



Artistry, craftsmanship, and attention to detail never go out of style







SWEETENS COVE GOLF CLUB

Charles Schwab Golf

Challengers Video Series

King-Collins was featured in Season Two of The

Challengers Video Series. “The Dynamic Duo” video

can be viewed on the Charles Schwab Golf website.

“Challengers are the driven few who pursue their passions, test

limits, and drive change. We’re a company that was founded on

the principal of challenging the status quo on behalf of investors.

That’s why we’re proud to present our Challengers video series, which celebrates these unique individuals in the world of golf.

From players and coaches to course architects, club designers,

technology experts, and media disruptors - see what inspires

them to view the world differently.”

Mark Bechtel

Sports Illustrated, November 22, 2019

“Around 5 p.m. on the first Sunday of November, the sun began to

dip behind the mountains that surround South Pittsburg, a sleepy

hamlet in southeast Tennessee, and the golden light illuminating

the two groups still playing one of the most scenic, trendy and

imaginative golf courses in the country started to fade. It was the

kind of tableau that a golf purist might hold up to a nonbeliever

as all that is beautiful, sacred and right about the game..”

“In other words, just your basic Sunday at Sweetens Cove, a nine-

hole course opened in 2014 by architect and designer Rob Collins

and Tad King that has forced the golf community to reconsider

what a course is—and what it can be.”

Dylan Dethier

The New York Times, August 15, 2017

“*Golfweek* listed Sweetens Cove at No. 59 in its top 100 modern

golf courses, a ranking of American courses built since 1960.

Sweetens Cove is ahead of numerous sites that have hosted PGA

Tour events and major championships, including Hazeltine and

Valhalla. Quail Hollow Club, the site of the 2017 P.G.A. Champi-

onship, which concluded Sunday, was behind Sweetens at No. 60.”

Dylan Dethier

Golf Magazine, December 2018 “Next

Best Thing, A Change in Course De-

signers”

“Rob Collins was fighting for his big break, and it finally arrived — in

an unlikely form. He and his course-design partner Tad King took

an insolvent nine-hole golf course on a flat, featureless flood plain

in rural Tennessee and turned it into an imaginative, eye-popping

revelation. The result, Sweetens Cove Golf Club, opened in 2014

and has become a gold standard for modern nine-hole innovative

design.

Collins, 43, has achieved cult-hero status as hype builds around

Sweetens. Now his firm has been called to bid against more re-

nowned designers for gigs. “We’ve scrapped for every bit of work

we’ve gotten,” Collins says, “and we bring that mindset to every

potential new project. People appreciate it.” Prospective sites are

cropping up across the country, from Zac Blair’s Buck Club in

Utah and New York’s Hudson Valley Golf to the Carolinas, Texas,

Michigan and more.”

Will Bardwell

Lying Four, May 7, 2019

“I walked with a pace quick enough to acknowledge that this

aura could not last, but slow enough to soak in each moment. I

stopped to photograph spots on the course that I’d been think-

ing about for months, revisiting them like they were old friends:

the eighth, the fourth, the fifth. The gold in the light could never

have lasted long enough for me to see them all. There are no

weak holes at Sweetens Cove, but that understates the course’s

brilliance: there are no weak places at Sweetens Cove. Every

square foot of ground at Sweetens Cove has purpose; no matter

where you find yourself on the golf course, you are confronted

with questions that must be answered thoughtfully, risks and re-

wards that must be weighed against one another. Perhaps there

are other golf courses that were designed with such remarkable

attention to detail, but I have not yet found them.

I do not say this lightly: Sweetens Cove might be the best golf

course in America. Not the best golf course in Tennessee, or the

best course in the South, or the best nine-hole course. The best,

period. There is a spirituality to this place; in the morning’s earli-

est moments, it is nothing short of ethereal.”

Christian Hafer

Golf Magazine, August 14, 2020

“The darling of the golf world is a nine-hole course with dou-

ble-pinned greens just 30 miles west of Chattanooga, Tenn. Low

in the valley sits nine holes with enough alternate-routing op-

tions to make your head spin. The low-key vibe is the draw at

Sweetens Cove, a South Pittsburg, Tenn., track built by Rob Col-

lins and Tad King in 2014... And as the golf world started finding

it, it blew up. Rightfully so.”

SWEETENS COVE GOLF CLUB

Ran Morrissett

Author, *The Confidential Guide to Golf*

*Courses, v. 2**

“Sweetens Cove is one of the most audacious designs we’ve seen.

