

# TOP 10

## YOU CAN PLAY

From Red Sky to Red Tail, the cream of 2002 rises to the top

BY: BRIAN McCALLEN

It had to happen sooner or later. The nation's golf course construction boom, while it hasn't gone bust, has certainly slowed considerably from its high-water mark of 524 new openings in 2000. Yet the lean field of newcomers in 2002 produced a strong collection of worthy venues.

On the design side, many of the *Top 10* layouts are classically styled engineering marvels built on

difficult terrain that tested the skills of the architect and will do the same for golfers. From a former army base outside Boston to Technicolor canyons in southern Nevada, designers have once again showcased their ingenuity and demonstrated the game's amazing ability to adapt to a wide range of environments. Times are tough, but golf in America continues to flourish.



# SHORE GATE GOLF CLUB

Ocean View, New Jersey

FOR YEARS, CALIFORNIA-BASED RON FREAM, the Johnny Appleseed of golf design, has been sending postcards to GOLF MAGAZINE updating his latest projects in the far corners of the globe. Korea. Nepal. Bali. Argentina. Even Disneyland Paris, but generally the more exotic the better. After decades of globetrotting, Fream landed in South Jersey 30 minutes outside Atlantic City, where the Turner family, owners of a nearby campground, asked him to have a look

at their 245-acre parcel. Won over by the designer's enthusiasm, Fream was cut loose on land that was beach and dunes eons ago. After massaging the site with bulldozers to displace 450,000 cubic yards of sand—this after noting sun angles and shadow patterns—Fream produced the boldest and most extroverted layout imaginable. At full stretch, Shore Gate is a dynamic, visually intimidating world-beater designed to drain the plaid from a duffer's knickers. Perhaps to remind players of the site's geologic past, Fream flashed sand up the sides of tall, vertical mounds at several holes to create the impression of incoming ocean waves.

There are 88 formal bunkers on the course, plus seven ponds, but it's the vast, fescue-fringed waste areas that scream "Watch Out!" "Shore Gate is a copy of no one and nothing else," writes Fream in a postscript from the oasis of Tozeur in Tunisia. Kudos to a West Coast pioneer not afraid to tilt the seaboard a little closer to the sea. *Green fee: \$42 to \$99. 609-624-8337; www.shoregategolfclub.com.*



Hole 17  
Photo: C. John



Top: Hole 5 - Photo: R. Fream  
Lower: Hole 9 - Photo: D. Dale

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