



BRIEFS

WORK COMPLETE AT HANOVER CC

HANOVER, N.H. — Hanover Country Club has just completed the construction of four new holes and the renovation of the other existing holes. Architect Ron Prichard restored the circa 1899 layout to its traditional design and Dahn Tibbett Golf Services of Marshfield, Mass., accomplished the reconstruction. During the yearlong project all greens, tees, and bunkers were rebuilt along with the addition of the new holes. The club is expected to open for play again in mid-2002.

RULEWICH UPDATING PALMETTO DUNES

HILTON HEAD, S.C. — Roger Rulewich has started work on a complete face-lift of the Robert Trent Jones Course at Palmetto Dunes Resort, here. Rulewich was involved in the original design and construction of the course more than three decades ago while working with Jones. The architect will redesign and rebuild all greens, tees and bunkers and the entire course will be regrassed with improved Bermudagrass varieties. In addition, all fairways will be regraded and contoured and a new drainage system will be installed. Rulewich will also add junior tees to encourage juniors and beginners to play golf. Construction and grassing is scheduled to be completed by June and the course will re-open for play in October.

HARVARD DESIGN SCHOOL ANNOUNCES WINTER/SPRING SEMINARS

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. — For one week in January and one week in March, the Harvard Design School Office of Executive Education will offer continuing education seminars related to the planning and design of golf courses and resorts. A wide range of disciplines such as architecture, urban planning and design, marketing and business management, and construction and project management will be addressed.

With fees ranging from \$475 to \$1,285, the one- to three-day courses will take place here in the school's George Gund Hall. Instructors include golf course designers Brian Silva and Robert Muir Graves; architects Kenneth DeMay and Richard Diedrich; designers and environmentalists William Burbank and Michael Hurdzan; and golf development consultant Barbara Hanley.

Pinehills GC opens Rees Jones course, Nicklaus design to follow

By JOEL JOYNER

PLYMOUTH, Mass. — New England's latest golf course facility, Pinehills Golf Club here in historic Plymouth, opened its 18-hole Rees Jones layout last Memorial Day weekend and has exceeded its projected golf rounds for the year. The upscale, daily-fee club is hoping to follow up on that success this year with a new Nicklaus Design course, drawn up by Jack Nicklaus II, scheduled to open this May.

In its first five weeks of operation, the Jones course averaged 200 players a day. "The course has been well received," said head pro, John Tuffen. "We're looking forward to opening the Nicklaus course next year. Construction is complete, and they finished seeding Aug. 1. It was playable last fall, but we're waiting until this year to open it up to the public."

THE JONES COURSE

The entire development, with the surrounding community developed by The Green Companies, consist of approximately 3,000 acres with 350 acres set aside for golf.

Jones had a large piece of property that provided several options. "The soil is really sandy, high-and-dry, and we were able to utilize a lot of the ridges," Jones said. "The biggest challenge for me was to maximize the terrain."



All the tees on the Jones course are rectilinear. The eighth hole is pictured above.

The bunkers resemble the old-style A.W. Tillinghast or Alister MacKenzie bunkering. "They're real sculptured, fairly dramatic, and they're one of the major characteristics of the golf course. Several of the fairway bunkers are located as

protective bunkers," said the architect.

There are bunkers located on every hole, and many of the fairways are routed along the ridges. "Most of the bunkers are below the fairways or below the targets and actually help keep the ball in play on missed shots," Jones explained. "They're not just sticking out of the ground. They're more recessed and cut into the lower terrain."

Four sets of tees allow play from 5,388 yards to 7,175 yards. "Basically, we design all our courses over 7,000 yards and add multiple tees," said Jones. "A course of 7,000 yards is no longer a long course anymore with the shafts now available, the metal head drivers, the Pro V1 and Nike golf balls. The course is long, but there's opportunity for all caliber players to find a comfortable challenge."

Grass hollows and pockets, cuts that hold a shot in, sculptured bunkers and ramps into greens give the design character. "It's not a spartan golf course," said Jones. "It's also a course you really need to think yourself around and determine what kind of shot you want to hit or are capable of hitting. It makes the game more enjoyable when a player needs to develop and apply strategy."

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The seventh hole at The Club at Patriot's Glen

Matthai unveils second in Md. at Patriot's Glen

By JOHN TORSIELLO

ELKTON, Md. — Jeff Matthai and Morris and Ritchie Associates, Inc. have addressed the need here for a mid-level public golf course with the opening of The Club at Patriot's Glen.

