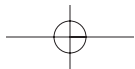
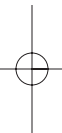
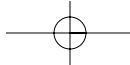
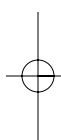
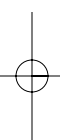
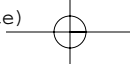


ROUTING *the* GOLF COURSE

THE ART & SCIENCE THAT FORMS THE GOLF JOURNEY





ROUTING *the* GOLF COURSE

THE ART & SCIENCE THAT FORMS THE GOLF JOURNEY

FORREST L. RICHARDSON, ASGCA

Foreword by

PETER OOSTERHUIS



JOHN WILEY & SONS, INC.



The routing of golf holes and the design of golf courses must be approached with the hands-on participation of a professional golf course architect. No book can possibly provide a complete how-to manual for such a complex undertaking. Each individual project comes with its own set of circumstances, and these must be researched and evaluated by a professional engaged specifically for that project. This book is intended to serve only as a guide for those involved or interested in the subject of routing golf courses.

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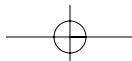
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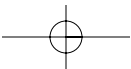
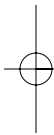
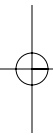
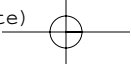
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*To my father,
who taught me to persevere,
and who watched the Golf Channel
in his final days,
reporting all he could to a son
who was busy writing.*





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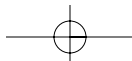
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Foreword

It is certainly a privilege to be able to write the foreword to Forrest Richardson's grand work, *Routing the Golf Course*. Forrest's decision to take on this most demanding project goes to show his tremendous commitment to his craft. This work will surely become recognized as the most complete study of an oft overlooked attribute of a golf course. Forrest carefully blends core information, historical references, personal experiences, enlightening interviews, and much of the wisdom of Jack Snyder, his mentor and inspiration.

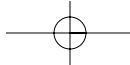
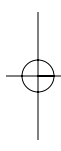
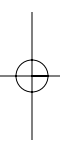
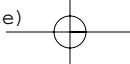
In my conversation with Forrest in Hole 12, I admit that my appreciation of golf course design blossomed only after I had given up full-time tournament play on the the PGA Tour. After time spent as a director of golf at a challenging Charles Banks course (Forsgate in New Jersey) and at a George Thomas masterpiece (Riviera), I had a much greater admiration for those ladies and gentlemen who strive to create challenging but enjoyable golf courses. I do regret not keeping a detailed record of all the courses I played around the world; I suppose I was too busy trying to finish at the top of the leaderboard!

Few golf course designers become household names, but that doesn't stop many talented and focused individuals from pursuing their dreams of designing and building wonderful golf courses that can be enjoyed by golfers of all abilities.

I can imagine Forrest's book not only inspiring and informing a potential golf course architect, planner, or developer, but also helping all golfers better understand and appreciate the layout of any course they might play — perhaps to the benefit of their score!

I'm sure you will relish the opportunity to add to your knowledge of golf course architecture. Enjoy the book, and good golfing!

— PETER OOSTERHUIS



Acknowledgments

In formally thanking people for helping to pull a project together, you try not to miss anyone, yet you must move swiftly. You can almost hear the theme music of the Academy Awards beginning to drown you out before you finish. My apologies if this drags on, but I cannot type any faster.

I am indebted to each of the golf course architects who trusted me with this work and encouraged me along the way. This applies not only to this book, but also to my career, which was shaped by many. To Geoffrey Cornish, Robert Muir Graves, and Bill Amick: Thank you for your faith in this project and my earlier writings. To the late Desmond Muirhead who passed away not long after the last word had been written: Your insights about routing could fill many books. Thank you for sharing them and giving me such good advice. I wish you had been able to hold the finished book. And to Jack Snyder, known elsewhere in this book as Arthur Jack Snyder: I cannot thank you enough for mentoring me. Without your experience and the gift for being able to pass some of it my way, I would be no further than Hole 2 or 3 by now.

Guest writers include the renowned Gil Martinez in Hole 6, "Real Estate, the Almighty Influence," and the esteemed Dr. Ed Sadalla in Hole 10, "The Psychology of the Golf Journey." They are joined by my interview with Peter Oosterhuis in Hole 12, "What Makes a Great Golf Course." And, as if he has not already done enough to help me, Jack Snyder keeps on giving by offering a few insights in the aptly titled Hole 17, "Never Assume Anything!" The thoughts of these professionals could be packaged into a conference of its own, but here you get them without the bad coffee and the uncomfortable chairs.

