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# Keep the Ladies Interested

First and foremost, Leawood South Golf and Country Club, located in the fashionable suburbs of Kansas City, is a golfing club. The entire operation is anchored firmly to the game. And secondly, the idea since inception in 1967 has been to avoid letting it become a club where someone in management has to often say, "Let's go into a huddle and see if we cannot drum up something to whet the interest of the girls."

Women have embraced Leawood South with open arms almost from the time the club opened. The evidence that they have been drawn

into the fold is:

- Some 230 women play the course regularly.
- Pro shop sales to women are burgeoning.
- The junior girls' program is thriving.
- The annual spring fashion show draws about 150 women at both the 18- and nine-hole segments of the course. It earns appreciative plaudits from the women.
- Head pro Harold Reed attracts sizable numbers of women into the lesson program with no special measures. Individual and group

instruction are both popular. Reed has been the pro since the club opened and has always made lessons a prime focus.

- The Southgate Open, an annual Ladies' Professional Golf Association event, is held at the club.

- Women golfing celebrities like Sandra Palmer visit with Reed every year for problems with their game; they know he is a good game tune-up man.

With all this going for him with the women, it is natural Reed keeps thinking of them when it comes to planning pro shop activities, lessons, special promotions and other facets of the course. The course is noteworthy for its reputation in the area. The course and clubhouse were built as a companion to residential development of single-family dwellings and townhouses in the \$60,000-plus bracket. The entire development was built by Moffet-Kroh Development Co., and is still operated by it. It encompasses over 600 acres.

Designed by Bob Dunning of Tulsa, Okla., the course is said to be challenging, well-planned and perfectly conditioned. The back and front nines are as different as night and day; the back is heavily wooded and the front more open.

One feature of the course is its fine stand of bluegrass on the fairways; the tees are zoysia. Developer John Moffett took a personal hand in shaping the course. He is a dedicated golfer and ranks pro golfers Carol Mann and Judy Rankin among his best friends. "Water is our chief antidote for any bluegrass problems other courses in the area have," he told GOLFDOM. "We have an automatic watering system



*Harold Reed, pro at Leawood South Golf and Country Club, Kansas City.*

and our water bills run \$3,000 to \$4,000 during the season.”

Golf is the backbone of the operation but the social aspects are not neglected. Executive manager John McNelly sees to that. The club has 468 golf members and 138 social members. The focal point of the festivities at the club is a ballroom, seating up to 262 persons, flanked on both sides by the bar wing and the card-player's wing. Events such as “shrimp night”, a party featuring a sing-along and all the shrimp one can eat for \$5.25, attracts 175 to 250 members. Facilities include a 19th hole on the lower level, which is a snack-style operation. There is no main dining room. Instead, food for the main functions is catered. For outside functions, the ballroom is rented at a minimum of \$100, or \$1 charge per person. It gets constant use.

The golfing season is ushered in and out with “duffer's delight” events which include breakfast for \$3.75, complete with bloody marys, and noon luncheons for \$1.25 or \$1.50. On these occasions, the course is played by over 175 male members.

But the ladies never get left out. An example is the spring fashion show. Harold and his wife Joyce work as a team in staging this event along with the member committee. About 30 garments are modeled by members of the club, and the event lasts about two hours. Refreshments and cocktails are served. Culottes, shorts, slacks, etc. from six lines are shown. As for operating the shop, Reed is a firm believer in the value of arranging coordinated displays which may include a pair of culottes shown with matching blouse, shoes and perhaps a hat. He said this complete coordinated display frequently results in a sale of the entire outfit.

He said his shop is a full-line operation. One of his tactics is to drop a line that has been stocked several years and replace it with another. This has the effect, he explains, of infusing fresh new colors and styles into the stock. He is a firm believer in keeping new things coming into his inventory. “Any pro shop operator who expects to make it big with women first must accept the basic premise they are harder to



*Leawood developer John Moffett took a personal hand in shaping the course.*

sell than men,” he said. “They shop around more, check prices and are keen judges of style and colors, and they know what is new.

“We do a good job on high-end pant suits, culottes, blouses and shirts,” he said. “We do it because we have the kind of upper-income, discerning customer who buys fine merchandise. And because we put the effort in stocking and presenting high-end goods productively and tastefully.

