

Salishan renewed

MAJOR RENOVATION BRINGS NEW LUSTER TO OREGON COURSE

by
HAL
PHILLIPS

Salishan Golf Links, the course that once first showcased the golfing promise of Oregon's coastline, reopened following a major redesign by Jacobsen Hardy Golf Course Design. Featuring 18 new greens, an additional 400 yards and new views of the Pacific Ocean and Siletz Bay, Salishan, located in Gleneden Beach, Ore., has reclaimed its standing as

one of the Northwest's top golf resorts.

"The major changes needed at Salishan were to identify drainage of the entire course and make the greens playable and receptive," says Oregon native Peter Jacobsen, PGA Tour veteran and partner with Jim Hardy in Houston-based Jacobsen Hardy. "I feel we accomplished both of those goals, but we did a lot more than that."

The Salishan layout was completely rebunkered, and one hole, the par-3 15th, was completely reimagined.

"The most dramatic change is the new No. 15," Jacobsen says. "Instead of a blind, uphill par 3, it's now a downhill par 3 playing directly toward the Pacific Ocean on the horizon. It's one of the exciting changes and improvements that we feel puts Salishan back on the map of tremendous Oregon golf courses."

Complete renovation

After purchasing Salishan in 2003, Eugene-based owner Spring Capital Group embarked on a multi-million-dollar renovation of The Lodge at Salishan. This fall, Salishan's day spa will open. But most important to golfers, Spring Capital committed \$3 million to Jacobsen Hardy's course upgrade.

Opened in 1965, Salishan Golf Links pioneered the Oregon coast for resort golf. Bordered by the Pacific Ocean to the west and the saltwater Siletz Bay to the north, Salishan attracted golfers because of its scenic location. However, the golf course never took maximum advantage of its location, according to Jacobsen. The layout was short, 6,000 yards, and throughout time, the course developed major drainage problems.

"One of our primary goals with the restoration of this course was to bring it into the 21st century," says Mark Swift,

Salishan's director of golf. "Technology of course design and maintenance had passed us by, and we wanted to preserve Salishan's place as one of the finest golf courses in the Pacific Northwest."

Focus on the course

Salishan was a tired golf course and needed more than minor improvements, according to Rex VanHoose, Jacobsen Hardy's senior architect in charge of the Salishan project.

"We solved the drainage issues, but we also brought a coherent strategy to the entire design," VanHoose says. "Peter's always telling us to let the land be the hero, and that's what we did here. The holes relate much better to the terrain now. I never suspected that we could change things so dramatically on every hole."

Salishan's new 10th hole illustrates the scope of Jacobsen Hardy's work. What had been a downhill, straightaway par 5 of 440 yards, with a perpetually soggy fairway, is now a dry, 457-yard double-dogleg thanks to strategic, fairway-pinching bunkers and a green that sits 30 yards to the right of the old one.

"It's a great improvement, but we also created a tremendous view of Siletz Bay behind the green," says VanHoose. "When we got there, the view was completely hidden by dense grouping of trees. You didn't even know the bay was there until you got to the 11th tee. Now you see it from 10th tee."

"The 10th and 11th (a 202-yard par-3 hole) both capitalize on the ambience of Siletz Bay in ways they never did before. The 11th green used to sit below a dike that runs along the bay's edge. We built up a new putting surface to the dike's elevation, so now you're looking out over the water across a horizon green. We also incorporated a sweeping dune feature behind the green, covered in beach grass, to provide a real sense of arrival on the links nine."

AT A GLANCE:

Salishan Golf Links

www.salishan.com

Location:	Gleneden Beach, Ore.
Course Type:	Resort
Cost:	\$3 million
Construction began:	Aug. 18, 2003
Course opened:	Nov. 15, 2003 (course opened Memorial Day weekend, 2004)
Yardage:	6,470
Par:	71
Number of bunkers:	58
Average green size:	5,000 square feet
Greens:	100-percent <i>poa annua</i>
Tees:	bluegrass/rye mix
Fairways:	bluegrass/rye mix
Accent:	native and beach grasses
Slopes:	134 from the back, 130 from the middle, 128 from the forward
Ratings:	72.2, 70.4, 71.3
Professional:	Mark Swift
Director of Golf:	Mark Swift
Superintendent:	Ryan Bancroft
Architects:	Jim Hardy and Rex VanHoose
Design Firm:	Jacobsen Hardy
Design Builder:	Eagle View Golf

Owner Spring Capital Group invested \$3 million to renovate Saishan Golf Links. Below are the 14th (background) and 15th greens (foreground).

Photo: Saishan Golf Links

foot spacings. They all meet at a trunk line that carries off and discharges the water. It's an incredible process that helped us meet a tight construction schedule. It cut down our soil disturbance obviously, but it also freed us from going back and re-establishing or improving the existing grade, which was maintained."

