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Green and Approach Contours Increase Golf's Interest

By WILLIAM B. LANGFORD

The golfer who plays around in par takes about one-half his strokes within 40 yards of the pin. If, then, the greens are featureless the short game, where the pressure is highest and where half the shots are made, is not carrying its share of interest.

Excellent examples of approach area contouring are seen in the natural production at St. Andrews and the skillfully designed artificial work that at Pinehurst appears to be natural terrain.

There will be more of this contouring as players recognize what has accounted for a new factor of interest in the short game. However, in view of the necessity of machine mowing the greens and approach area contouring must be such that it lends itself perfectly to machine mowing and drainage, and in the case of greens, provides ample surface for moving the cup into places that do not present difficult and discouraging angle problems for the great majority of players.

Character on and about the green comes from skillfully warped putting surfaces, from close-by hazards, and from undulations on the fairway just off the green.

Only a small part of the interest created by fairway waves is chargeable to green interest, as their primary effect is on the half or full shots to the hole. They are usually very much neglected by course designers, and are frequently accidental occurrences which sometimes become the most important factor in the play of a hole. Hazards

guarding a green likewise affect, principally, the shot played to the green, not the shot played on it.

Warp on a green not only increases short game interest, it also influences the stroke played to the green and plays a vital part in surface drainage—which must be perfect to assure a satisfactory putting carpet.

When all the greens on a course are uniform, inclined planes, sloping from back to front, they satisfy the golfer whose chief interest is not in his shots, but in his score; but they certainly are monotonous, taking the finesse from iron play by discounting one's ability to impart cut or backspin to approaches.

If instead of one long slope on a green, there are interweaving slopes, complicated putting problems are presented, which every true golf student will relish; and it is possible to split the drainage, spilling water from the green in two or more places, shortening the drain channels, and eliminating soggy approach areas. If the slopes from hazards surrounding a green are carried into it, the green will not be a separate entity, but become, properly, an integral part of the whole course composition, and the very desirable green warp will blend naturally into its surroundings.

Green slopes should always be designed with due regard to the type shot to the green imposed by the hole's length, hazard arrangement and terrain. While in general, grade on greens should not exceed one foot in 30, sharper slopes may be introduced in limited areas if the green size is increased to provide sufficient cup area.



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