

Golfweek's

ULTIMATE GUIDE

TO GOLF COURSE LIVING AND GREAT ESCAPES · 2016

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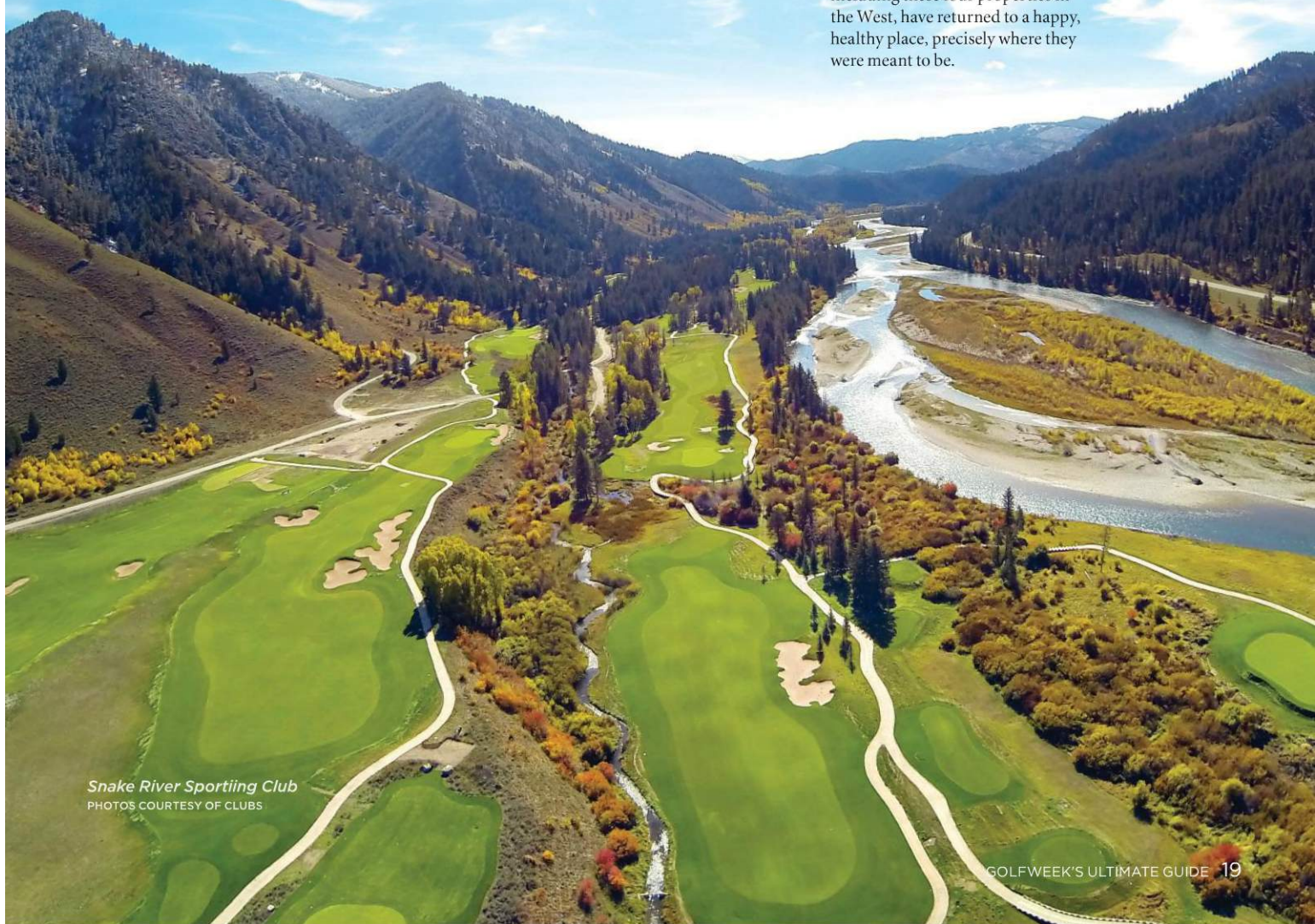
*The Cliffs at Glassy
Landrum, South Carolina*

