



## Short game success

A new short game practice facility for the University of Southern Mississippi men's and women's golf teams is helping to improve their performances

**F**ollowing evaluation of a number of options, the University of Southern Mississippi (USM) decided to locate its new short game facility on an area of wooded land that was available to them at the prestigious Hattiesburg Country Club, just a few miles from their main campus in the city of Hattiesburg, Mississippi.

Their challenge was to accommodate a large short-game green and separate practice putting green into the 3.5 acre site adjacent to the club's driving range, without negatively impacting the wetland that cuts through the property.

After studying the land with USM men's golf coach Jerry Weeks, golf course architect Nathan Crace, ASGCA Associate, proposed to make best use of the space available by designing a long meandering short-game green near the middle of the property, that can be approached by fairways on both sides.

One fairway extends from the short game green toward the northwest corner, giving players up to 110 yards to play shots into the green. The other fairway

goes in the opposite direction, towards the club's chipping green and practice tee. With two fairways, players have more practice options, and can take shots to the green from multiple different angles, distances, lies and elevations.

Originally a large drainage pipe was planned for the lowest area of the land, which would have allowed for that part of the site to be used for added fairway and a new road to the maintenance facility. The discovery of the wetland forced the relocation of that original road, but meant that funds planned for the large drainage pipe could be saved. Crace adapted his plans accordingly, improving the wetland to create an aesthetic feature that not only provides separation between the short game green and the new putting green, but also creates a natural filter for runoff.

The completed short game area is a resounding success. The USM men's team won their first event after the facility opened, with players crediting their success to the improved practice available on the new facility.



### USM short game facility

Location: Hattiesburg, Mississippi

Golf course architect:  
Nathan Crace, ASGCA Associate  
Watermark Golf/  
Nathan Crace Design  
[www.watermarkgolf.com](http://www.watermarkgolf.com)

Project summary: The University of Southern Mississippi wanted a new short game facility on a 3.5 acre parcel of land at Hattiesburg CC that was wooded and dissected by wetland. The design made the wetland a key feature of the facility and incorporated two fairways to maximize the options available for practice.

Partners: Landscapes Unlimited (construction); Rain Bird (irrigation); Advanced Drainage Systems (pipe)