

Twin Short Holes Feature Nassau County Course

By JOHN M. BRENNAN

Almost 23 years to the day that slim Charles Augustus Lindbergh lifted his monoplane, the Spirit of St. Louis, from nearby Roosevelt Field, less than a good brassie shot away, J. Russel Sprague, chief executive of sprawling Nassau County, snipped a tape at the first tee to officially open the new White course of Nassau County Park on the Salisbury Plains of Long Island.

Sprague conceived the idea of this vast three-course park area on what used to be the links empire of the late J. J. Lannin, former owner of the Boston Red Sox when Babe Ruth was a pitching and slugging sensation. As he cut the tape, Robert Trent Jones, widely known golf architect, smiled and with reason.

Jones, to the best knowledge of golf oracles, had introduced an innovation in building the White course of 6,378 yards, diagonally across from the swank Meadow Brook Club, where polo vies with golf.



Nassau Chief Executive J. Russel Sprague cuts the tape to mark opening of new White course featuring twin par-3 holes at Salisbury, L.I. Looking on are, left, Robert Trent Jones, architect and Nassau Public Works Commissioner, John C. Guibert.

The unique feature of the White course is exact duplicate short holes on all par threes. The purpose of these twin holes is to avoid congestion that occurs on short holes during weekends and heavy week day play.

"This innovation is quite apt to revolutionize golf course construction throughout the world," declared Sprague as he cut the ribbon for four Long Island pros—Pat Cici of the host club, Jack Mallon of Cold Springs CC, Willie Klein of Wheat-

ley Hills (and La Gorce, Fla., during the winter) and Al (Red) Brosch of Cherry Valley Club, the perennial district champion. An eagle three at the last hole by Mallon gave him and Klein a one-up victory. Mallon set a record of 68, with a glittering 32, four under, on the back nine. The first nine par is also 36, giving the layout a 72-stroke rating.

The colorful opening-day ceremonies, held at just about the spot where Lindbergh began gaining altitude on May 20, 1927, included a march to the first tee from the temporary clubhouse to the Scottish marches of a bagpipe played by John C. MacKenzie of the St. Andrews Society of New York. Public Works Commissioner John C. Guibert, who rules over the Nassau Park system, introduced Sprague, Robert Trent Jones and others.

