

Goosen Won't Loosen Up

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maintenance, including what turf types to use on his layouts. He says superintendents know best what will work and what won't.

Speaking of Goosen's designs, they might take on the look of a few Jack Nicklaus-designed courses.

"[Nicklaus] is my favorite designer," Goosen says. "I look a lot at what he has done at his golf courses and try to learn from him. Some of his courses aren't severe [layouts], and average players can play them and enjoy them. Some of his other courses are purely designed for professional golf."

Goosen's favorite Nicklaus design is Muirfield Village Golf Club in Dublin, Ohio, where he has played several times in the annual Memorial Tournament. "I love that course," he says. "It's a great design."

Even though Goosen has made a name for himself at the U.S. Open, he didn't fare so well this year in the tour-

namment, which was held at Winged Foot Golf Club in June. Goosen failed to make the cut.

"I like Winged Foot; I like all U.S. Open setups," Goosen says. "I just didn't play as well as I would have liked."

Two years ago Goosen won at Shinnecock after staging a remarkable putting exhibition. Interestingly, Shinnecock's slick greens left many players complaining they were too fast. But not Goosen.

"I don't think they went over the top there," Goosen says of Shinnecock's setup. He points out that he won the tournament with a four-under par score. "Look at Winged Foot," he says. "Five-over (par) won there. I don't think anything was wrong at Shinnecock."

Despite the high scores at Winged Foot, no one really complained about the conditions as they did at Shinnecock, which turned into a gripe fest on some levels. Goosen says Winged Foot's greens were more challenging to play than Shinnecock's.

"They were much bumpier and not nearly rolling as true as they were at Shinnecock," he adds. "The rough obviously was thicker at Winged Foot than it was at Shinnecock."

Goosen says he's not complaining about Winged Foot's setup. "The whole idea at the U.S. Open is somewhere close to par should be the winning score," he adds.

Goosen says competition on the PGA Tour these days is tougher than ever. It's also tough in overseas events.

"You have to play really well to win," he says. "Everybody hits it 300 yards and straight. It basically comes down to the guy who makes the most putts who will win at the end of the week."

But it's great to see so many players have a chance to win, Goosen says.

"It's a lot tougher to win out there than it was five years ago," he adds. "But then again, Tiger Woods was so on top of his game five years ago that it seemed like he was winning every week." ■

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