



BRIEFS

BARBARON BUILDING TWO BY LAGREE

INVERNESS, Fla. — Barbaron Inc. has been selected to build two Florida golf courses designed by Terry LaGree. The first, Skyview Golf Club, in Citrus Hills, is a nine-hole addition to the existing nine completed by Barbaron in 1998. When finished, the full 18-hole championship course will boast some of the highest green elevations in the state. The second layout, Glen Lakes Golf Club, in Weeki Wachee, will be a new 18-hole championship course. Both projects are expected to be completed next spring.

PALMER OPENS 11TH N.C. LAYOUT

PONTE VEDRA BEACH, Fla. — Palmer Course Design Company, based here, has opened its 11th course in North Carolina and is working on number 12. Company president and CEO Arnold Palmer played nine holes at Brier Creek Country Club when it opened in late September. Brier Creek, developed by Toll Brothers Inc., is a luxury golf course community set on 140 acres along the Noose River Basin in Raleigh; it features spectacular woodlands and wetlands. The 18-hole, 6,945-yard, par-72 layout was designed by Kory Williams, an architect with the Palmer Group. "Brier Creek was designed with the classic, traditional golf courses in mind," he said. "Use the existing terrain and a good, fair but challenging round of golf will follow."

MATTHEWS & NELHIEBEL HIT CANADA

EAST LANSING, Mich. — Golf course architects Matthews & Nelhiebel are headed across the border to expand the semi-private Sutton Creek Golf and Country Club, in Essex, Ontario. Sutton Creek will be the first Canadian project for the firm, which has designed more than 25 courses in Michigan. "We're working on an 18-hole master plan for Sutton Creek that emphasizes strategy and visual impact," said Howard Nauboris, who is heading up the design work under the direction of Bruce Matthews, ASGCA. "The proposed bunkers will be larger and more numerous, adding challenge to the layout. We will be adding additional tee surfaces for flexibility of length and challenge for all skill levels."

Ex-pro Brad Bell opens third course at Coyote Moon

By DOUG SAUNDERS

TRUCKEE, Calif. — Coyote Moon Golf Course, which recently opened in this town in the High Sierras, is the third golf course designed by Brad Bell of Sacramento, Calif. The 18-hole layout is rare in this state as it is a stand-alone project, built strictly for golf, not to sell building lots.

Although the course is located on a ridge 200 feet above Route 80, the main east-west interstate, it feels like it's miles away from anywhere. The layout winds through piney forests and sweeps over valleys, ravines and lakes. The only sounds heard come from birds, the streams, and the wind through the woods.

Golfers are teased to play shots into greens protected by huge rock outcroppings, hit to pins 80 feet below over creeks, and nail drives over tantalizingly long lakes. Throughout the course the challenge of shaping shots to negotiate nature's purest challenges adds to the sheer pleasure of playing on such a unique piece of property.

SIX YEARS IN THE MAKING

It took more than six years and a firm commitment for Bell and his partner Chris



The par-3 13th hole at Coyote Moon in Truckee, Calif.

Steel to complete Coyote Moon.

Steele, whose true profession is high-rise construction, got into the golf course construction business in 1994. Commercial construction had slowed, and Steele — who is not a golfer — had learned of a

golf course shortage in the Sacramento area. He knew he could secure land and financing, but he also needed to secure people who understood golf to make his foray into the field successful.

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An aerial view of Thistle Golf Club on the Myrtle Beach's Grand Strand

Thistle Golf Club adds new nine and provides service with a twist

By JAY FINEGAN

SUNSET BEACH, N.C. — Already recognized along the Myrtle Beach Grand Strand for outstanding course design, conditioning and service, Thistle Golf Club has added another nine holes to the layout, bringing the total to 27. The original 18 went operational in 1999, becoming the 101st golf course to open in the Myrtle Beach area.

The new nine — the South Course — which opened in late summer, nicely compliments the West and North courses. All three were designed by Tim Cate and feature a Scottish links-type feel. "The whole complex is just a

really good, very solid golf course," said Dan Oschmann, head professional and director of golf at the facility.

For the first two nine-hole layouts, Cate was instructed to create a design that is "ferocious, yet fair." Golfers who've had the chance to play the first 18 agree that the architect met the objectives, with wide, rolling fairways, five sets of tees, and large green complexes that permit bump-and-run approaches on most holes.

NEW NINE MORE CHALLENGING

The new South Course possesses a similar look and feel, but plays a bit longer, at 3,351 yards from the Thistle

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Red Sky Ranch to pair Fazio and Norman designs

By JAY FINEGAN

WOLCOTT, Colo. — Vail Resorts Development Company (VRDC) has broken ground on the first of two championship courses here in Wolcott, near Interstate 70 west of Vail and just outside White River National Forest.

The 780-acre project, known as Red Sky Ranch, will unfold over rolling Rocky Mountain terrain flush with sagebrush, juniper, aspen and dramatic rock outcroppings. Plans call for some 500 acres to be left in their natural state. The views of the Gore Range to the east and Castle Peak to the west promise to give the complex a stunning visual dimension.

The first of the two 18-hole tracks, a Tom Fazio design, will feature an 800-foot elevation change over the par-72 track. This is a monster layout, measuring 7,305 yards from the back pegs. The front and back nines will return to the Resort Clubhouse, a 20,000-square-foot ranch-style structure that will also house a golf academy. A 40-acre practice facility will sit nearby.

The second course, designed by Greg Norman, is awaiting approval by Eagle County zoning authorities. Christine Richards, a VRDC spokeswoman, said county officials were expected to rule on the project in early October. "We hope to have all of our approvals done this fall," she said.

The Norman layout will be another 18-hole championship course. It will feature a private Members' Clubhouse, another western-style building. The New York firm of Robert Lamb Hart is designing both clubhouses.

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