

But the code doesn't come into play the majority of time, Woodhead says.

More nebulous is when one superintendent visits another's course as a consultant or when looking for a job.

"The first statement under the professional conduct guidelines is that a member should always contact the superintendent regardless of the intention of the visit," Woodhead says. "That covers everything from looking for a job to getting a free round of golf."

And applications for employment should be tendered only if the current superintendent is aware of it.

"We won't advertise a job opening for an employer until we have notification the current superintendent has been told his job is being advertised," Woodhead says.

It's not against the law to visit a course without prior notification, and being approached by an employer and asked to visit a course and give an opinion isn't a violation of the code of ethics, Woodhead says.

"But the GCSAA doesn't condone that sort of behavior," he says.

If an employer contacts a potential candidate, Woodhead says that person should call the current superintendent to let him know that he has been contacted about his job.

"Those are the types of things we can't enforce with sanctions, but we're trying to get our members to abide by the guidelines," he says. "Would my actions meet the approval of my peers? If what I'm doing is on the up and up, it shouldn't matter if the next guy behind me comes in and does the exact same thing."

Woodhead says if a superintendent tells the GCSAA a consultant came onto his grounds without previous contact, the organization will write a letter with a copy of the guidelines and ask the consultant to review the professional conduct guidelines and abide by them.

"We're not a union," Woodhead says. "We can't guarantee a job. We don't have any powers to prevent anyone from doing anything other than to provide them what we see as a professional way of doing business. If it's illegal, we take similar action to a defamation suit, if it got to that point. Otherwise, it's a matter of helping the superintendent find that next opportunity and sometimes going to the person who's doing the incorrect action and getting them to do the right thing going forward."

GET IT IN WRITING

Gary Reeve, a partner at the law firm Kennedy Reeve & Knoll in Columbus, Ohio, is a certified specialist in labor employment law. He says superintendents are like any other employee and can be fired for almost any reason at all.

"As long as they don't have a contract or union affiliation, they are at-will employees," Reeve says.

That means they can't be fired for age, race, gender, disability or national origin, and depending on the size of the staff (if there are more than 50 employees), the Family Medical Leave Act.

"At-will employment works both ways," Reeve says. "An at-will employee can up and quit, and there's no legal recourse."

For a superintendent to have a contract dispute, the contract must specify a duration of time of employment, Reeve says.

"It can't be an offer letter that details compensation," he says. "That's not an employment contract. It has to have a duration of time in it. If it says June of 2007 to June of 2008, and 60 days we'll notify if we wish to renew, then we're talking about a contract of duration."

The GCSAA would like for its members to have duration contracts, but it doesn't happen nearly as often as it does for general managers or head pros in the industry. Lyne Tumlinson, director of career services at the GCSAA, says her unofficial research shows that about 25 per-

cent of GCSAA Class A members have a contract for duration compared to almost 75 percent for general managers or pros.

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cent of GCSAA Class A members have a contract for duration compared to almost 75 percent for general managers or pros.

MAKING A CHANGE

Ken Mangum, the director of golf courses and grounds at the Atlanta Athletic Club, says it's been his experience that friends in the industry can help with a job search.

"When I was hired, the general managers were friends," he says. "They had someone call me so I could call them so he could say he didn't call me. The professional thing to do is have the general manager call the other general manager and ask if he has any objections. The correct protocol would be for someone at one club to contact someone at the other club."

When employees leave, the hope is that everyone keeps a professional attitude.

"Everyone is trying to improve themselves," Mangum says. "You might not want them to

"Managing golf courses is big business. It's sad to say, but anything goes. It's like any other part of corporate America."

- TOMMY WITT, CGCS

cent of GCSAA Class A members have a contract for duration compared to almost 75 percent for general managers or pros.

"A lot of superintendents don't think to ask for one," she says. "I wish a whole lot more had contracts that stipulate a time."

THE RIGHT FIT

Contracts aside, the most important thing when hiring a superintendent is quantifying the facility's needs, Tumlinson says.

"What's good for Augusta might not be good

go, but how can you hold them back? How can you be angry at them for looking to get a better job?"

But firing is an entirely different situation.

"How do people get fired?" Mangum asks. "The three top reasons would be: One person got in power and didn't like someone, and one person got rid of somebody - you see that a lot. Second, someone says, 'We want to go to the next level.' They perceive the person they have can't take them there, when in fact they don't know what level they're at. Third is when a new

general manager comes in and wants to bring in his own people. That's OK as long as he gives a guy a chance for a couple of years to show what he can do. Many times, the guy doesn't get that. They don't get the full benefit of the doubt."

