

THE
GOLF
MAGAZINE
INTERVIEW
MARTIN MOORE

WE ARE FLAGSTICK 好球场 我来造

文 刘文伟 图 马诺 资料图片 被采访者提供 版式 吴立才

球场建造是个大学问。高尔夫进入中国不到三十年，已建成的球场中，好球场有哪些？好球场的共性是什么？想要深入了解，非得自己亲自去建个球场才行。不过与旗杆（Flagstick）球场建造管理公司总裁马丁·摩尔对话或许是个捷径

马丁个人资料

祖籍: 美国佛罗里达
现居住: 美国佛罗里达、
泰国曼谷、中国昆明
专业: 高尔夫球场管理
(Lake City College)
职位: 旗杆球场建造管理
公司总裁
合作设计师: 杰克·尼克劳
斯、尼克·佛度、汤姆·法齐
奥等



1978年的暑假,美国佛罗里达的一位高中生找了一份兼职,在高尔夫球场里做维护工作。球场的环境和氛围令年轻人马上迷上了这份工作。高中毕业后,他便去当地一家球场就职。小伙子起早贪黑,上午做球场维护,下午去球具专卖店,给会员擦球杆。一位前辈看他这么努力,就对他说道:“如果你想在球场业里混,去读个大学吧。”

两年后,他申请到了著名的Lake City college,在那里学习球场管理。不过在大学里,这位年轻人才发现自己更喜欢的是球场建造,于是他将职业定位于球场建造。毕业后不久,这位年轻人就在杰克·尼克劳斯设计公司谋得项目协调员一职,开始了球场建造的职业生涯。这位年轻人名叫马丁·摩尔。

上世纪90年代是泰国高尔夫球场的高速增长期,马丁进入尼克劳斯公司后,很快便被派到泰国负责项目协调的工作。曾经连续举办LPGA比

1996年马丁与金熊尼克劳斯在春城施工现场



建造春城山景球场期间,马丁曾长时间驻在球场达一年半之久。在尼克劳斯公司效力九年之后,马丁于1998年自立门户,创立了旗杆公司

赛的泰国Siam乡村俱乐部便在这期间建成。随后,马丁开始担任项目经理,陆续参与过不少顶级球场的建造工作。建造春城山景球场期间,马丁曾作为项目经理,长时间驻在球场达一年半之久。在尼克劳斯公司效力九年之后,马丁于1998年自立门户,创立了旗杆公司。旗杆公司的任务便是协助业主、设计师建球场。从前期准备阶段、种草到球场开业,这期间的时间安排、项目招标合同、预算都归他管。

两年前,我在万宁神州半岛的施工现场第一次见到马丁·摩尔,当时他便以旗杆公司的总裁身份,陪着设计师维斯科普夫跑上跑下,尽可能地将维斯科普夫的设计理念实施到球场当中。最终,神州半岛入选了2011年美国GOLF杂志最佳新球场排名的第三位。今年4月份的高博会上,我又一次遇到了马丁,他的旗杆公司在里面有个展位。中国旺盛的球场建造需求将马丁的公司吸引到了中国,而几十年的丰富球场建造经验也的确是旗杆公司立足中国的资本。

在你们合作过的设计师当中,谁给你的印象最深刻?

这个问题很难回答,但我还得说是尼克劳斯,实际上我曾经为他工作过9年,从上个世纪90年代我开始为



他效力,一直到1998年。他是历史上最伟大的高尔夫球手,而他的团队很出色,很好的设计师在为他工作,其中很多人跟我是多年的朋友。如果你看过球场的建造,你会发现要建一座质量上乘的球场并不容易,而尼克劳斯总是能建造好的球场。尼克劳斯对于他所经手的项目都很用心,他的签名球场从策略角度而言,设计巧妙,因为尼克劳斯本身就是一位伟大的球手,精通打球策略。

一座伟大的球场具备哪些要素?

