

Burbank to Move Mountain to Build A Golf Course

Nothing Is Impossible in California Where They're Planning to Shave Off A High Peak to Provide Golfing Facilities for 95,000 People

By VERNE WICKHAM

ALTHOUGH Burbank, Calif. has a population of 95,000 it has no golf course. Worse yet, it has no land upon which to build one. But all that is being changed. They are going into the hills back of the city, chopping off the top of a mountain, filling the dirt into the canyons and providing land for an 18-hole course.

Burbank once had the Sunset Canyon golf course in the general area where the new one will be built. But it is now covered with home sites, as is practically the entire 18-square miles of the city. There are probably less than 1,000 undeveloped lots within the city limits and certainly not the 125 acres needed for a course. So, they are "building" land.

The hills and mountains back of the city long have been a favorite spot for picnickers and hikers — and forest fires and floods. In 1916 Oliver Stough, an early land owner, dedicated some of this hilly land to the city for parks and recreation purposes. As Stough Park it was partly developed with an open-air theater and

rustic park. The city, sensing the need for a golf course, purchased some additional acreage and a public-spirited citizen, Joseph De Bell, tossed in 100 acres of land for golf use. But the land, bisected as it was by deep canyons, covered with scrub oak, and marked by tall mountain peaks, was a fine place for bobcats and coyotes but not for fairways, traps and greens. However, city officials and engineers do remarkable things in California. They decided on a plan to chop off the tops of mountains, fill the canyons and presto, there would be 125 acres of "links-land".

About three years ago the plan began to jell under the direction of Clayton W. Paige, Burbank's city engineer. He assigned Edward J. Ernst, an engineer on his staff to handle the engineering on the project. Ernst decided that a scale model of the entire development was the best way to show people what they were going to do. He made two 4 by 6 ft. scale plaster models. One shows the land as it is. Detail and scale were the result of field work and aerial photographs and surveys. The second model shows the completed golf course (see photo), with the top of the mountain chopped off and the canyons filled.

Test holes were drilled in the highest peak and soil tests made. The top of the peak will be cut down 185 feet. On this plateau will be built the clubhouse, commanding a magnificent view of the city and valley. In all, more than 3,000,000 yards of earth will be moved before the golf course is seeded.

In addition to providing nearly 100,000 people in Burbank with a sporty golf course, it will serve to aid flood control and provide fire protection for the mountainous area back of the residential part of the city.

The two scale models were a part of the booth exhibit of the Southern California GCSA at the National Turf Show.



Burbank's proposed new course is shown in the foreground of this scale model.