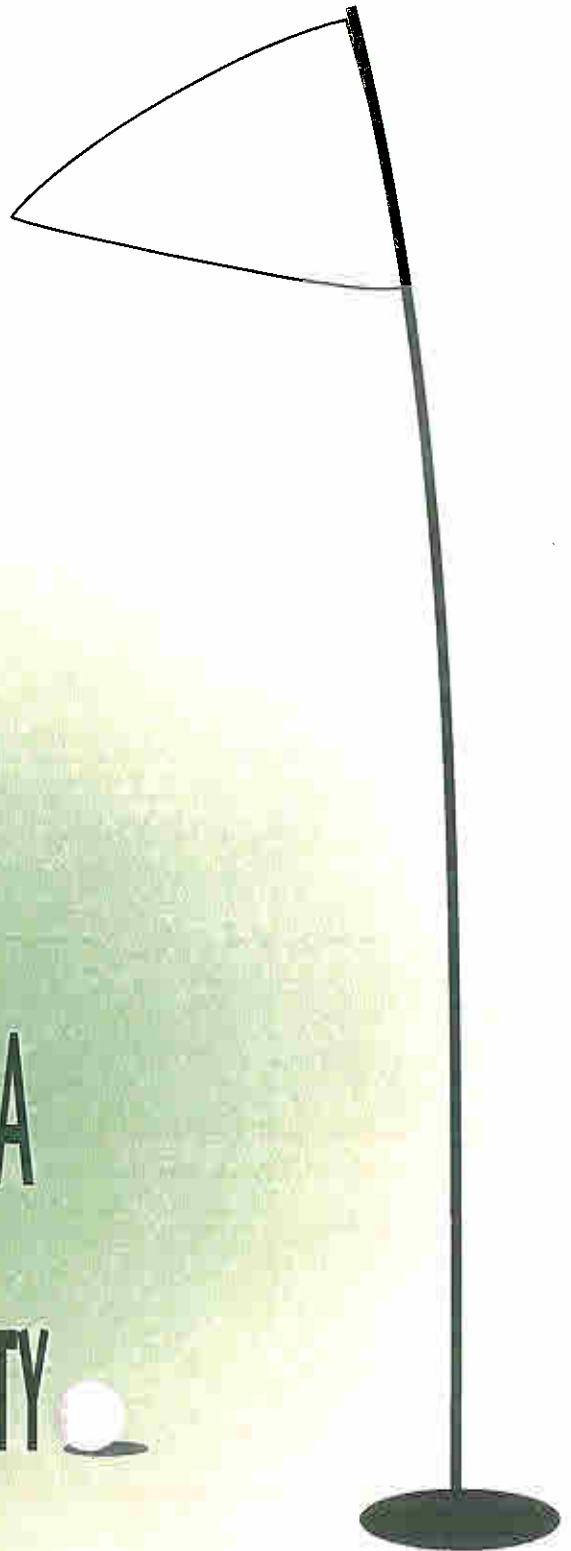


**BUILDING AND MANAGING A**

**WORLD CLASS GOLF FACILITY**



**A thesis submitted in fulfillment of the  
requirements for Master Professional designation  
by the Canadian Professional Golfers' Association**



**By Bill Penny**

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## **DEDICATION**

**I would like to dedicate my thesis to my wife Marnie who has been directly involved in the golf business for all of our thirty-two years together. She was there with me during those development years as a young assistant professional, and has stood by and encouraged me throughout my career as I advance my knowledge and horizons enabling me to reach new heights in my chosen field. I have had the opportunity to work at public, semi-private, private and resort facilities and Marnie has supported all my efforts to constantly seek perfection. It is with that encouragement and support that I complete this thesis and reach another of my career goals in the CPGA.**

**Also, a very special thank you to Jodi Goebel for all her support and dedication in putting it all together.**

**The subject that I have selected, "Building and Managing a World Class Golf Facility" has evolved with the innovation I have witnessed over the past thirty plus years in the golf industry. I have certainly had the opportunity to experience first hand the operation as a whole. I have witnessed the development of a course from raw land to maturity; it certainly has been an enjoyable and memorable ride and one that I am delighted to share with all of today's young professionals.**



**Finally, although your round is complete, your experience continues with time to relax and enjoy the clubhouse amenities to bring your world-class golfing experience to a close; and you can be sure that every opportunity will be taken to provide you with a lasting impression of your world class experience.**

## **FORWARD**

The evolution of Building and Managing a World Class golf facility is certainly not a process that has been isolated in my experiences. Changes develop over years, at different courses and with different professionals throughout the golfing community. And yet I feel my experience, being closely associated with the start-up and grow-in of some really world class operations, has given me a good grasp of the developments that have changed our world class approach. Certainly a great deal of my paper supports the success of the projects I have participated in, however, I have drawn upon many resources and contacts established throughout my career to explain what I see as the foundation of an entire golf facility.