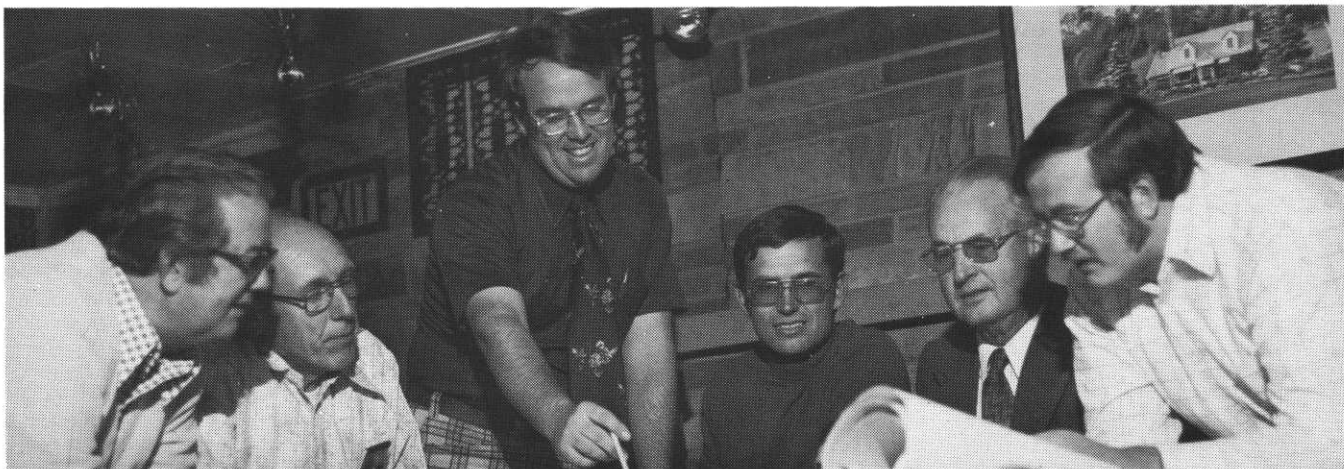
“It is so essential for a pro shop manager to keep up with trends and to key on them,” Reed said. “Right now we have seen a switch on our course to women wearing more culottes instead of shorts, so we are offering a larger selection of colors, sizes and styles in that particular item. We do an awfully good job on culottes priced between \$18 and \$28 and a lot of our blouse and shirt sales average around \$12 and \$14. Some labels have better identification with our customers than others and we try to stock those with which our women identify more closely.”

Reed is also an excellent golfer, placing ninth in the last year's national senior tournament. He said, “We sell golf more than anything else. And almost everything good that accrues in all areas is a spinoff of the golf program. The fact that we enjoy brisk sales of clubs to junior girls checks back to our solid junior program. In the course of that program, we stress the need to fit the weight and length of the clubs to the individual and not to use mother's or dad's clubs which are usually too heavy. And not to pick up a set at a discount store where individual needs are entirely neglected.”

How good is the junior program? There are 125 young women in the program receiving instruction on either an individual or group basis. One of the prime reasons it is a good program is that Reed and his assistants Tim Lowrey and Gary Clark believe in a strong teaching program.

Reed teaches simply, stressing the basics of the golf swing. He feels there are many people giving golf instruction who have no business doing it because they never got the basics down themselves. Here, as at other clubs, one of the problems with juniors lies in keeping up their enthusiasm. The women's golf committee lends a hand in this area by making it a consistent practice to walk around the course with juniors and offer tips on their game. Their pep talks help keep the juniors interested.

Reed says that parents are a big influence on whether or not their children stay interested in the program. Too many of them, he feels, believe that one season of lessons is sufficient. “We charge \$10 for a season of lessons to juniors,” he said. “When we learn of a drop-out after only one season, we try to get with both the youngster and the parent and stress the way to becoming a good golfer is to keep learning, — indefinitely. I drop a few names of some of the golfers who profitted from this constant-lesson philosophy. This helps in a lot of cases. As result of our determination to keep juniors in the program, we have turned out more good golfers than many clubs.” □



# THE BELLVILLE PROJECT: COOPERATION IN CONSTRUCTION

Can a private owner with modest resources build a course with today's escalating prices? The answer is yes, and Gene Banks of Bellville, Ohio, proved it by completing his 18-hole executive course for close to \$200,000, less than one-half of the national construction average. Gene's method was simple, and the key was good prior planning and working with professional people throughout the project.

