

WORDS BY RICHARD GREEN

A links legend in the making



For his latest course, David McLay Kidd is turning the clock back 100 years.

The summer of 2008 will undoubtedly be a busy one for Scottish designer David McLay Kidd, with the unveiling of two magnificent new courses in his homeland. First up, in June, is the Castle Course – the seventh member of the St Andrews Links Trust and one of the most eagerly awaited openings of recent times. But amid all the hullabaloo of a new course at the Home of Golf, we should certainly not overlook Kidd's second offering in what will be a bumper summer for Scottish golf courses.

Having spent his childhood holidays playing in the pristine dunes at

Machrihanish and caddying for his father and grandfather, Kidd's latest project, adjacent to the legendary links created by Old Tom Morris in the 19th century, could be just as significant as the one in Fife.

Judging by the latest photographs of Machrihanish Dunes, that desire to emulate his design forefathers will undoubtedly be achieved. "We followed the lie of the land and unlike most courses around the world, we did not lay out the course and make the land change with it, we designed each hole around the natural terrain," says Kidd of his new links. "For maintenance we will do a

little mowing, but will mostly rely on the wandering sheep to keep the fescue in check – just like the old courses used to do. We are returning golf to how it should be played; no longer is it a gentle walk in a garden, it will be a full-fledged mountaineering expedition at this course."

With seeding and shaping of all 18 greens and tee complexes now complete, the first 18-hole links on the west coast of Scotland in 100 years is ready to join the big time. The course will open in August 2008, with a green fee in the region of £95.

■ Contact: www.thewaygolfbegan.com



Time team
Kidd (second right): "We are returning golf to how it should be played."



Great Scot
It's been a century since the west coast had a new 18-hole links.

Course briefs 02/08



Arabian Links

Five-times Open champion Peter Thomson has revealed plans for a new course in Ain Al Emarat that he hopes will replicate many of the elements of golf in the British Isles. "The land at Ain Al Emarat is magical, pure links land with no vegetation. We could instantly see marvellous golf holes in these undulating dunes," Thomson said. "The land is so natural and you can see potential for holes from all the classic British links courses. It truly is a golf course designer's dream, and we will leave it all up to nature to design the course." Construction on the Abu Dhabi course will begin soon.

www.tpl.eu.com



All Greek to RTJ

Robert Trent Jones is to design his first course in Greece, a beachfront layout on the beautiful Messinia peninsula on the Peloponnese. The Bay course at Navarino will be part of a significant development that includes four five-star hotels, a number of luxury villas, several spas and another championship course, The Dunes, designed by Bernhard Langer.

www.troongolf.com



Cornish batty

Plans for a £100 million hotel complex at St Mellion, Cornwall, have had to take into consideration a colony of bats hibernating in a roof space. The building was due to be demolished in March, by which time the bats should have flown, but the new building will include a special dormitory for the returning animals. "We are working hard to ensure the colony remains undisturbed this winter and is able to return to a safe, purpose-built bat dormitory in the future," said ecologist Jeff Picksley.

www.st-mellion.co.uk

