

# SEVEN SPRINGS MOUNTAIN RESORT

## A NEW WORLD CLASS SPORTING CLAYS COURSE IN PENNSYLVANIA

Nestled in the lush green hills of the Laurel Highlands area of Pennsylvania, only ninety minutes from Pittsburgh, you will find Seven Springs Mountain Resort – appropriately enough in the town of Seven Springs. The resort itself has been around since the 1930s and is the premier ski area in the Mid-Atlantic region. What's new? New ownership and a new world class sporting clays facility that was completed and opened for business in June this year.

Seven Springs Sporting Clays boasts a 7,000 sq ft lodge, three sporting courses with a total of 42 stations and a practice area along with two 5-Stand layouts. The full service sporting lodge contains a pro shop, fully secured on-site gun storage, restaurant, lounge, private dining room and shower and locker room facilities

for both men and women. For warm weather dining and socializing, a huge deck overlooking a lake is the ideal place for before and after refreshments. The stated goal is to become the best sporting clays destination in the country – and they are off to a great start.

The facility is managed by Michael Mohr, a Level III instructor and member of the NSCA Advisory Council. Mohr also serves Seven Springs as the Sr. Director of Resort Activities. His background in sporting clays is significant, having been a competitive FITASC shooter and formerly managed the sporting clays facility at Nemaocolin. The entire course was designed by Mohr during the two year facility construction phase, with the support of the resort ownership and management.



ABOVE: A CHALLENGING SPORTING STATION.

TOP: REAR OF CLUB HOUSE. RIGHT: THE PRO SHOP. BELOW: VIEW FROM THE DECK.





## Resort History

Since the 1930s the Seven Springs Mountain Resort was owned by the Dupre family and over the years it expanded to become the #1 Mid-Atlantic ski resort – according to SKI Magazine. In July of 2006 the Nutting family purchased the resort. The family has a fourth generation newspaper publishing empire, with more than 40 newspapers in 10 States from West Virginia to Hawaii. Bob Nutting is the fourth President and CEO. In 1996 the family entered into a limited partnership with the Pittsburgh Pirates. (Nutting became CEO and owner of the team in 2007.)

In early 2006 the Nutting's became interested in the Seven Springs Mountain Resort and began negotiations to purchase the property. Knowing the resort was in serious need of updating and modernization, the deal was completed and the resort changed hands officially in July of that year. Construction and renovation quickly began and the rooms of the hotel and convention facilities were redecorated and updated, working very

carefully to maintain the décor that complements the history and style of the past. New levels of customer service practices and standards were instituted and today the resort enjoys a revitalized feeling both in look and the employees who are responsible for a high level of customer experience that is the mandate for all guests to enjoy.

## Sporting Clays

According to Nutting, he has been an avid clay enthusiast for years and it is this interest that prompted the addition of the new Seven Springs Sporting Clays facility. Very early in the process, he recognized that to build the best he would need someone to head up the project with specific sporting clays knowledge. Mohr was hired to fill that

need in July of 2007 and began the process of designing and working with other staff to make it a reality. Nutting's passion for being a steward of the land and environment is reflected in the design of the lodge, the layout of the stations and even in the remodeling of the ski slope tows and facilities.

## Going Green

In designing the sporting clays lodge, Nutting believed it was paramount to build according to environmental standards for the future. With help from the Natural Defence Council, the new sporting clays lodge was designed to use geo-thermal heating and cooling. This highly efficient process, which has been in use since the Roman Empire, uses the earth's inner core temperature to temper the water. Water lines were placed in wells and drilled about 300 feet down into the Earth's crust. The lines are pumped to a series of heat pumps and compressors for heating and cooling through a forced air system. Geothermal energy is one of few renewable resources that can supply a continuous base load power without spewing out harmful gases like fossil fuels. This will lessen Seven Springs' carbon footprint

and pioneer the process in the Laurel Highlands region.

At the ski resort, the motors that operate the lifts and tows were changed to eliminate burning diesel fuel and converted to electricity. All foam containers including coffee cups were eliminated from the resort. Light bulbs have been changed to lower use types and recycling programs instituted. More improvements to positively impact the environment are on the table and staff and management are encouraged to seek out other green initiatives. According to Nutting, "it's all about being a good neighbor and taking care of the land."