一座伟大的球场具备四个要素:好的设计、高质量的建造、球场建成后合理的养护、优良的运营。还有一点,业主得有财,有足够的预算,可以请来非常好的设计师,找到一块建球场的好地。很明显,你要大动土方,雇来专业人士,顶级的造型师、顶级



上图: 马丁与Flagstick执行副总裁托尼

右图: 1991年刚刚加入尼克劳斯设计公司的马丁在泰国考艾高尔夫球场的工地



与美巡赛球星Fred Couples在一起

的建造师,最后才有可能建成世界级的球场。有顶级的设计,但建造却不合理,球场就不会好;建造优良,但设计不佳,同样没戏。如果这两者都具备,但球场维护不好,球场就会沦为一个低成本养护的球场。同理,你也无法养护好一个本来建造就不合理的球场。一个建造低劣的球场如果想得到奥古斯塔的养护,得到的结论只会是,你的管道不对、你的灌溉不合理。我认为所有这些要素都是环环紧扣。所以,即使你设计好、建造好,养护得当,你球场还得运营好才行。当然,还有很多其他的要素,但当你全盘考虑时,这四个要素是构成伟大球场的关键。拿春城为例,设计好,建造

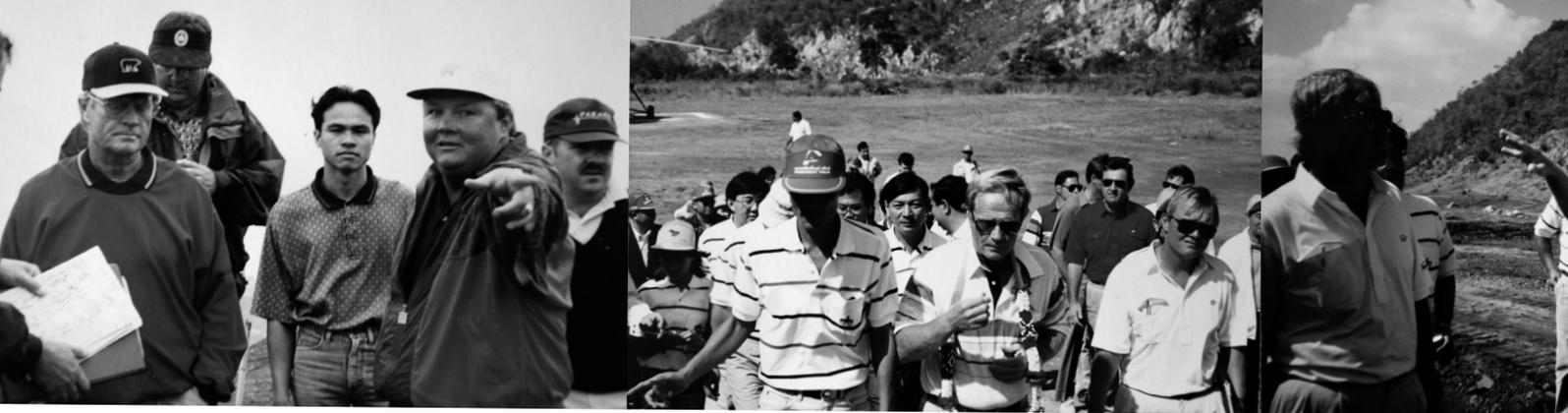
优良,而且好的地理位置也很关键,你想想,如果把球场建在乌鲁木齐,谁会去打啊?

建造球场过程中,哪个阶段是最容易出现问题?

我想说土方的移动,这通常是一个项目的开始阶段,其他所有阶段都在这个阶段之后。土方的工期影响到之后所有环节的日期。高尔夫球场的建造要按照顺序来,总的来说,建球场有10到15道程序。一切都要依照顺序来,如果土方没做,没法做造型,没做造型,你就没法做管道铺设,管道没做就没法做灌溉。我们形象地把这个比作一列火车,每个工序就是每一节车厢。如果第一节车厢毁了,整辆火车就完蛋了。比如,如果土方没做好,造型就很难做。土方环节的好坏会影响到整个建造。

在中国建造球场这么多年,是否有疯狂的记忆?

