

# Designing for the future

**D**ESIGNING GOLF CLUBHOUSES is a specialised field of architecture, one that demands vast empirical expertise coupled with an ability to interface with the land.

One company that successfully synthesises architecture and landscape is Perrett Ewert Leaf (PEL) a Melbourne based design firm comprising of Ross Perrett (golf course architect, architect & landscape architect), Toby Ewert (architect) and Will Leaf (architect).

PEL have a tradition of successful Clubhouse Architecture design in Australia, Scotland, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Japan and China. They understand the nuances of clubhouse design to maximise aesthetic appeal, ensure member and player enjoyment, and deliver administrative and financial success.

A PEL design encourages the Clubhouse to be the pivot or focal point of the golf course and its successful operation. In its simplest form it is a home for the club's activities before and after the game, with many of the original clubhouses formerly homes that were extended and adapted to suit the demands of club activity.



The National Golf Club in Victoria, designed by Ross Perrett, of Perrett Ewert Leaf in association with Perrott Lyon and Mathieson Pty Ltd

The arrangement and size of these activities will differ depending on whether the facility is a private club, a daily fee golf course or a tourist resort and the major contrasts in clubhouse design are easily recognizable when one compares a traditional private club to the resort or public facility which will encourage a more relaxed atmosphere to best facilitate the core function of playing golf.

Cultural differences can also significantly impact the design of clubhouses and must be taken into account, for example, in Australia the bar plays an important role in the social life of the club, in contrast to Asian Clubhouses where considerable design emphasis is placed on private dining and after game bathing facilities.

Designing a building that will serve the club for 50 years in a rapidly changing world requires an understanding and commitment to Environmentally Sensitive Design principles, the use of robust building materials and timeless architecture free from fashion and bygone clubhouse typologies.

Interestingly many recent clubhouses have opted for 'safe' traditional designs that belong to eras past, however PEL implores golf clubs and managers alike to consider future proofing their courses with sensitive clubhouse design, aiming at the needs of tomorrow's member.

For enquiries into clubhouse design please contact Perrett Ewert Leaf on +61 (3) 8698 8011 or by email at [architects@perrettewertleaf.com.au](mailto:architects@perrettewertleaf.com.au)

## Aussie battler to the international 'Grip Master'

**A**USTRALIAN IAN MCCONCHIE makes golf grips, with the not-so-little Aussie battler taking on the biggest golf companies in the US and beating them at their own game.

What started more than 15 years ago has now begun to prosper, with the 6'2", 280lb McConchie producing a range of quality and innovative leather golf grips which have taken the golfing world by storm.

McConchie, who with his brother Bruce had spent their lives in the leather industry, felt he could make a quality leather grip that golfers would want to buy.

Hence, The Grip Master was born. Armed with a patent and proprietary manufacturing process, and with former touring pro Ben Jackson as his connection to the leading players, McConchie and The Grip Master were on their way.

Persisting after some early setbacks, McConchie finally sold his grips to Porsche Design for use on their high end equipment, with Paul Heffernan heading up the design studio at Porsche Design his first customer. Heffernan would join McConchie to help build The Grip Master brand.



The Grip Master range – inset, Ian McConchie

While this struggle to get established was going on, the product was evolving, with the hard work banging on doors and talking to touring pros starting to pay off as the list of players who wanted the Grip Master product growing.

Introducing grips made of different types of leather, Cabretta, Deer and Kangaroo, their following on Tour continuing to grow. They signed **Retief Goosen**, who had been using the grips for some time, to be their primary front man.

During 2010, the team worked on a new leather grip that was machine sewn, a grip

more conventional in its profile, which was an immediate success when released to the Australian market.

With many players switching to the sewn Kangaroo from The Grip Master, the company officially became the number one leather grip on all Tours. **Geoff Ogilvy** winning the Australasian Tour Order of Merit using The Grip Master grips capped off the company's rise to prominence.

The Grip Master 42gsm sewn Kangaroo is the strongest lightweight grip available, with its unique wrap is now the choice of many of the world's best players, while the putter line is also rated amongst the best putter grips available. The Grip Master is used on premium putters brands including selected models by **Scotty Cameron, Callaway, TP Mills, Bettenardi and GEL. Yamada.**

The Grip Master is the result of Ian McConchie's dream and determination, a golf grip that has leading edge technology, the finest materials and a reputation for superior quality. It is the number one leather grip on all tours, with requests from leading professionals coming into its Melbourne facility daily. •