

· 2008 EDITION ·

THE TRAIL **GUIDE**

THE OFFICIAL GUIDE TO



ALABAMA'S ROBERT TRENT JONES GOLF TRAIL





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OFF THE TRAIL

BY GOVERNOR BOB RILEY,
STATE OF ALABAMA

Being governor doesn't allow me to spend time on a golf course, but travels on government business have given me a unique perspective of the impact of golf on Alabama.

During service in Congress and now as governor while seeking international investments in our state, I often find that the image of Alabama precedes our arrivals. Sometimes it's the chairman of the corporation or a vice president, but it's usually early in our visit that someone will ask: have you played the Golf Trail and then proceed to name courses they've heard about.

The first few times that happened I was surprised, but not any more. The Golf Trail has accomplished precisely what the head of the Retirement Systems of Alabama set out to do; David Bronner has helped reshape the image of our state.

Fifteen years ago few associated Alabama with world-class golf. Since the opening of the Trail, corporate decision-makers and opinion leaders from around the world have discovered that our state offers private-club golf at municipal-course greens fees. People who probably never had a reason to visit Alabama have made repeat visits to experience all 468 holes at 11 locations. Now, more than half a million golfers a year play the Trail. The success of the Trail has encouraged other resort developers to invest in quality golf and prompted local country clubs to upgrade their courses.

As a result, readers of *Golf Digest* voted Alabama's Trail number one in the world for value and in the top ten for quality. Newspapers from Los Angeles to Scotland rave about golfing in Alabama.

More importantly, the Trail has improved the quality of life in our state and made it more appealing to investors. Shortly after the first courses opened, Mercedes-Benz decided to locate their first American plant near Tuscaloosa, and recently celebrated their first 10 years by doubling the size of the facilities. Honda followed with a large assembly plant east of Birmingham and Hyundai opened its first North American plant in Montgomery. Within the space

of 10 years, Alabama has become the nation's third largest automotive manufacturer.

Last year, the largest European steel company selected Mobile for its first American plant, in part, to provide steel for our booming automotive industry. The Thyssenkrupp plant will be one of the largest single private investments in the U.S. in decades.

Our residents have a remarkably strong work ethic and they produce superior-quality products. We have no difficulty making the short list of states that international companies consider for future investments.

Alabama is on a roll. I'm delighted that you and your party are spending time (and money) in our state.

Good luck on your game. In case you find tomorrow frustrating, just remember what Dr. Bronner said, "nobody remembers easy courses".

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bob Riley". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Governor

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THE TRAIL GUIDE 2008 EDITION



Golf landscape photography throughout by Michael Clemmer.

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ON THE COVER

No. 10 on The Falls Course at Magnolia Grove on The Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail in Mobile.

Magnolia Grove will be the site for a new full-field LPGA event in September of 2008.

Photography by Michael Clemmer.





The Capitol Hill Clubhouse glistens at the end of day from this view on Legislator No. 18.

DR. DAVID G. BRONNER...

A TRUE VISIONARY

BY IAN THOMPSON

WHEN DR. DAVID BRONNER SPEAKS, people listen.

Or, in the case of certain unnamed course designers, they wish they had listened, but more on that in due course.

As head of the Retirement Systems of Alabama, he controls the pension fund of hundreds of thousands of Alabamians. This is a responsibility he does not take lightly, but he has taken an uncharted path to reach his goals of growth and investment across the state.

He is flamboyant, yet very secure in what he has done and continues to do.

When I met him in his penthouse office in downtown Montgomery, he talked and I listened. I just had to prod him with an occasional question and off he'd go, puffing on his ever present cigar as he went.

It seemed obvious to start with the obvious question: Why a golf trail?

"The genesis was two things: combat some of the negative publicity about the state and golf in the state. It wasn't just in the sports pages, but the business pages too.

"And second, a study showing that 90 percent of corporate leaders played golf."

So it was that he contacted Bobby Vaughan, who continues with the Trail to this day, to kick the tires on his grand plan. The two knew each other through Vaughan's tenure as a golf professional at Wynlakes (in Montgomery) and Tanglewood (in North Carolina).

The story of how the legendary Robert Trent Jones Sr. came to be involved is a good one.

"As the idea for a golf trail across Alabama crystallized, we knew we needed someone big to help with the designs, with the concept," Bronner said.

"The time frame was the early 1990's. I wrote the same form letter to five designers that you and I have both heard of. 'Trent' did Tanglewood, that's one reason I included him on the letter.

"In the letter I outlined some of the scope of the project including 54 hole sites. I didn't know who or what I was specifically looking for."

“IN ALABAMA PEOPLE HAD TALKED OF THE POTENTIAL FOR YEARS AND YEARS, BUT THE POTENTIAL REMAINED THE SAME AND NOTHING EVER HAPPENED. I’D BEEN IN THE JOB 15 YEARS AND WAS TIRED OF NOTHING HAPPENING. I TOOK A RISK TO HELP THE OVERALL IMAGE OF THE STATE AROUND THE WORLD.

Two never responded, one sent a form letter saying he wasn’t interested and one wrote him back inferring it would never work. ‘Trent,’ as Bronner always referred to Jones Sr., was the only one to pick up the phone and call Bronner.

Skeptical at first, he called initially to see if Bronner was really serious.

“I told him, of course I was serious... I wouldn’t have written the letter if I wasn’t... we hit it off right away and the Trail was off and running.”

I have to admit, the words Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail do kind of roll off the tongue.

For the record, Bronner declined to name the other four designers, but you wouldn’t have to be a genius to figure out some of the names.

“In Alabama people had talked of the potential for years and years, but the potential remained the same and nothing ever happened. I’d been in the job 15 years and was tired of nothing happening. I took a risk to help the overall image of the state around the world.

“I had three things in mind: to impact tourism, to recruit industry and to attract retirees to move to our state.”

He also told Jones to make the courses tough, which goes along with Trent’s axiom of a hard par and an easy bogey.

“Trent worried we were making them (the courses) too hard and I told him to make them harder! You’ve got to have some sizzle. I was out at PGA West in La Quinta, Calif. and people were standing in line to play that (very tough) golf course.”

So does Bronner play “his” courses regularly?

“I’ll show up unannounced and always have a notepad with me. I’ve never left a site and my list has been blank. There are always things that can be done better, improved upon.”

He will play Capitol Hill most often due to it’s proximity, but will get on the road and could show up at any of their locations statewide from Point Clear to Huntsville and all points in-between.

He wouldn’t be drawn on a favorite course, but said that Trent loved Grand National in Opelika, marveling that he could use so much lakeside property. Certainly a distinct rarity in the course design business.

Bronner carries a 9-handicap and strikes me as a fierce competitor.

“I play every Saturday or Sunday, often at Wynlakes or Capitol Hill. It helps take the stress off of me. I know enough about the game to be dangerous and love not worrying about anything else while I’m on the course.”

While he is justifiably proud of the courses all across the Trail, he has taken the next step with lodging onsite or close by. This has taken the form of either building from scratch or taking over and resurrecting existing facilities. None more noteworthy than the esteemed Grand Hotel in Point Clear.

“This was a landmark in the state but had been sliding downhill. We have upgraded everything and added a lot to it. The golf courses have been improved beyond all recognition too.”

Point Clear Holdings is the lodging and real estate component of the RSA and Bronner shows no sign of slowing its progress down, with properties including the aforementioned Grand Hotel Marriott Resort, Golf Club & Spa (Point Clear); Renaissance Riverview Plaza Hotel and Battle House, A Renaissance Hotel (both in Mobile); Montgomery Marriott Prattville Hotel & Conference Center at Capitol Hill (Prattville); Renaissance Montgomery Hotel & Spa at the Convention Center (Montgomery); Auburn Marriott Opelika Hotel & Conference Center at Grand National (Opelika); Renaissance Ross Bridge Golf Resort & Spa (Hoover); and Marriott Shoals Hotel & Spa (Florence).

He indicated new courses on the Trail are probably unlikely, but he had not fully closed the door. He said the western part of the state, chiefly around Tuscaloosa, was an area they had at one point wanted to build a facility, but could never find the right fit. Gulf Shores had merited consideration too, but was subsequently dismissed.

Bronner is indeed a visionary and he had access to the funds (over \$150 million has been spent thus far) to make the Trail a wondrous reality. **TG**

Ian Thompson writes a weekly golf column for The Birmingham News and is the Editor of GolfSouth Magazine, based in Birmingham.



Hampton Cove Short Course reflects the beauty of the foothills of the Appalachians.

HOT FALL FORECASTS

TWO FULL-FIELD LPGA EVENTS COMING TO ALABAMA IN SEPTEMBER

For golfers and golf fans, all eyes will be on Alabama in September. Two full-field events will be coming to the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail in September 2008.

A new full-field tournament, the Bell Micro LPGA Classic, will be held Sept. 11 – 14, 2008 in Mobile at Magnolia Grove. Two weeks later the second Navistar LPGA Classic will be held Sept. 25 – 28 at Prattville’s Capitol Hill.

Both four-day competitions will feature 144 stars of the LPGA competing for purses of \$1.4 million each. Some of the famous faces on the 2008 LPGA Tour include: Lorena Ochoa, Annika Sorenstam, Paula Creamer, Natalie Gulbis, Se Ri Pak and many more. The final field for both events will be named prior to the tournaments.

“As someone who was born and raised in Alabama, having Bell Microproducts be named as the title sponsor of an LPGA Tournament at the Magnolia Grove golf course is a particular point of pride to me,” noted Don Bell, president and CEO, Bell Microproducts. “The RSA’s world-class Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail is the perfect site for the tournament, as it showcases the great natural beauty evident in Alabama’s diverse topography. At Bell Microproducts, we place a high value on executing strategically and being able to compete with the best, which is something we have in common with the LPGA professionals that will compete here. We look forward to an exciting tournament in Alabama!”

*For player information, volunteer opportunities and other updates for both tournaments, visit www.rtgolf.com.
To discuss additional sponsorship and Pro Am opportunities, call Jonathan Romeo at 205.942.0444.*



NAVISTAR LPGA CLASSIC		LEADERS	
1	OCHOA	12	12
2	PRAMMANASUDH	13	13
T 3	HJORTH	14	14
T 3	STANFORD	15	15
5	CASTRALE	16	16
T 7	WRIGHT	17	17
T 7	FERNANDEZ	18	18
T 7	WEBB	19	19
T 10	FRANCELLA	20	20



The world's top golfers participated in the inaugural Navistar LPGA Classic. Sweden's Maria Hjorth (center) won on the final hole, edging Lorena Ochoa (top right) and Stacy Prammanasudh (bottom right) to claim her first tour victory since 1999. *Photography by Jonathan Hoopes.*

HJORTH OVERCOMES FOUR-STROKE DEFICIT FOR INAUGURAL NAVISTAR LPGA CLASSIC VICTORY

The inaugural Navistar LPGA Classic in September 2007 had more drama than a Hollywood blockbuster film.

For Maria Hjorth, there proved to be something magical about the number three on Sunday's final round. Three years following a return to LPGA Qualifying School in 2004, the 10-year Tour veteran garnered her third LPGA Tour victory at the Navistar LPGA Classic to retain her exempt status for the following three years after carding a 14-under-par 274 for a \$195,000 winner's check and a year's lease on a Navistar International MXT truck.

For Hjorth, claiming her first Tour win since the 1999 season seemed challenging at the start of the final round of the inaugural event on The Senator at the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail at Capitol Hill venue in Prattville, Ala. Forced to overcome a four-stroke deficit, the three-time European Solheim Cup Team member prepared to chase down 54-hole leader Lorena Ochoa, who was on a quest for her fourth-straight victory in as many tournaments, and eventual runner-up Stacy Prammanasudh, who was one stroke behind Ochoa as they entered the final round.

"I was hoping for them (Prammanasudh and Ochoa) not to run away too much, but I've been hitting the driver really well all week, and if you do that on a course like this you're going to have plenty of birdie opportunities, and that's what I did all day," Hjorth said. "There were a

couple of par putts coming down the stretch that were really important that I made, and I'm very, very excited. It's been a while, so it's just amazing right now."