我得追溯到建深圳观澜湖期间,我们14个月内要完成5个球场,工作量巨大。每天会有3000到4000名工人在场地上施工。他们三班倒,一天24小时不停歇地工作。当时我们住在球场附近的一个位于山坡上的村子里,每天早上6点上班,下午6点下班,然后7点钟回到村子里,大家一起吃晚饭。从吃饭的地方向下望去,我们可以看到整个场地灯火辉煌,工人、搬运泥土的卡车,非常忙碌。有一次我们要做一个6000到8000平米的湖,我们6点准时离开场地,一边吃饭一边看着前方远处的热闹的做工场面。然后第二天一早6点,当我们回到工地的时候,人工湖竟然已经做好了!我们在休息,工人们在施工,他们竟然一晚上挖出20万立方的泥土,建好了人工



湖。能看到这一幕发生实在太神奇了。

还有一个故事,是发生在我们建春城的时候。那时我刚来中国不久,对中国人的做事方式还不太了解,不知道如何指挥工人们做事。山景的9号洞球道中间有一块巨石,石头高三米,宽也有好几米。好几个月以来,我一直抱怨要把这块石头移走,但是没有人移。我们没有移动石头的设备,最后我发飙了,下命令必须把石头移走,因为石头将影响球道种草,而且它位于落球区。当我从住所再回到球场时,发现六七位工人手里拿着剪刀和小锤子,在凿石头。我一看傻了,这可是三米高的石头,要想去掉石头得猴年马月啊。我回到家,第二天早上5点半我又返回球场,看到有30余名中国人用小锤子继续凿着石头,这时石头已经分开了几块,而且都位于球道平面之下。石头就这样被搞定了!一整个晚上,30到40名工人,用剪刀和锤子就让石头消失了。在中国任何事情都有可能发生!获得最后的结果,有很多种办法,有时,你会由衷竖起大拇指:中国人真聪明,他们总能用不同的办法获得相同的结果。

Flagstick与其他在中国的建造管理公司的区别是什么?

我们的建造经验是首屈一指的。我们已在中国建造了25座锦标赛球场,而且现在还有11座球场在建当中。在中国与在美国建球场区别很大,我们从中吸取了很多经验,国外公司来中国做生意,要学习很多东西。

当我从住所再回到球场时,发现六七位工人手里拿着剪刀和小锤子在凿石头。我一看傻了,这可是3米高的石头,要想去掉石头得猴年马月啊

我们已经度过了学习阶段。如今公司的结构非常合理,并且有很多项目管理的经验,这点会让我们与其他公司区别开。我们目前在中国有两个办公室,能把办公室设在中国很关键,有很多远在国外的公司想为中国的客户提供服务,这是不太可能的。我们熟悉中国人的做事方式,理解中国文化,知道如何在中国做生意。另外,公司在管理方面同时也吸纳了中国元素,在管理、人力资源、设备运用,我们公司都有相应的中国人才在管理,这会在实践时提高效率。我们非常理解为什么要这样做,而一些国外的公司可能就不会理解。

世界范围和中国内,哪个Flagstick公司曾接手的项目最令你满意?

很难说哪一个最让人满意,但可以说哪个给我带来最大挑战,让我最有成就感。我要说的是深圳的观澜湖。2002-2003年期间,我们同时接手了5座18洞锦标赛球场的建造工作。这是之前我们从未做过的,算得上世界范围内给我们挑战最大的。另外,最

近完成的海口观澜湖有10个球场,我们也很有成就感。世界范围内,我想说的是内布拉斯加州的Dismal River,杰克曾无数次到那个球场实地考察,那是个非常独特的项目,建在沙丘上,土方量极小,非常有趣的一个项目。

如果你是老虎在迪拜项目的建造管理方,他的项目现在停滞,你作何感想?

