Ian Woosnam to design golf course near China's Great Wall

BEIJING — Ian Woosnam announced recently that he is designing an 18-hole golf course near the Great Wall of China, about 45 minutes north of downtown Beijing.

"We have been purchasing this land near the Great Wall since 1995, and we believe we have superb terrain that will allow Ian Woosnam to design a truly unique course," said Yin Jian, chairman of the Long De Hang Co Ltd, the project's developer.

According to Woosnam, "This is going to be a phenomenal project. My team has walked the site and we are absolutely thrilled by the land and its proximity to one of the world's great landmarks."

Construction of the 7,200-yard, par-72 Yin Shi Fu Golf Resort course is currently underway and is scheduled to open in the spring of 2000.

Located 40 minutes from the Beijing International Airport, the club is situated in the foothills of the northern mountains, in close proximity to The Great Wall.

"On clear days," said Brit Stenson, senior designer on the project, "The Great Wall can be seen from the site and will be visible from the golf clubhouse dining room."

According to Stenson, the site combines existing hills, rolling farmland and thousands of trees. "Much of the upland area is in orchard use, as was the original Augusta National, with flowing crabapple, apple, and cherry trees, while the lower areas of the site are studded with towering poplars."

Woosnam added that he'll be incorporating a "least disturbance" concept when designing the golf course.

The project follows the opening of Dale Hill Golf Club in Sussex, England — a Woosnam-designed course — and two other recent projects by Ian Woosnam Design — one in La Union, the Philippines and the other in Shenzhen, China.