my friends were all going to be astronauts or the President or professional ball players and here I was telling everyone I was going to be a golf course architect when I grew up!"

For another new associate member, Thad Layton, a senior golf course architect for Arnold Palmer Design Company, thoughts of design also started at an early age: "At 13, I learned to play the game during summer golf camp at a local muni in Gulfport, Mississippi, called Tramark. It was a pretty basic 18-hole layout with small pushup greens and two bunkers on the

entire course. The lack of features must have bothered me on some level as I was always making changes to the course in my mind. As my play improved, so did the quality of golf courses on which I got to play and my appreciation for the differences in each golf course grew. My dad was very supportive of my interests, taking me to play golf at different courses in our area. At 15, I picked up a book on golf course design and knew I'd found my calling. I've been pursuing that dream ever since."

His introduction to the ASGCA came while studying for a degree in Landscape Architecture at Mississippi State University. "I sent off for a brochure listing all the members. With the intent of learning more about the craft, I wrote to every member enquiring about a summer internship. It was through that process that I learned



“Becoming a member of the ASGCA has always been a career goal of mine. This dates back to my high school years when I wrote to the society for advice on how to pursue a career in the field

enough about the society to know that it was the benchmark for golf course architects to aspire to, and something I wanted to become... it's hard to believe that was 20 years ago! As with all things that take time and effort to achieve, it was well worth the wait.”

Chad Goetz also achieved associate membership status in 2015, having 16 years' experience with Nicklaus Design, since graduating from Kansas State University with a degree in Landscape Architecture. “Becoming a member of the ASGCA has always been a career goal of mine. This dates back to my high school years when I wrote to the society for advice on how to pursue a career in the field,” says Goetz. “I was extremely fortunate to be a part of a great junior golf program where I learned the game and also was allowed very affordable access to a nearby golf course. The course itself

was nothing terribly inspiring, and my interest in golf design grew out of comparing it to the amazing courses I saw in magazines and on TV. I did well in school and wanted to pursue a career that would get me excited to go to work every day. As we all know, golf design is not the largest, most accessible profession, but after a lot of study and consideration, I decided to go after my dream.”

For Goetz, the journey to ASGCA membership was via Europe: “I was a member of European Institute of Golf Course Architects, but upon my transfer from our European office to the main office here in North Palm Beach, Florida, the region of my work changed somewhat. While I will continue to be involved in some international work, my focus is becoming more and more domestic. The EIGCA is a wonderful

organization, but becoming a part of the ASGCA has always been a professional goal of mine and it allows me to be part of an organization a little closer to my base.”

There have only been 282 members of the ASGCA since it was founded in 1946. Its original charter membership of 13 included some of the industry's most influential figures, including Donald Ross, Stanley Thompson and Robert Trent Jones. So it is perhaps no surprise that acceptance to the ASGCA requires the very highest standard of work. Each of the new ASGCA associate members submitted details of a range of golf course design projects as part of their application process.

Crace's portfolio of courses had already received multiple accolades, including the renovation of Ole Miss Golf Club in Oxford, Mississippi, that was named one of the top three renovations in America among public courses by *Golf Inc.*, and the new course design of Copper Mill Golf Club in Zachary, Louisiana that was voted the Best New Affordable Public Course in America for 2004 by *Golf Digest*.

For Goetz, his submission for ASGCA membership included some of the

Thad Layton, ASGCA Associate (right), works alongside Arnold Palmer, ASGCA Fellow



most noteworthy new designs in Spain in recent years, including Las Saurines de La Torre, Mar Menor, El Valle and Hacienda Riquelme in southern Spain, and the new third course at Golf La Moraleja, one of Madrid's most prestigious clubs.

"Of the courses in my submission for membership, I'm most proud of our recently completed course in Brazil called Fazenda Boa Vista," says Layton. "It is the culmination of everything I've come to learn and believe about golf course architecture over the past two decades. The golf course has a rugged, natural beauty that doesn't impose itself on the landscape. Native grasses were planted in the outer roughs, providing a low maintenance ground cover requiring no fertilizer or irrigation. The fairways are wide where it matters most and hazards are used sparingly, offering multiple angles of play for golfers of every caliber. A wide variety of green sizes and shapes give the course an almost unlimited array of setup options and the surrounds provide a multitude of recovery options. I've played it at least a dozen times now and I never tire of the experience." ●

## DESIGN INFLUENCES

We asked the three new ASGCA Associate members about their design influences



"I begged my parents into stopping for a few hours at Pinehurst on the way back from a summer vacation trip. I was maybe 13 or 14 and all I wanted to do was walk around and look at the courses. I was immediately hooked on Donald Ross! I have the utmost respect for all of the greats, but I wouldn't say I am an architect who tries to 'channel' dead architects from the past. I know it's cost me at least two renovation projects, but I think you have to respect their work while keeping your eye on the reality of the modern game and it's my duty to a potential client to give them that opinion open and honestly. The clubs and balls, the agronomic practices—it's all light years beyond what the greats of the past had at their disposal. And I'd like to think that Ross and the others would agree that we have to adapt. You can renovate or restore a course to reflect and honor the past, but you have to do it in a way that fits the modern game. The modern day architects I find myself drawing inspiration from are ASGCA members, including Pete Dye for his boldness and willingness to push and exceed the envelope; Bob Cupp for his subtlety, depth perception, and angles; and Rees Jones, his longevity, the finished lines of his work—sometimes very understated—and his bunkers always seemingly in the right place at the right time (or wrong place if you hit a poor shot)."

