From the Golan to the Gulf, Israelis await golf

**By Mark Leslie**

GADOT, Israel — From the Golan Heights to the Gulf of Aqaba, there has been only one golf course in Israel. Until now.

With expertise from the likes of South African pro-designer Gary Player and American designer-builder Perry Dye, Israelis and tourists to this country will have the world of golf opened up to them.

And it appears that with approval for five new golf courses from the government and support from the Jewish financial community in New York, Israeli kibbutzim looking for more profit centers may also join the picture.

Already:
- In Eilat — on the shores of the Gulf of Aqaba and the Jordan River — several courses are being planned as part of a destination resort area located partly in Israel and partly in Jordan. A popular tourist spot, Eilat is a free-trade zone with no taxes.
- Gary Player Design Co., led by Jacobs of the South African office, is designing a nine layout in the Elat complex, while another client is looking for property for an inland course east of the Gaza Strip.
- Kibbutz Gadot, located just above the Sea of Galilee on the Jordan River — barely 200 to 300 yards from the original Syrian border before Israel won the Golan Heights — has hired Dye and American golf course consultant Jim McLoughlin to work on a course as part of “a large-scale tourist project,” including two vacation

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**It's do or Dye at Black Bear**

**By Eustis E. Fla. — Eighty-foot backdrops in central Florida? Features reminiscent of PGA West making a statement of character? A 19th "Shootout Hole" (lighted, no less) to break ties, or offer up a challenge after a round of golf? Yes, and more, says majority owner and general partner Richard Stein of his Black Bear Golf Club.

"We wanted a fun course, sort of a PGA West on the East Coast," Stein said. "And we wanted a golfers' club, not a country club. Golf alone. That's what we've got."

To get his wish, Stein hired P.B. Dye — son of PGA West architect Pete — to design the 18-hole semi-private track. Then he brought in John Reger, PGA president for North Florida, as director of golf and Dan Fore of the Medalist Club as superintendent.

The result opens for play Nov. 1 and hosts a tournament less than a week later. Golfers will be tested by sandy waste bunkers, undulating greens and dramatic fairway elevation changes on a track measuring 5,100- to 7,000 yards over five sets of tees. Dye, now part-owner, moved 500,000 cubic yards of earth to create soft rolls on the 164-acre site — a chore made easy since the former citrus grove boasts sugar sand 60 feet deep.

Two bodies of water add punch to the challenge, including a 10th hole that is encircled

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**The first tee at Israel's only golf course, The Caesaria Golf Club, a private 18-hole facility that opened in 1961.**

**Golf Course News: Is there anything that distinguishes a P.B. Dye design from other courses?**

P.B. Dye: I want something that is highly playable, but not necessarily easy. I was playing with a guy on one of my courses and he said, 'You know, this course has VD. It's visually disturbing.' I like that. My father and I like to visually disturb people. Our courses may look hard, but they don't really play hard. I want to make a course as hard

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**Ports St. Lucie, Fla. — Fraternal twins, born together but very different in look and style. That's how Tom Fazio views the two courses he has designed here at the PGA Golf Club at The Reserve, which will become home to the pros and open to the public when it opens this winter.

The North and South courses represent "a vast difference in styles and looks," said Fazio. "I think if you took a consensus of golfers after they played the two, you'd get a split vote on which is best."

Comparisons will come soon enough. The North Course is slated to open in December and the South Course a couple of months later.

Their openings delayed at least two months by a series of drenching hurricanes and storms, the courses are "the fruition of a lifetime dream for the PGA to own a golf club our members can call their home," said PGA of America Chief Executive Officer Jim Awtrey. With a cap of $49 set on the greens fee and car during high season, the tracks fulfill the association's mission "to make world-class golf open and affordable to the public," he added.

A learning center is also planned and a third 18-hole