As Prammanasudh and Ochoa traded the lead over the first several holes, Hjorth managed to quietly sneak up the leaderboard after sinking a 30-foot eagle putt on The Senator's fifth hole and followed with a birdie on the eighth hole. With the aid of an additional birdie on hole 10, Hjorth found herself knotted at the top of the leaderboard at 13-under with her playing partners, Prammanasudh and Ochoa.

The tides turned for Hjorth, though, when she made a 25-foot birdie putt on the 17th hole for sole possession of the lead, and Prammanasudh made par and Ochoa moved within a stroke of the lead with her own birdie. As Hjorth made par on the final hole, Prammanasudh sent a 20-foot birdie putt just left of the hole to avoid a playoff, and Ochoa bogeyed to tie for third place with rookie Angela Park.

Navistar International Corporation is the parent company of International Truck and Engine Corporation. The company has an engine plant in Huntsville, AL and is known for producing commercial trucks and schoolbuses. To learn more about Navistar and all of its products, visit www.navistar.com.

For a preview of the 2008 Navistar Classic in September, visit www.navistarlpgaclassic.com.



Fighting Joe No. 12, at 716 yards, is the longest hole on the RTJ Golf Trail.

HIT THE TRAIL

ALABAMA IS HOME TO THE ROBERT TRENT JONES GOLF TRAIL, A 26-COURSE MARVEL THAT MAY WELL REPRESENT THE GREATEST BARGAIN IN AMERICAN GOLF. NO WONDER WOMEN LOVE IT.

BY STEVE EUBANKS · *As appeared in Golf for Women, March/April 2007*

ONE THING YOU NEED to know about Alabama: No matter how much you've read or heard about genteel Southerners and their predilection for hospitality, the friendliness of Alabamians will exceed your expectations. The "yes, ma'ams" and "if you pleases" are as genuine as they are gracious. You will soon discover this if you decide, as I did, to play what is arguably the finest collection of public golf courses in America. Alabama is home to the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail, the largest golf project in the world, encompassing 432 spectacular holes of golf at 10 locations stretching from Muscle Shoals in the north to Mobile in the south, each course designed by the late, great golf architect Robert Trent Jones Sr.

Golf Digest calls the Trail one of the 50 best golf destinations in the world. But it's far more than that. In 1991, when bulldozers broke ground at the first course, Oxmoor Valley in Birmingham, local businesses took in \$1.8 billion. Today the number is \$7.5 billion, making golf tourism the state's largest industry.

My playing partner, Mark (who is also my literary agent and friend), and I knew little about the Trail when we booked a nine-day golf excursion through the Heart of Dixie. In fact, Alabama wasn't our first choice. We had originally planned a golf trip to Southeast Asia, but the strongest typhoons in 50 years had flooded the courses we were to play and filled the lobby of our hotel with uprooted palm trees. So I said to Mark, "Hey, why

don't we go to Alabama and do that Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail thing?"

I had only a superficial knowledge of the Trail. I knew that Dr. David Bronner, in his role as administrator of the Retirement Systems of Alabama, came up with the idea of a multiple-facility golf trail in the hopes that people traveling from north to south for vacation would choose Alabama over Georgia, Florida or the Carolinas and that their tourism dollars would grow the state retirement fund. He wanted more than 18 holes at each location, with additional par-3 courses at most, and he wanted the sites spaced relatively close together, with no more than a two-hour drive from one to the next. He also wanted a single designer for all the courses to create architectural consistency. I had heard Bronner chose Robert Trent Jones Sr. because no one else would return his calls, a fact Bronner later confirmed to me.

"I wrote letters to four or five of the top architects and told them what we had in mind," Bronner said. "One wrote back and said, 'You're a public institution, so you really can't afford my brand.' We thought that was funny. Trent [Jones] was the only designer to pick up the phone and say, 'Are you serious?' I told him, 'This is an opportunity for you to create your masterpiece.'" Before he died, Jones did indeed call the Trail his masterpiece.

"Looks like we can get a lot of good golf in for not a lot of money," I said to my friend Mark.

“Good and cheap: sounds like a winner,” he replied.

Our voyage began in the tiny town of Gadsden, off the interstate between Atlanta and Birmingham, at the counter of the Waffle House, a coffee-and-potty-break diner where grits come standard, carb counting is forbidden, Peterbilt hats are optional and smoking is not only accepted, it’s encouraged. The waitress called me “Hon” and Mark “Sugar.” She looked offended when we passed on the “country ham or bacon” option and smirked when we said, “No, thank you” to the ashtrays. Not only was this ambience fine with us, it fit the theme of our vacation: calories and caffeine in the mornings, followed by as many holes of golf as daylight would allow; then get in the car, drive to the next site, eat a steak, drink a scotch, sleep, and repeat the process the following day—the perfect guy trip.

But a funny thing happened on the way to Testosteroneville: We discovered that the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail is also one of the most woman-friendly golf destinations in America.

A few miles from the Waffle House, in a beautiful pine forest where Mark assured me we were lost, we stumbled upon our first stop, Silver Lakes, a facility with 27 holes of championship golf and a nine-hole par-3, or “short,” course. The three regulation nines are named Heartbreaker, Backbreaker and Mindbreaker, the perfect place for a couple of golf masochists to start their marathon. So call me silly, but I was a little surprised when I showed up at the driving range to find it full of women. My buddy and I were relegated to the last two teeing areas at the far end of the range, where we were the only men in sight.

The courses at Silver Lakes lived up to their names, breaking my heart, back and mind. I’m a 2-handicap and former college golfer, so I played the back tees (7,674 yards with a course rating of 77.7 and a slope of 151), and Mark, who carries a solid USGA Handicap Index of 20.5, played the middle tees (6,686; 72.5/139). We staggered into

the clubhouse for a post-round beer, and that’s when I saw the women again, laughing and comparing scorecards over lunch. Since a few hours in Alabama will remove any inhibitions you might have against chatting with strangers, I walked over and asked, “Did you enjoy yourselves out there?” The woman at the head of the table spoke for the group. “The courses on the Trail are great. Some are easy, some are hard; they’re all in great shape. There’s something for everybody.”

That statement sums up the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail. In Huntsville, at Hampton Cove, Mark and I played between two groups of women who appeared to be having the time of their lives. After playing one of the two championship 18s at that site, we ventured onto the short course where the holes ranged in distance from 83 yards from the forward tees to 257 yards from the back tees, with as many as four different tees on each hole. Halfway through our second 18, we were greeted by two more groups of women. A member of the first group said, “Isn’t this great?” as we crossed paths between holes.

And it only got better. In Muscle Shoals on the shores of the Tennessee River, our third stop, the two courses are called The Schoolmaster, after President Woodrow Wilson, who is known as the “schoolmaster” of politics, and Fighting Joe, after General Joe Wheeler, the only general to serve in both the Confederate States Army and the U.S. Army. The two 18s couldn’t have been more different in both design and playability. When we arrived on the first tee at Fighting Joe, I looked at the scorecard and said to the starter, “Excuse me, is this a typo, or is this golf course nearly 8,100 yards long?”

From the back tees, Fighting Joe is the fourth longest golf course in the world, one that has open, rolling terrain; long, wispy rough; and undulating greens. A few acres yonder, The Schoolmaster is a classic tree-lined course with numerous bunkers and lots of elevation changes.

“Do women enjoy these courses?” I asked Scott Arndt, the director



Silver Lakes Short Course No. 9 may well be among the prettiest holes on the Trail.

of golf at The Shoals. "They love them," he said. "We've actually been surprised by the amount of repeat business we get from our women players."

The off-course amenities are equally inviting. Muscle Shoals has one of the largest recreational lakes in the region, and the town is a music lover's heaven. The Rolling Stones' album *Sticky Fingers*, Lynyrd Skynyrd's demo compilation, *Skynyrd's First: The Complete Muscle Shoals Album*, and many of Sonny and Cher's recordings were cut here, which gives the town a certain VH1 *Behind the Music* feel. Enter any hotel bar and you're likely to find a great house band.

After leaving Muscle Shoals (where I shot the best 87 of my life from the tips at Fighting Joe), we traveled an hour and a half south along country roads, passing 20 more Waffle Houses and no fewer than 50 Baptist churches. The next day we were treated to the Ross Bridge Golf Resort & Spa near Birmingham, a place so picturesque and challenging that the Champions Tour moved the Bruno's Memorial Classic (now the Regions Charity Classic), its Alabama stop, to the resort's course two months after it opened. I had trouble getting Mark out of the steam room for our 10 o'clock tee time, but after we got onto the course we didn't want to leave. I played from the 7,446-yard tees and he played from the 6,200-yard tees. The foursome of women playing behind us played from 5,312. All of us had a blast.

I didn't expect to see so many women at all these courses," I said to Chip Purser, the director of golf at Ross Bridge. "We've seen probably a 50/50 split so far this week."

He nodded. "We get that a lot. Women seem to like the diversity of the courses and the consistency of the facilities."

By day five I realized what Chip meant. The clubhouses at all the Trail courses look the same, so by the second or third site, you know where the golf shop and the locker rooms are, and you know the chicken salad in the grill room is going to be good because it was good in Montgomery, Mobile and Muscle Shoals. Once you get onto the golf courses, however, the diversity gives players of every skill level the chance to have fun. There are no stops on the Trail where you are forced to play a course with too much sand or too many water hazards unless you want that sort of challenge; the courses are as difficult or as easy as you wish to make them. The Capitol Hill facility in Prattville (a suburb of Montgomery, about an hour from Ross Bridge down I-65) has three championship 18s that look like they are in different parts of the country. Walk out one door and you can play the Judge, a long lowcountry course where Spanish moss hangs from yawning water oaks, with numerous forced carries over lily pad-laden wetlands. Go out another door and you can play the Senator, a wide-open course in the mold of Shinnecock Hills. A third door takes you to the Legislator, a traditional layout with Jones' trademark bunkers: large, looming and positioned exactly where your instincts tell you to hit the ball.

"I think I'm going to bring my wife down here," Mark said. "The weather's perfect, the golf's great, the hotels are close, the people are nice and the whole place is impossibly cheap."

The retail rate in October 2006 was \$35 for green fees with an extra \$15 for a cart, which would be considered a bargain even if the golf were average. (Peak season rates are \$45 to \$125.) For the quality of the

facilities on the Trail, travelers would be hard pressed to find better value. "My wife is like a lot of women: They want to feel like they're getting their money's worth," Mark opined. "At these prices, most women can relax and have a good time regardless of what they shoot." Chip Purser pointed to a group of women a few holes ahead. "Seven of them come down from Chicago every year and play for a week. They call themselves the Chicago Seven. They've become so popular that they play in the LPGA Tour pro-am in Mobile every year."

On the final day of our journey, Mark and I sat down for breakfast in Opelika with the Chicago Seven. They range in age from late 40s to early 70s, and in playing ability from an Index of 8.4 to a handicap of 40. They are all members of the Ladies League at Chevy Chase Country Club in Wheeling, Ill., the same club where Al Capone was a member and where he hid bootlegged liquor in tunnels under the clubhouse. In 1998 one of them took a leaguewise survey to see who would be interested in a road trip to Alabama; seven women jumped at the chance. Every year since, between four and seven members have returned. "We tried to have eight this year," one explained. "But one of our group is a lawyer and a trial came up, so she had to cancel. No matter how many come, we're still the Chicago Seven."

Each November, they load up two minivans and make the 12-hour drive south to play golf. To a woman they mentioned value, consistency in service and diversity in the courses as reasons why they keep coming back. "The places are all unique," Connie Luncsford said. "You don't get bored. Nothing about the trip is a blur."

The women differed on which stop was their favorite. The consensus: Ross Bridge, with its lavish hotel and spa, was their favorite lodging; Cambrian Ridge in Greenville was their favorite course, with The Schoolmaster in Muscle Shoals coming in a close second. All agreed that the highlight of the trip was playing in the pro-am of the LPGA Tour's Mitchell Company Tournament of Champions in Mobile. "This year we played with Liselotte Neumann and Moira Dunn," said Sue Webber, the best player of the bunch. "They were fantastic, but all the players are. Because we've done it so many times, the commissioner recognized the Chicago Seven at the pro-am party. That was pretty special."

"So, what do you think of Grand National in Opelika?"

"We'll let you know after the round," said Sue.

