

ASGCA Asks Raters for "Level Playing Field"

The American Society of Golf Course Architects has called for a "level playing field" when raters evaluate golf courses for organizations or publications.

"We think raters should focus on pure design," states ASGCA President Damian Pascuzzo, "and not include things like 'tradition' and 'walking' in

their calculations. When the panelists rate a course--new or old--that's the rating that should determine the final ranking. The sponsoring organization should not have 'optional' points to award older courses, since that sways the final rankings to favor older courses."

The Society president added that

the organization would prefer not to have any ratings published, since it is an "impossible task to compare a brand new course with one that has been in play for 50 years or more, but we recognize that golf course rankings help sell magazines."

Conditions Different Today

The ASGCA pointed out that architects often had the luxury of choosing between a variety of acceptable sites 50 years ago, which made it easier to incorporate mature trees and ensure a course that was easy to walk.

Today, the Society noted, architects often work with very difficult sites that have steep grades. Furthermore, owners often want all players to use revenue-generating carts, so walking is seldom even an option.

"Despite contemporary parameters, which include stringent environmental regulations, today's architects are designing great golf courses that can compare favorably with the well-known courses that have grown in stature through the years," Pascuzzo added.

ASGCA Schedules Older Courses

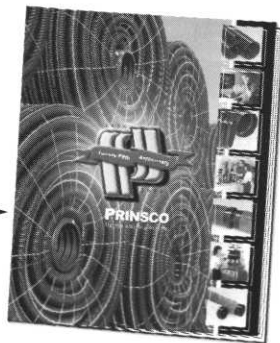
The ASGCA said that it has great respect for America's great, older courses. In the past decade, the Society has held annual meetings in Long Island, Philadelphia, Toronto, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Charleston and Columbus so that members could learn from playing established golf courses that have earned recognition.

"If we have to live with rankings, we'd at least like them to be equitable," the ASGCA president stated.

The American Society of Golf Course Architects is composed of 150 leading golf course architects throughout North America, all of whom have met the organization's stringent requirements for membership. To learn more about the ASGCA phone (312) 372-7090 or fax (312) 372-6160.

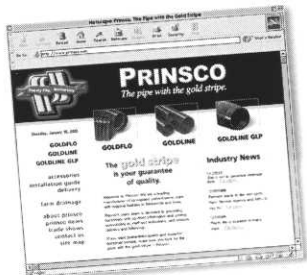
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