NELSON, Haworth make stateside debut in N. Calif.

HONOLULU, Hawaii — The firm of Nelson & Haworth, Ltd. has been chosen to design The Grizzly — an 18-hole, par-72 championship course near Graeagle in northern California. This commission marks the firm’s debut into the U.S. mainland market.

The Grizzly golf course is located in Gold Mountain, seven miles east of Graeagle and 45 minutes northwest of Reno, Nev. The 1,200-acre project is a recreational, 427-homesite community master-planned by Taliesin Architects, the perpetuation of Frank Lloyd Wright's architectural practice.

“We’ve been looking for just the right project to mark our transition into the mainland U.S. market,” said Robin Nelson, chairman of Nelson & Haworth.

“This has everything: A great client, spectacular site, and superb location. And we’ll be opening our first mainland office in the... clubhouse.”

Ground was broken on The Grizzly in May. Designed as a semi-private course for tourists and residents of Gold Mountain, it is being developed by Duriel, Peggy, Joe and Laurie Garner of Grizzly Golf Inc. They plan to open the first nine holes by the end of 1997, with the second nine to debut in early 1998.

In addition to the 18-hole course, The Grizzly will include a practice facility complete with a driving range with target greens, an 18-hole putting course, and a nine-hole executive track — all to be completed in early 1998.

Nelson and Neil Haworth plan to lay the course onto the site’s natural contours, leaving the mountain setting unaltered and the natural “hazards” of the environment in play. With the towering, snow-capped Sierra Nevada mountain range as the backdrop, the course will weave around giant boulders, ancient juniper trees, tall pines, and the Feather River. Other natural distractions include deep canyon gorges, mountain meadows, and canyon rims complete with rail trains.

Each hole will offer a choice of five tee locations. The course will be a par-72 and measure over 7,200 yards from the championship tees.

Mark Rathert remarks, beautifies Avondale in Idaho

B Y M A R K L E S L I E

HAYDEN, Idaho — A major renovation of Avondale Golf and Tennis Club by course architect Mark Rathert has turned the 30-year-old track into a “must-play,” according to the greens committee chairman.

“What Mark did for the beautification of the course is unbelievable,” said Keith Couttrall of the privately owned public facility. “We are very, very pleased with the results. It’s something special, and I think we’ll find that a lot of people who come to north Idaho to golf at Cuer d’Alene Resort will want to find their way to Avondale for another round.”

Anxious to reopen the course, Avondale’s greens committee decided to sod most of it after a renovation that included nine new greens, all new tees, a new creek and waterfall providing “surround-sound” to golfers at the 10th tee at Avondale CC.
'Stunning' work, says Avondale official

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With that, they were able to re-open the front nine in early July and back nine at the end of the month. "They wanted to play it this year and the weather this spring was not good for grass-growing," Rathert said, "so we sodded all the greens and a bulk of the fairways, landing areas and green surrounds."

Major among the improvements, Coultrap said, "is a 400-foot babbling brook coming out of the lake next to the 10th green which runs into a waterfall that splits behind a natural outcropping and falls into a new lake."

"It is absolutely stunning," Rathert incorporated that brook and waterfall into a new 11th that has become Avondale's signature hole. The 11th was an uphill, blind par-3. Rathert lowered the green and created the lake on the right-hand side which falls into the brook Coultrap mentioned. The green is fronted by a bunker and backed by water.

The 2-1/2-acre lake at the bottom of the waterfall serves as an irrigation reservoir. The original, pushup greens were very small — in the range of 3,000 square feet — and fell sharply off the back. The contractor, Adair Earthworks of Post Falls, took extra material from the lakes and incorporated it around the greens to enlarge them and hold shots.

Meanwhile, Rathert said, he "reshaped the bunkers into a [Alister] Mackenzie-esque style — with some noses and fingers — and used a soft approach, with no mounds. The land forms we created are smooth contours — not bumps."

Elsewhere, Rathert restocked many of the fairways which have severe left or right slopes in the landing areas that pushed balls into the roughs. "It's tight because of woods," he said. "We just tried to make it more fair, add some character and create an old-looking course. And we thinned out a few trees for better sunlight and air circulation."

"It started out as solely an irrigation project," Coultrap said, adding that the 500 shareholders of the public facility are glad they went the extra mile with an extensive remodeling.

Rathert, meanwhile, opened a nine-hole addition at Indian Creek Golf Club in Elkhorn, Neb., in June and has a nine hole at Kissing Camels Club in Colorado Springs, Colo., under construction as well as three projects in Japan and Indonesia. A privately owned daily-fee facility 15 miles west of Omaha, Indian Creek now boasts 27 holes.

Four of the new nine holes

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