Five hours later Mark and I agreed that Grand National was not only our favorite course of the trip but one of the best 54-hole golf complexes in the world. The layouts were challenging, fun and in great condition, and 34 of the 54 holes play out to, away from, alongside or within sight of one of Alabama's most scenic bodies of water, Lake Saughatchee.

In the parking lot after the round we saw the Chicago Seven loading up their clubs. "What did you think?" I yelled as we passed.

Sue Webber gave a huge thumbs-up. "Fantastic." TG

THE TRAIL STARTS AT THE WEB

Few websites are more user-friendly than rtjgolf.com when it comes to booking a vacation. In addition to providing everything you need to know about the golf courses, the site has mileage charts, maps, hotel recommendations and a centralized reservations page that lets you customize your trip. For example, if you try to book tee times at two sites that are too far apart, a warning pops up and you're given a more conveniently located alternative site.





THE TRAIL

BOSS

HARD-CHARGING DAVID BRONNER MADE HIS NAME MANAGING BILLIONS OF DOLLARS AND LAUNCHING THE 15-YEAR-OLD ROBERT TRENT JONES GOLF TRAIL. BUT HE'S JUST AS HAPPY TEEING IT UP AND TRADING BARBS WITH PALS.

BY TOM ENSEY, GOLFWEEK CONTRIBUTOR · ILLUSTRATION BY ROGER SCHILLERSTROM

As appeared in GolfWeek, September 24, 2007

DAVID BRONNER, THE CIGAR-CHOMPING CEO of the \$35 billion Retirement Systems of Alabama fund for the past 34 years, has been called the most powerful man in the state.

He probably is.

Bronner has served under six governors and had highly publicized fights with most of them – battles memorialized in dozens of editorial cartoons he proudly displays on his office wall.

He doesn't lose.

And by the way, it's Dr. Bronner to you – unless you're one of his 15 or so golf buddies who meet every Saturday and Sunday for a round of golf and smack-talking. To them, he's just Dave or David or other, not-so-nice names.

Bronner isn't a medical doctor. He holds a Ph.D. in Administration and Higher Education and a law degree from the University of Alabama. But the folks in the state call him Doctor the same way they still refer to the late "Bear" Bryant as "Coach Bryant."

All those years. All that money.

Bronner built the fund from a 25-percent funded mess into one of the nation's most solvent retirement funds. RSA's holdings include a chain of newspapers and TV stations and 55 Water Street in New York, and office buildings it funded helped reshape the skylines of Mobile and Montgomery. Bronner also has helped attract billions more to the state in the form of national and international businesses.

But Bronner has said that his proudest achievement is Alabama's Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail. Fifteen years after the first Trail site opened, there are 11 locations and 20 regulation 18-hole courses, some with luxury hotels managed by Marriott. (Most Trail sites also have par-3 short courses.)

Bronner was courting businesses in Germany when he hit upon the idea for the trail. It was 1990, and Birmingham's Shoal Creek Country Club was hosting the PGA Championship. What should have been a

proud moment for Alabama turned into an international embarrassment when it was revealed that Shoal Creek was a segregated club.

"It was in the papers in Germany," said Bronner, who decided investing in golf might burnish the state's image and attract the kind of tourist he likes – those who spend money.

"I didn't know if we'd make any money at it, but I figured, at least we'll have a lot of nice golf courses," said Bronner, who added that the Trail turns a 3 percent profit. (The RSA does not break out information on the Trail's finances.)

Though the state-backed golf trail was, at the time, a revolutionary idea, it's not surprising that Bronner thought golf could burnish Alabama's image. On weekends, you usually can find him and his gang of disrespectful pals batting it around Wynlakes Golf and Country Club in east Montgomery and hurling barbs machine-gun style. When the group plays a RTJ course, Bronner carries with him a bucket of sand and fastidiously fills in divots, according to his buddy Buck Newman.

The group has one rule: Nobody talks about business or asks Bronner for advice.

Bronner, who carries an 8.3 handicap index, according to GHIN.com, typically shoots "a few strokes on one side or the other of 80," Newman said, and is known for being particularly adept on the greens.

"Sometimes, it's like he wills the ball into the hole," Newman said.

Bronner also is a stickler for the rules.

Once, playing in an amateur tournament at the RTJ course in Opelika, he accidentally hit the ball on a practice swing and called it on himself. He lost his flight by one shot. And Bronner is a skillful and relentless needler, according to Bruce Hodges, one of his closest friends. "Bumper" is the nickname Bronner gave to one pal who is notorious for using foot wedges.

"We badger each other relentlessly," Hodges said. "If anyone has anything going on in his business or personal life that (Bronner) can attack, he will stay on you the whole round."



Oxmoor Valley in Birmingham was the first site opened on the Trail in 1992.

Growing up in Austin, Minn., Bronner learned golf from his mother, Marge, and his work ethic from his dad, George, who owned a pool hall called The Spot. George would open the The Spot at 8 a.m., go home for dinner, then return to work until the last group left.

Bronner, who drops curse words occasionally in interviews, doesn't cuss when he hits a bad shot. That, too, comes from his mom. He didn't cuss in front of her.

"I'm more a laughing, giggly kind of golfer when I mess up," he said.

The best part of the day comes after the round, when the gang gathers in the grill room, lies, accuses each other of cheating and settles bets.

"We play for big money. A buck a round," said Bronner pal Kin Blankenship. "Maybe \$20 changes hands in the course of a year. But if David loses a dollar, he's sick, because he hates to lose so much. He handles billions during the week, but he loses a buck and it kills him.

Bronner, whose state salary was \$422,000 in 2006, has passed up more lucrative jobs in the private sector.

"I could have gone other places," Bronner said. "But I'd have been the second or third banana. I like being the top banana."

Hodges thinks there's more to it than that.

"I think his competitiveness in business and his drive and pursuit to make Alabama a better place carries over into golf, not the other way around," he said. Hodges said the state of California once dangled an offer for Bronner to manage its retirement fund, the nation's largest.

"He said, 'It would take me 20 years to get the kind of influence in California that I've got in Alabama, and I don't have 20 years,'" Hodges said.

Maybe Bronner's first impression of Alabama led him to the conclusion that the place needed help.

He was talked into coming to Alabama for his post-graduate degrees by a finance teacher at his alma mater, Mankato State, which is now Minnesota State. The old prof had become head of Alabama's finance department.

Bronner drove down in a non-air conditioned car in the furnace that is late August in the deep South. He rolled down all four windows and drove fast.

He wound up staying at a mom-and-pop dump on the outskirts of Tuscaloosa. The bed was so soft that the mattress folded around him when he fell into it, exhausted. There was one channel on the TV. There was no phone in the room.

He had to walk down to the office to call home.

"I don't know if I've come to the end of the Earth," Bronner recalled telling his dad, "but I bet I'm close to it."

But in December, an unlikely snow covered the campus. He called his dad again. "I love it here," Bronner said. "They had 2 inches of snow and canceled classes for three days."

Maybe that was part of the idea for the Trail: Warm weather that allowed year-round golf.

A beautiful place that had a lot of problems, Alabama was a state that could use a brainy guy who knew how to make money, who could improve the joint.

Bronner, the fiercely driven smart-aleck with an ego to match, had found his home. **TG**

Tom Ensey is a writer from Montgomery, Ala.

DOCTOR'S ORDERS

Given his track record managing Alabama's \$31 billion retirement fund, David Bronner, aka Dr. Bronner, often is asked about his investing secrets. Here are some of his tips:

STAY IN THE BLACK.

"Yeah, yeah, yeah, I know it's boring," Bronner said, jumping out of his chair, warming to the subject, walking around his office and waving his cigar like a wand. "But I'm going to tell you what everybody else tells you. Pay down your debt." Don't let interest payments on loans or consumer credit consume too much of your cash flow, or you're going to be just another working stiff living from check to check. Job one: Accumulate savings before you get serious about using your money to make money. Stay liquid.

INVEST IN SOMETHING YOU KNOW ABOUT.

"Whatever business you're in, for example, invest in that. You should know your own business," Bronner said.

BEWARE THE STOCK MARKET. MOST PEOPLE HAVE JOBS AND DON'T HAVE TIME TO FOLLOW THE MARKET CLOSELY.

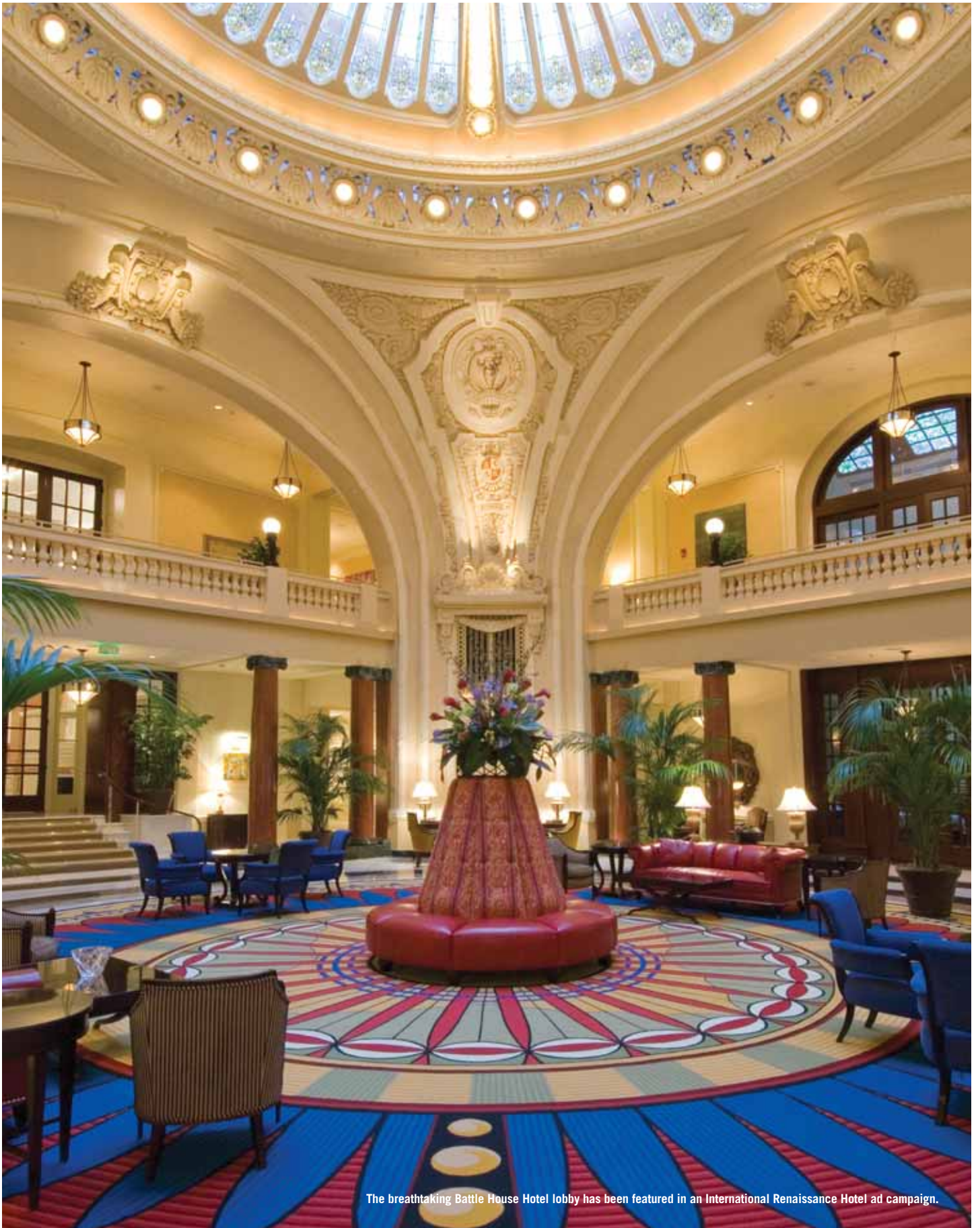
"Well, somewhere out there, there's a guy working at least that hard studying the stock market, and that guy's got better resources than you do. If you try to outplay the market with that guy, he'll kill you every time."

RECOGNIZE LUCK AND DON'T TRUST IT.

