

PALMER ACQUIRES FIRST COURSE IN NORTHEAST

BUFFALO, N.Y. — Arnold Palmer Golf Management Company has purchased Brierwood Country Club in Buffalo, N.Y. Brierwood is the first of several planned acquisitions in the Northeast. Brierwood is considered one of the most challenging courses in western New York and the focal point of a \$150 million, master-planned community being developed by the E. F. Burke Company. It includes an 18-hole course and 84,000-square-foot clubhouse.

Kentucky strip mine reclaimed for golf course

JENKINS, Ky. — When a coal company turned a local country club into a strip mine, most area residents thought that was the end of golf at the site, despite promises that a golf course would eventually be built.

Two years later, a new \$1.5 million nine-hole public golf course has indeed emerged from the mining rubble. Raven Rock Golf Course, one of the few public-access courses in Eastern Kentucky, opened in late spring thanks to the efforts of the Pike-Letcher Land Co.

Parts of the strip mine were incorporated into the design. Golf carts travel up the side of

an old hollow fill, a valley where bulldozers once dumped soil disturbed by mining. Old silt ponds which once collected muddy water are now water hazards.

Raven Rock is apparently only the second golf course built on a former strip mine. As a general rule, coal companies reclaim sites by sowing grass for pasture land. This process is far less expensive than building a golf course at the site.

In Eastern Kentucky, once-mined areas have also been converted into airports and residential housing developments.

Eisenhower

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grounds themselves were designed originally by Thomas Jefferson, and redesigned by the Olmstead brothers. They maintain this as a curator does a museum. It's a living museum, not just a building. It's the only head of state's home in the world that the people go through every day.

"It has a jogging track, a tennis court, a children's garden, a swimming pool, bowling alleys, all sorts of different sports that Americans enjoy. So why shouldn't it have a putting green if presidents play golf?"

The fact some presidents don't golf, and others who do haven't remained in office terribly long, explains the troubled past of the Eisenhower green. Of course, Ike was an avid golfer, had it built and kept it. "It remained in place during Kennedy's time and Kennedy used it a bit," Jones said. "[Lyndon Baines] Johnson didn't use it. When [Richard] Nixon came into office, for some reason around 1972 the green was bulldozed. The story goes that David and Julie Eisenhower, during a visit, went out to putt on the green and it was gone. It turned out that while Nixon was away for a weekend H.R. Haldemann had it removed.

"Ford wanted to restore it, but he had too short a time [in office]. My father [Robert Trent Jones Sr.], brother [Rees] and I went by there one afternoon to look at it and help him in 1975. But it didn't come to pass. Carter was a tennis player; he didn't care. Reagan was noncommittal; he dabbled in golf for political reasons. Bush wanted to restore it, but instead put in a plastic miniature golf putting surface, which is there but not in the same location."

Along came Clinton and, Jones said, therein lies "the wonderful news that the White House is honoring the game of golf during its centennial year by restoring the Eisenhower putting green. The game is flourishing and our president acknowledges it."

Jones and crew restored the green as faithfully as possible, using old pictures. "With one exception," Jones said, explaining that Clinton opted not to include the small bunker that once sat next to the green.

"Our assistance from the USGA and Glenn Smickley has been spectacular," said White House Chief Usher Gary Walters, under whose charge the National Park Service cares for the grounds. "Glenn is giving us a real lesson, donating his time and expertise in advising and counseling us how to maintain, manicure and grow this green."

"It's like taking care of a baby in diapers," said Groundkeeper Manager Dale Haney. Haney's immediate superior, Executive Grounds Superintendent Irv Williams, might be able to relate to Haney's feelings. Williams worked at the White House when Ike had the green built. History, indeed, has repeated itself.

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