



**“As expenditures go up, the dues at courses go up. A lot of clubs are having a rough time right now. Even though it might cost more to play, I don’t think the game will suffer.”**

business. Today though, pros are getting much better at paying their bills on time.”

Intelligent solutions are the answers Hogan offers today’s pro in keeping out of the red.

“A lot of businesses are under-financed. A lot of small businesses are in trouble. A lot of pros are in trouble. The remedy is to carry less inventory. Buy things that move. There’s enough business history to back that up,” he points out.

While still a touring pro, Hogan realized that he would one day turn to the business side of the game. “I knew that I’d get old someday. This business looked good, because it seemed that I knew something about it.”

Since becoming involved with his equipment company, Hogan has been an active overseer. He is no figurehead. When AMF purchased the Hogan Company in 1960, part of the agreement was that the name of the company and its principal namesake would continue.

If any group is happy about the arrangement, it is his employees. Touring the plant with a company public relations man, one sees dedication in the work. Hogan, himself, has trained a lot of people that now work on his assembly line.

Quality of the finished product is the prime goal at the Hogan plant. Numerous inspections are made before anything leaves for the

marketplace. This may slow production, but assures a demand for the Hogan lines. AMF’s annual corporate report for 1974, showed that the Hogan Company celebrated its best year ever.

Hogan’s business interests in golf extend beyond equipment. He is involved in course architecture and construction. He is currently involved in a course being constructed near the Dallas-Fort Worth Regional Airport. Called the Trophy Club, the project’s chief designer is architect Joe Lee, but Hogan himself will have a lot of input in the complete result.

“I always wanted to find a good piece of land and build a course that should be played. People should enjoy playing it. There will be no blind shots on this course. When you design a course, it should be built to allow for the greatest enjoyment. You build with that thought in mind. Each hole should be different and need to be negotiated differently.”

“Courses should be built for enjoyment. Anybody can make a course impossible to play. A course should be constructed with framed fairways, bunkers and ample-sized greens. There has to be character in each hole,” Hogan said.

There will be 36 holes full of character at the Trophy Club and Hogan feels that’s the only way to build a course. “There has to be that

many, at least, because a course with only 18 holes more easily lends itself to slow play,” he said. “I realize, there is a slow play problem right now. I don’t have solutions for it, although, a lot of the problems may be a matter of management.”

He described how two Texas pros are now handling over 600 people a day on weekends on a 36-hole course. He was sure slow play can be dealt with. “There are people in this world that don’t mind waiting. Take Japan for instance, there are people there waiting two months just to get a tee time. If you miss, you wait two more months. Japanese people play golf as a status symbol.”

Realizing there is a maintenance side to the course, too, Hogan wonders out loud about the escalating costs of country clubs. “As expenditures go up, the dues at courses go up. A lot of clubs are having a tough time right now. Even though it might cost more to play, I don’t think the game will suffer. People will continue to have recreation. Golf, skiing and tennis are continuing to expand,” Hogan said.

Ben Hogan as a player influenced two generations with the game of golf, and helped it to build a prominent niche in the life of America. As a member of the golf industry, he continues a pattern of influence which is helping make the business of golf a major one, important to the economy. □

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# Snapfinger Woods- A Natural Development

An Atlanta land developer envisioned building one of the finest golf courses in the city — despite serious flooding and drainage problems on the land that he owned. He then teamed up with a club manager determined to provide what he calls the best dollar value in golf of any club in the area.

The result — a successful formula for the golf club operation at Snapfinger Woods, a complete 1,450-acre, multi-use community 13 miles east of downtown Atlanta.

Since the start of construction at Snapfinger Woods in 1971, the developer, Phipps Land Co., has invested thousands of dollars and man-hours in not only the completion of a challenging 27-hole facility, but also in solving the drainage and flow problems of Snapfinger Creek. At the same time, the new manager of Snapfinger Woods Golf Club is implementing an extensive series of improvements designed to offer every club member the most value for his or her money.

**Natural beauty preserved.** The project has been a gradual and methodical one but has nevertheless kept pace with a continually increasing popularity of and demand for golf at Snapfinger Woods, according to Joe Hamilton, Phipps vice president. "The golf course and club facility has been and was always intended to be one of the primary attractions for the people who moved into our apartments and condominiums here, but it is also a major drawing card for new residents, prospective tenants in the industrial park, and any other people who might be interested in becoming part of the community in some integral way," Hamilton told GOLFDOM.

