

# Pebble Beach: Keeping a course's well-being

BY FRANK POLLARD

Seventy years ago, Samuel F.B. Morse, amid much fanfare on Washington's birthday 1919, opened the Pebble Beach Golf Links — a venue that many feel is still the finest seaside course in North America and perhaps the world. Morse's vision was to create a one-of-a-kind golf course with unsurpassed scenic beauty and an element of difficulty that would always be challenged but never conquered.

Commissioning amateur golfer and architect Jack Neville to achieve this dream was either a stroke of genius or happy chance, but the results were a magnificent creation of 18 holes adapted perfectly to the Pacific headland's sloping inland meadows and along the craggy cliffs bordering the sea — some of the most dramatic and stunningly beautiful coastal terrain in the world.

Playing Pebble Beach today, the golfer negotiates those same unchanged verdant fairways and small contoured greens that became familiar to almost all the world's great golfers over the intervening years. The course remains as Neville and Douglas Grant (who assisted Neville in its design) devised it. The course has remained essentially without major alteration during that shoal of time and the changes that have been made are minor in the overall scheme of things.

It isn't by accident that Pebble Beach is relatively untouched by time. It's been a commitment by, first, Samuel Morse and, following him, those who have worked diligently to make the golfing experience of visiting golfers as nearly perfect as possible.

In 1928, E. Chandler Egan strengthened bunkers on several holes prior to the 1929 U.S. Amateur. As time elapsed, a number of greens and fairways were altered slightly through continuous maintenance by greenskeepers and their crews; fairways became narrower and greens smaller by way of continuous mowing and other maintenance practices.

Preceding the 1972 U.S. Open, Frank "Sandy" Tatum (later USGA president) was asked to take part in course preparation. Tatum sagaciously called in Pebble's origi-

nal architect, Neville, to help in restoring any features of the course that would bring it back to its original design.

This required some reconfigured bunkering on a number of holes, a new bunker guarding the landing area on the 9th fairway, a new championship tee plus a mid-fairway bunker on the 10th, and minor cosmetic cleanup.

The only other major changes made have been installation of cart paths from tee to green on all 18 holes in the late 1970s.

Golfers playing the course have been provided with precisely the same challenges faced by a Jack Nicklaus (1972) or a Tom Watson (1982) who won U.S. Open at Pebble, Bobby Jones playing and being eliminated in the 1928 U.S. Amateur, Lanny Watkins winning the PGA in 1977, and Harry Vardon, Walter Hagan, Ben Hogan, Babe Zaharous, Gene Sarazen, JoAnne Carner, Betty Jameson, Sam Snead, Lawson Little, Arnold Palmer, Byron Nelson, Roberto DiVincenzo and a hundred other golfing greats who came and played either in tournaments or for pleasure.

### Maintenance program

A golf course as a living thing needs extraordinary care particularly when it is one of the world's premiere courses and the venue for major professional and amateur golf events and, at the same time, is a public course frequented by some 60,000 amateurs yearly.

On-going programs of maintenance and reconstruction at Pebble Beach have been uniquely developed to keep the course in tiptop condition so that it is of tournament quality on any given day and not alter the course layout from the way it was conceived in any way.

The commitment of course officials is to be an innovative leader in providing their guests with a golfing experience on their four famous golf courses and preserving Pebble Beach Golf Links in a manner that maintains its original character and appeal in the tradition of the game.

D.J. Pakkala, Pebble Beach's director of golf, puts it this way, "The Pebble Beach Co.



*Pebble Beach's famous and picturesque 7th hole, as it was in the late 1920s, top. In the center photo, taken in 1973, and bottom photo, shot this year, you'll notice that the contour of the green has remained almost precisely the same. The bunkers have changed slightly over the years but have been brought slowly back to the original shape and size as conceived and designed by Jack Neville.*

has put forth a very strong effort to develop maintenance practices that will insure keeping the continuity of the course so that whether the golfer comes back next week, next year, or in 20 years it will look and be precisely the same as it is today, and was in the distant past."

"There have been tremendous improvements in both golf course equipment and maintenance practices over the past few years," says Larry Norman, Pebble Beach Golf Links superintendent. "Where we used to mow fairways every other day or every third day, now we are mowing daily.

"New equipment has allowed more fre-

quent aeration and sometimes weekly top dressing of greens where it doesn't have an impact on the golfer since it's done lightly. Advances in equipment are also allowing us to verticut greens quite often, and where we were doing it weekly, we can now do it very lightly on a daily basis. We are doing a great many tasks on a more frequent and intensive basis with a resultant higher consistency level throughout the golf course."

