

Pebble Beach Being Rebuilt for 1929 Amateur

By JACK FULTON, Jr.

THE National Amateur championship of 1929 will be held over the Pebble Beach course at Del Monte, California, and since the time the tournament was awarded to this Pacific Coast links over a year ago, a great deal of remodeling and reconstructing has been done.

It is a serious matter nowadays for a club to accept the National Amateur tournament. Not only must the course measure up in all respects to the calibre of courses used in previous years, but each and every hole must be a so-called "test" of golf. Every club in the bag must be called on not once but several times in the round, and yet, with all of this, the course must be fair and punish only the ill-directed or poorly-placed shot.

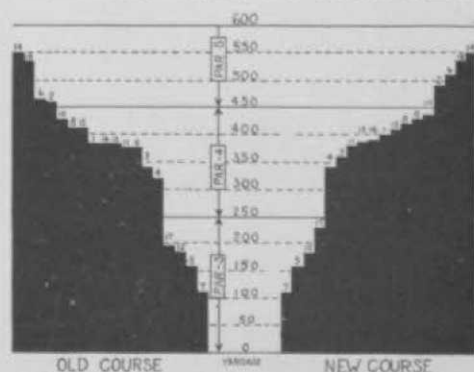
The graph on this page will tell the story of the changes to which Pebble Beach has been subjected. On the left appears, diagrammatically, the profile of the old course wherein the holes are charted in the order of their length. It will be noticed that there was considerable lack of diversity in shot requirements. There were five holes all approximately 375 yards in length, and two other holes only a few yards longer than a good par-4.

Notice on the right of the diagram how these holes have been modified. The course has been lengthened 300 yards, and this added length has been apportioned among the holes in such a manner as to give almost perfect regularity to the "step-up" on the graph shown on the right above. It indicates that the new Pebble Beach course has a balance of distance seldom found on any individual 18-hole layout.

Under normal conditions, the "ideal" course has four par-3 holes, (or one-shot-ers)—one an extremely short hole; one a decidedly long one, and two in between. Notice how well the new layout meets this requirement. There are four par-5 holes on an ideal layout, two of which will demand two full wood shots, and a delicate third; the other two requiring two exacting full-shots from the best player's bags.

In this portion of the ideal layout, the Pebble Beach links also conforms closely. The new 2nd and 6th holes, formerly decidedly weak because they were only a few yards longer than the limits of par-4, have been lengthened more than 40 yards each, which will give a character and force and nicety of play not present formerly.

The real beauty, however, on the new Pebble Beach layout lies in the almost



perfect step-up of the par-4 holes. Five of them are under 400 yards, holes requiring a lofted club shot after a good drive. The other five are 400 yards or longer, and call for long drives plus distance iron shots.

With all these changes in Pebble Beach, to which should be added a complete reconstruction of all putting greens, no attempt has been made to increase the difficulty of the course for the average player. The high handicap man, so long as he chooses the route designated for him, and plays reasonably straight, will find the course, if anything, somewhat easier than formerly. This is accomplished by, in many cases, widening the fairways which, for the high handicap man, more than offsets the additional yardage of the various holes. Sufficient openings onto the greens have been left in each case for all reasonable requirements.

The championship golfer, however, has not been dealt with so kindly, and with



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the new layout a poorly played shot will be followed by one of exceptional accuracy in order to get on in par strokes. Considerable use is made of the so-called "optional route" system, whereby the long hitter may materially better himself by flirting with a difficult carry by means of a well controlled shot. In each such case there is a safe conservative route offered for the player who is not so sure of himself.

The whole undertaking was by far the most difficult piece of reconstruction work, so far as designing is concerned, that has been attempted on the Coast. The fact that the course was to be done over for a national event, the first ever to be held on the Pacific Coast, called for out of the ordinary consideration. The class of the country will pass on it. The obstacles the designer was forced to overcome were numerous, and must have seemed at times insurmountable. Since the course is operated by the Del Monte Hotel Corporation, hundreds of good golfers from all parts of the country have seen the work in progress, and it is safe to say that nearly as many suggestions were offered, some of which were good.

Such problems as additional area for the better handling of galleries, water pressure and volume on extensions to new fairways and greens, adequate additional drainage, and many others required considerable study, problems encountered only in such remodeling operations for a national championship, and seldom, if ever, presenting themselves in the building of new courses.

All construction has been completed and seeded, and the next fifteen months' nursing, to produce a suitable turf, will be in most competent hands.

There is every reason to believe that the crack amateurs contesting in the 1929 event, will find this course equally as difficult as those over which they played in other years.

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