Hamilton said in the construction of the original 18-hole golf course, great care was taken to preserve and enhance the natural beauty of the terrain and to capitalize on the picturesque Snapfinger Creek

## *Carving a golf course development out of nature in Atlanta*

which winds north-south through the approximate center of the property. "Our initial design intent for the golf course was to leave as much natural growth and limited fairway width at crossings," Hamilton said. "When the course and clubhouse were finished, we had one of the most beautiful golf facilities in the city, but there were still some major problems to be solved before we could be satisfied with the quality of the entire operation."

A portion of the first 18-hole course was laid out along the lowlands of the creek. In the first two years of its operation, the course was closed an average of 30 days a year when heavy rains caused the creek to overflow and inundate the flood plain. "In fact, the course was flooded the day after it opened," Hamilton said.

Modest corrections were made at the time to facilitate the flow of water. Trees were removed from the creek bed and additional landscaping was undertaken to prevent erosion along the banks of the creek. However, during those first two years there was a steady increase in demand for golf. "In fact," Hamilton said, "the demand for golf exceeded the supply within the first 18 months. We had originally forecast a gross income of \$264,000 during the first year of operation of the initial 18-hole course. By the end of the first year we had actually grossed \$560,000. The golf course operation was obviously too important to us as developers and to the project itself to simply write off those flood days to experience."

**Downstream study.** That was when Phipps decided to let its engineers and golf course architects attack the problem more analytically. Thorough studies were made down-

stream as well as north of the course to determine what impediments might be causing the creek to flood on the Snapfinger Woods property and to determine what measures might be taken to control the forces of nature without sacrificing the natural beauty of the creek's flood plain.

At the conclusion of the preliminary study, three basic problems were identified. A large mass of rock several hundred yards south of the property was keeping the water level immediately upstream artificially high. Further interruption of the natural water flow was being caused by sedimentation under the expressway bridge at the southern boundary of Snapfinger Woods. Together these had created a third problem of increased sedimentation along the golf course, the net result of which was a very shallow creek bed. The shallowness of the creek bed, which allowed none of the regular scouring action of normal water flow, was a self-perpetuating problem. The shallower the creek, the less scouring took place. The less scouring, the more sediment continued to settle in the creek bed.

There were also other factors. The area two miles north of the property in the same watershed was also being developed as a golf course and erosion from that project deposited silt downstream. South of the property the elevation change for a distance of 2,000 feet was only two feet, and the irrigation supply lines crossing the creek caught debris and actually impeded the flow. Engineers also noted the storm drains feeding into the creek were not only blocked at high water times, but actually had water forced back through them.

The most obvious and immediate solution was to remove the rock impediments downstream. During the next four months of the flood control project, easements were obtained from several property owners. Contractors employed by Phipps removed the large mass of rock and redressed the land to pre-

The clubhouse at Snapfinger Woods in Atlanta is of a rustic contemporary design constructed of rough-hewn cedar siding and glass on a hill overlooking the first 18-hole course. Its semi-circular design affords numerous views of many areas of the course and community.

# Snapfinger Woods continued

vent erosion. While this allowed considerable improvement in the flow of water through the development, other measures were still needed to prevent future flooding.

**Riprap and gabions.** On the property itself, engineers graded the banks of the streams to funnel the water more efficiently and stabilized the banks with riprap and gabions and wire cages filled with small rocks. These not only control erosion but also collect silt and sedimentation to eventually support the growth of grass and other plants. The few impediments created in the development of the golf course and surrounding community, such as irrigation supply lines, were removed from the creek bed and placed immediately underneath the creek crossings. Flap valves were installed on storm drains. The bridge abutments, which had been undermined by flooding, were riprapped.

Acute curves were either riprapped or channelized and in some cases floodways were built to connect straight sections of the creek and to avoid the impediment caused by the curves during flood conditions.

The creek at the southern end of the course was dredged to increase its volume and velocity. To correct the sedimentation problems in the flat portions of the course itself, gen-

The business of running the development demands keeping the members involved. A women's golfing clinic is one of several special activities at Snapfinger Woods.

tle swells were built to create the undercurrents necessary for normal scouring without significantly changing the terrain of the course. All flood control measures, however, were in line with the developer's primary consideration — to maintain the aesthetic value of the entire flood plain area and to disturb the natural ecology of the stream as little as possible.

The extra landscaping that was an integral part of the flood control improvements was augmented by the planting of an annual winter grass on the new golf course upstream, a step which considerably lessened erosion during the flooding season.

The total cost of the improvement project was more than \$74,000. The results have proven very worthwhile, Hamilton told GOLFDOM, and the club is now able to keep the course open in rainy and dry season alike.

