

CLUBHOUSE OF THE YEAR: The Amazing Martis Camp **34**

Golf Inc.™

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25 Big Ideas

From golf bars to 12-hole courses, we share some of the boldest, most innovative ideas that can stimulate and empower the golf industry into the future



CLUBHOUSE of the Year

Martis Camp and Boot Ranch headline this year's seven best clubhouses by working with local materials, local artisans and interweaving the clubhouses into the landscape.

BY JACK CRITTENDEN

The number of new clubhouses has dropped in recent years due to the slowdown in new course development and the struggles that private clubs face both in the U.S. and Europe. But architects and interior designers continue to boldly move forward aesthetically, even if they have fewer canvasses to work on.

Take, for example, Martis Camp. Its developers planned a high-end private club and community more than 10 years ago. But the Truckee, Calif., project faced significant environmental hurdles. DMB, developers of Lahontan Golf Club in Truckee and DC Ranch in Scottsdale, Ariz., brought in John Sather with Swaback Partners to tackle the mammoth challenge.

Sather designed onsite, worked with local artisans and materials and took great pains to achieve LEED Gold status.

"This is one that you appreciate for the phenomenal team that came together," Sather said. "Everybody rose to the challenge and gave their all because they realized they would not get

another opportunity like this.

The breathtaking clubhouse won first place in our private category this year and best of the competition.

Overall, we are honoring seven clubhouses this year — four new private clubs, two public courses and one renovation. Our three judges reviewed all entries and graded each project. We chose to honor the clubhouses that achieved high scores, regardless of category.

Our judges are all experienced experts on clubhouse design and operations. Jim Richerson is general manager and group director of golf for Kohler Co. Frank Benzakour is general manager of Middle Bay Country Club. Kenneth Hart is director of architecture at Chambers.

All three agree that Martis Camp achieved its goal of creating a timeless and iconic building that will last for generations. Boot Ranch in Fredericksburg, Texas, Emaar Misr in Cairo, Egypt, and the other honorees will also likely make an impact on the world of golf for the long term.

PRIVATE: 1ST PLACE

Best of competition

Martis Camp

Truckee, Calif.

Owner: DMB/Highlands Management Group

Clubhouse Architect: Swaback Partners

Interior Designer: Vallone Design

Contractor: Hayhoe Construction

By the Numbers

Private Club

Size: 73,485 sq. ft.

Cost: N/A

Dining: Main, 99; Mixed Grill, 50; Private Dining, 23; Banquet Capacity, 200

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The clubhouse at Martis Camp sits perched atop a 70-foot rock promontory, overlooking views of the course's 18th fairway. It is, as our judges said, "breathtaking."

"This was really a once in a lifetime opportunity that we feel will be revered in 100 years from now," said John Sather, the architect behind the project. "We had



great reverence for the site and feel we did right on such a beautiful location.”

Architect John Sather pulled his inspiration from the great National Park lodges of the 1900s, including Ahwahnee Hotel in Yosemite. He said he realized that the architects of those classic lodges designed the hotels onsite. He chose to do the same — setting up a tent and sketching and drafting onsite over the course of two summers.

“We felt the only way to do it right was to set up operations onsite,” he said. “That’s not something we do everyday. But we are not given opportunities like this everyday.”

This allowed him to fit the building to the contours of the rock, align views, study the sun angles and understand the prevailing winds and trees. The result is a building that delivers the needs of the 21st century, yet remains warm and welcoming, evoking an arts and crafts feel.

The design team used materials from onsite, including the rockwork. And local artistic craftsmen were used for metal work, stonework and the unique ceilings in the dining rooms. The clubhouse includes a spectacular octagonal dining room with a unique hand-quilted patchwork ceiling.

Descending a grand staircase, guests arrive at the golf shop and state-of-the-art swing room before embarking on the 18-hole golf course and then retiring to enjoy the men’s or women’s lockers rooms

and lounges.

The clubhouse is about more than just golf. It offers an exercise room, a full service spa with steam room, couples massage room with fireside tables, fitness center with jetted soaking tub and a saline lap pool.

There are tiny trails and paths throughout the property that take members to interesting sitting terraces, with spectacular views of the Sierras.

“We make it easy so people can have a conversation around a fire pit,” Sather said. “This is the primary spot to meet other members of their community.”

The design team was spot-on and created tremendous aesthetic value throughout the entire building with great use of textures, colors, rich accents and incorporating local artist work for a unique look that also ties back to the local community.

—Jim Richerson