[King-Collins] built one of the most diverse and entertaining set

of green complexes found anywhere. This kind of fun, inventive,

quick golf is more commonplace in the UK, which is why the

game is so much healthier there than in America. If you leave

[Sweetens Cove] smiling, don’t panic: golf is supposed to be fun.”

*Sweetens Cove received the highest average rating of ALL golf

courses in Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, & Louisiana.

Paul Rudovsky

Golf Course Rater

“Prior to this afternoon, I had played 1001 golf courses, including

every one of the 318 still existing courses that has ever been listed

on a World Top 100 by Golf Magazine, Golf Digest, and 8 oth-

er well known publications. This afternoon, I played Sweetens

Cove and had so much FUN...the only courses I can think of that

are comparable in terms of fun include Askernish GC (Scotland),

Royal Worlington (England), Royal Dornoch, The Old Course,

Brora, Sand Hills GC, and a few others.”

“Simply Brilliant and brilliantly simple. Hope your phone is ring-

ing off the hook. Thank you for your work and the results!”

Adam Lawrence

Editor, *Golf Course Architecture*

“Sweetens Cove is the best nine hole course I’ve ever played and a

truly outstanding piece of golf design and construction.”

“[The King-Collins] work at Sweetens Cove is remarkable: to take

a flat, boring nine hole course and build something so visually

dramatic and yet such damned good fun to play is, in my opinion,

one of the more impressive golf architectural achievements in re-

cent years. Some will say it is too bold; I disagree. The first and

most important job of a golf course is to put a smile on the face

of those who play it; well, I came off Sweetens Cove wearing the

biggest grin for some considerable time...”

Adam Schupak

Golfweek

“Sweetens Cove lived up to the hype...There are endless possibili-

ties to approaching these wildly imaginative greens, which total

over 100,000 square feet. I left anticipating the change to play it

again - or maybe 255 holes in on day. Sweetens Cove is sweet.

Jeremy Wilson

Paired Up, Profile of Rob Collins, 2018

“That’s why this place is sacred, because every part of his story is

baked into the DNA of the golf course. The signature tree stand-

ing tall behind the green is the New York Times piece, finally put-

ting Sweetens on the map...He pulled his story out of a flat field

in South Pittsburg, TN like a sculpture from a block of marble.”

Anthony Pioppi

Author, *To The Nines*

“Sweetens Cove...harkens back to one of the most influential golf

courses ever built in the United States [Augusta National]...Col-

lins & King have embraced the original MacKenzie-Jones tenets

with gusto. Writing about Augusta then, MacKenzie could have

been describing Sweetens today.”

Graylyn Loomis

Assistant Editor, *Links Magazine*

“I have never had more people to tell me to play a course than

Sweetens Cove...After a few holes you realize the caliber of cham-

pionship golf and think, ‘I’ve got to tell everyone about this...’ At

that point, you’ve accidentally joined the Sweetens Cove cult.”

“Rob Collins and his team transformed a featureless and flat exist-

ing nine-hole course...into a fun and challenging golf experience

that harkens back to the quirky links play at the likes of North

Berwick and Cruden Bay...Sweetens embodies my favorite type of

golf and I cant wait to see the next courses that Rob Collins and

his partner, Tad King, create.”

Golf Inc.

January/February 2016 Issue

“Rob Collins nominated to the Most Influential Architects list by

Ran Morrissett.

SWEETENS COVE GOLF CLUB

Jim Hartsell

Author, *The Secret Home of Golf - Sweetens Cove Golf Club*

“It is not hyperbole to say that the Par 5 1st hole at Sweetens Cove wouldn’t be out of place in The Open Championship. It is that good.”

“With all due respect to The Old Course, I always tell them that in my opinion, [Machrihanish] is The Secret Home of Golf. After spending the day at Sweetens Cove Golf Club, I believe I’ve found the *Secret Home of Golf In America*. I can’t wait to go back and play 36...or 54.”

Andy Johnson

The Fried Egg

“As I reflected on my two-hour drive back to Knoxville, I thought of how Sweetens Cove was in rare air as one of my favorite golf courses because of its beautiful backdrop and world-class architecture. Each shot on the golf course presents unique challenges and multiple shot options to overcome them. Just the type of course I dream about playing from sun up to sun down.”

