

BUILDING CLUBS OF THE FUTURE

Raleigh-based McConnell Golf invests \$7.3 million to renovate and restore four of its 12 clubs around the Carolinas and Tennessee.

RALEIGH, N.C. (March 2017) — Since its inception in 2003, McConnell Golf has bolstered its burgeoning reputation in the golf industry by investing significantly in improvements and upgrades at its clubs. McConnell Golf is currently overseeing renovation and restoration work totaling approximately \$7.3 million at four of its clubs around the Carolinas and Tennessee.

With the 2016 additions of Providence Country Club in Charlotte, N.C., and Holston Hills Country Club in Knoxville, Tenn., McConnell Golf now owns a dozen 18-hole, private golf courses plus one nine-hole course around the southeast.

Meanwhile, McConnell Golf has added two new national memberships to its attractive menu of affordable, cutting-edge offerings. “McConnell Golf is focused on building clubs of the future,” said McConnell Golf Chief Operating Officer Christian Anastasiadis. “There is one reason we are in business — members. Attracting members through a quality and value experience, and retaining members via a sustainable product that they always want to be part of.”

COUNTRY CLUB OF ASHEVILLE — Asheville, N.C.

In 2016 at North Carolina’s venerable Country Club of Asheville alone, McConnell Golf spent \$3.7 million on capital projects, of which \$3 million was devoted to a major golf course renovation. That brought McConnell Golf’s total investment amount since purchasing the Country Club of Asheville in late 2014 to more than \$4.6 million.

Country Club of Asheville is the oldest private club in North Carolina, its origin dating back to 1894. The club features a Donald Ross-designed golf course and is located seven minutes from downtown Asheville and The Omni Grove Park Inn.

For much of 2016, Country Club of Asheville's golf course was closed due to extensive restoration performed by Pinehurst-based golf course architect Richard Mandell, who oversaw numerous improvements such as new 007 Bentgrass on all 18 greens, a restored creek crossing on No. 10, a new practice facility and rerouted cart paths.

Mandell said the most exciting part of the project was discovering and returning the forgotten work Donald Ross had created in 1928.

"Working alongside [superintendent] Robby Watts and his crew, undergoing renovations at the Country Club of Asheville have been a very enjoyable experience for me," Mandell said. "It was fun to incorporate my knowledge of Ross in creating new greens where possible and uncovering some of the original greens buried under a few existing ones."

Using information from longtime Country Club of Asheville members, the Donald Ross Society and notes from the original construction, Mandell tried to mimic the original course layout as closely as possible. Every piece of data gathered would allow him to focus on his goal of preserving the original instead of making design changes.

"My early process walk-through with Les Stradley, who was the golf pro there in the 1970s, was an eye-opener as to the changes to the greens in the 60s from Ross's work," says Mandell.

"I am most proud of the finished work to the features and shaping of the putting surfaces, which was done by NMP Golf Construction and my shaper, Marc Burger, respectively," says Mandell. "I hope the greens are as fun to putt [on] as they were to design. Mr. McConnell wanted a set of very interesting, challenging putting surfaces, which is what we delivered. I believe they are the soul of the course now."

Besides the changes to the greens, another adaptation required moving the first tee. The results: A better view of the fairway for the golfer's drive and the creation of space for a new 10,000-square-foot practice putting green next to the clubhouse.

The reconstruction efforts, particularly the new drainage and turf, will also help provide outstanding course conditions year round. Strategically chosen for Asheville's unique climate, the 007 Bentgrass greens will perform very well in the cool weather along with the rest of the course. The fairways are also Bentgrass, while the roughs are a blend called Midnight Kentucky Bluegrass.

To reduce excessive mowing, Mandell used Meyer Zoysia on the sand bunker faces, just as he did at Raleigh Country Club in 2006. Although Zoysia is a slow-growth, warm-season grass used all over the Southeast, it is new to the Asheville area.

"Overall, the work here at CCA is some of my best," says Mandell. "I think the green complexes and the bunkering are a testament to Ross's practical approach to design, yet we seized the opportunity to create a bit more variety from hole to hole. It was an honor to work on the 16th hole, as it has always been one of my favorites as depicted in one of my favorite books on golf architecture, *George Thomas's Golf Architecture in America*."

But work on the golf course is not nearly all that has been done at Country Club of Asheville since McConnell Golf took over operations. The clubhouse was completely renovated including a new porte-cochere entrance adding character and volume upon approach. McConnell Golf renovated the men's and women's locker rooms and bathroom areas, while a men's steam room was also installed. Outside the clubhouse has received fresh landscaping, as well.

The new back patio terrace with modern, chic furniture and panoramic mountain views creates an ideal gathering place. New awnings wrapped around the entire backside of the clubhouse, while a total overhaul to the Fitness Center included flooring, enclosed fitness studio, TVs, a personal training assessment area and select equipment.

Country Club of Asheville also received a newly created Cardinal Game Room (Tween Room) for children to play in, as well as adults for game nights and holiday gatherings. McConnell Golf performed a total resurfacing of the pool, updated and renovated the pool cabana to include paint and flooring and installed a new sound system.

In 2017, McConnell Golf has more scheduled improvements at Country Club of Asheville including a new pool fence, a total overhaul of the outdoor Tennis Shop, select upholstery throughout the clubhouse, new banquet chairs for the special events, a new digital keypad allowing 24-hour Fitness Center access, and a new HVAC digital control system and unit replacement.

