

The Football Player and the Englishman

THEIR FIELD OF DREAMS IS TAKING SHAPE NEAR CHARLOTTE

TEXT BY JULIE DEGNI MARR PHOTOGRAPHY BY GERIN CHOINIERE

THE PLACE, THE PLAYERS

Just outside Charlotte, sprawling across 50 peaceful acres near a famous old gold mine, a very special neighborhood is coming to life. It is the culmination of a longtime dream for a favorite Carolina Panther. It's also a crowning achievement for one of the area's top luxury homebuilders, a British transplant who builds to European standards. They're calling it The Estates at Soen.

WIDE RECEIVER, WIDE GIVER

Most people know Muhsin 'Moose' Muhammad simply as #87 of the Carolina Panthers, two-time All Pro wide receiver. They know him as a wide giver, too, supporting causes ranging from adoption ministries to the Ronald McDonald House of Charlotte and even his very own M2 Foundation For Kids, started in 1999 to help young people reach their potential and realize their dreams. But what most people don't know is that before becoming an NFL star, even before playing football at Michigan State, he was a little boy who grew up playing along the banks of the Grand River in Lansing, Michigan, exploring the woods, fishing for walleye and salmon, hunting deer. And it's those idyllic childhood memories that have shaped the vision for The Estates at Soen.



BUILDING A GREAT REPUTATION

Peter Leeke moved to Charlotte from the United Kingdom in the 1990s, quickly recreating on American soil his award-winning custom building company, Kingswood Homes. He has since built two charity showhouses for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital and two showhouses for the March of Dimes, raising awareness and hundreds of thousands of dollars for the charities. His other dream homes are on display in luxury neighborhoods throughout the region. But before becoming a builder, he was a boy growing up in England who spent summers fishing and riding horses in the countryside of Ireland, where his grandparents lived. It's those memories he brings to the drawing table of The Estates at Soen as the neighborhood's featured builder along with R. Frank Burke of Premiere Estate Homes.

DREAM HOMES, DREAM SETTING

It was architect David O'Bryan who recommended Mr. Leeke to Mr. Muhammad, and the two realized they had much in common, including children at the same school. Friendship and a good working relationship developed, and Kingswood Homes has been

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instrumental in establishing the European look and feel of the neighborhood, with its elegant entrance, guardhouse and bridges. The property also features three lakes and two miles of nature trails.

Fourteen sprawling home-sites, each with its own gated entrance, will be interspersed throughout the 50 acres of

Soen. Every home will be unique, yet blend with the whole due to stringent architectural guidelines. Located off of Indian Trail Road in Waxhaw, the new neighborhood seems a world away from the hustle and bustle of the civilization, yet is just minutes from retail conveniences and even a new hospital.

A NATURAL FIT

"What strikes me most about Mr. Muhammad is what an absolutely great next-door neighbor he would be," says Mr. Leeke. "He doesn't have a bit of arrogance and treats people for who they are, not who he is. What you see is what you get."

"First and foremost, I wanted to create a peaceful and serene environment where my family could enjoy nature the way that I did growing up," says Mr. Muhammad, who cherishes a closely-knit home life. He and his wife, Christa, have six children ranging in age from five to 12. "Then I wanted to be able to share that dream with

others who value tranquility and beauty as much as we do." *

For more information about *The Estates at Soen* visit online at estatesatsoen.com. For sales information, please contact Connie Nuttall at 704.367.7249 or connie.nuttall@allentate.com.