**Nine new holes.** The flood control project was completed in late fall of 1973. But it still did not satisfy the steadily increasing demand for golf and it certainly would not continue to meet the needs of the community's residential population as development progressed. Already a 150-apartment complex and two condominium complexes of 61 and 47 units were complete and a third condominium project would open a year later. The community's 500-acre industrial park was in its second phase of development and nearly 60 firms had located offices or

manufacturing and distribution facilities there.

Thus, at the same time the flood project was underway along the creek, plans were being finalized to construct nine new holes on 52 acres of higher, more rolling land adjacent to the original 18 holes.

Completed and opened for play last fall, the new course represents a radical change in character from the original one, an advantage which offers the individual golfer an additional and more varied range of challenges. The layout of the new course, designed by golf course architect Joseph Lee, features a trio each of par three, par four and par five holes in contrast to the standard course layout.

The benefits from these improvements to the golfing club member were immediate. The benefits to the developer and club manager were just as significant, but perhaps less obvious. The nine-hole addition afforded more thorough and efficient maintenance of the entire course. If necessary, one of the nine-hole courses can be completely closed for extensive maintenance work without interrupting normal 18-hole play. In such a way, the entire course can be completely serviced in only three days. In addition, the availability of three nine-hole courses allows club tournament play to proceed simultaneously with regular individual play on separate courses. Since the new nine has opened, the golf operation has already realized more tournament play, more participation in golf clinics and more organized golf-



ing activities by women and juniors as well as men.

From the developer's point of view, Hamilton said, the efficiencies gained from the new nine-hole course more than justified its development cost of approximately \$325,000. Naturally, the same pro and superintendent and maintenance equipment would be utilized for all 27 holes and the enlarged facilities increased the membership capacity of the golf club itself. These factors have allowed Phipps Land Co. to estimate that its gross revenues would increase 45 percent while its expenses would only increase by about 28 percent.

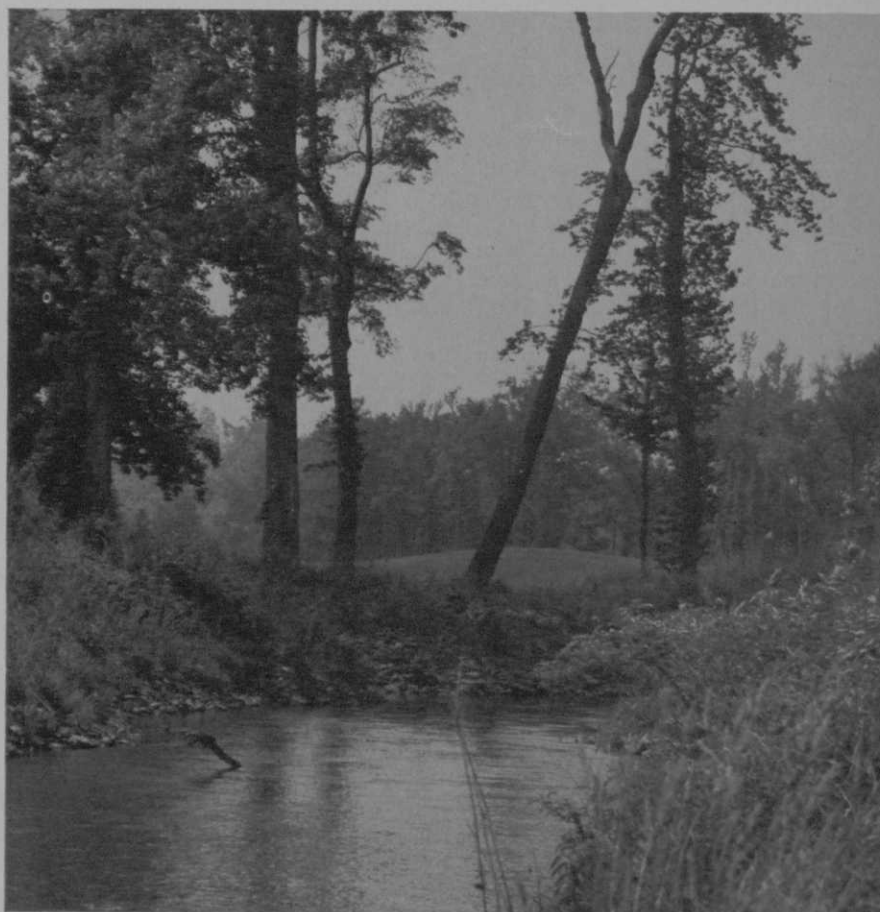
**Club sold to manager.** By the end of last year, the course supported an almost continuous play on 27 dry holes and enthusiasm for the operation was continuing to grow. With its improvement program fully implemented and the golf operation well-postured at that point, the developer took one final step to insure the high quality of the club operation would be consistently maintained while it continued to pursue other land development projects. At the beginning of this year, Phipps sold the course and clubhouse to William Roquemore of Lakeland, Ga., so that it could direct more of its energies toward those areas in which it has the most expertise and turn over the day-to-day operation of the golf facility to specialists in that field. The property was sold with full operating covenants to protect the integrity of the community. Phipps will remain active in the development of Snapfinger Woods through its completion.