Norman says one of the keys to better maintenance practices is hiring well-qualified people who are career-oriented in turfgrass management.

*Continued on page 17*

## TWO FOR THE SHOW!

*Golf Course News* announces

**The International Golf Course Show Special . . .**

Advertise\* in the January and February issues of *Golf Course News* and you'll receive:

- A 10% discount on your ad in the February issue.
- Your exhibit space highlighted in a convention locator map published in both issues.
- Alphabetical listing in a special list of advertisers and exhibit spaces in both issues.
- Distribution of the February issue to convention attendees' rooms at all major hotels.
- Distribution of the February issue on the convention floor from the *Golf Course News* booth.

\* 1/6 page or larger. Feb. insertion must be equal or larger in size.

Call today and reserve space for our *Two for the Show* special. . . **It's really one for the money!**  
January closing: Thurs., December 14

**GOLF COURSE NEWS**

7901 Fourth St. North, Suite 311, St. Petersburg, FL 33702 813/576-7077

For free information circle #129

# Pebble Beach

Continued from page 16

"Now with the costs of managing any golf course skyrocketing with yearly budgets regularly in the millions, superintendents and greenkeepers who are well educated and better trained are a must.

"Here, we are also developing our own programs where our people are being trained not only in golf course maintenance operations but are having the opportunity of cross-training and becoming well rounded in all phases of resort operations including the pro shop and many other phases of resort activities. We currently have 19 green-keepers who are responsible for the course, some areas around the lodge itself, the driving range, and our Peter Hay nine-hole par 3 course."

## Troublesome Kikuyugrass

One of Pebble Beach's major projects has been removal and control of Kikuyugrass.

"It was brought here at some point in the past and planted along the coastal bluffs for erosion abatement," Norman explains. "It is the kind of grass that adapts well but reproducing vegetatively and building upon itself, it spreads and becomes almost unplayable. It also becomes dormant in winter and is generally unsightly.

"Using the 1992 U.S. Open scheduled to be played at Pebble as a goal, we have developed a program to get it under control. We know we can't eradicate it completely but we can control it. We have therefore over the past year stripped 13 holes (with five yet to go) of Kikuyu and reseeded the fairways with a combination of colonial bentgrass, creeping bent and a small amount of fescue. The roughs were also stripped and reseeded with Kentucky bluegrass and perennial rye. And, interestingly enough, we managed to accomplish this prodigious task without disturbing daily play significantly."

He says players today wouldn't know that the work had been done.

"We have instituted a vigilant and continuous program, one of a search-and-destroy type activity, which is keeping the Kikuyu well under control."

## Coastal erosion

Another area of primary concern is the erosion, particularly along the coastal cliffs.

Pebble Beach brought in a group of engineers and seismologists some time ago to see if they could devise solutions to stop some of these erosion problems. Photographs had shown that over a period of years, the coastline along the course had changed and become dramatically different.

"What was interesting," says Norman, "is that we determined that most of the erosion was not coming from tidal activity, rather from seismic activity. We also discovered, to our surprise, an earthquake fault running under the course (under hole 7 and across the course and under hole 13).

When we experienced high incidences of seismic activity, we found that we were losing chunks of earth into the sea.

"We identified the weakest areas and installed riprap sea walls along the 17th and 18th holes to successfully control those areas of erosion. The cliffs along the 4th and 6th holes presented a different problem when we discovered that there was an interface between the parent rock base and the topsoil varying in depth between 14 and 29 feet beneath those fairways. The course ground water was percolat-

ing down through the earth to the rock below and then moving toward the cliff and adjacent sea making the earth above it very unstable."

He says the problem was solved by cutting a trench down to bedrock the full length of each of those fairways and greens (320 yards along No. 4 and 510 yards along No. 6), then installing an intercept drain and drilling outlet exhaust drains from it into the ocean.

"It very nicely stabilized the earth and we've had no trouble with erosion since," he says.

"A tremendous amount of care is taken not to change a thing on the course. Whenever we plan to do anything to the golf course — whether it's a major project or just installing sprinkler heads, repairing cart paths, or trimming trees — we consult the archives that contain detailed records and photographs dating back to the very beginning," says Norman. "It is the philosophy and commitment of the Pebble Beach Co. to continue to maintain and improve the course, being very careful to preserve the integrity of the original

design."

