

Shorter, more strategic courses on horizon

by

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When all is said and done, money is what makes business tick, and budgets certainly dictate the number of new courses to be built and older ones to be remodelled. With tight money the past two years, many plans for building and remodelling have been shelved. However, in the past six months there have been several positive indicators that construction activity will be strong in 1972. In addition, most developers feel that a golf course is a must in a resort complex or quality residential development.

Since money is a factor, many of these new courses will be shorter than the standard 18-hole courses. With land at a premium, many will be par 60, or executive length. Although shorter, they will require as much, or more, strategy on the part of the player. Golf course architects are requiring accurate club selection and shot placement by the strategic location of multiple tees, hazards, and smaller greens.

Although the trend toward shorter courses may not please the touring pros (although there still are plenty of championship and standard 18-hole courses being built), the new type courses are preferred by businessmen, senior citizens and women. The executive-length course doesn't require five or six hours to play and it doesn't have the long par-5 holes that discourage many golfers.

In all current golf course design—remodelling as well as new courses—easy maintenance is a prime consideration. The golf course architect, while planning the most challenging course he can on the available land, also must think ahead and give the golf course superintendent a layout that can be maintained at peak condition with the modern equipment and supplies now available. Monster holes that require a great deal of hand mowing, raking and watering put too great a dent in the superintendent's schedule and budget.

The American Society of Golf Course Architects is most interested in preserving the green belts in our urban areas, many of which are golf courses, and many of the design techniques used on the shorter executive courses can be utilised in the remodelling of some of our older courses, giving them new dimensions for years to come. With the many executive-length courses now on the boards, it appears that golf soon will have a course for everyone—championship, standard, executive, and par-3. And if you don't have every type in your area, remodelling tees and greens can give a standard course the versatility to stretch itself into championship length, or shorten itself for ladies competition. With this planning, it seems certain that golf will continue to be the most popular sport with our leisure-conscious population.

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