

Hole of the

■ No. 17
Tournament Players Club at Sawgrass
Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla.

Month

Short and Not So Sweet

It's a wee 132 yards long, but the No. 17 hole of the Stadium Course at the Tournament Players Club at Sawgrass is arguably the shortest-toughest par 3 in golf – thanks to the famous (infamous?) island green. Golfers hit about 120,000 balls in the water annually.

Pete Dye, who designed the course in 1981, says No. 17 was never planned as an island green. But after Dye reaped large amounts of sand from the area where 17 was to be built to use on Nos. 15 and 16, the area was left with a big hole in the ground. Dye's wife and design partner, Alice, suggested the island green. The rest, as they say, is history. Pete jokingly says he takes credit for the design, but only when someone hits the green.

Superintendent Fred Klauk Jr. says the hole presents few maintenance challenges. His staff treats the green like any other green in regard to pesticide and fertilizer applications. Klauk says the green is watered less because of wicking from the lake. Of course, divers come in once a quarter to collect the lost golf balls.

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