**Nathan Crace, ASGCA Associate, Watermark Golf/Nathan Crace Design**



"Ed Seay was a mentor. He was a born leader and taught me the art of clear and direct communication on the job site. Arnold Palmer taught me how to see the course through a tournament player's eyes and the importance of building features that help a golfer intuit the strategy of the course. Erik Larsen taught me some of the technical aspects of the business and how to travel and work effectively across 12 time zones. I've been equally influenced by the courses and people outside of APDC. My early travels lured me west to Cypress Point where I gained a deep appreciation for the routing and striking bunkering of MacKenzie and Hunter. I also studied George Thomas' and Billy Bell's work in the LA area, the sculptural bunkering, bold design features, and efficient routing at Bel Air and Riviera left a lasting impression. While located in Ponte Vedra, I was fortunate to play TPC Sawgrass multiple times, gaining an appreciation for the pure strategy and gravity defying shapes of a Pete Dye design. More recently, I've gotten to know ASGCA members Bill Coore and Gil Hanse and their teams. I have a tremendous appreciation for the thoughtful and timeless work they are doing. Our upcoming work at Castle Stuart has us studying great links courses like St. Andrews, Brora and North Berwick."

**Thad Layton, ASGCA Associate, Arnold Palmer Design Company**



"Since I've been a part of Nicklaus Design for 16 years, my career and design personality has been molded significantly by Jack Nicklaus and the various talented design associates who work for the company, especially Chris Cochran, ASGCA. They have particularly opened my eyes to the strategic side of design and how we as designers can encourage players to think their way around the course, rather than to try and constantly overpower it. I still find myself learning something new every time I collaborate with them. Outside of the company, I draw influences from across the history of the profession. While I try not to tie myself to a particular designer or style, I have always admired the aesthetic talents of Dr. Alister MacKenzie and some of the ground-breaking strategic concepts of George Thomas."

**Chad Goetz, ASGCA Associate, Nicklaus Design**

# A key to club renovation

Brian Idle of Peacock + Lewis explains how a master plan can alleviate the fear associated with change

One constant that exists in club management is *change*! Sooner or later, all clubs must face the ‘renovate or raze’ dilemma. This applies to both the golf course and clubhouse, and in both cases a master plan can alleviate the fear of such a vast undertaking and actually make the process enjoyable and rewarding.

From bid opening to grand opening, a well-orchestrated process offers a great opportunity to align a club for relevance in the marketplace for many years to come. Common questions and associated answers are:

**WHAT?** A need to improve facilities and have a plan for the future.

**WHY?** Losing revenues, property values, members, employees and reputation.

**WHEN?** Now—Planning costs little compared to rebranding.

**HOW?** Go through a facilities master planning process.

**WHO?** A team of specialists with a proven track record of success in the club industry.

The team approach works effectively in master planning facility improvements for clubs, including the involvement of an American Society of Golf Course Architects (ASGCA) member, who can work with the clubhouse architect to ensure symmetry in clubhouse and golf course design. The first step is

to recognize that problems attracting new members affect the bottom-line and are a threat to the club’s survival.

## WHAT?

“We have a fine club just the way it is.”

“Why change a thing?”

“It works just fine.”

“I don’t use it enough to pay to improve it.”

## WHY?

### *Competition*

New clubs are built and many are updated every year, competing for many of the same prospective members. Each new or remodeled club presents an alternative to the amenities you have to offer.

### *Aging facilities*

Many older facilities have not stood the test of time, have not aged well, or stayed current with industry trends and have not evolved with society’s changing lifestyle. With the primary source of new members coming from the existing members, your club relies heavily on a happy, satisfied, excited and proud membership for future success.

There are new requirements for today’s club amenities, including:

- Larger and nicely appointed women’s locker rooms.
- Youth lockers and related facilities.
- Golf training studios.
- Short game practice facilities.



## HOW?

A good master plan! A good architect and golf course architect can help.

Most clubs meet annually to create the club budget. A well-conceived and executed facilities master plan can help the leadership determine the useful life of the facilities and whether the time is right for a refurbishment, major remodeling or replacement of facilities.

## WHEN?

Now! Here are specific steps which have resulted in successful master plans for many clubs:

### *1. Member Survey*

The member survey can be conducted by the master planning team or by a company specializing in those overseeing conducting and evaluating written member responses. Survey results can be useful to both the golf course and clubhouse.

