

Bob Moses Dreams Up World's Fair to Pave Way For More Courses

By **JOHN M. BRENNAN**
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As we were sipping coffee in the fabulous restaurant atop New York's colorful World's Fair on opening day, the No. 1 man of Queens, Borough President Mario J. Cariello, nominated Bob Moses as golf's outstanding benefactor.

The boss-man of the billion-dollar Flushing Meadow extravaganza has done more for the golfer than any man since



Moses



Cariello

the game was developed. "He brought the game to the masses and created the finest municipal chain of courses in the universe," suggested Cariello, himself a low-handicap player at nearby North Hempstead CC.

Bossing the eye-filling fair is merely a small part of Moses' daily routine. "He's a young 76, you know," said Cariello, who has played a major role in the development of the second fair. "I well remember the day, some 30 years ago, when we came out to Corona GC, which was built on an enormous garbage dump maintained by the Brooklyn Ash Removal Co. Bob Moses, Mayor Fiorello La Guardia, Grover Whalen and other city bigwigs were in the conference that made the decision to create the so-called World of Tomorrow, the first fair built on an unsightly garbage heap. The fair opened a

few years later — on April 20, 1939."

Developed Subway Circuit

Cariello recalls that Moses reluctantly agreed to raze the picturesque Corona course, which fringed Flushing Creek, inasmuch as he was commissioner of parks of New York City at the time and was in the process of developing the Subway Golf Circuit that now accommodates more than a million rounds a year.

Ask Moses, a man who possesses an unique faculty of being able to transform dreams into reality, why he developed this second giant show in Flushing Meadow and he's got several stock answers — some surprising.

The most unusual retort — and probably the most logical — is "to get a park and more golf." Moses, a Rhodes scholar at Oxford in 1923 and graduate of Columbia University, is sincere in his park development dreams. In his philosophy, nothing impermanent, such as fairs, are vitally important.

Those few intimates of Bob Moses will concede he is extremely proud of the fair, but he doesn't worry about it. Certainly, not like his worries over golf expansion and creation of new parks and parkways.

Fill from the Ocean

His current worries are about the development of new Marine Park course in Brooklyn. This facility is uniquely built with the use of synthetic topsoil and fill from the ocean. He, too, is concerned with the newly acquired Douglaston Park course, formerly North Hills CC, for which Father Knickerbocker paid \$6,000,000, the largest sum ever paid for a course in this country.

When Moses took over as city parks commissioner, the golf courses, like Van Cortlandt and Pelham, built before the turn of the century and Forest Park, Dyker Beach, Mosholu and the two 9-hole layouts in Richmond, La Tourette and Silver Lake, were essentially cow pastures.

The magic touch of Moses has transformed all of these courses into 18-hole municipal layouts that compare favorably with private club facilities. Under his regime, Clearview in Queens was purchased for \$940,000 during the depres-

sion; Kissena Park was built along with Split Rock, now a twin of Pelham in Westchester-Bronx sector. He, too, built a pitch-and-putt course at Riis Park in the Rockaways.

Bob Moses appears to be casually coasting since he gave up a myriad of jobs, such as bossing the Long Island State Parkway Commission, New York State's Power Authority and New York City Parks Department following a clash with Gov. Rockefeller.

Saved from Potatoes

As head of Long Island State Park Commission Moses carved out of potato country in Suffolk the outstanding municipal golf setup in the universe. Bethpage State Park, with five courses and a sixth on the drawing board, is a Moses masterpiece. All courses start and end within a few yards of the handsome Colonial-type clubhouse located on a knoll near Northern State Parkway.

Another Moses dream that has been realized is Sunken Meadow Park course, a 27-hole layout that is constructed on high land overlooking Long Island Sound.

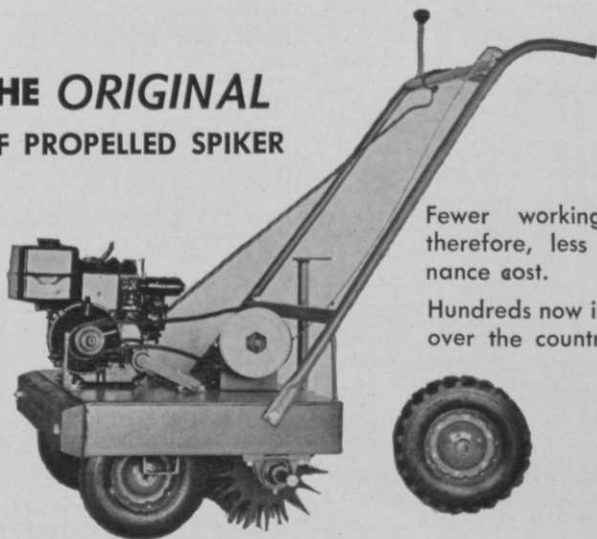
Bob makes frequent excursions from his Babylon estate to Bethpage and Sunken Meadow. Several more courses are planned for Suffolk by the L.I. commission.

There's no hint of dimming in that incisive vigor of well-selected Moses verbiage when the big boss of the World's Fair talks of golf expansion in the Big City and nearby Long Island.

"That's actually the reason he went along with a second fair," explained Carriello. "He is so engrossed with the development of golf and parks, which will be permanent, that he accepted the challenge of a second fair. He envisions the day when most of the fair will be reduced to rubble and work started on Flushing Meadow park — and golf. That will reciprocate, I suppose, for the Corona course that was wiped out to make room for the first fair."

Bob Moses is in his 50th year of building fabulous bridges, tunnels, parkways, superb beaches and golf courses since being hired by Gov. Al Smith. His work has been copied and imitated all over the globe.

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