Many years ago Banks bought 62 acres of land near Bellville with thoughts of someday building a course. Over the past six years the idea began to grow. While economy in construction was of vital importance, Banks was not prepared to sacrifice quality; in fact, he was convinced from the start success would depend on having a course that was well-planned, challenging, and esthetically beautiful . . . one golfers with varying degrees of expertise would enjoy playing.

Banks began by hiring Jack Kidwell and Dr. Mike Hurdzan, golf course architects from Columbus, Ohio, to do a feasibility study for him. Their study showed all possible layout plans, climatic factors, a soil mapping analysis, underground water resources, different methods of greens construction, variations in

irrigation systems, a construction cost estimate, a sample budget, and a projected income.

Armed with all the facts about the good and bad features of the property and proposed project, Banks went to his attorney, accountant, and banker for their opinions. After considering all the facts, he used his land as collateral to borrow the construction funds.

After sealed bidding, Gene decided he could economize on building the course by subcontracting with local contractors, providing Kidwell and Hurdzan would give close field inspection. At this time, a local technical representative for Scotts' ProTurf, Dick Warner, contacted the architects and arranged to meet with Gene and his son Darrell. Warner offered a full line of services, including continued soil testing, and recommendations for seed and fertilizer mixes and future maintenance programs. In addition, Dick was able to offer Banks a delayed billing which helped with overall financing.

Final course layout was a par 62 measuring 3,470 yards off the men's tees (2,948 from ladies' tees; 3,778 yards tournament distance). The design, including the variability in yardage off the several sets of tees,

was planned to encourage beginners and challenge the better players, rewarding accuracy even in less powerful golfers. Jack Kidwell comments: "The well-designed executive course may be the most important catalyst in the future growth of golf. An executive course appears to be within the physical capabilities of older folks, women and younger people, and therefore they don't feel intimidated. This course will start new golfers who in time will need lessons, equipment and more courses." (From the back tees on several of Kidwell and Hurdzan's executive courses, the course record is par, indicating the challenge inherent in their design for golfers on all skill levels.)

Banks was able to construct the course at a low cost for several reasons, stemming from careful attention to the architects' plan. Dr. Hurdzan says, "Our design was concerned primarily with utilizing all natural resources and carefully balancing excavations to fill requirements. No earth was wasted or moved twice. If we cut a tee or green into a hill, we used the earth at that site or one nearby. Seven ponds were dug next to areas requiring safety buffer zones and large volumes of fill." This economy of



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# BELLVILLE continued

design and construction, the owners estimate, saved about \$18,000 in building costs.

Rather than cutting down trees for clearing, the decision was to move existing trees on the course under the architects' direction. The result was that several hundred six-to-eight-inch diameter white pines were transplanted, each twenty to thirty feet high, giving the course an established look, at an estimated \$18,000 savings over the cost of clearing the site and planting new trees.

A further \$30,000-40,000 savings was realized by using a simplified greens construction method. Kidwell and Hurdzan have built hundreds of golf greens using 75 percent tested and selected sand and 25 percent well-decomposed organic matter with a three-inch pure sand layer over the graveled tile lines. This amended soil can be mixed on

site, and there is a definite textural barrier effect in the overall function of the green.

Climatic analysis and soil analysis of the feasibility study showed that normal rainfall was approximately an inch per week and bluegrass turf could go 14-18 days without water on the native soils. Therefore, an automatic tee and green irrigation system was recommended and installed, while a manual system was specified for fairways, permitting an additional savings of about \$16,500. Turf-grasses used were bentgrass on greens; Kentucky bluegrass on tees, collars, and bunkers; and a bluegrass blend overseeded with perennial ryegrass, on fairways and roughs.

During construction, Banks used almost all local contractors and construction people, numbering upwards of 25 adults and 50 child "volunteers" as rock pickers. Many local citizens contributed time,

labor, and farm equipment to aid the project. Both Gene and Darrell were constantly on the site, as interested and enthusiastic "superintendents" of the progress.

