

## The Golf Architect and the Golf Club

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The question of the relationship which should exist between the golf architect and the golf club is one on which there are a great many varying opinions. The following embody the opinions of the writer and are offered merely for what they are worth.

In establishing a new golf course, the first essential is to secure a desirable piece of land. Perhaps the best plan for a club to follow is, to obtain options on several tracts and then get a golf architect or other competent judge to determine which is the best. Too often a group of men not sufficiently informed or who have but slight knowledge of the desirable landscape features for a golf course select the site and then the golf architect is called in to lay out the course. Many golf clubs have unfortunately made very bad selections of land, with the result that a really desirable course is out of the question or can be obtained only at inordinate expense.

In selecting the man to lay out the course, the club should consider the architect from three standpoints, namely: Does he know the ideals of the game? Does he know construction and maintenance? What has he produced? It is also well to discuss the merits of the available architects with amateur golfers who have made a study of golf courses and golf architects. Such men have no other motive than the general advancement and betterment of golf. Good courses advance the interests of the game, while poor courses invite ridicule from critics and never create enthusiasm in the club.

When the committee appointed has decided on the architect they want, they should have a conference with him and talk over their situation in general. The club committee should discuss with him, at that time, all their ideas or suggestions. If suggestions are made that are good, a competent architect should have no hesitancy in incorporating these in his layout. Clubs may very properly disagree with what the architect proposes. They can not always agree with what an architect thinks is best, and its committee should have perfect freedom to discuss with him the plans of their future playground. It must be remembered, however, that in nearly every club a large proportion of the members are inclined to object to all "difficult" features on the course; but, if the architecture is sound, these same objectors will be the very ones to "point with pride" afterwards. Consequently, the architect must exercise the requisite tact, good judgment, or persuasiveness to convince the club that his ideas are reasonable and that they will prove satisfactory.

The architect should then be allowed to go ahead and do the best possible job that he can, without further suggestions, because it is to be presumed that his record should show that he is capable of laying out a course with variety and interest and that it will be well constructed and maintained at a reasonable cost.

The club should not expect the architect to submit plans and specifications and then not supervise the work, because in nine cases out of ten the man or men engaged to build the course do not, or can not, interpret the ideas that the architect plans. It is practically impossible to put on paper or incorporate in a model, ideas that fit in well with the general landscape. These must be worked in as the construction progresses.

An architect should never lose sight of his responsibility as an educational factor in the game. Nothing will tend more surely to develop the right spirit of the game than an insistence upon the high ideals that should inspire sound golf architecture. Every course needs not be a Pine Valley or a National, but every course should be so constructed as to afford incentive to and provide a reward for high-class play; and by high-class play is meant, simply the best of which each individual is himself capable.

For laying out the golf course, the architect's fee should properly include the cost of supervising the construction of same. He should make a sufficient number of visits to see that his plans are being carried out absolutely; and indeed the club should insist on this.

Under no consideration should an architect consent to submit plans and specifications for building a course without his supervision, because this is not only an injustice to the club, but it is not fair to him if his plans are not carried out as he intended. No conscientious architect should take on more work in one season than he can properly supervise.

The plans submitted by the architect should be complete in so far as the framework of the golf course is concerned. It is unwise for the architect to submit or for the club to accept a complete scheme of bunkering the course. In the beginning, pits and hazards should be put in, in conjunction with the construction of the greens, and also certain other bunkers on the fairway that have a definitely fixed position, such as a carrying pit off a tee, etc. He may, however, submit a scheme for the bunkering of the fairways, which bunkers can be put in later and the location of which can best be determined by the play.

It also would seem advisable that the club retain the architect in an advisory capacity during the year following the main construction, or through the whole period of construction if it is to take several years. In this way the architect can serve the club most satisfactorily and secure for it the best results that he is capable of producing.

Finally, a really conscientious architect, one devoted to the game and to his profession, will make the club's interests his own. His reputation must rest both on what he accomplishes and in the satisfaction he gives his clientele.

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