

## PROJECT NEWS

Summer 2016

### Wichita Country Club, Wichita, Kansas



#### Tripp Davis Completes a Bunker Renovation and Restoration at Historic Wichita Country Club

Golf course architect Tripp Davis has been working on one of the most storied golf clubs in the country, Wichita Country Club in Wichita, Kansas, and just completed a significant bunker renovation and restoration program. This project follows Tripp Davis and Associates' 2014 renovation of all of Wichita's tees with Latitude 36 Bermuda.

Originally founded in 1900, Wichita Country Club has hosted a number of prominent tournaments over the years including the Western Amateur, the U.S. Women's Open, and most recently the 2010 U.S. Women's Mid-Amateur. In addition, the membership at Wichita has been actively involved in the game and includes Kansas State Golf Association founder John L. Powell and former USGA President, Judy Bell. In 1950, the club moved to its present site and invited architect Bill Diddel to design the golf course. This project came on the heels of Diddel designing the Northwood Club in Dallas, which was awarded the 1952 U.S. Open.



"Wichita Country Club has a great set of original Diddel greens and a subtly brilliant routing," stated Davis. "In redoing the tees and the bunkers, our objective was to work with the greens and routing to enhance the strategic quality of the course. I could not be more pleased with the way the visual style of the bunkers turned out – very classic."

The bunker work Davis just completed included renovating and replacing old drainage, the installation of Better Billy Bunker liners, and the use of new blended bunker sand.



# Wichita Country Club Continued



In addition, Davis' restoration of the bunkers gave them a more classic look. The project was inspired by Bill Diddel's early work that included restoring some of the original bunkering that was lost, and returning the original strategic intent of the bunkers for the modern game.

"Wichita Country Club is extremely pleased with the work that Tripp Davis, his shaper Jason Gold, and builder Landscapes Unlimited did with the bunker renovation and restoration. I would have never thought a bunker project could have such a dramatic impact on the way a golf course looks and plays, but this one has," said Head Golf Professional, Phillip Prude.

TDA would like to thank Brian White, golf course superintendent, and his staff for their hard work and assistance during the construction and growing-in phase. We also thank golf course builder Landscapes Unlimited for their usual high quality work and great attention to detail while working with our shaper, Jason Gold. We especially thank Phillip Prude, Head PGA Professional, for his insight and the Wichita Country Club membership for their support and patience.

## Wichita Country Club Construction Views:



*The 1<sup>st</sup> Hole fairway bunker was removed in March to restore the original architect's opening hole vision*



*The team shaped the chipping area*



*A crew member is placing sod on the 14<sup>th</sup> Hole in early May*



*The bunker sand was delivered in April*

# PROJECT NEWS

## The University of Oklahoma Golf Course, Norman, Oklahoma



### **Tripp Davis Reworking the University of Oklahoma Golf Course and Enhancing the Golf Team Practice Facilities**

Tripp Davis is back at his alma mater but this time not as a Sooner player but to rework the Jimmie Austin Golf Course at OU and enhance the school's golf practice facilities.

Home to championship amateur golf in the state of Oklahoma, hosting two USGA national championships, one state championship, Men's and Women's USGA Public Links Amateurs, three NCAA Regional Championships, and most recently with the men reaching the NCAA Final Eight, the Jimmie Austin Golf Course is revered by golfers across the country. After Davis and his team completed a Master Plan for the golf course, practice facilities, entry road, parking lot and clubhouse, they began with the redesign of the tees going with a new Zoysia turf, repositioning and restyling bunkers, changing some fairways and embarking on major work on seven holes.

Originally designed and built by native Oklahoman Perry Maxwell in the early 1950's, the course underwent a major redesign in the early 1990's at the hands of Bob Cupp. The objective of the latest work by Tripp Davis has been to adapt the course to the way the modern college players play, giving it the flexibility to strategically challenge the best men and women players in college golf, while establishing an historic and visually interesting style.