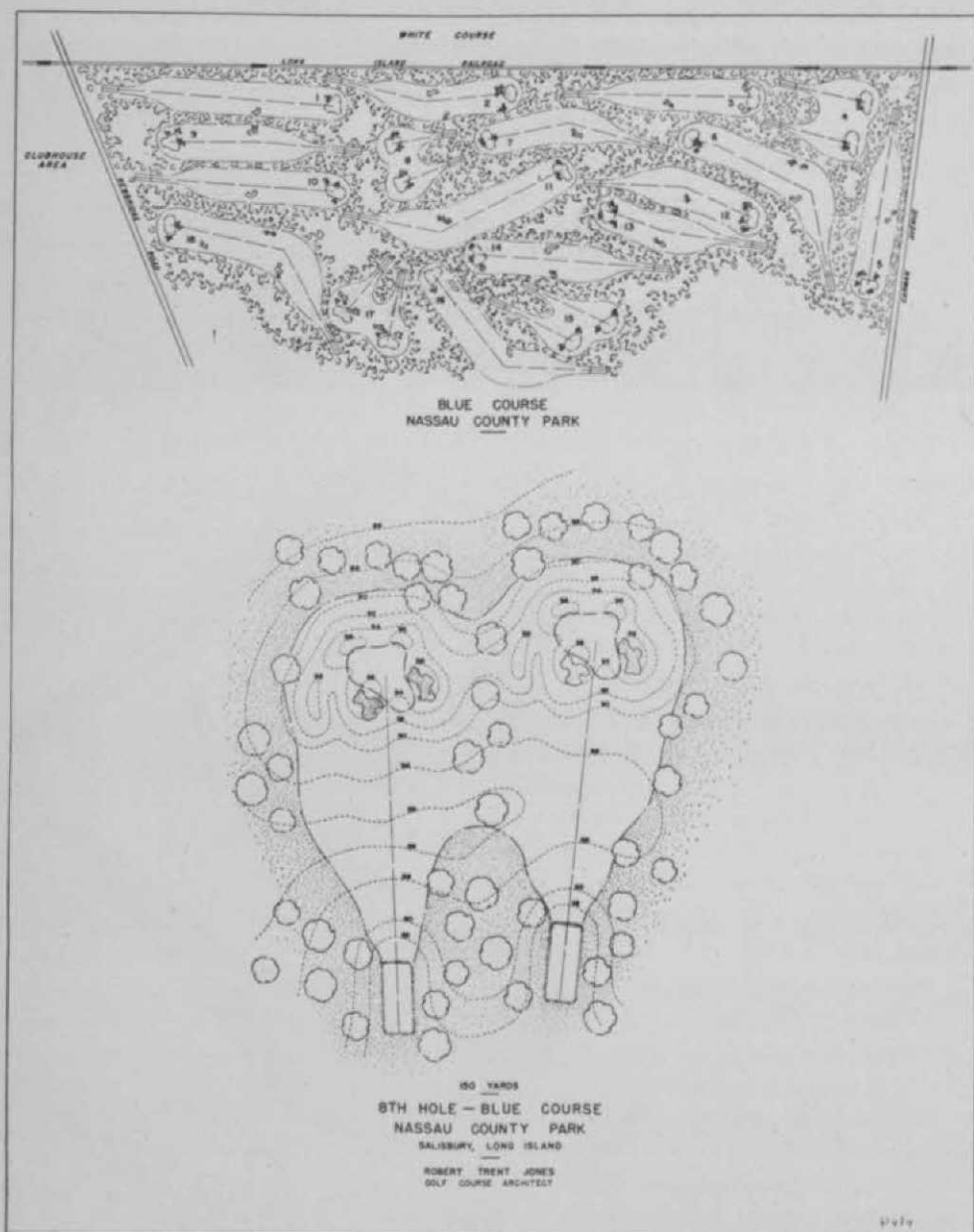
Twin Holes to Speed Play

Jones expressed the opinion that most municipal and public links of the future will incorporate the twin-hole idea on the short holes to eliminate traffic congestion.

"There will be no jamming of three and four foursomes at the tee of the par three holes of this White course," said Jones. "By having exact duplicate short holes, there is always an open or free hole to keep the flow of play progressing and since these duplicate holes are truly exact copies of each other, there is no choice between the two."

While Nassau County is the first to bring the double short holes into play, the idea as a log-breaking of the traffic jam on public courses has taken hold and is now proposed for several municipal courses throughout the nation, among them being the new Marine Park course to be built by New York City near the Idlewild Airport on reclaimed ground; Columbus, Ohio, municipal course and the new municipal courses at Denver, Colo.

The White course gives the residents of Nassau County (non-residents are barred) three courses, one of which is temporary and will be abandoned when another, to be known as the Blue, is opened next autumn. The temporary course now being used is the old No. 1 of the Salisbury layout. The Blue layout will greatly resemble the White, with the double holes. The other course is the Red, which doesn't have the double holes on the par-threes.



That means that when completed, Nassau Park, with its double holes will have actually 54 holes, plus the eight double holes, or 62 in all. When Lannin operated the Salisbury tract in the pioneer days of golf on Long Island, he had five courses on the 950-acre layout. It was necessary to lease an additional 150 acres for the No. 5 course.

Residents Demand Fine Courses

Nassau County, the fastest growing section from a standpoint of population in the country, has maintained its policy of

building superior golf courses in a section thickly dotted with excellent private links. There are dozens of world-famous private links, including the Garden City GC, within a five-mile radius of the Salisbury site.

It was a challenge of a man-sized job that faced Jones when he signed to construct the three courses on the virtually abandoned Lannin empire. The table-top terrain had to be molded into a gently rolling, beautifully landscaped greensward. The county officials demanded

courses designed so that they would be difficult for the high scorers, yet at the same time provide excellent tests for the low scoring players. This was accomplished by the strategic positions in which the traps have been placed, both in the fairways and at the generous-sized greens which average 10,000 square feet. The traps placed in the fairways are beyond the reach of the average golfer's normal range, therefore presenting no particular difficulty to him.

