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By Brandon Tucker

While Trump stalls, other new golf developments move forward in Scotland

It might be easy for outsiders watching the ongoing battle between Donald Trump's proposed golf resort in Aberdeenshire and local officials to get the impression that Scotland would rather stick to the status quo than cater to an American businessman's vision.

But that is hardly the case at all.

Scotland is set to debut four brand new golf courses in 2008, three of which tie in a full-scale resort and/or real estate and two of which have strong American affiliation. It must have Trump one step away from the funny farm – or in this case Northern Ireland.

Machrihanish Dunes, opening this summer on Scotland's southwest coast, is next door to 19th century Machrihanish Golf Club. It is the first course in Scotland to be built on a Site of Specific Scientific Interest, and a new accompanying real estate development is tied in to boot.

Castle Stuart, near Highlands capital Inverness, is slated to begin previewing its 36-hole links this fall. By 2010, it will be a full-scale resort, including 148 resort-ownership lodges. One the resort's investors is American Dan Reiner of Clubcorp, which resorts Pebble Beach and Pinehurst among 400 other courses.

The Renaissance Club at Archerfield will feature 18 holes from American architect Tom Doak of Renaissance Golf Design, along with a full resort & spa. It's sandwiched between legendary neighbors Muirfield and North Berwick in East Lothian.

Let's also not forget Herb Kohler purchased the Old Course Hotel and the nearby Duke's Course in St. Andrews in 2004.

The modern day golf business model and Scotland get along just fine.

The difference is in the marketing. These developments appear to be more about the golf and significance of the lands they occupy. For instance, Machrihanish Dunes' URL is "TheWayGolfBegan.com".

Trump is encountering endless obstacles because the Scots perceive his development to be about, well, Trump.

That is troubling news, because he is being lapped in his own game, and the window of opportunity is closing. Higher fuel costs, a weakening U.S. dollar and looming recession fears mean Scotland's golf tourism should expect a few lean years in the foreseeable future.

So even if Trump's \$2 billion resort is eventually given the green light, it's probably already too late.