"Today's best college golfers are playing a great deal differently than they did 20 years ago and the work we are doing at OU is to adapt to those changes while making sure the golf course has the flexibility to be set up in a way that will strategically challenge all players," said Davis. "Although the course can be set up to play quite long, we don't want length to be the dominant strength a player needs to play well. We want to make the ability to score as the most important strength."

Relative to style, Davis wanted the golf course to be more reflective of the naturalistic attributes of the site and embrace Perry Maxwell's naturalistic styles and influences. Bunkers with "ragged" edges and free flowing lines, and strategically placed native grasses will be more visually prevalent, while Bishop Creek and its tributaries that run through the property will be more in play and more visual.

Starting this summer, Davis will begin work on the new OU practice course which will be known as "The Ransom Course." The foundation of The Ransom Course is a four hole course that can be played as par three holes from a wide variety of distances and angles. Within the framework are two short par four holes that will allow players to practice a variety of different tee shots down what Davis calls "driving lanes," with one oriented south and one north. And, there is fairway and there are bunkers approaching each of the four greens from a variety of angles, giving players the ability to practice every shot imaginable from 100 yards and in.

*Story Continues*



## The Ransom Course (OU) Continued

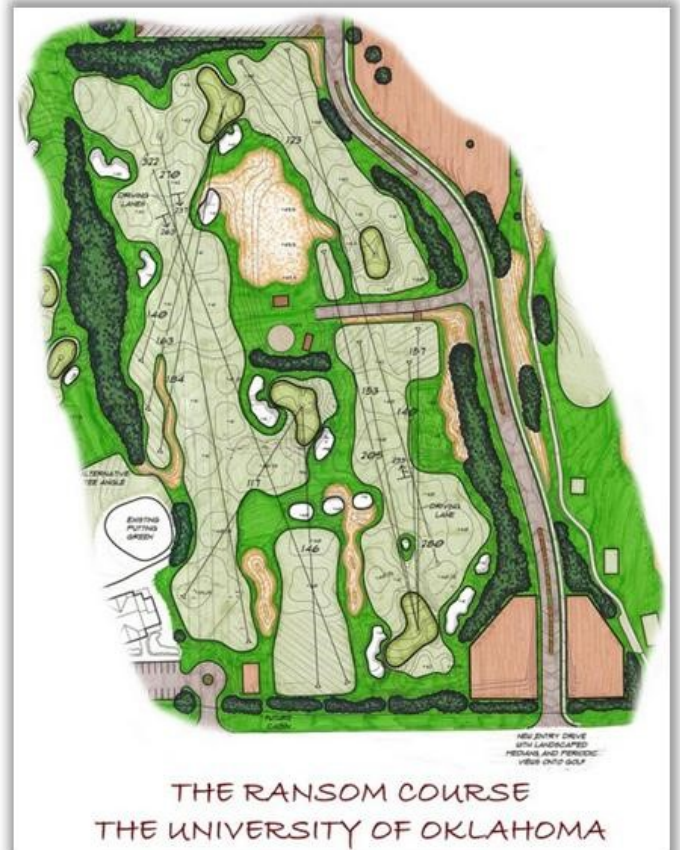
“The key is giving players the ability to practice in a realistic environment and experience real on-course situations,” Davis said. “It is taking variety in practice to another level beyond the typical driving range and short game area.”

With the changes to the golf course and the addition of The Ransom Course, Davis believes the University of Oklahoma will have one of the very best university golf facilities in the country.

“Having played college golf and being part of a National Championship Team here at OU in the 1980’s, I am fortunate to have a unique insight into the college game and how golf teams come together to practice. Eliminating any barriers to how a golf course can be set up to mimic what players may find at any golf course around the country, and eliminating any barriers to how they can practice, is what is of value to a college golf program. We are achieving that at Oklahoma.”

TDA would like to thank golf course builder Course Crafters and acknowledge the great work of Terry Mausbach, project superintendent, and Bill Willingham, shaper. We also thank golf course superintendents Cody Elwood and Eddie Roach and their staff for helping coordinate everything and doing such excellent work establishing the new grass.

A special thanks to Rodney Young, PGA Professional and Manager at the Jimmie Austin OU Golf Club, for his extraordinary ability to provide the vision and knowledge to help the golf facilities at OU become among the very best in the country.





