

New courses earn honors

Tullymore, The Tribute, Forest Dunes gain plaudits

BY MIKE TERRELL

Special to the Record-Eagle

While Michigan's new golf course construction has slowed to the point that the state no longer leads the nation in the number of new course openings each year, it remains at the top of the list in producing national award-winning designs.

Three new area courses, all opened to the public for the first time last season, have garnered national attention by being named among the top new courses that you can play in the United States. All located within an hour's drive of Traverse City, the trio includes: Tullymore, located near Big Rapids; The Tribute, located at the Otsego Club near Gaylord; and Forest Dunes, located in jack pine highlands between Grayling and Roscommon.

Tullymore, designed by award-winning Colorado golf course architect Jim Engh, was recently ranked as one of the top 100 Golf Digest courses in the country; a heady award for a brand new course. Located just south of Big Rapids, this stunning layout features dramatic finger bunkering filled with white sugar-like sand, a wide variety of green shapes and sizes.

The course, gracefully spread out

over 800 acres, measures over 7,100 yards from the tips. Five sets of tees allow you as much challenge as you can handle. A slope rating of 148 from the back tees makes it one of the more difficult courses in the Wolverine State. Cavemous bunkers, surrounded by thick grassy slopes, an Engh design characteristic, define the bowled—rather than elevated—greens.

Tullymore's signature hole, the par-three No. 12, was designed to simulate one of the most famous holes in Ireland; the Dell hole at Lahinch Golf Club. Much of the hole is hidden by a hillside, an unusual feature for a par-three.

For more information on Tullymore and its sister course St. Ives, call (800) 972-4837 or click on www.stivesgolf.com.

The Tribute, the newest links at Gaylord's Otsego Club, opened last season to rave reviews and garnered a Sports Illustrated Top 10 New Course of the Year Award along the way. Playing up and down the highlands above the Sturgeon River Valley, it offers dramatic golf and even more dramatic views.

Spread out over 1,100 acres, it's a massive natural design with generous, wide fairways and large undulating greens. From the tips it's literally a monster measuring over 7,300

yards, but four and, on some holes, five sets of tees offer golfers reasonable choices. Only twice during the entire round do you encounter another hole on the Gary Koch-Rick Robinson designed course.

For more information or to book a tee time, call (877) 465-3475 or click on www.otsegoclub.com.

Forest Dunes, the new Tom Weiskopf course located between Grayling and Roscommon, has been added to this year's Golf Magazine prestigious list of Top 10 Courses You Can Play in America.

Weiskopf completed his work on the course nearly three years ago, and, initially, it was never intended to be open to the public. The original developer lost the property in a court battle, and the new owners decided to open the facility to the public for limited play until membership roles are filled; not unlike other, similar golf properties around northern Michigan have done.

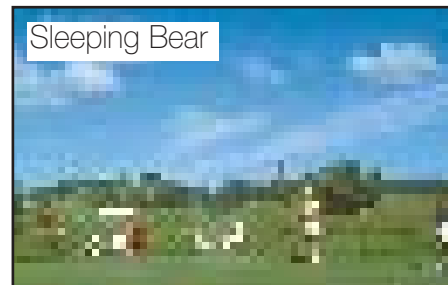
Eight-square miles of forested state and federal land surround a spectacular layout. Forest Dunes is reminiscent of Weiskopf's award winning Arizona courses with natural sand dunes highlighted by native grasses, flora and century-old red

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AREA GOLF LISTINGS

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course opened for play a few years ago amid kudos from players of all abilities and ages. It features natural terrain and outstanding views of the Leelanau Peninsula. The yardage is 6,651 from the back tees.



Sleeping Bear

Located on Otto Road, 3 miles south of Suttons Bay, 271-2020.

Leland Country Club: A private golf club with 18 holes that overlooks Lake Leelanau. Located in Leland.

Northport Point: A nine-hole private course near Northport.

Sleeping Bear Golf Club: Formerly the North Course at the Leelanau Country Club, the course is one of the area's longest at 6,800 yards from the championship tees. Call 228-7400 or 1-888-228-0121.

Veronica Valley: Veronica Valley is a scenic course that plays to a par 35 and 3,203 yards. Located on County Road 641, 5 miles south of Lake Leelanau. 256-9449.

MANISTEE COUNTY

Arcadia Bluffs Golf Club: One of the most beautiful courses in northern Michigan, Situated 150 feet above the Lake Michigan shoreline, it offers spectacular views from virtually every vantage point. The 18-hole, par-72 course has no water hazards, making it look like a seaside

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