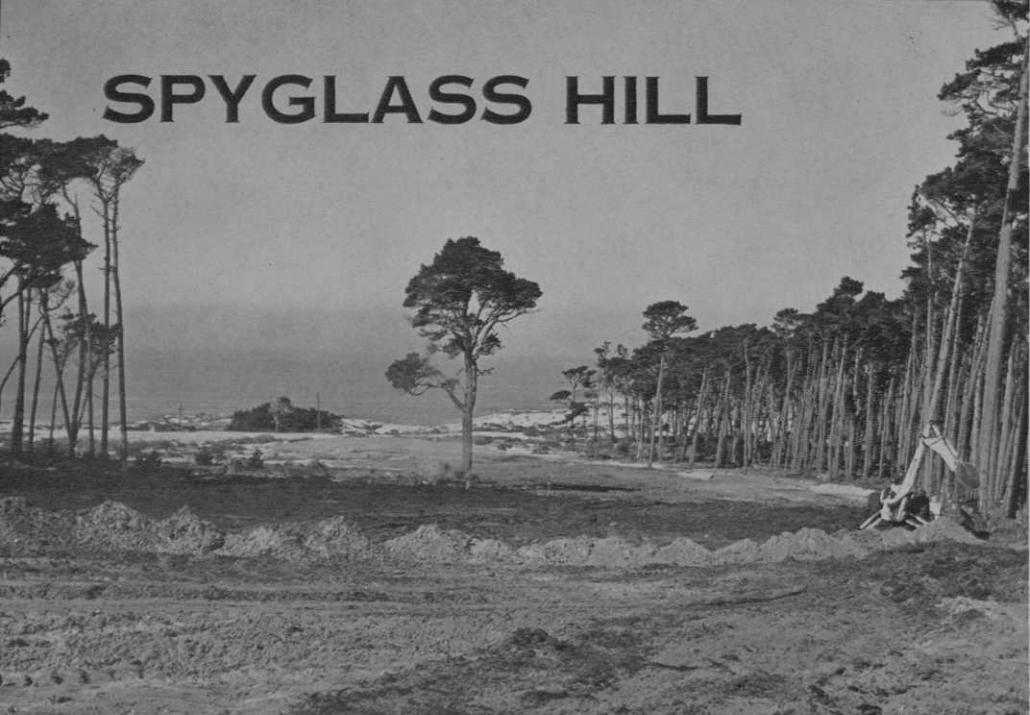


# SPYGLASS HILL



Julian P. Graham Studio Photos

**It has inspired Robert Trent Jones and Robert Louis Stevenson, but it may cause frustrated golfers to throw themselves onto the rocks**

## By WALTER ROESSING

**O**n a spectacularly scenic stretch of Northern California's world-famed Monterey Peninsula, a championship golf course with the picturesque name of Spyglass Hill has been carved out of snow-white sand dunes and virgin pine forest.

Designer Robert Trent Jones has modestly labeled this astonishingly beautiful setting as his "dream course." A famous artist once described this area as "the finest meeting of land and water in existence." Non-golfer Robert Louis Stevenson found Spyglass Hill the inspiration point for his *Treasure Island* novel.

When ready for play early in 1966, Spyglass Hill will further enhance the Del Monte Estates claim of "golf capital of the world." Del Monte, a vast private park in the heartland of the Monterey Peninsula, already is the site of five great courses. These include Pebble Beach, Cypress Point, Del Monte, and the Monterey Peninsula Country Club's Dunes and Shore

links. Spyglass is situated between the Cypress Point and Dunes.

Bob Hanna, affable and hard-working executive director of the Northern California Golf Association, says, "There are thousands of typical golf courses across the land in such localities as Rochester, Sacramento, Phoenix, and especially Palm Springs. In Palm Springs you find one Indian reservation after another covered with fairways and bunkers.

"If the Monterey Peninsula isn't the golf capital of the world then it certainly is the 'golf showplace of the world'. And Spyglass Hill is destined to become one of the greatest 18 holes of golf in the game."

In addition to its incomparable grandeur, the new course has seven noteworthy features.

First, Spyglass Hill will be the home course of the Northern California Golf Association. This is a first in U. S. golfing history. No other regional golf asso-



Spyglass pro, Frank Thacker, and Robert E. Hanna, secretary of the Northern California Golf Association, look on as construction men prepare to seed the latest starter among the Monterey Peninsula courses.

ciation can claim its very own golf course.

The NCGA plans to conduct all of its championship tournaments, including collegiate, Junior, Senior, match and medal events, at Spyglass. It's also conceivable that the course eventually will be the site of a National Open.

#### Ideal for Galleries

Second, from a gallery standpoint, it will be one of the most outstanding viewing courses in the nation — ideal for spectators because mounds or high areas border a majority of the greens. From one sweeping vantage point in mid-course, a spectator will be able to see the second and third shots on both 11 and 14, the entire 12th hole and, by moving a few steps, the entire 15th.

Third, it is the first links on the Monterey Peninsula to have lakes as water hazards. These have been designed around the greens on 7, 11, 12, 14, and 15. All lakes are 12 to 14 feet deep; the body of water on the 12th hole covers an area of 12,000 square feet; and the 15th is the reverse of the 16th at Augusta with a

crescent-shaped lake at the right instead of the left.

#### Sand in Place of Rough

Fourth, there is no rough. However, adjacent to the fairways on the second through the fifth holes are devilish, great, white sand dunes. All other holes are bordered by towering Monterey pine and oak trees.