# PROJECT NEWS

## Old American Golf Club, The Colony, Texas



12th Hole

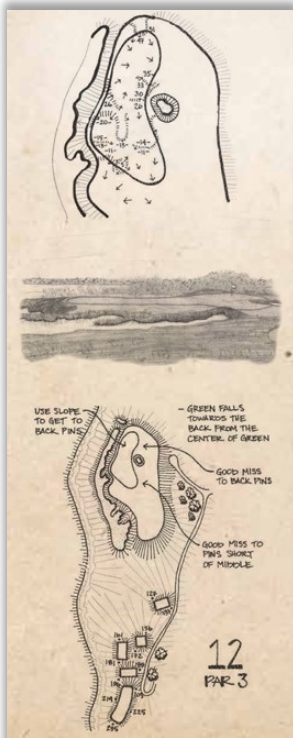
Old American Golf Club, designed by Tripp Davis and PGA TOUR player Justin Leonard, is maturing since its 2011 opening. “The golf course is in the best condition and the course is better each year,” said Mike McCabe, Old American general manager. “The course plays as Tripp described it would mature – firmer and fast, which makes strategic angles ever important to playing well.”

Old American Golf Club has received a number of prestigious accolades since its opening. GOLF Magazine cited Old American as a Must-play golf course in Texas and Golfweek Magazine selected the club at #6 in its 2016 Best in State List: Texas. Golfweek named Old American to its 2012 Best Residential Courses list. Links Magazine chose the club as one of the Best New Courses (U.S.A.) of 2010. The course hosted the 2013 Texas Women’s Open.

The 18-hole layout emphasizes strategy and shot-making and contains natural contours, hazard styles, native grasses and green shapes that were influenced by such masterpieces as Shinnecock Hills, National Golf Links, Prairie Dunes and Crystal Downs. Old American resides on the shores of Lake Lewisville, on the outskirts of Dallas, and fourteen of the holes have lake views.



*Tripp and Justin review the routing map*





# IN THE NEWS

Part 1

## Part Golf Course, Part Practice Ground

BY DAVID GOULD

**T**hese unconventional projects can often be part golf course and part practice grounds, depending on need and preference, even switchable between the two functions. The design trend is seen in facilities like The Proving Grounds outside of Dallas, The Playgrounds in Houston and the 50-acre, walking-only Trilogy Golf Club at Ocala Preserve in central Florida.

They are meant to reward a time investment much shorter than the four-hour round, while moving the time-compressed golfer out of his or her hitting bay on the range into a free-form environment in which creativity – so vital to good golf from inside 150 yards – can blossom. And while such an environment is alluring to score-conscious low-handicappers, these compact hybrid golfscapes are particularly ideal for family golf experiences. And that's important for player development.

Course architect Tripp Davis has been an early exponent of this new approach, helping to convince leaders of Long Cove, an upscale golf community north of Dallas, to try something different. Davis was sure that golfers wouldn't miss having 7,000 yards of golf if they could hustle over to The Proving Grounds and either practice in a round-simulating manner or have a bit of fun playing the loop of short holes that zig-zag around this 17-acre property. The development has been highly successful with its homesites – nearly \$40 million in sales in under two years – which is a bright sign for this alternative golf concept.

"At one end of the spectrum, we drew inspiration from professional practice facilities where players are able to re-create every shot they might encounter on a full course," comments Long Cove's developer, Don McNamara. "At the other end, we wanted a low-pressure environment where a father could actually enjoy teaching a daughter to play, or a whole family could enjoy the game on a summer evening in bare feet." And yes, we do recall that shoeless golf dates back to Sam Snead in his West Virginia boyhood.