Contributing to the savings were the hard work and attention to detail of the construction subcontractors, none of whom had ever built a golf course before. The architects note that although it is rare to find local contractors with the capability of building an attractive course, they feel the Bellville construction team — who did most of the earthmoving; installed the irrigation systems; and handled tree moving, finish work, and seeding — did an exceptional job. "The contractors' responsiveness to guidance and pride in the job being done helped hold down costs and really put us over the top in quality," comments Hurdzan, "I think the finished golf course itself is the best proof of what a committed team can do."

Course construction started on May 17, 1975, and was completed by September 11, with the probable opening date in early May or June, 1976. Turf seeded as late as mid-September was already well established by mid-November, a situation the owners attribute largely to a double-rate application of a starter-type high phosphorus fertilizer. "Greens fertilizer with micro-nutrients seems to have the balance needed to make up for the lack of these nutrients in most new greens, especially high-sand greens like these," Dick Warner commented.

Much of the success in reaching the goals Banks set for the course came from high quality and good organization that would contribute to a prompt and substantial return on investment.

Gene and Darrell Banks — and the residents of Bellville who have participated in the project — are justifiably proud they've been able to bring modestly-priced golf to the community. It started 25 years ago with one man's dream, and within a few short months has become a reality: a course that can give experienced golfers many enjoyable hours, and can introduce a growing number of beginners to the pleasures of the same. □



**Taking advantage of nature:** During construction of the Bellville Project, repositioning of existing trees helped give the course an established look. At the same time, the owners acquired a substantial savings over the cost of replacement stock. Several hundred white pines were transplanted.



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# In Design, Keep Women in Mind

With the rise of female participation in the game, course architects are becoming more and more aware of the fact that women must be included in their ultimate design plans.

Obviously, over the years many women have been somewhat discouraged in their game, forced to play facilities set up with men in mind. What are the alternatives? According to the American Society of Golf Course Architects, the female golfer is no longer being treated as an afterthought, but a highly influential factor in new course designs and remodeling projects.

"Architects are deeply aware of the need for considering the ladies in designing a course," explains ASGCA president Geoffrey Cornish of Amherst, Mass. "The challenge is to consider the ladies without compromising the layout for men."

Golf's handicap system has been an effective equalizer and has contributed to the sport's popularity. Yet no one can ignore the fact that, in most cases, a man can hit the ball farther — although not necessarily with more accuracy — than a woman.

Ladies' tees, therefore, are intended to compensate for the strength difference. But, do they? The yardage advantage is nullified when the ladies' tee does not afford as clear a view of the hole as does the men's. Sharp doglegs are often difficult to negotiate when playing from the ladies' tee. Then, too, a visible second shot for men is frequently a blind shot for women.

Designers recognize these problems and are correcting them in a variety of ways. Extra care is being taken to design ladies' tees with alignment to the women's landing area. Placement of hazards in relation to ladies' tees is also being given consideration.

"Generally women can play the same course as men except for the

length of the hole and the distances hazards and fairway areas are located from the teeing area," remarks Philip Wogan, Beverly, Mass. "Usually these factors can be adjusted by proper positioning of the women's tees so hazards and fairway landing areas meet the requirements of women's play." We can expect to see larger ladies' tees and multiple teeing areas according to ASGCA vice president Edwin Seay, Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla. That way, players can select which set of tees offers the desired challenge.

"Shorter holes with more difficult approach shots seem logical and practical, with short tees for women and several tees for men," advocates Ferdinand Garbin, Export, Pa. "Then the men can choose a tee to suit their game and women will be more comfortable."

Arthur Hills, Toledo, maintains, "Consideration should be given to placement of women's tees so the traffic pattern from green to next tee is convenient and direct. The tee should view the hole as clearly as do the back tees. As a matter of fact, the name 'women's tees' is really inappropriate. These 'forward tees' are perfectly suited for play by the increasing number of senior players who drive the ball shorter distances. The fact they are called 'women's tees' discourages much use. The name should be dropped!"

