

Ross's Northland Country Club Update Completed

A course wide renovation of the venerable Donald Ross-designed Northland Country Club is complete. Northland Country Club, host of the 1946 Western amateur and 1956 Women's USGA Open Golf Championship anticipates that course improvements completed over the past three years will return the course

to its original grandeur.

"A diverse membership profile and the evolution of golf equipment technology required that we update the course to accommodate today's member," said Joe O'Connor, Northlands' Director of Golf Operations. "Improvements have been made that restore, maintain and enhance the

strategic integrity of Ross' design."

A Renovation Master Plan prepared by Kansas City based Craig Schreiner Golf Course Architects (CSGCA) outlined numerous course improvements to update the 6,825 yard, par 71 layout. CSGCA, highly regarded for their work at numerous Ross courses, integrated multiple tees to balance par for all handicaps and provide a new dimension of playability and shot selection. Fairway bunkers repositioned to define landing areas enhance strategy while greenside bunkers restored to proper depth and position accentuates shot making opportunities. Drainage throughout the course is improved by way of an extensive drainage system and the conversion of drainage ditches into meandering creeks that are visible on eight golf holes. Native stone bridges built with funds generously donated by members complement the creek enhancements. "Probably one of the few areas of the course that was left untouched is the putting greens. Donald Ross designed exceptional green complexes here and we worked hard to respect the nuances that remained intact over the years," said Todd Clark, CSGCA Senior Design Associate. Northland CC is ranked by *Golf Digest* as one of the top 5 courses in Minnesota and in the top 100 classic courses in the United States by *Golfweek*.

"Not since 1921 when Ross was hired to completely layout a new course has the Northland membership witnessed such dramatic improvements to their golf course," said Northland General Manager Bill Roberts. In the early days, flocks of sheep, rather than wide-sweeping mowers, were driven around the course to groom the holes. Each fall the caddies would herd them down Superior Street to the course, and then on to a West Duluth packing house when the job was done, according to Roberts. "With the exception of a few modifications the golf course has remained essentially the same since the early '20s."

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More rounds per year = Higher profits
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Shorter meetings = Longer happy hour
Longer happy hour = Hero status

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