The organizations that came to the rescue are many. Special thanks are due to the American Society of Golf Course Architects (ASGCA); to Rand Jerris and Maxine Vigliotta at the United States Golf Association (USGA); to Peter Lewis and Fiona McDougall at the British Golf Museum; and to Alan McGregor, Peter Mason, and Liz Taylor at the St. Andrews Links Trust. For their help during my trips to unearth the history of routing and to visit even more golf courses, I must thank my good friends George Farrow, Wyn Thompson, and all of the Gransburys up in the North of England, and, down south, John Mercer and Mo Webster. Your hospitality, transport service, and cooking were above and beyond. Why is it that you put up with this foreigner?

A picture is worth 10,000 words, as the saying is supposed to go. Great thanks to each of the golf course architects who spent time sorting

xii *Acknowledgments*

through their files for old routing plans, photos, and information for use throughout the book. The clubs, archives, and photographers who provided images are all heroes in their own right.

My editors, Margaret Cummins and Elizabeth Roles at John Wiley & Sons, were terrific and enthusiastic guides who brought everything together. Their counterpart in my office was my capable assistant, Mike Hopkins. Although I know he would rather have been doing real routing plans instead of fiddling with all of the examples, diagrams, illustrations, and charts, he poured himself into this project from beginning to end, many times working until the daylight came around a second time. Mike wears many hats in this small office, as I do. We wore even more during this effort, and it cannot be adequately expressed how well the work all seemed to go.

Last, but not least, appreciation goes to my family for long ago seeing to it that I had a junior set of golf clubs and transportation to the local courses. If not for my parents, my Uncle Maurice, and my brother Bill, golf might have escaped my radar. And more recently to everyone for their support during writing, traveling, editing, and more writing. Not everyone is lucky enough to work alongside their spouse—I am. My wife, Valerie, an accomplished graphic designer, took on the tedious job of accounting for all the images in these pages and remained mostly patient. She managed to keep everything in order, including our personal life. My daughter, Haley, could not have been better to me. I regret the late nights when she was already asleep before I could say good night. Thank you for chipping with me in the backyard.

— FORREST RICHARDSON

Introduction

There are 35,000 golf courses across the world, and it's my guess that among the 50 million golfers who occupy their fairways, it is a rare instance to hear one say something along the lines of "Gee, the routing of this course is very interesting." Quite simply, the routing of golf courses is taken mostly for granted. The process of getting from point A to point B in a round, one of the unique aspects of this beloved game, is overshadowed by the happenings of each individual hole, that breathtaking view at the par-3, or all of the individual and minute events that are piled together to make up a complete round of golf. Routing is something that golfers are subconsciously aware of, but never to the point that it can be appreciated on its own merit. A golf course might feel right—but why?

Routing is the anatomy of a golf course, and a golf course is the framework for the entire game on a given day in the life of a golfer. Of all the millions of individual components that go into golf, the routing is the glue that holds them in place. It is a common thread that ties the beginning with the end, attaches each hole to the next, and supports the golfer to make a mark, be it good or not-so-good. Even though years of opinion may finally spell the end of a disliked bunker on a course, or some grand old tree dies, or a new lake is added, the routing will almost always endure. When neighborhoods once full of children are redeveloped into neighborhoods full of the children of the children who grew up there, the golf course that winds its way beside these homes will, very likely, begin at the same point and go in the identical direction it did on the day it first opened for play. It is rare to see a golf course significantly rerouted, and there is a good explanation for this: It is costly. Just as you cannot easily change the anatomy of a living person, you cannot easily change the anatomy of a living golf course. Yes, of course you can alter its appearance and shift a few things around. But generally, you have only so much space to work with, and where the holes go is where they will continue to go.

The effect of routing is powerful. It is a rather permanent condition. As such, it occupies an important part of the design of golf courses—far more important than typically regarded. In my work as a golf course architect, I have seen routing plans that were expertly created and also plenty that look as if they had been thrown together at the last minute. What a shame. To take such a precious part of the game—the treasure map we provide the golfer—and assume that things will work themselves out once the magic of the bulldozers is performed and the bare ground disappears to unveil shades of green turf.

