



A practicing golf architect since 1919, Robert Bruce Harris has designed or remodelled more than 160 courses. During this time he has owned eight courses and still has title to three of them. Harris is a past pres. of the golf course architects society and a member of the GCSA and USGA's green section committee.

Realtors Capitalize on Golf's Magnetism

By **ROBERT BRUCE HARRIS**

THE golf course as the nucleus of community development is big real estate news now.

However, the idea itself is old in American golf. The Garden City Golf Club was a landscaping, recreational and prestige selling point in the sale of the Stewart estate's property on Long Island 60 years ago. The summer home sites around the earlier golf clubs were quickly bought. Property around such clubs as Indian Hill in Winnetka, Ill., readily commanded a premium when the club was built and now sells at 20 times the old "premium" price. Carolina sand hills were almost wasteland before the Pinehurst courses were built. The same can be said of the golf land on the Monterey peninsula.

Older members of most private country clubs, together with officials, often wish they'd bought the inexpensive acreage bordering the club when it was established.

Today, experienced real estate men, capitalizing on golf's magnetism in the suburban living scheme, are trying to do the second-guessing the first time.

Zoned or Separate Village?

The factors that must be considered in the planning of a community with a golf course center must be of special interest to professionals, superintendents and club managers because these men probably will figure profitably and importantly in the operation of the golf communities.

One of the earliest parts of the plan-

ning is a study of the zoning laws if the golf course community is to be located in an established city or town, or if it isn't, the formation of a village with its own zoning laws and as protection against unduly heavy taxing.

The instant a golf course is started taxable value of the club's ground and of surrounding property jumps and the golf community has to plan to control this factor.

However, this increase of taxable values can be a trading element for the golf community heads. Provision must be made for the utilities, electricity and probably gas, sanitation and storm sewerage, maintenance of streets and possibly sidewalks and alleys, lighting, police, fire and postal service, not to mention first, the matter of schools, essential to at least some of the families even if the golfing community is pretty much a resort proposition.

The sanitation sewer system likely will be quite a problem. State and local health board control of these systems is getting increasingly strict, and properly so.

Surface drainage is a big factor, especially when the open spaces of the golf courses might make control of heavy rains and flash floods exceedingly difficult.

Road Location A Problem

Road location to preserve privacy yet provide convenience of access, unobtrusive service by delivery trucks and waste disposal vehicles and road planning to make easy the location of residences by visitors, calls for a great deal of thoughtful planning.

The size of the lots are a problem that affects many other problems, such as road planning and whether to have lots between fairways or on the perimeter of the course or in both locations.

Generally the larger the homesite the more desirable it is. I have designed golf course-residential projects with home sites of $\frac{1}{4}$ acre up to 5 acres. A major problem with the smaller sites is to have them so located, of such shape and so governed by building restrictions that the community won't look crowded.

The important thing, of course, is to have the home sites in an atmosphere of spaciousness and exclusiveness. The lots on the inside of the course that have a view in all directions yet which are so located with reference to the course so no wild shots possibly can be bothersome generally are the most desirable locations.

Restrictions usually prohibit building fences on lots bordering the courses. In this way the lots look bigger and the course does not seem to be cramped.

Landscaping Makes A Picture

Landscaping is an important element from the golfing and residential planning viewpoints. The scenic beauties of the course and of lakes which may be in or bordering the courses must be brought into the home through the windows.

The location of the practice tee, important enough in a purely golfing establishment, has additional elements of concern when it is part of a community plan and may be used often in the evenings.

The selling and operating agreements demand thoroughness, foresight and specific understanding. The agreements, in some cases, will involve the services of the golf course superintendents' staff and equipment in maintaining residential areas adjacent to the course.

Who Is Allowed to Buy?

Whether to sell exclusively to club members or what kind of screening must be applied in approving purchasers of the golfing community's home sites is a major problem. Then the matter of resale by the original buyer or his estate is bound to come up.

The character of the agreement between the real estate people and the buyers assuring the continued existence of the course as a golf course is highly important. The contract determining the operation of the club as a private club after the residential sites have been sold and the real estate men have moved, also must be made a

SCGA Abolishes Penalty Stroke

Southern California GA dirs. have unanimously voted to abolish what they call an unfair penalty stroke in connection with ball out of bounds, lost ball and unplayable lie. Rules changes apply to all SCGA member clubs.

The new local rules regarding ball out of bounds, lost ball and unplayable lie require that a player must go back and play his next stroke as nearly as possible to the spot from which his original ball was played, and count only all actual strokes.

The board also voted to permit cleaning of balls and repairing of pit marks made by balls striking the green. Cleaning and repairing shall be done before putting.

Players who intend to play in USGA events must keep a handicap in accordance with USGA rules.

The SCGA board believes its action will be of assistance to the USGA and the Royal and Ancient in obtaining public reaction in this modification of play.

basic agreement of the entire project.

This planning may sound immensely complicated but it actually isn't to experienced and responsible parties.

Canadian Turf Meeting

Tenth annual turf conference, sponsored by the Royal Canadian GA's green section in conjunction with Ontario Agricultural College, will be held in Guelph, Ont., Mar. 12-13. RCGA recommends that persons planning to attend should make hotel reservations well in advance with Lorne Fischer, mgr., Royal Hotel, Guelph.

Penn State Conference

Penn State University's 28th turfgrass conference will be held Feb. 16-19 at University Park. Twenty speakers from eight extension stations and industry will be heard at the conference. This will be the last conference H. B. Musser, Penn State agronomist, will attend as a representative of the University as he is retiring on July 1 after 37 years there.

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