Mangum has seen a lot of bad blood result from firings.

"You find out how unprofessional people are," he says. "I saw a situation in which a single owner hired a guy, and he was set to go to work on Tuesday, and the owner hadn't told the old person. The new guy called the old guy on Friday to tell him he'd be there, and the old guy didn't know he was gone."

It's a shame when a club decides it wants a new set of eyes without telling an employee about current expectations, Mangum says.

"A guy has given a club 30 years, and he had to leave after 30 years without fond memories of the club he's given his life to – without a single written documentation saying, 'You need to do this or that.' They don't sit a person down and say, 'We don't like this or that.' If I'm not doing something, and I don't know it, how do I fix it?"

CONSULTANTS

Another scary aspect about the business is the advent of consultants, Mangum says.

"Many times clubs will bring someone in to do their dirty work," he says. "Unfortunately, the clubs bring in outside consultants and decisions are made. Is that coincidence or by plan? Everyone has to draw their own conclusions. When you walk into a meeting, and there's a consultant there, and you had no prior knowledge of it, you better get your resume ready."

A consultant's job can be easy because he can point out flaws, then leave.

"You can go into any golf course on any given day and find things that aren't done," Mangum says. "Is it a leadership issue? Is it a budget issue? What's the real problem?"

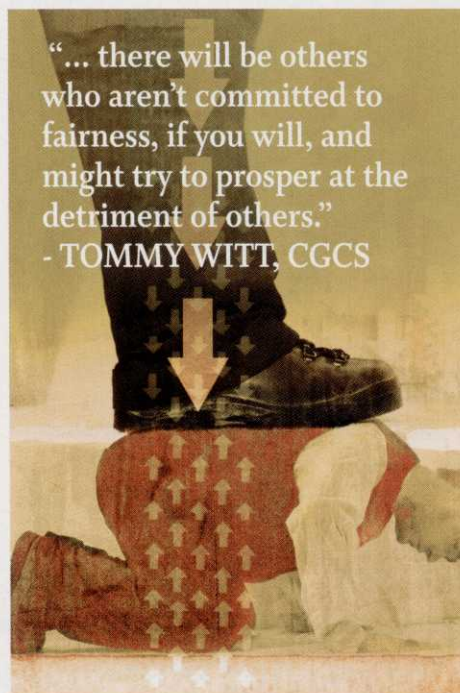
Instead of hiring a consultant, Mangum prescribes bringing in friends and associates for their advice.

"If you're proactive, the chances of bringing in a consultant are less," he says. "Consultants can be perceived as a person who can make problems go away. You always have to look at the track record of consultants. You need to do some reference checking and follow up on them. You're assuming the consultant has a proven

track record in the area, the business, longevity. You are assuming a lot of things."

One also can take advantage of free advice from the USGA's Turf Advisory Service.

"They see many golf courses in your area," Mangum says. "They're regional, and the USGA is respected by people in golf. They aren't selling anything. They make no money on outside products and equipment. They're not biased, and they provide a lot of information. And they aren't there to bury the hatchet in somebody. They're there to help."



"... there will be others who aren't committed to fairness, if you will, and might try to prosper at the detriment of others."
- TOMMY WITT, CGCS

Randy Nichols worked at Cherokee Town and Country Club in Dunwoody, Ga., for 27 years and now has his own consulting business. He agrees with Mangum that employees need to understand the expectations of employers.

"If someone does it wrong the first time, I feel like it's my fault that I haven't told them exactly what my expectations were," Nichols says. "I'd sit him down and give him 90 days."

As a consultant, Nichols says he would never go on a property without first telling the superintendent.

"I tell them right up front, if you don't want me there, I won't be there," he says. "I try to help superintendents. I'm not there to fire someone. It's not my ambition to fire someone. I'm on the side of the superintendent. I'm there to help

him keep his job."

ON THE UP AND UP

Tommy Witt, CGCS, director of golf course operations at Northmoor Country Club in Chicago, says there are many superintendents of noble character and integrity who will always try to do the right thing when it comes to pursuing a job.

"And likewise, there will be others who aren't as committed to fairness, if you will, and might try to prosper at the detriment of others," he says.

