

## GCC Farm Course gets a big makeover

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By [GERALD WITT](#)

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GREENSBORO — The course redesign at Greensboro Country Club's Farm Course is unique because there was more space to add than usual, the course designer said.

So during the recent construction that left the course chewed up for more than a year, five holes were recreated.

"I don't think I've been given a property where there's so much new possibility," said course architect Donald Steel .

Steel has shaped three courses at the historic St. Andrews Links in Scotland, among others in the British Isles and the world.

Golf Digest honored one of his designs, The Highland Course at Primland in Meadows of Dan, Va., as the best new course of 2007 with a greens fee greater than \$75.

Steel is in Greensboro this weekend for the official opening of the redesigned Farm Course, though it had a soft opening at the start of this year. The course is private, meaning one must be a member or be invited to play.

Usually courses up for a redesign are landlocked, but the new layout makes use of what was Greensboro Country Club's driving range. Steel stretched the course 388 yards.

"I remember one day being out with the redesign committee and Mr. Steel being out there on the 14th tee," said Farm Course golf pro Mary Thomas . "And there was a wooded lot behind the hole and he said, 'This is where I'm going to put the fifth tee.'"

She said that the members gave Steel a free hand on designing the course within the roughly \$3 million budget .

Old greens were replaced and fairway bunkers are deeper and more challenging. There are longer drive opportunities, and a golfer's short game is more essential. Thomas called it tough but fair.

Some parts won't appear the same to those who haven't been to the Farm Course in a while, according to Steel.

"And I think the aesthetics have been improved," Steel said, adding that water hazards and features are more prominent.

Thomas sees the change, and the challenge.

"I'm getting used to hitting out of the new bunkers," she said with a chuckle. "They're definitely challenging."

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