

Hamilton Island Yacht Club and Golf Club open

► Bob Oatley, owner of the 30m supermaxi *Wild Oats XI*, has made an impressive statement across the world of luxury yachting with the opening of the extraordinary new yacht club and golf course at his Hamilton Island resort, which stands as the centrepiece in Australia's tropical Whitsunday region. Oatley, who has been a regular summertime resident in Porto Cervo over the past three decades, gave extensive briefs to the architects of both facilities then let them have free rein. The end result, much to his delight, is that both Hamilton Island Yacht Club and Hamilton Island Golf Club are already being acclaimed as world class in design and presentation.

Celebrated Australian architect Walter Barda was inspired by billowing sails, hull shapes, and the amazing array of spectacular sea life that abounds along the nearby Great Barrier Reef when he created the dramatic yet free-flowing lines for the yacht club. The same influence extended to the 35 luxury villas that are part of the club precinct. These villas are currently being marketed internationally.

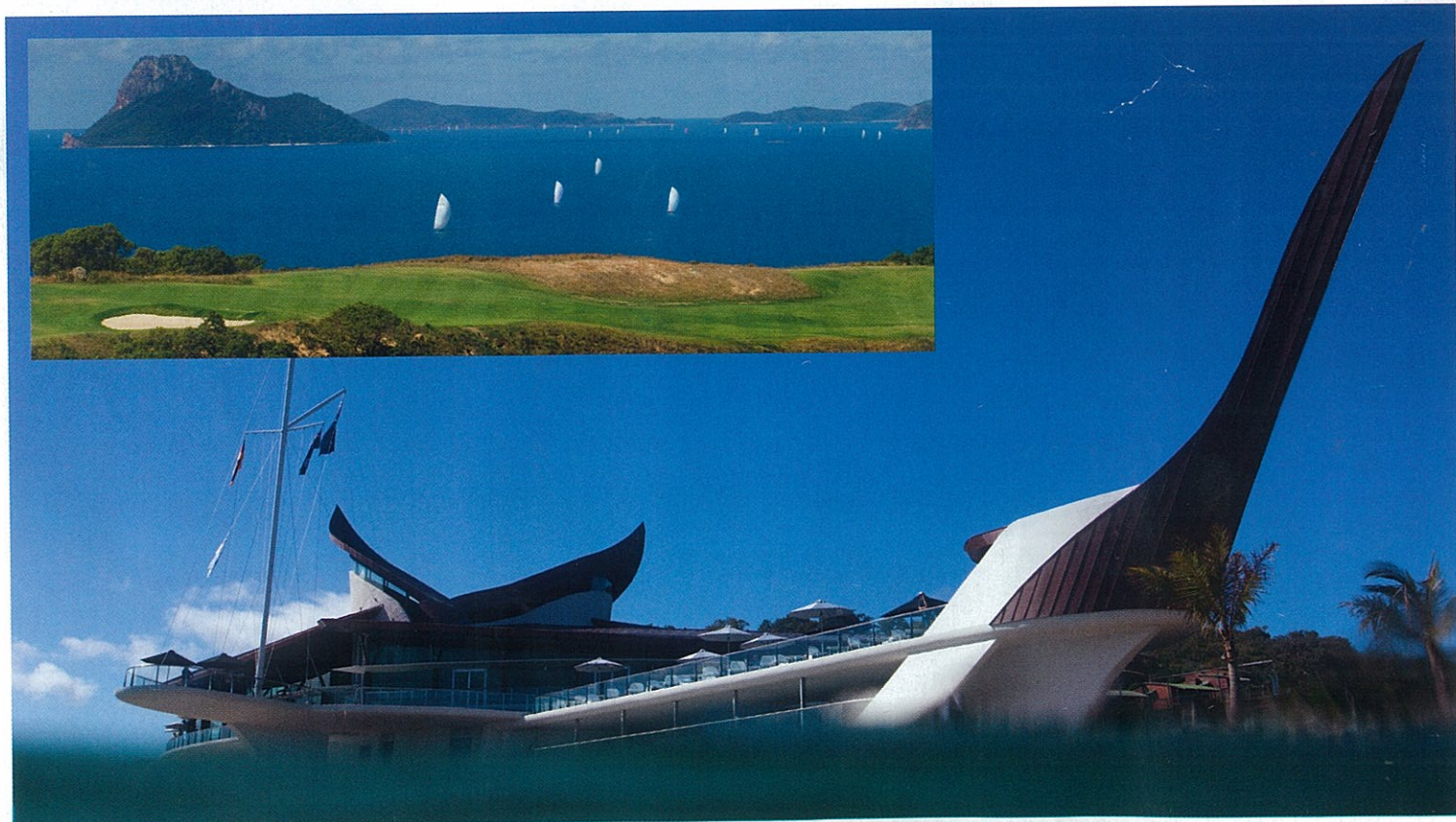
The yacht club's commodore, America's Cup and world champion yachtsman Iain Murray, was also involved in the initial concept and development of the entire project. Much of the club's focus will be on providing first-class service and facilities for visiting superyachts. There are exceptional indoor and outdoor dining areas, relaxing bars and private dining rooms, all offering expansive water views across

islands and the 250-berth marina. Private club members are treated to exclusive use of the upper level where there is a bar, dining area and reading room for their enjoyment. They also have special access to a Health Club which has a fully equipped gym, a lap pool and sauna.

The golf course reflects the creative genius of Australia's five-time British Open champion, Peter Thompson. He has applied flair similar to Barda's with the layout of the 6,130m, par 71 18-hole course that sweeps across the ridge of Dent Island, which flanks Hamilton Island. Among the many striking features is the fact that at least 14 holes are considered 'signature holes', providing panoramic views across the Whitsunday Passage and the island-studded waters to the east.

The clubhouse, designed by award winning local architect Chris Beckingham, melds superbly with the island's natural surroundings and offers impressive views over the Coral Sea to the imposing Pentecost Island and beyond. Beckingham also designed the secluded and luxurious Hamilton Island haven known as qualia, recently recognised as Australia's 'Best Resort and Best Hotel' for 2009.

Among the many visitors who were at Hamilton Island for the opening of the yacht club and golf course was American superyacht owner Jim Clarke with his Australian supermodel wife, Kristy Hinze. During his stay Clarke suggested that he could well consider bringing one of his yachts south to Audi Hamilton Island Race Week in August next year. RM



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