太可惜了。事实上,这个项目招标期间,我们也参与竞标了,只是最后没有选择我们而已。他们一定是选错了人。(笑)令人失望的是,这是个好项目,可最后却没有实现。对所有人,包括泰格来说,我对他们表示遗憾。不过





90年代来到亚洲涉足球场建造业，从马丁·摩尔手里诞生了众多品质优良的好球场。而监理这份工作让马丁的足迹遍布亚洲

已经建好的6个洞可能是目前造价最贵的6个洞。我为此感到惋惜，但你知道，没有人能控制经济的走向，财政问题是无可避免的。要成为一座伟大的球场依靠的不是昂贵的造价，就像我之前说的那几个要素。如果春城养护不好，经营不力，它现在也可能是个烂球场。业主的积极支持也很重要，如果业主只给你300万美元的球场预算，而建到6个洞时，钱已经花完了，所以建造前的预算非常重要。

我们通常的做法是，在为一个球场做预算之前，我们可能会对一个预算反复修改11次之多。在建造之前，我们想让业主和每个人明白，这是我

们要花的钱。我们会让客户充分参与进来，了解球场的建造。最后花的钱可能会比预算多一点，但是球场会在合理的规划和经营下获得好的结果。

中国球场马丁造

项目(部分摘录)	设计师
春城山景球场	杰克·尼克劳斯
昆明石林	施密特·科里设计公司
深圳·观澜湖	奥拉沙宝
深圳·观澜湖	大卫·杜瓦尔
深圳·观澜湖	安妮卡·索伦斯坦
深圳·观澜湖	大卫·利百特
深圳·观澜湖	格雷格·诺曼
神州半岛	汤姆·韦斯科普夫
海口·观澜湖黑石球场	施密特·科里设计公司
成都保利	施密特·科里设计公司

很多中国的球场业主都迷恋于找大牌设计师做签名设计，你如何看待这个问题？

没错，以尼克劳斯为例，他有好几种不同级别设计的球场，从签名球场，到Legacy Course，后者现在由杰克与儿子一起合作设计。我可以告诉你的是，杰克在签名球场上也会投入很大的精力，很多项目要依据球场与他约定到现场参观的次数而定，但所有签名球场，即使他不现场参观，也要插手很多事情，从球场攻略，到整个项目规划。还有一种尼克劳斯公司设计的球场，他本人不会参与设计，而是由其经验丰富的设计团队来操刀，他们中有的人由尼克劳斯培训成为设计师。设计助理的设计思路是和主设计师一样的，杰克的设计师们也与杰克有着一样的设计理念。所有的伟大设计师都会培训自己的团队，因而，大牌设计师团队中的设计师有着相同的设计思路。伟大设计师公司里，躲在大牌设计师背后的每位设计师都有足够的资质，他们可以设计出同样伟大的球场，唯一的区别在于他们不是名气很大的设计师，但他们从伟大设计师那里学到了如何设计球场，这样球场设计理念得以传承。当尼克劳斯决定不再去设计球场的时候，他的设计理念不会失传。当本·霍根不在的时候，还有别人能将他的设计理念传承下去。尼克劳斯现在有一种设计就叫做Legacy Design，这也是为什么杰克和他儿子一起合作设计，杰克寄希望于儿子将Legacy Design一代代传下去。○



海口观澜的黑石球场荣获2010最佳国际新球场第二名

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WE ARE FLAGSTICK

Building Great Golf Courses. That's what we do.

文 刘文伟 图 马诺 资料图片 被采访者提供 版式 吴立才

It takes expertise to build a great golf course. Could China, a country where golf is younger than thirty, have any such courses? If it does, what are they like? To truly grasp what it takes to build an elite golf course, you would probably have to build one yourself. But maybe a conversation with Martin Moore, the president of Flagstick Golf Course Construction Management, could serve as a shortcut.

Martin's File:

Birthplace:

Florida, USA

Current Home Cities:

Scottsdale, AZ; Bangkok,
Thailand; Kunming, China

Degree:

Golf Course Operations,
Lake City College

Current Position:

President, Flagstick Golf Course
Construction Management

Who He Has Worked With:

Jack Nicklaus, Nick Faldo,
Fred Couples, and many other
world-renowned architects



Martin Moore

During the summer vacation of 1978, a high school kid in Florida picked up a job doing maintenance work at a local golf course. The atmosphere of the club and the daily immersion in nature enchanted him and no sooner had he graduated from high school than he was back at the course as a full-time employee. He arrived early and left late, working course maintenance in the mornings and cleaning members' clubs in the afternoons. One day, an older gentleman took notice of the boy's hard work and told him, "If you really want to get mixed up in this golf business, you'd better go and get yourself a college degree."

