

# Ross Society gaining membership, eyes regional events

PINEHURST, N.C. — Pinehurst's No. 2 course would be a "magical" site for a U.S. Open.

So said David Eger, senior director of rules and competitions for the United States Golf Association, at the Donald Ross Society's recent annual meeting here.

Eger noted such a prestigious event would be fitting tribute to course designer Ross.

Eger cautioned that Pinehurst would have to meet several USGA stipulations, such as course conditions and greens fitness in June.

Eger: Holding a U.S. Open on Pinehurst No. 2 would be 'fitting tribute' to designer

The USGA title event is booked through 1996.

Eger, current North/South Amateur champion, shared the speaking spotlight with former N/S amateur titlists Peggy Kirk Bell (1949) and Harvie Ward (1948). Eger, 40, made his first N/S title try in 1990.

Eger was among prominent golf names welcomed into the Ross Society, now 3 years old and numbering 525 members.

Ian Baker-Finch sent along with

his membership application a scorecard he'd used while winning the 1991 British Open.

Other new members included PGA Tour standout John Cook and golf course architect Arthur Hills of Toledo, Ohio. Hills joins peers Dr. Michael Hurdzan, Jack Nicklaus, Stephen Kay, Ben Crenshaw, Ron Prichard and Tom Doak.

The Ross Society was formed to assist with restoration and preservation projects at golf courses de-

signed by Ross and contemporaries.

Barry J. Palm of Phoenix, Ariz., Donald Ross Society president and co-founder, said some day his organization hopefully will be headquartered at Pinehurst. From such a base, he declared, the society could serve the members and the game, and continue to promote Ross' memory.

Palm, assistant executive director of the Arizona Golf Association,

pointed out that Ross members are from 40 states, the United Kingdom and even the Middle East.

"People who appreciate preserving classic golf courses are finding out about us," Palm said, noting that there are members from more than 200 Ross clubs across the country.

At the suggestion of members, the society plans regional meetings and golf tournaments and outings at Ross courses such as took place last fall at Salem (Mass.) Country Club.

## Kay: Keep it classic

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looking at plans of Ross and from old aerial photographs, it appears he always wanted the golfer to see the sand. So if you were playing downhill, he would maybe leave the sand flat and bring the grass down the bank because you could see it. If you were playing uphill, and if you left the sand flat, you would be blind. So he would flash the sand. He says on a couple of holes at Oyster Harbors: 'I must see the sand. Flash it up the face.'

Indeed, Kay said Oyster Harbors even has both styles in one bunker alone.

Meanwhile, although Kay's renovation work of the masters' courses mainly involves bunkering, at Bel Air (Fla.) Country Club this year he will rebuild all the greens on the South Course to Ross specifications. When new owners bought the course in the 1970s, they built ponds on the site and raised all the greens but changed their contours.

### HIS OWN WORK

Kay intends to cling closely to the classic look in two 18-hole golf courses he is designing this year — Blue Heron Pines near Atlantic City, N.J., and Stanton (N.J.) Golf Club.

Blue Heron Pines will be a mixture of Pine Valley, Bethpage Black, Oyster Harbors and Pinehurst No. 2, which are all on sandy soil with pine and oak trees, similar to Blue Heron Pines.

Yet, Stanton is on a hilly site and will have "a completely different style," Kay said. "We're not copying holes, but I'm trying to get a (classic) feel and concept."

His first full 18-hole course — Hiland Golf Club, which opened in 1989 in Glens Falls, N.Y. — is hosting the New York State Open this year.

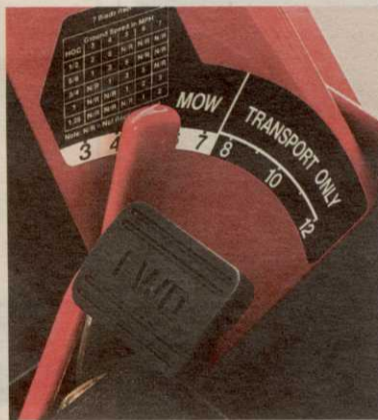
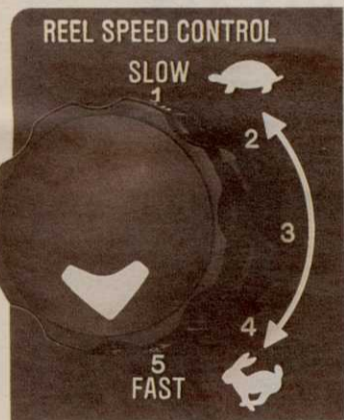
"I want to keep my work to around two 18-hole courses a year and a certain amount of renovation because I personally shoot the grades on every green," Kay said.

Remaining true to his feeling for the classics ("They have stood the test of time."), Kay said his best compliments come on holes that were completely changed over the years and that he tries to put back to their original state. If a golfer plays it and says it is one of the best holes Donald Ross ever did, that is what I'm looking for."

And has that happened?

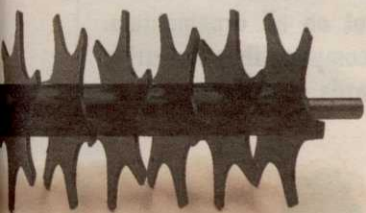
"Yes," is the happy reply.

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