

CrossCreek adds to Southern California's public golf supply

By JAY FINEGAN

TEMECULA, Calif. — The semi-private CrossCreek Golf Club, set amid rolling hills here in the "wine country" of Southern California, will open in May, providing more daily-fee golf for an area badly in need of it. According to club officials, it will combine the access of a public course with the refinements of a private golf club.

The 6,833-yard layout, designed by Arthur Hills/Steve Forrest and Associates, occupies 180 acres of picturesque countryside. "CrossCreek is an absolutely beautiful site with every component needed for a great golf course," said Hills, who has more than 150 courses to his credit. "There is plenty of variety and challenge for golfers of every ability, and the aesthetics will provide enjoyment for all. Changes in topography and beautiful views will create great drama and an overall memorable golfing experience."

This is the first golf course for developer Imprimus, based in Palm Desert, Calif. "It's a pretty small outfit, just a couple of guys," said senior design associate Chris Wilczynski, the on-site project manager for the Hills team. "We're doing a second course for them in Gypsum, Colorado." Ranger Golf handled the construction out of its western division office, in Chandler, Ariz.

HILLS ON ALL SIDES

Temecula is a small but growing town northeast of San Diego and due east of San Juan Capistrano, not far from the Camp Pendleton Marine base. "Temecula is becoming a big place for people to move to from San Diego and Los Angeles," Wilczynski said. "There are hills and mountains and kind of a rural flavor."

According to Wilczynski, CrossCreek is a high-end course that will compete well in the area. "The whole property sits down in this big basin they call Walker Basin," he said. "There are high hills on all sides, so it's completely enclosed. But you do get some decent views of tall mountains to the west."

The first five holes play along a corridor of stately oaks and sycamores, with a creek that criss-crosses the fairways at various angles, demanding well-place drives. Holes six through nine come out into the open, across a rolling meadow, and the back nine plays up into the hills and returns through the woody section. Each hole features at least four tee boxes.

DANGER LURKS ON 13

"There are big hills on the back nine, with a lot of drama



The fifth hole at Cross Creek GC in the wine country northeast of San Diego

there," Wilczynski said. "On the 13th, a cape hole, the fairway sits on this high shelf and a big ravine runs the length of it, at an angle. It sets up a risk/reward situation for your tee shot. You want to carry as much of the ravine as possible. But the thing is 50 feet deep, so if you knock it in there, you'll be dropping or hitting another ball."

The course tests players early. The second hole, for example, a 420-yard par-4, plays straight over the creek to an elevated green that drops off sharply on the left. "The green is completely convex, so anything on the sides will roll off," said Wilczynski. "It's quite tricky."

STAFF WEARING KNICKERS

Aiming to capture the ambience of golf's "golden age," all CrossCreek employees will sport traditional uniforms, including knickers, white shirts and bow ties. On-course "player assistants" will advise golfers through their round.

Green fees are expected to be in the \$80 to \$100 range, according to Jim Decker of the Hills design group, but membership entitles players to unlimited play as well as exclusive rights and privileges.

Golf and club facilities are being managed by Links Management, based in Farmington, Utah.

Nicklaus and Bonita Bay planning new Florida course

BONITA SPRINGS, Fla. — Jack Nicklaus has teamed up with the Bonita Bay Group to build the Retreat, a Nicklaus signature golf course set to be constructed under Audubon Cooperative Signature Sanctuary guidelines.

A private club, the Retreat will be situated on a secluded, 275-acre site here in southwest Florida. It's being created as a free-standing facility, with no residential development and membership limited to 275. The site offers outstanding natural assets, including mature oak, pine and cypress trees, and a natural flow way through the center of the property.

Ground will be broken once 100 membership reservations have been received. It is anticipated that the course and its support services will open in fall 2002, with the clubhouse to open in fall 2003.

PRECISION OVER RAW POWER

Nicklaus said the 18-hole course will reward accuracy, not brute strength.

"There are several constants to my approach," he said. "I design layouts that challenge golfers to play intelligently rather than ones that test their strength—golf is a game of precision more than power. And I avoid disrupting the natural setting as much as possible. The golf holes should fit the terrain."

The clubhouse design is by Richard Diedrich of Diedrich NBA in Atlanta, a leading firm in the field. Diedrich NBA also designed The Club at Mediterra's clubhouse and the Bonita Bay Club Estate clubhouse. "We are designing the clubhouse to complement the site's outstanding natural assets. It will have the character of an estate-house retreat with a Florida ranch theme," said Diedrich.

Graves & Pascuzzo opens five courses in Calif., heads overseas

EL DORADO HILLS, Calif. — The golf course design firm of Graves & Pascuzzo Ltd. has been on a hot streak recently. It opened five courses in California, moved on the East Coast, ventured into Japan and made its first design sojourn into Europe with a project in Italy.

"It's been hectic," said managing partner Damian Pascuzzo. "We strive on every project to give the attention to detail that is needed in designing a golf course that is memorable, challenging, and fun to play. That attention to detail takes time. Our philosophy is to take on fewer projects and do them well."

One example is Maderas Golf Club, which sits in the picturesque foothills of San Diego. It opened last fall to rave reviews from golfers and golf writers alike.

"The course was designed to reflect the parkland style," said Pascuzzo. Tees were strategically placed on cliffs and rock outcroppings, creating dramatic drives to fairways framed by stands of oaks and sycamores. With elevation changes running about 200 feet, the course offers superb vistas, challenging options and plenty of thrilling shots. According to *The Southern California Golfer's Guide*, "Maderas promises to deliver golf



The Graves & Pascuzzo-renovated La Quinta Country Club in California

memories of a lifetime."

SCOTTISH FLAVOR

The Bridges, another Graves & Pascuzzo design, opened late last year and created quite a buzz among golf enthusiasts. Inspired by a trip to Scotland's Royal Dornoch, Pascuzzo was committed to bringing a unique style of golf to Northern California.

Located 30 miles east of San Francisco in the foothills of San Ramon, The Bridges is part of a master-planned community developed by Shapell Industries. This par-73 layout sweeps through an expansive valley and can play to over 7,200 yards.

While The Bridges does not claim to be a true links course, it can definitely feel

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