

GOLF WEEK

DECEMBER 10-17, 2010

GOLF WEEK.COM

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WHAT A YEAR!

U.S. OPEN TROPHY,
RYDER CUP CLINCHER
AND TIGER SLAYER:
G-MAC DELIVERS IN '10
GRAEME McDOWELL, P36

DEDICATED PLAYERS
FIND MANY ROUTES
TO 2011 PGA TOUR
Q-SCHOOL REVIEW, P24

AFP/GETTY IMAGES/ROBYN BECK



Circling Raven

A worthy gamble

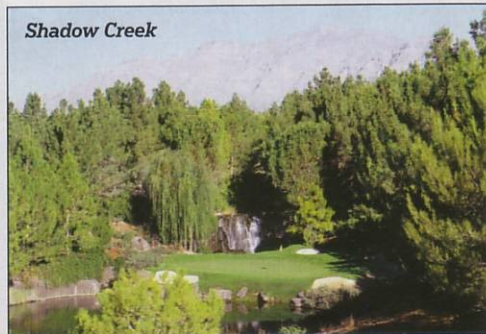
IN SLOW DEVELOPMENT CLIMATE, CASINO COURSES ARE STILL PAYING OFF

By **Martin Kaufmann**

Midway through December, you typically can count on at least two things happening: You'll face the prospect of frantic, last-minute Christmas shopping, and you'll find Shadow Creek Golf Club at the top of the annual Golfweek's Best Casino Courses list.

The North Las Vegas, Nev., layout, now 20 years old, remains the perfect golf course for Sin City. Like the mammoth, themed casinos that line The Strip, Shadow Creek is a thorough re-imagining of the otherwise nondescript land on which it sits.

Shadow Creek's grip on the list's top spot remains firm,



Shadow Creek

Golf Club in Philadelphia, Miss.

There are some interesting additions to the list. The Greenbrier's Old White (No. 8) and Greenbrier (No. 45) courses qualified this year following

though its lead over No. 2 Fallen Oak narrowed slightly this year. The 4-year-old Saucier, Miss., layout has helped establish the Gulf Coast region as one of the country's finest golf-and-gaming destinations.

Both designs were created by Tom Fazio, who placed eight courses on the list, more than any other architect. That included two layouts done in collaboration with Jerry Pate at Dancing Rabbit

Casinos, P78 >>>

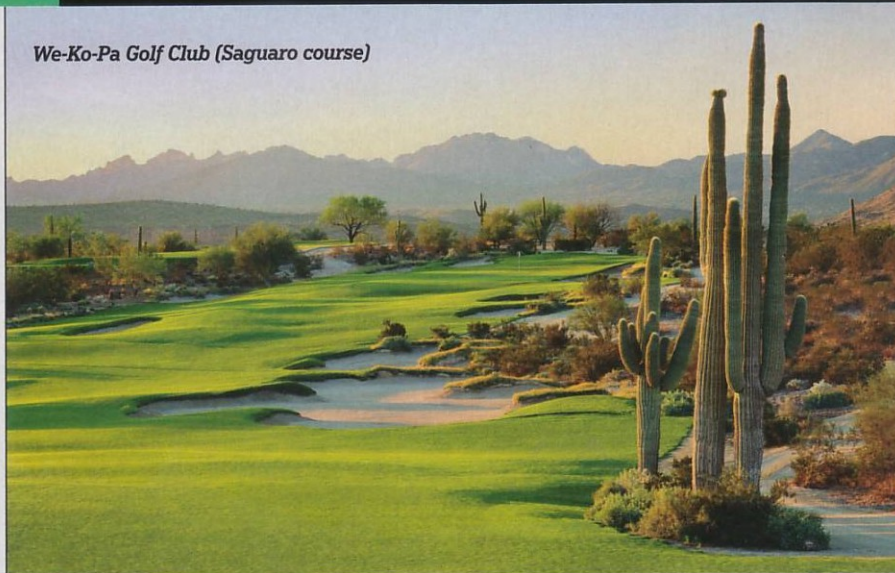
THE GOLF LIFE

<<< **Casinos, P76** the July opening of the resort's 100,000-square-foot Casino Club. And Southern Dunes Golf Club in Maricopa, Ariz., checks in at No. 20 following its acquisition this past summer by the Ak-Chin Indian Community. Southern Dunes, a highly regarded layout for serious players, is now affiliated with the Harrah's Ak-Chin Casino Resort.