To safeguard this integrity, a series of yearbooks on the course is kept.

"Once a year we take pictures of the tees, fairways, greens and rough throughout the course and keep them in that year's book," Norman says. "In addition, anything we do to the course, no matter how minor, we also take 'before and after' photos as well as noting the reasons we did it and the costs. These also go into the yearbook where we are compiling a living

Continued on page 33



# THERE ISN'T A GOLF COURSE ON EARTH OUR MULE CAN'T MASTER.



© 1989 Kawasaki Motors Corp., U.S.A. Always wear protective equipment appropriate for the use of the vehicle. See the Owner's Manual for more information. Never operate under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Protect the environment. Obey laws and regulations that control the use of your vehicle. The Kawasaki Mule is an off-highway vehicle only, and is not designed, equipped, or manufactured for use on public streets, roads, or highways. Specifications subject to change without notice. Availability may be limited.

If you've got a tough course to care for, we've got a Pro to help you do it. The Kawasaki Mule.

The Mule's got 4-wheel independent suspension, automatic transmission, and a reliable 18 horsepower, liquid-cooled engine for plenty of putt. And a Dual-Mode Differential for maximum drive.

It's small and maneuverable and easy on your turf. But plenty big enough to haul two guys and pack an additional 500 pounds in the tiltable, diamond-plate steel cargo bed. Total payload is a full half ton, like most of the bulky pickups you're probably using now. And with the optional trailer hitch, you can tow up to 1,000 more.

Plus you can add options like a hydraulic lift kit, turf tires, sideboards and more.

The bottom line? A Mule is high on performance and reliability and low on maintenance and operating costs. Which is par for the course, since it's a Kawasaki.

For your nearest dealer, call 1-800-543-MULE.

**Kawasaki**  
Let the good times roll.

For free information circle #105

## Ill health forces Hoffman to resign

Edward L. Hoffman, president of the Club Managers Association of America, recently announced his resignation from the board of directors for health reasons.

Hoffman announced his resignation at the board's Nov. 4 meeting. He will be succeeded by Kenneth W. Brown, CMAA vice president and general manager of the Indianapolis Athletic Club.

Hoffman served as general manager of the Racine Country Club in Racine, Wis., from October 1984 until last July. Prior to this appointment, he was general manager of the Green Acres CC in Northbrook, Ill.

Hoffman joined the CMAA in

1961 and was first elected to the board in 1983. He has been actively involved on various committees including Budget and Finance, P.A.I.R., Research and Publication, Executive Career Service, Insurance and Executive.

Hoffman plans to remain involved in the association's activities and continue in the capacity of chairman for the 1990 annual conference, Jan. 29-Feb. 2 in Orlando, Fla.

## Pebble Beach

Continued from page 17  
history of the course year by year."

### Four unique courses

With Pebble Beach Co. owning and operating four courses (Pebble Beach, Spyglass Hill, Spanish Bay and Old Del Monte) on the Monterey Peninsula, each complementing one another, and providing a unique and different golfing experience to the visitor, maintenance practices must be varied widely to meet the character of each course.

Pebble Beach has a special charisma created by its location and its challenging design, history and accolades. One of its beauties is the rugged seaside character that shouldn't be changed.

Here, while integrating the most modern technical approaches to maintenance and providing the highest quality playing surfaces, course officials are preserving the traditional and natural coastal zestiness that only a seaside course can possess.

Recently Jack Nicklaus was filming a TV special on the course and as he walked up to the bluff on the 8th hole, he was asked by Larry Norman, "How do you like it?" And Nicklaus' answer was simply (with a broad smile), "You're making it too nice."

Pakkala, formerly at Medinah Country Club in Chicago and then the Vintage Club at Indian Wells near Palm Springs, pointed out that "our on-course work will continue to keep the integrity of the original Pebble Beach layout — hole by hole. Those fairways that have been narrowed ever so slightly and contours around the greens (not their surface) that become a bit different over periods of time will be continually brought back to their original state from tee to green."

He added, "We will also be working on major improvements on each of our other courses."

"Pops," a caddie who started caddying at Pebble Beach when he and the course were very, very young, will tell you, "It hasn't changed!"

Frank Pollard is a freelance writer based in Hollister, Calif.

## Scandinavian supers tour U.S.

A group of 90 Scandinavian golf superintendents recently toured several U.S. golf course equipment manufacturing plants and courses.

