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course is back and it is in tip-top shape. There was a lot of perception that it is not, but after the Golf Digest ranking, we are looking forward to players driving up from New Orleans and Baton Rouge as well as other areas to come see how great the place looks."

The Bluffs does feature stay-and-play options with its lodges. The old clubhouse next to the driving range is also available for golf and non-golf rentals. There is also an attractive non-resident membership that golfers from Baton Rouge - which is only 35 miles away — are eligible.

The Bluffs has a new cart fleet and from the tips, the course plays at 7,003 yards, but there are also three other tee locations (Blue: 6,426 yards; Green: 5,724 yards and Red: 4,669 yards).

For information on The Bluffs, visit the facilities' website (www.thebluffs.com).



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minimum annual guarantee of about \$1 million in revenue. In its bid, the foundation also sought 40 percent of the profits from golf operations and a management fee of 4 percent of gross operating revenue. Again, Lupo would not comment on specifics, although he said all financial aspects of the agreement are being "tweaked."

Golf activities, traditionally a major revenue source for the cash-strapped park, had been mothballed because of damage from Katrina until September 2009, when the North Course reopened. While officials have wrestled with the idea of replacing the ruined East and West courses with a complex worthy of hosting professional tournaments, golf activity in the park has climbed

steadily. Last year, the North Course had about 41,000 rounds and with the driving ranges grossed nearly \$1.5 million. The park netted about \$125,000 from golf in 2010. Consultants estimate that once the entire complex is fully operational, it will gross at least \$4 million annually and net about \$900,000 for the park.

Addressing critics who say talks with Bayou District have dragged on too long, park officials note that it took them three years to reopen the North Course.

"Over and over, we heard we should have opened it long before," Becker said. "But we opened it as fast as we could. On this project, we can understand the concern over the length of time. We wish it was shorter. But we decided to do it this way. That's what we've always done. And if it takes little longer, it takes a little longer."

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other over two days. Saturday will consist of Four-Ball play concluding with individual stroke play on Sunday.

In May, we will again head to Baton Rouge's Santa Maria Golf Club for the Net Amateur and Net Club Team Championships, the only LGA Championships conducted under a 'net' format. The 2011 event again had a strong field and it is anticipated that this year's event will continue to show growth. Santa Maria will host this championship for the fifth consecutive year

After the Amateur at TPC Louisiana in New Orleans, we head to the middle of the state and Links on the Bayou in Alexandria for the Junior Amateur Championship in mid-July. This will be the first LGA Championship conducted at this facility owned by the city of Alexandria. Later that month, we head back to Baton Rouge's University Club for the Four-Ball Championship. Recently renovated by David Toms and

fellow Shreveport resident Jim Lipe, and having served as host to the LGA's 2011 Senior Amateur, the University Club has drawn rave reviews for its challenging layout. After the Mid-Amateur in early-August, we conclude the month with the best seniors in the state taking on another Lipe design, OakWing Golf Club in Alexandria. The season concludes in mid-September as we welcome LeTriomphe Golf and Country Club in Broussard back to the championship rotation for the first time in 12 years as they host the Senior Four-Ball Championship. Qualifiers will again be held for the Amateur and Mid-Amateur Championships. Eight sites around the state will be conducting sectional qualifiers for these championships for those who are not exempt. All LGA Championships are open to members of LGA member clubs.

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