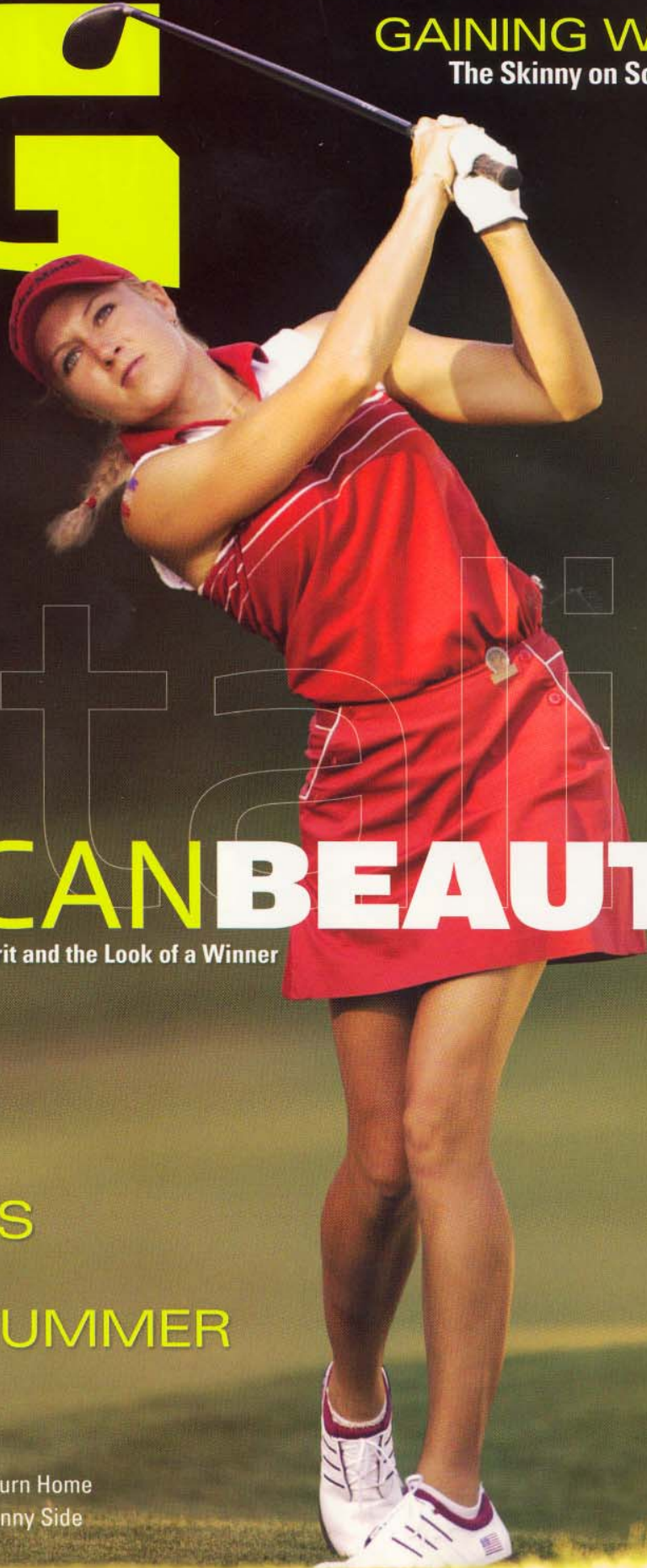


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Tamarack Resort Takes a Relaxing Tack



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TWICE THE THRILL

When it's fully completed sometime in 2008, Tamarack will rank among the West's most complete multi-season resorts, with skiing in winter, golf and other outdoor pursuits in summer and some or all of the above during the "shoulder seasons."

Osprey Meadows architect Robert Trent Jones Jr. brings every element of great mountain golf together on such holes as No. 3 (above), with its dicey approach over water, and No. 8 (right), where tall pines frame a well-guarded green.

Like all the people associated with Tamarack Resort, Tom Altmann is a patient guy.

As summer gets going in the mountains north of Boise, Idaho, Altmann celebrates the grand opening of the Osprey Meadows golf course at Tamarack as its director of golf. He'll be standing on the stone deck of the Members Lodge overlooking the 18th green with the sun and a smile on his face as players finish their experience on the Robert Jones II masterpiece.

But it wasn't always this way. The first multi-purpose U.S. resort to be approved in 25 years took nearly that long to come to fruition.

"Two years ago we had two yurts and tent-style cooking," Altmann said while monitoring the thaw on Osprey Meadows in



late March from his perch above the course. "Everything you see happened in the past two years."