When "Rocky" Roquemore took over the management of the club after the sale, he immediately outlined his own improvement program to augment that already completed by Phipps. He is devoting attention toward better grooming of the course, additional landscaping, complete revamping of the sand traps, the purchase of an entire fleet of new golf cars and expanding other club services for the golfing and general membership.

One hundred new Melex golf cars were purchased to replace and expand the previous fleet and a vigorous and innovative five-year landscaping plan was carefully out-



Rip rap and gabions line the banks of Snapfinger Creek in many places along the course to stabilize the banks and prevent erosion. Eventually the rocks will collect silt and support the growth of grass and small shrubs.



Tall trees and high grasses add to the natural beauty of the golf course bordering Snapfinger Creek.

# Snapfinger Woods continued

lined. All the greens will be converted this fall from the current Bermudagrass to Penncross bentgrass for a better year-round putting surface. Thousands of trees, shrubs and flowers will be planted along the course to improve its aesthetic appeal and heighten the challenge of the game.

Roquemore is organizing his landscaping program according to a seasonal theme. Each of the three



William Roquemore

nine-hole sections of the course has been designated for either spring, summer or fall blooming plants and will be landscaped accordingly. Azaleas, dogwood and flowering fruit trees, for instance, are being planted on the east course along the stream for spring color. A summer theme has been assigned the southern tip of the course where crepe myrtle, pampas grass and other summer blooming plants will be added. Pyracantha, purple maple and similar shrubs will provide fall color for the new nine holes.

"Our objective is to have at least one nine-hole course in bloom most of the time," Roquemore told GOLFDOM. He added that he also intends to plant pines and other evergreens uniformly throughout the course along with beds of annuals and perennials.

**Total club program.** Improvements such as these are all part of Roquemore's primary intention of making the club the best value in golf in his area, he said. He said the club has traditionally offered some of the lowest membership and dues fees in the city for a facility of its kind, and both Phipps and he are convinced that with the additional improvements already underway, value is

even further enhanced.

Membership initiation fees for the golf club are \$300 although no fee is charged for a "clubhouse only" membership. A social membership, which excludes golf, is offered for \$10 monthly or an annual fee of \$110. An associate membership affords the member use of all facilities but he must pay a greens fee for golf. That can be obtained for \$20 monthly or \$225 annually. Cost for a full membership which includes all club facilities and no greens fee is \$45 monthly or \$490 annually.

While the golf facilities are definitely the nucleus of the Snapfinger operation, they are not the only feature. The course functions as an important part of the total club program which in turn is only one of several recreational opportunities available to the community.

For club members who prefer other activities, the club offers tennis and swimming programs and a complete food and beverage service. The 27,000-square-foot clubhouse includes a general dining room and annex for private dining, a spacious lobby and fireplace lounge, an outdoor balcony overlooking the golf

