

Thomas on design

Continued from page 14

a trick taught to him by Willie Tuckie Jr. concerning laying out a golf course on a contour map. In Thomas' words: "Your map is, of course, contoured to scale, and you cut out of blotting paper miniature fairways, making them also to the same scale as the map; it is easy to place them on your contour map with thumb tacks, first having your map on a board. You will find that by hinging these little fairways at or about the 200-yard mark, you can make them follow the contours on the map as doglegs or straight holes.

"You can play with them just as if they were picture puzzle units; and by making them of different lengths, all to scale, with their width corresponding to that of fairways from 65 to 80 yards wide, the one shotters unhinged and the three-shot holes hinged twice, you

will find them of the utmost help."

Read this and you have to love Thomas. Was he prophetic? Hear this: "It is most important for the future of golf in this country that every aid should be given to the building and upkeep of municipal courses, because such will eventually become of the greatest value to the game, and from them we may expect to produce many of our future great players."

Was he a rule-breaker? "To my mind, five one-shotters [par-3s on one course] are not too many. Certainly, a fine test of this type is superior to a poor two-shotter, and, in addition, they usually surpass the two-shotters in character, because ground for them is easily found, and they may be made with less trouble and expense..."

"Furthermore, by saving ground in the use of one shotters, it is easier to secure better two shotters on the balance of a course, and in badly broken country they help the problem of plan."

Was he walled in by tradition or grandeur? "It is possible to make a very short nine-hole approach and pitch course, where the holes will average around 30 yards, all of which will require most skillful playing to secure the average par of 3; and I know of several layouts of this character in crowded districts, which are very interesting and attractive. It would seem that such short pitch-and-approach courses could be easily installed at many clubs, at hotels, and even for private grounds, and give the utmost pleasure, as well as fine practice, for the short game."

Was he humble? Speaking of the concentration of municipal golfers ("There was no nonsense as 'Please move your shadow off the line of my putt,' or 'Stand still, caddie, while I play this shot'), he said: "I admired those golfers; I realized they were far above me as sportsmen and golfers."

Here are some thoughts on:

• Nature vs. man: "...the truly Ideal

course must have natural hazards on a large scale for superlative golf. The puny strivings of the architect do not quench our thirst for the ultimate..."

• Walking: "Broadly speaking, where it is necessary to climb more than two steep hills and more than four medium grades, the course is approaching impracticability..."

• The sun. "The tract to be purchased must have a clubhouse site where several finishing holes on both nines of an eighteen hole course have the sun at their back. The thirty-six hole layout must also finish away from the setting sun. By noting possibilities for the clubhouse site the avoidance of sun holes as finishes is a simple one."

• Art and utility: "In golf construction art and utility meet; both are absolutely vital; one is utterly ruined without the other... If you fail in either, your course is without true merit."



CALENDAR

May

5-7 — 51st Annual Southeastern Turfgrass Conference in Tifton, Ga. Contact Dr. Wayne Hanna at 912-386-3360.

16 — Golf Environments of the 21st Century: Integrating Wildlife Conservation and Golf Courses, a conference coordinated by the U.S. Golf Association and National Fish and Wildlife Foundation at National Geographic Society Headquarters, Gilbert H. Grosvenor Auditorium, 1145 17th St., N.W., Washington, D.C. Contact Dr. Kimberly Erusha, USGA, Golf House, P.O. Box 708, Far Hills, N.J. 07931; 908-234-2300.

12-18 — American Society of Golf Course Architects Annual Meeting in Toronto. Contact 312-372-7090.

June

13-15 — Medfest '97 in Post Falls, Idaho. Contact Brandie Beebe at 800-568-8873.

18 — SUNY Cobleskill's Turfgrass and Landscape Workshop in Cobleskill, N.Y. Contact Robert Emmons at 518-234-5644.

27 — Turf-Seed Inc. Field Day 15 in Rolesville, N.C. Contact Melodee Fraser at 919-556-0146.

July

29 — Midwest Regional Turf Field Day in West Lafayette, Ind. Contact Midwest Regional Turf Foundation at 317-494-8039.

August

19 — Cornell Field Day in Ithaca, N.Y. Contact Frank Rossi at 607-255-1629.

September

4-5 — Southwest Horticultural Trade Show in Phoenix.

October

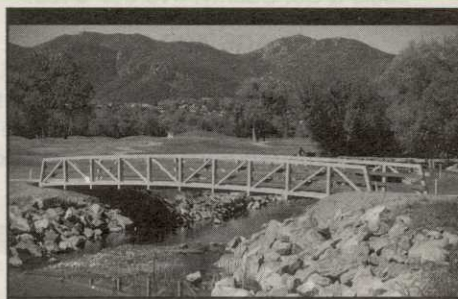
26-28 — Public Golf Forum in Oak Brook, Ill. Contact Golf Course News Conference Group at 207-846-0600.

November

2-4 — 18th Annual Irrigation Association International Exposition and Technical Conference in Nashville, Tenn.

Golf Course Marketplace

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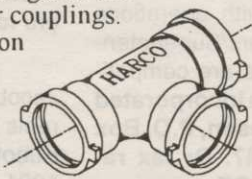
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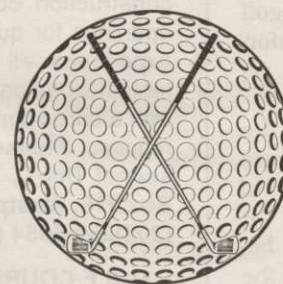
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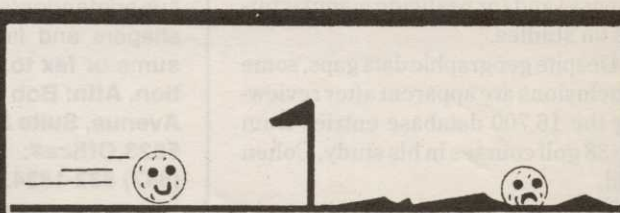
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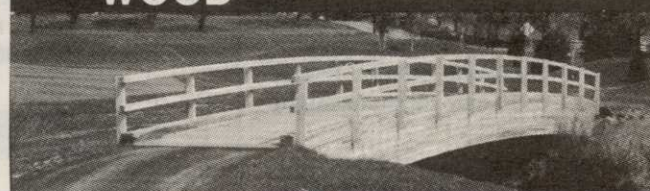
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