

Ballantrae course to swing into action this summer

Public course offers amenities associated with private courses

BY BRUCE STAPLEY
Correspondent

Patches of Fragrant Viburnum, fields of rye and wheat, and an irrigation pond containing treated effluent is a combination not normally associated with a championship golf course.

But when the Ballantrae Golf and Country Club welcomes its first players later this summer, these are just three of the components contributing to what is being billed as an ecologically friendly, state-of-the-art public golf course set among what will be eventually a 900-unit housing development.

The course, which lies between Hwy. 48 and the Ninth Line just north of the Aurora Sideroad, is committed to offering an exquisitely manicured, full-service facility while at the same time maintaining the level of stringent environmental attention required by its location on the Oak Ridges Moraine.

Scratch golfers and weekend duffers alike will see their abilities tested by a par-72 course ranging from 5,207 to 6,850 yards depending on which tees they choose to drive from.

What was previously 175 acres of flat farm land has been transformed into a contoured oasis dotted by ponds, a wide variety of ground coverings, and the distraction of numerous bunkers containing the excess of natural sand found just beneath the ground's surface.

The course layout is the product of the creative mind of Doug Carrick, the noted golf course designer whose genius can be seen



STAFF PHOTO/SJOERD WITTEVEEN

John McLellan, general manager of golf operations at the Ballantrae Golf and Country Club, stands outside the gate to the new public 18-hole, par-72 course that is scheduled to open later this summer. The course is located between Hwy. 48 and the Ninth line, just north of the Aurora Sideroad.

at such clubs as Angus Glen and Osprey Valley.

The course exemplifies Carrick's emphasis on combining a degree of difficulty with a certain level of forgiveness for mistakes.

"Carrick's courses look intimidating but they play fair," insists John McLellan, general manager of golf operations at the Ballantrae club. "After all we want you to come back."

McLellan points as examples to the course's wide fairways and to

greens that average 6,000 square feet. Bent grass cut to fairway height will cover the hollows next to the greens.

"That will enable the mid to high handicapped a choice to chip or putt if they miss the green."

With several of the 18 tees elevated and set adjacent to ponds, golfers will be able to reduce the risk of ending up in the water by choosing the mid or forward tees, giving them less water to shoot over.

The Ballantrae club's commit-

ment to preserving the natural environment is demonstrated by its inclusion in the Audubon International Signature Program, which promotes a merger between the free enterprise system and productive environmental management.

Through the program, the course will combine the natural with the manicured with an emphasis on maintaining the delicate balance that makes up the Oak Ridges Moraine. A \$3-million

sewage treatment system will divert treated effluent from the surrounding housing development to a man-made pond for irrigation purposes, while the use of natural sand in bunkers is also in keeping with using natural resources to augment the course.

"We had to give the Audubon Society a whole plan telling them things like what kind of chemicals we're going to use," said McLellan. "They monitor it on an ongoing basis and give their input."

He said government officials would also require monthly reports on 20 wells on site to ensure the proper usage of water being drawn from aquifers under the course. Irrigation will also be required for several hundreds of acres of wheat and rye that are to be planted in fields adjoining the course until the housing development is finally completed later this decade.

Over 25,000 trees have been planted throughout the course, and ground coverings will consist of a mix of natural grass, fescue and a variety of other plants.

"There will be a different flowering tree or shrub on every hole," he cited.

McLellan said golfers would be welcome to walk the course instead of using carts to better appreciate the setting with its natural beauty.

He added those who use carts wouldn't be restricted to cart paths used by most courses.

"Because of our well drained sandy soil there'll be no danger of compaction."

A Whitby resident who has been in the golf business since he was 16, McLellan said his goal is to offer golfers a public facility with standards traditionally met only by private clubs.

Club fees will be \$60 on weekdays, going up to \$75-\$80 on weekends.

Kavluk, Radbourne in fine form at Boston Marathon

BY BRUCE STAPLEY
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Just call him "Kim" Canada. Stouffville marathon runner Kim Kavluk managed to buck cold weather and a strong headwind to finish in the top four per cent at the Boston Marathon on April 17.

The 45-year-old veteran long distance runner placed 584th overall in an expanded field of 18,500. The race is usually limited to 10,000 runners but was expanded for the millennium run. He finished 26th out of a total of 1,195 Canadians taking part in the legendary annual event.

Kavluk's time of 2:52:29 was his best ever showing in the seven Boston Marathons in which he has run. His previous best time at the Boston event was 2:53:27. It was also the fastest time posted by the insurance broker in any marathon in which he has participated.

"It went really well for me," said Kavluk. "It was the fastest marathon of my life."

While Kavluk was running near the head of the pack as a Boston Marathon veteran, another Stouffville resident was

making her own personal mark.

Deb Radbourne clocked in at 3:51 in her second marathon ever. Competing in the 40-45 year old female category, the mother of two qualified for the Boston race in her first marathon in Toronto last fall. Seeded 13,667th, she managed to move up almost 3,000 positions to finish 10,837th overall. She was in the top half of all female runners.

"I was very pleased," said Radbourne. "For me, the prize was just getting there."

Kavluk said if it hadn't been for the near freezing temperatures and headwind, he might have done even better.

"I was hoping to break 2:50. But it was the coldest Boston Marathon in at least 22 years. There were no records set. The times were all off."

Seeded 1,959th enabled Kavluk to start near the front of the pack at the narrow starting line. Kavluk said he felt strong throughout the entire 26.2-mile course and noted his famil-



KIM KAVLUK
Posts personal best mark at Boston Marathon

ilarity with the course made it easier for him to stick to his plan. "After running the course seven times you get to know it. You have to pace yourself, you can't peak too soon. You've got to be careful because you think you're doing great but then, boom, it gets you."

Kavluk said he has learned how to let gravity carry him down the downhill sections while saving himself for the uphill stretches. He knew he was on his way to a personal best when he was still feeling good upon his arrival at the fabled Heartbreak Hill, 20 miles into the marathon.

In explaining his success, Kavluk attributed it to an improved training routine.

"I hired a coach this time. It's all about the homework. You know before a marathon if your training is going well. Plus, I had no injuries during my training."

A teacher at Unionville High School, Radbourne's personal victory in Boston was the culmination of an interest in running that is just over a year old.

She said it wasn't easy getting the feel of things in Boston. But she said her initial disorientation was erased by the warm reception given her by those in attendance.

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