

Bobby Jones, player-designer unveiled in biography

By MARK LESLIE

The first time Bobby Jones walked onto the property that would become Augusta National Golf Course, he was astonished. "It even looked as though it were already a golf course," he remarked.

Thus began Jones' brief — but distinctive — input consulting in golf course designs. Just as Jones profoundly influenced golf as a player until his death in 1971, Augusta National and Peachtree (in his hometown Atlanta, Ga.) on which he also consulted, deeply affect course design to this day.

Sportsmanship, talent — class. Bobby Jones had them all — and more. And his kaleidoscopic life is brought to life colorfully, expertly and interestingly by Sid Matthew in the coffee-table biography, *The Life & Times of Bobby Jones*. Bobby Jones IV has called this Sleeping Bear Press publication "the greatest book ever on my grandfather."

For Matthew, collecting its essentials and writing it was a 20-year labor of love.

"Bobby Jones was one of very few people whose lives actually transcend the legend that grows up around them," Matthew said from his law office. "His legacy was the balance in his life. Not only was he a genius as a golfer but as a writer, golf course architect, actor, in his relationships and being an ambassador for golf. His family came first, his law practice second, and golf last, but never a life unto itself. He could have parlayed his fame into fortune. He did not."

Interesting to readers in the golf industry is a chapter devoted to the construction of Augusta National, Jones' "dream course." Matthew shares insights into the feel, qualities, strategies, instincts and philosophies of golf course architecture important to the man who won 15 major titles while competing as an amateur.

To Bobby Jones, golf was not a career; it was a way of life. And, therefore, to him, course design was not of fleeting impact; it was something of consequence.

Listen to his statement on the penal/reward concept of widening the gap between a good tee shot and a bad one. There are two ways, he said: "One is to inflict a severe and immediate punishment on a bad shot, to place its perpetrator in a bunker or in some other trouble which will demand the sacrifice of a stroke in recovering. The other is to reward the good shot by making the second shot simpler in proportion to the excellence of the first."

"The reward may be of any nature, but it is more commonly one of four — a



With Alister Mackenzie (second from left) and others looking on, Bobby Jones tees off from a potential tee box during construction of Augusta National.

better view of the green, an easier angle from which to attack a slope, an open approach past guarding hazards, or even a better run to the tee shot itself. The elimination of purely punitive hazards provides an opportunity for the player to retrieve his situation by an exceptional second shot."

At Augusta National, Jones was given the opportunity to consult acclaimed course designer Alister Mackenzie and put his design philosophy to the test of reality.

"Perfect!" he exclaimed the moment he first saw the property. "And to think this ground has been lying here all these years waiting for someone to come along and lay a golf course upon it."

Since Augusta National opened in 1932, golfers from around the world have felt those same stirrings. And while Bobby Jones' extraordinary play is a mere memory, the course he helped design lives on through the ages, reflecting his ideals.

Jones and Mackenzie, Matthew said, "married the best of the penal and strategic schools of design, together with the notion that a golf course should provide enjoyment to the greatest number of golfers."

Citing Mackenzie's thankfulness for

Jones' collaboration on Augusta National, Matthew added: "You do not discuss any subject of architecture with anyone knowledgeable, without coming back to Augusta National as one of the foundational cornerstones in the discussion. The standard is always Augusta. That is what genius Jones brought to the subject of design..."

"Many golf courses are trendy and must be redesigned. Augusta was done in such a monumental style that it will never be redesigned."

Everyone who knew him has a personal Bobby Jones story, and Matthew has taken care in this book and in an Academy Award-nominated video to capture those memories. Among them is his response when a group of Augusta National members approached him with the proposal that a bronze statue of Jones be made for the facility.

Jones' response: "No. This course is memorial enough."

Sid Matthew would like to believe he has put together a book Bobby Jones would have liked. You have to agree.

Sleeping Bear Press can be reached at P.O. Box 20, Chelsea, Mich. 48118.

Midwest developers keep Lohmann busy

MARENGO, Ill. — Lohmann Golf Designs Inc. continues to make its mark in the Midwest with several projects in Illinois, Iowa and Wisconsin.

Nine of the planned 27 holes are open at The Broken Arrow Golf Club in Lockport, Ill. The second nine has completed the grow-in stage and the third nine — featuring double greens on all holes — is grassed and scheduled to open this summer.

Working as a design/build team, Lohmann and Midwest Golf Development are continuing work on Whispering Springs Golf Club in Font du Lac, Wis., where weathered ledge rock that was mined from the site will be used on lake and creek banks and near tees and cart paths.

Hunters Ridge Golf Club in Marion, Iowa, an 18-hole championship-length daily-fee course with an extensive practice and chipping area, and The Meadows Golf Club in Dubuque, Iowa, an 18-hole daily-fee course are expected to open in the fall.

And construction is underway at Twin Bridges Golf Club in Danville, Ind., an 18-hole daily-fee Lohmann design with a practice area scheduled to open in the summer of 1997. Twin Bridges is being constructed and managed by Heritage Golf Management of Indianapolis.

GEORGE AT WORK IN VIRGINIA

RICHMOND, Va. — Meadowbrook Country Club has retained golf course architect Lester George and his Colonial Golf Design, Inc. to develop a master plan for renovations for its golf course. Meadowbrook was originally designed by Fred Findlay and opened in 1959. George is also working on renovations at Boonsboro Country Club in Lynchburg, Va., another Findlay design. Meadowbrook Green Chairman Larry Marshall said the renovations will involve "modernizing" the tees and greens.

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turf studies and environmental turfgrass physiology, respectively. He is a former golf course superintendent, and last year was presented the Distinguished Service Award from the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA).

GCSAA, in fact, supported Sleeping Bear Press in publication of *Golf Course Architecture*. Some 70 percent of any profits generated by copies of this \$75 book sold by GCSAA will go back to the organization for a scholarship fund and to assist in getting other golf-industry texts published. GCSAA is headquartered in Lawrence, Kan., and Sleeping Bear Press in Chelsea, Mich.