“I had this surreal day and after I left there for the first time, I was just sitting in my car and it finally hit me that these are the kinds of places that people need to be highlighting.”

Jay Revell

Author, *The Song of Sweetens Cove*

“I’m sitting in a meeting room in Tallahassee, Florida... ..but my golfing soul is somewhere near South Pittsburg, Tennessee. For those in the know, South Pittsburg is home to Sweetens Cove Golf Club, the modern masterpiece of a course hand crafted by King-Collins Golf Course Design. Tad King and Rob Collins are the duo that comprise this golf course design and construction team based out of nearby Chattanooga. The work they have done there has touched a nerve with me. I am just returning from my first trip to this cult phenomenon of a golf course and the slopes, bunkers, and angles are running through my head like the tune of a new favorite song.”

“Like Shoe-less Joe Jackson walking out of a cornfield, you are transported into a world of pure perfection. As you stroll to the teeing ground and the vast landscape unfolds before you, you can’t help but look back receiving the nod in recognition that you have paid your fee and you can go walk up and touch the Mona Lisa.”

Guy Cipriano

Golf Course Industry Magazine

“A nine-hole rural Tennessee course built during the recession might be this decade’s most transcendent golf facility. Revitalized via a rare golf construction project that...reopened and renamed in 2014, and reenergized following glowing profiles in consumer publications, including The New York Times, Sweetens Cove disperses simplicity into an industry filled with complexities. Not many rural golf transformations compare.”

Ron Whitten

Senior Architecture Editor, *Golf Digest*

“Hand-built from the remains of a forgettable nine-holer called Sequatchie Valley, Sweetens Cove was designed and constructed in 2013 by architect Rob Collins and construction partner Tad King. As their debut project, they went all out to make a big impression, with enormous fairways (the seventh and eighth holes share one that’s a hundred yards wide), distinctive greens (the one on the par-3 fourth seems to go on forever, with wings, swales, knobs and corner pockets), and varied bunkering (massive waste bunkers on the third and ninth, tiny pot bunkers on the second and fifth)... At Sweetens Cove, I can easily take in a second loop, or even a third. There seems to be at least three ways to play each of its cleverly-crafted holes. I’d like to bottle it and take it home.”

Golfweek Magazine

May 2019

Sweetens Cove is ranked #49 on the *Top 100 Modern Courses in the United States* list ahead of multiple major championship and Ryder Cup venues in addition to being rated the “#1 Course You Can Play” in Tennessee.

Travis Hill

The Golfer’s Journal, No. 2

“But for those who had heard rumors or read the fawning blog posts from diehards who had made the trek, the response was unabashed envy. ‘Sweetens is more than golf,’ a friend who had played there whispered. ‘It’s a religious experience.’”

The broad swath of the par 5 first hole stretches out beneath the tee complex, which is benched into the hillside near the clubhouse. This visually stunning hole introduces players to many of the larger themes of the golf course, as strategic options, tightly mown turf, the absence of rough, and artistically inspired construction set the tone for the remainder of the round. The reverse redan, punchbowl green complex, which is guarded by a massive bunker lined with railway sleepers, presents golfers with an infinite variety of possible outcomes and shot-making scenarios. These indelible characteristics conspire to create a unique sense of place and a level of texture uncommon to all but a few layouts.

