

Former PGA pres' design set for November unveiling in La.

RICHARDSON, La. — Washington Parish golfers have a new 18-hole championship course in their backyards.

The Gemstone Plantation Country Club opened for limited play late in September. The 7,000-plus-yard course and residential community is four miles west of Franklinton on Louisiana Highway 10 near Richardson. The layout was designed with the help of former PGA presi-

dent James Ray Carpenter. The course is scheduled to open for full public play by November.

The course, built around hills and hundreds of live oak trees, will be surrounded by one of the largest subdivision communities in the parish. Plans call for 156 home sites along the course and lakes. One of the course's unique holes is a 180-yard par-3 with an 1,100-square-foot island green. A wooden bridge links the green to the shore.

Georgia golf facility prepares to open after seven-year struggle

NORTH AUGUSTA, Ga. — They first started moving dirt at the site in the early 1990s, but the new River Club of North Augusta along the Savannah River in the downtown district is set to open an 18-hole, daily-fee layout later this fall.

The 6,850-yard, par-71 course,

formerly known as the North Augusta Golf Course, was reworked and redesigned by golf course architect Jim Fazio. The course is owned by North Augusta Golf Venture, a group that includes Bill Collins of Atlanta, and Bob Whitely and former New York Giants running back Tucker Frederickson, both of North Palm Beach, Fla.

The course was grassed during the summer and greens were seeded in September. "Mother Nature is control right now as far as the rain and the temperature," River Club course superintendent Shane Schutte told *The Augusta Chronicle*. "An early winter could hurt us."

Schutte said the course layout, which offers some views of the downtown Augusta skyline, "is fantastic ... For the low handicapper, a lot of water comes into play."

Alabama links reopens after 3-year layoff

PRICHARD, Ala. — After closing three years ago and falling into disrepair, the 18-hole High Point Golf Course will reopen with at least nine holes ready for play sometime this month.

City officials have spent \$44,000 to get the 18-hole layout ready for play again after years of neglect. The front nine, which will be managed by the city, is scheduled to open for play this month.

Opened in 1974, the course has seen its share of troubles. Before its grand opening, heavy rains and flooding ruined so much grass that the course had to be re-sodded. The course was also almost destroyed again in 1976 by more heavy rains.

"The course is now designed to flow with nature," Mayor Jesse Norwood said. "We're more at harmony with the natural flow of the land."

A new putting green is under construction at the course and the old driving range has been reconfigured. Auburn University officials have also expressed interest in testing and studying different grasses at the course.

