

## Q+A

**I THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE FUN TO WATCH THE RYDER CUP (AND PLAY SOME GOLF) IN EUROPE THIS SEPTEMBER. ANY SUGGESTIONS?**

For Ryder Cup revelry without the crowds, and for a preview of the 2010 host site, head to **Celtic Manor Resort** in south Wales. Tee it up on the new Twenty Ten Course—the first golf course built specifically for the transatlantic matches—where water threatens on half the holes. In the afternoon, catch the action live from this year’s event at Valhalla Golf Club in Louisville, Kentucky, on big screens in Celtic Manor’s bars, bedecked in festive Cup decor. As a guest at the five-star Resort Hotel, home base for both teams in 2010, you’ll also have access to the luxurious Forum Health Club. The Ryder Cup Package at Celtic Manor runs September 19–21 and includes a full Welsh breakfast each morning, a round on the Twenty Ten Course and a round on the Montgomerie or Roman Road courses (\$927 per golfer, \$530 per nongolfer; 011-44/1633-410-262, celtic-manor.com). Don’t miss the nearby gems Royal Porthcawl, Ashburnham and Pennard, all within a ninety-minute drive of the resort.

## NUMBERSGAME

Number of golf courses worldwide: **31,548**

Number of countries where courses exist: **119**

Percentage of total worldwide courses that are in North America: **59**

Percentage in Europe: **19**

Percentage in Asia: **12**

Percentage in other countries: **10**

Average number of golf ranges that open in the U.S. each year: **50**

Average number of ranges that close in the U.S. each year: **50**

Cost per range ball, in cents, during peak hours at Chelsea Piers Golf Club in Manhattan (the most expensive range in the nation): **28**

Number of range balls hit at U.S. driving ranges in 2003: **600 million**

Sources: Golf Research Group, National Golf Foundation, Golf Range Association of America (golfrange.org), Chelsea Piers Golf Club



Form of flattery: Stanford's MacKenzie practice green

## NEWS

# PRIVATE PRACTICE

Along with having launched the career of the world’s best golfer, Stanford University can now claim to have the world’s premier collegiate practice center, the **Siebel Varsity Golf Training Complex**. Named for its primary donor, Thomas Siebel—former CEO of Siebel Systems—the \$4.5 million, thirty-acre complex was designed by Robert Trent Jones Jr. and opened in April. And although it accommodates the big sticks, the center’s standout features are tailored to the short game.

Six target greens embody elements favored by one of a few iconic architects—MacKenzie, Fazio, Jones Sr.—some selected due to their designs’ appearance on the teams’ rota. MacKenzie’s Meadow Club, for example, hosts this year’s Men’s Pac-10 Championship, and the women play Dye’s Karsten Course for the Ping/ASU Invitational. Aficionados will recognize the MacKenzie green for its boomerang profile and flashed-up bunkers—think sixteen at Cypress. Railroad ties offer a clue at the Dye salute, a small tabletop with steep, grass-face sand traps. The Tillinghast green bears a fun resemblance to the tenth at Winged Foot West.

The design concept fits the project’s aim of creating a wide range of shot scenarios, from an elevated approach to a bump-and-run to a flop shot out of deep rough. Sixteen bunkers feature three different grades of sand, and the greens have both bent-grass and Bermuda surfaces. Even the mowing patterns will specify cuts of different heights. The teams can thus prepare for almost any shot on any surface encountered in competition. “We want our players to practice to play, not practice to practice,” said Stanford men’s coach Conrad Ray.

The new complex also provides a “secret tee” location for the neighboring Stanford University course, stretching the par-three third to 240 yards. However, like the rest of the facility, it’s reserved for team use—and, of course, for Stanford’s resident Tour professional, Michelle Wie. Here’s hoping her game gets a boost, too. —*Jessica Shambora*

“Golf is twenty per cent mechanics and technique. The other eighty per cent is philosophy, humor, tragedy, romance, melodrama, companionship, camaraderie, cussedness, and conversation.”

—Sportswriter Grantland Rice in *The Mysterious Montague: A True Tale of Hollywood, Golf, and Armed Robbery*, by Leigh Montville (Doubleday, \$26)