HOLE

1

Sweetens Cove Golf Club



PRE-CONSTRUCTION



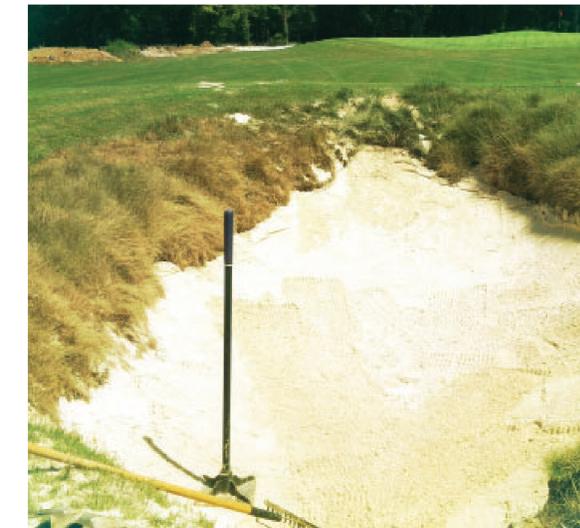
CONSTRUCTION







The 353-yard second hole is a sleeper on the dramatically improved layout. In contrast with the first, the bunkering is much more understated, but no less strategic. A lone, centerline pot bunker seems too small to hit from the tee, but is maddeningly adept at gobbling tee shots. In concert with the remainder of the layout, much of the strategy is dictated by the contours in and around the green complex. A ‘valley of sin’ contour, which is reminiscent of the famous feature on the home hole at St. Andrews, guards the left side of the green and complicates shots for golfers who choose the safe route to the left of the central bunker. Clever golfers will often find that the best way to negotiate the challenges of the bold and intricately detailed putting surface is by using its contours to play away from trouble and have the slope bring the ball around to the hole.



HOLE

2



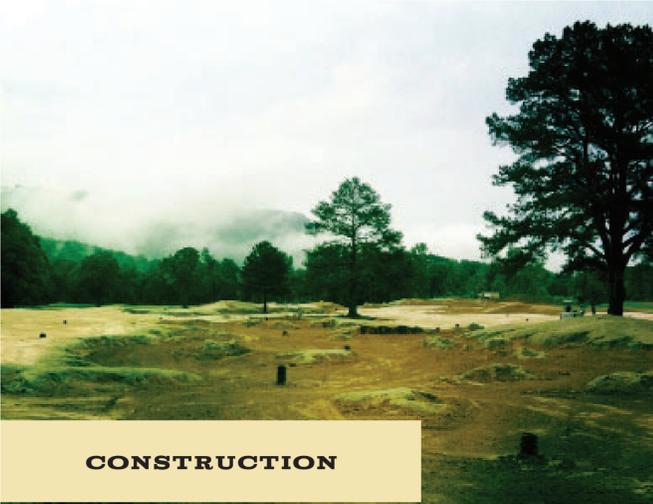






The formerly featureless and utterly bland par five third hole now sports one of the most striking, highly detailed bunkers anywhere on the planet. This massive waste area, which ties into the shaping, strategy, and visual aesthetic of the third, fourth, and fifth holes is the golfer's introduction to our clever use of scale on the renovated layout. The broad, open expanse of the land and the accompanying long views across the property are a central and iconic characteristic of the course. Accordingly, we built features that compliment, rather than detract from, this broad scale. The bunker itself was meticulously hand detailed over thousands of man-hours and, as a result, its refreshingly bold and natural appearance provides a stark contrast to the wholly insipid hazards found on most golf courses. Strategic decision-making again confronts the golfer on every shot. The green, which was constructed behind a large oak tree, begs golfers to attempt creative shots around, over, or underneath its canopy. The boldly contoured putting surface figures directly into the strategy and, again, golfers are asked to consider playing away from certain hole locations in order to work the ball along the ground in order to lie dead at the hole.

Sweetens Cove Golf Club



HOLE
3

















While the first three holes guarantee that players new to the layout are aware that they have encountered a highly unique golf course, the fourth hole obliterates the mold for par 3 construction. While this outrageous and endlessly entertaining hole, which can play from 90 to 200+ yards, borrows characteristics from the Himalayas hole at Prestwick and the 10th at Friar's Head, it manages to boldly present its own distinct characteristics to golfers. Two massive tees, which stretch out perpendicular to the line of play, add endless variety to the hole, as the angle of play, degree of visibility, and distance can vary daily depending upon the placement of the tee marker. When the serpentine 20,000 square foot, heavily undulating green and its endless potential pin placements are added to the unique teeing ground, golfers are ensured that they will encounter a new look and shot-making dilemma each time around.

