

'Stunning' work, says Avondale official

Continued from page 41

With that, they were able to re-open the front nine in early July and back nine at the end of the month.

"They wanted to play it this year and the weather this spring was not good for grass-growing," Rathert said, "so we sodded all the greens and a bulk of the fairways, landing areas and green surrounds."

Major among the improvements, Coultrap said, is "a 400-foot babbling brook coming out of the lake next to the 10th green which runs into a waterfall that splits behind a natural outcropping and falls into a new lake.

"It is absolutely stunning."

Rathert incorporated that brook and waterfall into a new 11th that has become Avondale's signature hole. The 11th was an uphill, blind par-3. Rathert lowered the green and created the lake on the right-hand side which falls into the brook Coultrap mentioned. The green is fronted by a bunker and backed by water.

The 2-1/2-acre lake at the bottom of the waterfall serves as an irrigation reservoir.

The original, pushup greens were very small — in the range of 3,000 square feet — and fell sharply off the back. The contractor, Adair Earthworks of Post Falls, took extra material from the lakes and incorporated it around the greens to enlarge them and hold shots.

Meanwhile, Rathert said, he "reshaped the bunkers into a [Alister] Mackenzie-esque style — with some noses and fingers — and used a soft approach, with no mounds. The land forms we created are smooth contours — not bumps."

Elsewhere, Rathert recontoured many of the fairways which had severe left or right slopes in the landing areas that pushed balls into the roughs.

"It's tight because of woods," he said. "We just tried to make it more fair, add some character and create an old-looking course. And we thinned out a few trees for better sunlight and air circulation."

"It started out as solely an irrigation project," Coultrap said, adding that the 500 shareholders of the public facility are glad they went the extra mile with an extensive remodeling.

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Rathert, meanwhile, opened a nine-hole addition at Indian Creek Golf Club in Elkhorn, Neb., in June and has a new nine at Kissing Camels Club in Colorado Springs, Colo., under construction as well as three projects in Japan and Indonesia.

A privately owned daily-fee facility 15 miles west of Omaha, Indian Creek now boasts 27 holes.

Four of the new nine holes

boast lakes and water features, including a par-4 dogleg right with a second shot over a lake, followed by a par-3 that plays around the lake and across a stream.

Builders moved about 600,000 cubic yards of earth, digging lakes, flattening out landing areas and creating a huge practice facility, Rathert said. The practice area includes a chipping and sand trap green, a big putting green and a driving range that ac-

commodates 40 golfers.

Three existing holes also were remodeled, Rathert said, as a prelude to a future renovation of the entire original 18 holes.

The private, Press Maxwell-designed Kissing Camels Club also will be 27 holes when Rathert finishes adding four holes to part of the back nine and five to another part of the back nine to turn them into two new nines.

"We analyzed the original drawings and are creating similar character to the Maxwell rolls

on the greens," Rathert said. "The difference is, the original course has become very 'treed' over the last 30 years. Ponderosa pines have grown a lot."

The scenic new nine plays along a bluff and over some natural yucca and other native vegetation. Sitting on top of a mesa above Colorado Springs, the property offers panoramic views of Pikes Peak and the red rock of the Garden of the Gods.

The track, owned by Hill Development Corp. of Dallas, is being shaped and will be seeded this fall. A 1998 opening is expected.

IT'S A COMPLETE TRIUMVIRATE

ACME, Mich. — The new 18-hole signature golf course being designed for Grand Traverse Resort Village by Gary Player will take part of his nickname with regional identification. It will be called Northern Knight. Upon completion, Grand Traverse Resort Village will be the only resort in the world to boast signature courses designed by Jack Nicklaus, Player and Lee Trevino. Plans call for ground to be broken for Northern Knight this fall, with opening projected to be as early as 1998.

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