



Brookside's "front yard" is hedged in to keep waiting golfers and onlookers from annoying those on the tee.

## WHY BROOKSIDE IS POPULAR

By D. SCOTT  
CHISHOLM

*Teamwork of operating officials gives  
Pasadena a model munny layout*

**T**HE municipally owned (Pasadena, Calif.) Brookside Park course offers about everything any golfer could desire, and, in my candid opinion, a little bit more. More because you can actually play golf at Brookside 364 days in each year. You can't play on New Year's Day owing to the fact that the fairways are used as a parking space for football fanatics attending the Rose Bowl game. It's a good No. 3 iron from the seventeenth tee at Brookside to the West goalposts in the Bowl. Upwards of 20,000 automobiles are scattered all over the fairways while the greens are rope-enclosed with one man in charge of each green.

Brookside golfing activities were started in the spring of 1928 and eighteen holes were opened for play on November 1. William P. Bell, golf architect of the Western slopes, designed and supervised the construction and his job was no sinecure from the start. The course, like the Rose Bowl, is built in the Arroyo Seco, a river bed filled with huge boulders and small rocks when Bell took over his job. It looked about as hopeless a job as any architect could imagine. More than 44,000 yards of topsoil had to be hauled in from other parts after the rocks were cleared.

I am now referring to the first course of 18 holes only—the other nine hole course came later. Officials decided to install a water system that called for half of the course being supplied with the snap valve system and half with pop-ups. Fairways are of Bermuda, while all the greens are cocoos bent.

Not a single green has been out of commission at any time since the day the course was opened. A great wealth of sand, perfect drainage and fertilizer is the secret of it all, together with the fact that when the greens were first made, they were moulded with native sand and rich topsoil and perfectly drained under all conditions. It may rain cats and dogs in the forenoon of any one day, yet the course is in almost perfect playing shape in early afternoon. Cocoos bent, officials found, provides superb putting surfaces in Southern California and it is a well known fact that the greens at Brookside, even when the summer temperature is close to 103, present as fine a putting surface as any to be found anywhere. They never



They have the responsibility of Brookside—Bill Nicholas, superintendent of parks, and Bill Hickey, Brookside pro.

give trouble and brown-patch is unknown. Care is taken not to permit any foreign grasses or weeds to contaminate them.

Water costs like the very dickens in the semi-tropical climate of Southern California. That is to be expected. Eastern greenkeepers find it hard to realize that the cost is so very high. The annual water bill for Brookside's 27 holes runs around \$10,000. The bill for last July, not unusually warm, amounted to \$2,200. That's no guess work—it's out of the city records. There are no unwatered places at Brookside. It is one huge, beautiful mass of green covering 140 acres. Whatever rough there is skirting the fairways is not rough grass—it's rough stones mixed with course gravel, desert-like.

#### A Team That Really Clicks

The city of Pasadena and the Brookside course in particular is very fortunate in having Bill Nicholas as the superintendent of Parks. He is an engineer of outstanding ability. Nicholas works hand in hand with the Brookside professional, Bill Hickey, and with the Brookside greenkeeper, W. H. Sill. Jimmy Sinclair is the assistant pro. They form one happy family and such unity of action could not fail to click in any kind of undertaking. Nicholas, himself a golfer (and that, lest you are not aware, means a great deal when the welfare of a municipal golf course is at stake) is a crank on having the color of his greens as brilliantly emerald the

year around as is possible, because he then knows he won't have any worries about them going back on him. And those who have gazed upon a green sown to Cocos knows what a eye-resting hue of green it presents.

Practice putting space is a very important and an extensive proposition at Brookside. There are two practice greens—both in front of the clubhouse, and they are kept up with the same immaculate care and attention as are the regular greens on the course itself. There is no charge for the use of them at any time. Nicholas told me they have about 20,000 feet of turf in these two greens alone. It should be explained that the front of the clubhouse is only used for parking purposes and for these two putting greens. All other activities are to the back of the house and it is necessary for one to walk through the clubhouse in order to reach Bill Hickey's golf shop and the first tee. Maybe, it is because of the inaccessibility of these putting greens that no charge is made for their use. It would not pay to keep an attendant on hand for that purpose alone.

The rambling Spanish-type clubhouse, soon to be enlarged, was built for \$40,000 which was left in the will of a big-hearted citizen who had a desire to do something for golf in Pasadena. It was well spent, I must say. The cafe part of it, first class in every way, is leased out and Nicholas told me that both the lessee and the city make money.

