

Ross course owners nabbing Forse for remodeling jobs

By Vern Putney

Golf course designer Ronald A. Forse of Uniontown, Pa., who has put his restoration philosophy into play at several Pennsylvania and Ohio courses, has moved to Massachusetts with his handiwork.

He's making long-range improvements at Hyannisport Country Club, implementing Donald Ross drawings and making the course play for modern equipment.

Project completion is due in mid-August.

Reconstruction of bunker complexes and additions of women's tees at the Lebanon (Pa.) Country Club were the focus of a recent project.

"By researching architect Alexander Findlay's style, we were able to remodel with an authentic feel and character. This 'sympathetic remodeling' addresses the desired flavor in addition to the course's functional and agronomic needs," Forse said.

"Holes on a lackluster front nine were made attractive, and recontouring of the 17th green's surface made subtle breaks while creating a more level putting surface."

Forse's restorative touch also will be evident at the Lancaster (Ohio) Country Club. Donald Ross and Jack Kidwell each designed nine holes there.

The course has blind shots to correct and other problems, but J.B. McGovern's 1926 drawings will be the guide. Focus will be on using contour of the land to best advantage.



Lebanon Country Club's renovation featured reconstructed bunker complexes.

A charter member of the Donald Ross Society and its history committee, Forse reveres early architects. He emphasizes restoration in their image (not the remodeling architect's) while yielding some ground to modern yardage demands.

Forse frequently visits classic courses to study their design features. Last spring he

explored Pinehurst #2 course, and this spring will revisit Pinehurst and the Donald Ross Archives for further study.

"Golf courses properly designed are works of art and should be regarded and preserved as such," Forse said. "Modern equipment has altered shot value and effective lengths on many holes."

"Sympathetic remodeling" addresses the desired flavor in addition to the course's functional and agronomic needs.'

— Ronald Forse

"Holes should, therefore, be updated in the spirit and character of the original design. Bunkers can be relocated to play for today's lengths but made to fit the original concepts and look of the course. One bunker strategically placed can affect shot planning as much as a multitude of hazards."

"Shot value and strategy are of utmost importance in design, much more to be valued than difficulty. Hazards are to make the game interesting, not to penalize."

The 1979 graduate of West Virginia University with a bachelor's degree in landscape architecture traces his appreciation for the classic golf course to roots at Mt. Ridge Country Club in West Caldwell, N.J., a Ross design. There he caddied, worked on the maintenance crew and played often.

Bruce Hepner, Forse's design associate, has a civil engineering degree from Michigan Tech and once was an auto designer.

Incline Village courses begin lengthy remodeling

LAKE TAHOE, N. Y. — The Incline Village Golf Resort is in the midst of a major restoration project that encompasses both the championship and executive courses.

The resort's \$4 million five-year plan will include a state-of-the-art irrigation system at the championship course, remodeling the existing championship clubhouse, and minor improvements at the executive course.

The irrigation system involved installation of 19 miles of pipe in 60 days last summer at a cost of \$800,000.

Robert Trent Jones Jr. designed the master plan to improve the course.

With the severe water shortages affecting the Tahoe basin the past five years, the system will use water more efficiently.

Within the next five years, the Incline Golf Resort plans to spend \$1.2 million on remodeling the clubhouse at the championship course.

Last summer, 40,000 rounds of golf were played at the championship course, 25,000 rounds at the executive course.

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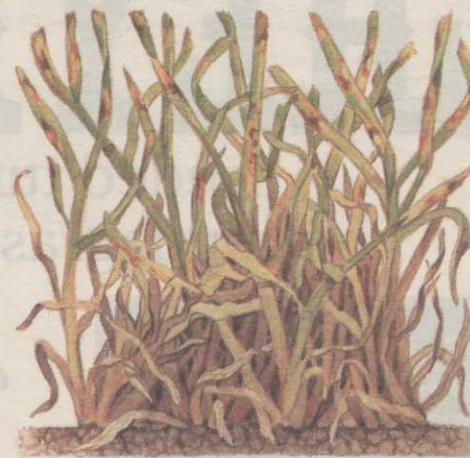
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