You could get lucky and make some quick money in the stock market. "That can be the worst thing that can happen," Bronner said. "You can have a lot of fun in Las Vegas if you get lucky. Say you take \$1,000 to Vegas, you hit early. The first thing to do is take your thousand, put it in your pocket and don't take it back out. After that, win or lose, at worst you go home with what you came with."

BUY REAL ESTATE.

"You're not going to make a whole lot, but it's solid," he said. An airline guy Bronner often sees at the Montgomery, Ala., airport asked him the same question a while back: What's the best way for a regular Joe to make a little on the side? "I saw him a few weeks ago. And he said, 'Hey, man, I've got three rental properties and they're all doing all right.'"



The breathtaking Battle House Hotel lobby has been featured in an International Renaissance Hotel ad campaign.

PAMPERING & PLAY:

RTJ TRAIL'S RESORT COLLECTION OFFERS THE BEST OF BOTH

BY BILL LANG

FOR 16 YEARS, the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail has been known for challenging golf courses and great value. When the first Trail courses opened in 1992, Alabama certainly wasn't known for having luxurious accommodations or spas. Now in addition to exceptional golf, the Trail features several four diamond resorts and a new upscale hotel opening in Montgomery in February 2008.

The Renaissance Montgomery Hotel & Spa at the Convention Center, the 8th hotel in the RTJ Resort Collection, is minutes from the Capitol Hill site on the Trail and even closer to the state's capitol. With a performing arts center featuring concerts, Broadway-style shows, a new spa, great restaurants and bars plus other entertainment options at the Renaissance Montgomery, trips to the RTJ Golf Trail will continue to get even better.

Exceptional resorts are found across Alabama on the RTJ Golf Trail and appealing to both leisure

and business travelers. Some of Marriott's highest ratings for hotel quality, spas, golf and overall guest satisfaction in North America is found on the RTJ Golf Trail. According to BestSpasUSA, Alabama is ranked fourth in the country for the number of quality spas, exceeding New York, Hawaii, Georgia, Texas, South Carolina, New Mexico and 40 other states.

In 2006 Renaissance Ross Bridge Golf Resort & Spa in Birmingham was named best new hotel by Marriott International. This honor was given in 2006 to another RTJ Resort Collection property, the Battle House, A Renaissance Hotel, in Mobile. Having back to back winners from Marriott, the world's leading hospitality corporation, is quite an honor. The Marriott Shoals also has received great accolades and was the top Marriott hotel in North America for spa, golf and guest rooms for most of 2007.

Information on each of the eight hotels is below and also can be found online at www.rtgolf.com. ►

MOBILE BAY REGION

GRAND HOTEL MARRIOTT RESORT, GOLF CLUB & SPA Point Clear, Alabama · www.marriottgrand.com

Since 1847, The Grand has maintained a gracious tradition of Southern hospitality on historic Mobile Bay. The Grand Hotel consistently receives the AAA Four Diamond Award and is a family-friendly historical hotel that is 160 years young and was named a top family resort by *Travel + Leisure* and *Zagat*. An active schedule of activities and special weekends is particularly attractive to families. Groups appreciate the superlative meeting facilities. With 405 luxurious guest rooms and having some of Marriott's best spas, golf courses and pools, the Grand Hotel remains grander than ever. A \$50 million renovation on The Grand was completed in 2003 and again in 2006. The Dogwood and Azalea golf courses were renovated in 2005.

The resort has 37,000 square feet of meeting space that was completely renovated in 2006. The Grand's 550 acres feature giant live oak trees, multiple beaches and lush landscaping. High tea is served each day at 4:00 p.m. in the resort's lobby. In addition to world-class golf and the 20,000-square-foot spa, the resort has a variety of activities including eight rubico tennis courts, a croquet lawn, horseshoes, bikes, kayaks, sailboats and other watercraft for guests' enjoyment.

RENAISSANCE RIVERVIEW PLAZA HOTEL Mobile, Alabama · www.riverviewmobile.com

A prime downtown location with a covered walkway to the Mobile Convention Center makes the Renaissance Riverview Plaza a favorite for business guests. Leisure travelers will enjoy easy access to the Alabama



Hospitality in downtown Montgomery will be taken to a new level with the 12-story Renaissance Hotel & Spa at the Convention Center, open in February 2008.

Clockwise from top left: The Trellis Room at The Battle House Hotel; Newly renovated Fathoms Lounge at the Renaissance Riverview Plaza Hotel in Mobile; The Harbor Room, the upscale dining room at the Renaissance Riverview; The Grand Hotel Marriott Resort, Golf Club & Spa has long been known as the Queen of Southern Resorts; The picturesque marina at the Grand Hotel in Point Clear

Cruise Terminal, the home port for the Carnival Cruise Line's Holiday ship. Renaissance Riverview Plaza also is a short walk from the city's Carnival Museum, the Museum of Mobile and the Gulf Coast Exploreum Science Center & IMAX Theater, which also features blockbuster exhibitions.

Having just undergone a \$50 million renovation, the 374 plush guest rooms are as popular as the hotel's spectacular views of Mobile Bay. The Harbor Room restaurant features exceptional seafood and steaks. Riverview Plaza features 32,000 square feet of versatile meeting, banquet and exhibit space. Mobile is the home of the country's original Mardi Gras and parades pass in front of the Renaissance Riverview Plaza during Carnival season.

BATTLE HOUSE, A RENAISSANCE HOTEL Mobile, Alabama · www.rsabattlehouse.com

Originally built in 1852 and closed in the mid-1970's, the Battle House in Mobile has been restored to all its grandeur. The Battle House reopened in May 2007. The 238 gracious guest rooms, new spa and historic lobby, restaurant and ballrooms will make Riverview the perfect urban retreat for business and leisure guests with an affinity for the finer things in life. The hotel has 35,000 square feet of meeting space and is connected to RSA Battle House Tower.

Guests at all three Mobile Bay resorts have easy access to great golf at RTJ's Magnolia Grove. Creeks, marshlands and lakes add to the challenge of Mobile's Magnolia Grove. The Falls, Crossings and Short courses have all received national recognition from various golf publications. With Bell Micro's LPGA full-field tournament in September at Magnolia Grove, the three Mobile Bay hotels are a great place to stay for the event.

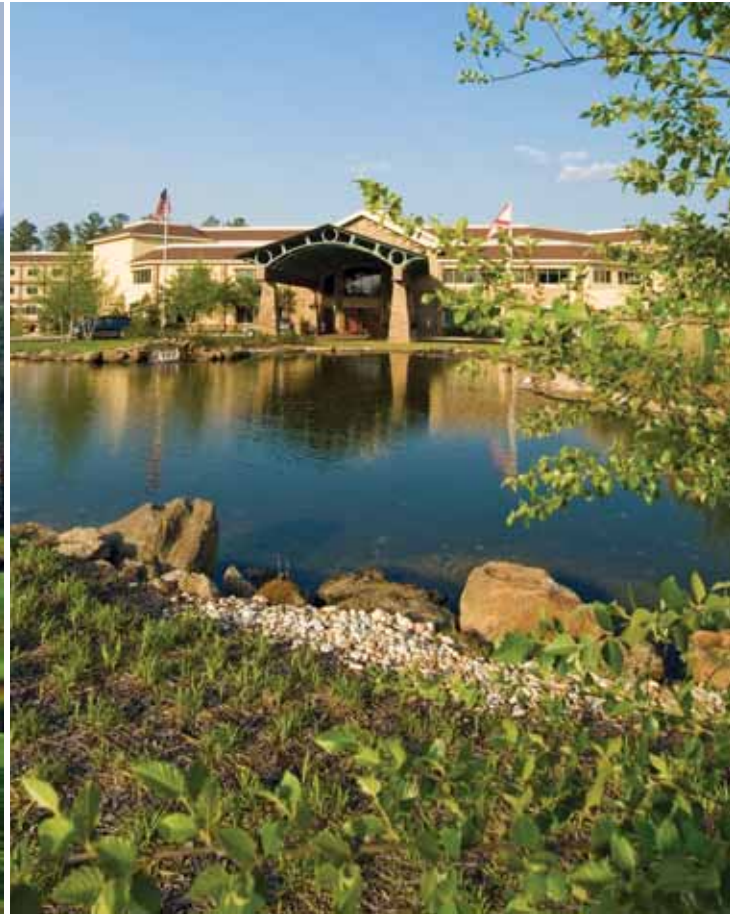
CENTRAL ALABAMA AND MONTGOMERY REGION

RENAISSANCE MONTGOMERY HOTEL & SPA AT THE CONVENTION CENTER Montgomery, Alabama · www.renaissancemontgomery.com

Opening in February 2008, The Renaissance Montgomery Hotel & Spa at the Convention Center brings Alabama's capital city a great cultural, culinary and corporate hub. The hotel features 346 luxurious rooms and suites, several restaurants and bars, a performing arts center and a European-style spa. Located near the Alabama River, Renaissance Montgomery is a part of the city's downtown revitalization. The city's minor league baseball stadium is just blocks away, as are several Civil War and Civil Rights historical sites. For concerts, plays and general entertainment, the hotel's 1,800-seat performing arts centre is quickly becoming the city's social hot spot.

Renaissance Montgomery includes a newly renovated and expanded convention center. The hotel complex has more than 100,000 square feet of meeting space and features some of the latest technology available for meetings. The Renaissance Montgomery is approximately 10 minutes from the Capitol Hill site on the RTJ Trail. ►





**MONTGOMERY MARRIOTT PRATTVILLE HOTEL
AND CONFERENCE CENTER AT CAPITOL HILL**
Prattville, Alabama · www.marriottcapitolhill.com

An unexpected level of privacy and intimacy in a wooded setting awaits business and leisure travelers just 10 minutes north of the State Capitol. Beautifully designed with stack stone and timber, the resort provides an extraordinary staff/guest ratio to ensure attentive, personalized service for every guest. This distinguished Prattville, Alabama hotel resort includes 90 guest rooms and suites, two eight-room villas and a 10,000 square-foot Presidential Cottage with five additional luxury suites.

The hotel was the first to be built directly on the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail courses and overlooks the 54 holes of championship golf at Capitol Hill. This RTJ site hosts the LPGA Navistar Classic tournament in September. The hotel has more than 18,000 square feet of event space, including a new ballroom.

**AUBURN MARRIOTT OPELIKA HOTEL
AND CONFERENCE CENTER AT GRAND NATIONAL**
Opelika, Alabama · www.marriottgrandnational.com

Situated just 10 minutes from Auburn University, in the quaint historic town of Opelika, the Auburn Marriott Opelika Hotel and Conference Center at Grand National offers the finest, most luxurious accommodations in the area. This nationally renowned retreat is the region's premier golf destination and lakeside resort with 54 holes of Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail golf. The majority of guest rooms in this luxury hotel and resort overlook Grand National's golf course and Lake Saugahatchee. The hotel has 114 guest rooms and 15 luxury suites.

Renovated in 2006, this hotel has 15,000 square feet of technology-equipped event space, a business center and a 96-seat amphitheater. The hotel was named among the "Best of the Best" by *ConventionSouth* readers and the hotel's chef was named "Alabama's Top Chef" by the Alabama Hospitality Association.

NORTH ALABAMA AND BIRMINGHAM REGION

RENAISSANCE ROSS BRIDGE GOLF RESORT & SPA
Birmingham, Alabama · www.rossbridgeresort.com

Renaissance Ross Bridge Golf Resort and Spa in Birmingham is designed to provide a unique environment of stylish comfort and sophistication. This four diamond resort has 259 guest rooms, with balconies overlooking the third longest golf course in the world at 8,191 yards from the tips. The resort has 11 spacious suites, for an extra level of comfort and indulgence. Ross Bridge is the home of the Regions Charity Classic, a PGA Champions Tour tournament, and is the host hotel for the Porsche Sport Driving School. The resort offers luxurious pampering in a 12,000-square-foot, European spa. Caviar facials, a couple's treatment room and hot stone massages are signature treatments in the spa. The resort has multiple

Clockwise from top left: Renaissance Ross Bridge Golf Resort & Spa stands like a Scottish castle over the third longest golf course in the world; The Auburn Marriott Opelika Hotel & Conference Center at Grand National is golfers' heaven; Marriott Shoals Hotel & Spa overlooks the picturesque Tennessee River



The 10,000 square-foot Presidential Cottage at Montgomery Marriott Prattville Hotel & Conference Center has five suites, koi ponds and a butler upon request.

restaurants, including fine dining with a Mediterranean influence. For meetings or special events, Ross Bridge has 20,000 square feet of function space ranging from a large ballroom to a smaller, distinctive boardroom. The resort consistently remains among the top Renaissance hotels in the world for guest satisfaction and overall style.