Sweetens Cove Golf Club



HOLE
4

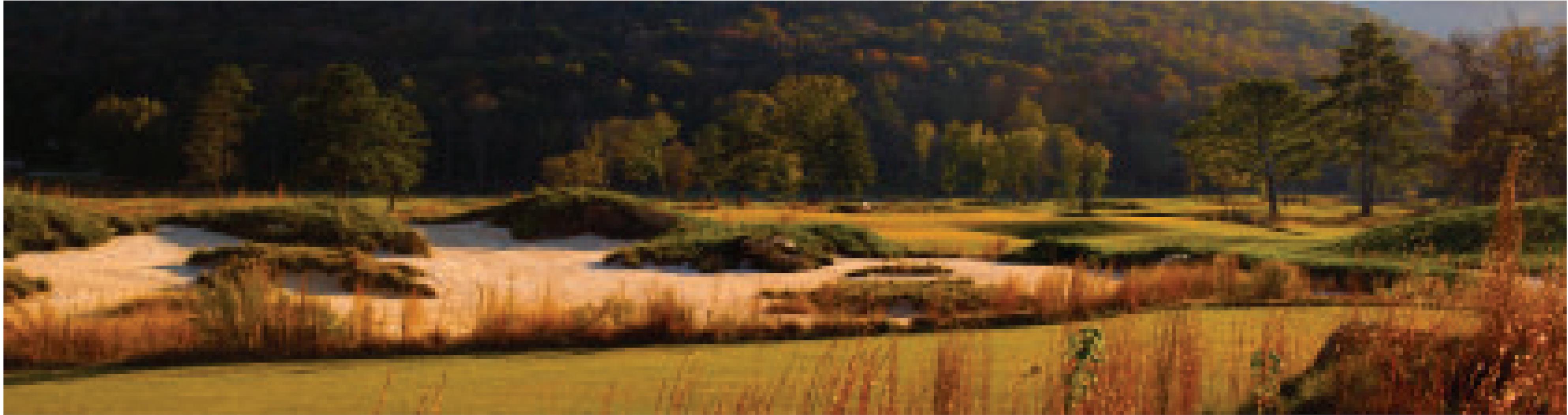


















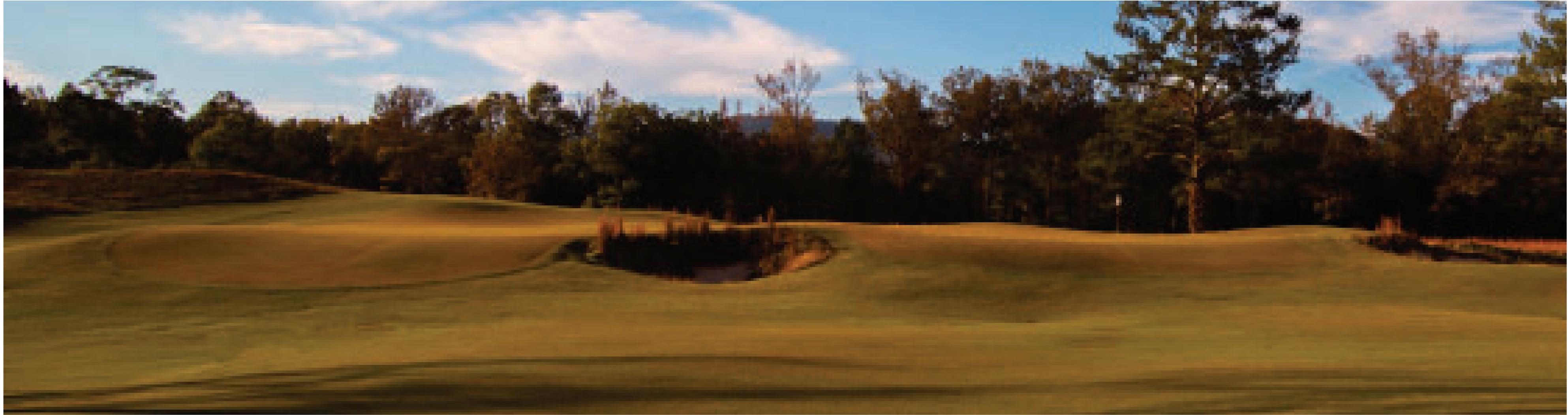
Drivable par fours are considered by many to be the most fun and, when executed properly, the most strategic of holes. It would be understandable to have somewhat of a letdown after the tremendously dramatic fourth hole, but the 283-yard fifth refuses to take a back seat and, as a result, immediately establishes itself as one of the most highly entertaining and strategic short par fours in the world. After a short stroll from the fourth green, players walk across a beautifully constructed boardwalk, through the waste bunker and onto the elevated back tee, which provides a commanding view of the 100-yard wide 5th fairway, waste area, and third fairway. Strategic dilemmas abound as golfers who choose a layup must consider the correct angle of approach into the boldly contoured, boomerang green, as the pin placement will exert a great deal of influence over the optimal area from which to approach the hole. Bold golfers intending to reach the green on the drive must deal with a beautifully constructed greenside hazard, which is adjacent to the waste area, and a devilish, centrally positioned ten-foot deep pot bunker lined with railway sleepers. Once in this hazard, it is possible that multiple strokes will be necessary to successfully escape its depths. Combined with the putting surface and the tightly mown surrounds, this feature ensures that scores ranging from eagle to triple bogey will be common. It is a rare and beautiful paradigm when dramatic opportunities for success and failure reside in such close quarters.

