The Links at Outlook brings Scottish flavor to Maine

By JOEL JOYNER

SOUTH BERWICK, Maine — Ever since King James IV of Scotland lost 14 shillings to the Earl of Bothwell in a gambling wager back in 1502, the sport of golf has continued to grow — and grow, and grow. It may be a gamble for a new course to open, what with upscale public golf courses proliferating and competing for golfers' attention. But The Links at Outlook, owned and operated by the Flynn family, just might have what it takes by bringing a Scottish touch to Maine.

A once foreign financing was considered — and even zoned — for an industrial park in the early 1980s, but the creation of a driving range in 1988-89 set in motion a chain of events. "It just took off from the driving range," said Tim Flynn III, general manager. "We originally intended to place all 18 holes on the east side of Route 4, which would have made for some narrow fairways, but when we bought an additional 30 acres on the other side of the road it really opened up the layout possibilities."

Designed with 11 holes of rolling mounds, heather grass, and strategically placed sand bunkers, the east side makes for a challenging but manageable game for the average golfer. The classic style of firm and fast greens and fairways requires cautious drives and fairway play in order to safely reach the greens.

The outlook from the 17th fairway affords views of the 17th green and the links layout of the front nine.

The architect for the course, Brian Silva, said that "the greens can be attacked only from certain areas of the fairways, and the low-handicapper won't score unless he recognizes and finds Continued on page 21

Weiskopf's Ocean Club nears opening

PARADISE ISLAND, Bahamas — In December, the famed Paradise Island resort, the Ocean Club, will unveil a scenic 18-hole golf course as part of Sun International's $100-million renovation and expansion of the property. Designed by Tom Weiskopf, the Ocean Club Golf Course has been completed and grassed and will be ready for play by year-end.

Set on the eastern end of the island, Weiskopf's par-72 layout takes advantage of the magnificent Bahamian landscape and island crosswinds, challenging golfers' accuracy. Overlooking the Atlantic Ocean and Nassau Harbour.

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Meadowbrook National to open this year

LAKELAND, Fla. — Meadowbrook Golf Group, Inc., has announced that its new 27-hole resort course in Las Vegas will be called Meadowbrook National Golf Club.

The new course, scheduled to open before the end of the year, will be marketed nationally and will become a flagship property for Meadowbrook Golf, which owns or manages more than 100 courses across the country.

Meadowbrook National is a joint venture property for Meadowbrook Golf and the Ocean Club Golf Course has been completed and grassed and will be ready for play by year-end.

Construction of all 27 holes is nearly completed, and the turfgrass has matured to the point where many holes are virtually playable. A company spokesman said the course is expected to be open for play before Christmas, and that reservations are already being accepted for 2001 golf events.

Meadowbrook National is a joint project of Meadowbrook Golf and Apollo Real Estate Investment Fund III. Apollo Real estate is a New York investment fund that also holds a major equity position in Meadowbrook Golf Group, which will operate the club for the partnership.

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After forty years, Jim Fazio still designing courses worldwide

SARDINIA, Italy — From a career spanning 40 years, Jim Fazio's designs can be found throughout the United States and in 10 foreign countries. Growing up in the Philadelphia area he learned the business from the ground up working with his uncle, George Fazio, and brother, Tom.

Golf Course News correspondent Trevor Jackson recently met with Jim to discuss his design philosophy, experiences and ongoing international projects, which include Le Mezzanin Golf Country Club in Sardinia, Italy, and the Bahama Club in Freeport, Bahamas.

New Providence in the Bahamas was his first overseas work. What was that like?

Fazio: We started that course at Coral Harbour in 1962 for the developer Lindsay Hopkins, the Miami Coca-Cola bottler. I lived at the hotel for two years to build the course. I didn't have any maps or surveys to work from and ran off the property a bit, and we lost a couple of building lots this way. There was a little ridge in there and no topsoil. We crushed the coral rock and dug shallow lakes, testing every day not to take too much out of them to go back to salt water.

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CUBA PLANS FOR 26 GOLF COURSES

HAVANA, Cuba — The Cuban government may be Communist, but it's not about to let the Caribbean golf boom pass it by. Rumbos, the state-owned company that manages the Varadero Golf Club, will start building a course in Cayo Coco early next year. It has plans for three more courses, once foreign financing is secured. In addition, Cyan Caribe, a hotel company, breaks ground on a new course in Jibacoa this September. Several other courses are in the planning stage.

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The Links at Outlook

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Jim Thompson, president of Vail Resorts Development Co., cites golf as critical to high-end real estate sales and attracting major hotels for the ski operations. Vail Resorts owns and operates Vail, Beaver Creek, Keystone, Breckenridge and hospitality assets at Jackson Hole.

Interestingly, the company is building expensive private golf clubs with Tom Fazio and Greg Norman layouts, now under construction at Red Sky, nine miles from Vail. Four hundred memberships will be sold with initiation fees of $100,000, which will pay the $40-million cost. The opportunity to join such a club will add $100,000 to the price of a building lot. As Thompson puts it, "The golf drives the real estate sales and the summer bed base."

Hotels also demand golf. Ritz Carlton is building a 240-room hotel here, and it required golf availability for its guests as a condition. The resort gets more needed beds for skiers.

The Red Sky development is based on the Beaver Creek model, where half the tee times go to members and the other golfers at Vail. Two club houses will be built, one luxury and for members and the other smaller for guests. The two groups will rotate daily with members playing one course one day and the other the next. The members have their private club and guests have two fine courses to play.

THE LINKS AT OUTLOOK

The Vail model might be stigmatized with such expensive real estate. A development underway at Bachelor Gulch has already sold 56 of its 600 units for homes that will cost over $5 million each. A common cost of building in the area is $1,000 a square foot. The numbers differ, but the three companies agree that golf is a key factor in developing four-season resort operations, which are an absolute must to keep ski resorts viable. And the multiple resort companies are not alone. Smaller mountains such as Ragged in New Hampshire now have golf courses, and others are building or considering golf.

In fact, golf may just be the key ingredient in the survival of the ski industry. For some exciting golf, keep your eye on the mountains.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN HIGH END

Out west, golf is taking on even greater magnitude here in the Rockies.

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Jim Fazio Q&A

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I had a young Bahamian on the tractor who had been trained at Huntington Hartford's course (the Arawak Golf Club on Paradise Island). He was a great shaper but one day I loaned him my car and he got drunk and smashed my car so bad that it wouldn't run again. So he gave me a bicycle to make up for it. That taught me not to lend my car again - I rode that bike for two years.

Fazio: In addition to the Bahamas, I've worked in Spain, Italy, Puerto Rico, Japan, Mexico, and now, Turkey. Plus all my work in the United States. My son, Tommy, is working in the United States. He was a working in the United States. His father, Tommy, is working in the United States. He was a working in the United States. His father, Tommy, is working in the United States. He was a

GCN: Which countries have you worked in?

Fazio: In addition to the Bahamas, I've worked in Spain, Italy, Puerto Rico, Japan, Mexico, and now, Turkey. Plus all my work in the United States. My son, Tommy, is working with me on Grand Bahama now, where we're renovating the Ruby and Emerald Course at the old Princess Resort (now Bahamas). So, since 1994 to 2000, I'm back in the Bahamas again.

GCN: Turning to Italy where you have been so active, are these projects just for tourism and resorts?

Fazio: Well, in Italy in 1986/87 there were about 120 golf courses. Since then another 50 have gone in. The majority are located in the northern part of the country near the commercial centers and bigger cities. Italian golf may be the exception in the survival of the ski industry. For some exciting golf, keep your eye on the mountains.