Two years later that boy, now a young man, applied to the golf course operations program at Lake City College in Florida. After starting the program, it wasn't long before he realized that his true interests lay in golf course construction and design, and so he set his sights on a career developing golf courses. Not long after graduating, he was offered a job as project design coordinator for a Jack Nicklaus Design golf course, and off he went, his golf course construction career officially underway. This young man was none other than Martin Moore.

The 1990s were years of rapid growth for golf in Thailand. Martin had only been with Nicklaus Design for a short while before he was sent to Thailand to handle

1996 – Martin and the Golden Bear, Jack Nicklaus, on-site at Spring City.



While building the Mountain Course at Spring City, Martin was based on-site for a year and a half. After nine years with Nicklaus Design, Martin started his own company in 1998, which he called Flagstick.

the company's project coordination. During this time he worked on the construction of two Jack Nicklaus Signature courses: Mission Hills Khao Yai and The Country Club Khao Yai. Soon thereafter, Martin became a project manager for the company, and was involved with a series of high-end course developments. One of those assignments took him to Kunming, China, where Martin served for one and a half years as the project manager for the construction of Spring City's Mountain Course. After nine years with Nicklaus Design, in 1998 Martin left the company to start his own business, which he named Flagstick. Flagstick's primary mission is to assist project owners and golf course architects to build great golf courses. From the early, preparatory stages of a project through grassing and opening, from budgeting to bid solicitation, Flagstick manages a wide variety of critical tasks.

I first met Martin two years ago at The Dunes at Shenzhou Peninsula, on China's Hainan Island. As Flagstick president he was accompanying golf course architect Tom Weiskopf on a site tour, with the goal of implementing the designer's ideas into the final product. Eventually, the course was selected as Golf Magazine's third best new course of the year for 2011. I ran into Martin again at this year's Beijing Golf Show in March, where Flagstick had an exhibition booth. China's staggering demand for golf course construction has drawn Flagstick to the mainland, and with the company's abundance of golf course construction experience, Flagstick is in a position to capitalize on China's demand.

Among the golf course architects that you've worked with, which one has left the deepest impression on you?

That's a tough question, but I would have



to say Jack Nicklaus. I worked for his company for nine years, up until 1998. Not only is he the greatest golfer of all time, but he has a remarkable team of people working for him, many of them outstanding golf course designers with whom I've been friends for years. If you've seen a golf course under construction, you know it's a huge challenge to build a high-quality facility, but Nicklaus always seems to build great golf courses. Jack is very careful with every project he undertakes. From a strategic standpoint, the design of his Signature courses is ingenious, and that's because he himself was such an extraordinary player and such a brilliant strategist.

What are the essential elements of a great golf course?

In my opinion, there are four key components to any great golf course: good design, high-quality construction, proper maintenance, and first-class operations. And one more thing: The owner needs to have adequate resources to hire a top-notch golf course architect and to find a great piece of native land for golf. And, obviously, you will have to do proper earthwork, hire specialists, hire the best shapers, hire the best contractors – only then will you be able to build a world-class golf course. If you've got an excellent golf course architect, but the construction is



Above: Martin with Flagstick's vice president & general manager, Tony Cunzio

Right: 1991 – Martin on-site at Country Club Khao Yai in Thailand, just after joining Nicklaus Design

sub-par, the golf course won't be very good; or, if you have a good construction team but your architect isn't creative, it's equally hopeless. Even if both of those elements are perfect, but the course maintenance is poor later on, the course will become just another average facility. By the same token, there's no way to maintain a golf course that was poorly or improperly constructed to begin with. If you try to take a golf course with sub-standard construction, and maintain it like Augusta National, you'll soon discover that you may be facing an impossible task. I think all of these elements are interrelated. So, even if you have a good design, good construction, and good maintenance, your facility still needs good operations to be a true success. Of course, there are many other important parts to a great golf course, but when you consider it all together, these four things constitute the necessary framework for creating an outstanding golf course. Take Spring City as an example: the design was terrific and the construction was superior, and its geographical location is critical to its success. That last



