

Making the Best Use of Golf Architecture

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In all games each contestant first fights himself; in most games he also fights an opponent who makes every legitimate effort to upset his play. In golf the opponent does nothing to interfere with his adversary, but the playing field, which in every other sport is static, is an active agent in the battle. Baseball is not improved by a rough playing surface which makes the handling of ground balls uncertain, but the recovery play in golf, which stamps a champion as such, is built up by the eccentric variations and features of the course itself. Strategic policy in most sports stems usually from situations developed by the opposing efforts and reactions of participants, but in golf the playing field, standardized in other games, dictates the winning program.

A paradox exists in most games in that the simpler the basic concept, the more complex and baffling the contest engendered. Golf in particular is characterized by simplicity, play fundamentally being governed by one rule only, to wit: Strike and keep striking at the ball without in any way improving the lie until it lodges in the hole. Few if any sports develop more problems than golf.

Use Bountiful Nature

This aura of simplicity should extend to the course, the player's principal opponent. The game traditionally was conceived by simple shepherds to be played over an ordinary stretch of countryside. Hazards were not built but, by trial and error over the years, the most interesting positions for the various units of the course were discovered, using only the natural difficulties which were already there. Courses evolved in this manner have become world famous. Thus, when planning a golf course, it is usually unnecessary to alter extensively what nature provides. What modifications are made should be carried out unobtrusively and in harmony with the terrain so as to generate golfing interest by supplementing nature, and adapting the layout to the tract to be used rather than by laboriously changing what exists to make it fit more or less artificial ideas. The chimeras of copying famous holes is not attainable, but the alert designer can apply the principles which made those holes famous to new but similar setups to create new holes which may receive more acclaim than their celebrated prototypes.

The amount of artificial construction needed on a new course is in reverse ratio to the natural interest presented. If nature has been bountiful, it is only necessary to use properly and to condition what is given, and to assure ease, efficiency and economy in future maintenance operations.

If the property is featureless, all earthworks should be informal and carefully blended into their surroundings to give the illusion of relief to an otherwise monotonous expanse; and hazards should be placed with the object of rewarding careful, accurate play and of tempting the first flight performer to stretch to save a stroke, not for the purpose of further punishing the inadequate efforts of most of us. That trap or feature which affects a well hit ball and influences play really means something; the one that merely punishes a bad shot is of minor importance and often just an unnecessary annoyance to the high handicap man.

In remodelling old courses, the job frequently is to cure nature's wounds, to try to make capital out of past mistakes, and to discover overlooked opportunities.

The golf course architect has made a life study of his specialty. Each course he visits is examined with a critical eye, searching for errors, new ideas and possibilities; and his mind has become a treasure-house filled with memories of architectural combinations which may be used to solve present problems. During his lifetime he has carefully explored many more courses than most amateurs or greenkeepers, and than all but the most active of playing professionals. His background should include competitive playing experience and a sound knowledge of the capabilities of both experts and duffers, so that he can be a more impartial judge and able to create courses which will be tests for sharpshooters and stimulating sources of enjoyment for the rank and file.

Cooperation of Specialists

The development of a golf course calls for the services and cooperation of many specialists. The golf course architect must understand the problems and be able to coordinate the talents of all these men. The clubhouse and landscape architects, the golf course superintendent and the engineer are all indispensable, but since the peculiar problems of a golf course vary



HOPKINS TROPHY US-CANADA PGA MATCHES HERE

This is the 18th at Beaconsfield, Montreal. The Canadian Open of 1946, won by George Fazio, was played at that club and it'll be the scene of the first Hopkins trophy Tuesday and Wednesday, Aug. 26-27. US and Canadian PGAs will pick 6-men teams, with the Canadians probably selecting a couple of British Empire stars for their side. John Jay Hopkins, Chmn. and Pres., General Dynamics Corp. of New York and Washington, head of Canadair Ltd., honorary director of Canadian PGA and member of PGA of American Advisory committee, is donor of the trophy. Hopkins also is picking up the tab for players' expenses. Each player will get \$750. Hopkins is having his personal plane transport American players from the Ft. Wayne tournament to Montreal, then after the International PGA team matches to Hartford for the Insurance City Open.

from those these experts usually handle, the advice of the golf course designer is essential. As their individual designs are interdependent, the golf course architect's overall planning is needed to tie the contributions of the specialists together to attain a practical result.

The man who plans the course should participate actively in its construction, either by direct management or by frequent inspection; and no changes whatsoever should be made in his plans without his knowledge and consent. The most unwise procedure is to attempt to save money by skimming on survey costs or proceeding with any building operations which are not thoroughly understood and in accordance with the designer's ideas.

The golf course architect is an independent entity in the organization which improves an old course or brings a new one into being. His job ends when the enterprise is completed, his interest and loyalty is in the course itself, and not in the permanence of his employment. He is in a position to fight wholeheartedly for his ideals so that he can complete a course which will enhance his reputation and be a lasting satisfaction not to one special group, but to every player who uses it.

U.S., Canada, Mexico in Amateur Team Matches

Aug. 14-15 at Seattle (Wash.) GC, prior to National Amateur championship a triangular team match will be played between 7-men teams of U.S., Canadian and Mexican amateurs.

The first day there will be three 36-hole 3-ball sixsome matches in which each country will have two players playing alternate strokes and each pair against the other two. The second day there will be six 36-hole 3-ball matches with each country represented in each threesome, playing against the other two.

The event is an extension of the US-Canadian amateur matches played before the 1951 Amateur at Saucon Valley. Now Mexico is in the picture as an extension of U.S. golf relations which has been long and earnestly advocated.

The matches will be for the Americas cup, donated by Jerry Bowes, past pres., Western Golf Assn.

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