### *2. Facility Evaluation and Engineering Studies*

A facility evaluation (complete building physical) may reveal potential code violations, insurability issues and physical condition of the assets, including: structural, mechanical,



Peacock + Lewis have worked with numerous golf clubs on their master plans, including Muirfield Village in Ohio



**Brian Idle, President, Peacock+Lewis Architects and Planners, LLC**

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electrical, plumbing, fire protection and electronic systems.

Following the building evaluation, the board and master planning team discuss the merits of remodeling compared to the costs for facility replacements.

### 3. Programming

The master planning team conducts programming/interview sessions with members and staff to learn about the existing facilities, operations, future needs, expectations and issues not routinely discussed among members and staff.

### 4. Master Plan Solutions

The team designs and budgets solutions to present to the board.

Issues to be addressed during the master planning process include:

- Operational inefficiencies (cost of operations).
- Member inconveniences (services and amenities during and after construction)
- Facility image to all audiences
- Future growth and shifting demographics
- Building, planning and zoning requirements
- Insurability issues
- Phasing options

A financing plan is then developed.

The most successful plans use future initiation income and member turnover as their cornerstone. The average turnover rate for member-owned clubs is five-to-seven percent per year.

### 5. Focus Groups/Member Meetings

Live presentations are the best way to communicate and sell any idea, and build positive momentum for the project. The smaller the groups, the more interaction and good input will result.

Display master plan graphics inside the room and/or in the lobby. Include an opening by the club president or committee chairman, then a full presentation (including the budget and schedule), with ample time for a question and answer session.

### 6. Information Booklet

Following the informational meetings, the committee and board should unanimously approve revisions to the plan. Final graphics should be presented in an information brochure for members to review, and accompanied by a proxy for voting.

### 7. Presentation for the Vote!

## WHO?

Finding the right master planning team can be a relatively easy process. Look for experienced teams in the following ways:

1. Ask competing clubs who they used and how successful they were with their program. (The club's manager and leadership will know other clubs, which have experienced a major remodeling or master plan; talk to those club managers and members in leadership positions).
2. Have your president or general manager contact the local and/or national chapter of the Club Managers Association of America (CMAA).
3. Visit the ASGCA website ([www.asgca.org](http://www.asgca.org)), where members are listed alphabetically and by geography. ASGCA members have the experience and problem-solving skills to assist with golf course questions.
4. Have director of golf and/or golf professional contact other pros who have had their facilities remodeled. ●

“ One rule I think is a bit much, especially for the average player, is the grounding rule in bunkers



## Tripp Davis, ASGCA

In the first of a new regular item to close *By Design*, we ask a member architect five quick questions

**H**aving grown up around the game of golf in Atlanta, Tripp Davis, ASGCA was a three-time American Junior Golf Association All-American, before accepting a scholarship to play golf at the University of Oklahoma. There he became an All-Big Eight selection, an NCAA All-American selection, and played on the Oklahoma team that won the 1989 National Championship. He has played in 15 USGA Championships, including being the medalist at the 2003 US Mid Am and reaching the quarter finals in 2005 and 2009.

With a Masters in Landscape Architecture and experience working in golf construction and as a designer, Davis formed his own golf course architecture firm in the 1990s and has an impressive portfolio of original designs—from Oklahoma and Texas to Mexico and China. He has established a reputation as a restoration specialist, having worked on many historic designs, recent examples including A.W. Tillinghast's Spring Lake course in New Jersey and Herbert Strong's Engineers Country Club in New York.

### How is your game?

“My game comes and goes. I don't practice or play very much—once a week on average, but I still play three-to-four amateur events a year. It's hard to be sharp physically or mentally playing tournament golf sporadically. But, I still work at it—my goals are a little more modest.”

### Which three people would make up your dream fourball?

“Bobby Jones, Arnold Palmer and Ben Crenshaw, at Augusta National. They are three people I really admire and I think that would make for a really fun round of golf.”

### What is your favorite hole in golf?

“I like quite a few, but the thirteenth at Pine Valley comes to mind the quickest—the best par four in the world in my opinion. I also really like the new fourth hole we did at Preston Trail in Dallas—a par three that varies as much day to day as any par three I have seen.”

### If you could change or add one rule, what would it be?

“I would like to see the rules simplified in general. One rule I

think is a bit much, especially for the average player, is the grounding rule in bunkers. I would rather them all play through the green. It would remove any issues we have with design of 'waste' vs 'formal' bunkers, as well.”

### What project are you currently working on?

“We are quite busy with major renovations under construction at Tapatio Springs outside San Antonio and the University of Oklahoma Golf Club, the construction of a unique new course in Ocala, Florida, and a greens redesign at Burning Tree in Greenwich, Connecticut, which will finish in September. We are in the design phase for a complete bunker renovation/restoration at Wichita Country Club and a new practice facility at Whipoorwill in New York this fall, while starting design for a complete course renovation at Northwood in Dallas, that we expect to start construction in October 2016. Things will slow down a little this fall—maybe I can play some golf!” ●





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