

Golfers can play 50 of top courses without leaving town

When one of my neighbors asked me if I had been to a new eatery called Bottom of the Cup, I said "No, but I haven't visited the nearest Starbucks either," thinking that the word "cup" must have something to do with gourmet coffee and donuts.

But after repeatedly driving by this new business at Duncan Corners, I did become increasingly curious about why I saw so many customers carrying golf clubs in and out of the place.

I guess if I didn't have to take my eyes of the road to read the second line of printing on the sign, "Golf Bar and Grill" that would have cleared things up right off the bat. But it still wouldn't have properly prepared me for what I found when I finally made time to park and step inside for closer inspection.

Then, I discovered what Bottom of the Cup is all about, a truly clever combination of a pub, restaurant, and indoor amusement park for both experienced and beginning golfers. And its golfing theme is captured in every detail from basic décor to food and entertainment.

The first thing you'll notice both inside and out is a panoramic digitally produced window tint treatment that pictures sweeping fairways, greens, water hazards and sand traps. Rising some four feet from the bottom of the restaurant's picture windows, this mural does more than merely enhance an interior hunter green, black and burgundy color scheme. At night, it also blocks annoying headlights that might otherwise clash with the normally soft candle-like illumination inside.

"In designing this place, we've done everything we could to create the look and feel of a traditional golf club atmosphere," said Ben Nash, who co-owns Bottom of the Cup with Gary Hall.

That explains the bar and grill's masculine look and feel, punctuated with dark cherry woodwork and furniture, black leather upholstery, and a total lack of frilly curtains, fancy table linens and floral arrangements.

"Golf clubs are popularly considered hangouts for men," Nash pointed out.

"But we do have a number of couples who come here. It's just not a place for singles looking for love or for the enjoyment of children," he added.

It is a one-of-a-kind place to hone your golf driving and putting

In Focus with Fil
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skills in any weather conditions while enjoying a snack, a meal, or your favorite brew before, after or during.

In fact, thanks to four built-in simulator cubicles, customers can play virtual golf on their choice of 50 top golf courses around the world. The Royal Melbourne Golf Club in Australia, Kapalua Bay in Maui, and the Dorado Beach courses are just a few on this list.

But by far, the St. Andrews Golf Club Old Course in Scotland is the most famous. This is the locale where the sport began and evolved, and where golf's spirit and traditions have been safeguarded for more than six centuries. It is indeed a Mecca for anyone who has ever swung a club.

At Bottom of the Cup, the technology that makes it possible to enjoy the realism of golfing on such famous fairways is in the high end Panasonic overhead projectors, computerized controls and flexible tethered screens. This enables golfers to drive a ball into the screen, and follow it down the fairways, over the hazards and, hopefully, into the cup.

Meanwhile, an infrared camera takes 60,000 reads per second as each ball flies into the screen and feeds this information into a computer. In turn, the computer tells the projector exactly where to land your ball on the fairway or green after each swing.

This equipment is manufactured by Full Swing Golf, Inc., of San Diego, and cost Bottom of the Cup's co-owners \$80,000 for each of the four simulators.

But as a customer, it will cost you just \$40 an hour per group of up to four, or twenty bucks a person. And although your host can provide clubs, most players bring their own.

Though Bottom of the Cup just opened in late March, it has already proven to be a magnet to golfers residing in the nearby senior living Village at Deaton Creek and other local communities with and without traditional outdoor courses of their own. And it's quite obvious to all visitors that this business is a reflection of the owners' personal love of golf.

"We're both passionate golfers, and have enjoyed playing together for more than 10 years," Ben Nash said. And he further told me that his interest in the sport was passed on to him by his family.



INDOORS GOLF
 Getting ready to tee off on the simulated Kapalua, Hawaii course at Braselton's Bottom of the Cup, Paul Morabito (left) gets a virtual golfing tip from Ben Nash.

His parents, Ben Sr. and Pam Nash of South Hall's Reunion neighborhood are avid golfers, though his mom is a more recent practitioner of the sport.

"She got hooked on golf right here on our simulators, and immediately took off on a shopping spree to purchase her own clubs and a new wardrobe of sportswear to go with them," Ben said.

"Even my seven year-old, Ben III, likes to play on our simulated courses when we're closed. He has his own set of little clubs, and we just use a simulator booster to add distance to his naturally limited swing," he told me.

The staff of 13 at Bottom of the Cup includes Ben's younger brother Keith, who assists executive cook Pat Murphy in the kitchen. Together, they get most of the applause for the grill's food service, which features a large, 10-ounce "Fairway Hamburger" and meal-sized portions of seven different appetizers. And among the latter, fried pickles and fried green tomatoes presoaked in buttermilk are especially popular. All menu items are priced under \$10.

