



Pelz: Play Without Fear

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HUNTER MAHAN

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Chance to Do It Again”

MAHAN ON *THAT* RYDER CUP MOMENT



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p. 48

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BEST TRIPS

SPEND YOUR MONEY WELL

Edited by JOE PASSOV

The superb closing hole at We-Ko-Pa's Saguaro course.



Travelin' Joe's Hometown

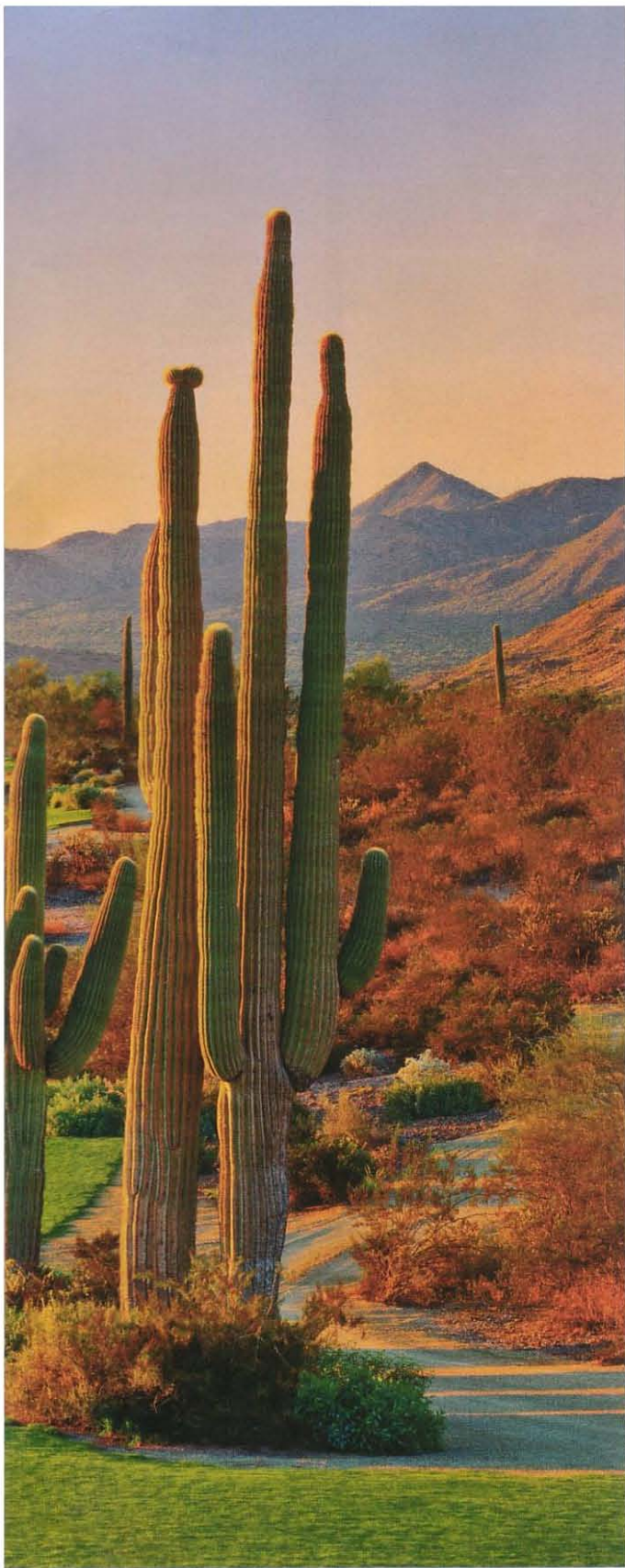
In our October issue I annointed **Phoenix/Scottsdale** America's No. 1 golf destination—and not just because I live here. The region's blend of trophy and value courses, 330 annual days of sunshine, and countless big-city attractions make it the best town for traveling golfers. Now allow me to show you around! — *Joe Passov*

Must-Play Course: If you've got just one course to play, make it **We-Ko-Pa's Saguaro course**. This four-year-old Bill Coore/Ben Crenshaw design has extra-wide fairways that will let you shake off the winter rust but parries with green complexes that will vex even the wiliest short-game wizards. No homes or roads and plentiful ground-game options make this very walkable layout the choice for purists. (\$50-\$195; 480-836-9000, wekopa.com)

Best Public Course in Town: **Troon North's Pinnacle course** integrates nine Tom Weiskopf/Jay Morrish holes with nine Weiskopf solo efforts and melds them seamlessly into a high-desert setting, complete with rock outcroppings, cactus-framed fairways and mountain backdrops. One too many homes can distract, but the daunting forced carries and strategic risk/reward options elevate the Pinnacle. (\$45-\$295; 480-585-5300, troonnorthgolf.com)

Course Worth Groveling to Play: Whether you pick the Lower course at Scottsdale's **Whisper Rock** (a Phil Mickelson design) or Tom Fazio's Upper, you're bound to run into a major winner, Ryder Cupper or CBS broadcaster. Paul Casey, Martin Kaymer and Geoff Ogilvy are among the regulars; Gary McCord and Peter Kostis are often on hand to call the action.