The business isn't as bad as many other professions in the world, but it's not like it was 20 or 30 years ago, Witt says.

"Managing golf courses is big business," he says. "It's sad to say, but anything goes. That's the evolution of our business. It's like any other part of corporate America. There are superintendents who will try to get a job someone else already has. There's no positive attribute about a person who would do that. But the GCSAA can't suspend or exile them. The right way to look for a job is – whether local, national or international – to set up a good network. Look at the GCSAA employment service. It's your network of people across the country. You're aware of when things are going to happen. When it happens, you apply for it."

A disturbing undercurrent in the industry is typified by Witt's unidentified friend.

"A friend of mine was trying to get a certain job, and I said, 'That job isn't open yet. They haven't terminated that superintendent. It's not a job yet.' And he said, 'If I don't go for it, somebody else will.'"

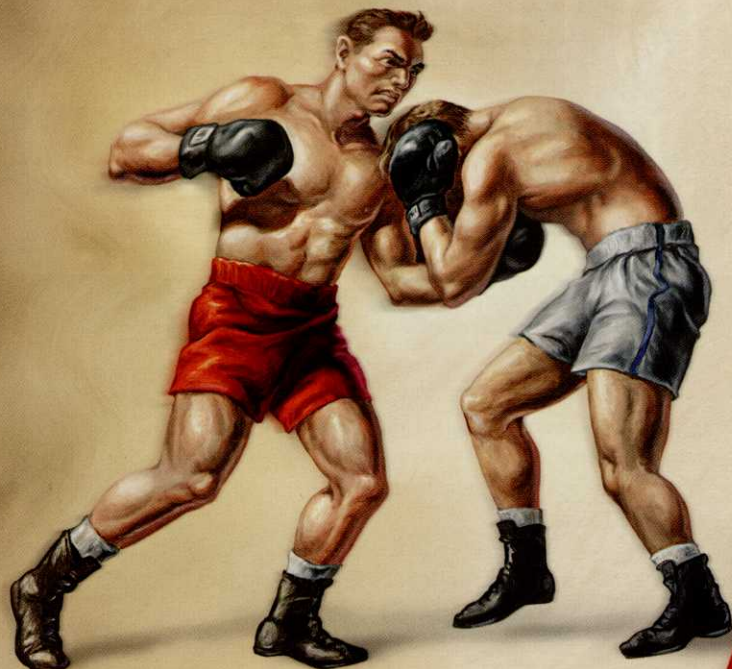
Witt asks if anyone would want to be treated that way.

"If you apply correctly, get your credentials, support material, letters of recommendation, resume, work history, curriculum vitae and photos and send them in, you'll get a look," he says. "I understand people can be desperate for jobs. It's easier to understand why someone might do that, but desperation attempts rarely work."

"You may land a position under somewhat suspect practices, but there's a good chance that it will take you a long time, if ever, to outgrow what you've done with superintendents in the area," he adds. "There's a good chance that you would be an outcast because that's not what most guys are about." **GCI**

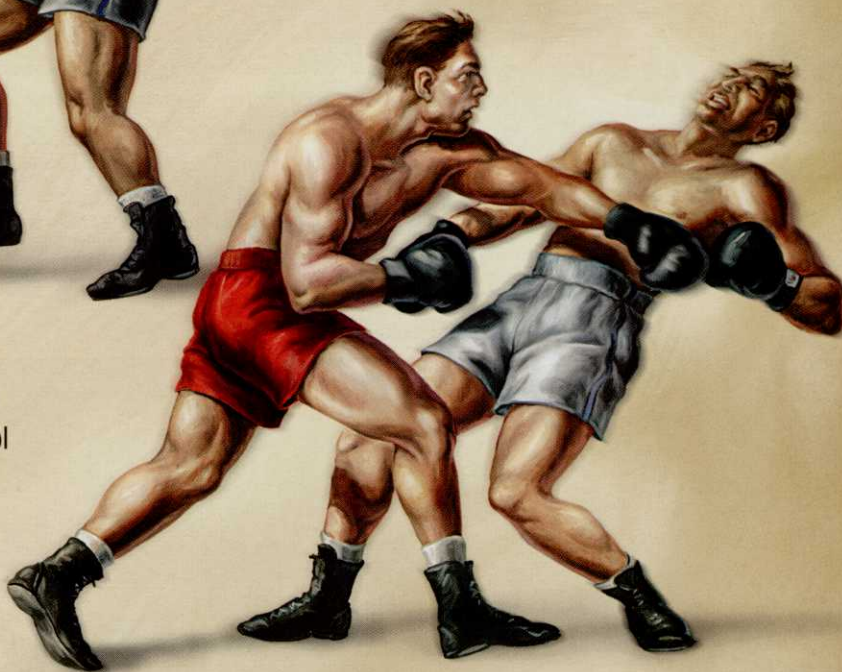
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Harmony In Growth

