

## **Sanford Golf Design completes Hacienda Bay in Egypt**

New resort layout finally on verge of opening following series of disruptions to construction.

### **Sanford Golf Design has completed work on the new Hacienda Bay golf course in El Alamein, Egypt.**

The course first entered construction in January 2008, but the development was put on hold as a result of the Arab Spring in 2010. Prior to construction resuming in 2014, golf course architect John Sanford was asked to reduce the size of the course and practice area to make space for additional housing.

Seven holes (one to five, seventeen and eighteen) were redesigned to make way for more villas. These holes were partially constructed so some were rebuilt to accommodate the new plan.

“Originally the course was to be of championship length and quality, primarily for European tourists,” said Sanford. “However, the market strategy changed with the Arab Spring. The owner also wanted to make the course accessible to Egyptians who purchased villas in the resort. We designed a lighted promenade around the perimeter of the layout with a trail through the course to a promontory with views of the Mediterranean Sea.

“Initially we hired American supervisors, shapers, finishers and irrigation installers to build the course along with Egyptian labourers. When the Arab Spring happened all the ex-pats went home, except construction supervisor Marty Dye. During the three years that construction was delayed, Marty taught five young Egyptians how to shape, finish and install irrigation. These young men learned quickly and took pride in their work.

“With the assistance of Raed Madkour [project engineer and translator] they learned to speak English. When the Arab Spring ended, construction resumed with the new crew,” continued Sanford. “At first I was skeptical, but they were determined to build the course according to my direction and did a fine job finishing the golf course.”

“Naturally, I like the whole course, but sixteen, seventeen and eighteen stand out as potential big ‘swing’ holes. The sixteenth is a medium-length par three with a peninsula green surrounded by water. seventeen has a double fairway split by desert, it’s typically down wind and potentially a drivable par four; and the eighteenth is a long, demanding par four dogleg left with water on the right side of the second shot.”

Turf areas were limited to conserve water and planted with Platinum Paspalum. “The balance of the course is desert-scape, as water is a precious commodity. The water source is a combination of treated effluent and wells, with local government supply as a backup.”

The golf course is planned to open in summer 2021.