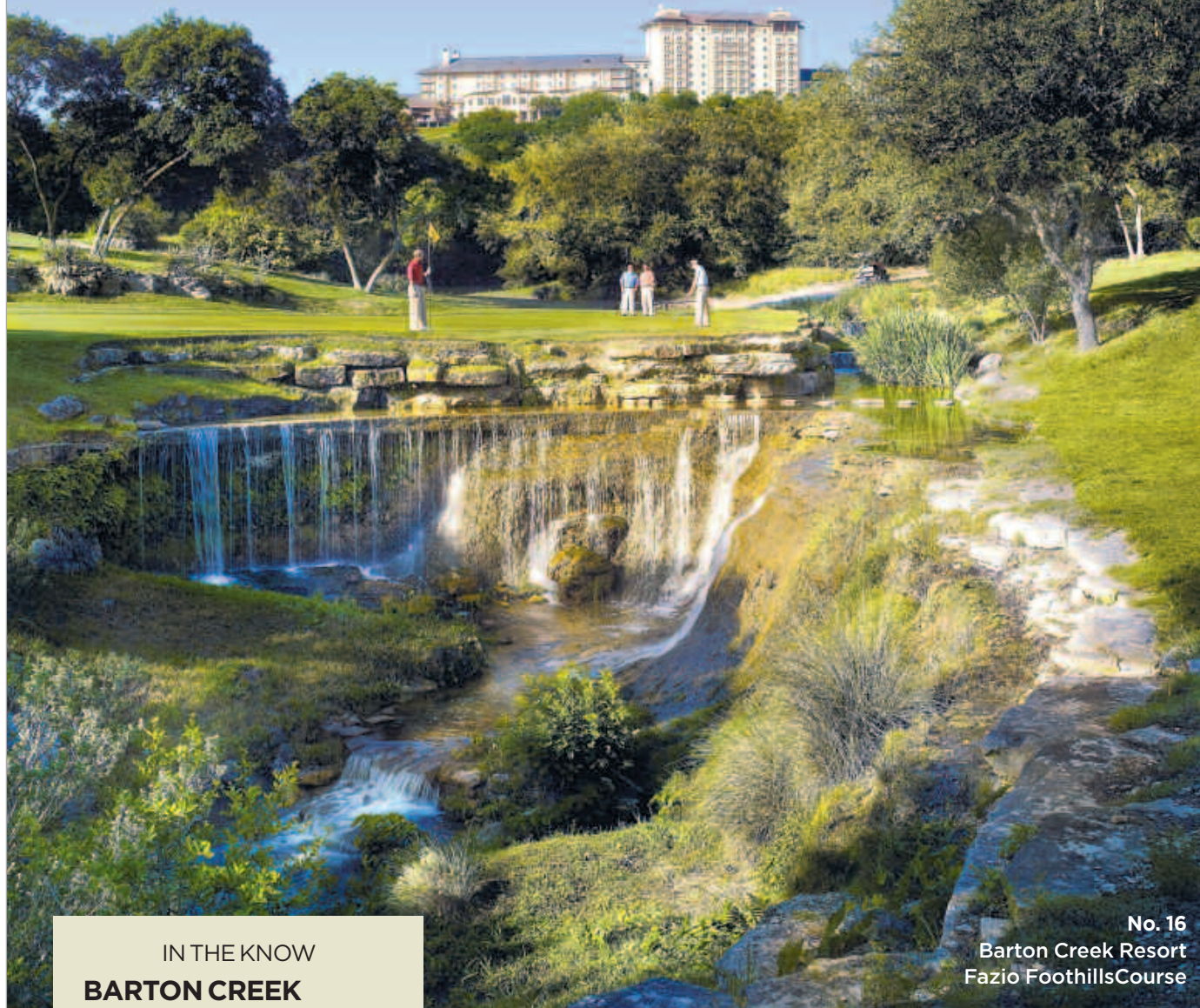


Trendsetter



No. 16
Barton Creek Resort
Fazio Foothills Course

Barton Creek Resort

IN THE KNOW

BARTON CREEK RESORT

Location: West Austin, near Westlake, off Capital of Texas highway

Cost: Rates vary by season, \$125 to \$205

Contact: 512-329-4000

Highlights: Luxury four-star hotel of the same name on property, various packages available.

Notable: First Tom Fazio-designed course in Texas, only resort in state with two Fazio courses. Also has golf courses designed by Austin native Ben Crenshaw and Arnold Palmer.

Website: www.bartoncreek.com

BARTON CREEK'S FAZIO FOOTHILLS STARTED A HILL COUNTRY BOOM 25 YEARS AGO

By ART STRICKLIN

AUSTIN — Barton Creek Resort celebrates a major milestone in Texas golf history this summer, with its 25th anniversary of the Tom Fazio-designed course that boosted Austin and the neighboring Hill Country into the golf capital of Texas. “We’ve served three-quarter of a million golfers since this course opened, so I’d say it’s more than stood the test of time,” said current Barton Creek club director Michael Rushing.

The course, now known as Fazio Foothills, to separate it from the newer Barton Creek Fazio Canyons, was ranked No. 20 among *The News*’ top 100 courses, the first non-private course on the list. It is also the No. 1 course in its price category in the state. (See Page 23.) It also resides in various top 100 national lists.

When the extremely rocky and dense hardwood property opened in July 1986, few could have probably guessed it would light a Hill Country golf boom which has attracted a national golfing audience to the scenic area.

“The dramatic scenery and the great par-5 finishing hole, with the elevated green, caverns and the rushing water, it doesn’t get any better than that,” Rushing said

While Fazio is loath to ever rank the highly regarded courses he has designed, he worked with two legends of Texas politics and business, former Gov. John Connally and Lt. Gov. Ben Barnes, who were among the partners in the development. Fazio made his first golf course design in Texas and knew he had found something special.

“People ask me all the time if I can see a hole when I’m out for the first time. I didn’t envision this layout, but I knew it was a very dramatic site.

“The more dramatic holes, the more chances for people to like it,” Fazio added. “We had so many choices.”

Fazio has returned to Texas another half dozen times, with courses in Dallas (Dallas National, Vaquero), San Antonio, Horseshoe Bay and a second course at Barton Creek, with each new design seemingly more successful and more popular than the last.

“Barton Creek really put Austin on the map and let the locals and the state know we were serious about golf here,” said Brent Buckman, the original director of golf.

After a few fairly simple opening few holes, Fazio ended the front nine with a dramatic water and rock-strewn par-3, which Chi Chi Rodriquez once aced during the Champions Tours Legends of Golf Tournament, held for nearly a decade here.

The par-4 10th hole features an elevated tee 100 feet above the fairway. There are several back-nine holes layouts hugging the edge of huge canyon. The par-4 16th is annually voted as one of the most scenic in the state with a tree-lined fairway and the green guarded by water on three sides.

A silver anniversary tournament will honor the 50 members who have been here all 25 years, including University of Texas coaching legend Darrell Royal. George W. Bush, who once claimed it was his favorite course in Texas, might even stop by.

As a tribute to a true Texas golfing original.