COMEBACK STORIES

L Aid low by the real estate crash, these communities have risen from the ashes

By Josh Sens

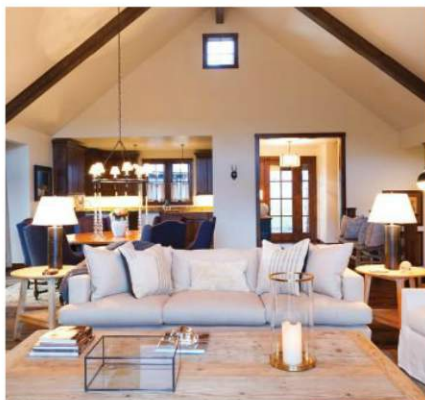
The world's best players all share a common trait: they find ways to recover. The same is true of the top private clubs. The financial crash of 2008 sent countless facilities on a wayward path. But a select few, including these four properties in the West, have returned to a happy, healthy place, precisely where they were meant to be.



Snake River Sporting Club
PHOTOS COURTESY OF CLUBS

SNAKE RIVER SPORTING CLUB

Jackson Hole, Wyo.



Opened in 2006, Snake River Sporting Club was meant to be just that: a high-end retreat that took advantage of its postcard location in the shadow of the Tetons, with a wide range of activities geared toward the great outdoors. Three years later, the club's backdrop remained an alpine idyll, but its golf course had begun a rough return to nature, its fairways splotchy, its bunkers windblown and overgrown with aspens. Battered by the crash, the club had gone under, and the bank that held the note had opted to retain just one maintenance worker to keep the track from going entirely to seed.

In 2013, when Cygnus Capital acquired the club, the amenities needed much more than a light dusting. But by the end of that year, the clubhouse, left unfinished during bankruptcy, had been completed. The course, meanwhile, was treated to emergency procedures: its bunkers restored, its greens reseeded, its beaten fairways nurtured back to life. It reopened for play in 2014.

At the same time, the club reached out to the original 90 members and offered to welcome them back into the fold, honoring whatever terms

they'd signed on for, no additional investment required.

"We felt it was the right thing to do, ethically, operationally, in every sense of the word," Snake River general manager Jeff Heilbrun said.

So did the members; 70 percent of them returned. Their ranks have since swelled to nearly 200.

In its reincarnation, Snake River Sporting Club is improved, with a richer array of family-friendly activities. Early this year, the new ownership partnered with Orvis to launch the first Orvis fly-fishing school in Wyoming. Elsewhere on the property, the equestrian center

has been vastly expanded. A new outdoor-pursuits center, with canoes, kayaks and paddleboards, has been added, along with an 18-hole Frisbee golf course. A lake, stocked with trout, provides the perfect place for beginning anglers to get their feet wet. And then there's the river, the club's namesake and signature feature, its currents wending within yards of a Tom Weiskopf layout that itself weaves through a landscape of cottonwoods and willows.

For club members and their guests, it's a prized amenity. But it also serves as a kind of emblem, surging ever forward through life's ebbs and flows.



Golf Club at Cuscowilla
Eatonton, Ga.

PHOTO BY RUSSELL KIRK



1. (1) Wade Hampton Club

Cashiers, N.C., 1988
Tom Fazio
Avg. rating: 7.92

2. (2) Rock Creek Cattle Co. > p.84

Deer Lodge, Mont., 2008
Tom Doak
Avg. rating: 7.85

3. (4) Huntsman Springs

Driggs, Idaho, 2009
David McLay Kidd
Avg. rating: 7.57

4. (3) Shooting Star GC

Teton Village, Wyo., 2009
Tom Fazio
Avg. rating: 7.54

- New to list
- ** Back on list
- > Featured properties
- (#) Last year's ranking
- (NR) Not ranked last year

5. (6) Colorado GC

Parker, Colo., 2007
Bill Coore, Ben Crenshaw
Avg. rating: 7.53

6. (5) Gozzer Ranch GC

Arrowpoint, Idaho, 2007
Tom Fazio
Avg. rating: 7.51

7. (7) Oak Tree National

Edmond, Okla., 1975
Pete Dye
Avg. rating: 7.41

8. (11) Estancia

Scottsdale, Ariz., 1995
Tom Fazio
Avg. rating: 7.39

9. (8) Castle Pines GC

Castle Rock, Colo., 1981
Jack Nicklaus
Avg. rating: 7.30

10. (13) Mayacama Golf Club

Santa Rosa, Calif., 2001
Jack Nicklaus
Avg. rating: 7.30

11. (12) Pronghorn (Fazio)

