



## SILVA EXCITED ABOUT EXPANSION OF MOUNT PLEASANT COURSE

By Lee Pace

BRETTON WOODS, N.H. (August 2007) – Golf was first played in the valley beneath the peaks of the Presidential Range in Bretton Woods as early as 1895. Joseph Stickney, the owner of the elegant Mount Pleasant House, one of the grand hotels that thrived in the late 19th century in the White Mountains, retained Scottish golf architect Alex Findlay to cobble out a nine-hole layout.

The Mount Washington Hotel was built several hundred yards to the north of Mount Pleasant House and opened in 1902. Eleven years later, architect Donald Ross began construction on a new 18-hole layout that opened in 1915. The original Mount Pleasant course was disbanded, and the land sat idle for some 70 years. The Mount Pleasant House was razed in 1939.

Architect Brian Silva was the lead designer in 1989 on a new nine-hole Mount Pleasant course that was produced under the shingle of the design firm of Cornish, Silva and Mungeam. Silva will commence on a major overhaul and expansion of the layout to 18 holes upon the scheduled completion and re-opening in the fall of 2008 of the restoration currently underway on the Donald Ross course at Mount Washington.

“It’s important for our long-range plan to have two excellent 18-hole golf courses here,” says Mount Washington Resort President Patrick A. Corso. “I think what Brian is doing with the Ross course is going to be very special. The next step is to take a good nine-hole course and make it an outstanding 18-hole course.”

The resort has land available that will be used to expand the existing nine holes and add a new practice facility. That acreage is located to the east of the current Mount Pleasant course and is bounded to the north by the back nine of the Ross course and to the south by Hwy. 302.

“I have fond memories of building that course,” Silva says. “As a stand-alone, I think the nine-holer would be a big hit. It’s a strategic layout. It requires a lot of careful thought about how to plan and execute each shot.

“We crafted the land more on the Mount Pleasant course than what you see on the Ross course. It’s a bit more ‘moundsy.’ The land for that course has more definition than that of the Ross course.”

The design of the new Mount Pleasant is evolving on his drawing table, Silva says.



“The course is still very much in the design process, both as to where the holes will go on the land and what their design character might be,” Silva says. “I find the latter often evolves in front of me once clearing is complete.”

The existing nine-hole layout is routed in front of the Mount Washington Hotel and along the Ammonoosuc Rivers, and hotel guests drive through the course en route to the hotel.

“The existing course is a really good test of golf,” Mount Washington Resort General Manager Matt Massei says. “It’s fun to play. It requires you shape some shots off the tee—some require a draw, others a fade. There are good visuals on the course. There’s a lot of opportunity to take what’s there and create a really good golf course.”

One important element of the Mount Pleasant renovation project will be to expand the existing practice facility, adding new tee space, target greens, a short-game area and a teaching facility for golf schools and clinics.

“It’s very important that we have a state-of-the-art teaching and practice facility,” says Massei. “For our membership program and our resorts guests, we’ve got to take our existing facility to a whole new level.”

When the Mount Pleasant expansion is complete, the resort will have a Donald Ross course brought to modern playability and agronomic standards by Silva and then a new course designed by Silva as well.

“I think the goal when you have a facility with multiple courses is to create different looks and feels and personalities,” Silva says. “I think we’ll accomplish that here.”