A NUTRITIONAL BALANCE

Soil tests pinpoint subsurface needs. By T.R. Massey

There are many nebulous factors working in tandem when keeping turfgrass healthy. Water, fertilizer, pesticides and mowing programs are important. But looking out over a verdant stretch on a golf course tells only part of the story of what's happening with the turfgrass growing there. The true tale lies in the soil beneath the surface.

For a healthy turf stand, the soil must be in proper balance, and even more important are the nutrients contained therein. The proper mix of food for turfgrass plants must be in harmony. This is determined through soil and nutrient analysis – an effective tool used by superintendents.

(continued on page 68)



Laboratories can analyze soil for pH, magnesium, phosphorus and salt levels. Photo: Dakota Analytical

BUILDER EXCELLENCE AWARDS



Chambers Bay Golf Course in University Place, Wash. Photo: Aidan Bradley

A SUPPLEMENT TO

GOLF COURSE
INDUSTRY

"Pinehurst No. 8 is the first course ever established with Penn G-2. The greens continue to be excellent."

Jeff Hill, CGCS, Superintendent
Pinehurst No. 8

"Our members and guests enjoy superior conditions on a daily basis."

Paul Jett, CGCS, Superintendent
Pinehurst No. 2

"Penn G-2 allows us to have excellent putting green quality throughout the season."

Kyle Brown, Superintendent
Pinehurst No. 1 and Pinehurst No. 4

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Steve Wilson, Superintendent
Pinehurst No. 3 and Pinehurst No. 5

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"Our first experience with Penn G-2 came in 1993. We liked its density, ability to withstand wear and most importantly its ability to provide championship quality putting surfaces throughout the season. All eight courses have had great success as the site for a number of events, including the 1999 and 2005 U.S. OPEN Championships on Pinehurst #2. We are very pleased with the decision we made."

- Bob Farren, CGCS, Golf Course and Grounds Manager



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pictured from left to right:
Bob Farren, CGCS, Golf Course and Grounds Manager
Paul Jett, CGCS, Superintendent Pinehurst No. 2

The GCI staff presented the 2008 *Golf Course Industry* Builder Excellence Awards at the Golf Course Builders Associations of America's awards dinner, which occurred in conjunction with the Golf Industry Show in Orlando, Fla., in February. Four awards were presented. Frontier Golf won the Affinity Award for best environmental project with the restoration of The Old Course at Bedford Springs Resort in Pennsylvania. (See page 4B.) Genesis Golf Builders took home the Legacy Award for the best renovation project with the OSU Scarlet Course in Columbus, Ohio. (See page 10B) Seaside Golf Development earned the Heritage Award for best reconstruction with the Pensacola Country Club in Florida. (See page 18B.) And Heritage Links won the Creative Award for the best new construction project with Chambers Bay Golf Course in University Place, Wash. (See page 26B.) The following four articles depict these award-winning projects.

FROM THE GCBA A

The Golf Course Builders Association of America's members are dedicated to the professionalism of golf course construction and renovation. For more than three decades, they've been providing golf development with the best built courses in America. GCBA A members are proud to participate in the annual *Golf Course Industry* Builder Excellence Awards that recognize the best builders in four categories: best new construction project, best reconstruction project, best renovation project and best environmental project.

On behalf of the GCBA A's entire membership, I would like to congratulate the 2008 Builder Excellence Award winners and *Golf Course Industry* for this excellent program recognizing these outstanding builders and providing this competition to strive for these prestigious awards. The program also provides an incentive for an entire team of builders to strive to be the best at what they do.

Bob Pinson, GCBA A president
President
Course Crafters
Gainesville, Ga.



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A river runs through it

A stream dictates the restoration of a historic course in Pennsylvania *By John Torsiello*



The Old Course at Bedford Springs has featured the work of three notable architects: Spencer Oldham, A.W. Tillinghast and Donald Ross. Photo: Photographic Design

Like a Renoir or Monet painting that has had its beauty stolen by years of neglect and mishandling, the historic Old Course at Bedford Springs Resort in south central Pennsylvania was a sad sight just a few years ago.