The superintendents hailed from Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden. The group began its tour at the Jacobsen Division of Textron plants in Racine, Wis. and Charlotte, N.C. They also met with local golf course superintendents and questioned them on turf care practices.

The foreign superintendents also visited the University of Minnesota Department of Horticulture before flying to Florida. There they played the Doral Country Club's Gold Course and the New Course at Grand Cypress.

"The purpose of this trip is to educate them on what's being done here in the United States," said Neils-Erik Brems, a representative with ORAG, the European turf equipment sales organization

that sponsored the trip. "They can go back and educate their boards of directors or greens committees on what can be done to improve their courses."

Brems said the popularity of golf continues to grow throughout Scandinavia, with Sweden alone having an estimated 200,000 golfers. The number of courses in Denmark is expected to jump from its present 60 to 100 by the turn of the century.

# SHINDAIWA TEARS THE COMPETITION APART.

Among commercial trimmers, three names dominate the turf. With Shindaiwa, Echo and Green Machine sharing 2/3 of the market.

So, who makes the best trimmer? We do. We proved it. We matched our new Shindaiwa T-27 against the comparable Echo 2501 and the Green Machine 3000 M. We took them apart. And tore them apart in the process.

Shindaiwa T-27 Flywheel

### A TWO STROKE OF GENIUS.

Our 2-cycle engine delivers more power with less weight than either Green Machine or Echo. Quite a feat, considering we sacrifice nothing in quality along the way. Chrome plated cylinders, 2-ring pistons and electronic ignition are standard. The result is a pro machine with the power to work harder. And last longer.

### NO BAD VIBES.

Shindaiwa trimmers have the finest anti-vibration design in the industry. We pioneered anti-vibe design. Every unit is engineered around the concept of lowest possible vibration to reduce user fatigue. Even our harness is made to absorb vibration. Our T-27 represents our second generation of superior anti-vibe design.

Shindaiwa T-27 Shaft

### YOU WON'T GET SHAFTED BY SHINDAIWA.

Our shaft is 7MM diameter and splined at both ends for easy maintenance. It's also relieved at the engine end for absorbing greater torsional loading. Compare that to Echo's smaller 6MM flex cable. It's the same thing we use on our smallest homeowner flex shaft unit.

### LIGHT IN WEIGHT. BUT NO LIGHTWEIGHT.

Special alloys make our units strong, easy to handle and extremely light weight. But our T-27 still delivers greater horsepower than either Echo or Green Machine.

### SHINDAIWA KNOWS HOW TO COOL IT...

Our flywheel has a larger fin area than either Echo's or Green Machine's. So it delivers excellent cooling under high heat, high load conditions.

### ...BUT WE CAN ALSO TAKE THE HEAT.

Shindaiwa's large insulator block allows for a cooler carburetor temperature and less chance of vapor lock. Others are puny in comparison.

### SHINDAIWA COMES THROUGH IN THE CLUTCH.

Greater horsepower requires a larger clutch. Our two-shoe bonded clutch is larger than either Green Machine's or Echo's. So it has greater contact area. That results in longer life and smoother, positive engagement.

### COME TO GRIPS WITH A SHINDAIWA.

Our T-27 features a suspended front handle grip made of double-density rubber. Compare that to either Green Machine's J-loop handle made of less durable open cell foam or Echo's one-piece grip of hard plastic. You can feel the difference all over your body.

### A PROFESSIONAL APPROACH TO CARBURETORS.

An efficient metal slide-valve TK carburetor allows our T-27 to cut in all directions and deliver precise fuel/air metering throughout the mid RPM ranges where pro trimmers frequently work. It's the same type of carb found on high performance motorcycles. Echo and Green Machine, on the other hand,

Shindaiwa T-27 Carburetor

offer plastic rotary-valve carburetors designed for homeowner trimmers.

### NOW, HERE'S THE BEST PART:

Every Shindaiwa trimmer is backed by a 7-day money back guarantee. If, after one full week, you're not convinced that our T-27 is the best trimmer you've ever used, we'll buy it back. No questions asked. You can't lose.

### READ ALL ABOUT IT.

Send for free literature that tells our comparison story in full detail. And discover Shindaiwa superiority part by part. You'll never be torn between trimmers again.

**shindaiwa**

**WE SIMPLY MAKE THEM BETTER.**

11975 S. W. Herman Rd., Tualatin, Oregon 97062