## For The Whole Family

Seven Springs has it all. Start the day with a round of clays, while the rest of the family has to decide between pool time, downhill mountain bikes, nature hikes, kids adventure camps, golf, fishing, alpine slides, chairlift rides, bowling and disc golf. The list goes on. If your spouse doesn't care to shoot, the new Trillium Spa will be of interest and perhaps equally for the shooter once the round is finished. Something for everyone – and you get to shoot. That's about as good as it gets.



L TO R: ALEX MOSHER, MICHAEL MOHR AND BOB NUTTING.  
BELOW: SLOPE SIDE POOL.



## The Courses

The three sporting courses are designed to allow shooters from all levels of skill to have a good time as well as be challenged. The stations are very easily accessible by walking, or by golf carts with gun holders and ammunition carriers. All forms of target presentations are standard throughout the course and each station has a look and feel of a natural setting. During the construction, careful attention was paid to avoid removing any more trees than was absolutely necessary. When you stand at a station and get your look at the target, you really have to make a decision where to break the clay to avoid being thwarted by trees and natural obstacles – including rock formations. The stations themselves are well constructed for safe shooting and easily accommodate squads of four or more. The active stations for the day have a number posted on them for easy identification. The walkway is pavement and is easily navigated. In the hot weather, each stand has shade for the comfort of the shooter and the target area is well lit by natural light for reasonably easy target acquisition. However, at a few of the stations, many of the targets come out of the shadows, making it a great challenge to pick your spots and see the clays.

According to Mohr, each station and each course can be set up to accommodate any level of competition and or group of guests. They can easily accommodate corporate events with large numbers of participants while offering the lodge and facilities for socializing or a business meeting environment. It is clear that much of the focus is on members and regular visitors to the course every day. Having three



**ABOVE: ONE OF TWO 5-STAND LAYOUTS.**

courses available allows Mohr and his staff to always have one course available for members and individuals regardless of the corporate activity. The two 5-Stand courses are available for practice, as well as a separate event, and they are also able to be setup to meet the skill levels of the shooters. Both layouts will be heated for winter for some morning shooting before hitting the ski slopes.

## Home From Home

If you've always wanted to live at and be a member of a sporting clays club, the Seven Springs Mountain Resort may be your answer. The resort has more than 1200 homes, including single homes and condominiums. Many of the homes are at the top of the mountain with incredible views and ski in and ski out capability. Ski lifts go right past the common areas for easy skiing and access to



the trails. As the demand requires, more housing is planned in keeping with Nutting's plans for appropriate land use with minimal environmental impact.

This is a year round resort, offering virtually any outdoor activity you can think of – as well as sporting clays. The resort currently greets and serves more than 1.2 million visitors annually.

On a personal note, I had the opportunity to meet and chat with the management and many of the staff during my stay there to cover the recent Irlene Mandrell Celebrity Shoot. It was clear that the commitment to a great guest experience is very real. Many of those attending the Mandrell event were very complimentary – not just about the facilities, they were equally impressed by the staff. When asked, Nutting declined to

discuss the dollar investment in this venture, however it is clear that it was and is significant.

The complete commitment to the sporting clays shooter is clear in the quality of the facility, the beauty of the courses and the knowledge of the staff. If you want to shoot (and we all do) while at the same time have the non-shooters in your family enjoy

themselves, then you should plan a visit to Seven Springs.

Just as an added benefit, I also visited and played their fine golf course. It's a lush tree lined design with just enough bunkering and water

to make it appealing to the eye and present fun challenges. It's a great layout that takes advantage of the many elevation changes with breathtaking views of the mountains. Visiting in June, one would expect the fairways and greens to be good and I was not disappointed. The course is very well maintained and groomed. The greens were some of the best I have ever seen at a resort course. The pro shop staff were very helpful and knowledgeable. You can also rent clubs – so all you have to carry on your trip is your 12ga.

If you time it right, you might be there for one of the outdoor concerts, wine festivals or a fun charity shoot. Either way, you'll enjoy yourself with a great shooting experience and a family getaway. ■

*For complete information go to: [www.7springs.com](http://www.7springs.com)*