



Jasper County, South Carolina

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Jasper County prepping for second visit of multi-million-dollar PGA Tour at Congaree Golf Club

A year after the first PGA Tour event at Congaree Golf Club in Jasper County, local leaders are touting community improvements including an upgraded airport able to service small corporate jets popular with the PGA group.

“We are thrilled that Congaree Golf Club is once again set to host the major tour event, and with last summer’s event under our belt, we are fully prepared to offer an outstanding experience to all who visit and participate in October’s CJ Cup,” said Jasper County Administrator Andrew Fulghum.

The professional golf tournament, sponsored by and named after The CJ Group of South Korea, will be held at Congaree Golf Club in Ridgeland, South Carolina, the week of Oct. 17-23. The tournament was launched as Korea’s first official PGA Tour tournament in 2017 and was played for three consecutive years at Nine Bridges on Jeju Island before being relocated to the United States due to the pandemic challenges.

The tournament is expected to yield a nearly \$54 million media value, with 32 *Discover South Carolina* ad spots playing throughout the broadcast, and have an estimated \$80 million economic impact on the region.

Congaree Golf Course, a Tom Fazio design, is near Ridgeland, South Carolina, about an hour northwest of Hilton Head Island SC and Savannah GA. South Korea’s CJ Group specializes in four core areas: Food and Food Service, Biotechnology, Entertainment and Media, and Retail and Logistics.

The Ridgeland-Claude Dean Airport in central Jasper County is closest to Congaree and offers exceptional convenience to golfers, their support team, PGA officials, sponsors and people wishing to watch some of the greatest golfers play a challenging and scenic course.

A 3,600-square foot temporary terminal opened in May at the airport that features a passenger waiting area, pilot lounge and line service work area. Aviation gasoline and Jet-A fuel trucks should be operational for retail fuel sales by Aug. 1, said Danny Lucas, director of Jasper County's Development Services Division.

"When the CJ Cup comes to Congaree Golf Club and Jasper County, our Ridgeland-Claude Dean Airport will be set up to handle incoming business jets and other aircraft associated with the event," Lucas said. "We are the most convenient airport for this tournament and we look forward to helping showcase Jasper County and Congaree Golf Club."

The county's emergency services division and sheriff's office will coordinate tournament support, with details to be worked out this summer in partnership with state officials and the PGA Tour, Fulghum said.

Congaree Golf Club, which debuted at No. 39 in Golf Digest's America's 100 Greatest Golf Courses last May, hosted the PGA Tour's Palmetto Championship at Congaree in June of 2021, won by South African Garrick Higgo. The course was built to challenge the world's top golfers and has earned widespread praise among PGA Tour players.

This will be the first time the tournament will be played in the Southeastern U.S. following two years of play in Las Vegas, first at Shadow Creek Golf Course in 2020 and then The Summit Club in 2021.

The CJ Cup in South Carolina will feature a 78-man field comprised of five players designated by the Korea Professional Golfers' Association (KPGA), as well as the top three available players of Korean nationality from the Official World Golf Ranking as part of CJ Group's vision to support the development of professional golf in Korea.

The remainder of the field will be comprised of the leading players from the 2021-22 FedExCup points list and sponsor exemptions.

According to the PGA Tour, the Palmetto Championship at Congaree last summer was expected to have a \$50 million impact on the South Carolina economy, plus a \$54 million value in media coverage.

The Ridgeland-Claude Dean Airport, while recently upgraded to handle small corporate jets, doesn't have an airport terminal or jet fuel station yet. Those improvements are expected in coming months, said Airport Manager Danny Lucas.

Congaree opened in 2017 and was named Golf Digest's best course built between 2010-2019. The Congaree Foundation partners with the Lowcountry Food Bank and the Boys & Girls Club of Jasper County and works to increase young people's access to golf.

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