

New Texas Course Set to Open This Month

The Max. A. Mandel Municipal Golf Course will finally open this month in Laredo, Texas. One of the few new golf venues to debut this year in the U.S., it is the first city-owned public golf facility in Laredo.

Robert Trent Jones II Golf Course Architects (RTJ II) designed the layout to reflect the beauty of the Rio Grande River and the oasis it nurtured, while providing stark contrast to the sparse and rugged South Texas landscape.

"We felt a significant responsibility to the people of Laredo, as well as to the game of golf itself, throughout the process of creating this golf course," said course architect Robert Trent Jones Jr., chairman of RTJ II. "We have created a golf experience that we hope will be a great source of pride and satisfaction for the community."

Occupying bluffs above the Rio Grande and looking across to Mexico, the par-72 layout winds over 270 acres of sandy terrain. Encompassing almost a mile of riverfront property, the course has four holes adjacent to the river. It also traverses deep arroyos and navigates through 30-foot-tall mesquite woodlands and open farmland.

Jones focused on drama, playability, risk and reward at The Max." Featuring five sets of tees and wide fairways, the course can be stretched as long as 7,200 yards, while being equipped with tees that play less than 5,000 yards.

RTJ II also crafted "courses within the course," with the closing nine presenting returning loops of three holes and six holes flanking the practice facility. The concept allows for play of three, six, nine or 18 holes as well as to provide instruction for new golfers. Each hole integrates "family tees" to encourage participation by parents and children.

The \$6.6 million project - the price includes roadways, golf course, clubhouse, and maintenance facility - was made possible through 390 acres north of the city donated by the family of the late Max A. Mandel, a Laredo bank executive involved in a variety of civic projects.

"We understand how an exceptional new golf course like this can enrich a community," said Jones, who has created more than 270 courses in more than 40 countries on six continents. "The impact reaches beyond just those who play golf. It reflects upon the identity of Laredo, which may now be seen as an even more inviting place to develop businesses and raise families."

"This golf course will be the catalyst for business development and investment in our community," said Mayor Raul G. Salinas.

RTJ II worked on the construction of the course with Landscapes Unlimited of Lincoln, Neb., as well as the management team of Foresight Golf, of Boerne, Texas, which will oversee the golf operations for the city of Laredo.