

THE GOLF COURSE

A MONTHLY BULLETIN DEVOTED TO THE DISCUSSION OF MODERN METHODS AS APPLIED TO GOLF COURSE CONSTRUCTION AND UPKEEP

Long Holes

By THE OBSERVER

I AM going to tell you about three friends of mine, Long, Wild and Short. These men have golfed with me for a number of years and frequently we make golf pilgrimages. Together we visit many courses and I doubt if ever men enjoyed their four-ball matches more than do we. Usually Long and Short play together, while I am paired with Wild, and our battles are close and interesting. My friend Long hits out tremendous shots from the tee and through the fairway, but I think that he is one of the most uncertain putters I have ever seen. He usually manages to get around somewhere in the neighborhood of 85, although when he enjoys a streak of good putting he is very apt to break 80 and altogether he is the best player among us.

On the other hand, his partner Short, is exceedingly accurate and consistent when he reaches the putting green and although his average score is something like 90 he lends valuable assistance to Long.

My partner, Wild, is erratic throughout and my records of our scores show that he ranges between 80 and 95, depending entirely upon the nature of the courses over which we play. I may say that I play a careful game, on rare occasions breaking 80, if the course be none too difficult, but on less fortunate days it is not uncommon for my card to show a 90 and I have to confess to a number of cards touching the three figures. However, I am glad to say that such catastrophes are very infrequent for I endeavor at all times to be careful. But there are occasions when I fear that I lack concentration because of the fact that much of my attention is given to the study of the courses themselves. So much for our four-ball matches and ourselves.

From time to time I endeavor to interest my companions in the holes which we play, but only too frequently they permit their judgment to be influenced by their respective scores. I find our estimates at great variance. For in-

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common with all leguminous plants, of extracting nitrogen from the air and storing it in nodules attached to its roots.

Grasses, on the other hand, have no power to extract nitrogen from the air, and to flourish, grasses must have a plentiful supply of nitrogen; consequently it follows that if a manure rich in nitrogen is used on turf containing clover, it will help the grass without assisting the clover to an appreciable extent.

After a considerable amount of experiment we have been able to produce a manure with its ingredients so completely balanced, that it will, if used systematically, eventually starve out the clovers.

It is, of course, impossible for us to say how long this process takes, as its action to an extent depends on the nature of the soil and the quantity of phosphoric acid and potash that is available, but if a lawn or green containing clover is dressed with Anti-clover Manure, a distinct improvement in the grass and a diminution of the clover will be noticed within a few months of its application.

Long Holes

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stance, not very long ago we discussed one of the longest holes which I have ever seen. It measured 640 yards and I contended that it was much too long, for the fairway gave none of the shots unusual length. Long was loud in his praise of it, for he had no difficulty in reaching the green in three. The green was large and not closely bunkered. I contended that under normal conditions

there was no excuse for a three-short hole of this length.

"Surely," I argued, "The course offers a great many opportunities for the hard hitters to extend themselves, and this hole demands nothing but three lengthy wallops with no great premium offered for the placement of any one of the three."

Naturally Short agreed with me and on this occasion Wild did, too, for he had visited the rough on both sides. I had no ax to grind for fortunately my third was close enough to the green to enable me to lay my approach dead enough to hole in five, which secured a half with Long. But I found but little pleasure in playing the hole for it seemed to me quite featureless.

Soon after, on another course, we played another three-shot hole, which measured 525 yards and this time we found the green closely bunkered, which seemed to me quite proper, for I maintained that any three-shot hole should demand two long, well placed shots and then a controlled approach to the green. In playing this hole Wild, who at times hits tremendously lengthy shots with his wood, caught two fairly on the nose, and right down the middle of the course. He was favored by a following wind and his drive, as I paced it off, was close to 350 yards. With a brassey he connected with another long one, which, to his great disgust, found one of the guarded pits. Quite impartially he cursed his luck and the builder of that particular hole.

"None but an imbecile would close off this green so unfairly," he raved.

I ventured the observation that it would be quite impossible to bunker that particular green fairly and at the same time admit two abnormal strokes

such as his, but I fear that I failed to convince him that my thought had any merit.

Short had succeeded in reaching the green with his third, a long mid-iron and although Long had half-topped his drive a brassey had placed him in position to get home with his third. Naturally, Short declared that something must be wrong with that hole and I quite agreed with him, and a few days later our play of a hole of similar length on another course, vindicated my opinion.

This hole, 540 yards long, was provided with a rather small, closely guarded green, which opened up to an approach shot from the left of the fairway, but an immense area of broken ground extended across the fairway and it was fully 75 yards from the near edge, which apparently was about 325 yards from the teeing ground. Obviously, it would require a carry of about 400 yards in two shots to reach the fairway beyond. Short could not make it and was compelled to play short, taking four to reach the green, and Long had to do precisely the same thing, for after half hitting his drive he found the carry too great for him and from a point short of the hazard area he could not reach the green with his third. Fortunately, after my partner, Wild, had sliced into the rough I managed to win the hole in 5 by hitting two good ones to the fairway beyond and placing a very satisfactory jigger on the green.

Here was an instance where we were confronted by an obligatory carry for the second shots and while, generally speaking, I am of the opinion that the carry should be graded, I think that on this three-shot hole such a scheme of hazards is very effective and quite defensible.

Long argues that a three-shot hole should have a wide open green so as to permit the "slogger" to get there occasionally with two abnormally long shots. His idea provides a three-shot hole about 500 yards in length, with a large, unprotected green. To my way of thinking this is neither fish nor fowl. In my humble opinion, the character of each green is fixed by the particular type of shot which is to find the green, and although the three-shot hole is the longest of any on the course it does not follow that the green should be the largest. The real three-shotter should demand two perfect, long balls and then an approach, which must be played with accuracy. Any three-shot hole which enables a player to miss or half hit either his drive or his second and afterward gain the green with any kind of a third stroke, is open to criticism.

In my next article I will relate some of the adventures of Long, Short, Wild and myself over other courses, particularly as we play two-shot holes of varying types.

My Old Putter

Although so often blamed by me

For what was not thy due,
Old Putter, since I knew thee first,
I've always found thee true.

How often have I slighted thee

To give new clubs a try,
And when they failed me one by one
Have sadly laid them by.

And then, my old neglected friend,

I've turned to thee once more,
And confidence from thee regained,
Which friendship can restore.

New putting clubs may come and go,

Block-headed and the rest—
Old Putter of a day gone by,
Thou art to me the best.