

"Masters" proves that some things just never change

By MARK LESLIE

So, you golf purists out there in Golf Kingdom think we should return to the Glory Days of the early 1900s. Those were the days, weren't they, when there were no squabbles about manmade "chocolate drops" along fairways, or all-carry shots to the green, or overwatered putting surfaces, or golfers who lamented hazards, or developers' cries of "More distance. I want more distance!"

Well, the masters themselves — you know, Mr. Tillinghast, Mr. Thomas, Mr. Macdonald, Mr. (Bobby) Jones and others are here to set the record straight. Here, that is, in the new book, "Masters of the Links — Essays on the Art of Golf and Course Design."

Edited by Geoff Shackelford, whose "The Captain" brought us insights into the life of architect George Thomas, this pot-pourri illustrates that some things never

change. Though the essays were written during golf architecture's Classic Era — those times which are to golf as the 1950s are to American Graffiti-ites — you might think they were fashioned in 1997.

• For instance, this from Charles Blair Macdonald in 1928:

"Viewing the monstrosities created on many modern golf courses, which are travesty on Nature, no golfer can but shudder for the soul of golf. It would

seem that in this striving after 'novelty and innovation,' many builders of golf courses believe they are elevating the game. But what a sad contemplation!

"Motoring to Southampton, I pass a goodly number of new courses. As I view the putting-greens it appears to me they are all built similarly, more or less of a bowl or saucer type, then built up toward the back of the green, and then scalloped with an irregular line of low, waving mounds or hillocks, the putting-green for all the world resembling a pie-faced woman with a marcel wave. I do not believe anyone ever saw in nature anything approaching these home-made putting-greens. Then, scattered over the side of the fairway, are mounds modeled after haycocks or chocolate-drops. The very soul of golf shrieks!"

• Was Robert Tyre (Bobby) Jones Jr. talking about "the masters" when he wrote this in the *USGA Green Section Bulletin* in February 1932: "Of our two great American preferences — the one for placing the green bunkering very close to the putting surfaces, and the other for soggy greens

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— An observation from Charles Blair Macdonald in 1928

which will hold any kind of pitch, whether struck with backspin or not — I can not say which induced the other or which came first. The close guarding, in many instances, makes a soft green necessary if the hole is to be playable, and easy pitching, on the other hand, makes it necessary to decrease the size of the target in order to supply any test. I quarrel with both ends of this proposition, whichever is to blame. These together are two reasons, I think, why our golf courses in the main lack the subtlety of the British links, and why our golf does not demand the strategy or the intelligent planning it should."

• More play and faster putting speeds, everyone says, are driving today's growing number of greens renovations and enlargements. So, you think it is a new problem? Think again, as told by George C. Thomas Jr. in *Game and Gossip Magazine's* January 1932 edition: "The old adage of golf architecture, 'the shorter the shot, the smaller the green,' has been discarded as an accepted theory, on account of increased traffic on courses. ..."

He added: "We must now supply all greens with sufficient adaptable surface frequently to change the cup. The same crowded conditions necessitate a green without too many severe rolls or undulations, for the reason that steep slopes are not practicable to pin placements."

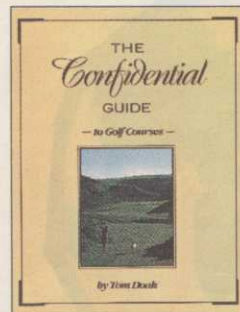
• Jack Nicklaus has taken endless flak for designing greens that demand all-

GOLF COURSE NEWS BOOKSHELF

The Confidential Guide to Golf Courses

By Tom Doak

Written in the inimitable style of *Golf Magazine's* golf course design editor, this book describes, uncovers and rates more than 1,000 courses worldwide that the author has visited and photographed.



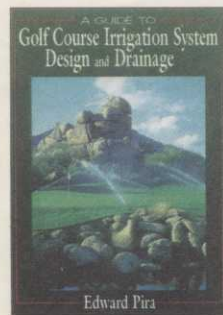
With more than 180 four-color photographs, it might be the best collection of worldwide photos ever published. It starts with a "Gourmet's Choice" selection of 31 of Doak's personal favorites, each by a different designer, followed by brief reviews of

courses from Pebble Beach, Calif., to Kebo Valley, Maine, and from St. Andrews, Scotland, to Joondalup in Western Australia.

\$45.00, 400 pages, hardcover.

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As a working reference or as a textbook, the *Guide to Golf Course Irrigation System Design and Drainage* covers every important aspect of the subject in an easy-to-understand format. It is perfect for the practicing turfgrass manager, superintendent, consultant, sales representative, and student. Used in numerous academic courses for years, this is the first commercially-available version of a perennial best-seller, and is completely revised with new exercises, practical examples, numerous new figures, and expanded sections covering a wide variety of irrigation system components. A hands-on manual, it guides



the reader through every phase of an irrigation program. Turfgrass managers and golf course superintendents will refer to this handy book often to plan effective irrigation systems, ensure appropriate capacity, easy installation, and practical operation and maintenance.

