

## Unique partnership, project taking shape at Stonewall Jackson Lake State Park

By ANDREW OVERBECK

WESTON, W. Va. — Construction is well underway here at Stonewall Jackson Lake State Park and Resort, a unique venture between the Army Corps of Engineers (COE), the state of West Virginia and local real estate developer McCabe Henley Durban LP. The project sits on 2,000 acres along the 26-mile-long Stonewall Jackson Lake and consists of a 34-site campground and 384-slip marina. An 18-hole golf course designed by Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla.-based Palmer Course Design, a 196-unit lodge, conference facility, spa and cabins are currently under construction.

"When the COE finished the dam in 1990 they bought 20,000 acres around the lake and created a hunting and wildlife area," said Rudy Henley, senior managing partner of McCabe Henley Durban. "The state then worked a deal to build a state park on 2,000 acres of the property. To finance it, the state decided to put together this private-public deal because they couldn't issue general obligation bonds."

Henley's group put a development team

together and was awarded the contract in 1997. "The state put up \$10 million and we organized the construction and raised another \$42 million through a private placement of tax exempt bonds," he said. "The bonds will be repaid as a function of the project's operating revenues. The state has no obligation."

Contract negotiations and financial arrangements were time consuming.

"This was an unusual deal," Henley said. "The U.S. Government owns the land, they lease it to the state, who in turn lets us use it. We have a qualified management agreement that enabled us to issue tax exempt bonds as developer and operator on behalf of the state."

The deal was further complicated by the COE's environmental assessment which suggested that the developers needed to have a larger buffer zone between the golf course and the lake. "They proposed a buffer zone that was larger than the industry standard, which caused headaches because the land could not support an 18-hole golf course," said

Henley. "It took a year to convince them that the standard buffer zone was adequate."

However, now that construction has begun Henley is bullish on the future of the project. "This project is enhanced because so many facilities are already in place that can contribute to the revenue stream," he said. "The lake, roads, sewer and water lines and the marina and the campground are already built and in use."

"The golf course, from a net income perspective, will be marginally profitable," he continued. "But its ability to drive conference business and attract lodge guests is highly important." The project is situated next to I-79, 90 miles north of Charleston, and Henley expects the course to draw both tourists and local outdoor enthusiasts.

### DOWN IN THE HOLLOW

The 7,000-plus yard course sits on 137 acres surrounded by the lake and hills, giving the course varied terrain. According to Palmer Course Design's senior golf course architect Erik Larsen, the course is a "tight little guy."

"Holes three through seven run down a peninsula to the lake and the rest of the course is in a big hollow," he said. "There



Senior golf course architect Erik Larsen (left), Arnold Palmer and project agronomist Gregg Phillips on site at Stonewall Jackson Lake State Park and Resort

is one big hollow that comes down out of the mountains. We snuck holes up and back in the little hollows, so it is tight because anywhere out of the hollow it's a one-to-one slope."

The highlight of the course is the 15th green, said project agronomist Greg Phillips. "You can see every bit of the golf course and resort from that location because it sits up 100 feet above the course," he said.

The course will feature bentgrass fairways, greens and tees with tall fescue, and bluegrass in the roughs. Despite 100 rain days so far this year, West Palm Beach, Fla.-based Ranger Golf has completed the rough shaping of the course and eight holes are now being seeded. Nine holes will be completed and seeded this fall.

The lodge, conference center and golf course are scheduled to open in the spring of 2002.

## Lohmann transforming Wisconsin resort

ELKHART LAKE, Wis. — The first spade of dirt was turned here at the 18-hole Quit Qui Oc Golf Club in July. By next July, this central Wisconsin resort will have 27 holes, two new green complexes, one less safety concern, and the latest in junior practice facilities.

Lohmann Golf Designs (LGD), working with its sister construction division, Golf Creations, has called for the reconfiguration and upgrade of holes 16 and 17 on the original Tom Bendelow-designed layout. The old 16th at Quit Qui Oc used to be a so-so par-3; come next summer, it will be a stunning par-4.

"The intent was to gain some yardage for what is a pretty short course," explained Bob Lohmann, president of Marengo, Ill.-based LGD and Golf Creations. "On 16, we essentially created a brand new green setting and surrounds. It worked out perfectly; it's going to be a great little hole."

"On 17 [a par-5], we shifted the putting surface slightly forward and mounded the area in back to solve a safety issue," he said. "The 11th tee had been quite close to the original 17th green; now it's a much more reasonable distance, with some attractive mounding to serve as a buffer."

With the 17th hole already complete,

renovations to 16 will be conducted this fall, simultaneous with the construction of nine new holes at Quit Qui Oc. All the construction will be handled by Golf Creations.

"For the new loop, we've been presented with a great piece of land with a lot of movement and interesting natural characteristics," said LGD project architect Rex VanHoose. "We've routed the new nine to lay comfortably on the land, with minimal grading work. That means we'll be cutting features into the site as opposed to building features atop a flat piece of land."

"We're using natural ridges for tee areas and existing plateaus for landing areas," he added. "We have several sink holes on the site, which we've incorporated as a design feature. It's also a very gravelly site, which means it will drain very well."

LGD and Golf Creations are also fashioning a junior course at Quit Qui Oc, within the existing driving range.

"What we've done is designed several target greens to accept shots from several small tee pads we built within the range itself," said Lohmann. "The various combinations of tees and greens allow kids to play nine different holes."

## Tackles The Nasty Spots

That's The Beauty Of A National.

Trust a National's flexible, four-wheel, low, low center of gravity design to make simple work of berms, banks and bunkers — all of your course's toughest spots. Better yet, we invite you to test the rugged, hill-hugging tenacity of a National for yourself.

Contact us for a test drive:  
1-888-907-3463  
www.nationalmower.com

\*\*\*  
NATIONAL MOWER COMPANY  
SINCE 1919  
700 Raymond Avenue  
St. Paul, MN 55114  
Fax (651) 646-2887  
Email sales@nationalmower.com



NATIONAL is a Registered Trademark of National Mower Company