Built on former mining land and part of the golf offerings at Ross Bridge, Oxmoor Valley tests golfers' skills on the roller coaster fairways on the Ridge and Valley courses. Like Silver Lakes, the Short Course made *Golf Digest's Places to Play* Great Value list. The courses were enhanced in 2006.

MARRIOTT SHOALS HOTEL & SPA
Florence, Alabama · www.marriottshoals.com

Overlooking the Tennessee River and historic Wilson Dam in Florence, Alabama, the Marriott Shoals Hotel & Spa continues to be a leader in Marriott for exceptional golf, spa, pools and overall guest satisfaction. The 200 guest rooms, including seven suites, have private balconies and riverfront views. The resort features Alabama's only revolving restaurant and more than 30,000 square feet of versatile meeting space. The Marriott Shoals was named among the "Best of the Best" by *ConventionSouth* readers.

The Marriott Shoals Hotel & Spa is a short distance from two new Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail courses – Fighting Joe and Schoolmaster. The Fighting Joe was named among the top 10 new courses by *Golf Magazine* and *Travel + Leisure Golf*. The Schoolmaster course opened in 2005 and also approaches 8,000 yards. In addition to great golf, the Shoals area is internationally known for two things: bass fishing and a rich musical heritage. The Bronzeback Café pays homage to the area's bass fishing reputation. Little Richard, Rolling Stones, Cher and others recorded in the Shoals, so the hotel's bar, Swamper's Bar & Grill, celebrates the area's rich musical heritage. For upscale dining, the revolving 360 tower restaurant offers remarkable cuisine and amazing views of the Tennessee River. The 6,000-square-foot European-style spa and salon helps make the Marriott Shoals Hotel & Spa the premier resort in the Tennessee River Valley. **TG**



National Village at Grand National, Opelika, AL

CAN'T GET ENOUGH GOLF... OR FISHING OR HIKING THROUGH WOODLAND NATURE TRAILS?

Then check out National Village, a planned 700-acre resort community adjoining the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail at Grand National near Auburn and Opelika, Alabama. Plans call for a series of villages surrounded by open, green spaces, including the Grand National golf facility and Lake Saughatchee.

A partnership between The Retirement Systems of Alabama and Conner Bros. Construction Company, the community skirts the 1500-acre, 54-hole golf facility. The late golf legend Robert Trent Jones Sr., who designed the Trail, called the Grand National facility the single greatest site for golf in the world.

For those who want more than golf, there's a pristine 600-acre lake, miles of walking trails and the on-site Auburn Marriott Opelika Hotel & Conference Center at Grand National. The hotel contains 129 rooms, a state-of-the-art meeting amphitheater and can officially claim the best chef in Alabama, according to the recent honor from the Alabama Hospitality Association.

The first 48 homes in the community are Craftsman style cottages, with prices beginning in the \$600,000 range. Plans call for additional lower priced housing for differing lifestyle choices, including smaller cottages, town homes, brownstones, golf villas and town center lofts.

Plans for future amenities include walking and biking trails, Village Center with retail, marina, observation pier, feature pool and trophy fishing lakes. The mixed-use Village Center, located opposite the hotel, will include housing, retail, office and other uses.



For more information contact National Village Realty at 334.821.1878.



Colony Club at the Grand Hotel, Point Clear, AL

SOME TRADITIONS ONLY GET BETTER.

Eating Sunday Brunch with your grandparents. Strolling under giant oak trees dripping in Spanish moss. Learning to play croquet on the Grand Lawn with your parents. Watching the sunset over Mobile Bay with the ones you love. Enjoying high tea at 4:00 by the fireplace. Making new friends at the pool or rejuvenating yourself in the Grand Hotel's Spa.

Since opening in 1847, The Grand Hotel Marriott Resort, Golf Club & Spa has been rich with many traditions. In 2008, a new tradition will begin – the Colony Club at the Grand Hotel.

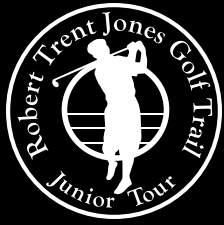
For generations Grand Hotel guests have found it difficult to leave. Now they can own a part of the Grand Hotel and be part of a new Grand tradition. The Colony Club at the Grand Hotel offers a variety of luxury residential options and the amenities to spoil you. The first phase of The Colony Club at the Grand Hotel is upscale condominiums called Bayview.

Overlooking Sweetwater Lake on the hotel's historic grounds, Bayview offers a breathtaking panorama at every floor from oak-draped parks and a fresh-water lake to the magnificent 36 holes of the Azalea and Dogwood courses of the Lakewood Golf Club. Amenity-rich living at the Colony Club will be centered around an aquatics center, fitness and wellness studio, tennis academy, dining and social areas and a business center, all of which are currently under construction. These future amenities, together with those afforded by the Lakewood Golf Club and the Grand Hotel's Spa, offer the residents of the Colony Club at the Grand Hotel a true resort-living experience.

Exploring the Colony Club at the Grand Hotel doesn't end at the front gate of this private community. The quality of life at Point Clear is legendary. Explore the boutiques, galleries and restaurants of Fairhope or spend your day along the Alabama Coastal Birding Trail. The Fairhope/Point Clear area has gained notice in the Wall Street Journal as one of the Top 10 places in the U.S. to retire. Perhaps it is time you take a look. Extend your checkout from the Grand Hotel forever.



Please call for more information 251.929.3383 or visit us online at www.colonyatthegrand.com.



THE ROBERT TRENT JONES GOLF TRAIL JUNIOR GOLF ASSOCIATION

enters its seventh year with a record number of competitive junior golfers from across the southeast competing in events throughout the State of Alabama. From the coastal lowlands of Mobile to the Tennessee River Valley in the Shoals, 14 Junior Golf Tournaments are planned for the 2008 season.

The RTJGT Junior Golf Association is among the most affordable junior golf programs in the country and offers a high level of quality of competition. Junior Association members receive preferred Trail-wide greens fees, a membership gift box with Junior TOUR merchandise and a special range ball rate.

To further promote golf on The Trail, the JGA has set up three divisions: tournament division to foster competition in Alabama and throughout the Southeast; Instructional Division, to help develop skills of junior golfers; and Junior Development, to make golf more accessible to juniors of all ages and races.

Sponsors of this year's RTJ Junior Golf TOUR include Nike Golf, Coca-Cola and PowerAde.

For more information on the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail Junior Golf Association please call 800.949.4444 or visit www.rtjjuniorgolf.com.

2008 TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE

DATE	LOCATION	CITY
JANUARY 26 - 27	*MAGNOLIA GROVE	MOBILE
FEBRUARY 23 - 24	CAMBRIAN RIDGE	GREENVILLE
MARCH 8 - 9	THE SHOALS	MUSCLE SHOALS
APRIL 5 - 6	HIGHLAND OAKS	DOTHAN
MAY 24 - 25	*SILVER LAKES	ANNISTON/GADSDEN
JUNE 2 - 3	GRAND NATIONAL	OPELIKA
JUNE 16 - 17	ROSS BRIDGE	BIRMINGHAM
JULY 7 - 8	*CAPITOL HILL	PRATTVILLE
JULY 21 - 22	OXMOOR VALLEY	BIRMINGHAM
AUGUST 16 - 17	THE SHOALS	MUSCLE SHOALS
SEPTEMBER 13 - 14	CAMBRIAN RIDGE	GREENVILLE
OCTOBER 11 - 12	SILVER LAKES	ANNISTON/GADSDEN
OCTOBER 25 - 26	*HIGHLAND OAKS	DOTHAN

TOUR CHAMPIONSHIP

NOVEMBER 22 - 23	*GRAND NATIONAL	OPELIKA
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* = Major (tournament worth double points)



The inaugural NIKE Cup was held at the end of the summer of 2007. The NIKE Cup is a Ryder Cup format junior event that features some of the top junior golfers from the states of Alabama and Georgia. In 2007 Alabama Junior Golfers were victorious against their counterparts in the Georgia's Cannongate Junior Golf Tour in the NIKE Cup competition held in Newnan, Georgia. Twenty junior golfers from each venue will meet again in 2008 at Capitol Hill in Prattville for a rematch.

A VISITOR'S GUIDE TO THE TRAIL

Alabama's Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail is a collection of 468 holes of championship golf on 11 sites around Alabama. Most are near an interstate or federal highway and directions are easily marked by green highway signs.

The Wall Street Journal said the Trail "may be the biggest bargain in the country" and *The New York Times* called the Trail "some of the best public golf on earth."

The eight Resort Collection Hotels on the Trail all fly the Marriott or Renaissance flags and are top in their class for luxury, golf and spa experiences.

Please use the map and the mileage chart on this page for guidance or contact any of our Reservations Specialists at 800.949.4444 for more information or for tee times and reservations.

You may also visit us online at www.rtgolf.com. Click on Reservations, then on Driving Directions and Information for maps and more detailed information.



MILEAGE BETWEEN TRAIL SITES

	CAPITOL HILL	CAMBRIAN RIDGE	GRAND NATIONAL	HAMPTON COVE	HIGHLAND OAKS	MAGNOLIA GROVE	LAKEWOOD G.C.	OXMOOR VALLEY	ROSS BRIDGE	SILVER LAKES	SHOALS
CAPITOL HILL	—	57	78	193	114	183	185	86	85	155	212
CAMBRIAN RIDGE	57	—	114	245	99	137	139	138	137	207	264
GRAND NATIONAL	78	114	—	189	131	240	242	121	120	112	242
HAMPTON COVE	193	245	189	—	310	372	374	122	123	81	77
HIGHLAND OAKS	114	99	131	310	—	201	217	201	200	233	328
MAGNOLIA GROVE	183	137	240	372	201	—	39	264	263	333	364
LAKEWOOD G.C.	185	139	242	374	217	39	—	284	283	353	384
OXMOOR VALLEY	86	138	121	122	201	264	284	—	2	88	140
ROSS BRIDGE	85	137	120	123	200	263	283	2	—	89	141
SILVER LAKES	155	207	112	81	233	333	353	88	89	—	135
SHOALS	212	264	242	77	328	364	384	140	141	135	—



THE SHOALS

FLORENCE · 36 HOLES

The Fighting Joe course at The Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail at The Shoals opened August, 2004, and was the first Trail course to break 8,000, measuring some 8,092 yards from the black tees.

It's long, really long, and this links style course is simply good straight-forward golf. You can see where you're going. The question is... can you get there?

Some say the spectacular 17th hole is the signature hole on the course, but the 18th green overlooking Wilson Lake on the Tennessee River will distract you with its beauty, if not its treachery.

Travel + Leisure Golf has named Fighting Joe one of the top new courses in 2004 for good reason. Long-hitters here will experience a test of champions; but from the correct tee box, all players will enjoy world-class golf.

The second course, The Schoolmaster (named for President Woodrow Wilson who was responsible for getting Wilson Dam built on the River and who was known as The Schoolmaster of politics) opened in the Summer of 2005.

This tree lined course is more traditional golf with every hole in keeping with the natural topography along the Tennessee River. It's wooded, rolling and spectacular.

First reports indicate The Schoolmaster may be a tougher course than Fighting Joe, but only time will tell. One thing's for sure, it's a Shot Maker's golf course with narrower fairways, tree lined greens, and still a length of nearly 8,000 yards!

