



THE RIDGE

A Dream Realized

"You will be shocked by the drama of the course. Just when you think you've played the best nine holes of your life, you step up to the 10th tee and it starts all over again." —TOM FAZIO



RINGOES, NEW JERSEY: "Once you remove yourself from the 'big city density' along our coast, much of New Jersey is rolling farmland and pastoral settings," explained Joel Moore, owner *and* original developer of The Ridge at Back Brook (aka The Ridge). "The challenge in developing a golf course in the Northeast is finding a quality parcel of land that hasn't already been developed."

A DREAM TURNS TO REALITY

The tri-state area (New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania) is one of the most competitive private club marketplaces in the world. Members value tradition and rules of the game. So, for The Ridge to consistently be ranked best in state (up against hallowed competition from Baltusrol and Pine Valley in New Jersey) carries significant value.

"Ironically, basketball was my sport of choice growing up," recalled Moore. "One of my first experiences on a golf course was less than memorable. My dad signed me up one Saturday to caddy at Ridgewood Country Club in Paramus, New Jersey. My first loop was for a doctor who played 'military golf.' He would hit it left, right, left, right. After a long day of carrying his heavy bag, I promised myself I would never step foot on a golf course again." It was a promise he failed to keep.

Joel excelled as an accountant, and as a young man and new husband, he left the comfort of working for a large accounting firm to hang his own shingle. "I soon learned the value of networking with private club members and, as I got older, playing golf became a passion of mine," said Moore.

"I woke up from a sound sleep one day with an epiphany. After nudging my wife Pam, I told her, 'I'm going to build the finest private, Tom Fazio designed, golf-only facility in the state.' She promptly gave me a stern look, said I was crazy, and went back to sleep!"

Soon afterward, he set out to find the "perfect" piece of land. "It wasn't an easy task. Many an afternoon, I would leave my thriving accounting practice to walk sites thick with vegetation. I can't tell you how many dress slacks and shoes were ruined by thorns and mud bogs. My search initially seemed

“Our goal on a daily basis is to provide our members and their guests championship PGA Tour like conditions on our wonderful and dramatic Tom Fazio designed golf course.”

— JOEL MOORE, OWNER, DEVELOPER, MANAGER

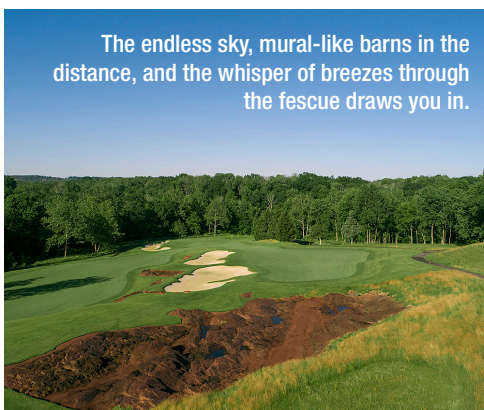


fruitless because most large parcels I visited were flat farmland with little topography and even fewer mature trees. Then, I found it. The problem was that several individuals owned the 300+ acres. It was a delicate balance of negotiations before I finally had a contract in hand.”

BREAKING THE ICE

Now, attention turned to whom would design the course. “I only had one architect in mind,” stated Moore. “If I couldn’t land Tom Fazio, I wasn’t going to build the club. My first meeting with Tom and his team was at the PGA Show in Orlando, Florida. If you have ever been to the show, you know how many distractions there are. At first, I felt Mr. Fazio was preoccupied with talking to others. When we got down to business, one of his first questions was, who is your second choice of an architect? I told him, without hesitation, it was either you or nothing. That broke the ice and established what has now been a friendship for the better part of two decades.”

The architectural course layout blueprint took 26 iterations before my final approval was in place. “It would be difficult, if not impossible, to build The Ridge today,”



The endless sky, mural-like barns in the distance, and the whisper of breezes through the fescue draws you in.



Perched majestically on a ridge, the clubhouse is a mix of American Craftsman and Adirondack architecture. It’s a taste of the Rockies in the Northeast.

“Quite possibly the best golf club you’ve never heard of is in a place you’d never expect.”

— LINKS MAGAZINE

“The eighth best private course in the country.”

— GOLF WORLD READER’S POLL, 2010

“Best new course east of the Mississippi River.”

— GOLF DIGEST, 2003

explained Moore. “Several of our greens and fairways play to the water’s edge. Today’s regulations require 75 feet of easement to protect organic nutrients from entering waterways that feed into groundwater and wells. I live nearby and appreciate the concerns. My agronomy team invented what we call ‘the stream skimmer.’ In essence, it’s a catch basin that allows excess storm runoff to be pumped into an 18 million-gallon holding pond for irrigation. The \$250,000 investment is good for the environment and provides the necessary water to irrigate the course during the dry season without a constant need to tap into groundwater.”

THE RIDGE TODAY

After a 29-year career building his accounting firm, Joel sold his 400+ client base in 2012 to focus full-time on The Ridge at Back Brook.

“I consider it ‘my baby,’ and I couldn’t be happier with how the club has evolved and matured. We have no real estate encroaching on the experience, and I consider our playing conditions among the best in the world,” smiled

Moore. “We are a traditional golf club with one of the finest practice facilities anywhere. We offer a generational membership, and our financials are rock solid, with the past two years being our best ever.” ■

For information on membership, please visit TheRidgeGC.com.