

Goodbye Wedgwood hello Wedgewood

Neil Bisseker

Wedgwood Golf Club (without the e) is officially a thing of the past. The classic parkland course on the outskirts of Port Elizabeth closed its doors at the end of April. While it marked the end of a chapter in the storied history of the layout on which Gary Player won his 100th tournament, it ushered in the start of an exciting new era for golf in the region.

On 7 May, the official sod turning took place for the new Wedgewood Village Golf and Country Estate which is to replace 77-year-old Wedgwood Golf Club. "It's taken us two and a half years to get to this point," said project facilitator Simon Bezuidenhout. "As part of Pinnacle Point Holdings there is an enormous amount of expectation surrounding the project, simply because of the wonderful success Pinnacle Point at Mossel Bay has enjoyed in such a short space of time."

Wedgewood Village Golf and Country Estate represents a massive R1.5 billion investment in the Greenbushes Area of Port Elizabeth. "The civil engineers moved on site at the beginning of May to start work on the roads and services and on the front wall and gatehouse," said Bezuidenhout. "Golf Data will be arriving shortly to begin a complete make over of the course."

The proof will be in the playing on the remodeled course, which will feature three brand new holes. All the other holes will be reshaped and the new 18th will finish alongside a new dam in front of a brand new clubhouse. "The course will feature four dams in total, as opposed to the one which is currently in play in front of the par-three 15th," said Bezuidenhout. "Several holes will be affected by the addition of more water and we're hoping to have the course ready for play towards the end of 2008."

Along with the new course and clubhouse come tennis courts, bowling greens, swimming pools and a health spa and hotel. There'll also be a retail section to meet the needs of the residents of the 300-home lifestyle village and of the owners of the 475 homes that will be built around the course.