

# KISSING CAMELS

GOLF COURSE

COLORADO SPRINGS, COLORADO



## Texas Verve, Colorado Scenery, Innovations, Make it a Showpiece

By BILL DAHMS

**K**issing Camels GC, located in Colorado Springs, Colo., which turned its golfers out to graze for the first time in June, has a true Texas touch which, in the estimation of any Texan, at least, bespeaks volumes. Conceived by a Texas oilman, Al G. Hill, who is something of a Coloradoan by inclination since he attended college in that state and as long as 12 years ago bought the 1,600 acre mesa on which the club and surrounding estates are located, it may be more accurate to say that the Kissing Camels complex is a combination of grandiose Texas dreaming salted with the splendor of Colorado scenery. If that doesn't set your blood to charging consider, too, that KC's course was designed by J. Press Maxwell. The latter, as you may know, does his blueprint work in two locations — Dallas, Tex., and Aspen, Colo.

At the gateway to the Garden of the Gods, Kissing Camels just doesn't shove its scenic wonders before the golfer and say, "Here it is! Have you ever seen anything like it?" It presents in addition its share of golfing innovations. For example: Every hole on the course can be seen from a penthouse atop the clubhouse. Up there, too, is a widow's walk, ostensibly intended for impatient wives, but probably being paced just as frequently these days by impatient husbands. Possibly it should be

called a widower's walk. In the club lounge, called the Oasis Room and which gives a view of Pikes Peak, there is a scaled replica of the course under glass—a painful reminder to the player who has just traveled 18 roughs, but at the same time a joy to the fellow who has outdone himself.

### Bouquets in the Rough

Harry Farrar, Denver Post sports columnist, has pointed out that Kissing Camels is not yet an Augusta National, but adds that time certainly will put it in the class of Broadmoor and Cherry Hills, a pair of layouts that rank with the best. Maxwell has contrived a par 70 out of the 7,054-yard length. Most of the par 4 holes are quite long and tough and each of the four par 3s exceeds 180 yards in length. Greens (averaging 7,000 sq. ft.) are planted to Pennncross, tees are Merion and fairways in Kentucky bluegrass. Rough areas, as suggested before, are just that. Owner Al Hill, who has an eye for beauty as well as promising oil leases, wouldn't allow the course maintenance department to clip the rough this summer until the wild flowers had spilled their seed. So, the errant swinger may find his ball in a bright bouquet of red Indian paint brush or among equally exotic free-growing corsages. Holes and clubhouse grounds at Kissing Camels are surrounded by 4,500  
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Above and below left are two views of Kissing Camels' pro shop. Beamed ceiling, excellent lighting, handsome interior provide atmosphere that is conducive to buying of golf merchandise.



Replicas of club's 18 holes are under glass on bartop. (Below) View from veranda compares with any offered at any club in U.S.



newly planted pine and spruce trees and in the next five years another 2,500 trees will be planted.

### Waited for Water

The club is surrounded by more than 700 homesites and adjoining it are 51 summer cottages, ownership of which entitles one to everything from maid service to yard care. All utility installations at Kissing Camels are underground and land has been set aside for a community center, shopping areas, churches and schools. Nearby is the Garden of the Gods club, a resort that Hill built some ten years ago. It was his intention at that time to include a golf course but construction of this was delayed until water became available. A complete automatic sprinkler system was installed when the Kissing Camels course was built.

The pro at Kissing Camels is Bill Lawe, who received his shop and teaching indoctrination under Claude Harmon at Thunderbird in Palm Springs, Calif. Bill's staff includes Jim Ewart, shop manager, Jack Kendzior, teaching assistant, and Frank Chavez, in charge of the bag and storage department. Handling women's sales is Kitty Pritzlaff.

### Confidence in Buying Power

Kissing Camels will operate around the calendar, but since his shop is only newly opened, Lawe hasn't been able to determine just what his Colorado Springs clientele will indulge itself in and what it may pass up. However, his \$45,000 beginning inventory is a strong indication that Lawe feels he isn't going to be victimized by non-support. In the early weeks of operation, sportswear moved well for him and indications pointed to women being nearly as free spenders as male golfers.

As you will note from the two views of the proshop on page 27, there is no lack of artful lighting and tasteful display in Lawe's emporium. The different kinds of merchandise are nicely departmentalized and the women's sections take up just about as much room as those set aside for the men. There is no sign whatever of any congestion in individual or rack or shelf displays, and almost immediately upon entering the Kissing Camels shop you get the impression of airiness and altogether good taste that is rarely duplicated in similar establishments. Beamed ceilings, circular fixtures giving a recessed lighting effect and panelok panelling in alternate light and dark tones lend a rich tone to the shop as does the

brown and black carpeting that covers the salesroom floor.

Parking space for golf cars is located opposite the ground floor dining area, while the clubhouse basement contains storage space for more than 100 carts. The golf car rental rate is \$8 for 18 holes. Storage and cleaning rates amount to \$24 a year, \$5 a month or \$2 a week.

Bill Lawe has been so busy getting his new shop set up that, as yet, he hasn't given much thought to promoting either the sale of merchandise or lesson business. He feels that since Kissing Camels will be in operation the year around, and business will be quite steady even during the winter months, there probably won't be much need of resorting to clearance sales other than to get rid of merchandise that can't otherwise be sold. In a shop of this kind it is the opinion that close inventory control, in which the sales peaks and valleys are anticipated, is the real key to profitable operation.

### Four Shots at the Shop

Lawe, incidentally, is indebted to Press Maxwell for the way in which the course has been laid out. In four instances during the playing of an 18-hole round, the golfer is brought into the direct vicinity of the clubhouse, and hence the pro shop. This happens on the first, fifth, tenth and fourteenth tees and on the fourth, ninth, thirteenth and eighteenth greens. Certainly an arrangement such as this isn't going to hurt pro sales. Two practice putting greens and the club's driving range are located near the first tee.

The whole setup at Kissing Camels — Texas enthusiasm, Colorado climate and scenery, the new community enveloping the club, the innovations introduced in the clubhouse, and the course itself—are conducive to a rewarding future for a resourceful pro. And Bill Lawe, working as head man on his first big job, is reasonably sure that he has the acumen, alertness and solid business background that is going to enable him to take care of that future.

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### Duties of Officials

Duties of officials under the rules of golf are explained in a July USGA Journal article. It describes the duties before play starts, on the tee, in hazards, etc., and discusses procedures for match and medal play. Reprints of the article are available at no cost from the USGA, 40 E. 38th St., New York 16.