Undermaintained and victim to the ravages of a stream run amok, this unique work of three notable architects – Spencer Oldham, A.W. Tillinghast and Donald Ross – retained only a visage of its former style and beauty.

The new owner of the resort, Bedford Resort Partners, decided something had to be done to save the masterpiece and to bring its property into the pantheon of great Northeast resorts. In the spring of 2005, it hired Ron Forse, a golf course renovation expert, to plot the rebirth of The Old Course. Now, the “new” Old Course at Bedford Springs Resort has reemerged with a remarkable luster and vitality.

“The course almost was in a comatose state when I was asked to look at it,” says Forse, who has reworked Salem Country Club in Peabody, Mass. (an original Donald Ross) and Newport Country Club in Newport, R.I. (an original A.W. Tillinghast). “I saw a course that was unkempt and old but one that was well loved by the people of the region. When I saw the features that were still there – the green complexes, bunkers and mounding – it was fascinating. It stoked our fires and got our creative juices flowing. It was a good opportunity to do something special.”

Forse collaborated on the restoration with Jim Nagle, a design associate with Hopwood, Pa.-based Forse Design.

The course’s architectural intrigue lied in the fact it was a merger of three classic styles: Oldham’s chocolate drops and geometric S-curved and donut bunkers; Tillinghast’s classic touches that included Tiny Tim, a storied par 3; and Ross’s classic springs course with small, raised greens. Oldham designed the original 18-hole course in 1895, and Tillinghast’s redesign changed the layout from 18 to nine holes in 1912. In 1923, Ross redesigned and expanded the course back to its original 18-hole layout. In 1984, the course was designated a National Register Historic District.

“We realized when we took over here that for us to be at a level where we wanted to be, in competition with The Greenbrier and The Homestead, we needed to have a golf course of the quality guests would appreciate,” says Keith Evans, managing partner of Bedford Resort



The stream project received fast-track approval from state and federal agencies because it enhanced and protected the natural environment of the property. Photo: Photographic Design

Partners. “Our objective was to celebrate the history of the golf course. We knew Ron Forse and his firm had done a lot of work on historic courses and he had a passion for it.”

A QUICK ONE

The owners spared little expense making their dream come true. About \$7 million was earmarked for the project, which started in June 2006. Because the owners wanted the course to be operational as quickly as possible for its guests, the project had a remarkably short time line. It had to be completed by October 2006 and be playable by July 2007 when the resort reopened.

“It was a quick completion date,” says Nick Mazzella, business manager of Jones Mill, Pa.-based Frontier Golf. “We had more than 100 employees working on site sometimes, and we worked two shifts. We did some cart path work under the lights, and it was nothing short of amazing how smoothly things went. We got a big break with the weather, which was good for the most part.”

RUN, SHOBER, RUN

A complete overhaul of the course was called for, from the irrigation system and drainage to fairways, greens, bunkers and tees. One of the

most vital components of the project was the restoration of Shobers Run, which dissects the course. The stream had become severely eroded and filled with sand and silt. It often flowed out of its banks during heavy rains and was causing considerable damage to the course, as well as making it almost impossible to keep the course open on days when it rained heavily.

“The project couldn’t work without the stream restoration being a major part of it,” Mazzella says. “It was absolutely the single greatest factor to finishing the golf course the way we wanted it finished.”

Every day, the stream was struggling to stabilize itself, Forse says. The erosion, silt and sand buildup raised the level of everything. Superintendent Dave Swartzel knew the stream was at the root of many of the course’s problems.

“Every time we received an inch of rain, the course had to be shut down,” Swartzel says. “Without doing the stream work, it didn’t make sense to put all that money into a renovation.”

Bedford Resort Partners called in Lititz, Pa.-based Land Studies, an environmental restoration and planning firm, to prepare an analysis of the stream and devise a game plan. It proposed to remove layers of silt and sand from 18 inches to 4-feet deep on the stream bed, as well as create an 80-foot buffer zone on each side of the

stream serving as wetland habitat for a variety of flora and fauna and helping to protect the course from flooding.

The stream work cost \$1 million and was spread out over 6,200 linear feet. The stream project, which included the building of several new bridges over Shobers Run, received fast-track approval from various state and federal agencies because it was seen as enhancing and protecting the natural environment of the property.