Greens Improvement

The greens Jacobsen Hardy encountered prior to the renovation at Salishan were severely contoured and averaged 5,000 square feet in size. The green contours, designed in the 1960s when mowing heights ranged from 9/32 to 1/4 of an inch, were a continual source of frustration for resort guests. Presently, the *poa annua* putting surfaces are

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cut at 1/8 to 1/10 of an inch.

"The greens at Salishan had become unplayable and unfair, and pin placements were scarce," VanHoose says. "This is not to say that greens today can't be designed with significant movement. To make them fair, however, the size of the green must increase to allow for this movement and for multiple pin placements. Because we were salvaging the existing turf from the existing green surfaces (100 percent pure *poa annua*), we were confined to the same average green

size. In response to lower mowing heights, greater green speeds and 5,000-square-foot greens, we redesigned the putting surfaces with softer contours — no slope greater than 3 percent. The new greens offer subtle movement within each surface, creating a fair and playable test that's plenty challenging, too." GCN

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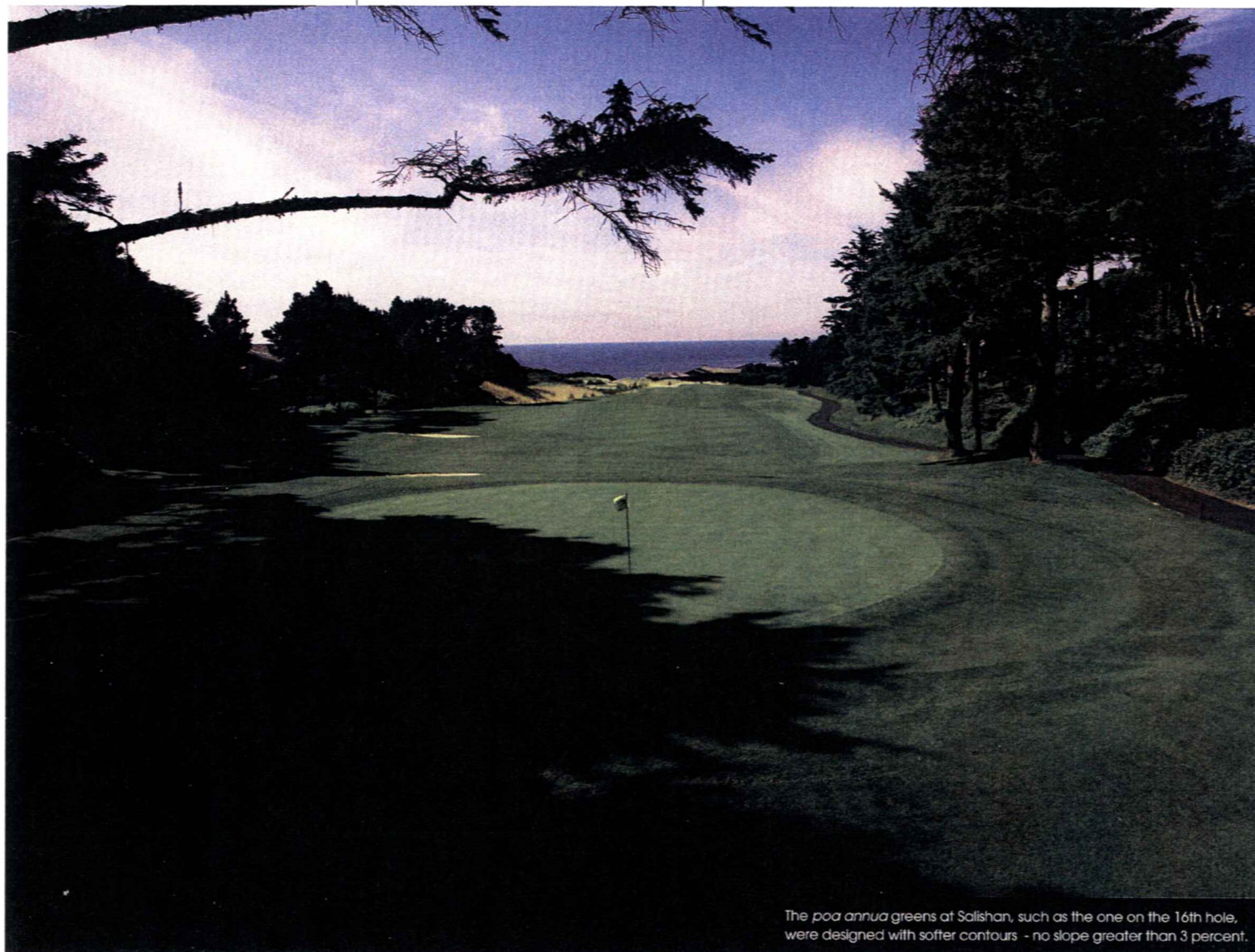


Photo: Salishan Golf Links

The *poa annua* greens at Salishan, such as the one on the 16th hole, were designed with softer contours — no slope greater than 3 percent.