The history of Tamarack goes back much further. The resort first began to take shape in the late '80s as Valbois. The project eventually failed in the mid-'90s amid delays from federal regulatory hurdles. New

investors revived the project in 1998 and called it Westrock before finally settling on Tamarack — after the resort's signature tree — in 2002.

Four years later, Tamarack is up and running as a full-scale, four-season resort. The Tamarack Members' Lodge, with its pairing of leather and hardwood creating a classic Western feel, currently is the centerpiece. Despite the name, the Members' Lodge welcomes all visitors staying at the resort located 90 miles north of Boise off Highway 55 near the small town of Donnelly.

"We want to emphasize that this will be a very public resort," Altmann says.

Don't expect a super-sized golf-and-ski experience the likes of Tahoe, Sun Valley or Vail, however. Tamarack has an unspoiled feel and wants to keep it that way. Homes will be visible on only three of Osprey Meadows' 18 holes, and the entire resort lodging will be capped at 2,000 beds.

"We're going to keep it small, boutique-style, but it's a high-touch resort," he says. "We want to give people an experience that's life-lasting."

That's a euphemism for the type of superior service guests have enjoyed at resorts such as Deer Valley in Utah and the Yellowstone Club near Big Sky, Mont. — two of the inspirations for Tamarack.

The pulse of Tamarack eventually will be taken at Village Plaza, a pedestrian-friendly entertainment venue set amongst an array of restaurants, shops, villages and cafes. Village Plaza is scheduled for completion in December 2007. Tennis superstars Andre Agassi and Steffi Graf are part of a group backing construction of the Fairmont Hotel, a luxury structure coming online in 2008 near Village Plaza.

While Tamarack hasn't completely taken shape, the word is out about its myriad recreational opportunities. The ski resort has expanded to 840 acres with 2,800 vertical feet. Besides the spectacular golf, summer activities include mountain biking on nearly 15 miles of single- and double-track trails. For the extremists, lift service provides access to Tamarack's 7,700-foot summit. The northern shore of 21-mile long Lake Cascade is no more than

Osprey Meadows

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Par: 72

Yardage: 7,300 yards (back tees)

Access: Osprey Meadows is open to the public with preferred tee times reserved for members.

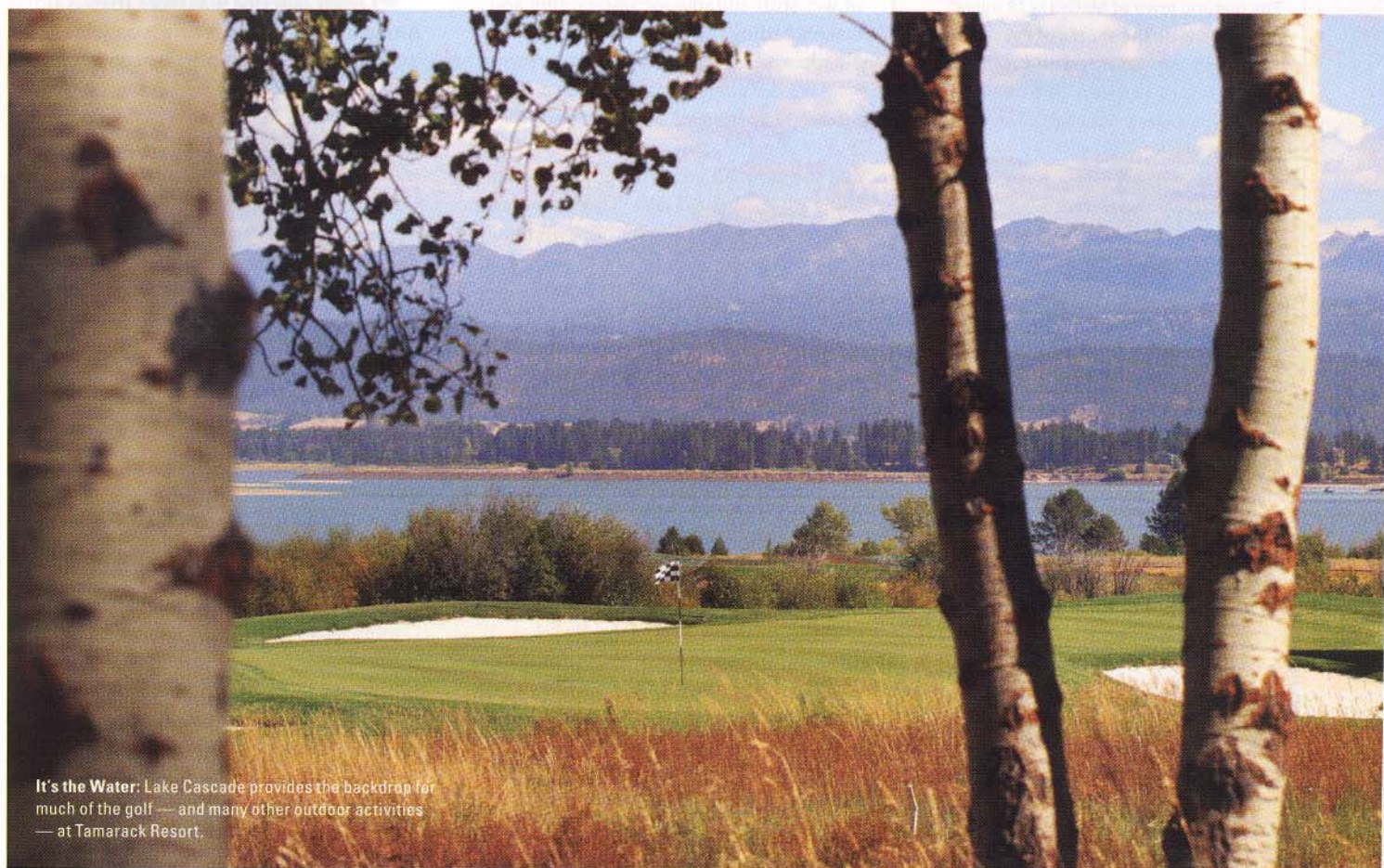
Getting there: Tamarack Resort is located 90 miles north of Boise off Highway 55.