"Once the government agencies came to the site, and we explained exactly how it was going to work, how the water flow was going to be and the wetlands that were going to be created, they got on board," Evans says. "I remember walking out of the meeting we had about the issue and thinking what Land Studies wanted to do was pretty radical. There were going to be no retaining walls, and it was going to take the stream back to where it was 200 years ago. Now, we couldn't be more pleased. We have a gold medal trout stream where the native brook trout are returning in numbers, new wetlands and an unbelievable scenic ribbon of beauty passing through the course."

"We created 11 acres of wetland with the new flood plain, and we have all kinds of wildlife in there, from blue heron to deer," Swartzel says. "It's a big win for the environment, for us from a maintenance standpoint, and for the golfers with the way the stream comes into play on a number of holes and adds to the beauty of the course."

The only real surprise Mazzella's workers encountered during the project was new, natural springs they kept unearthing.

"Natural springs are littered throughout the course," Mazzella says. "What we did was chan-

What the judges said

"This project was successful primarily because of the creek restoration, which allowed them to recapture a capacity for storage during storms and to eliminate floods. It also gave them a place to drain the golf course features they were working on to make the project work. It was something they hadn't done before, but it was very well done. They were able to deal with the environmental compliance issues, especially those related to the fish that were saved. The problem-solving ability of the contractor and its ability to plan the work well and aggressively solve problems was important."

– Ray Davies, director of golf course maintenance and construction, CourseCo

"They had to deal with a creek that ran through the property, reconstructing that creek and creating a large, significant flood plain following that creek. They handled dealing with the environmental restrictions and the permits and approvals required for that very well. They made it all work. It sounds like the benefits of what they did turned out well in terms of aesthetics and being able to handle floods better."

– Chris Wilczynski, principal, Arthur Hills/Steve Forrest and Associates

"They did many creative things dealing with the creek that runs through the property. The work they did to restore the creek bed and create the flood plain runoff storage was an excellent thing to do. It looks like they learned on the job. The original subcontractor that was brought in did the first the first 100 feet, and Frontier did the rest of the 4,900 feet. It was an extensive piece of work, and they did a great job."

– Walt Lankau, president, Stow Acres Country Club in Stow, Mass.

"Frontier increased the flood plain by restoring 5,000 linear feet of stream bank 80-feet wide, which increased the stream elevation. They also used all of the excavated material that deposited throughout the years of flooding as topsoil throughout the facility and didn't haul anything away."

– Jim Roney, director of golf courses and grounds, Saucon Valley Country Club in Bethlehem, Pa.

"Frontier was able to handle some unforeseens on the project and was able to offer solutions, value engineer the situation and come up with positive solutions to get around the problem and make everything great at the end of the day."

– Rex VanHoose, senior v.p./managing architect, Jacobsen Hardy Golf Course Design

AT A GLANCE

Old Course at Bedford Springs Resort

Web site: www.bedfordspringsresort.com

Location: Bedford, Pa.

Type of project: Restoration

Cost: \$4.3 million

Project started: June 2006

Project completed: October 2006

Course opened: July 2007

Architectural firm: Forse Design

Builder: Frontier Golf

Superintendent: Dave Swartzel

Owner: Bedford Resort Partners

nel the spring water into the stream corridor, which allows the golf course to function better from a drainage standpoint."

The stream work also influenced how Forse reworked some of the holes along Shober's Run. In some instances, the architects were able to dictate to Land Studies that the stream couldn't be moved because they didn't want to alter the original design intent. On holes seven and eight, the stream had to stay where it was because Forse and Nagle didn't want to deviate from what Ross created in 1923.

"On the second hole, there was no question the position of the stream left of the hole had to remain," Nagle says. "The second dates back to 1895. We didn't want to impact the layout of such a venerable old golf hole."

HISTORICAL INTEGRITY

A considerable benefit of the stream work was the excavation of about 65,000 tons of valuable fill for use on the golf course and driving range.

"We were able to raise almost every green using the footprint of what was there for historical integrity," Forse says. "Every green was sitting too low and had too much pitch for today's green speeds. We were also able to use the fill to build up some of the fairways as much as three feet."

The team chose A1 and A4 bentgrass for the greens, a mix of SR1119, MacKenzie and Southshore bentgrass on the fairways and tees, a blend of five types of Kentucky Bluegrasses for the rough, and various fescues for the second cut of rough and the native rough.