I support all my writing with past experience, which includes: my apprenticeship years in the Canadian Professional Golfers Association at a public and semi private operation on the west coast; my term at a world class, public, daily-fee resort facility in Maui Hawaii; nearly 20 years at a private course in Edmonton Alberta; development from day one of a high-end daily fee resort course in the Canadian Rockies; and the same day one experience at a Jack Nicklaus signature course in Edmonton Alberta. I am currently involved as a General Partner in a very exciting project in Calgary Alberta: building a golf course, driving range and learning center.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Having spent the last thirty-three years directly involved in the golf business working at public, semi-private, private and high-end daily resort facilities, I feel very confident in presenting this thesis for the CPGA. My career path has taken me on a very interesting journey and the process of “Building and Managing a World Class Golf Facility” detailed in this thesis comes from my hands on experience.

I say “world class” to mean that the site really explodes with excitement; each hole is different and literally takes your breath away. From ground breaking to the moment one tees off, every detail must be addressed in order to achieve perfection.

In this thesis, I will attempt to go into detail explaining how I have seen this dream become reality and examining the reasons for some of the decisions made in the process that leads to course maturity and acceptance.

I have really enjoyed putting together this paper; my biggest problem was keeping it to a readable length. I’ve tried to cover all facets of construction and operation as I have experienced them, and as I would like to see them in any world-class facility under development.



## **HAVING A DREAM**

A World Class golf facility can only begin with a dream; a fervent dedication to create something truly world class. I have had that dream myself, and have witnessed that dream become reality on more than one occasion. The process involves specific choices throughout construction, some of which may seem extravagant or extraordinary, but "World Class" to me signifies the pinnacle of perfection and as such requires specific characteristics in a course. Does it mean that the course must be challenging enough to host a major PGA event? I don't think so. Does it mean that it must be \$200.00 a round to play? Again I don't think so. But, it does involve creating a course that will wow each guest in all aspects of the facility, taking excellence beyond the fairways to create a fantastic golf *experience*.

### ***THE TYPE OF FACILITY***

The course described throughout this thesis is a world class, high-end, public, daily-fee golf facility. And the most important descriptor, "world class", is only achieved with meticulous attention to detail.

A World Class course carries with it the connotation that anyone and everyone the world over would enjoy its offering. The golf experience begins at the gate: the beauty of the landscape; the convenience of the parking lot; the care and attention at the bag drop and greeting area. First impressions are made even before the golfer exits his vehicle. Excellence continues with the beauty of the clubhouse, efficient registration in the Pro Shop and courteous club handling to prove to the golfer he is indeed a guest. The appearance and set up of the driving range, the first tee reception, and starter information on the course set up all contribute to a golfer's world class experience. All of these things must be handled with the utmost class and enthusiasm. You haven't even hit a ball on the course yet, but you certainly have had insight into its world-class service. Now that you are at the first tee and ready to begin your round, what lies beyond?

Each hole is framed like a picture. The architect has given you a fairway to play the hole; everything is in front of you; nothing is left to the imagination. The course is groomed to perfection but you will not see a grounds attendant or hear the noise of any maintenance equipment. After your round you are met by an attendant to clean your clubs and take them to your vehicle, thanking you for visiting the facility and wishing for your return in the future.

## **SITE LOCATION**

In selecting a site for your golf facility, you are acquiring sufficient land for 18 holes; a clubhouse; parking; maintenance and practice facilities; a putting green and nursery green; for a world-class facility this list can be never ending. As such I recommend a minimum of 180 acres for development. (Yes you can build 18 holes on 90 acres, but we are dealing with a championship layout and all its facilities).

Once you have made up your mind that a selected piece of land meets all your requirements (based on the criteria below) it is very important that you tie up the property with an option to purchase subject to conditions. At that point you can continue with soil tests to make certain that your land can grow grass, but the general contours of your property must first support your dream.

### ***POPULATION BASE AND ACCESSIBILITY***

Access to the site establishes a critical first impression and determines the location of the facilities involved in the golf course. There will exist on each site potential access points that must be evaluated for their sight and safety distances on existing roads, ease of travel to and from the property, and use for primary and secondary entrances. A golf course is nothing without its golfers, and as such must provide convenient access to its site, making it reasonably available to those who wish to play.

In choosing a site based on accessibility, you must identify the population base of the site, rate its accessibility based on existing and potential points of access, and ensure that the type of facility most suited to the site will provide an economically viable facility when servicing golfers in the accessible population.

### ***TOPOGRAPHY***

The slope of the land is a major indicator of the layout possibilities of the course. Areas of the topography that contain milder slopes will generally be more conducive to the location of golf holes. The slope of the land involved in a hole will have a direct impact on how and at what pace that hole is played. Steeper slopes tend to be avoided to prevent an unreasonable challenge for players, and to minimize grading requirements during construction. Changes in elevation are important to the location of tees, fairways and greens to prevent blind shots that detract from the visibility and therefore, the strategy of a hole: Higher elevations provide views that enhance the overall experience of the course.