Native American tribes, in fact, have been prominent in driving the growth of casino golf as they've added amenities for their gaming customers. That includes courses such as Sequoyah National, part of Harrah's Cherokee Hotel and Casino in Whittier, N.C., the only 2010 opening to earn a spot on the list.

More broadly, casino golf represents one of the few areas of relative strength, given the domestic

We-Ko-Pa Golf Club (Saguaro course)

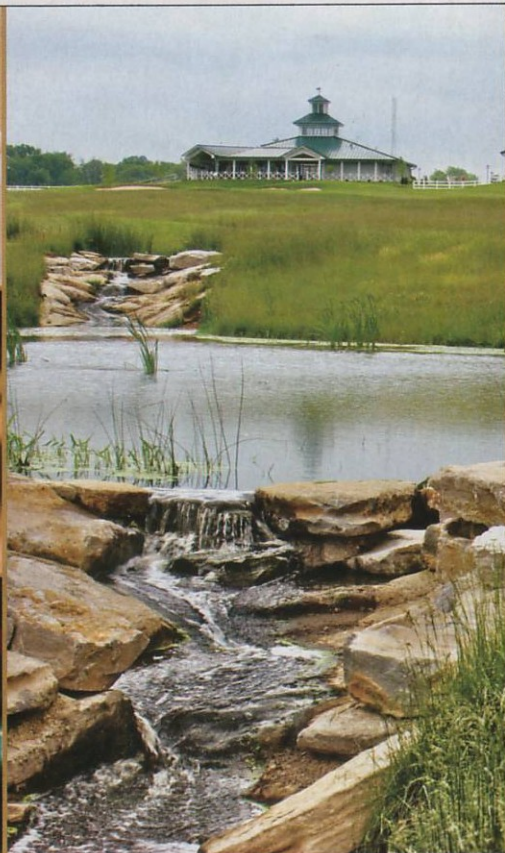


COURTESY OF WE-KO-PA GOLF CLUB/LONNA TUCKER

collapse of golf development over the past two years. Gross gambling revenues totaled nearly \$31 billion in 2009, down from a peak of more than \$34 billion in 2007, but still 25 percent

higher than in 2000. Those sorts of numbers suggest casino operators are going to be formidable players in golf development for the foreseeable future.

○



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Wilderness at Fortune Bay



COURTESY WILDERNESS AT FORTUNE BAY

French Lick Resort (Dye)