Holes to Remember

No. 6: 220-yard par 3 — It's a 200-yard carry over wetlands from the championship tee to a green that looks like a postage stamp — one of Robert Trent Jones II's favorite design techniques — but is actually quite large and inviting. Lake Cascade and the mountains frame the view.

No. 18: 560-yard par 5 — Uphill dogleg right featuring island fairways and a narrow band of wetlands acting as cross hazards. Spectators will be able to watch golfers finish their rounds from the Village, just as pedestrians wandering the narrow streets of St. Andrews can stop and watch players putting out on the 18th green at the Old Course. The green is perhaps the largest and deepest on the course at 10,000-plus square feet.

AT A GLANCE



It's the Water: Lake Cascade provides the backdrop for much of the golf — and many other outdoor activities — at Tamarack Resort.

STUFF ² DO»

... IN AND AROUND TAMARACK

Prez Presence

Perhaps the only thing you need to know about other recreational opportunities at Tamarack Resort and nearby Lake Cascade is that President Bush chose to vacation there. Tamarack offers 60 miles of paved and unpaved trails. Tamarack has a full-service trail park for mountain biking designed by the International Mountain Biking Association, including lift service to the 7,700-foot summit of Tamarack Mountain. Tamarack also offers customized scenic SUV tours with expert guides to view a variety of wildlife.

Loving the Lake

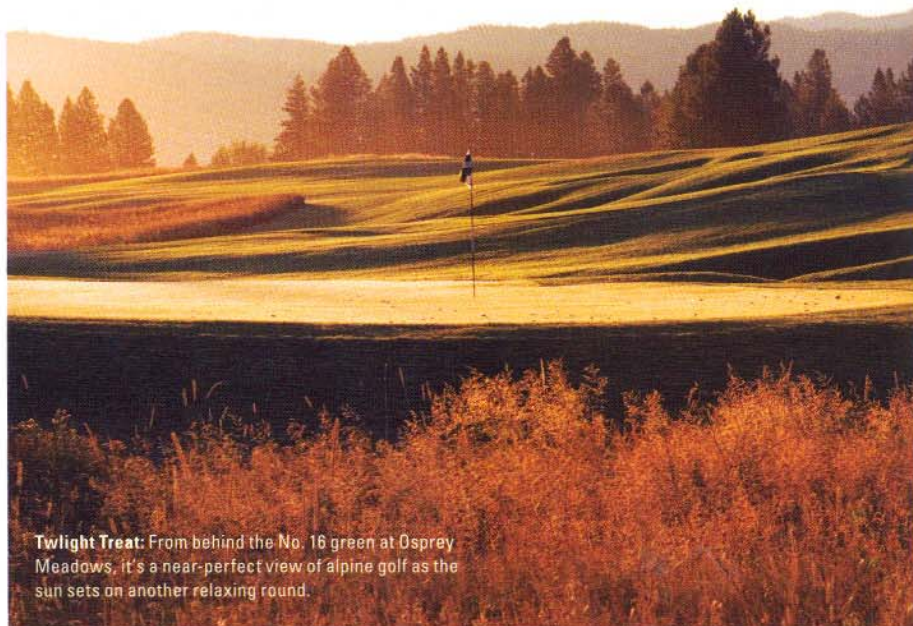
Lake Cascade is 21 miles long and offers opportunities for swimming, sailing, fishing, canoeing, lake kayaking, power boating, waterskiing and wakeboarding. An extensive fleet of rental boats is available.

