The Reservoir

by Matthew Rose (aka "Snowdog")

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This is my first official release for Links 2003.

Previously I have released two betas. One was back in 2005 and was a desert course, which was abandoned due to a significant loss of work following a series of designer crashes. In June 2011, I released a beta of The Reservoir.

I have been using the APCD since receiving one of the very first original betas more than a decade ago, but for the longest time I had trouble with the steep learning curve and found the amount of necessary steps needed to produce a finished product was tedious beyond my own personal patience boundaries. I also felt the quality of work being done by guys like Mike Jones, Chuck Clark, and Robert Miller was on a level far away and above anything I could produce myself, so for long periods of time I gave it up. I've done a lot of stopping and starting with projects as a result.

So here it is, more than 10 years later, and I've finally decided to release something. The Reservoir is the very first course I ever routed, going all the way back to the year 2001. I did a good deal of the elevations then as well. That would make the basic skeleton of this course 11 years old! I shelved it for several years while life got in the way, and also did other projects in that time which were ultimately lost in the same hard drive crash during the autumn of 2005 that killed my desert course and made me not want to even look at Links for about two or three years.

Only in the last couple of years did I find my routing and elevations intact for The Reservoir on a backup disk. I polished it up, added a lot of custom textures and objects, seam-blended and otherwise brought it up to Links 2003 standard. In that time I have redesigned two or three holes (the par-3 12th is in its third incarnation) but the majority of the holes have remained essentially as they were laid out more than a decade ago, save for the cosmetic upgrades (textures, etc.).   
  
 The course plays 7,157 yards from the tips to a par of 72 and is designed to be fairly realistic, strategic, and with an emphasis on classic risk-reward philosophy. The design predates the 1.06 and 1.07 mods by a few years, but I have been testing it in 1.07 for some time. The look and feel of the course is influenced somewhat by Muirfield Village, and by classic parkland style layouts like Colonial, Westchester, Quail Hollow, and others. I have used a few custom objects, downloaded from APCD-courses.com and from Links Corner forums; none of these I have created myself. I'm not sure whom to credit as there are a lot of them and in most cases I've lost track of the original source. The textures are a combination of default Links textures that I have screen captured and heavily modified, and from the old Jack Nicklaus series created by Brian Silvernail. Modifications include re-coloring, adding mowlines, and light/shade effects. Most of these are done in 256 or 512 format; these were done prior to the 1024 HD patch.

I have decided not to add HD textures at this time because I am quite happy with how the existing ones look and play, and because I'm not fully up to speed on mapping with HD textures yet.

The panorama is called er\_version2 and was downloaded from the custom APCD area of the Links Corner forum. Unfortunately, there doesn't seem to be a name credited with its creation in the original .zip file, which I still have.

One thing everyone will notice is that I have not made a custom clubhouse. I'm simply hopeless when it comes to this sort of thing... I have since learned to do very rudimentary 3D buildings, but nothing I'm ready to put into an actual course yet. These kinds of details I tend to overlook or spend less time on than others as I find the actual course design process (layout, verts, seam blending, etc.) so exhaustive that I often lack the energy to do things like cart paths, clubhouses, buildings, etc. I hope future releases will feature notable improvement in these areas.

I expect some people to perhaps be disappointed that certain details weren't embellished further, like the cart paths or clubhouse. I also expect that this may have a slight effect on possible reviews and ratings. I'm willing to accept such critique, if only because I understand the high standards that have been established by some of the names listed above.

But the truth is, I'm absolutely sick of working on this. I've had this course in one form or another for nearly a third of my lifetime. I don't want to work on it anymore. I feel like I have given it so far beyond the maximum effort one should spend on any project, and I really want to move on to others. So I'm putting this out, warts and all.

Enjoy playing it. After all this time, I believe it was worth sharing. I hope you agree with me.

I have one more behind this one which I hope to put out in quick succession, followed by two more originals which are elevated but not blended or planted. and after that, I'm going to attempt a real course for the first time, an upgrade of Castle Pines in Colorado.

Special Thanks to the following:

Rehit, Mogulbasher, Mike Jones, Chuck Clark, Robert Miller, Brian Silvernail

Also, to my beta testers from summer 2011: "Broomer", "gator" & Steve Gilmore.

I apologize profusely for not knowing the real names of many of you.

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May 30, 2012