Fifth, the breathtaking course follows the natural contour of the coastline and forest. No soil or fill material was imported and, in fact, there was a minimum of earthmoving during construction. Two deep gullies bisect the layout, adding to the hazard of trees, bunkers, lakes, and sand dunes.

Sixth, Spyglass follows the current emphasis on long holes and oversize greens. The championship course will play 7,190 yards, with the 600-yard first a formidable outward bound hole. The greens all average more than 8,000 square feet.

Seventh, a beauty of design is No. 14. This par five, 580 yard hole features an ingeniously devised double dogleg. To

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## Spyglass Hill

(Continued from page 26)

further discourage the gambling brand of shotmaker, a long lake guards the right front of the green and an oversized bunker the left front, with a narrow fairway of 20 yards in between. Hanna quips, "Jones thought of building a high bridge on this hole so the unhappy duffer could take a quick dip to eternity."

It was on this very 14th tee that course construction was started in May, 1964. Except for heavy rains last winter — when work was halted and a 'cat' almost sank out of sight — construction has moved along smoothly. The rains turned out to be a blessing because they pointed out several requirements for drainage, boosting the actual construction costs of the course by \$20,000 to \$487,000.

Construction involved the destruction of 50 acres of Monterey pine and oak trees, which were hauled into holes in the middle of the fairways and burned; the installation of irrigation and drainage systems; the closing of one Del Monte road; and the elimination of a spectacular collection of equestrian trails and jumping courses which ran through the previously untouched forest.

### Hold Up on TV Cables

Originally, it was planned to install buried television and power cables on select holes but the \$25,000 expense was considered too costly. Now it is anticipated that more compact and lightweight portable television cameras and other sending and receiving equipment will be



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developed by the time the course is ready for tournaments.

A 2,000-square-foot, one-story pro shop already has been completed, with construction of a two-story, combination clubhouse and NCGA office building scheduled to start in early 1966 at the intersection of Signal Hill and Stevenson roads. The latter will be adjacent to a 300-yard driving range and practice greens.

Primary feature of the 5,800-square-foot structure will be a rooftop observation deck overlooking much of the picturesque course. The clubhouse portion of the building will include lockerrooms, meeting and sitting rooms, a card room, and a large club room on the upper level. However, since the clubhouse is to be the main facility for the Spyglass Hill Golf Club, it will have no social area. Architect for the pro shop and clubhouse-office building is Gifford Sobey of Los Gatos.

There is a strong possibility some home construction will be undertaken. A few custom houses now skirt the links on the 2nd through 5th and on the 13th holes.

**Deer Inspect Course**

Spyglass has had a collection of very unusual construction supervisors. Del Monte Estates is the sanctuary of some 2,000 deer and other wildlife and it's a rare day when you don't see several deer inspecting the challenging course.

Challenging is right. Designer Jones has described Spyglass as "the supreme test for the likes of Arnold Palmer and Jack Nicklaus . . . some of those par fives will bring those lads to their knees."

Hanna emphasizes, "There is no way to wish your way around this course. Not only do you have obstacles of sand dunes, bunkers, lakes and trees along the fringes but there are menacing 200-foot-tall pines which sit in the mid-point of the fairways on the 9th, 16th and 17th holes. Then, there are the elements.

"Take the first hole. It is a 600-yard monster with a dogleg to the left off a beckoning clump of trees. But I'd bet neither Nicklaus nor George Bayer can reach the neck of that dogleg in one shot because you must always drive against a prevailing northwest wind."

Hanna and Club Pro Frank Thacker take great delight in discussing the other



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major obstacles to breaking par on the course. Those not previously mentioned include:

—Tremendous, swirling winds which whip off the Pacific along the ocean holes of Nos. 2 through 5.

—The 370-yard, par-five 17th could be a nightmare. Five bunkers surround the green; there's that big pine in the middle of the fairway; and if you hook the ball you're dead because you wind up in the 11th fairway with a forest of trees blocking your return shot.

—“A super finishing hole” is what the gregarious Thacker calls the 18th because “there is no way to play it safe.” The Robert Louis Stevenson School is to the left of the fairway; trees to the right; and the green guarded by large bunkers.

“Jones is damn proud of this course,” explains Hanna. “He proceeded with extreme care because the opportunity to acquire terrain like this for a championship golf course comes once in a lifetime.”

#### Has 250 Sponsors

The NCGA became seriously interested in obtaining a home course in 1959 when it began finding it difficult to conveniently stage its championship events. The idea was brought into being by the full cooperation of Del Monte authorities. After Samuel F. B. Morse, board chairman of Del Monte Estates, made the land available, a total of 250 sponsors put up \$2,500 apiece to finance the ambitious project. Spyglass Hill GC was formed and it obtained a 50-year lease on the land from Del Monte, with the latter maintaining and operating the course.

A number of colorful course names were suggested by the golf club founders, such as Indian Village (a onetime Indian village has been converted into picnic grounds on the edge of the 6th and 7th holes), White Sands, Pebble Pines, Bird Rock, Fan Shell Cove and Fan Shell Beach. The directors selected Spyglass Hill, which was suggested by Morse.

When not reserved for club members or NCGA tournaments, the course will be open for general play to all members of all USGA golf clubs.

The Northern California Amateur — a match play tournament — is slated to formally baptize Spyglass in September, 1966.



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