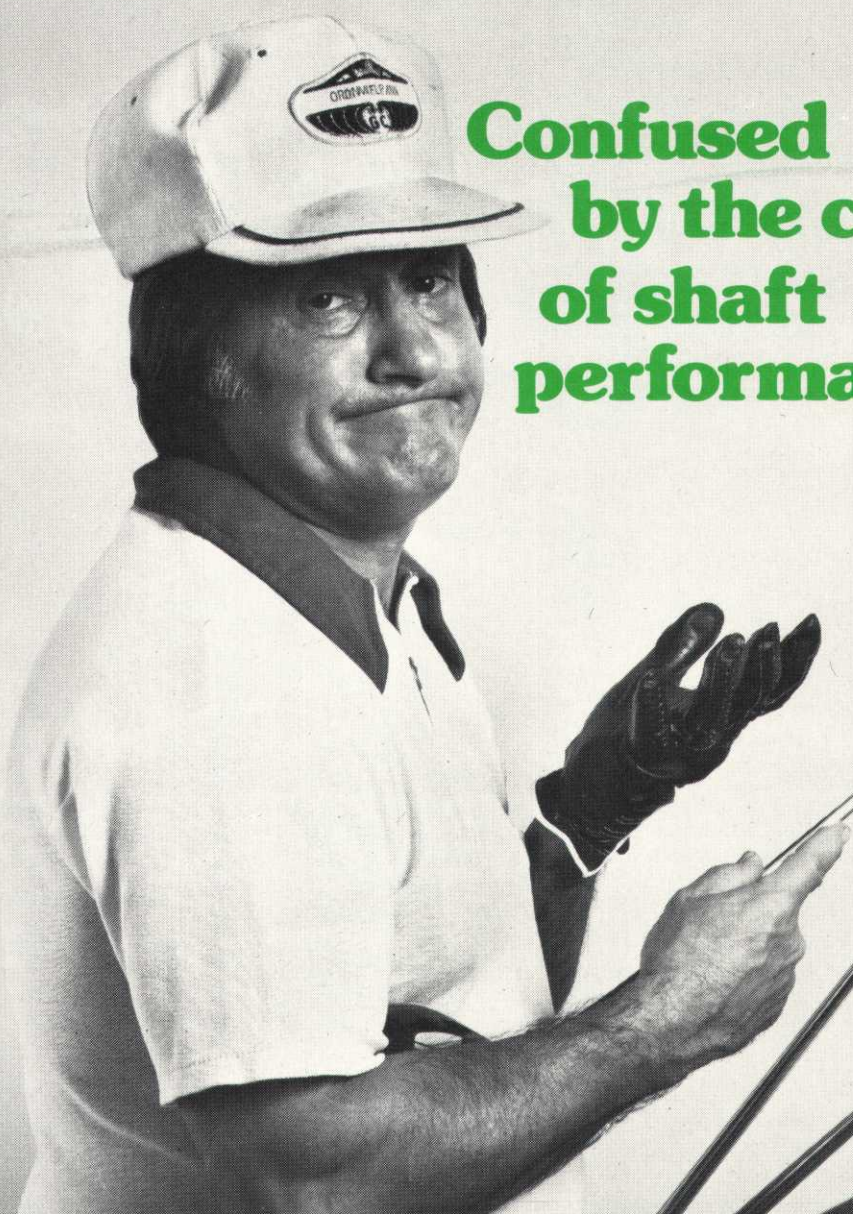
Another problem area for golfers — especially women — is water. While water enhances the beauty of a course and has ecological merits, it is also a mental and physical hazard. Yet, we can hardly envision courses without water — nor should it be that way.

