

***Charlotte's Providence Country Club unveils freshly renovated golf course. Raleigh-based McConnell Golf purchased Providence CC in early 2016 and has invested more than \$5 million in capital improvements. Greensboro-based golf course architect Kris Spence oversaw the renovation work.***

**CHARLOTTE, NC (August 2018)** — Providence Country Club in Charlotte is prepared to unveil its newly restored golf course on Friday, August 31.

Greensboro-based golf course architect Kris Spence oversaw the renovation work, which began in February and was completed ahead of schedule. The Providence golf course was originally designed by Dan Maples and tweaked in 2006 by Mike Gleason.

Raleigh-based McConnell Golf purchased Providence CC in early 2016 and immediately announced it would spend the next few years providing substantial improvements around the club and renovating Providence's golf course. Spence was hired to function dually as the architect for the project, as well as the construction manager.

Spence's comprehensive renovation project at Providence CC focused on bunkers, new and expanded irrigation for better course conditioning, transitioning the green complexes from bent grass to Champion Bermuda grass — reworking the green complexes without rebuilding them, especially the surrounds — along with fashioning new, dramatic views from the fairways.

“The Providence project was a unique opportunity for me in that I was able to express a wider range of creativity versus most of my restoration efforts,” Spence said. “Mr. (John) McConnell wanted a golf course that was fun to play, aesthetically pleasing, strategic, interesting with variety, difficult when it needs to be but, first and foremost, one that the membership could be proud of. We delivered on that front.

“It was a great team effort between the Spence Golf and McConnell Golf maintenance guys at Providence Country Club. We worked through some tough weather conditions and pulled it off. I think the members will also be pleasantly surprised at the opening day conditions.”

Spence incorporated the Capillary Concrete liner system during the complete redesign and reconstruction of the bunkering. The new bunkers feature a combination of high sand flashed faces and slightly irregular rolled grass edges.

“These are some of the most beautiful and functional bunkers I've done in my career,” Spence said. “Every bunker serves a strategic purpose or sets an angle moving the hole from side to side. Providence was somewhat flat and straight

before. Now, the holes sashay from side to side around through the bunkering creating tons of options.”

Providence features five par-3 holes. “One of my goals was to make them as different as possible with a wider variance in lengths and dramatically different looks,” Spence said. “The most dramatic among them is the ‘Redan’ style fourth with a back yardage of 240 yards, maybe the best par 3 I’ve designed to date.”

Among Spence’s previous renovation work is a pair of McConnell Golf properties — Greensboro’s Sedgefield Country Club Ross Course and Brook Valley Country Club in Greenville, NC — as well as Country Club of North Carolina’s Dogwood Course and Roaring Gap Golf Club. Spence worked on the Brook Valley renovation with Chris Parham, who is now the superintendent at Providence.

A neighborhood club with a younger membership established in southeast Charlotte in 1989, Providence has earned a reputation as one of the Queen City’s premier family country clubs. Providence’s extensive amenities include 14 tennis courts and state-of-the-art aquatic facilities with three swimming pools, as well as a newly constructed outdoor bar and dining area with a fire pit.

At 800 families strong, Providence’s avid golfing membership played 28,000-plus rounds in 2017.

“Kris Spence has delivered a golf course that is totally unique from the course we had before,” said McConnell Golf Founder and CEO John McConnell. “I am truly impressed with the new look, as he took a very flat golf course and made it feel much more dramatic to play. All players will immediately notice the visual appeal and new strategy required. I think he retained the playability for all levels of golfers. but they will totally be impressed with the new greens and bunkers that have been created.”

Spence has earned a reputation as one of the country’s top restorers of Donald Ross courses and other classically designed layouts. His firm, Spence Golf Design, which he opened in 2000, now boasts nearly two-dozen employees and has carved out a productive niche around the southeast.

“I’ve been asked many times leading up to the work whether Providence would have a Ross look similar to my restorations,” Spence said. “I want Providence to be unique unto itself, have a style and character all its own. The members will find that they have a course that they can be proud to show their friends and guests that is significantly different than their neighbors in the Charlotte market.”

Renovation work is also being performed on the Providence clubhouse. The club’s Dining Room and Members Lounge are being reversed and fully updated with new furnishings and decor. In addition, there will be a new front entrance to the restaurant.

In the past two years, McConnell Golf has performed \$1.3 million in renovation work on the Providence clubhouse including an enlarged Fitness Center, renovated Golf Shop, a new bag-drop location and cart staging area, while the entire back lawn of the clubhouse was re-landscaped. Lastly, McConnell Golf added an all-new “Providence Playhouse” kids’ activity center.

With the golf course renovation and clubhouse upgrade, McConnell Golf will have invested more than \$5 million in capital improvements to enhance the Providence membership experience.

“I am very pleased with the outcome that Kris Spence has provided,” said McConnell. “We have a course today that our members will enjoy playing on a frequent basis.”

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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 Ventures.

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