

## Alter Course "Too Tough" for Members and Hogan

By DAN JENKINS

THE proposal to re-define Colonial CC in Fort Worth, Tex., at first might have sounded absurd had it not been made by the club's founder, Marvin Leonard, and its most celebrated member, Ben Hogan.

From any other source a similar suggestion would have been greeted by the entire golfing Southwest with a whimper of total surprise and utter disbelief — virtually the same reaction you would get from a make-up artist who had been told that Grace Kelly needed plastic surgery.

Leonard, a millionaire sportsman and golf enthusiast, wove the long, wooded par 70 layout around the Clear Fork of Fort Worth's Trinity River in 1936. And ever since, the fertile valley of Bermuda and live oak trees has been held in high regard by the game's foremost players and architects. Colonial was, in fact, the first course in the Southwest to have bent greens.

Only six years after it was built Leonard brought the U. S. Open championship to Colonial. Craig Wood's winning putt for 284 was still rattling in the cup in 1941 when Leonard gave birth to another brain-child, the now famous National Invitation tournament, started in 1946.

Hogan, a long-time member, has added more pride to Colonial's premises through the years. He has frequently named it among his "ten best" courses. And in a national magazine article in 1948 he chose two of its holes—the third and fifth—on his All American layout.

Byron Nelson, the Roanoke, Tex., rancher, has often placed Colonial among his top five courses in the nation. But perhaps it was veteran Chandler Harper who paid the club its richest compliment. After winning the National Invitation last year, Harper said: "This is the finest, and toughest, par 70 course in the world."

Thus, with Colonial's pride understandably swollen, it came as more than a mild surprise last August when Leonard and Hogan announced that Dick Wilson of Delray Beach, Fla., was being called in to amend and approve plans for a re-defining program.

"To be truly great," Ben said at the time, "the course needs something. It needs re-locating."

After looking the job over, Wilson was both amazed and flattered that his ideas coincided perfectly with what Leonard and Hogan had in mind.

### Course Was "Too Tough"

"Colonial is too tough," Wilson said. "It's unfair in places, and a great course need not be unfair."

The plan then was to make Colonial "fairer" for the scratch shooter, and, at the same time, keep it tough, but, again at the same time, make it easier for the high handicap player who had always had trouble with the "impossible" undulating greens.

Wilson's theory was this: Make it rugged to get to the greens, but give the player a fair chance of making his putt once he got on.

The changes which Wilson blueprinted, many of them first noted by Leonard and Hogan, provided for eight completely new greens, much larger, the re-locating of many traps, the addition of several new bunkers, the twisting of some fairways, the clearing out of some trees.

### Kept Cost Low

Wilson ordered the "natural look," drove in the stakes, made frequent visits to the job. For the most part, however, it was turned over to Colonial Superintendent Joe Cano, who completed the manicure in what may be a record six months for the surprisingly low cost of \$24,000.

Hence, Colonial has the new look. And

## Colonial CC Takes "Rough" Out of Greens



The 18th green, one of eight at Colonial CC, which had its rolling hills removed at instigation of Ben Hogan and other members. Old type undulating greens were considered "unfair" for just about every kind of golfer, including the pro. That isn't the Sahara in the foreground, but there's enough sand there to make approaches plenty tough.

the game's top performers will be in for quite a surprise when they gather for the eleventh annual National Invitation May 2-6, and the fifth annual International PGA Team Matches for the John Jay Hopkins Trophy between U. S. and Canadian players on May 7-8.

By taking all of the needed soil from the 12th hole — one of the most radically changed of the lot—Cano estimates that he held down the overall cost by \$8,000.

The smallest of the eight new greens is 5500 sq. ft., and the largest is 8000 sq. ft.

On top of the tile Wilson ordered 4 in. of pea gravel for water drainage. The seed bed—at the ratio of two shovels of sand, one-half shovel of peat, and one shovel of top soil—went on top of the gravel. Sea-side bent was used for the enlarged, but flattened, new greens.

Employing no more than 19 men on the job at one time, and using a TD-14 bulldozer to re-shape the greens and bunkers, Cano complied with Wilson's plan and added 12 new traps.

At first, the gleaming silica sand was used in the bunkers, but members found it too tough. Cano then mixed the sand with plaster, turning it a beige color, and got better results.

In many instances the new bunkers bite into Wilson's "flower" shaped greens, and they indeed present a sterner, more challenging approach shot.

Some 50 yards was added to the overall length, and Colonial now measures 7085 yards from the championship markers.

Six holes now feature sharper doglegs, the result of Wilson's added mounds and fairway bunkers. And the 18th green perhaps underwent the most drastic change.

The 447-yard par four finishing hole is a hilly narrow test which calls for an expertly placed tee shot. The old green, however, was sunken and boarded on one side by a fiendish pond, and on the other by a boundary. The pin was always hidden.

Wilson raised the green 15 ft., enlarged it twice the size, and guarded it on both sides with huge bunkers which stretch almost 30 yards and cut into the putting surface.

### Needed Construction Changes

There was, of course, another important reason why Colonial needed the improvements. It was simply a matter of good health. The old greens were too small, and had no drainage. They needed air. And the soil was too compact. On several holes

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### National Open Course Previewed in Colorama

William C. Chapin (left), pres. of Oak Hill CC and of the coming 56th USGA Open and the club pro., Charlie McKenna, study a small section of the largest photo ever made of a golf scene which is now on display in full color in Grand Central Terminal, New York City. The complete picture — a huge color transparency, 60 feet long by 18 feet high — shows the 10th and 11th greens of the club's East course where the Open will take place June 14-16. The picture was taken by Eastman Kodak Co. photographers and is part of the company's exhibit at Grand Central.

### U. S. Golfers Can Challenge "Champs" in Swing Club Matches

Golfers throughout the nation will get the chance to compete against famous golfers during the week of July 1-8 for the benefit of the United Voluntary Services Swing Clubs which serve Veterans Administration Hospitals as well as U.S. military installations.

Any golfer may be a challenger and play, at handicap, against as many champions as he or she desires. Challengers will pay a fee of \$1 for each champion with whom they wish to match scores. Among the country's better known golfers who have agreed to be "champions" are Bing Crosby, Bob Hope, Harve Ward, Chick Evans, Fred Waring, Patty Berg and Phil Rodgers, Jr. Chamber of Commerce champ. The champions will play their rounds July 8.

#### Several Organizations Cooperate

Among organizations which are cooperating with UVSSC in staging the Service Week tournament are GCSA, PGA, Depts. of the Armed Forces and the Veterans Administration, says Mrs. Helen Lengfeld, who directs the Swing Club.

Challengers who defeat the champions will be given certificates attesting their victories.

### Alter Tough Course

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tree roots were near the green surfaces.

The new fairway contours, larger greens, added bunkers and mounds frightened Colonial's regular players at first. It was feared that the bunkers alone would add several strokes to the 90 shooter's score.

"What they will realize," Wilson said, during the project, "is that the traps now will catch many erring shots which, in the past, have bounded into ravines, bushes and the river. In that respect it will be easier for the high handicap player. Also, it will be easier for him to putt the flat greens. At the same time, however, the championship player will find that his approach shot requires much more thought and accuracy."

This summer Colonial's improvement program will be completed when a new \$65,000 watering system will be installed. The old steel pipes are rusting, and cast iron will be used in the new system.