

Bates redesigns Fla.'s Boca Resort Course

By MARK LESLIE

BOCA RATON, Fla. — There was so little left of the William Flynn design at the Boca Resort Course here that when architect Gene Bates remodeled the 70-year-old layout, little was said about "maintaining the integrity" of a classic design. The name was the only thing that remained

the same with the Dec. 17 reopening, according to Bates.

"There is not one aspect of the old course that's still there," Bates said. "We rerouted it and built a new course. It had some age to it and its interest level was mediocre.

"It needed a physical and mechanical facelift as well as pizzazz."

Situated at Boca Resort and Club, the course was designed by Flynn in 1926. But it underwent numerous modifications over the years.

When Miami Dolphins and Florida Marlins owner Wayne Huizenga bought the property recently, he gave Boca Resort President Michael Glennly the

go-ahead "to add sizzle to the property," Bates said.

With the decision came \$5.5 million to carry it out.

Construction crews created waterfalls and natural-looking streams out of kokina rock. They transplanted 110 large live oak and ficus trees onto the course, using a 70-ton crane to move several and two 50-ton cranes to relocate one of the huge trees.

Bates transformed the relatively flat property, adding elevation changes that now reach 40 feet.

Central to the design is Mt. Boca, a 20-acre mini-mountain built in the middle of the property using soil from dug-out lakes.

"We have tees playing off the top of it [Mt. Boca], two greens that play up into it, and two holes that turn off of it," Bates said.

Despite sitting on only 95 acres, he said: "We created mounding so you can't see people on other fairways. It's like you're in your own little world."

Bates built "unique modified Mackenzie-style bunkering featuring a lot of fingers and flashes," he said. "The sand really shows up well."

The new par-71 layout plays from 4,600 to 6,200 yards over four sets of tees.

"The pros who played at the reopening were surprised at its resistance to scoring at that yardage," Bates said.

He said the new Champion Bermudagrass was used on the greens, and after an average of 60 days of grow-in, "every one of them putted extremely true and looked really mature," he said.

Crown Golf built the course — a fitting decision since patriarch Lester Crown's father-in-law owned the property in the 1940s and '50s.

Boca Resort and Club also owns Boca Country Club, located on waterfront property about a mile west from the resort.

Redstone plans new Houston facilities

HOUSTON — The Redstone Group of Houston is planning a new, \$20 million, master-planned community with two courses on a 613-acre portion of Josey Ranch in northwest Harris County.

Jacobsen/Hardy Golf Course Design has been selected to design the daily-fee courses. Described as upscale, the courses will be set into mature trees and wind around existing Cypress Creek. Construction on both courses and the first 100 building lots will begin this spring.

Routing plans for the courses are complete. Landscaping will feature perimeter horse fencing with stone columns and a high-profile entrance in the form of a to-be refurbished grain silo.

Redstone, which owns the four-star, four-diamond Houstonian Hotel, Club & Spa in Houston, expects to break ground on an additional project early next year. The company owns 460 acres in Ft. Bend County with plans to develop a private club with two 18-hole Rees Jones-designed courses.



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