It's hard to beat the beauty that Hole #18 holds on the high bluffs over the river, but the waterfall on Hole #2 sure comes close. Make sure you've done your homework well, for The Schoolmaster will certainly test all of your skills. TG

ROBERT TRENT JONES GOLF COURSE AT THE SHOALS

990 SUNBELT PARKWAY · MUSCLE SHOALS, AL 35661 · 256.446.5111

GREENS FEES from \$43 to \$64 · Visit rtjgolf.com for more information

FIGHTING JOE COURSE

Black 8,092/78.7/138; Purple 7,126/74.0/135; Orange 6,628/71.5/130; White 6,154/69.3/123; Teal 4,978/69.0/122; Par 72

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
BLACK	611	466	478	426	236	497	607	477	236
PURPLE	567	413	416	360	193	468	537	406	190
ORANGE	540	388	396	326	175	432	524	375	157
WHITE	512	370	373	313	160	408	467	332	145
TEAL	394	302	320	279	137	325	408	283	101
PAR	5	4	4	4	3	4	5	3	4

	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
BLACK	489	413	716	223	476	466	483	592	200
PURPLE	460	371	622	184	417	397	437	537	151
ORANGE	428	345	581	163	403	352	423	483	137
WHITE	412	332	498	153	369	326	385	473	126
TEAL	256	310	441	136	244	260	304	377	101
PAR	4	4	5	3	4	4	4	5	3

SCHOOLMASTER COURSE

Black 7,971/78.0/143; Purple 7,294/74.7/134; Orange 6,778/72.2/128; White 6,160/69.1/124; Teal 5,249/70.3/121; Par 72

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
BLACK	453	238	477	632	472	265	459	509	681
PURPLE	421	196	450	568	452	231	400	445	645
ORANGE	382	178	421	549	409	208	366	406	604
WHITE	337	135	393	504	373	178	339	369	562
TEAL	311	131	337	478	315	158	268	325	488
PAR	4	3	4	5	4	3	4	4	5

	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
BLACK	226	589	618	455	417	447	197	443	393
PURPLE	202	559	568	424	390	414	157	409	363
ORANGE	168	521	527	402	368	395	146	390	338
WHITE	147	489	501	353	333	347	135	347	318
TEAL	122	381	479	307	265	267	101	283	233
PAR	3	5	5	4	4	4	3	4	4

HIGHLANDS COURSE

Purple 7,262/75.7/133; Orange 6,620/72.3/124; White 6,004/69.6/117;
Teal 4,765/66.0/118; Ladies' Teal 68.3/113; Par 72

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
PURPLE	409	382	518	210	412	435	453	238	511
ORANGE	394	352	490	183	378	406	424	190	480
WHITE	372	315	472	163	334	381	387	141	440
TEAL	309	257	355	94	273	336	318	84	361
PAR	4	4	5	3	4	4	4	3	5

	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
PURPLE	461	202	435	413	414	539	259	534	437
ORANGE	402	177	347	384	382	515	211	498	404
WHITE	371	154	308	369	342	470	161	452	372
TEAL	257	102	266	319	298	390	94	383	270
PAR	4	3	4	4	4	5	3	5	4

RIVER COURSE

Purple 7,667/77.8/130; Orange 6,764/72.8/123; White 6,111/69.7/116;
Teal 5,278/67.0/118; Ladies' Teal 70.4/119; Par 72

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
PURPLE	556	207	467	447	476	214	433	627	438
ORANGE	505	186	404	375	388	196	393	566	394
WHITE	463	165	347	342	350	158	360	540	348
TEAL	431	135	267	299	285	135	305	499	318
PAR	5	3	4	4	4	3	4	5	4

	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
PURPLE	572	437	454	421	208	600	187	451	473
ORANGE	535	398	418	382	186	519	176	378	365
WHITE	486	353	379	314	165	494	163	350	334
TEAL	428	293	340	276	112	426	132	314	283
PAR	5	4	4	4	3	5	3	4	4

SHORT COURSE

Purple 3,635; Orange 3,007; White 2,480; Teal 1,861; Par 54

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
PURPLE	192	184	222	149	201	257	190	215	199
ORANGE	161	167	189	110	182	184	175	173	153
WHITE	124	152	154	95	149	145	144	145	128
TEAL	83	109	72	78	83	109	114	126	111
PAR	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3

	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
PURPLE	177	193	184	222	205	247	159	232	207
ORANGE	161	152	174	185	170	184	143	168	176
WHITE	115	131	144	156	143	137	115	151	152
TEAL	98	83	124	105	115	95	85	128	143
PAR	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3



HAMPTON COVE

HUNTSVILLE · 54 HOLES

At the northern terminus of the Trail in Huntsville is Hampton Cove, a 54-hole facility with terrain that drastically changes from one side of the property to the other.

From May 19 to Thanksgiving 2008, the Highlands Course will be closed for renovation to the greens and to convert it back to its original design as a true Scottish links course, with rolling fairways and long waving grasses. At the signature fifth hole, an old mule barn adds to the picturesque appeal of the setting. Completely opposite in design is the River Course, the only Robert Trent Jones layout without a single bunker. The River Course is laid out on former soybean fields in the flood plain of the Flint River. The River Course is a throwback to the way courses were built long ago. The dirt was merely pushed up to create the greens and tees, leaving all else, including massive oak trees, as is.

The Short Course at Hampton Cove is very open and links-like, with water in play on 11 holes and a large double green accommodating the 10th and 17th greens. **TG**

ROBERT TRENT JONES GOLF COURSE AT HAMPTON COVE

450 OLD HWY 431 SOUTH · OWENS CROSS ROADS, AL 35763 · 256.551.1818
GREENS FEES from \$43 to \$64 · Visit rtjgolf.com for more information



SILVER LAKES

ANNISTON/GADSDEN · 36 HOLES

Named by *Golf Digest's Places to Play* as one of the nation's Great Value courses in the public category, Silver Lakes is set on rolling terrain at the edge of Talladega National Forest between Anniston and Gadsden. Silver Lakes features three championship nines plus a nine hole Short Course. This facility is anchored by a number of strong par fours that play to pedestal greens perched 30 to 40 feet above fairway level.

The Heartbreaker nine is dubbed by many as the most challenging nine on the Trail from the championship tees. Consider the 450-yard par-4 ninth with water rippling down the entire left side of the hole. The beauty of Silver Lakes is the multiple tee selections (up to 12 on some holes). The Backbreaker nine is a photographer's dream, boasting beautiful views of the Appalachian foothills from its elevated tees. The par-5 seventh, a 623-yard thriller (466 from the novice tees), brings water into play not once, but twice. The Mindbreaker, although a tad easier than the other two, demands shotmaking at its finest. The Short Course at Silver Lakes is arguably the most demanding collection of one-shotters on the Trail. There's water in play on seven of the holes, including a 12-foot cascade beside the sixth green. **TG**

ROBERT TRENT JONES GOLF COURSE AT SILVER LAKES

1 SUNBELT PARKWAY · GLENCOE, AL 35905 · 256.892.3268

GREENS FEES from \$43 to \$64 · Visit rtjgolf.com for more information

MINDBREAKER COURSE

Purple 3,579/37.0/64; Orange 3,215/35.4/60; White 2,987/34.2/58;

Teal 2,322/33.8/56; Ladies' Teal 34.0/62; Par 36

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
PURPLE	546	177	408	207	556	434	406	454	391
ORANGE	505	157	361	189	515	388	362	387	351
WHITE	471	132	345	169	492	376	320	358	324
TEAL	344	96	296	123	376	279	280	317	291
PAR	5	3	4	3	5	4	4	4	4

HEARTBREAKER COURSE

Purple 3,828/38.5/68; Orange 3,301/35.5/60; White 2,967/34.1/59;

Teal 2,543/33.9/57; Ladies' Teal 34.3/62; Par 36

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
PURPLE	568	479	455	431	215	452	550	229	449
ORANGE	532	397	402	404	167	394	506	146	353
WHITE	481	375	367	357	136	344	475	118	315
TEAL	431	280	329	312	109	301	454	67	260
PAR	5	4	4	4	3	4	5	3	4

BACKBREAKER COURSE

Purple 3,846/38.2/63; Orange 3,385/35.4/58; White 2,927/33.8/56;

Teal 2,364/33.1/54; Ladies' Teal 33.7/60; Par 36

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
PURPLE	455	206	455	496	231	401	623	445	534
ORANGE	406	159	399	400	174	371	578	399	499
WHITE	346	132	350	343	120	346	466	342	482
TEAL	293	92	294	292	94	212	369	287	431
PAR	4	3	4	4	3	4	5	4	5

SHORT COURSE

Purple 1,946; Orange 1,450; White 1,276; Teal 798; Par 27

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
PURPLE	232	192	225	236	199	254	186	211	211
ORANGE	137	155	166	171	160	167	170	169	155
WHITE	123	133	146	156	130	138	147	150	153
TEAL	90	81	100	94	99	94	94	85	61
PAR	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3

RIDGE COURSE

Purple 7,055/73.5/140; Orange 6,527/71.6/136; White 6,148/70.1/133;
Teal 4,974/69.1/122; Ladies' Teal 70.2/130; Par 72

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
PURPLE	449	528	539	389	179	447	379	176	421
ORANGE	404	513	520	382	146	405	346	159	384
WHITE	364	500	506	356	123	389	317	129	393
TEAL	297	458	451	286	85	291	232	77	227
PAR	4	5	5	4	3	4	4	3	4

	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
PURPLE	414	446	483	189	389	390	205	440	592
ORANGE	379	393	465	162	348	366	172	411	572
WHITE	361	373	440	137	333	353	165	396	543
TEAL	279	305	410	92	251	321	145	304	463
PAR	4	4	5	3	4	4	3	4	5

VALLEY COURSE

Purple 7,149/74.6/130; Orange 6,590/71.3/127; White 6,027/68.7/118;
Teal 4,924/69.4/122; Ladies' Teal 68.3/120; Par 72

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
PURPLE	440	204	435	188	415	400	564	433	561
ORANGE	415	174	391	171	375	369	509	396	541
WHITE	393	153	363	145	327	334	475	358	513
TEAL	367	100	285	109	265	290	401	268	428
PAR	4	3	4	3	4	4	5	4	5

	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
PURPLE	475	363	506	207	552	407	178	400	441
ORANGE	420	322	504	177	527	381	165	359	393
WHITE	393	279	490	147	502	335	120	337	363
TEAL	284	229	461	107	441	295	81	302	210
PAR	4	4	5	3	5	4	3	4	4

SHORT COURSE

Purple 3,360; Orange 3,037; White 2,556; Teal 1,871; Par 54

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
PURPLE	170	224	203	208	135	155	163	204	161
ORANGE	152	206	183	185	126	147	150	188	130
WHITE	122	195	138	142	113	139	131	170	119
TEAL	79	141	103	108	98	93	103	144	103
PAR	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3

	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
PURPLE	195	215	182	137	253	211	192	174	178
ORANGE	179	191	154	135	225	192	160	164	170
WHITE	166	158	144	127	141	153	137	129	132
TEAL	69	114	95	124	123	91	124	83	76
PAR	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3



OXMOOR VALLEY

BIRMINGHAM · 54 HOLES

This 54-hole facility was built on former mining land owned by U.S. Steel. Sculpted from the peaks and valleys of the Appalachians, the courses offer scenic forests, numerous creeks and challenging elevation changes. The Ridge Course, with its roller coaster fairways, heavy tree cover, and precipitous 150-foot elevation changes, is incredibly photogenic. As a reminder of the site's former use, the green at the par-five 3rd is buttressed by a shelf of exposed shale rock. The Valley Course is dotted with picturesque lakes, beautiful rolling fairways, and stretches two miles downrange along a slender valley. The 18th hole, a 441-yard par-4, nicknamed "The Assassin," rises to a dramatic finish at the signature clubhouse just above the green. The Short Course at Oxmoor Valley is a delightful collection of 18 pure one-shotters which offer severe elevation changes and almost every hole plays downhill. The Short Course is listed by *Golf Digest's Places to Play* as one of the nation's Great Value courses in the public category. **TG**

ROBERT TRENT JONES GOLF COURSE AT OXMOOR VALLEY

100 SUNBELT PARKWAY · BIRMINGHAM, AL 35211 · 205.942.1177

GREENS FEES from \$43 to \$64 · Visit rtjgolf.com for more information



ROSS BRIDGE

HOOVER · 18 HOLES

Alabama welcomes the newest addition to The Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail: Ross Bridge. Beautifully carved into the rolling terrain of Shannon Valley, these 18 holes will challenge even the best golfers. Named one of *Zagat's* top new courses, Ross Bridge hosts the Regions Charity Classic, a PGA Champions Tour event each May.