With PGA Tour star, Fred Couples

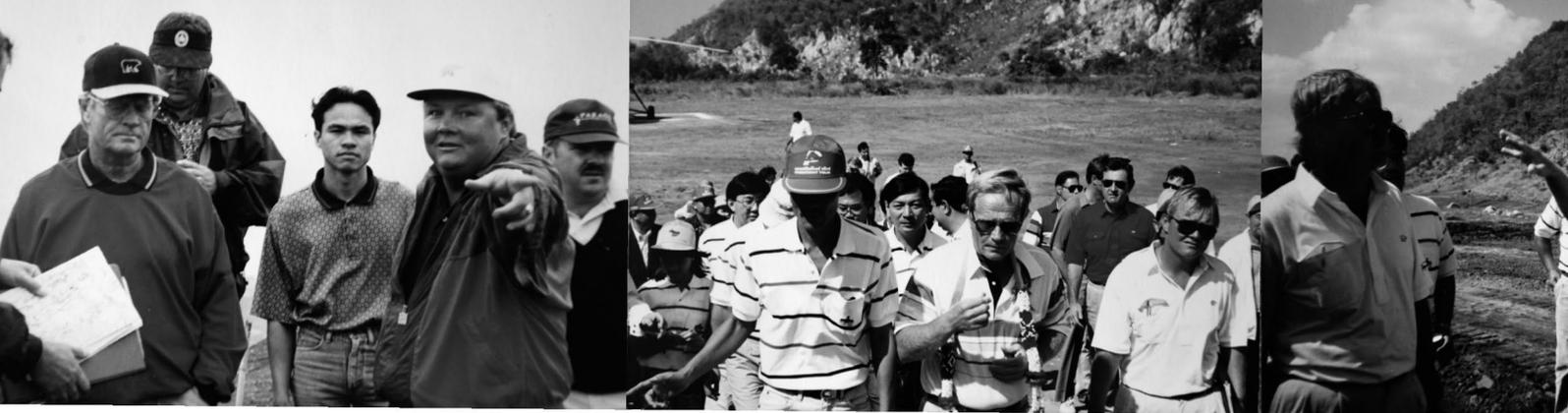
part, location, is important too – if you build a golf course in Urumqi, who's going to go play it?

During the construction process, which phase presents the greatest risk of problems?

I would say it's the mass earthworks phase. This is often the first stage of a project, so the other steps all come after this. The amount of time and effort allocated for earthworks will influence all the following tasks of the project. Good golf course construction must follow a specific sequence, and generally speaking, most projects have 10-15 steps. Everything must go according to that set sequence: if the earthworks stage isn't finished there's no way to do shaping; if the shaping hasn't been completed you can't install the drainage; if you haven't installed drainage you can't move on to irrigation. You can visualize it like a train, and each step in the process is a single carriage. If the first carriage breaks down, then the whole train gets wrecked. For example, if you don't finish the earthworks portion, it's pretty hard to do shaping. So that first step, mass earthworks, has a huge influence on the rest of the construction process, especially in regards to meeting the schedule.

After all these years of building golf courses in China, do you have any crazy memories?

Sure, going back to when we were building Mission Hills in Shenzhen. We were trying to build five golf courses in just 14 months, which was an enormous challenge. We had about 3,000 to 4,000 construction workers active on site every day, with three separate shifts working around the clock. At that time we were living in a little hillside village near the site. We would get up every morning and start work around 6 AM, and leave the site around 6 PM, and get back to the village by about 7 PM for a group dinner. From where we ate we could look up the valley and see the entire site lit up brightly, full of workers and earth-moving equipment, still working in full force at that hour. There was one time that we needed to build a 6,000-8,000 square-meter lake. We left the site at 6 PM, as usual, and sat up in the village eating and watching the construction scene in the distance. When we got back to the site early the next morning, this entire man-made lake was completely finished! While we had been sleeping the crews had been working, and in just one night they excavated 200,000 cubic meters of dirt to build this man-made lake. It was like a miracle had happened right in front of our eyes.