Though open seven days a week from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Bottom of the Cup offers a special treat for the fairer sex on Wednesday evenings.

Designated "Play with the Pro Night," Chateau Elan's golf coach, Mark Desisto is on hand for three hours then to help the ladies brush on their game for a charge of \$50 each.

Patrons of either gender who happen to be southpaws always get a price break when playing virtual golf at Bottom of the Cup. Because the owners are both left-handed, it's their custom to give others with the same handicap a 10 percent discount whenever they play without assistance from Desisto.

And whenever customers want a break from playing golf, they can just enjoy being spectators of this and other sports, thanks to a line of 42-inch high definition television screens above the bar or simply participate in conversation while seated in deep leather chairs around low glass tables in the pub's lounge area.

Ben Nash thanks the Braselton Town Council for recognizing that the entire concept of his thematic bar and grill would be an asset to the sizeable golf-centered population in this area.

"They were both enthusiastic and helpful in our efforts to open here," he said.

Still sporting his Marine Corp head shave and linebacker physique, Nash is easy to spot among other workers at Bottom of the Cup, and he loves to talk golf with any visitors.

And if you happen to be one anytime soon, be sure to ask him about his future plans to add tournaments, leagues and benefits for his favorite charities, Toys for Tots and Habitat for Humanity. He told me that's all coming and likely additional locations and franchise opportunities as well.

Fil Jessee lives in Braselton, where he works as a freelance journalist. He can be reached at filwrites@aol.com.



'ROUND-UP FOR READING' FUND-RAISER HELD

The Friends of the Braselton-West Jackson Library recently held its "Round-Up for Reading" fund-raiser at the Hoschton Depot. The event featured entertainment by Tiffany Milargo, a silent auction and a live auction. The Friends group said it was the most successful fund-raiser for the organization.

Family run, walk set Sunday

The Open Homes/Open Hearts 5K Run and Walk and Community Fun Day is seeking participants for its event on Sunday, May 4, at Ft. Yargo State Park, Winder.

The event is designed to raise awareness about children in the community who need adoptive families and others who need temporary foster care placement. Organizers are asking churches, schools, service organization and other groups to form teams to participate in the run and walk.

The event is sponsored by the Region V Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS) and the Department of Human Resources (DHR), and the DFCS State Adoption Unit.

Along with the run, there are family activities and free food.

The Community Fun Day starts at 2 p.m., with the fun walk starting at 2:30 p.m., and the race at 3 p.m.

Entry fees are \$15 prior to April 25, \$20 on race and \$15 for the one-mile fun run. Participants may pre-register at active.com. Awards and T-shirts will be given.

For more information about the event, call Danny Stevens at 706-542-9505 or e-mail gdstevens@dh.state.ga.us. For more information about foster care or adoption, call 1-877-210-KIDS.

For more information about the race, call Will Chamberlin, Classic Race Services, at 706-769-6593 or e-mail gwilc@bellsouth.net.

Computer class ahead for seniors

The Friends of the Braselton-West Jackson Library will hold a computer help class for seniors on Friday, May 2, at 11 a.m.

James Anthony of Anthony Computer Solutions, LLC, ACS4Seniors will be helping seniors during the free class.

The class will be held in the conference room of the Braselton Library. For more information, call the library at 706-654-1992.

birth announcement

Lauren Kate Jorgensen

Crystal Erin Dewitt Jorgensen and Steven Michael Jorgensen, Braselton and Mt. Airy, announce the birth of a daughter, Lauren Kate Jorgensen, on April 26, 2008, at BJC Medical Center, Commerce.

She weighed 8 pounds, 2 ounces, and was 19 inches long. She joins a brother, Kyle Logan Dewitt, 11.

The grandparents are Charles and Jeannette Dewitt, Braselton, and Don and Rosie Jorgensen, Windsor, Conn.

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REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
 CITY OF HOSCHTON, GEORGIA

The City of Hoschton, Georgia is requesting proposals from qualified businesses and individuals to pave new parking spaces on the west side of City Square along White Street. Details are available on the website www.cityofhoschton.com or by calling 706-654-3034.

Proposals must be sealed and clearly marked "Proposal for City Square Parking Addition." The response must be delivered to the City Clerk at City Hall, 79 City Square, Hoschton, Georgia 30548 no later than 12:00 o'clock Noon on Friday, May 2, 2008 at which time they will be opened. Proposal responses received later than the date and time specified will be rejected. Mayor and Council and City of Hoschton Staff will not be responsible for late deliveries of proposals that are addressed incorrectly, delivered by mail or by any other method.

The City of Hoschton reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals or parts thereof, and if an award is made it will be in the best interest of the City of Hoschton.

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