

# Surprenant: World's Longest Course



Bob Grant, construction supervisor, will stay on as Surprenant Supt.

Measuring 8005 yards from the back tees, the new Surprenant National G&CC of Massachusetts, now about 75 per cent completed, will be the world's longest golf course.

Located at Bolton, 38 miles west of Boston, this de luxe layout is the brainchild of Albert H. Surprenant, owner of the Surprenant Manufacturing Co. of Boston and Clinton, one of the largest manufacturers of specifications plastic insulated wire and cable for electronic guided missiles and aircraft.

## Aim for Perfection

From the inception of the course, perfection in construction and maintenance has been an overriding consideration. When the owner retained the writer as course architect he stated his intention of setting up an advisory committee of non-members to assist in all phases of design and construction.

Under the leadership of Ralph Sawyer,

## Five Sets of Tees on Each Hole

## Make 8000-Yard Layout Fair Test for All Types of Golfers

By GEOFFREY S. CORNISH

well known amateur golfer of Worcester who has tested the efforts of golf architects on both sides of the Atlantic for some 35 years, the committee included another amateur golfer, Wally Helstrom of Shrewsbury, and touring professional, Paul Harney, who has represented the not yet completed course on the circuit for the past two seasons.

To insure that no maintenance aspects were overlooked two course supts., Sime Braio of the Worcester (Mass.) CC and Manuel Francis of the Vesper's CC, Lowell, were included on the committee. In the early planning stages Bob Grant, formerly of the Wayne (N.J.) CC and a graduate of the University of Massachusetts green-keeping course was appointed construction supervisor and permanent Surprenant supt.

## Committee, Architect Team Up

From the start, the writer's plans and specifications were closely studied and discussed by the advisory committee, the owner and supt. One result has been that every known skill and technique in growing of golf grass has been utilized so that there are no known constructional defects in greens, tees, fairways or traps. It is the feeling of the architect that although this arrangement involved a great amount of discussion and argument it is lending to the perfection desired by the owner.

Several pioneering features, having a direct bearing on course maintenance, are the results of these discussions:

(1) Fairway water system is being set up to pump 700 gpm at 110 lbs. pressure. While this is not too unusual, the entire system except for the main is being made with a special grade of plastic pipe.

(2) At each tee and green, parking spaces are provided for electric golf carts.

(3) A network of gravelled maintenance

roads is being installed through woods remote from playing areas, but all lead to destinations on the course.

(4) Teeing surfaces average 8,000 sq. ft. or better. This is about 1½ times the average green size at many clubs.

(5) Vesper's bent has been planted on the greens and on a 20 foot apron surrounding each. This is a strain of velvet developed by Manuel Francis at Vesper's CC and subsequently tested for several years in Dr. DeFrance's plots at the University of Rhode Island.

### Plenty of Room Left

Although the Surprenant tract of land includes over 500 acres only 210 were actually used for the playing areas, clubhouse grounds and practice areas. Selection of land was made with variety in mind as to elevations, scenery, terrain and soil.

Included in the 210 acres are 110 of gently rolling terrain, 35 of an abandoned golf course, 30 of an old airport, 15 acres of grazing land and 20 acres of a deserted rifle range. Selection of different types of terrain has permitted great variation in the holes and balance has been achieved by dividing different terrains more or less evenly between the two nines.

Two landscape features designed personally by the owner and built by Bob Grant and his crew include a chain of small lakes and a picturesque set of rockeries and grottos. The lakes are connected by landscaped waterfalls placed so that the falling water catches the light of the setting sun during the twilight hours of golf.

### Five-In-One

An immense amount of discussion has arisen among New England golfers as to the merits of an 8000 yd. course. As critics have pointed out, only a small percentage of golfers can possibly enjoy such yardages. Actually, however, with five sets of tees the Surprenant course is five courses in one and players can use the set of tee positions they normally play at their home courses.

While it is not within the scope of this article to deal with the overall architecture of the course or its individual architectural features a card is shown below to provide some idea of the variety of golf offered.

Hole	Super Champ.	Champ.	Long	Reg.	Short	Par
1	405	385	370	355	350	4
2	585	560	525	510	490	5
3	495	445	435	425	400	4



Albert Surprenant, owner, and Geoffrey S. Cornish, architect, check plans at National.

4	205	170	150	140	140	3
5	645	600	565	530	510	5
6	480	415	395	380	350	4
7	265	200	185	165	135	3
8	410	390	375	360	340	4
9	480	430	415	400	365	4
Out	3370	3595	3425	3275	3080	36

Hole	Super Champ.	Champ.	Long	Reg.	Short	Par
10	465	415	390	370	360	4
11	470	430	410	390	350	4
12	645	540	500	455	450	5
13	265	225	200	170	135	3
14	435	400	390	370	350	4
15	460	430	400	370	350	4
16	265	200	195	190	165	3
17	420	415	400	400	380	4
18	610	510	500	490	445	5
In	4035	3565	3385	3205	2975	36
Out	3970	3595	3425	3275	3080	36
Total	8005	7160	6810	6480	6055	72

The extent to which Massachusetts' new National course will be the forerunner of the golf course of the future is anyone's guess. Many features are revolutionary and it will be years before their practicability will be adjudged. Surprenant is an interesting experiment, well worth watching.

### Sound Financing

Financial statement of the Royal Canadian Golf Assn. for 1956 shows the Assn. to be in sound shape. Income exceeded expenses by \$5,219 for the year and increased the surplus to \$49,000. However, total revenue was down from 1955 by \$3,400 while expenses showed a slight increase of \$300.

**Make Sure Your Club Officials  
Receive Golfdom in 1957  
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