

HARLOW TELLS OF ALTERATIONS TO COURSE HERE

New Changes Wrought at Augusta National Discussed
by Expert

By ROBERT E. HARLOW

A British linksland motive which was intended by the original builders of the Bobby Jones' golf course in Augusta, has been abandoned, and the artificially thrown-up sand dune formations which were intended to give the foreign touch to a number of the greens at the home of the Master's tournament have been replaced with a more modern American conception of proper contours to test a player's skill.

No formal announcement has been made concerning the changes which have been going on, but Perry Maxwell, of Oklahoma, an American golf course architect, and live stock farmer, has been designing at the Jones' course for several months and it now requires scrutiny to see the remains of what were once considered the boldest "sand dunes" on this side of the Atlantic coast.

It was a notable experiment, but an effort to duplicate the natural terrain of one country in another location, by artificial means, does not work out successfully except in Hollywood, where the camera is faster than the eye and they build the Swiss Alps and the Egyptian pyramids and get away with it.

GIVEN LOCAL COLOR

Augusta is a lovely country, but it is the lovely country of the South with its beautiful and brilliant azalea and camellia, and not the cold, and austere Scottish coastline, where in the mist of early morning it is difficult to distinguish rolling sand dunes from the grey North Sea. Oklahoma's golf architect has given the Augusta National back to Georgia and this is most pleasing to P. J. A. Berckmans, the horticulturist who was born on the site and who has created there an arboretum which makes a perfect setting for the Bobby Jones course.

The changes will be equally pleasing to those experts who by years of practice have perfected their strokes to the greens so they are able to hit the ball within putting distance of the pin. Because of the peculiar undulations in the approaches to a number of the original Augusta greens, many a well directed shot bounced off at a strange angle, thus discounting a player's skill.

The greens at the fifth, seventh and seventeenth holes have been rebuilt. The abruptness of the "sand dunes" contours, which baffled the expert players has been eliminated and truly struck balls will not in future take as many sour "kicks" as formerly.

A new tenth green has been cut into the hillside behind the original green, and to the left, on high ground, backed by a ring of tall pines. The hole is lengthened to 449 yards, a great two shot test for the experts. Mr. Berckmans removed 75 pine trees to make way for this new green. In this instance the object was not to eliminate peculiar land formation, but to move the green from low land, and make what was at best a freakish second shot, into a test of a player's ability to hit a long ball to a well built modern green.

This new tenth green is the largest on the course, and has undulations which will call for great skill in laying approach putts dead, but there is nothing so abrupt about it to make it beyond the power of those with a delicate putting stroke.

Not all of the old country features have been eliminated. The "school-master's nose" bunker in the middle of the 11th fairway, built to duplicate one of St. Andrew's best known sand pits, remains the same as the day it caught one of Col. Bob Jones' (father of Bobby) perfect drives and so annoyed him that he wanted to "what jackass" caused such a thing to be dug in the middle of the "pretty."