Richard Phelps, Lakewood, Colo., observes, "Water should not be eliminated; it is a part of the game and ladies expect it and enjoy it." Long carries over water, though, usually spell disaster for average golfers and are physically impos-





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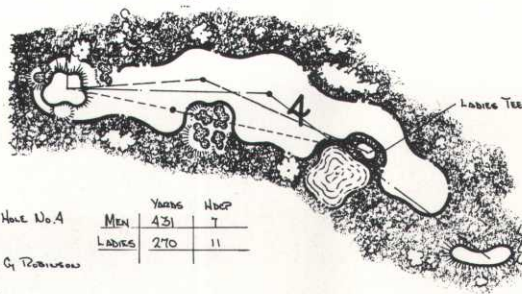
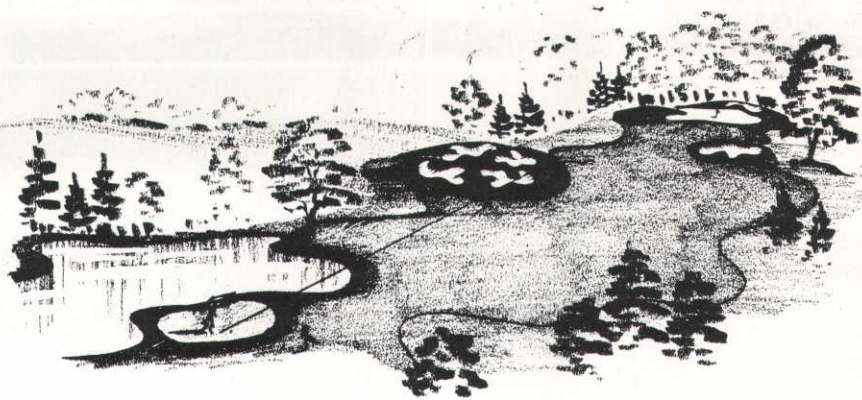
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# Design continued

sible for most women. To reach a happy medium, architects are concentrating on providing alternate routes of play rather than forcing golfers to attempt a long carry over water. Such a solution still offers the option of making the water shot, which will appeal to long ball hitters and low handicappers. It also promotes the thinking aspect of golf, brings strategy into play, and preserves the sporty nature of the course and the game.

"Both men and women should be required no long carries over water. Alternate safer routes around water and short shots after a lay-up from water should be the order of the course," states ASGCA Governor William Amick, Daytona Beach, Fla.

Tremendous rises in female golfers, coupled with soaring land prices, high maintenance costs, and increasing construction budgets, all point to shorter courses. Architects, consequently, are planning more par 3s and executive layouts, plus reduced yardage for regular courses. Ladies stand to benefit from shorter holes since accuracy, more than



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**Feminine option:** Water is a particularly tough hazard for women to handle. Course architects such as Geoffrey Cornish are giving the ladies an alternate route to the green, without the worry of the water. Those that can hit the long ball, though, can take the water and invoke strategy into the game.

brute strength, will be rewarded.

The majority of ASGCA members predict shorter yardage will be accompanied by smaller greens and narrower fairways. Smaller greens, averaging 5,000-7,500 square feet, will contribute to faster play. Narrower fairways will place more emphasis on placement shots — a woman's forte — and sharpen golfers' thinking power in club selection.

Opposition was voiced by David Gill, St. Charles, Ill. He feels green size "depends on the shot played to it. Each fairway is an individual thing. It can be tight at one point and open at another." Under such conditions he does not foresee absolute reductions to accommodate women, or any golfer for that matter. "Par is the equalizer. What may be a tough-to-reach par 4 hole for the male may be an easy-to-reach par 5 for the lady."

Raymond F. Loving, Jr., Ivy, Va., declares, "In the green area, consideration should be given to women in design by providing a grass approach to the green without the penal hazard of having to hit over a bunker or water. Bunkers should not be deep or heavily mounded."

Separate courses for women doesn't seem the answer either. While the ladies' course at Medinah County Club in Medinah, Ill., and the Ladies Hunt in Toronto are fine tests of golf, the idea of separate courses is not popular. Cornish points out, "It has been repeatedly demonstrated in both North America and the United Kingdom designing a separate nine at the same club for the ladies is not the answer. They don't want to use it. It appears they feel they are being relegated to the inferior. They want to play the course."

Architects recognize this and caution against radical design changes. They are, by no means, attempting to change the game to suit the woman golfer stereotype. Their aim is to provide a fair test of golf for every caliber golfer — young and old, male and female.

"Designing and building good golf courses to satisfy women players does not necessarily mean too short or unchallenging courses for men," stresses Don Herfort, Minneapolis. "The time is not too distant when the shorter golf course designed for the 'thinking' golfer will become the most desirable, successful end product." □



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