

Big data's big promise

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Golf Inc.™

SUMMER 2021



RealFood's Ed Doyle

San Vicente Golf Resort
Ramona, Calif.

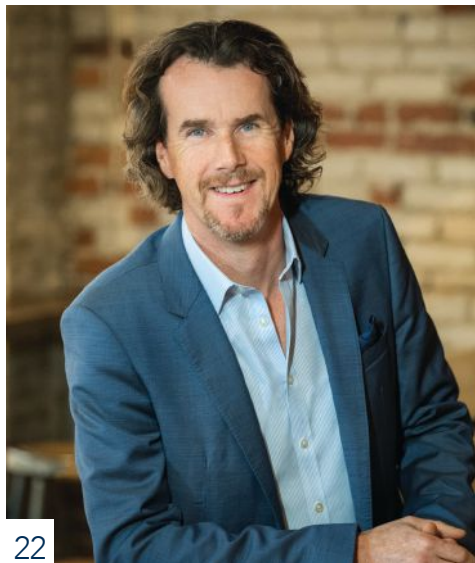
2021 RENOVATION OF THE YEAR

RESTORING HISTORICAL DESIGN

Diablo Country Club and San Vicente Resort take top honors in this year's competition.

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COVER PHOTO BY MICHAEL GAINEY

2021 RENOVATION OF THE YEAR

Restoring HISTORICAL design

Diablo Country Club and San Vicente Resort take top honors
in this year's competition.

by Michelle Weyenberg

It's not out of the ordinary for clubs and courses rich in history to undergo renovations to restore their original appeal while also modernizing playability for today's golfer. What can be out of the ordinary is the scope and brilliance of such projects.

Several have reached that lofty goal and are winners in Golf Inc.'s 2021 Renovation of the Year competition.

The course at member-owned Diablo Country Club near Danville, Calif., took the top award in the Private Club category. The goal of the project was to restore the feeling of the 100-plus-year-old golf course and pay homage to its original design.

"I couldn't be more thrilled with the dramatic improvements that have evolved in this massive renovation and restoration project," said golf course architect Todd Eckenrode, ASGCA.

The other winners in the Private Club

category were The Ocean Course at Ponte Vedra Inn & Club in Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla., second place; and Fox Chapel Golf Club in Pittsburgh, third place.

Capturing honorable mention were: Shadow Wood Country Club's Preserve Course in Estero, Fla.; the Lower Course at Baltusrol Golf Club in Springfield, N.J.; and Kenwood Country Club in Cincinnati.

San Vicente Golf Resort in Ramona, Calif., is the Public Course winner. The goal of its renovation was to create a unique and interesting design that improved playability and sustainability.

In the Public Course category, The Refuge in Flowood, Miss., was second, and The Yards in Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla., was third.

Judging for all Renovation of the Year entries was based on achievement of goals, improved playability, maintainability and course aesthetics. Winners were chosen through blind judging.

PRIVATE CLUBS

First Place

Diablo Country Club

Diablo, Calif.

Owner: Member owned

Architect: Todd Eckenrode, Origins Golf Design

Contractor: Landscapes Unlimited

Cost: \$10 million

This once proud classic, which opened in 1914, is now a reflection of its glory days after 10 months of renovation. Extensive historical research paid big dividends, as all aspects, including tees, bunkers, greens and surrounds, are back to the original design, but with minor modifications for ease of maintenance.

Large areas of native habitat and natural waterways were restored, and an original natural hazard was re-created, all while taking steps to improve water quality and runoff issues.

Approximately 30 acres of turf was converted to native grass meadows, providing natural habitat corridors and significantly reducing maintenance costs.

Tees were redesigned into free-form shapes and combined in many instances.



PUBLIC

3 AFTER

1ST



3 BEFORE

First Place

San Vicente Golf Resort

Ramona, Calif.

Owner: San Diego Country Estates Association

Architect: Staples Golf Design

Contractor: Heritage Links

Cost: \$2.9 million

San Vicente Golf Resort celebrated the grand opening of its newly renovated course in May, nearly 50 years after its original opening in 1973. For the first time in its history, San Diego Country Estates Association took significant steps to fix green consistency, turf quality, drainage and overall agronomic health of the entire golf facility.

“In 2019, we hired one of the best architects in the United States, Andy Staples,” said Mario Trejo, general manager of San Vicente Golf Resort. “His vision and passion for doing things right are very impressive.”

The near 10-month renovation of the course, described as an inland links style course, focused on reconstruction of 19 putting greens, 56 new and updated sand bunkers, re-grassing and a set of family friendly scoring tees on each hole. Some trees were removed to improve air circulation and increase sunlight. Other improvements were made to select cart paths, beautification of surrounding vegetation and increased drainage of fairways.

Owners say they now have the ability to market the course to a wider audience, which in turn will result in increased revenue.

What the judges said:

“A fantastic realization of the overall vision for the project. The effort to increase sustainability and reduce their environmental footprint was successfully implemented, while also creating a stunning visual enhancement to the course.”

— *Jerame Miller*

“Wonderful to see a project achieve all the goals of improved infrastructure and ease of maintenance but still deliver on the aesthetic appeal and strategic interest. It has the feel of golden age Thomas or Mackenzie in 1930s California.”

— *Matthew Dusenberry*

“Improvements to infrastructure, playability and aesthetics are impressive.”

— *Martin Elgison*

PHOTOS BY MICHAEL GAINNEY