

The next big things in golf retail | 10 people shaping private clubs

Golf Inc.™

MARCH/APRIL 2017



Mark Burnett, ClubCorp

DEVELOPMENT of the YEAR

A reversible course tops our list as
Golf Inc. expands the contest to
include redevelopments.



Easterbrook joins PGA; Townend starts management co.

No. 1 John Easterbrook Jr.



The longtime Troon Golf executive is leaving the golf club operations giant to become chief membership officer of the PGA of America. The newly created position will oversee member-focused areas of the organization, including education, employment, member services and section business operations. He is a 30-year PGA member.

No. 2 Duncan Andrews

Andrews has put his one-year old Cape Wickham Links up for sale. The renowned oceanfront track occupies part of a 330-acre parcel on King Island in Tasmania and was co-designed by Mike DeVries and Darius Oliver.

Golf Digest considers it Australia's No. 1 public-access course and No. 24 on the planet. But the course's success has given its owner unexpected headaches. "I built Cape Wickham to see if I could build a course that was ranked in the world's top 100," Andrews told Golf Australia. Now, he says, in order to keep the financial momentum going he's got to build more accommodations and he doesn't want to be in the hotel business.

No. 3 Kazuo Okada

The Japanese billionaire is intrigued by the possibilities for golf development in the



Philippines. Late last year, the chairman of Tokyo-based Universal Entertainment Corp. opened Okada Manila, the largest casino in the Philippines. Okada has made a fortune manufacturing and selling slot and pachinko machines, arcade games and video games. He has a net worth of \$2.3 billion, according to Forbes. The Okada Manila includes a nearly 1,000-room hotel and a man-made beach. Okada views it as the

base of his Philippine operations, which will eventually include resorts with golf courses.

No. 4 Charles Garaventa

The food and beverage manager at the Country Club of Landfall in Wilmington, N.C., in February donated a kidney to an ailing 74-year-old club member. Garaventa, 54, said he was inspired by the fact that his son, Daniel, had a kidney transplant 10 years ago with a kidney provided by an organ donor. Landfall hosts the annual Willie Stargell Celebrity Invitational to raise money to help local people living with kidney disease.

No. 5 Matt Tausig

The director of golf at The Lodge of Four Seasons in Lake Ozark, Mo., Tausig has initiated a new rate structure that allows golfers to pay by the hour at the lodge's two 18-hole courses. Tausig said golfers can still pay the traditional full-round greens fee, but the new rate structure was initiated to attract people who don't have the time to play 18 holes. The rate typically is \$10 per hour, including a cart, but the charge can vary according to the season and how busy the course is. The new pricing policy is expected to appeal to conference attendees at the resort, who might have time to play only a few holes.

No. 6 David Townend

The golf industry veteran is launching a new management company that will be based in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Townend previously worked for Starwood Hotels & Resorts, IMG and Troon Golf. At Troon, he was in charge of business development and operations for the Asia Pacific region. His new company, Azalea Hospitality, will be a full-service golf and leisure management and consulting company operating throughout the Asia Pacific region.



No. 7 Scott Campbell

Campbell is opening his Oregon family ranch to resort guests. Featuring two 18-hole reversible golf courses, Silvies Valley Ranch is an operating cattle ranch with lodging, a spa and other amenities. The two courses, designed by Dan Hixson, are set to open in July.

No. 8 Randy Eckels

Eckels is the new CEO of Clubessential, a leading technology partner for private clubs. He brings three decades of technology and software leadership experience to the company. He was president of Horizon Software International, a Roper Technologies business unit, where he led the transformation and growth of Horizon as a SaaS cloud provider to the K-12, health care and senior living markets. In 2015 and 2016, Clubessential made the Inc. 5000 list of fastest growing private companies in America.



No. 9 Jim Koppenhaver

Koppenhaver, president of Pellucid, warns that golf participation continues to decrease "at an alarming rate," but he notes that operators of U.S. golf properties are staying afloat because older golfers are playing more often. "In a nutshell, older, high-frequency golfers are each covering about two of the low-frequency, younger golfers that are not being attracted to the sport," he writes. He predicts the number of rounds played on U.S. golf courses will remain "relatively stable" during the next decade. After that, presumably, all bets are off. The decrease in participation among the under-45 age group doesn't bode well for the future.