The course meanders through indigenous landscape and around the 259 room Renaissance Ross Bridge Golf Resort & Spa. Ross Bridge is the third longest course in the world but offers multiple tees for golfers of all levels. Symbolic of an old parkland style course, ten holes play along the banks of two significant lakes connected by a spectacular waterfall dropping 80 feet between the ninth and eighteenth greens. A gristmill added to the waterfall reflects the history of this old mining site. The beauty and challenge of each hole leads many to believe there is not one signature hole but possibly eighteen.

Like many other Trail courses, the par three holes are incredible. Considerable elevation change combines with water or other natural obstructions to get your attention. Large putting surfaces provide many tempting pin locations that will test golfers' approach shots.

Number seventeen, a long par four, plays to a small, well guarded green. Water frames the right side of this down-sloping hole. In the background is a picturesque view of the ninth and eighteenth holes with the waterfall tumbling between. Seven offers a par five that traverses a ridge high above the rest of the course. The ninth will leave you speechless as it is time to decide how daring you are off the tee. A split fairway allows for either a short challenging route or safer but long hole. Regardless if it is a par three, four or five, Ross Bridge stands ready for your game! **TG**

ROBERT TRENT JONES GOLF COURSE AT ROSS BRIDGE

4000 GRAND AVENUE · BIRMINGHAM, AL 35226 · 205.949.3085

GREENS FEES from \$80 to \$115 · Visit rtjgolf.com for more information

ROSS BRIDGE COURSE

Black 8,191/78.5/135; Purple 7,446/74.9/127; Orange 6,783/71.3/118;
White 6,200/68.7/117; Teal 5,312/70.2/123; Par 72

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
BLACK	620	467	470	226	469	207	619	502	518
PURPLE	573	430	445	202	417	194	561	447	410
ORANGE	543	395	422	155	380	185	519	408	377
WHITE	511	322	392	146	337	174	484	376	341
TEAL	463	278	366	140	303	110	458	311	285
PAR	5	4	4	3	4	3	5	4	4

	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
BLACK	477	208	454	698	239	458	571	501	487
PURPLE	454	184	429	614	219	415	538	467	447
ORANGE	417	167	408	540	176	366	511	411	403
WHITE	387	133	357	519	163	341	477	382	358
TEAL	273	120	326	403	130	293	410	334	309
PAR	4	3	4	5	3	4	5	4	4

FOR MAPS AND MORE DETAILED INFORMATION on all Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail sites, go to www.rtjgolf.com. Click on Reservations, then on Driving Directions and Information.

LAKE COURSE

Purple 7,149/74.3/136; Orange 6,488/71.3/126; White 5,948/68.7/117;
Teal 4,910/68.7/117; Ladies' White 74.4/133; Ladies' Teal 68.0/119; Par 72

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
PURPLE	380	428	197	527	423	442	557	213	411
ORANGE	364	381	178	480	396	381	521	182	379
WHITE	319	361	168	447	385	352	477	148	339
TEAL	285	308	92	399	308	295	418	103	276
PAR	4	4	3	5	4	4	5	3	4

	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
PURPLE	434	445	522	427	545	230	334	205	429
ORANGE	397	387	493	388	510	182	297	174	398
WHITE	353	356	459	361	488	160	285	143	357
TEAL	276	239	391	343	384	93	247	126	327
PAR	4	4	5	4	5	3	4	3	4

LINKS COURSE

Purple 7,311/75.1/135; Orange 6,574/72.3/129; White 6,015/69.6/119;
Teal 4,843/69.6/113; Ladies' White 75.5/139; Ladies' Teal 70.4/120; Par 72

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
PURPLE	423	556	206	425	456	544	472	345	204
ORANGE	396	509	182	409	375	499	446	319	170
WHITE	366	470	165	384	342	460	409	299	133
TEAL	313	385	110	262	275	412	318	234	119
PAR	4	5	3	4	4	5	4	4	3

	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
PURPLE	363	260	575	418	467	516	181	429	471
ORANGE	326	195	500	378	422	467	152	402	427
WHITE	289	151	493	343	372	451	118	368	402
TEAL	242	69	426	272	338	362	93	312	301
PAR	4	3	5	4	4	5	3	4	4

SHORT COURSE

Purple 3,328; Orange 2,798; White 2,476; Teal 1,715; Par 54

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
PURPLE	188	201	171	173	187	173	152	216	250
ORANGE	170	166	151	152	147	137	119	193	234
WHITE	148	148	128	131	124	137	119	174	211
TEAL	93	106	83	92	102	97	89	119	71
PAR	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3

	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
PURPLE	161	187	231	185	138	204	202	155	154
ORANGE	131	172	179	151	108	184	173	110	121
WHITE	108	139	179	98	104	156	156	110	106
TEAL	85	95	119	58	72	143	108	77	106
PAR	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3



GRAND NATIONAL

AUBURN/OPELIKA · 54 HOLES

The Links Course was named by *Golf Digest* as the 2nd best new public course in America in 1993. The Lake Course was named by *Golf Digest* as the 4th best new public course in America in 1993. And both courses were in the top 10 of *Golf Digest's* list of America's Top 50 Affordable Courses. The three courses at Grand National are also listed among the nation's 40 Super Value courses by *Golf Digest's Places to Play*. Grand National, by all reports, was the single greatest site for a golf complex Robert Trent Jones, Sr. had ever seen. Built on 600-acre Lake Saugahatchee, 32 of the 54 holes drape along its filigreed shores. The cornerstone of the complex is the Links Course, which is without a single weakness. The par-four 18th is without a doubt the strongest finishing hole on the Trail. The drive must carry a corner of the lake, while the approach is played to a shallow pedestal green shored up by boulders. With 12 holes hugging the shore, Grand National's Lake Course is every bit as scenic as the Links. Not only is the quartet of par threes on the Lake Course as good as any in the nation, the 230-yard, island green 15th may be the single prettiest hole on the Trail. The Short Course, while overshadowed by the two main tracts, is a thing of beauty, with more than half the holes touching the lake. This 18-hole course of one-shotters might be the finest anywhere in the country. **TG**

ROBERT TRENT JONES GOLF COURSE AT GRAND NATIONAL

3000 ROBERT TRENT JONES TRAIL · OPELIKA, AL 36801 · 334.749.9042

GREENS FEES from \$43 to \$64 · Visit rtjgolf.com for more information



CAPITOL HILL

PRATTVILLE · 54 HOLES

One of the most popular sites on the Trail, Capitol Hill, in Prattville, continues to get praises from golfers and golf writers alike. *Golf Magazine* called The Judge Course one of the 10 public courses in America worthy of hosting the U.S. Open and the *Zagat Survey of America's Top Golf Courses* ranked it among the top 50 courses in America. The Senator was named among the Top 10 New Courses in the nation by *Golf* magazine and is showcased in September during the Navistar LPGA Classic. Located in Prattville, approximately 13 miles north of Alabama's state capital, Capitol Hill features three 18-hole championship courses. With more than 1500 acres of golf and nature, the pure magnitude of this facility is amazing and allows each course to be drastically different from the others.

The Senator, a Scottish-Links style course with beautifully manicured bent grass greens, holds over 160 pot-hole bunkers and mounds 20 to 40 feet in height, cleverly hiding the cart path or any other hole from the fairway. The secluded settings of each hole will make it feel as if you are the only foursome on the course.

The Legislator, a more traditional course, plays in and out of pine trees and along the bluff. The view riding down the "Sky Bridge" for six holes laid out in a native cypress swamp will impress as you are led back up the bluff to finish the course at the spectacular clubhouse.

The Judge offers stunning vistas alongside the 200 acre glistening backwaters of the Alabama River. The first tee lies 200 feet above the fairway overlooking the Alabama River and the Montgomery skyline. With 14 holes adjoining the water and a stunning bulkhead island green, the Judge is described as simply magnificent.

Capitol Hill features an innovative circular driving range, 400 yards in diameter. TG

ROBERT TRENT JONES GOLF COURSE AT CAPITOL HILL

2600 CONSTITUTION AVENUE · PRATTVILLE, AL 36066 · 334.285.1114

GREENS FEES from \$43 to \$64 · \$10 up-charge per round on Judge course
Visit rtjgolf.com for more information

LEGISLATOR COURSE

Purple 7,323/74.1/126; Orange 6,646/70.8/124; White 6,232/68.7/117;
Teal 5,414/71.5/119; Par 72

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
PURPLE	631	404	177	481	603	198	425	455	420
ORANGE	554	389	163	421	536	174	401	411	380
WHITE	541	366	136	391	509	151	361	393	366
TEAL	435	324	115	325	428	124	339	353	311
PAR	5	4	3	4	5	3	4	4	4

	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
PURPLE	412	207	387	544	476	407	181	585	424
ORANGE	369	170	367	519	434	364	160	552	365
WHITE	350	148	348	505	407	343	148	512	330
TEAL	337	105	302	451	343	313	124	464	295
PAR	4	3	4	5	4	4	3	5	4

SENATOR COURSE

Purple 7,726/76.6/131; Orange 6,968/72.4/125; White 5,921/67.6/111;
Teal 5,122/67.6/115; Ladies' White 69.6/121, Par 72

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
PURPLE	427	230	419	426	681	420	232	558	437
ORANGE	395	206	385	367	606	385	167	530	402
WHITE	365	165	346	339	511	326	129	453	376
TEAL	281	89	290	282	460	301	109	393	290
PAR	4	3	4	4	5	4	3	5	4

	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
PURPLE	616	435	467	203	459	449	222	559	457
ORANGE	543	400	434	169	426	417	181	515	408
WHITE	528	634	391	159	358	334	147	475	366
TEAL	460	317	326	116	333	307	84	376	308
PAR	5	4	4	3	4	4	3	5	4

JUDGE COURSE

Purple 7,794/77.8/144; Orange 6,670/72.6/132; White 6,198/69.3/129;
Teal 4,955/68.3/121; Par 72

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
PURPLE	415	459	187	617	423	229	675	466	424
ORANGE	400	371	155	514	386	190	586	420	387
WHITE	379	350	129	486	335	148	575	395	362
TEAL	296	297	104	402	273	128	351	344	271
PAR	4	4	3	5	4	3	5	4	4

	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
PURPLE	711	478	231	424	469	552	256	430	348
ORANGE	563	394	179	373	424	500	223	384	321
WHITE	543	340	160	313	377	478	170	364	293
TEAL	421	268	98	278	352	413	126	286	247
PAR	5	4	3	4	4	5	3	4	4

SHERLING COURSE

Purple 3,681/37.4/67; Orange 3,423/36.3/65; White 3,028/34.9/62;
Teal 2,435/33.7/60; Ladies' Teal 34.3/57; Par 36

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
PURPLE	568	209	428	184	428	420	437	636	371
ORANGE	531	167	398	169	399	397	412	601	349
WHITE	490	146	365	141	367	324	354	514	327
TEAL	417	91	280	79	224	283	322	460	279
PAR	5	3	4	3	4	4	4	5	4

CANYON COURSE

Purple 3,746/38.0/74; Orange 3,490/36.9/72; White 3,058/35.8/70;
Teal 2,422/34.4/68; Ladies' Teal 33.9/59; Par 36

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
PURPLE	501	275	585	444	383	418	522	258	360
ORANGE	477	244	553	421	353	374	499	237	332
WHITE	432	163	478	366	330	366	464	152	307
TEAL	371	130	409	297	272	259	336	108	240
PAR	4	3	5	4	4	4	5	3	4

LOBLOLLY COURSE

Purple 3,551/36.6/66; Orange 3,295/35.6/63; White 3,078/34.7/61;
Teal 2,350/33.4/58; Ladies' Teal 33.5/54; Par 35

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
PURPLE	497	421	418	182	418	222	503	447	443
ORANGE	469	397	390	155	413	196	434	423	418
WHITE	457	346	334	136	367	138	369	366	365
TEAL	342	322	249	75	301	112	344	321	284
PAR	5	4	4	3	4	3	4	4	4

SHORT COURSE

Purple 1,640; Orange 1,415; White 1,116; Teal 745; Par 27

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
PURPLE	156	187	211	147	173	159	231	185	191
ORANGE	136	155	187	123	142	141	210	162	159
WHITE	118	121	151	79	109	123	123	151	141
TEAL	81	71	94	66	76	75	76	93	113
PAR	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3



CAMBRIAN RIDGE

GREENVILLE · 36 HOLES

Known by avid golfers as one of the most beautiful and most challenging stops on the Trail, Cambrian Ridge in Greenville lies just 40 miles from Montgomery. It is well worth the ride for any golfer looking for 36 holes of jaw-dropping golf.