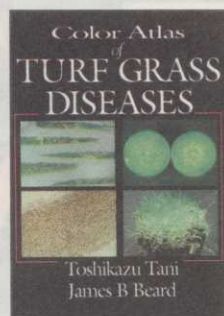
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By Dr. Toshikazu Tani

Contributing Author, Dr. James B. Beard

The *Color Atlas of Turfgrass Diseases on Golf Courses* presents more than 540 high-quality color photographs of all the major turfgrass diseases that occur on both warm-and cool-season grasses. It is international in scope. This book will likely become the standard color-guide to disease diagnosis and pathogen identification for golf course superintendents and turfgrass practitioners. No other book contains as many color photographs of this detail and quality. Helpful maps are included to assist in disease identification by providing geographical locations where each disease/pathogen is likely to occur. A unique feature of this easy-to-use field guide is that it also provides color photos of step-by-step guidance on diagnostic techniques for laboratory analysis which can be used by practitioners.



\$79.95, Approx. 250 pages, hardcover.

The Course Beautiful

This is a fascinating collection of original articles and photographs on golf course design by one of the masters. A prolific writer, Tillinghast delves into his philosophies on golf course design and maintenance, and his thoughts on what makes a championship course. It is loaded with vintage photographs and original Tillie sketches of such of his creations as San Francisco, Winged Foot and Baltusrol golf clubs.

\$34.95, 120 pages, hardcover.

The Captain — George C. Thomas Jr. and His Golf Architecture

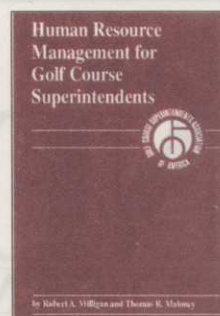
The creator of Riviera and Los Angeles country clubs and author of the classic book, *"Golf Course Architecture in America, Its Strategy and Construction,"* George Thomas has deeply affected the golf industry even since his death in 1932. Thomas worked on single projects with Donald Ross and A.W. Tillinghast, learned from friends Hugh Wilson and George Crump, and designed more than two dozen courses on his own. At the same time he was recognized worldwide for his books about and breeding of roses, his first love. Call him brilliant, or enigmatic, but in his last years his work was on a book about Pacific game fish. Shackelford reveals the man behind the work.

\$35.00, 207 pages, hardcover, limited edition of 1,200 copies.

Human Resource Management for Golf Course Superintendents

By Robert Milligan and Tom Maloney

This practical guide provides basic management principles and techniques which view people as the most important asset in golf course management. Five basic management functions are detailed throughout the book, using everyday situations to illustrate the key points.



Designed to serve as a quick reference, or as a self-teaching guide, *Human Resource Management for Golf Course Superintendents* features numerous techniques and practical examples.

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The directory covers academic programs and key contacts, instructional resources including slide sets and videos, software and much more.

The section on related books provides a definitive guide to pertinent titles on diseases, weeds, insects, irrigation, pesticides and general information. Industry services such as diagnostic labs and soil-testing facilities are included.

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"Masters"

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carry shots. So, you think Mr. Nicklaus invented this design? Think again, as you read what William S. Flynn wrote in the *USGA Green Section Bulletin* in October 1927:

"America has developed a more or less stereotyped shot to the green that is the high, all-carry shot. This has been brought about, no doubt, by the fact that fairways and particularly approaches have gone unwatered during the summer when the ground has become hard. It is much simpler to play a high carry shot to a soft green which gets water than to attempt a pitch-and-run to a green with a cement-like approach."

• And, is it a new thing to have equipment changes affect course design? Here's Thomas again, zeroing in on the U.S. Golf Association's regulations levied on golf balls: "These changes ... make the problem of the constructor more confused than ever, because he must endeavor to prepare his entire course for a variable standard, and must provide, for the exasperating problem, a green which later will take care of any oval, balloon, or cannon-ball upon which the governing body may insist."

Don't you just love it?

Other insights abound, and many will take you aback. For instance, what would A.W. Tillinghast have thought about today's penchant for 7,000-yard courses? "The fetish of distance is worshipped entirely too often and there should be a quick end to it," he wrote in *Golf Illustrated* in March 1935. "Very recently, in California during one of the open tournaments, we heard a noted player asked his opinion of the course. 'It's too damned long' came the instant and candid reply — and this answer was made by one of the longest hitters in our land. And with

this note of confidence from one for whom long holes have no terrors, we are for the present content to rest our case."

Also, we hear the claim that today's golfers — especially Americans — are wimps. If so by 1990s standards, how would they have fared in 1935 when Tillinghast wrote: "No doubt, many of the hazard-shirking fraternity would declare that playing a wayward ball from such places was entirely too difficult. What utter nonsense! There were and are shots that will do it; another generation knew how to play them, and it is not altogether pleasant to think that golfers of today are going soft. Possibly a bit more sting in the rod of golf chastisement in these, or modern times, would render it more of an achievement to break par so habitually."

Obviously, Tilly thought the golfers of his day were thin-skinned about playing the ball as it lies, compared to their colleagues of the past.

