

Hudson National Golf Club
Croton-on-Hudson, NY



“Aspen did a great job in listening to our needs, and were proactive—not reactive—in making sure that the golf experience didn’t suffer. We are exceptionally pleased with the bunkers and equally pleased with the manner in which the work was done. We had zero interruptions for our members, and no complaints!” —Marc Possidento, Club Manager, COO of Hudson National



New Bunkers: High Style, Low Maintenance

Hudson National Golf Course - First Place, Golf Inc. Renovation of the Year

Location:	Croton-on-Hudson, NY
Type of project:	Renovation
Cost:	\$ 818,309
Construction started:	March 2010
Course opened:	July 2010
Architect:	Tom Marzolf, Fazio Golf Design
Builder:	Aspen Corporation
Course Superintendent:	Chris Smith
Owner Representatives:	Marc Possidento, COO, Club Manager

Hudson National Golf Club, known for its spectacular Hudson River views, was designed by celebrated architect Tom Fazio. In fact, Hudson National's hole #16 is featured on the cover of Fazio's Golf Course Designs book.

In March, 2010, Hudson National began a renovation project on its bunkers, which visually and strategically are some of its greatest assets. *"The bunker style featured high visual impact, but also required high levels of maintenance,"* says Aspen president Donnie Adkins.

PROJECT GOALS

As part of a long-range master plan, the bunker renovation project included re-building 80 bunkers and adding 6 new ones. The goal was to make subtle adjustments that would decrease the amount of maintenance required on the bunkers and increase their life expectancy without making significant changes to their strategic values.

PROJECT CHALLENGES/SOLUTIONS

• A lot of area to cover

The course is spread out over a large tract of land which required Aspen to utilize specific haul routes from the golf course to the designated dumpsite and material staging areas—both for the existing bunker sand and grass that was removed as well as the new sand and topsoil that was used to construct the renovated bunkers.

At one part of the project, topsoil and sand were stored over a mile from where the work was being done. Since there is no continuous cart path, golf holes had to be crossed.

In order to maintain the schedule and meet the requirements of the haul routes, Aspen utilized a larger fleet of specialized high flotation equipment than it may otherwise have done for a project of this scope.

Golf course architect Tom Marzolf, Fazio Golf Design, said, *"Aspen's ability to work an area, finish it quickly, and so it was key to the success of the overall project."*

The site is also unusually rocky, as most of Westchester County, NY sits on a slab of granite. Marzolf said the course was hard to build and hard to shape the first time around and the renovation proved challenging as well.

"At the base of each hole was shot rock, so putting in drain lines was difficult," he says. *"Aspen had to backhoe ditch everything. The difficulty factor was there from day one."*

• Just keep the course open, please!

The Club has a shorter than average playing season due to the climate in the region and because its membership is primarily national and international, so renovation work had to be conducted during the playing season. The club insisted that no more than three holes be closed at a time.

Hudson National has some of the highest membership fees in golf. Many of its members are high rollers from Wall Street who are using the golf course to conduct business; these are not people who would tolerate much delay during construction. The fact that the members were satisfied with the course during construction is a testament to the small footprint that Aspen was able to maintain.

Golf Course Superintendent Chris Smith says Aspen went above and beyond in keeping disruption to a minimum. *"We stayed open the whole time and didn't have too many holes exposed to construction at one time. There was very little disruption to our members and the golf course was well-cared for."*

• Advance planning pays off

The project "commenced" long before any equipment arrived on site. Several advance meetings to discuss the project approach,

materials used, and logistics were held before starting excavation, so a clear plan had been developed and was ready for execution on Day 1, ensuring that there would be no miscalculations along the way.

Marc Possidento, Club Manager, COO of Hudson National, said it was important that the renovation proceed in a professional manner.

"Aspen did a great job in listening to our needs, and were proactive—not reactive—in making sure that the golf experience didn't suffer. Everyone on the team conducted themselves professionally, down to details such as how laborers dealt with balls rolling into bunkers; their daily communication with us was excellent."

PROJECT RESULTS

Eighty bunkers were rebuilt for this project with a total square footage around 67,500; six new bunkers added another 10,000 square feet.

Golf course superintendent Chris Smith and his staff deemed the renovation project a success based upon the increased ease of maintaining several bunkers on the golf course that had become problematic. The new bunker liners have made substantial improvements in minimizing damage and contamination as a result of rain events. *"The bunkers are holding up great and their ability to withstand washouts is amazing,"* says Smith.

And maintenance costs have been reduced. *"Before the renovation, I had to send out the full staff after a rainstorm because all the bunkers were washed out,"* he says. *"Now I might have to send out a small crew to do some minor raking, but that's it. Definitely a cost savings."*

Hudson National was named First Place Winner in Golf Inc.'s Renovation of the Year in the category of projects under \$1 million.

The course was also included in the 2011-2012 Golf Digest Top 100 Golf Courses in America, moving up in the rankings from 94 to 83.

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