There's one other story from when we were building Spring City. I hadn't been in China very long, and wasn't familiar with the Chinese way of doing things, nor did I fully understand how to direct a team of Chinese construction workers. On the ninth hole of the Nicklaus Mountain Course there was a huge boulder right in the middle of the fairway, probably three meters high and as many meters wide. I had been complaining for a few months about how I wanted that huge rock removed. We didn't have the right equipment to move something like this, and finally, one day I just got really angry, and ordered the thing to be moved, because it was going to affect the construction in this area and fairway grassing, and it was right in the middle of the landing area. When I was leaving the site in the evening, I found six or seven workers trying to chisel away at this stone with picks and hammers. I was shocked. It would take forever to grind down that boulder with small hand tools. When I came back the next morning there were 30 or 40 laborers still hammering away at the thing, but now the boulder was completely broken apart and was lying in pieces on the fairway. And that's how it got accomplished. In one night, 30 or 40 guys with hammers and picks had made that giant boulder disappear. Anything can happen in China! There's never just one way to get what you want. Sometimes you just have to give them the thumbs-up and say, "yep, Chinese people are really smart." They can always think of multiple ways to achieve the same results.

What is the difference between Flagstick and other construction management companies in China?

Our construction experience is second to none. We've already completed 25 championship golf courses in China, and we have 11 more under construction at the moment. Building golf courses in America is very different from building golf courses in China, and we have extensive experience on both sides. When a new foreign company comes to China to do business there's a lot to learn, and we have the advantage of having already gone through that learning phase. Our construction

When I came back to the site, I found six or seven workers trying to chisel away this stone with picks and hammers. I was shocked. It would take forever to grind down that small boulder with small hand tools!

management structure, which is a perfect fit for the Chinese market, together with our abundance of construction management experience, differentiates us from our competitors. We now have two offices in China, and this local presence is critical for our business. There are many foreign companies based abroad that want to offer their services to the Chinese market, but that's difficult to do if you're not in China on a full-time basis. We're familiar with the Chinese way of doing things, we understand Chinese culture, and we know how to do business here. Additionally, we've hired a number of Chinese experts and professionals to our team, from HR managers to equipment operators. Flagstick has qualified Chinese personnel in many areas of the business, which improves our efficiency and quality of service. We know that this adds significant value for our clients, but some foreign companies may not fully grasp that concept.

Of all the courses Flagstick has completed internationally and in China, which one was the most satisfying for you?

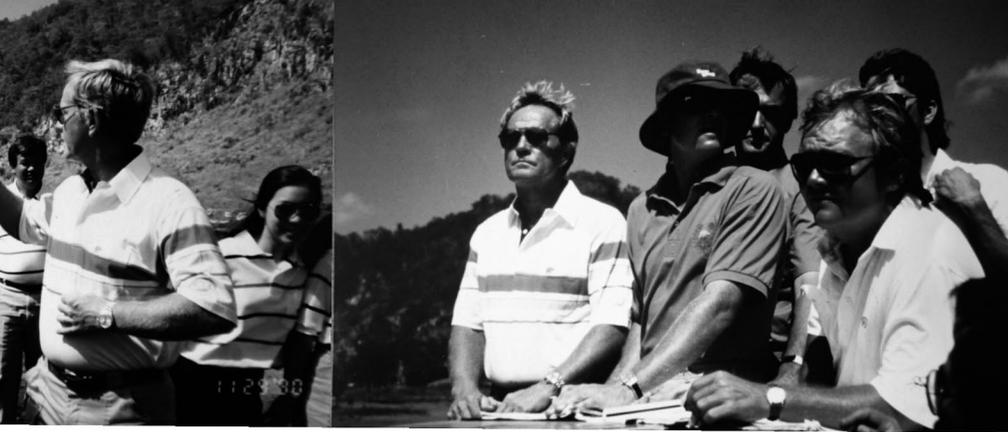
It's hard to say which one is the most satisfying, but I can definitely identify the project that was the biggest challenge for me, and which also gave me the biggest sense of accomplishment; without a doubt that is Mission Hills Shenzhen. From 2002-2003, we took on the simultaneous construction of five championship golf courses on very difficult terrain and completed the project from start to finish in