His thoughts are echoed by Tom Doak, who may have penned my favorite quote in the book. In his *Play It as It Lies*, Doak said: "Modern American golf design is modeled on the same principles as our ailing criminal justice system: We build more water hazards [prisons], but they only house the disadvantaged, while the elite receive suspended sentences."

No self-respecting retrospective would leave out the great Dr. Alister MacKenzie. Here, MacKenzie wrote in the January 1934 edition of *Golfing Magazine* that any artificial lake should have a clear bottom so that balls can be recovered. "There is no thrill in driving over an ugly hazard," he said. To make his point he recalled many years ago "seeing a peppery Major at Strensall in Yorkshire, England, top three balls into an extremely muddy pond. The ugliness of the hazard and his bad play irritated him so much that he threw his club after his ball, then he threw his whole bag in and when his small caddie

began to laugh he chuckled him in, too!"

And no self-respecting collection would be without an introspective description of St. Andrews and its place in the world of golf. This one comes from Robert Hunter, who at times assisted MacKenzie and H. Chandler Egan in design, as it appeared in *The American Golfer* in January 1927:

"Where else in the world do we find a course to which all great players journey and where all ages and abilities meet and all praise with equal fervor? What other course can we all name which defies the champions and yet delights tottering old age? What other course can be played with a putter — the Swilken Burn being, in that case, the only serious obstacle — and at the same time be spoken of, by those qualified to speak, as the best course in the world..."

"Every time I visit St. Andrews my love and admiration for it increase. I should rather play that course for the rest of my life than any other I know. I should never grow weary of it; nor should I ever conquer it; and every round would whet my appetite to tackle it again on the morrow."

GUEST COMMENTARY

Canada

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Manual will incorporate the CGSA mission statement into practice. That is, the CGSA is a society committed to excellence in golf course management and environmental responsibility through the continuing professional development of its members.

A "user-friendly" theme will focus on interpreting environmental law into laymen's terms, while clearly outlining requirements of what must and should be done to be in compliance.

Due to the sheer amount of information gathered, teaching aids such as "Did You Know ..." and "Plain English, Eh!" are used to make an easy-to-read format. In addition to a glossary, numerous "Q&A" scenarios will be brought forward, as well as professional insight from industry leaders, such as golf course architects, engineers and turf advisors. In other words, the Environmental Management Resource Manual will be something the membership will use.

The manual is to be divided up into nine parts:

Section 1 — Introduction (purpose, how to use the manual)

Section 2 — An Explanation of Regulatory Requirements (i.e. municipal, provincial and federal)

Section 3 — Important Steps To Avoid Being Investigated

Section 4 — Maintenance Facility Operations (includes pesticide licensing requirements, to fuel storage)

Section 5 — Course Renovation and Redesign (includes permit requirements, to erosion control)

Section 6 — Environmental Monitoring (i.e. pesticide and fertilizer nutrients)

Section 7 — IPM

Section 8 — Environmental Enhancement Projects (i.e. Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program and the Golf Course

N.D. getting ready

Continued from page 45

was under water for 40 days. Superintendent Mark Lindberg said the course is still recovering. One-hundred acres were overseeded with rye grass for fast growth. These have to be overseeded with the normal bluegrass/fescue mix.

"Although," said Linberg, "if it's going to keep flooding, we may keep it in rye."

About 10 percent of the roughs have yet to be reseeded. The course opened in early July, and because of the silt which remained after cleaning, "pick and clean" was the name of the game.

Course mechanic Doug Klemetson related that walk-behind, rather than triplex mowers, were used on the greens, of which only four survived the flood. He described the course as being in bowl, with a protective dike of 28 feet. Water above that level comes in from all directions, and with the river at 54 feet, there was no protection.

At the Grand Forks Country Club, where damages were in the quarter million dollar area, the pumphouse and computer system were wasted, said mechanic Dan Knoblich.

Superintendents Association of America's Steward Awards)

Section 9 — Communication (with members, media and the general public)

Sections 4-7 will conform to the following structure:

1) Introduction.

2) Regulatory Requirements to summarize how the topic is governed in Canada and by whom (i.e. municipalities, provincial bodies, or federal institutions).

3) Standard Operating Practices is the heart of each topic. Figures, tables, contact numbers for individual provinces

and discussions of all relevant issues are discussed here.

4) Colleague Examples outline what the industry has adopted from legislative requirements. Pro-active superintendents' case histories are included, as well as industry leaders' opinions on the subject matter.

The project team consists of Kirk Morrison (co-writer), President of Bel•MK Engineering Ltd., Calgary, Alberta, who has extensive experience in assembling environmental codes of practice for a number of industries, and me. A steering committee has been comprised for editing purposes and is headed by Environmental Committee Chairman Jay Leach (CGSA's Alberta director), superintendent at Cottonwood Golf and Country Club in Dewinton, Alberta, and includes golf course superintendents across the country.

Both the steering committee and writers were intentionally chosen from all sides of the country in order to create a holistic document that would have a national focus.

It is nearing its completion, and sponsorship opportunities are still available for the copy, binding and distribution process. Interested industry affiliates should contact Vince Gillis, CGSA executive director, at 905-602-8873.



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