

Roddy Ranch to herd golfers

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ranching have been dismal.

"The economics of raising livestock and staying ahead of the tax collector reached the point that Roddy had to come up with a new plan to maintain his lifestyle. Through a close associate he was introduced to the world of golf as a way to preserve his passion – his beloved ranch.

Roddy had the primary raw material for golf – lots of land. But more than that, his property featured the kind of varied terrain and wide vistas that practically guarantee a great golf course.

"When I brought out Bob Moore, the lead designer, I asked him what kind of a golf course I could have here," Roddy said. "Bob said that it would be one of the best in the state. I had never played golf in my life, so I left the job of building the course to the professionals."

REMINISCENT OF IRELAND

Moore is a design partner with J. Michael Poellot Golf Design Group, and what he created is a memorable golf course that hugs the grasslands as it uses all the advantages of elevation change and natural green sites.

The course plays from 5,400 yards to 6,945 from the back tees over 235 acres that just two years ago the owner would move cattle across. Moore worked diligently to let the landscape dictate the routing of the course, and careful shaping helped to set a graceful flow to the first five holes as they climb towards the highest part of the layout.

"The site reminded me of Ireland when the hills are green in the early spring months," Moore said. "The cascading hills really helped to frame the holes, so I wanted to make a links-style course that was similar to the ones found there. The owner let us do what was necessary to make a good course. The landscape certainly made that easier."

True to the old-style courses, Roddy Ranch plays as a continuous loop rather than two nines playing back to a clubhouse. From the highest point of the course the downhill 570-yard par-5 sixth hole falls off of a hillside to a dramatic expanse. This hole became a design chal-

lenge, as wetlands dedicated that part of the hole to be rerouted. But in the end the grand tee view simply invites golfers to swing away.

SUPERINTENDENT ONBOARD FROM START

Head superintendent Ken Schwark came on board in the fall of 1998 to help supervise construction and to supervise the grow-in. The course uses a variety of grasses, including bluegrass and rye fairways, fescue roughs, wild grasses in the natural areas, and A4 bentgrass for the greens.



The first hole at Roddy Ranch Golf Club

Schwark's presence from the start gave him input into such things as softening steep bunker faces to make for easier maintenance. He also was involved in creating the superlative greens at Roddy Ranch.

"During the construction phase I hired an Australian greenskeeper who used to work at Royal Melbourne Golf Club," Schwark said. "He presented to me a system for growing and maintaining bentgrass greens that will help to control the development of thatch and the proliferation of poa annua grass, which is a difficult challenge here in California. Right now the greens are firm, fast and true, and we intend to perfect them even more."

RODEO CHAMP NOW INTO GOLF

Roddy Ranch has been open only since

November, but it has already drawn praise from players, not only for the beauty and challenge of the course but for the club's warm and friendly down-home attitude.

This is all a reflection of the owner, who has suddenly become a serious golfer himself. Although he has only played for two months, Roddy displays the natural athletic ability that helped to make him a two time world rodeo champion. In 1997, in fact, he was inducted into the Cowboy Hall of Fame.

"I never thought that golf would be a game I would like, but the simple economics of it was what first caught my

the American West so that it won't be lost to future generations."

A LIVING MUSEUM TO OLD WEST

To this end Jack Roddy plans to make his course a living museum to the American West. He plans to build a hotel where families can stay while they play golf or ride through the 1,500 acres of land that he has managed to preserve, thanks to his golf revenues. He is a man with a vision as big as the sky his course lies under.

Jack Roddy's desire to do things right comes through in all aspects of the operation of the course, from the fact that he didn't open too early to the warm reception that each golfer receives. It is the greatest of ironies that this man, who is the embodiment of the cowboy and ranching, has turned to a game invented by sheepherders to save his lifestyle.

He is proud to be called a golfer today, and glad that golf can help to preserve one of the last stands of open space near a sprawling metropolis. ■

Player moving on South America

PALMBEACH, Fla. — Gary Player Design (GPD) has signed a multi-year agreement with Caprile & Capdepon, a golf course design and construction company based in Buenos Aires. GPD plans to expand its presence in the growing Latin American market. Caprile & Capdepon has developed more than 50 golf courses in the last 30 years, including Martindale Country Club and Los Lagartos Country Club, in Buenos Aires. GPD will establish an office in Buenos Aires to coordinate communication and design services throughout South America.

Pinehills to open 18 holes in spring

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terrain has provided us with an opportunity to utilize the native ridges and high points for a variety of different tee and green sites," he said. "The valleys and swales provide the course with containment and relief from errant golf shots, while natural hazard locations give each hole its own identity."

The Nicklaus Design course will offer a totally different experience. "This spectacular property with its stately white pines, native vegetation and exciting topography allows us to create an extraordinary championship golf course," the designer said.

Both courses were designed to accommodate all levels of golfers. Four sets of tees allow courses to play from 5,388 yards to 7,175 yards, accommodating for beginners, yet challenging enough for the most expert player.

THREE GOLF SCHOOLS ON SITE

Pinehills' practice facilities include a double-ended driving range with both natural grass and artificial turf tees, bunkered target greens with traps, numerous putting greens and separate chipping areas. State of the art instruction allows players to work on any aspect of their game through Pinehills Golf Academy, the Dave Pelz Short Game School and the Scott Sackett Golf Academy.

Opening this May, in conjunction with the Jones course, is the 12,000-square-foot clubhouse, designed by Childs, Bertman and Tseckares of Boston. Offering panoramic views of the facilities, the clubhouse will feature a pro shop, grille room, banquet pavilion, a Ryder Cup "function room," outdoor terrace dining and locker rooms. The building can accommodate groups from 20 to 288 for meeting and dining. ■

eye," he said. "In a year these 235 acres might earn \$10,000 to 20,000; now that much comes in a week. But more than that I am excited to see the different people that play golf, and I give them a chance to enjoy the outdoors and feel the serenity and beauty of the open range. I am going to do all that I can to keep this place as a special tribute to the ideals of



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