14 months. We had never been asked to do anything like that, so I definitely consider it the biggest challenge Flagstick has undertaken and accomplished. Besides that, the ten courses recently completed at Mission Hills Haikou were also a big achievement for us. Internationally speaking, I would say Dismal River Golf Course in Nebraska was one of the most interesting projects. Jack Nicklaus made countless on-site visits, and the result is a unique layout built directly on the Nebraska Sandhills, which required minimal earth-moving. It was a very interesting project to work on, and the end product is a great "natural" golf course.

If Flagstick were the construction management company for Tiger Woods' project in Dubai, which is now at a stand-still, how would you feel?

Yeah, it's very unfortunate that his project





Setting foot in the Asian golf industry in the 1990s, Martin Moore created many high-end golf courses. His footprints are scattered across Asia in the form of his golf course construction work.

there has stopped. Actually, we took part in the bidding stage of that project, but in the end they just didn't pick us. The disappointing part is that this really was a good project, but it just hasn't worked out financially. To everyone involved, including Tiger, they have our condolences. But those six holes they've already finished might be the most expensive six holes ever built. I feel bad about it, but you know, nobody can control local economic swings, and problems such as this are inevitable in our business. The creation of a world-class golf course isn't based on super-expensive construction costs; it's based on those few factors I named earlier. If Spring City's course maintenance was not top-notch, if its operations team wasn't phenomenal, by now it might just be another average golf course. The pro-active support of the owner is essential, too.

Proper pre-construction planning, especially budgeting, is extremely impor-

tant. We often revise a budget 8-10 times before we finalize it. Before we begin construction, we want the owner and all concerned parties to have accurate knowledge of how much the project will cost. We get the owner fully involved in the process, and help them understand

the ins and outs of the golf course construction process. On occasion, when unexpected additions or changes by the designer occur, the final cost may be slightly higher than the original budget, but with proper planning and management during the construction process the results will be outstanding.

Golf Courses in China by
Martin Moore

Spring City (Mountain Course)	Jack Nicklaus
Kunming Stone Forest	Schmidt-Curley
Mission Hills Shenzhen	J.M. Olazabal
Mission Hills Shenzhen	David Duval
Mission Hills Shenzhen	A. Sorenstam
Mission Hills Shenzhen	D. Leadbetter
Mission Hills Shenzhen	Greg Norman
The Dunes at Shenzhou Peninsula	Tom Weiskopf
Mission Hills Haikou, Black Stone Course	Schmidt-Curley
Chengdu Poly	Schmidt-Curley

Many Chinese owners are obsessed with idea of having a signature design course from a world-famous architect. What do you think about that?

I see nothing wrong with that. Take Jack Nicklaus for example: his firm offers a variety of levels of design, from his Signature brand to the Legacy brand, the latter being a Jack and Jack II co-design. I know this much, Jack himself invests a huge amount of time and energy into his designs, and often the contract specifies the number of times that he must visit the site during construction. With all of his Signature courses, even when he's not making site visits, he's still very involved with other design issues, from course routings to strategy to the overall project planning process. Nicklaus Design also has another level of course, where Jack himself is very minimally involved in the design, but his highly experienced in-house team of architects, many of whom trained directly under him, design the golf course. The design philosophy of the assistant architects is the same as the principal architects, and they all work under similar principles as Jack himself. Most of the great designers personally train their teams, and, as a result, their teams all share a similar design philosophy. They all learn their trade from the masters, and in this way the knowledge of how to design a world-class golf course is passed on from generation to generation. When Jack Nicklaus decides to finally retire from his firm, his design philosophies will not be lost, just as when Ben Hogan retired there were people who carried on his design beliefs. This is the idea with the Nicklaus Legacy brand; Jack hopes that by working closely with his son his design philosophy will be transmitted from generation to generation.



The Black Stone Course at Mission Hills Haikou received the honor of being rated the second best new international course for 2010.