

not, says Sandy Tatum, a former President and Stanford alum. "I think it would fall squarely in the USGA's mission to preserve the values and tradition of the game and [protecting the golf course] most certainly would not be overstepping their bounds."

Grant Spaeth, another Stanford alum was asked what he would do if such an idea came to him during his early 90's tenure as USGA President.

"Freeway expansion has ruined many California courses and whether such a historic status could have prevailed I don't know. But clearly I would have been open to it as president and a member of the Executive Committee. Now that the USGA foundation has more substance, we would probably have appointed a subcommittee to look at this, study it carefully, and report back."

Spaeth also pointed out that ultimately, the USGA could probably set up such a program and allow the state golf associations to get involved by helping in the designation of worthy courses or in the execution of any necessary protection for those courses.

Peter James, a current member of the Executive Committee, also agrees that such a program would surely "capture some attention,

particularly with other issues in the game also possibly threatening historic courses," he said. "There is definitely room for such a program in the game, and I know its something that would certainly generate interest and discussion among the Executive Committee members."

Would a USGA stamp of approval save Stanford's course from extinction? Maybe not. There are those in golf that would say such a USGA program, started now, would only be happening because so many USGA officials past and present went to Stanford. Perhaps, but Stanford has hosted seven NCAA golf championships and a U.S. Boys Junior Championship in 1960. So it's hard to argue that Stanford has not contributed to the game in every way imaginable: great architecture, home course to numerous golfing greats, and as a historic tournament venue.

Some form of official recognition for classic architecture is long overdue and necessary to protect future situations like Stanford's. Why not take advantage of this dire situation at a course that is so clearly been vital to the game and such a special part of so many people's lives?

If not now, when will golf ever have a better opportunity to stand up for its history, tradition and classic architecture? /

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