The greens have been plateaued and shaped in dune-like form with rolling contours. They are ample in size (the smallest is 7,000 square feet) to allow for frequent changing of the pins as well as to make adequate targets for the higher handicap players. As the low-handicap player is always playing for the pin, he must make an accurate shot to the pin position, or he will be faced with a cunning putt over the undulating green surface to get his par. The high-handicap player will have no difficulty getting one over par and is unlikely to have the higher scores that are normally produced on the penal type courses.

The fairways are wide, the average being 200 feet. They are cut from the tees to and around the greens, making the course one of park-like beauty.

The courses are all irrigated from wells dug at strategic positions, which means that tees, fairways and greens should always be lush in spite of the weather conditions.

Landscaping is Feature

In order to give Nassau County Park that third-dimension, officials recently awarded Erthal and Grand of Brooklyn a \$52,170 contract to landscape the new Blue course. This includes planting of 2,472 trees. These include 748 shade specimens such as oak, maple, beech, sassafras, redbud, cherry and dogwood; 932 evergreens. The planting is being done around tees, in the rough and along borders.

Henkels and McCoy of Philadelphia seeded the Blue course last autumn. The cold spell of March caused some bare spots and these recently have been reseeded.

It was necessary to remove some 100,000 yards of sand from a nearby lake area, which will eventually become part of the grandiose park system that will become a virtual play paradise, with an amphitheater, section for model airplane enthusiasts, a picnic area, softball fields, etc. Some 20,000 yards of topsoil was also dug from the lake region.

The holes of the three permanent courses have been broken up in their design into such length and variety that every club in the bag will be used. The

sequence of holes has been so developed that variable lengths of holes follow each other.

Stanley Thompson, noted Canadian designer, collaborated with Jones in shaping the White and Blue courses. Frank Squires is the greenkeeper, Tom Mallon the superintendent of the park and Frank Hurley the manager of golf.

Last year, the handsome pro shop, one of the largest in the country, was officially opened. Pat Cici, who got his start with George Heron at Meadow Brook, is the head pro. His associate is Walter Kozak, a former Met PGA champion, who was at Pomonok CC, Flushing, for many years.

The golf shop, which was erected at a cost of \$100,000, was designed by the late Clifford C. Wendehack, who also blueprinted the vast clubhouse which will be erected in the near future.

A fulltime permit to play any of the Nassau Park courses sells for \$60. At least one of the courses will remain all year around. For weekend and holiday play, the permit costs \$50. For those who like week day play, the fee is \$25.

The green fee for weekends and holidays is \$2 and after 4 P.M. \$1. The week day fee is \$1 and after 4 P.M. 75 cents.

Officials said that more than 10,000 permits will be issued for 1950. Patronage, in spite of unfavorable weather, has increased over 20 per cent over last year's record figures.

Sprague fears that in spite of the twin par-three holes on two of the courses, plus the additional course facilities, there will be traffic jams on the fairways within another few years. That's because of the tremendous population increase and keen golf interest in that section of the country.

Top Pro Stars Aid Jaycees in Junior Golf Promotion

Transcriptions of five minute interviews with golf's top players are being made available to state and local Junior Chambers of Commerce in preparation for the state qualifying tournaments prior to the U. S. Jaycee National Junior Amateur Championship at Ames, Iowa in August. Interviews arranged by Hugh Egan, Director, Sports and Recreation Committee, USJCC, will make it possible for thousands of youngsters throughout the nation to hear the advice and encouragement offered by the game's top competitors. Interviews with the following are available from Egan's office, 209 South State St., Chicago 4, Ill., for radio broadcast: Skip Alexander, Clayton Heafner, Chick Harbert, Johnny Palmer, Ben Hogan, Jimmy Thomson, Sam Snead, Gene Sarazen, George Fazio, Jim Turnesa and golf writers O. B. Keeler of the Atlanta Journal, Larry Robinson, N.Y. World-Telegram and Sun and Bob Harlow, publisher of Golf World.