COURTESY FRENCH LICK/KEN E. DYE

Yocha Dehe Golf Club



COURTESY YOCHA DEHE/AIDAN BRADLEY

Golfweek's Best: Casino Courses 2010

	Location	Opened	Architect(s)	Avg. rating
1. Shadow Creek Golf Club	North Las Vegas, Nev.	1990	Tom Fazio	8.07
2. Fallen Oak Golf Club	Saucier, Miss.	2006	Tom Fazio	7.36
3. We-Ko-Pa Golf Club (Saguaro)	Fountain Hills, Ariz.	2006	Bill Coore, Ben Crenshaw	6.95
4. Barona Creek Golf Club	Lakeside, Calif.	2000	Gary Roger Baird, Todd Eckenrode	6.72
5. French Lick Resort (Dye)	French Lick, Ind.	2009	Pete Dye	6.71
6. Cascata	Henderson, Nev.	1999	Rees Jones	6.64
7. Atlantic City Country Club	Northfield, N.J.	1923	William S. Flynn, Tom Doak	6.51
8. The Greenbrier (Old White)	White Sulphur Springs, W.Va.	1915	Charles Blair Macdonald, Seth Raynor	6.48
9. Wilderness at Fortune Bay	Tower, Minn.	2004	Jeff Brauer	6.39
10. We-Ko-Pa Golf Club (Cholla)	Fountain Hills, Ariz.	2001	Scott Miller	6.29
11. Meadows at Mystic Lake	Prior Lake, Minn.	2005	Garrett Gill, Paul Miller	6.21
12. French Lick Resort (Ross)	French Lick, Ind.	1917	Donald Ross	6.15
13. Circling Raven	Worley, Idaho	2003	Gene Bates	6.14
14. Talking Stick Golf Club (North)	Scottsdale, Ariz.	1998	Bill Coore, Ben Crenshaw	6.10
15. Wynn Golf Club	Las Vegas	2005	Tom Fazio	6.08
16. Edgewood Tahoe Golf Club	Tahoe, Nev.	1968	George Fazio	6.03
17. Journey at Pechanga	Temecula, Calif.	2008	Arthur Hills, Steve Forrest	5.94
18. Dancing Rabbit Golf Club (Azaleas)	Philadelphia, Miss.	1997	Tom Fazio, Jerry Pate	5.91
19. Lake of Isles (North)	North Stonington, Conn.	2005	Rees Jones	5.90
20. Southern Dunes Golf Club	Maricopa, Ariz.	2002	Brian Curley, Lee Schmidt	5.90
21. Yocha Dehe Golf Club	Brooks, Calif.	2008	Brad Bell	5.86
22. Turning Stone Resort (Atunyote)	Verona, N.Y.	2004	Tom Fazio	5.85
23. Grand Bear	Saucier, Miss.	2000	Jack Nicklaus	5.82
24. Sweetgrass Golf Club	Harris, Mich.	2008	Paul Albanese	5.80
25. Contraband Bayou Golf Club at L'Auberge	Lake Charles, La.	2005	Tom Fazio	5.80
26. Sequoyah National Golf Club	Whittier, N.C.	2010	Robert Trent Jones Jr.	5.80
27. Sandia Golf Club	Albuquerque, N.M.	2005	Scott Miller	5.79
28. Turning Stone Resort (Kaluhyat)	Verona, N.Y.	2003	Robert Trent Jones Jr.	5.77
29. Belterra Golf Club	Florence, Ind.	2001	Tom Fazio	5.68
30. Blue Top Ridge	Riverside, Iowa	2007	Rees Jones	5.63
31. Talking Stick Golf Club (South)	Scottsdale, Ariz.	1998	Bill Coore, Ben Crenshaw	5.62
32. Chariot Run Golf Club	Laconia, Ind.	2003	Bill Bergin	5.60
33. Spirit Hollow Golf Club	Burlington, Iowa	2000	Rick Jacobson	5.57
34. Rio Secco Golf Club	Henderson, Nev.	1997	Rees Jones	5.55
35. Sevillano Links	Corning, Calif.	2007	Mike Stark	5.54
36. Cherokee Hills Golf Club	Tulsa, Okla.	1924	Perry Maxwell, Tripp Davis	5.50
37. Oasis Golf Club (Palmer)	Mesquite, Nev.	1995	Arnold Palmer, Ed Seay	5.48
38. Whirlwind Golf Club (Cattail)	Chandler, Ariz.	2002	Gary Panks	5.48
39. The Preserve	Vanceleave, Miss.	2007	Jerry Pate	5.41
40. Shell Landing Golf Club	Gautier, Miss.	2002	Davis Love III	5.38
41. Turning Stone Resort (Shenendoah)	Verona, N.Y.	1998	Rick Smith	5.37
42. Whirlwind Golf Club (Devil's Claw)	Chandler, Ariz.	2000	Gary Panks	5.29
43. Dancing Rabbit Golf Club (Oaks)	Philadelphia, Miss.	1999	Tom Fazio, Jerry Pate	5.26
44. Apache Stronghold	Globe, Ariz.	1999	Tom Doak	5.26
45. The Greenbrier (Greenbrier)	White Sulphur Springs, W.Va.	1925	George O'Neil, Jack Nicklaus	5.24
46. Eagle Falls Golf Club	Indio, Calif.	2008	Clive Clark	5.21
47. Inn of the Mountain Gods	Mescalero, N.M.	1976	Ted Robinson	5.12
48. Bridges Golf Club at Hollywood Casino	Bay St. Louis, Miss.	1997	Arnold Palmer	5.06
49. Bali Hai Golf Club	Las Vegas	2000	Brian Curley, Lee Schmidt	4.82
50. Koasati Pines	Kinder, La.	2002	Kevin Tucker	4.50