Cambrian Ridge was also immortalized on the 2003 Microsoft Golf Game and was the subject of an extensive ad campaign in *Golf Magazine* promoting the game.

This year on Memorial Day weekend, May 24-25, Cambrian Ridge will host the 10th Annual Father/Son Championship, one of the most popular events on the Trail.

The Sherling/Canyon combination was named by *Golf Digest* as the 3rd best new public course in America in 1994 and 13th in their list of America's Top 50 Affordable Courses. This combination was also named by *Golf Digest's Places to Play* as one of the nation's 40 Super Value courses. The Loblolly nine, with its gently rolling fairways, cathedral-like pines, and water-fronted greens, exudes a stately, Augusta-like quality. The Canyon nine, carved from former hunting grounds where deer blinds remain nailed to the hard-wood, is a thrilling stretch of target-style golf with hole #1 being a 501-yard par four that drops 200 feet from tee to fairway. The Sherling nine may be the best nine on the entire Trail. Drama takes center stage at Sherling's ninth hole which marches straight uphill past a deep ravine strewn with ochre boulders to a lolling tongue of a double green shared with the ninth on the Canyon nine. Above this green is a clubhouse set atop the highest point in the county, its verandah serving up expansive 30-mile views of Southern forest land. The nine-hole Short Course is a marvelous collection of par-three holes laid out beautifully between the ridge and Sherling lake. TG

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HIGHLAND OAKS

DOTHAN · 36 HOLES

Located in the southeast corner of Alabama, Highland Oaks offers three nine-hole championship courses. The Highlands/Magnolia combination was named by *Golf Digest* as the 7th best new public course in America in 1994 and 31st in their list of America's Top 50 Affordable Courses. This combination was also named by *Golf Digest's Places to Play* as one of the nation's Great Value courses. This 36-hole complex features some of the longest and most classically designed holes on the Trail. Each nine has a different personality. Highlands, the core nine, is relatively open, with several lakes in play. The peninsula green at the par-3 sixth has an elusive, beckoning quality.

Marshwood has been made famous (or notorious) by its behemoth par-5 sixth, which stretches to 701 yards from the tips. The 422-yard par-4 ninth, a left to right dogleg, is arguably the best hole at the site and has a tilted green elevated above a swathe of wetlands. The Magnolia nine is well-named: specimen magnolia trees dot the higher ground, which is reached via a 1,000 foot long wooden bridge spanning a marsh filled with lichen-dappled trees. The feature hole is the 416-yard fifth, where a split-level fairway offers an option off the tee. The Short Course, a nine-hole par-3, has demanding bunker placements, three water holes and possibly the best putting Bermuda greens in the South. **TG**

ROBERT TRENT JONES GOLF COURSE AT HIGHLAND OAKS

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HIGHLANDS COURSE

Purple 3,892/38.6/70; Orange 3,580/37.1/68; White 3,296/35.8/66;
Teal 2,554/34.3/63; Ladies' Teal 35.0/64; Par 36

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
PURPLE	493	458	457	256	430	206	561	435	596
ORANGE	442	415	437	225	390	178	523	409	561
WHITE	402	371	414	181	362	169	507	365	525
TEAL	367	253	294	115	327	120	339	305	434
PAR	4	4	4	3	4	3	5	4	5

MARSHWOOD COURSE

Purple 3,812/38.3/68; Orange 3,492/36.8/65; White 3,158/35.3/63;
Teal 2,531/34.0/60; Ladies' Teal 34.5/62; Par 36

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
PURPLE	411	564	406	205	456	701	448	199	422
ORANGE	370	521	364	178	441	660	421	157	380
WHITE	334	483	327	137	418	616	382	113	348
TEAL	276	406	266	114	351	435	287	94	302
PAR	4	5	4	3	4	5	4	3	4

MAGNOLIA COURSE

Purple 3,699/37.4/65; Orange 3,404/36.1/62; White 3,090/34.7/59;
Teal 2,471/33.3/56; Ladies' Teal 34.0/59; Par 36

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
PURPLE	392	205	577	546	416	480	195	437	451
ORANGE	371	155	545	516	377	441	176	409	414
WHITE	330	110	520	480	352	396	150	373	379
TEAL	252	81	392	413	291	307	111	297	327
PAR	4	3	5	5	4	4	3	4	4

SHORT COURSE

Purple 1,809; Orange 1,539; White 1,229; Teal 874; Par 27

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
PURPLE	199	241	216	172	174	188	232	178	209
ORANGE	164	215	181	149	137	141	197	175	180
WHITE	121	184	133	127	101	113	159	136	155
TEAL	85	108	94	83	73	76	106	113	136
PAR	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3

CROSSINGS COURSE

Purple 7,151/74.7/134; Orange 6,560/71.6/131; White 6,063/69.2/126;
Teal 5,184/67.9/123; Ladies' Teal 69.4/115; Par 72

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
PURPLE	422	185	385	525	430	540	410	210	425
ORANGE	387	150	347	511	408	514	385	163	406
WHITE	364	135	317	444	378	496	349	134	373
TEAL	275	74	279	438	331	381	314	122	316
PAR	4	3	4	5	4	5	4	3	4

	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
PURPLE	417	415	416	535	195	430	535	220	456
ORANGE	386	371	371	500	157	385	517	195	407
WHITE	374	323	366	478	139	342	508	155	388
TEAL	348	273	322	400	91	334	416	121	349
PAR	4	4	4	5	3	4	5	3	4

FALLS COURSE

Purple 7,239/74.6/142; Orange 6,558/71.4/135; White 6,070/69.5/126;
Teal 5,253/68.1/124; Ladies' Teal 70.4/124; Par 72

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
PURPLE	448	197	413	391	582	187	520	443	420
ORANGE	406	173	380	368	516	169	496	405	386
WHITE	370	157	330	345	497	135	466	377	367
TEAL	345	126	308	331	412	93	417	336	320
PAR	4	3	4	4	5	3	5	4	4

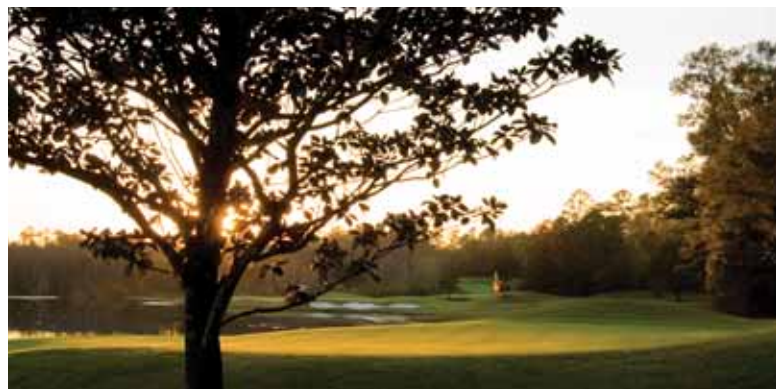
	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
PURPLE	570	206	393	215	430	446	437	395	546
ORANGE	513	161	367	162	386	407	394	356	513
WHITE	476	145	345	146	380	364	356	338	476
TEAL	393	106	307	138	264	328	324	282	423
PAR	5	3	4	3	4	4	4	4	5

SHORT COURSE

Purple 3,140; Orange 2,734; White 2,279; Teal 1,829; Par 54

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
PURPLE	174	180	189	215	137	135	190	178	160
ORANGE	160	170	165	189	107	126	152	153	140
WHITE	119	137	124	155	91	100	127	140	126
TEAL	93	102	90	136	71	80	90	110	118
PAR	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3

	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
PURPLE	173	192	195	205	190	110	192	155	170
ORANGE	151	174	170	175	164	99	161	135	143
WHITE	132	132	142	143	144	85	138	111	133
TEAL	117	108	128	121	103	70	122	80	90
PAR	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3



MAGNOLIA GROVE

MOBILE · 54 HOLES

The Falls and Crossings courses at Magnolia Grove were named by *Golf Digest's Places to Play* as two of the nation's Great Value courses, and both courses were listed in America's Top 50 Affordable Courses. The property at Magnolia Grove includes creeks, marshland, and lakes, with each of the 54 holes carved from a thick forest of hardwood and pine. The main tract at Magnolia Grove is the Falls Course. It is characterized by large, liberally contoured greens and massive, cloverleaf bunkers. On the 10th, a 570-yard par five and possibly the best strategic hole on the course, a waterfall cascades across stairsteps just beneath a contoured green that falls eight feet from front to back. The Crossings Course, which doubles across railroad tracks, is a shotmaker's layout. It occupies hillier terrain than the Falls, with several pulpit greens elevated well above fairway levels. Most of the holes on the Short Course, recently named the best par 3 course in America, call for forced carries over marsh to liberally sloped, bulkheaded greens and are equal to any of the one-shotters on the full-length courses. **TG**

ROBERT TRENT JONES GOLF COURSE AT MAGNOLIA GROVE

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LAKWOOD GOLF CLUB

POINT CLEAR · 36 HOLES

The venerable Dogwood and Azalea courses at The Grand Hotel Marriott Resort, Golf Club & Spa, have seen a lot in their days. They've hosted President Gerald Ford, Dr. Billy Graham and Bob Hope, to name a few of the more famous players.

They've been through renovations and hurricanes and still remain a showcase for great golf in the South. First built in 1947, the Lakewood Golf Club at The Grand Hotel showcases fairways lined with 200-year-old oaks and a dramatic signature hole, the 14th hole on Azalea. An island green is surrounded by a four-acre lake which makes your approach shot to this par 5 very demanding. Recently redesigned, the new designs lend themselves to superb conditioning year round. With the addition or expansion of ten water features over the span of the 36 holes as well as other interesting architectural features, golfers are faced with decisions at every corner.

The two, 18-hole courses are open to Lakewood members and hotel guests and promise a memorable golf experience for both the novice and the experienced golfer alike. Where the Dogwood course might seem a tad bit easier, and the Azalea, more of a challenge, both courses can play to your liking depending on your selection of tees. With five sets of tees per hole, your decision should be rather easy.

Funded by the Retirement Systems of Alabama, the renovation of both courses brings them on par with many of the great resort golf courses in the country. Lakewood Golf Club has several times been named to *Golf Magazine's* Best Golf Resorts in America. **TG**

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AZALEA COURSE

Purple 7,504/75.3/132; Orange 6,759/71.5/126; White 6,112/68.5/117; Teal 5,431/70.3/116; Red 4,725/67.8/111; Par 72

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
PURPLE	636	411	420	203	355	572	225	463	470
ORANGE	558	375	400	178	315	520	180	422	385
WHITE	490	345	353	164	288	491	159	379	372
TEAL	455	312	339	145	243	400	148	349	305
RED	410	255	303	77	216	354	120	296	293
PAR	5	4	4	3	4	5	3	4	4

	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
PURPLE	429	514	448	196	545	195	471	475	476
ORANGE	389	500	398	180	531	147	428	423	430
WHITE	347	460	371	158	472	133	342	386	402
TEAL	344	420	354	117	421	107	289	349	334
RED	302	321	338	107	383	66	273	307	304
PAR	4	5	4	3	5	3	4	4	4

DOGWOOD COURSE

Purple 7,063/72.9/128; Orange 6,521/70.4/126; White 5,885/67.5/115; Teal 5,267/64.7/108; Red 4,522/66.5/112; Par 72

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
PURPLE	528	425	214	399	499	426	305	191	398
ORANGE	483	410	174	380	469	415	286	177	361
WHITE	425	375	167	362	442	379	262	155	328
TEAL	385	330	143	344	397	347	236	128	294
RED	335	266	105	239	346	324	221	106	256
PAR	5	4	3	4	5	4	4	3	4

	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
PURPLE	380	445	548	233	463	454	572	209	374
ORANGE	347	415	521	191	428	424	531	176	333
WHITE	316	367	454	170	355	381	479	157	311
TEAL	296	288	390	154	335	361	408	139	292
RED	267	239	334	130	315	312	382	119	226
PAR	4	4	5	3	4	4	5	3	4

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