# Woods lends a hand to help new Cliffs course sit pretty



Photos by JOHN FLETCHER / The Asheville Citizen-Times

Jim Anthony, left, developer of the The Cliffs at High Carolina, and Tiger Woods take a walking tour of the site where Woods is designing a new golf course for the North Carolina development.

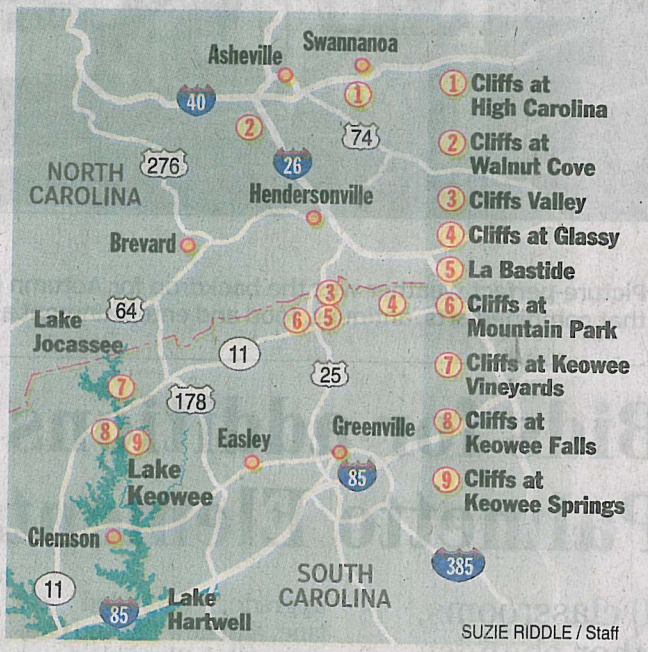
## Design by golf's $1 billion player generates interest in N.C. development

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SWANNANOA, N.C. — At the end of a monster week for making money, Tiger Woods flew Saturday into North Carolina's high country for his part-time job.

The sun was still burning off the morning chill when Woods' helicopter touched down near the 4,000-foot crest of spectacular mountaintop acreage Greenville businessman Jim Anthony had stitched together with four dozen transactions over 2½ years.

It was the last leg of a trip from his Florida home for the famously early-rising Woods, who couldn't stop talking about the fresh air and 50-mile views that had lured him to The Cliffs at High Carolina for his first attempt at golf course design in the United States.




SUZIE RIDDLE / Staff

Woods' schedule has been unusually full lately — four FedEx playoff events in a five-week stretch, ending with his $10 million payday for taking the FedEx title last Sunday, and his participation guaranteed in next week's President's Cup matches.

But he had pledged a day at High Carolina, where the leaves are just starting to turn, to survey the golf course work and help Anthony sell more

**MORE ONLINE**

See photos from The Cliffs at High Carolina and join Tiger Woods and Jim Anthony for a video tour of the property at GreenvilleOnline.com.

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# WOODS

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lots in an economy that has strangled residential real estate sales throughout the country.

Anthony said that while The Cliffs' brand of luxury hasn't been immune from the recession, the High Carolina project has closed on "about 30 lots, with five, six, seven more under contract, averaging about $1 million apiece" since a sales campaign began last November.

That squares with Buncombe County property records, which showed the closing of 29 lots for about $29.2 million as of Friday, according to the *Citizen-Times* of Asheville.

Anthony said there has been great interest in High Carolina because of Woods, and that it has helped spur interest in his other seven developments in the foothills and mountains of the Carolinas.

He said Cliffs Communities, his company, has fielded 29,000 inquiries from prospects interested in the Woods project and that property tours are booked solid for the next three months. Tours typically include visits of two to three days, with golf at Cliffs courses stretching from Lake Keowee to Asheville.

Tom Fazio, the preeminent golf course architect who has designed Cliffs courses at Keowee Springs and Keowee Vineyards, said that Anthony signing up Woods for his first U.S. course was "a grand slam home run for the Upstate and western North Carolina, an absolute stroke of genius."

Fazio said he has no doubt that Woods the designer will succeed.

"Everything he's done he's been successful at," Fazio told *The Greenville News*. "This is important to the region's economy. It's not an easy time to sell golf club memberships. But Tiger is one of those magical people."

The High Carolina course is just now being roughed out of the wooded property after 30 different routings by Woods' design company to get things just right and the permitting process. Anthony said he anticipates it will be ready for play in the fall of 2011.

The meticulous routing has given High Carolina southern exposure on most of its holes, which would allow for play on all but the nastiest of days and earlier starts after a frost.

While Woods is indisputably the world's best golfer, what he has planned is a golf course to challenge scratch golfers and delight duffers.

He said there will be plenty of slope on the right side of fairways because most high handicappers are slicers and he wants to help them keep balls in play.

Woods said if he has a "signature" design technique it would be his belief that golf should be played as much along the ground as through the air, something that also keeps in mind the skills of the not so good.

"When I was a kid just starting out, I couldn't hit the ball high with spin, and the courses I learned on let you run it up on greens. Most amateurs can't hit it high with spin, so we'll have openings at the front of greens," he said. "Some, obviously, will be more open than others."

He is also intent on capturing as many of the property's breathtaking views as possible, views that stretch southward to the valley towns of Fletcher and Mountain Home. And he wants High Carolina to be a course for walkers, with tees positioned near greens.

Speaking of tees, there will be six sets of them on each hole, with the par 71 High Carolina course measuring 7,515 yards from the tips to 4,902 from the forward tees.

Still, one mystery remains: how much The Cliffs is paying Woods for his work. Neither side will say.

But Forbes magazine said this past week that Woods became the first athlete to earn $1 billion with his FedEx title, and that he is being paid $10 million each for three projects under development in the United Arab Emirates, Mexico and North Carolina.

Asked Saturday if that price was about right, Woods smiled.

"That would be nice," he said.



Woods said he tried to capture as many stunning views as possible when creating the golf course's look.