#### Pro-Shop to Be Moved to Better Spot

Bill Hickey's shop, at present in the wrong location for him to do the ultimate of business, will soon be shifted to a spot close by the starter's box. That's the place for a golf shop—not at the far end of a club building where it is hard to find. Bill, at that, has a most attractive shop and he always has plenty of stock on hand. His display of photographic enlargements is among the most complete in the country and many a new customer is drawn into his selling quarters by the sight of them. "They all love to look at photographs of the great. I'm going to plaster every available inch of the new shop with Chisholm photos," said Bill. Hickey is a former St. Louis boy who acted as professional at the famous Agua Caliente

club for a time. He is extremely popular and does a whale of a business in teaching and merchandising.

Although another nine holes were put in use a few years ago, play has become so heavy and Brookside has become so popular that another nine are soon to be built by Billie Bell. Greens are already moulded with native sand and sand traps have been designed.

Holes will be of a different character than most of the others, as many tees will be located on hillsides. The new holes will, as a general thing, be longer and the entire layout will be more of a real championship test. It is figured the new nine, when tied up with the present nine hole unit as the second eighteen hole course, will measure well over 6,800 yards and will prove a stiff test for the best of players. The city of Pasadena at present owns and operates 526 acres in the Arroyo Seco; 80 acres are devoted to children's playgrounds, picnic grounds and baseball diamonds, the Rose Bowl takes up some 60 acres in conjunction with its parking space and the rest of the property is being utilized, or will be in time, for golfing purposes.

#### Brookside Draws All Classes

There is no more cosmopolitan golf course to be found anywhere in this country. Bill Hickey may be giving a half hour's lesson to his iceman in the morning and in the afternoon he may have a multi-millionaire as his pupil. Jock Mac-tavish, plumber's helper, may be put in a foursome with Andrew McMellow, president of the All-American Tin Can corporation of Delaware. They all mingle good naturedly at Brookside because they are properly introduced at the first tee by intelligently minded officials whose duty it is to see all leave the first tee in a happy frame of mind. The green fees are \$1 a day and \$5 for a monthly ticket that is NOT good on Saturday, Sunday or a holiday. Being adjacent to such \$20 a day winter hostleries as the Hotel Huntington, Hotel Vista Del Arroyo and others of almost similar rates and standards, it is no wonder one can see Duesenbergs and Cadillacs parked alongside cut-down roadsters and broken-down motorcycles. One look at the license plates and you will see almost every state in the Union represented. To this writer this was a most extraordinary sight—I've seen such a

thing in other resort communities but never to the same extent.

Skilled and attractive operation of the Brookside course as a public recreation utility accounts for a gross operating profit of \$7,231.95 during the year ending June 30, 1937. Interest charges and cost of capital improvements reduced this to a net operating profit for the year of \$4,018.14.

Including 972 monthly permit holders' play at the \$5 per month rate, and play of 77 holders of the \$7.50 per month tickets which permits Saturday, Sunday and holiday play, the Brookside play for the latest fiscal year was:

Daily—\$1.00 Fee .....	17,545
18 Hole Course—Before 8 A.M. and After 3:30 P.M. (50c).....	10,135
9 Hole Course—For the year (50c fee) .....	12,819
18 Hole Course—(75c fee).....	517
18 Hole Course—(\$2.00 fee).....	12
18 Hole Course—(\$3.00 fee).....	59
9 Hole Course—(35c fee).....	17,113
9 Hole Course—(15c fee)	
Re-play .....	3,191
Monthly Permits .....	11,503
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Total Number of Players.....	72,894
Total Players—18 Hole Course .....	39,771
Total Players—9 Hole Course .....	33,123
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72,894

Average number of games played by permit holders was 10.96.

#### White Bear Retires Vardon After Twenty-Four Years on Job

**T**OM Vardon has served the White Bear Yacht club as golf pro for 24 years and has done a fine, faithful job for a grand bunch of gentlemen sportsmen. Tom now is in poor health and in no condition to continue with his work. So the club has retired Tom, furnishing him with his house and pensioning him at approximately half his former salary for the rest of his days.

That's the kind of treatment from gentlemen sportsmen that shows recognition of loyal and competent service. The matter of pension plans is one seldom given consideration at golf clubs even though the basic principle of the organizations is sportsmanship that rewards fidelity.