



## New Tempest Golf Club Begins to Take Shape

*Brauer-designed track aims to be the top course in East Texas.*



**PRESS RELEASE:** The site for the new Tempest Golf Club in East Texas made for a great golf course and the team assembled by owner Joe Bruno is well on its way to fashioning Mother Nature's gifts into one of the region's best and most challenging places to play the grand game.

Tempest Golf Club is a stunning parkland-style course taking shape on the site of the former Southern Hills Golf Club, a mile off I-20 two hours east of Dallas and 45 minutes west of Shreveport, Louisiana. Parts of the new course are being grassed now, with the goal of opening for play in July 2018.

Brought to life by Arlington, Texas-based golf architect Jeffrey D. Brauer, Tempest Golf Club takes advantage of dramatic Piney Woods topography with its dramatic rise and fall of almost 200 feet, incredible core golf vistas across as many as five holes in the routing's lower confines, and a pair of holes that play across a four-acre freshwater lake.

It will be easy for golfers playing Tempest Golf Club to believe they are in the rolling hills of North Carolina rather than a short drive from one of America's major metropolitan areas. Brauer is noted for his ability to turn even the most banal or difficult tract of land into a fun and interesting golf course, but here he was given a great canvas and is bringing out the best of it.

"We have always had the stated goal of being the best course in East Texas and the site allows us to accentuate what the land gives us," said Brauer, whose previous designs include the Cowboys Golf Club in Grapevine, Texas, as well as The Wilderness at Fortune Bay and The Quarry and Legend Courses at Giants Ridge, and Superior National Golf Course, in Minnesota, all of which are highly awarded.

"Mr. Bruno has spared no expense giving us everything we've asked for, but the canvas itself just needed to be brought forward with a playable routing," Brauer added. "Mr. Bruno's architectural projects have won awards – he understands good design, and he is known for demanding the very best, which set the tone for the project.

"With a tweak here and a mound or two or a bunker there, we have been able to bring out the flavor and reveal the best things about the site. It will be a remarkable golf course and fun to play over and over again."

Bruno, a New Orleans-based attorney, originally developed the course and its surrounding neighborhood as a gift to his children and grandchildren. After years of struggling financially with the project, Bruno made the decision to take a mulligan on both the golf course and the community, eventually adopting the philosophy of putting the golf course first.

"The former course was not well received, was losing money and had become a nightmare in its operation," Bruno said. "I was ready to give up on the situation, but I walked the old course with Jeff, who was like a kid in a candy store. He was so enthusiastic and excited about the chance we had to make something special that I totally bought into his way of thinking and our collective vision for what was possible here came together."

Tempest Golf Club will be carded at 7,068 yards and play to a par of 36-36-72. The first six holes are routed over the footprint of the old course but the rest are completely new, built on land previously reserved for residential lots. The putting surfaces will be turfed with Champion G12 bermuda, perfect for the climate of East Texas.

Brauer said that golfers will find the sixth, the 11th, and the 12th holes to be Tempest Golf Club's signature offerings, but only after great debate because every hole is solid and has little features that sets it apart.

The sixth hole (a par 5) uses the same corridor through the woods as one of the course's existing holes but was transformed by moving more than 30,000 cubic yards of earth, removing the previous blind areas and creating a wonderful downhill vista.

Brauer was surprised that original course's designers didn't use the large tree-lined pond that now borders the 11th hole, a 450-yard par 4. He now considers No. 11 one of the best challenges on the course, especially from the back two sets of tees, which ask for an angled carry over the water.

The 12th hole had originally been earmarked for housing but its footprint was ultimately too steep. Now, that corner of the course has been turned into a dramatic, downhill par 3 on which the golfers traverse a creek on a wooden bridge between tee and green.

The 10th and 18th holes occupy what was an overcrowded mix of holes 7, 8, 16, and 18 and set the stage for a dramatic beginning and end to the back-nine.

The course and its renovated and expanded 7,500-square-foot clubhouse are being constructed by Signet Golf Associates of Pinehurst, North Carolina.

"Every day I'm on site here I see something else I like about the course and what we are fashioning from the palate nature has provided," said Peter Dejak, one of Signet's founders and principals. "Jeff has done an amazing job in his routing, and as the shaping of the holes become more evident and grassing continues, I see the subtle features coming into play that make all the difference between a good golf course and a great one."

The price tag for the new course and its amenities will end up being more than \$7 million, an unwavering sign of the dedication and commitment Bruno and his team have for the project and its ultimate success.

Brauer, the former president of the American Society of Golf Course Architects, also designed the three top-rated public courses in Kansas: Firekeeper, Colbert Hills Golf Club, and Sand Creek Station. Among his more than 100 design credits are the La Costa Resort's two courses in Carlsbad, Calif. (renovation), Gaylord Springs at Opryland in Nashville, TN, and Avocet Course at Wild Wing Plantation in Conway, SC.

He has won three "Best New Course" awards among his other honors.

Tempest Golf Club will be challenging for the best players, with tee locations that will make it playable for men and women of all levels, and junior golfer-friendly.

"I don't believe in designing tough courses," Brauer said. "Neither potential members, average golfers, or even millennials who will eventually support this course are enamored with extremely difficult tests of golf, although that philosophy was embraced and seemed true in the past. I am taking advantage of the site to design for moderately challenging, intensely interesting and beautiful golf."

The clubhouse balcony will have views of seven golf holes and will include corporate meeting space, a 200-seat banquet hall and an expanded The Tavern at Tempest restaurant.

The course will have extensive practice facilities and there are plans for casitas for stay-and-play or time-share options, and a pool. All signs point to a true destination golf course and unforgettable golf experience.

For information on hosting a 2018 golf, wedding, or corporate event, send your request to [info@tempestgolfclub.com](mailto:info@tempestgolfclub.com).

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**Julie Woods & Associates  
Real Estate Firm**

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