I think of golf courses as snowflakes—no two exactly alike. And why? The answer has considerably more to do with routing than any other variable. In the mathematical realm, two golf holes on earth *do* have a sporting chance of being *nearly* identical. As evidence, take a look at the extreme

efforts to construct replica holes in the past few years. Some developers have gone to tremendous lengths to have a famous golf hole sophisticatedly mapped and, once it is recreated in another place, to then detail the entire setting right down to the identical species of vegetation and the exact type of sand used in the bunkers. But how many entire golf courses do you suppose will ever be successfully cloned?

The ingredients that make routings so crucial and influential are the setting of a golf course together with its climate and the hundreds of other details of a particular locale. Multiply those specifics by the multitude of options in the sequence and the unfolding of golf holes as they link together on a particular day, and you will begin to appreciate the command of a routing plan. No matter how you dissect it, when we speak of *routing*, we are speaking of a *journey*. And no two journeys can ever be the same.

Although this book has a narrow focus—*golf course routing*—it remained my goal throughout the writing to apply the information to a wide range of readers. The content is not solely directed to the golf course architects, land planners, and landscape architects who are often first on the scene when it comes to looking at land for a golf course, although I admit this was tempting. Nor was the makeup aimed only toward land developers, home builders, resort operators, golf management companies, and politicians, even though it is their great influence that more often than not defines a completed golf course. The writing is geared to the golf enthusiast. Every so often, you will find the text interrupted to examine the game itself. This is by design. Most of the people I meet who are connected with golf share a fascination with the overall experience of the game. To present thoughts about golf course routing and to not send a periscope up to look around at the many facets of the game would be a disservice.

Much has been written about golf course routing, although most of it falls within isolated chapters in books of broader topic or, occasionally, in articles and opinions from early golf architects. I am indebted to the writers before me and have expounded on their thinking and wisdom with the greatest possible care and regard.

I hope that once you have “played through” this book, it comes more naturally for you to distinguish good routings from bad, and great from not bad. But this objective in understanding routing remains only part of the plan. That there will be a greater push for excellence when it comes to golf course routing is the ultimate goal.

In a game where the participants move from one short act to another, it’s essential to have an infinite understanding of what goes into making this progression work. Among my favorite adjectives, a golf course routing can be “intriguing,” “exciting,” “mysterious,” “beautiful,” “efficient,” “safe,” “challenging,” and “dramatic.” The list continues . . . and keep in mind there is an opposite for each and every word you can possibly think of!

To *route* means to *direct*. An expanded definition will very often go a step further: “to divert in a specified direction along an intended path.”

How lucky we are to be a part of a game in which the limits of play are defined not only by a very specialized form of architecture but also by the customized story that gets written each and every time a player makes his or her way from beginning to end. What a bore it would be if we did not have this topic to consider.

Using This Book

If the truth be known, I planned only 14 chapters when this book was in process, but by classifying the guest writings solicited to complete the topic as full-fledged chapters, it became possible to reinforce a theme with 18 tidy chapters—referred to as *holes*—and a most essential “19th Hole.” Beyond this bit of trivia, there are really only seven things that will be helpful for the reader to know:

1. The book is divided into four sections, each consisting of groupings of “holes” that may be thought of as chapters. The book is arranged this way by design. It helps to recall topics in groups, just as golf holes can often be recalled better by this method.
2. “The Opening,” which consists of Holes 1 through 6, is a background and sets the stage. Some readers may have a good handle on this, but I encourage reading it anyway.
3. “Making the Turn,” which consists of Holes 7 through 9, comprises information essential to any good understanding of routing.
4. “The Heart,” which consists of Holes 10 through 15, is really the how-to portion (but I would not suggest skipping right to it.)
5. “The Finish,” which consists of Holes 16 through 18 plus the “19th Hole,” is a collection of advice on presenting, wisdom on a variety of routing topics, and final thoughts on the future of golf courses and routing. Like all real-world 19th Holes, this area is a place to ponder and reflect.
6. Intermingled within this “round” is a collection of short stories based on real-life personal experiences. I hope the stories break up the material in a positive way. If any of these seem uninteresting to you, by all means feel free to skip ahead.
7. This book’s outer margins have been put to use. Here you will find interesting quotes, facts, and trivia.

