

WORLD GOLF REPORT

NEWS AND COMMENT ABOUT GOLF DEVELOPMENT AND CONSTRUCTION ALL OVER THE PLANET



"Blessed is he who expects nothing,
for he shall never be disappointed."
– Alexander Pope

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ABOUT US

ROBERT J. VASILAK

For the past 20 years or so, Robert J. Vasilak has provided development-related research services to many of the best-known golf companies on the planet. He's been the managing editor of a Washington, DC-based business magazine, and he's written for Esquire, the Washington Post, Golfweek, and other publications. In 2008, he created the first (and still only) publication dedicated exclusively to international golf development, called the World Edition of the Golf Course Report. Some of the material on this blog originally appeared in the World Edition, in a slightly different form. For more information about the World Edition, or to receive a free issue, send us an e-mail at WorldEdition@aol.com or call us at 301/680-9460. Vasilak also publishes the U. S. Golf Course Report, which reports on -- you guessed it -- golf development and construction in the United States.

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SUNDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2016

The Week That Was, *october 23, 2016*

Dubai, which likes to brag about its potential as a golf destination, is about to [lose one of its nine golf properties](#). Al Badia Golf Club, a venue that opened in 2005 (it was originally known as Four Seasons Golf Club Dubai Festival City), will close in February 2017. The club offered no explanation for its demise, and the news appears to have caught its members by surprise. "We've never heard of a club closing down," one of them told a Middle Eastern news service. Al Badia's 18-hole course, [literally an oasis in a desert](#), was designed by Robert Trent Jones, Jr., who once said that "water is seen, heard, and felt almost everywhere, on and off the course." Although Al Badia isn't nearly as prominent as Emirates Golf Club, Jumeirah Golf Club, or some other nearby golf properties, its passing certainly raises a red flag. Dubai is wealthy beyond belief, but it has a limited water supply and its real estate market toggles between boom and bust. What's more, a couple of years ago KPMG's Golf Advisory Practice intimated that [its golf market was about to max out](#). Given the dearth of information that we've received so far, it's impossible to draw any conclusions about what Al Badia's closing means to Dubai's golf business. But it can't be a positive sign.

Is Turkey's nascent golf industry [about to suffer another setback](#)? A little more than a week ago, some bad hombres launched a pair of missiles into the heart of the nation's favorite vacation spot, and now the Turkish Airlines Golf Open, scheduled to take place at Regnum Carya Golf & Spa Resort next month, may be canceled. The missiles didn't kill anyone, but everybody in Antalya is on edge and the European Tour is wrestling with matters that it's never confronted. "We will update further as soon as possible," it said in a press release. Turkey is a troubled country -- two recent terrorist bombings, last summer's aborted military coup, strained relations with Russia -- and the golf courses in Belek/Antalya are suffering as a result. Rory McIlroy had agreed to play in the open, and his presence at the \$7 million event was sure to boost television ratings and give Turkey's golf business a welcome shot in the arm. Today, though, the tour is in a no-win situation. It may soon give the all-clear signal, but fear is contagious and you've got to wonder how many pros would rather play virtually anywhere else.

Greg Norman thinks he can be in business forever, and he's set up a holding company that he hopes will help him do it. Beginning next year, "the Living Brand" will [dissolve Great White Shark Enterprises](#) and start operating through the far more cleverly named Greg Norman Company. "Over the years, I have learned that no business can stand still," he said in a press release. "We need to build a company not just for today, but for the future." Regrettably, however, the future isn't on the immediate horizon. In the near term, GNC will do exactly what GWSE has been doing for decades: Design golf courses, sell "branded" merchandise, make real-estate investments, and extend loans to small businesses. But sometime next year, when Norman begins to transform into a true captain of industry, he promises to unveil unique enterprises that will make GNC "a force on the landscape of golf and beyond." These enterprises could be anything, really, because Norman is a man of the world and a deep thinker. If you're looking for [a hint of what the "beyond" might be](#), however, think Verizon and educational technology.

An often overlooked international design firm has [opened its fifth golf course in Indonesia](#), this one on Bali, a popular vacation spot that markets itself as "the Island of the Gods." Belmont, California-based JMP Golf has produced an 18-hole, par-3 track for Bukit Pandawa Golf & Country Club, the centerpiece of a resort that's taking shape on the Bukit Peninsula, along the island's southern coast. The area is said to feature a "dramatic craggy coastline" and "imposing cliff-tops," and Bob Moore, the course's architect, reportedly preserved "rock outcroppings" and "architectural ruins" for additional aesthetic punch. Moore is responsible for two other JMP-designed courses in Indonesia, Royale Jakarta Golf Club in Jakarta and Royal Sumatra Golf & Country Club in Medan. He and his partners, Brian Costello and Mark Hollinger, along with JMP founder J. Michael Poellot, have also created courses in the United States and at least 10 other nations, among them China, France, Japan, Mexico, South Korea, and Thailand. Bukit Pandawa is being developed by PT Bali Ragawisata, which will eventually complement the resort's course with a hotel that includes villas and a beach club.

The original version of the preceding post first appeared in the October 2016 issue of the World Edition of the Golf Course Report.

This year, for the first time since its inception in 2004, the annual Golf Business Forum will be held in the United States. The event, which touts itself as "the largest and most significant meeting of golf-industry executives and decision-makers in the world," will be held at the Sawgrass Marriott Golf Resort & Spa in Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida from November 28 to December 1, 2016. It'll feature what HSBC, its sponsor and promoter, calls "[an action-packed agenda](#)" of "thought leadership and networking sessions" where "the game's most influential voices, leaders, decision-makers, and global innovators" will "reflect on an exciting year and debate the future of the game." A complete list of speakers hasn't been announced, but Jack Nicklaus, Tim Finchem, and Martin Slumbers will reportedly be there, and Annika Sorenstam will receive HSBC's lifetime achievement award.

POSTED BY ROBERT J. VASILAK AT 8:56 PM