

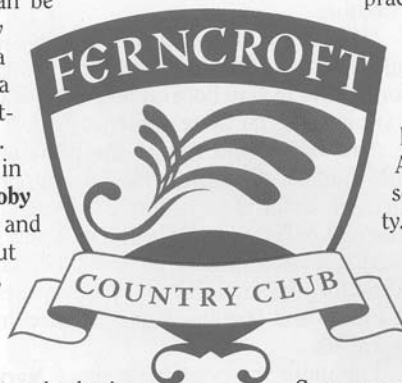
Ferncroft renovations continue with new practice area

Since taking over as the new owner of the Ferncroft Country Club last year, Affinity Management has made a number of immediate changes. The latest of which can be seen as soon as you drive onto the property where the practice range has undergone a total renovation and now includes, not only a state-of-the-art driving range, but a short-game area and a chipping and putting green.

"We feel like it's the best practice facility in the area," says Ferncroft's Director of Golf **Toby Ahern**, who is in his 15th year at the club and had high praise for Affinity, which is based out of Virginia and has worked with golf courses in 21 different states in the last 10 years.

"In this day and age, some people don't have the time to go out and spend four or five hours on an 18-hole round of golf on a regular basis. But now our members can come up here and spend one or two hours at the practice range and work on every single aspect of their game. We're very excited."

In order to make room for the new practice section, the course's management made the decision to sacrifice the first and ninth holes of the executive course. The tees on the former practice range were lengthened by 40 feet and replaced with grass tees, making the area now 40,000 square feet. There is also a strip of top synthetic turf that will be used during bad weather and for outings.



The first green of the executive course is now a short-game area, fit for shots of up to 35 yards. It also features a bunker to practice out of. The ninth green of the executive course is now dedicated for chipping and putting. The remaining seven holes of the executive course are still intact.

"We thought the end result was worth the loss of two holes on the executive course," Ahern added. "We now just think of those seven holes as part of the entire practice facility."

In addition to the new practice facility, Ferncroft now boasts a new 2,000 square-foot fitness center, which was built in the former members lounge, adjacent to the swimming pool. Former Boston Bruin **Don**

Sweeney, a Ferncroft member, helped design the center, which includes nine pieces of cardio equipment, a full set of free weights and a TrueStretch device that helps golfers increase flexibility and minimize injury through stretching exercises. In addition there is a coffee bar included within the confines of the fitness center, which is open to all members.

"It's an exciting time here," added Ahern, who was also happy to see renovations completed at the on-course bathrooms as well as the swimming pool. "We've made a number of improvements over the last 12 months and the reaction of the members has been fantastic."