

# Sarazen chosen for Donald Ross Award

TORONTO — Gene Sarazen, a golfing ambassador for more than 80 years, has been selected to receive the 1997 Donald Ross Award, given annually by the American Society of Golf Course Architects.

The Ross Award will be presented to Sarazen on Friday, May 16, here at St. George's

Golf and Country Club during the society's annual meeting. Each year the honor is conferred upon a person who has significantly contributed to the game of golf, and in particular, the profession of golf course architecture.

"As the golf industry enjoys a time of unprecedented popu-

larity, it is fitting that we honor Gene Sarazen, whose rise from the caddie ranks to become one of the game's best players is truly inspiring," said Denis Griffiths, president of the society. "His record as a professional golfer is matched only by his undying commitment to the game

of golf through 10 decades."

He played and won the first Shell's Wonderful World of Golf match in January 1962 at St. Andrews and hosted the show that featured the best international players vying on the world's greatest golf courses. Sarazen helped explain to the public on this popular television show why a golf course was exceptional, noting the architect's expertise in creat-

ing the finest in golf experiences.

"The Squire," as many writers came to call him, was born in New York in 1902. He was just 20 years old when he edged Bobby Jones to win the 1922 U.S. Open. Later that year his win at the PGA Championship stirred the country, as reports of his rise from humble roots helped to popularize the game and instilled pride among millions of Italian Americans.

## Q&A: Engh

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put the concepts that I have onto paper, then we can get exact quantities on excavations, piping, grassing, etc. Then we know the contractor is going to bid this thing according to these documents. In doing so, they'll be able to do it efficiently and the project won't cost as much money.

The counter to that argument is, you can't get small detail onto these drawings. But I contend that you can. We can build maybe 95 percent to design documents. Over a 200-acre site, that's pretty good.

GCN: You're a fairly accomplished player. You've been a scratch, right?

JE: Yes, but right now I'm a 2.5.

GCN: How much does that help or hurt you as an architect?

JE: That's a good question. I don't know that it helps that much. I think what it does is allow you to see all different spectrums of the game. As a reasonably good player, you play with other good players and see how they play. The trick is making sure you understand how everyone else plays: the women, the seniors, the disabled.

GCN: Are you more concerned with this because you're designing a municipal course?

JE: Maybe. I have been thinking about it a lot of late. We're really very close to being able to design a course that is accessible for everyone.

GCN: Is there a design style you enjoy playing but haven't yet been able to work in?

JE: When I was in Europe, [IMG] did a project that I believe is now open — the new course at Portmarnock [opened near Dublin in 1995]. Construction hadn't begun when I left, but I did the detail work there. That was a fun thing trying to route a course through the dunes. I would like to try my hand at another links design.

But the Sanctuary was a fun routing project, too. It was a struggle not to over-design the course because the site was so spectacular. That's typical design babble but in this case it's really true. The site was so great, I just tried to use the golf course as the accent.



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