

Casper, Nash enter Lewis & Clark country with new track

GREAT FALLS, Mont. — PGA Hall of Famer Billy Casper and Phoenix-based Greg Nash have been selected to design the new Foothills Golf Club here.

The project, which will anchor a planned resort component, is being developed by Northwest Real Estate Development.

"I have been familiar with Greg Nash and have followed his work for the past 15 years," said Brian Smithling of North-

west Real Estate Development. "I think he is one of the finest, if not the finest, golf course architects operating today. His designs are beautiful, challenging and a pure joy to play. He and Billy are also very hands-on and take active roles in assuring the quality and integrity of their designs throughout the construction process. That means a lot to me as a developer, and it will translate into a great

experience for our guests."

The upscale, daily-fee golf course broke ground in July and should be ready for play by spring 1999.

The golf club is located in the heart of "Lewis & Clark country," between Glacier and Yellowstone national parks. The 7,000-yard, par-72 course will reflect the "wild and woolly" character of the land. Nash plans a parallel fairway design, with wide

landing areas, generous greens — averaging 6,500 square feet — and rolling terrain.

The fairways will be planted with cool-season turf, like bluegrass and fescue. Out-of-play areas will be accented by knee-high fescue and native grasses. The greens will all be bentgrass. Adding to the course's challenge will be more than 60 sand bunkers, 30 grass bunkers, several small lakes and dramatic golf holes like the 616-yard, par-5 9th and the 414-yard, par-4 18th which plays uphill to a green fronted by four bunkers.

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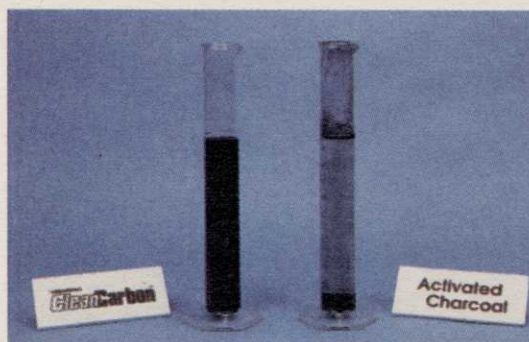
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Phillips on own

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"Stylistically," he said, "the classical golf courses have a lot of bunkers not just at the landing areas or at the greens, but mid-bunkering. A lot of players find that interesting and challenging. I think it adds a lot of not only aesthetic value but strategic value so that players of all levels have different landing areas. You create a risk-and-reward factor and strategic value for all golfers."

Phillips said his designs aim for the timeless and classical architectural concepts illustrated in the longer, softer lines with spill-offs featured at the flat site of Wisely Golf Club and the rolling terrain at Granite Bay.

"But I've had the opportunity to design completely different styles," he said. "Sometimes the landscape itself projects its own style. I think the phrase 'listen to the land' has been overused, but you need to understand the climate, your client, the user, and the budget they will have to maintain the course."

Phillips, whose work spans from Royal Westmoreland in Barbados to Penha Longa Golf Course in Lisbon, Portugal and Sugarloaf Golf Club in Maine, said he will continue to do domestic work and draw on contacts he has built in the Caribbean and Europe.

In the meantime, he will finish the RTJII jobs under construction. A course opened in Indiana this summer, another in Berlin is getting wrapped up, and four others are in the works. Other projects he has been involved in will be transferred to other RTJII designers.

"We will work them in, in a way that there will not be any down time," he said.

"Kyle has been a valuable member of our team," said RTJII President Robert Trent Jones Jr. "It is with sadness that we see him depart, but we thank him for his efforts on our behalf, and we wish him well in his future endeavors."

Phillips will work out of 5516 Riviera, Granite Bay, Calif. 95746; tel. 916-797-2141.