McCall of the Wild

The historic town of McCall is 18 miles north. It sits on the shores of Payette Lake and is home to two resort golf courses. The Payette River below Lake Cascade offers world-class whitewater rafting and kayaking.

And More Golf!

Tamarack has brought a rush of development to the Valley County region. That's good news for golfers as two more 18-hole courses are in the master plans for Tamarack. With Jug Mountain Ranch in the Donnelly area and three more resort layouts in play at McCall and New Meadows less than half an hour north, the area could eventually offer seven golf courses. Tamarack expects to offer package deals that include access to all of the area golf courses.



Twilight Treat: From behind the No. 16 green at Osprey Meadows, it's a near-perfect view of alpine golf as the sun sets on another relaxing round.

a par 5 from the golf course and much of the resort. The lake provides opportunities for swimming, sailing, fishing, canoeing and kayaking. The power set has plenty of wet stuff suitable for waterskiing and wakeboarding. Nature watchers can spot elk, deer, eagles and osprey.

"We definitely want this to be a family-oriented experience," Altmann says. "While dad's out golfing, mom can be in the spa and the kids can go with a guide on a nature trail or kayaking the lake. There are just a multitude of options. We don't want to exclude anyone."

The cozy nature of Tamarack allows visitors to enjoy themselves and totally forget about that morning commute. The only vehicles you'll have to operate glide on water, along a trail, or down a fairway.

"You can stay here and never have to get into your car," Altmann says. "If you want to go down to the lake, just dial customer service and you'll have a ride. It's definitely leave the driving to us."

The Washington Post named Tamarack one of the Top 10 travel destinations for 2004, and President Bush heeded that advice in the summer of 2005 during his first visit to Idaho as Commander-in-Chief.

"He's only an occasional golfer, but still I'm sure that's going to increase our visibility a ton this summer," Altmann says.

With or without an endorsement from the White House, the word is going to be out soon about Osprey Meadows as well.

The Jones II design meanders through meadow and forest between Lake Cascade and Tamarack Mountain. Jones II has melded all of nature's elements into the design.

"I really describe it as more than golf," Altmann says. "It's an interaction with nature, and it's a very pristine experience."

The course starts in an open meadow, but don't imagine anything but traditional mountain golf. Jones II emphasizes elevation changes on nearly every hole. Ribbons of fairway through forest — including the resort's namesake tamarack tree — soon prevail. The layout switches back and forth between the two extremes with mountain views and shimmering Lake Cascade ever present.

"Every hole is unique in some way," Altmann says. "There isn't an ugly duckling out there."

Swans, literally and metaphorically, are to be found, however. Holes like the par-3 6th bring out the clever challenges of Jones II's design skills. Stretching to 220 yards, mostly carry over wetlands, the design makes the green look minuscule, but the putting surface is actually generous. In fact, Osprey Meadows' greens average 7,000 square feet.

"(Jones II) is very good at making things deceptive," Altmann says. "They're really great big greens, but the landing areas can look very small. That definitely puts a little more pressure on the golfer."

The all-season nature of Tamarack is evident on the golf course with the tees

designated like ski markers. The double black diamonds equate to the tips (for those who haven't strapped on a pair of skis) and stretch out to 7,300 yards. The black diamonds are 6,805 and progress forward to the blue squares (6,265) and green dots (5,215).

"It's pretty tough from the back tees," Altmann says. "I'm guessing we'll have a slope rating in the 137-140 range, but Jones II did a good job of making everyone comfortable. If you play from the right tees, it's going to be very enjoyable."

Jones II, who has designed courses all over the world, also broke tradition with five 5-pars and five 3-pars in arriving at the standard par 72.

"Golfers like the pars 3s and par 5s because that's where they tend to score well, so that's what we went with," Altmann says.

Overall, the layout captures the essence of Idaho's Frank Church Wilderness Area, which starts just over the mountain from Tamarack.

"There's no distraction from houses or roads, and you're going to see abundant wildlife out there," Altmann says. "It's very serene, and it's going to stay that way." **FG**



White Joys: Golfers will visit Tamarack's brand-new lodge in a much different setting, but if they're skiers, they might head back to central Idaho for a winter stay.

Last year, one golfer had a drive of 3,631 miles.



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