"What we wanted to do with Patriot's Glen was fill a niche," said Matthai, who is a project manager for Morris and Ritchie Associates, Inc. of Abingdon, Md. The company's golf division has served as project engineers for several acclaimed courses, including Bulle Rock Golf Course in Havre de Grace, Md., and Beach Tree Golf Course in Aberdeen, Md.

"There have been a lot of upscale, daily-fee courses built in the area [between Baltimore and Philadelphia] with green fees in the \$95 to \$140 range. There are a number of existing municipal courses in the \$20 to \$30 range. Patriot's Glen is in the \$45 to \$55 range. We feel that the course is a bargain for a truly fine public layout," said Matthai.

This is Matthai's second solo design. His first course, Mountain Ranch Golf Course in Joppa, opened last year.

Trent Wright, general manager/director of golf at Patriot's Glen, said the reception for the new course has

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Renovation work is underway at Silver Creek

Silver Creek membership puts renovation on fast track

By DOUG SAUNDERS

SAN JOSE, Calif. — Architect Mike Strantz has started work on the renovation of Silver Creek Country Club despite the sagging economy that has crippled the nearby Silicon Valley region. The commencement of work on the nine-year-old layout is the culmination of a fast-paced approval process where a committed membership took control to make things happen.

Silver Creek Country Club is a Ted Robinson-designed course built on a hilly site in South San Jose as an anchor to a housing development created by Shea Homes. Club membership was limited to property owners in the gated community and the course proved popular, drawing more than 300 members. As is the case with many real estate driven properties, the best real estate went for the housing first and Robinson had to work with some awkward topography for the course.

Over the years the membership lodged many opinions of how the course could be better. With the final phase of development completed, Shea Homes offered the club membership the opportunity to take over club operations last

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Silver Creek

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winter and the membership leapt at the chance.

"We conducted several surveys during last summer to determine what the membership wanted to do about ownership and what things they would like to see happen to the golf course. By having a good sense of what members wanted we were able

to move very quickly when the opportunity came," explained general manager Bob Lee.

STRANTZ ON THE SCENE

The members made it clear from the start that they wanted to see their golf course brought up to a higher level in order to be more competitive with other private clubs in the region. Several prominent course designers, including the original architect Robinson, were contacted. How-

ever, the club went with Strantz who in recent years has earned a strong reputation on the East Coast for his artistic designs such as Tobacco Road in North Carolina and Stone House Country Club and Royal New Kent in Virginia.

"I have wanted to branch out to the West Coast and the timing of the renovation at Silver Creek fit our schedule. Also, as funding for new projects is becoming

tighter and good properties are harder to find, I think that renovation of existing clubs and golf courses is a facet of the design market that is going to grow," Strantz said.

As the renovation field grows, Strantz feels that it is important to be sensitive to other designers as he looks at more redesign work.

"For myself, I would not want to do any rework on a course

where the original designer hasn't been contacted first. I think that is only fair," Strantz said.

The \$2.5 million renovation will include improvements to the irrigation system, making significant improvements to the strategic placement of bunkers, improved bunker construction, and the redesign of four holes.

"The clubhouse sits up on a hill and the first and tenth holes play right off it. We are going to lengthen these two holes by adding new tees and repositioning

Having a very motivated membership helped this project come together quickly.'

— Bob Lee

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the bunkers. Most of the bunkers around green sites really don't come into play, so we are setting up the bunkers to add more challenge and appeal to the course," Strantz explained.

One golf hole, the par -5 16th, plays on the edge of a slope where Strantz proposes to move 30,000 yards of dirt to create a more playable hole. All of the bunkers will also be rebuilt in order to give more consistency to the entire course.

RENOVATION FAST TRACK

Working with a motivated membership and seeking outside knowledge was key to putting the renovation process on the fast track, said Lee.

"The membership was very supportive of bringing the course up to a higher level. Having a very motivated membership also helped to make this project come together so quickly," he said.

In addition, Lee and golf course superintendent Nick Checklenis attended a Remodeling University seminar presented by the American Society of Golf Course Architects that helped in the planning of their upcoming project. Strantz also made several presentations to the club members in May in order to get feedback and settle any concerns. This attention to pre-planning was crucial in order to secure member approval.

"We had our master plan together in the late summer and our membership voted for approval just after the Sept. 11 tragedy. Even through that cloud, 73 percent of the members voted to proceed. The members voted to pay capital dues beginning in 2003 to finance the project," Lee explained.

Plans are to keep the course open for play during the renovation process with all work scheduled to be completed by next summer. ■