Bend, Ore., 2006
Tom Fazio
Avg. rating: 7.29

12. (10) Mountain Lake

Lake Wales, Fla., 1917
Seth Raynor
Avg. rating: 7.28

13. (9) Mountaintop

Cashiers, N.C., 2007
Tom Fazio
Avg. rating: 7.25

14. (14) Martis Camp

Truckee, Calif., 2007
Tom Fazio
Avg. rating: 7.22

15. (15) Patriot GC

Owasso, Okla., 2010
Robert Trent Jones Jr.
Avg. rating: 7.20

16. (NR) Rock Creek GC of Idaho*

Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, 2012
Tom Weiskopf
Avg. rating: 7.17

17. (16) The Rim

Payson, Ariz., 1998
Tom Weiskopf
Avg. rating: 7.14

18. (29) John's Island West

Vero Beach, Fla., 1989
Tom Fazio
Avg. rating: 7.13



*Paa-Ko Ridge GC
Sandia Park, N.M.*

COURTESY OF PAA-KO-RIDGE, GC

19. (17) Long Cove

Hilton Head Island, S.C., 1982
Pete Dye
Avg. rating: 7.12

20. (26) The Madison Club

La Quinta, Calif., 2006
Tom Fazio
Avg. rating: 7.11

21. (20) GC at Cuscowilla

Eatonton, Ga., 1998
Bill Coore, Ben Crenshaw
Avg. rating: 7.07

22. (18) Clear Creek

Tahoe, Nev., 2009
Bill Coore, Ben Crenshaw
Avg. rating: 7.06

23. (19) Forest Highlands (The Canyon)

Flagstaff, Ariz., 1989
Jay Morrish, Tom Weiskopf
Avg. rating: 7.04

24. (21) Jupiter Hills Club (Hills)

Tequesta, Fla., 1970
George Fazio
Avg. rating: 7.03

25. (32) Forest Dunes GC

Roscommon, Mich., 2003
Tom Weiskopf
Avg. rating: 7.03

26. (28) Spring Island/Old Tabby Links

Okatie, S.C., 1994
Arnold Palmer, Ed Seay
Avg. rating: 7.03

27. (22) Concession GC

Bradenton, Fla., 2006
Jack Nicklaus, Tony Jacklin
Avg. rating: 7.02

28. (NR) The Ford Plantation* > p.80

Richmond Hill, Ga., 1988
Pete Dye, Tim Liddy
Avg. rating: 7.00

29. (NR) Snake River Sporting Club*

Jackson, Wyo., 2006
Tom Weiskopf
Avg. rating: 7.00

30. (27) Diamond Creek GC

Banner Elk, N.C., 2003
Tom Fazio
Avg. rating: 6.99

31. (25) Lahontan

Truckee, Calif., 1999
Tom Weiskopf
Avg. rating: 6.99

32. (30) Paa-Ko Ridge GC

Sandia Park, N.M., 2000
Ken Dye
Avg. rating: 6.99

33. (24) Quarry at La Quinta

La Quinta, Calif., 1994
Tom Fazio
Avg. rating: 6.98

34. (33) Stone Canyon

Tucson, Ariz., 2000
Jay Morrish
Avg. rating: 6.97

35. (23) Kiawah (Cassique)

Kiawah Island, S.C., 2000
Tom Watson
Avg. rating: 6.95

36. (43) Cliffs at Mountain Park > p.72

Travelers Rest, S.C., 2013
Gary Player
Avg. rating: 6.94

37. (34) Tradition at La Quinta

La Quinta, Calif., 1998
Arnold Palmer, Ed Seay
Avg. rating: 6.92

38. (31) The Stock Farm

Hamilton, Mont., 1999
Tom Fazio
Avg. rating: 6.92

39. (38) Frederica GC

St. Simons Island, Ga., 2004
Tom Fazio
Avg. rating: 6.88

40. (35) The Preserve

Carmel Valley, Calif., 2000
Tom Fazio
Avg. rating: 6.87

*The Preserve
Carmel Valley, Calif.*

COURTESY OF THE PRESERVE

