

# Jones International's Squaw Creek a winner on all fronts

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finished second to Fazio Golf Course Designers, Inc. in combined votes for Best Design Associate. And, said Jones: "People haven't seen half our work. [Lead designer] Kyle Phillips has done a lot of work in Europe, and Gary Linn has done a lot of work in Asia."

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For Jones, who said he does "a lot of my work in the mountains," Squaw Creek follows renowned designs of Keystone Ranch and

Sheraton Steamboat Springs in Colorado, Elkhorn and Sun Valley in Idaho, and Sugarloaf in Maine.

Even before it opened July 4, 1992, Squaw Creek received notoriety not only for its design but the fact that, after an eight-year-long approval process, it opened as "chemical-free."

"Squaw Creek is a '90s golf course in that it is very much designed from an environmental point of view, both protecting and restoring the environment," Jones said. "It is also avant-garde and

very different from a design standpoint. The course has two characters: the pine forest edges at the bottom of the mountain; then a transition into the meadows where you play more target golf. The contrast from a player's point of view is delightful."

Eight years of tedious negotiations with government authorities and the public led to 100 routing plans, and, finally, an improved property, Jones said.

Part of the property had served as a parking lot for the 1960

Olympics, "built by none other than the Army Corps of Engineers," Jones said.

Also, Phillips, the project's lead designer, said environmentalists "wanted to protect this 'pristine mountain meadow.' Well, we found that what was feeding this 'pristine' field was leachate from old septic tanks from neighbors. You couldn't give your property away there when this all started in the early 1980s. Values have probably quadrupled."

Meanwhile, Phillips said: "We

have to irrigate a lot of the 'wetlands' to keep them wetlands."

"The process itself," Jones said, "became a very, very important addition to the environmental pool of golf courses, which started at [Jones-designed] Spanish Bay in California and courses along the Carolina coast. This is the first time it had been done in a mountain setting."

Jones praised superintendent Carl Ryggs, who left environmentally sensitive Spanish Bay to join Squaw Creek halfway through construction.

"Carl declined to use any herbicides on the grasses, which was extraordinary. And yet he maintains the course very firm but hard and true," said Jones. "This can only be done in mountains. You can't abandon herbicides and pesticides where you don't have a very cold-snap season that controls the insects naturally."

## ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN

Saying he agrees with much of the "ecotopian philosophy of California," which calls for cleaner air, fresher water and better golf courses, Jones added: "I have adjusted our design philosophy to accommodate that point of view. I think Squaw Creek is a mountain example of that genre, which we will see more of in the '90s. It's an environmentally correct golf course."

## THE JONES INTERNATIONAL TEAM

Jones praised his design team, saying: "I think we have a marvelous atmosphere within our office... We have open discussions on what makes a course better. We do cross-referencing, cross-designing, alternative plans, alternative thinking in the field. There is no ego involved. We have very skilled individuals who want to design better golf courses and to make better architects of each other. They're always willing to learn and listen, and to teach younger people. Our philosophy is very collegiate."

## John Cook, Hurdzan on Palm Desert project

PALM DESERT, Calif. — Michael Hurdzan and PGA touring pro John Cook are designing two championship 18-hole courses for the city of Palm Desert.

The 540-acre property will include construction of an additional 576 villas for Marriott's vacation ownership program, 40 acres for a combination of single family houses and condominiums on the golf courses, two hotel sites, a conference center and a sports park. In addition a 10 acre office/medical site is also proposed. The plan also includes the 26-1/2 acre Desert Springs Marketplace, the first phase of which is under construction.

Course construction is expected to begin this spring.



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