

Random Thoughts on Golf Course Design

by Mike Schulz
Mike Schulz Golf Designs

★ A golf course designed has to remember that golf is a game. Golf courses should be designed and built so that they are fun to play.

★ A well designed golf course is safe, fun, challenging and beautiful to play and can be maintained within the owner's budget.

★ A great golf course design is one that fits the course into the existing terrain and not one that is imposed upon the land.

★ Golf is a game of accuracy not a game of distance. It is played to a 4 1/2 inch diameter hole. Distance is truly over-rated as a factor in the game of golf. All golfers should have a legitimate chance to reach each green in regulation with their best shots. All golf courses, especially public courses, should be designed with multiple tees so that if the golfer cannot consistently reach the greens in regulation, he or she should be able to move up to a shorter tee.

★ Public course golfers deserve the best courses their money can buy.

★ Golf courses must be designed for the regular golfer. A touring pro may never play the course. (Even if a course hosts a pro tour event, the pros will only play it for about one week out of the 52). A golf course should be designed so that regular golfers will not only play it once a year or once a lifetime and be beaten down by it, but will come back and play it every month, every week or every day. Regular, returning golfers pay the bills, not touring pros.

★ It costs a lot of money to build any golf course, even a mediocre course. It costs proportionally little more to build a great golf course. In any case, you have to move dirt. You might as well move it so the result is a great golf course. That is where a competent, professional golf course designer comes into play. The financial return on a great golf course is proportionally much higher than for a mediocre golf course.

★ Good drainage is a major factor in a successful course design. A course that closes down every time it rains is a loser.

★ Designers must help grow the game of golf by designing courses that encourage new golfers, especially women and juniors. They must have fun and not be discouraged during their very first round.

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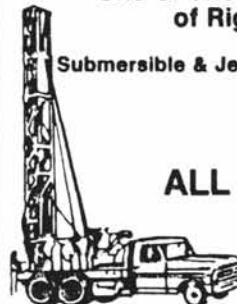
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