HOLSTON HILLS COUNTRY CLUB — Knoxville, Tenn.

Located in East Knoxville near the foothills of the Smoky Mountains on 180 open acres of rolling old farmland tucked into a bend in the Holston River, venerable Holston Hills features a 1927 Donald Ross-designed golf course that has remained nearly untouched through the years. Holston Hills immediately became recognized as the finest course in the state when it opened and started hosting every important regional tournament including a PGA Tour event.

McConnell Golf purchased Holston Hills in December 2015 and immediately invested \$1.4 million in capital improvements including a new fitness center, locker room upgrades, and a banquet and dining room renovation.

McConnell Golf installed state-of-the-art, Torque series equipment in the new Holston Hills fitness center, including a variety of machines such as leg extension and curl, along with Intenza Entertainment Bikes, treadmills, Octane stride elliptical and Octane XT-One. Rounding out the equipment are exercise mats, medicine and stability balls, resistance cables and foam rollers — all of which promote and support flexibility and non-impact strength routines.

The former kitchen at Holston Hills was completely gutted and a brand-new kitchen built. Currently under construction are a new dining room that will offer a festive atmosphere, an outdoor dining deck overlooking the golf course, a new main entrance to the clubhouse that will include a portico, a new golf shop and a new fleet of 60 golf carts. These projects should be completed this spring, followed by a grand opening function.

PROVIDENCE COUNTRY CLUB — Charlotte, N.C.

In early 2016, McConnell Golf purchased Providence Country Club. Located in southeast Charlotte, Providence CC was established in 1989 and has developed a reputation as one of Charlotte's premier family country clubs. PCC's pristine 18-hole, Dan Maples layout, redesigned by Mike Gleason in 2006, measures 7,021 yards and plays to a par of 72. PCC is tied for No. 8 in the *Charlotte Business Journal's* ranking of the toughest private courses in the Charlotte region.

McConnell Golf said it plans to spend the next few years renovating the PCC golf course using a well-known architect, while also providing numerous other substantial improvements around the club. PCC's extensive amenities include 14 tennis courts and state-of-the-art aquatic facilities, with three swimming pools, and a newly constructed outdoor bar and dining area with a fire pit.

Work is now being completed on McConnell Golf's first phase at Providence CC, which totaled \$1.3 million. Working with Edifice General Contractors and Redline Architects, the project has included the reversal of locations between the Fitness Center and the Golf Shop. The transition has doubled the size of the Providence CC Fitness Center, while they have also completely renovated the golf shop.

In addition, Providence CC now has a new bag drop location and a new cart staging area, while the entire back lawn of the clubhouse has been re-landscaped. Lastly, they have added an all-new "Providence Playhouse" activity center. The total value of the PCC renovation will exceed \$4 million.

OLD NORTH STATE CLUB — New London, N.C.

Old North State Club is a perfect day-trip for golfers wanting to tackle one of golf's finest tests, given the club's central proximity less than an hour from Charlotte and the Triad, and not much more than that from the Triangle.

For McConnell Golf, Old North State Club brings to the table a host of amenities found nowhere short of a private, recreational resort, where members can visit with their families for a long weekend, even if there's not another golfer in the crowd.

Located on the 5,300-acre Badin Lake, this secluded, gated community is surrounded by the quiet beauty of Uwharrie National Forest. The privacy is what makes Old North State Club such a desirable family retreat. The original clubhouse was turned into a spacious, eight-room lodge with a kitchen, bar, dining area and recreational room, where members can stay for a night or long weekend.

And there's plenty to keep everyone happy. Along with the golf course, there's biking, six tennis courts, two swimming pools, a playground and fitness center, a marina with a boat master for boating and fishing on Badin Lake, and a waterfront park for concerts, weddings and community parties.

McConnell Golf is currently doing some capital improvement work at Old North State Club, including the addition of a new rub rail on the marina pier, construction of a boat bay used for detailing vessels and upgrades to the marina's fuel tanks. Around the clubhouse, McConnell Golf is doing select landscaping renovations, while the kitchen equipment is also being replaced.

The ONSC pool is receiving a bathroom remodel, while the Lodge is getting new granite countertops and a landscape renovation of its own. McConnell Golf also recently relocated the fitness center into the main clubhouse, equipped with a brand-new AV systems and equipment. This relocation allows for a multi-purpose group exercise studio with an adjoining massage suite in the old fitness center space.

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ABOUT MCCONNELL GOLF

McConnell Golf (McConnellGolf.com) memberships include privileges at a dozen 18-hole, private golf courses plus one nine-hole course throughout the Carolinas and Tennessee. McConnell Golf's stable of prestigious clubs includes Raleigh Country Club and TPC Wakefield Plantation in Raleigh, NC, Sedgefield Country Club Ross Course and Dye Course in Greensboro, NC, Providence Country Club in Charlotte, NC, Old North State Club in New London, NC, Treyburn Country Club in Durham, NC, Brook Valley Country Club in Greenville, NC, Country Club of

Asheville (NC), The Reserve Golf Club in Pawleys Island, SC, Musgrove Mill Golf Club in Clinton, SC and Holston Hills Country Club in Knoxville, TN. McConnell Golf also operates the 27-hole public Raleigh Golf Association and manages the Grande Dunes Members Club and Ocean Club in Myrtle Beach for LStar Development.

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