

TWIN LAKES GOLF COURSE

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Hard work, a vision, the support of a family, and the grace of God, all made Twin Lakes what you see today. When Deon Dekkers moved to the United States from Cape Town, South Africa, with his wife, Lorraine, and three children, Andre, Michelle and Deon, they had to start just like a tree; from the ground up.

He began working small jobs that eventually lead to larger construction jobs. Along the way, he saw the need for landscaping trees. After doing research at Texas A&M, he decided to purchase land for tree production in east Texas.

On his way to look at land in Athens something convinced him to talk to a gentleman opening a gate along Highway 19 in Canton. The same gentleman sold the first 55 acres to Mr. Dekkers in 1990.

Today, there are more than 250,000 trees on the now 600 acres of land under



**300 Vz County Road 1103
Canton, TX 75103
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twinlakesgolfcourse.com**
 Opened: 1999
 Designer: Robert Hay
 Head Pro: Randy Wade
 Greens: TifEagle
 Par-Yards: 72-7,171



container tree production. Varieties consist of oaks, crape myrtles, cypress, elms, hollies, magnolias, pears, pines, pistachio, redbuds and wax myrtles. The container grown trees range in size from 30 gallon to 8' wooden boxes. Some trees are as old as 10 years and reach heights of 25 to 30 feet.

Trees from Twin Lakes are purchased by landscapers and can be seen at projects such as American Airlines Center, Dallas Cowboys Stadium, North Park Mall, the new Klyde Warren Park in Dallas, and around beautiful homes in Texas and surrounding states.

Mr. Dekker's son, Andre, oversees sales for the nursery and his son, Deon, is the grower for the company. In the late 1990s while having breakfast with his younger son he decided to build a golf course. Immediately he looked for surrounding land and purchased 100 acres that same week. Mr. Dekkers had never picked up a club in his life, but had been on many courses.

In South Africa, he was a nationally acclaimed cross country runner with numerous accolades. There, he ran barefoot and would sneak on local courses to train until operators ran him off. He always loved the beauty of a manicured golf



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course. One of the reasons he brought the family to the U.S. was the opportunity for his daughter to run in college on a scholarship. She, too, was a phenomenal runner and was the NCAA champion for Indiana University in cross country. His granddaughter is also running cross country on a scholarship at the University of Oregon.

The Dekkers combined their construction knowledge and the creativity of course designer Robert Hay to create this 200-acre course from pasture land and woods. Mr. Dekkers walked the woods choosing what would stay and what would go as Deon Jr. followed behind in a bulldozer.

Two years later, in 1999, Twin Lakes Golf Course opened to the public. Beautiful yet challenging it hosts various elevations, rolling tree-lined fairways, TiffEagle greens, two lakes, 50 bunkers, along with beautiful landscaping that creates a setting where any hole can be a signature hole. The greens are large, undulating and fast. The conditions are near perfect, the layout is fun, the service is friendly and the rates are reasonable.

The lakes come immediately into play on the par-4 first hole, where golfers

must carry a leg of the lake on the opening tee shot.

No. 8 is a 565-yard par 5 with a slight dogleg left. A tee shot to a narrow fairway plays downhill to an elevated green with a creek in front and a bunker on the left.

No. 10 is a downhill, 402-yard par 4 that presents a good birdie opportunity if you can navigate your tee shot past the lake, which runs down the left side of the fairway. The approach is to an oblong-shaped green with the lake on the left.

At the par-3 11th, golfers face a forced carry of 214 yards from the back tees to a sloping, three-tiered green.

No. 15 is a par 5 with a forced carry to a landing area guarded by three bunkers. The approach is downhill and requires a carry over the lake to the green, making it treacherous to go for the green in two.

At the par-3 17th, a lake guards the front of the green with out of bounds right.

No.18 is par 4 which plays downhill with a carry over the lake required to reach a green surrounded by roses...an appropriate way to end the day...much like the story of how Twin Lakes is 'blooming' in the golf world! ■



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