



Reconstruction of a green at Inverness Club

Hills tackles Ross's Inverness finetuning

TOLEDO, Ohio — The Donald Ross-designed Inverness Club, site of four U.S. Opens, one U.S. Amateur and two PGA Championships, has undergone an improvement program that will position the historic track to host future major championships.

Construction of a number of new tees lengthened the course

to 7,234 yards, playing to par 70 or 71. The most significant portion of the renovation involved reconstruction of bunkers and regrassing of the greens.

"Inverness has a long and rich history of hosting major championships," said club President William Parker. "The improvement program will maintain the

integrity of the course as a major championship site into the next decade and beyond."

Golf course architect Arthur Hills oversaw construction that began last August. New sand and internal drainage will be added to each bunker, with several bunkers being repositioned. Bluegrass sod will be placed around bunkers and greens to remove heavy bentgrass rough around the putting surfaces. The greens are being re-grassed with Penn G-2 creeping bentgrass.

Hills used the collection of historical photographs at Inverness during his planning. A few greens have been expanded to reclaim cupping areas and several fairway and greenside bunkers were reshaped or added to return them to their original Ross design.

"One of the goals is that the course will have the same character and appearance as it has now," Hills said. "All of the work that will be done this fall has been done after consultation with the USGA [U.S. Golf Association]. I would call this program a modest finetuning which will allow Inverness to lengthen its course for future major championships the club may host. The key to the added length is added yardage to the long par-4s, in an effort to bring middle-irons into use."

Oliphant Golf Construction of Madison, Wis., was the contractor.

Construction was completed in November, and the course will reopen in April.

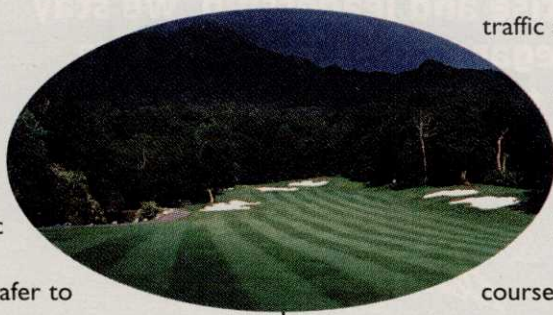


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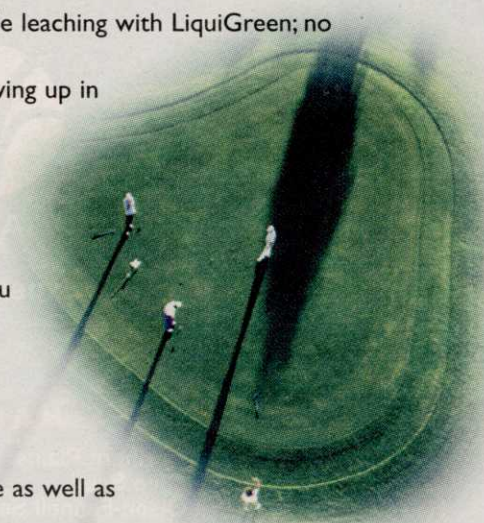
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Q&A: Schulties

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Wolfard [a former Bates' associate now working on his own in Dallas]. My favorite golf course is San Francisco Golf Club. You just feel the history. Among the modern courses I really like Shoal Creek in Birmingham, Ala., and I love Fazio's Pelican Hills in Newport Beach, Calif.

It's hard to compare designers. Everyone has a different canvas to build their courses on, every piece of property is different. What I'd like to do is give every architect a piece of ground where there isn't a foot of elevation change or a piece of vegetation that you particularly want to keep, and see what you get. Now Pebble Beach is a phenomenal golf course. Is it a great design? I'm not sure. Someone was smart enough in the way they laid it out. But they didn't move a lot of dirt. How could you mess up piece of property with 12 holes on the ocean? Some of the best courses may not be the best layouts, they just sit on a phenomenal piece of property.