The green complexes on the Saguaro course will vex even the wiliest short-game wizards.



LONNA TUCKER/WE-KO-PA GOLF CLUB



TPC SCOTTSDALE

WILD WEST The par-3 16th at TPC Scottsdale gets rowdy when the Tour comes to town.

Can't-Miss Hole: Sandwiched between two better, more exciting holes, the 162-yard, par-3 16th at the **TPC Scottsdale's Stadium course** nonetheless remains the Valley's ultimate test, thanks to the ghosts of packed grandstands and the echoes of golf's wildest crowds. (\$77-\$287; 480-585-4334, tpc.com/Scottsdale)

Best Vibe: At Scottsdale's **Grayhawk Golf Club**, classic rock is piped into faux-rock speakers on the driving range, Phil's (as in Mickelson) Grill serves up goldfish bowl-sized margaritas and Lefty memorabilia, and its two desert designs have both hosted Tour events. (\$50-\$225; 480-502-1800, grayhawkgolf.com)

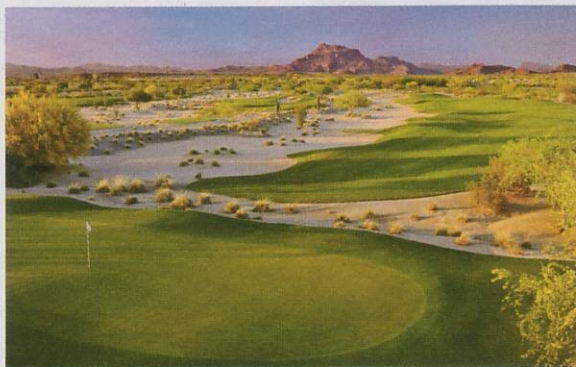
Don't Bother: With or without his former partner Jay Morrish, Tom Weiskopf has crafted a dozen of the Valley's finest designs. **Foothills Golf Club** in Phoenix, unfortunately, is not one of them. As Tom Doak once put it, Foothills is

"what you get when you combine a predictable low-profile design with a dull site: a dull course." (\$29-\$69; 480-460-4653, thefoothillsgc.com)

Hidden Jewel: Mesa's **Longbow Golf Club** is well known to Chicago Cubs fans because it's only 15 minutes east of Mesa's HoHoKam Park, the Cubs' spring training home. But the course belongs on even more radar screens. Sprawling bunkers, no homes and vistas of Red Mountain define

this compact Ken Kavanaugh design. (\$58-\$155; 480-807-5400, longbowgolf.com)

Fantasy Calendar Moment: At the 6th hole of the **Boulders Resort's South course**, you literally tee off atop a gigantic, prehistoric boulder straight out of *The Flintstones* to a sunken fairway framed by desert and a lake that hugs the right side. The par-4 1st and par-5 5th holes are equally compelling. (\$70-\$250; 480-488-9028, theboulders.com)



KEN KAVANAUGH/longbow GOLF CLUB

PEAK PERFORMER Red Mountain sets the scene at Longbow.

EAT
DRINK
STAY:

Seven of *Golf Magazine's* Premier Resorts medalists are sprinkled throughout Phoenix/Scottsdale, but for vacationing golf buddies, my pick is **Xona Resort Suites** (December rates from \$109; 888-222-1059, xonaresort.com). Next door to TPC Scottsdale and five minutes from Grayhawk and Kierland, Xona has accommodations and



COURTESY XONA RESORT SUITES

amenities that cater specifically to golfers, including a golf concierge.

On the dining front, dig into the nation's only four-diamond Mexican restaurant, **La Hacienda by Richard Sandoval at the Fairmont Scottsdale Princess** (480-585-4848, fairmont.com/scottsdale). The innovative pork dishes are divine and the tequila selection is deep.

To quench your post-round thirst, check out two polar opposites that are almost across the street from each other, the **Four Seasons Resort Scottsdale at Troon North** (480-515-5700, fourseasons.com/scottsdale) and **Greasewood Flat** (480-585-9430, greasewoodflat.net). A beverage on the patio at the Four Seasons' Onyx Bar & Lounge, while the sun disappears over Pinnacle Peak, is worth the splurge. Greasewood Flat, a western/biker bar incongruously set in the middle of tony North Scottsdale, dates to the early 1900s and offers genuine Old West ambience.