Davis found the right balance of the two needs with The Proving Grounds, and probably inspired

another Texas high-end development to the south. Bluejack National, 45 minutes northwest of Houston, does have a Tiger Woods-designed championship 18-hole course, but the heart of the Bluejack golf amenity is its smaller-footprint facility called The Playgrounds, also designed by Woods. True to its whimsical name, The Playgrounds provides "an unstructured golf experience" that makes it easy for family and friends to get in the flow of some ball-striking fun – typically with a half-set of clubs that rests easy on the shoulder. On the same course at the same time, an improvement-minded core golfer could be creating his or her customized scoring-shot challenge. That's an approach to skill-building that dovetails perfectly with the "complete-game" philosophy of such leading golf academies as Arizona-based Vision54, home base of famed coaches Pia Nilsson and Lynn Marriot.

In tandem with design partner Tom Lehman, Davis took things a step further in conceptualizing the Trilogy facility at Ocala Preserve. That design includes an 18-hole par-3 routing, a "Short Loop" within it that provides a six-hole round playable in 60 minutes, plus a "Skills Course" concept within the Short Loop, complete with designated drop-your-ball-here locations about 100 yards out.

If someone wants to stretch their tee-to-green journeys toward a more traditional scale, there is a six-hole course with four par-4s that range from 320 to 440 yards, plus a par-5 with many tees that plays from 90 to 175 yards and a par-5 with a top yardage of 530 yards. Go around that once and you've covered 2,200 yards of golf in about an hour – three times around is an old-fashioned dose of golf, at 6,600 yards.

Facilities and experiences from this new playbook sweep aside the game's intimidation factor. The time issue is also elegantly solved, and meanwhile the latest data on skill acquisition tells us that practicing and experimenting on layouts like these offers the straightest road to improvement. More such projects, with extra twists and wrinkles to increase the appeal, are likely in golf's future. ●



Golf course architect Tripp Davis is an early proponent of compact and hybrid facilities, helping design both Long Cove and Trilogy Golf Club.

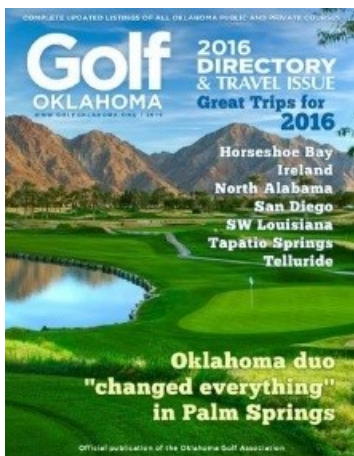


Co-designer Tom Lehman, the 2006 U.S. Ryder Cup Captain, walked with residents of Trilogy Golf Club at Ocala Preserve during the facility's grand opening in February of this year.



The Proving Grounds at Long Cove

**Above: Golf Range Magazine:** "These unconventional projects can often be part golf course and part practice grounds, depending on need and preference, even switchable between the two functions. The design trend is seen in facilities like The Proving Grounds outside of Dallas...and...Trilogy Golf Club at Ocala Preserve in central Florida." – David Gould



### Club & Resort Business Magazine:

"Trilogy GC at Ocala Preserve is all-in on its bet that its unique approach to golf will drive interest to the new development in Florida's horse country."

**Golf Oklahoma:** "Our course is once again a golfer's paradise, a paradise in every sense of the word because of what Tripp and his team have done," said head professional Matt Reams. "We feel like we're back on our way to regaining our proud position."

# MEET TDA'S INTERN: COLTON CRAIG



**Colton at Brook Hollow Golf Club in Dallas, Texas**

Colton Craig joined TDA as an intern in January. His main responsibilities have included helping with Auto CAD, doing renderings, and traveling with Tripp to projects in Oklahoma and Texas. Colton has proven to have a great eye for detail and his knowledge of the history of golf course architecture has surprised Tripp on many occasions.

“We have thoroughly enjoyed having Colton work with us, learn, and take another step towards his dream of becoming a golf course architect,” said Tripp. In early August, Colton will return to Oklahoma State University (OSU), Stillwater, Oklahoma, to complete his final year in the five-year Landscape Architecture program.

An avid golfer, Colton played high school golf and has been passionate about golf course architecture since he was a child growing up around golf in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Prior to his internship at TDA, Colton interned with golf course builder Course Crafters and golf course architects Bill Bergin and Richard Mandell. These internships gave Colton a great background in the industry for such a young person.



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