

U.S. OPEN PREVIEW

Golfweek

JUNE 2018

FOR SERIOUS GOLFERS

The Hills are alive

The national
championship
returns to
Shinnecock,
a classic beauty

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THE **ZIMMERMAN** AGENCY
(continued)

Patience is an Art

Architect's work finally comes to fruition at TPC Colorado

By Martin Kaufmann, BERTHOUD, COLO.

If you want to ponder the fragile existence of a golf course architect, consider Art Schaupeter's work at what has become TPC Colorado.

Schaupeter first walked the property in Berthoud, Colo., 45 miles north of Denver, in 2005. The golf envelope had everything an architect could want: 70 feet of elevation change, three reservoirs and long views of the Front Range. Schaupeter drafted designs, but when the economy stalled, the development stalled.

A decade later Schaupeter learned the project was back on. He finished his plans and arrived back on site in 2015, only to learn the course would become part of the TPC Network. Back to the drawing board.

With an eye toward tournament play, Schaupeter worked with the TPC design staff to soften green contours and move some holes to create better sightlines for spectators. In the end, Schaupeter reasons, this was all for the better.

"Instead of having a development plan with a golf course, we now have a golf course driving the overall plan a little more," Schaupeter said. "It improved the golf course substantially."

TPC Colorado held a soft opening for its 155 founding members over Memorial Day weekend and will begin welcoming public golfers in August, general manager Larry Collins said. A formal opening will take place in 2019, with a Web.com Tour event starting next summer, Collins said.

While much has changed since 2005, one constant was the idea for a short, downhill par 3 directly in front of the clubhouse, with McNeil Reservoir as the backdrop. No. 16 is

dubbed "Center Stage" because it will "get people in the clubhouse and on the golf course connected," Schaupeter said.

At the Tour's suggestion, home lots overlooking the reservoir were moved to make room for two stiff, par-4 closing holes, with the 18th playing 531 yards uphill. Even at altitude, that will be a test.

The effect was to create a hub for spectators and members, who can easily track the drive off No. 1, the approach to the reachable, par-5 15th, and action on the final three holes. The Tour's suggestions helped create a similar viewing hub among holes 4, 11, 12 and 13.

"We always look for a modified core where you have at least two golf holes adjacent, and sometimes you can get three or four, which makes it even better," said Leslie Claytor, the PGA Tour's director of golf course design and construction.

One concern was the peninsular, par-3 eighth hole, with the green resting on Lonetree Reservoir, near a planned beach club and marina. It will require players to walk out to the green, then backtrack to reach the ninth tee.

"Getting people out to that peninsula was worth dealing with pace of play (concerns)," Schaupeter said.

Claytor said, "We didn't think (No. 8) would work," but his team eventually bought into Schaupeter's vision. "When you get out there, you see what he was doing," Claytor said. "It's a cool hole."

In that regard, it has plenty of company at TPC Colorado. **Gwk**

BELOW: Lonetree Reservoir, along with Mt. Meeker and Longs Peak in the distance, forms the backdrop for the approach to No. 9 at TPC Colorado.



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