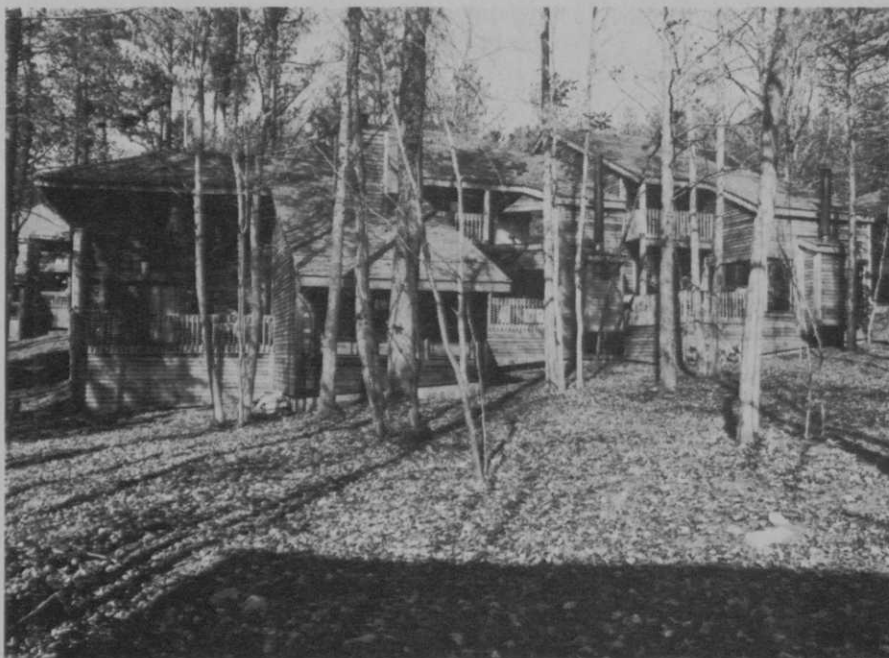


The recently completed village center houses the community's information and sales center and is currently being leased to specialty shops, offices and studios.

course, a bar and pro shop and sauna and locker room facilities for men and women.

Roquemore is anxious to see the members become more actively involved in the day-to-day operations of the club. Since he took over as manager, a completely independent men's golf association has been organizing many of its own programs, and plans are underway to do the same for tennis and swimming. A competitive swimming team among the juniors is currently being organized and a newly formed tennis association is outlining a summer program.

Pat Alford, food and beverage manager for the club, has to page 42



Careful blending of building and site is an important development guideline at Snapfinger Woods, as evidenced by The Terraces condominiums. These homes, which border the seventh fairway of the course, are constructed of cedar siding and shingles and are arranged in a cluster fashion among large stands of trees.



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# GOLF FACILITY MANAGEMENT AND THE SUPERINTENDENT

Golf course superintendents today are concerned with management at the golf facility primarily as it affects their position as professional career people. Superintendents generally are technically and scientifically oriented people. More than ever they come to the field with formal education, coupled with background and experience in turfgrass management.

They are professionals — as opposed to maintenance foremen. They carry a major responsibility in keeping the golf facility playable and at the same time in putting together an efficient labor force and equipment package. Maintenance inputs today also consist of chemicals and fertilizers, among others, that require a high degree of technical knowledge and experience.

As professionals, golf course superintendents seek career advancement, which may well be limited with the general manager concept. More important, it may limit the superintendent's participation in committee and board meetings. Superintendents need a liaison with the membership, as well as with the green committee members and the board of directors. It is this contact with members where the superintendents may sell their plans, their promotions and themselves as professionals. Their success or failure often hinges on ability to first interpret what levels of excellence the membership desires and then to turn these desires into

**This Midwest superintendent is against the general manager concept of country club management — and tells why**

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by Robert M. Williams  
Superintendent  
Bob O'Link Golf Club  
Highland Park, Illinois

reality on the course.

The general manager concept which superintendents most often fail to support is that at the private country club. Here the overall manager type of administration tends to damage the identity, the stability, the welfare and finally the professionalism of the golf course superintendent. His potential salary level will likely be decreased. He is more likely to be isolated from official contact with the membership.

Superintendents take exception to the common idea that a general manager reduces the demand in personal time and effort among club officials in attending club affairs. The contrary is more likely to be true. Much time can be, and often is, wasted at committee and board meetings when the technical experts such as the pros and the superintendents are not in attendance. Even more time can be wasted when the committees have not reviewed the subject matter with the technical experts and presented consensus recommendations.

There is another factor which is unique to the administration of a country club. Club operation is quite different from the industrial corporation where profit-making is all-important. In the country club operation, precise timing and coordination are secondary to the pleasure, service, comfort and the various levels of luxury associated with club membership. A country club is really an extension of the member's home and where he is mainly concerned with the pleasant rewards of social and recreational activity.

Such may not be the case with the privately owned public course or the large corporation golf complex. In case of the latter, operations may include two or more courses, a hotel, real estate sales and related activities. This is a profit-making operation and large enough to justify a general manager to coordinate all aspects of the total business. Privately owned courses are also profit-oriented operations. The owners are the general managers and history points to their success at the job. They are set up to make a profit and the customers have little to say about the standards of service or maintenance. The owners often entirely eliminate the golf pro and the owner takes the profit from the pro shop, car rentals, etc. Clubhouse activity under the one-man ownership usually centers around the bar operation. Food and locker services are kept to a