



—World-Herald Photo.

Dulin (left) and Maxwell . . . no blueprints needed.

Without Blueprints, Percy Changing Two Holes at CC

By Don Lee

Percy Maxwell isn't too anxious to let the public know how he became a golf course architect.

In fact, when he bared the secret the other day out at the Omaha Country Club, he mentioned something about the information being off the record.

But he smiled when he said it. And the story is too good to stay hidden.

It was away back in 1913. Mr. Maxwell, an active tennis player, was competing in a tournament in Texas.

Beaten by a Girl

Defeated in the first round, he entered the consolations. And after winning two or three consolation matches, Mr. Maxwell found himself matched against a woman who was allowed to enter the men's bracket.

Yep, he lost the match to the gal—a Miss Butlin, if memory serves. It was then his wife began dropping hints. Maybe tennis was a bit too strenuous, maybe he should switch to golf.

Well, Mr. Maxwell must have agreed. At any rate he started to whip up interest in golf, not as a player but as a designer.

And soon he left the banking business in Oklahoma and started his 35 years as a golf architect.

Uses No Blueprints

Mr. Maxwell, now of Ardmore, Okla., won't tell his age. But authoritative sources around town say he's 72. It's a spry and talkative 72 for the man who is a native of Kentucky and still carries the Southern burr under his tongue.

Mr. Maxwell never had any formal schooling for golf architecture. But he has traveled extensively, both in this country and abroad, studying the business.

He's in Omaha rebuilding the fifth, sixth and seventh holes at the OCC.

Asked about plans or blueprints for the changes, he said he never uses 'em. He just sits on a chair near the objective and directs a bulldozer pilot as to where to move what tree or bunker.

Changing Two Holes

He considers himself an artist or a sculptor, always creating something actually new.

Harold Dulin of Springfield, Mo., is his bulldozer man. They've worked together frequently, so Mr. Dulin no doubt can anticipate a move before the sculptor waves his cane.

The twosome is changing the fifth at the OCC into a par three and the sixth into a par five. Both were four-shot holes.

The changes are being made to eliminate a long climb to the old fifth green. It was an exhausting effort for any one who wasn't an athlete.

New Fairway Looms

The biggest change will be on the sixth. The new fairway is being cut through dense woods and will lead to an elevated green far back of the old carpet. It will measure about 530 yards.

The remodeling will give the first nine three par threes and two par five holes. That's a thing of the future, according to Mr. Maxwell.

Mr. Maxwell rates the rolling and tree-lined OCC course as one of the 10 prettiest in the country. And there's "nothing as pretty west of the Mississippi River," he says.

Once Here as Net Fan

His rating takes in lots of territory.

He claims to have rebuilt 14 of 18 greens on the Saucon Valley CC, site of last week's National Amateur; worked on 11 greens at Augusta National Course, scene of the Master's Tournament, and built courses at Iowa State College and the Universities of Oklahoma and Michigan.

He has built more than 70 courses and rebuilt 30 or 40.

Mr. Maxwell's call to the OCC wasn't the first time he has been in Omaha. He attended the National Clay Court Tennis Tournament here as a spectator in 1910—before that gal, Miss Butlin, showed up in Texas.