Sweetens Cove Golf Club

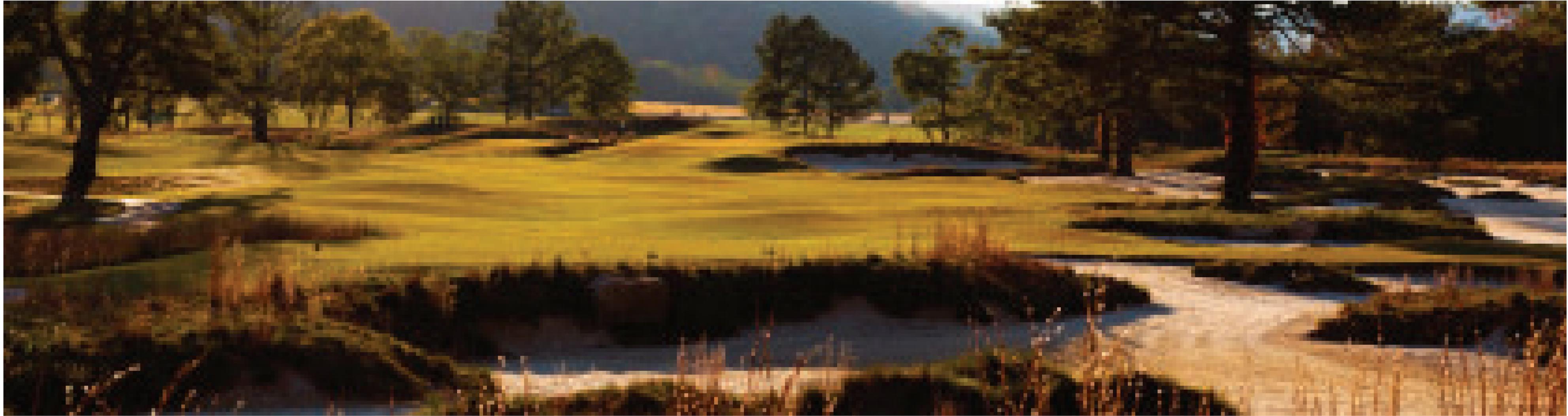


HOLE
5

















One of the most enjoyable aspects to one's round on the course is the natural ebb and flow of the routing. After playing the reachable fifth hole, players are confronted with a 440-yard cape hole, which is the longest par four on the course. The diagonal of the tee shot and green setting, with a far left pin that dangles over the edge of the lake, create a wonderful strategic scenario where players will have the option to attempt an all-or-nothing heroic carry on their approach. For the first time on the course, the players are not asked to deal with any fairway bunkering. Instead, the simple, but effective strategy of the water left and an expansive, 80-yard wide fairway to the right create the challenge, interest, and visual drama on the tee shot. The right-front side of the green is also open, and the uniquely angled putting surface is highly receptive to run-up shots for players who choose to avoid the water on the approach. The most cleverly played shots along the ground also have the opportunity to take advantage of a strong central roll in the green, which can help re-direct balls toward the more difficult to access left-hand pins. For a course that is beautifully arranged for match play, the sixth hole, with its heroic characteristics, will play a central role in determining the outcome of many matches.

