



Audubon CC completes final phase of three-year renovation project

Golf course architect Drew Rogers has completed the final phase of a three-year renovation project at Audubon Country Club in Naples, Florida.

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Audubon is a private golf community with a course originally designed by Joe Lee and built in 1989. The course has numerous lakes and holes fronting coastal estuaries and mangrove islands. Natural preserve areas separate holes from the surrounding housing.

“Over time, the original greens had become adulterated by years of topdressing and mowing patterns,” said Rogers. “Most of the greens drained very poorly and their shapes became circular or oval and the surface contours had very little character of movement. The club expressed a strong desire for more inspired contouring and greens that were more interesting but also fitting with their surrounds. These are traits and conditions that I see very often and are consistent with how many courses in South Florida evolve over time.”

The course closed for six months this summer while contractor Glase Golf Construction rebuilt and recontoured all eighteen greens. Surfaces were replaced with TifEagle bermuda and new green irrigation was installed.

“My challenge in redesigning the greens was to minimise the impact of the work area – to keep the new greens within the original fill pads – while also expanding the surfaces to recapture lost cupping areas and to better integrate the perimeter contours into the greens themselves,” said Rogers. “I worked very closely with Glase Golf Construction to achieve the proper balance of enhanced contouring, but within the context of the original setting, and within an acceptable playability tolerance for the members.”

Rogers, working alongside golf course superintendent Kenyon Kyle, also oversaw the enlargement and enhancement of the short game practice area. The club has also installed a new brick-paved golf cart staging area and worked on native landscaping.

Previous phases of the project saw tees and fairways converted from #419 bermuda to Celebration Bermuda, plus work on tees and bunkers, in two phases in 2015 and 2016.

“Our members have found the new greens to be challenging and more fun to play,” said Rick Bintzler, green committee chair at Audubon Country Club. “This was a well-planned, phase renovation that demonstrates the club’s commitment to continuously improve our facilities.”

“I’m really proud of this set of greens!” concluded Rogers. “I think we far exceeded everyone’s expectations.”