

Dubsdread Golf Club renovation honored by ING for its win-win-win accomplishments

February 4, 10:46 AM · Michael Jamison - Orlando Golf Examiner



Golf course architect Mike Dasher has lived in his College Park, FL, home for three decades, just a 9-iron away from the 7th green of the municipally owned Dubsdread Golf Club near downtown Orlando. He loves the charming neighborhood, and with equal passion the Dubsdread layout that he has played “probably fifteen hundred times.” It is a golf course that hosted Hogan, Snead and the like in the early half of the 20th century, and whose narrow fairways today are constantly full of Orlando-area residents.

But poor drainage, a product of non-existent stormwater regulations during the boom time of the region, began eating away at both his golf course and his neighborhood in recent years.

So after the storms of 2004, Dasher and Orlando city engineer Rick Howard brainstormed the beginnings of a plan that would not only solve the drainage problems in his neighborhood and irrigation concerns on his favorite golf course, but would also create stormwater solutions for the area for years to come.

And last week, the work of Dasher, the city of Orlando and the management company of Kitson & Partners was recognized by the non-profit International Network of Golf. The project won the Golf Course Architecture category of the 16th Annual ING Industry Honors, presented at the PGA Merchandise Show.

The course shut down in March of 2007 and Dasher began his magic. His team constructed six new ponds, expanded several existing ones, and built an aqua driving range. It is that lake that takes in a good portion of the runoff from the course and surrounding neighborhood.

“Over 70 percent of what was total annual pollutant into Little Lake Fairview is now being treated as the water cascades through the series of ponds we added on the course,” said Dasher. “We were able to add features on the golf course that affect strategy and also treat the water.”

And there was one other environmental benefit. State-approved expansion of nearby Interstate 4 by 2012 was going to require stormwater drainage. The Department Of Transportation would have to purchase private property from homeowners to amass the land on which to build these retainer ponds.

The Dubsdread renovation provides an alternative. The DOT added funding to the project, and the basics are in place to handle that stormwater drainage once the project kicks off. Homeowners’ property was saved.

While the environmental benefits of this project were undeniable, there was some risk for Kitson & Partners and the city of Orlando in shutting down the course for over a year, and tinkering with a very popular track.

“To be honest, I was a little skeptical of what would happen with the project,” said Rodney Reifsnider, general manager at Dubsdread. “It was difficult to envision Dubsdread being anything other than what it was.”

Not long after Orlando Major Buddy Dyer officially re-opened Dubsdread with a tee shot on the morning of July 10, Reifsnider’s fears disappeared. Dasher’s work has been well received, and the golfers have returned in droves.

The major personality trait of Dubsdread pre-renovation was its demand for accuracy. One might think that adding approximately 10 acres of water would tighten the course even more. But Dasher suggests otherwise.

“By lowering some of the areas along the rough and beside the greens, we were able to add banking and mounding that helps keep the ball in play,” said Dasher. “That is one of the little tricks we used to make the course play wider.”



New ponds enhance course, provide neighborhood drainage

So in the end, a golf course and its aqua driving range played a key role in a very positive project for the city, the neighborhood and the environment. A true win/win/win.

“You still find yourself amidst 90 year old oak trees,” said Kitson V.P. John Fogel. “The course still has that 1920’s and 30’s feel from tee to green. You still see beginners and scratch golfers playing together. Players of all ages can still walk or ride and feel like they belong here....if not belong here.”

And there is one person in particular who is pleased and relieved that the project turned out well.

“It is right here in my neighborhood,” said Dasher. “I was on this job site more than any other because every morning I walk my dog. If it turned out great I’m a hero. If it turned out bad, they know where to look for me.”

For more info: www.historicaldubsdread.com,
www.kitsonpartners.com,
www.pgamerchandiseshow.com, www.inggolf.com,
www.dashergolfdesign.com

Copyright 2009 Examiner.com. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed.

Author



Michael Jamison is an Examiner from Orlando. You can see Michael's articles at:

["http://www.examiner.com/x-2654-Orlando-Golf-Examiner"](http://www.examiner.com/x-2654-Orlando-Golf-Examiner)