Sweetens Cove Golf Club



PRE-CONSTRUCTION



CONSTRUCTION



HOLE

6









Prior to construction, the seventh and eighth holes were far and away the worst holes on a desperately decrepit layout. The playing corridors on both had been senselessly choked out by excessive tree planting campaigns over the 60-year history of the club. Miniature playing corridors, hideous maintenance standards, and bland, target golf were the unfortunate norm for these holes. As if these conditions were not enough, an open concrete ditch bisected the two holes, making lost balls common and already skinny fairways entirely unplayable. When this prior reality is contrasted with the outrageously strategic and fun golf holes that currently occupy the same ground, it is difficult to imagine how this transition was even possible. In a testament to the power of sheer grit and talent, our team transformed these holes into what they are today: back-to-back, short par fours that utilize timeless strategic lessons to their best mutual advantage. Seven and eight share a 150-yard wide fairway full of ridges, strategically placed bunkers, and irregular contours. The previously introduced concept of ‘tightly mown short grass as a hazard’ is the defining characteristic of the two holes. On the 310-yard seventh, two wonderfully artistic and strategic bunkers set the tone for the hole. While the fairway is nearly endless in its scale, clever players will find the skinny section of turf that is most likely to yield birdie putts after the approach. From a difficult to reach slot on the far right side of the fairway, players will learn that the domed green is most receptive from this angle. However, the difficulty increases exponentially the farther you move off of the ideal line of play, as the left side of the green steeply falls away and deflects anything less than a perfectly struck shot. Additionally, the central ridgeline can create visibility and depth perception issues for the golfer who fails or refuses to challenge the bunkering off of the tee. The style of recovery shot chosen around the green will be plentiful, as anything from a putt to a flop shot will be common as players attempt to navigate the challenges presented by the daunting contours in and around the green complex.

