Fazio says great competition pushes himself, colleagues

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course that opened in March — "We had so much land and so many great opportunities, with no restrictions, that it worried me."

But he is happy with the results — the "individual character of the holes and the playability characteristics, and the features, creeks, trees, rock outcroppings, sheer cliffs, long-range and short-range views, the forms and shapes of greens and bunkers, and the vegetation."

• Caves Valley, a private Baltimore course that opened in July — "It's tremendous — a modern-day Augusta National. It has great variety in rolling terrain, with the strength, character and style of beautiful, natural golf lands of the Northeast. Everything was perfect when it opened... It looks like it's been there a long, long time."

"This is a club of the next century — what clubs will be like. It's a tremendous environment. And the quality of maintenance, landscaping, setting for golf, the attention to detail... Every phase of it is just wonderful."

• Champion Hills, a private course near Fazio's home in Hendersonville, N.C., that opened in July — "It's a Wade Hampton-type of site, only more dramatic in a lot of different ways — maybe less dramatic in some."

Tom Fazio on site.

• Porter's Neck, a private course in Wilmington, N.C., that opened Oct. 1.— "The site had sand-based soil with high contours that allowed us to dig the golf course into the ground and create some unique features. It has major clusters of oaks and enough variety of tree to give us a good feeling."

"Plus we had (Jack) Nicklaus and (Pete) Dye courses nearby at Landfall. So that added to our enthusiasm to the point that I second-guessed myself about being involved with it... People could see this property and say it should be another Pebble Beach. There will never be another Pebble Beach."

"But I am well satisfied with it now."

Fazio also opened Osprey Ridge along with a new Dye course at Disney World in Orlando, Fla., on Jan. 2, and gave that layout high marks.

"It has some of the qualities of Lake Nona and Black Diamond, some of the feelings of..."