

Cobblestone Creek Country Club adds pond at 18th

By JAY FINEGAN

VICTOR, N.Y. — Cobblestone Creek Country Club, the newest private golf facility in the Rochester area, has announced the grand opening of several capital improvements.

The most dramatic change on the golf course is the addition of a pond in front of the 18th green. Golf architect Brian Ault, of Ault, Clark & Associates, designed the pond as part of the overall practice facility expansion and enhancement. The area was formerly marshland.

The two-acre water hazard on the closing hole will test golfers, said club manager Doug Wayne, a PGA professional. The 525-yard par-5 will give big hitters an opportunity to fly a second shot to the green, but many players will choose to

lay up and hope to hit the green in regulation. The water feature makes the original layout by architect Michael Hurdzan even more exciting, Wayne said, enhancing one of the area's most challenging layouts.

"It's a great hole, especially now with the pond," said Wayne. "We had all the work done locally by some earth-shapers up here in Rochester. We're committed to offering the best golf experience in the area, and our course is as fair and testing as they come."

Cobblestone Creek, managed by Virginia-based Billy Casper Golf, spent more than \$500,000 on all the enhancements to meet increasing demand at the growing club. They include:

- the opening of the Pub & Grille Room,

an informal, family-oriented alternative to its formal, full-service dining;

- the expansion of its natural-grass golf practice facility that includes a short-game practice area; and

- the expansion of the main dining and banquet room by 2,500 square feet;

"We're excited for our members and the future, because we continue to make Cobblestone Creek Country Club even better," said Wayne.

The expanded main dining room and banquet facility boasts one of the most scenic views in Rochester — a 180-degree elevated vista that unveils a superb view of the golf course nestled among the many hills, trees and lakes.

Cobblestone Creek recently surpassed the 300-member mark, leaving less than



The new 18th hole at Cobblestone Creek

30 memberships available before it begins its waiting list.

Fazio's first New England design opens at The International

By JAY FINEGAN

BOLTON, Mass. — The longest golf course in the world just got some company.

Here at The International, the 8,325-yard Pines Course has been joined by the Oaks Course, Tom Fazio's first solo design in New England. The new track, which opened in July, distinguishes The International as the only private 36-hole club in the six New England states.

In a sharp departure from most golf developments these days, the Oaks layout was permitted and built in 11 months, thanks to strong backing from local residents in this community, 40 miles west of Boston.

"We had wonderful local support, combined with a great architect and a great contractor," said general manager Brian Lynch, one of three principals in Arklow Limited Partnership, which owns the complex. "We had 250 acres, and we could either build a golf course or 200 houses. The people in the area looked at what 200 homes would do compared to a golf course, and they made the right choice."

"They actually assisted us in the permitting process," Lynch added. "Even non-golfers realize that golf is a friendly game, a friendly business. And it certainly is a preferred alternative over more housing."

PURE GOLF EXPERIENCE

The par-77 Pines Course opened for play in 1957. The USGA has rated it the most difficult course in the United States by slope (154) and by course rating (80.0). It features a parkland style, with "wall to wall green carpeting," Lynch said.

The new Oaks layout, which features (naturally) an abundance of oak trees, is strikingly different. "It has some waste areas, a kind of Pine Valley look," Lynch said. "It's much more naturalized."

Built by Agriscapes at a cost Lynch pegged at "north of \$10 million," the Oaks terrain rests on very sandy soil. "That



In a sharp departure from most golf developments these days, the Tom Fazio-designed Oaks (above), 40 miles west of Boston, was permitted and built in 11 months. The layout wraps around The International's par-77 Pines Course, which opened for play in 1957.

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Fazio's Oaks

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allowed us to build the course more quickly than you normally can in New England, with all the rock and ledge," he said. "We did some minor blasting on the first hole, and that was it."

The Oaks has no residential component. "That's the reason Tom Fazio agreed to do the project," Lynch said. "He loves pure golf. When people try to squeeze out that one last building lot, by moving a tee someplace else, that can jeopardize the integrity of the course."

PARACHUTE DROP ON FOUR

Fazio's design wraps around the original course. It stretches to 6,945 yards over rolling terrain, plays at par 72, and provides multiple tee locations.

'The people in the area actually assisted us in the permitting process.'

— Brian Lynch

The signature hole is the par-3 fourth, running 175 yards and featuring a 100-foot drop from tee to green. "It's a lot of fun, and it gives you a 90-mile view to the northwest that shows three mountain ranges," Lynch said. "So standing on that tee you have a breathtaking vista, and combined with the quality of the golf hole, it's just stunning. You hit your shot and you feel like the ball is hanging out there, being dropped down by parachute."

The Arklow partners opted for a second layout to accommodate the club's higher level of play. "We have an upwardly mobile membership here," Lynch explained, "and the use of golf as a business tool has risen dramatically in the last six or seven years. During the week we have a high level of business entertainment going on, and on weekends it reverts to a more socially driven club."

The Pines Course has 225 members and 10 corporate members. The new 36-hole complex will have a combined membership of about 500, Lynch said, plus 25 corporate members. Fees run from \$60,000 for an individual membership (plus annual dues of \$6,200) to corporate memberships (for three people) at \$42,500 per year.

CLUB AMENITIES

The International boasts all the trappings of a major golf facility. While building The Oaks, the owners also installed a 12-acre practice area, complete with four putting and chipping greens and three bunkers.

The 40,000-square-foot clubhouse can accommodate a large business gathering in one place without disturbing individual

members. "We built a special guest locker room, so if a member is hosting a large corporate outing on one course, we have a separate locker room, pro shop and dining facility for them," Lynch said. "They are separate from the onesy, twosy members who are entertaining a few clients."

"We've built two different structures for the different uses of the club, and that makes the facility work very well," he added. "It is

unique in this country in business golf, the way it's set up."

CADDIE PROGRAM

Twenty-five caddies, recruited from local high school golf teams, handle some 4,000 caddie rounds a year, earning \$30 a bag, plus tip. "We have a high school outreach program we're very happy with," Lynch said. "They're usually good players with a good understanding of the game." ■

Frontier, Love

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LOVE ACTIVE IN ALASKA

Love has designed several courses in Pennsylvania, including Tom's Run at Chestnut Ridge and Iron Forge at Penn National. His firm also has projects in Alaska, California, Nebraska and Virginia.

"It will be good to work in the Pittsburgh area again," Love

added, "especially since it's close to home for Nick and his crew. I am confident that Frontier will produce a great course for Cranberry Township."

The par-70 layout at Cranberry Highlands will measure 6,400 yards. Frontier will build two lakes to accommodate a double-row irrigation system, designed by Brian Vinchesi of Pepperell, Mass.-based Irrigation Consulting, Inc. ■

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