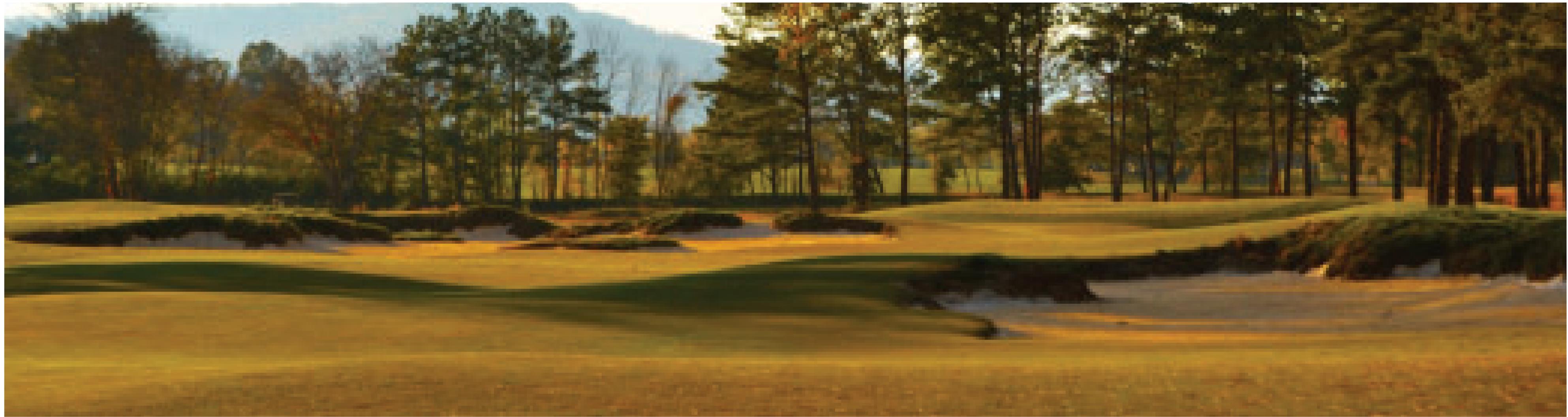
Sweetens Cove Golf Club



HOLE

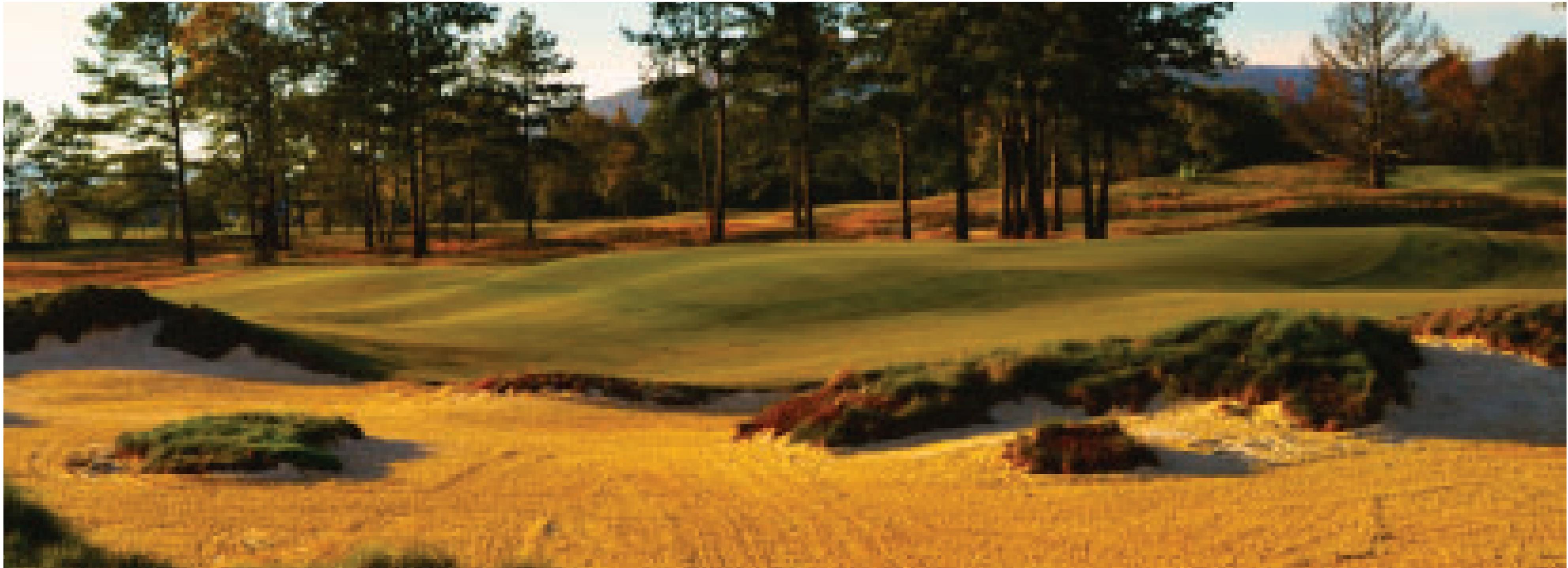
7











At a mere 355 yards, there was a danger that the strategy and playing characteristics of the seventh and eighth holes could be seen as being too similar, and would, therefore, become monotonous over time. At this stage of the round, any such mistake was entirely unacceptable. Fortunately, the eighth stands alone from its cousin, the seventh, but shares important cohesive strategic and shaping characteristics with its natural relative. In contrast with the prior, smallish putting surface, the double plateau eighth is a behemoth at 12,500 square feet, the second largest on the course. Additionally, the angles required for success on the seventh are irrelevant on the eighth, as pin placement on the massive green will dictate the optimal angle of approach from the outrageously wide fairway. Counterintuitively, play from the center of the fairway is the least likely spot to yield low scores or shots that have a reasonable chance to rest near the hole. Instead, the well-protected outer margins of the hole will provide the clever player with the best angle of approach to the surreal putting surface. As if it were a clock in a Salvador Dali painting, the green seems to drape over its surroundings, the outrageous contours deflecting any less than ideally struck shots to the immense, tightly mown and topographically heaving surrounds. In a flattering comparison, the eighth green has drawn comparisons to the all-world sixteenth at North Berwick. While it is impossible to re-create the feel of an iconic masterpiece like the aforementioned green, our eighth certainly provides immense playing interest with its massive playing corridor, irregular topography and green that contains a 4-6' deep swale running through its interior.

Sweetens Cove Golf Club



PRE-CONSTRUCTION



CONSTRUCTION



HOLE
8











On a golf course intended to sustain and promote the superior form of golf, match play, it was of paramount importance to end the round with a bold, strategic, and highly visual flourish. How to accomplish such lofty goals on a site that would only yield a short par 3 finish of only 90-140 yards? The flamboyant answer to this question is our ninth hole, a hybrid of two of the most iconic par three designs in the world, the 'short' and the 'redan'. Nowhere else on earth is there a green that captures the soul of these seemingly divergent design templates in one hole. Depending upon the tee and pin location, the hole can play within either style or as a hybrid. On a course full of extreme, but highly playable features, the ninth stands alone as a bold and singular test of one's mettle to stand on the tee, with a match on the line, and hit the shot necessary to achieve success. The green, through intensive site work, maintains its playability in spite of a ten (10') foot fall from its highest to lowest point. Brilliant shots to the far left pin may avoid the highly artistic, but intimidating, front and back bunkers by utilizing the slope to carry the ball along the ground for roll of over 120'. As if this dramatic shaping was not enough, the hole is cut directly underneath the amphitheater-like clubhouse setting, an area from which friends will watch friends succeed or fail on the final shot on our remarkably distinctive layout.

Sweetens Cove Golf Club



HOLE

9