Slope and elevation also establish the drainage patterns for storm water and must be considered in the placement of the golf holes for maintenance and play. Ideally you will find a site whose topography allows for an interesting championship layout without excessive construction costs to correct for visible holes or proper irrigation.

### ***WATER SOURCE***

The most important point in finding a site is access to a water supply. You will require approximately 30 million gallons of water in a storage capacity. In all likelihood you will be pumping in excess of 31, 250, 000 gallons of water per season on the course, assuming that we pump 250, 000 gallons per day based on 125 days of operation.

In addition to the patterns of surface runoff, sub surface sources of water are studied during site analysis to determine the most efficient and reliable way to supply irrigation for the course. Often, the impoundments on the course will serve as the main source of irrigation water and are supplemented with underground water on an as needed basis.

Withdrawal of underground water must be studied to determine the quantity required and its impact on the supply for adjacent properties. If the withdrawal of groundwater for irrigation may affect the water supply of an area, irrigation requirements can be altered, as necessary, to prevent any impact or depletion.

Alternatives to groundwater, such as the collection of storm water and the use of effluent, should be investigated as a source of irrigation supply. Recycled water can lessen the demand on potable water supplies in areas that have little rainfall or have experienced persistent drought conditions.

### ***SOIL***

The quantity and profile of the existing soils on the property are important to the eventual establishment and maintenance of turf grass for the golf course. Poor or inadequate soils will require amendments either during construction or as a part of seedbed preparation for grassing.

The geology of the property will have a bearing on the design of the course concerning earthmoving and drainage requirements during construction. Site analysis may include a bedrock composition and depth study to evaluate the additional cost of rock removal.

## **PERMITTING AND ZONING**

Permitting and Zoning practices will vary depending on local expectations in the area of your selected property. Nonetheless, the steps below, carried out thoroughly and in order, will open the doors necessary to assist you in acquiring approval for your project and acceptance for your intentions.

### ***OBTAINING YOUR PERMIT***

The first step in the long process to receive your permit is to get your local council approval on the project so that you can proceed with an area structure plan. The area structure plan will outline in detail your exact intentions with the land and an outline of your plans for course construction and development. The plan should go into detail about everything within the boundaries of the acquired land.

From here, you will acquire an Environmental Site Assessment (ESA): The purpose of the phase I ESA being to identify potential environmental concerns or liabilities arising from past or current activities on the site and it's surrounding properties. The scope of work for the ESA includes:

- A walk-over assessment of the site;
- An historical review of the site and immediately surrounding properties;
- Observation of activities on property within 200 metres of the site;
- Interviews with persons knowledgeable about past and present site activities;
- and Correspondence with regulatory officials regarding the site.

Next on your list is a historical impact assessment study. This historical study is focused on determining past land uses of the site and surrounding properties from a review of available aerial photos, street directions and Fire Insurance Plans (FIPs). This may take some time, especially if your site is found to contain any prehistoric animal remains, which may also have a large impact on the construction budget.

The next big step is to obtain a water supply permit to irrigate your course.

Once you have obtained all of the above, all you should require to begin construction is a permit. At this stage this should be almost automatic; and with your permitting and zoning issues resolved you have time to look at how you will finance the project.

## **FINANCING THE PROJECT**

Financing your course will require what at first may seem to be a monstrous budget. Throughout the project you will amass land, facilities, and construction costs, as well as fees from course, clubhouse and landscape architects. Although you have a lot of flexibility with these costs when constructing a golf course, the world-class result is only achieved with specific choices that will limit your budget freedom significantly.

### ***CREATING A BUDGET***

The budget process will outline what is required to purchase the land, develop the course, and operate the facility to achieve maximum profit potential. The total financing cost for a world-class facility will be in the ten million dollar range with construction of the course accounting for 6.5 million of the total cost. Infrastructure to include a clubhouse, maintenance buildings, on course shelters, etc. will round out this figure.

When you begin a project of this magnitude you cannot afford to go in under financed in the hopes that the project will come in under budget or last minute financing will come through. Make sure that you and your course architect are in agreement on a budget for construction, and that you have this and all other budgets assembled and approved as far in advance as possible.

Suppose we now have a potential site and sufficient water supply. How, now, are we going to finance this venture; whom do we expect to draw from? and what price can we expect? As this is a 10 million dollar project, we will have to charge \$125/round and play in excess of 20, 000 18-hole rounds to support the debt load. Raising capital of this magnitude requires precision planning and preparation. You should prepare a detailed business plan and be prepared to answer any and all questions regarding the financing of your course. I will not go into this business plan, but will note that in your plan you should pay extra attention to your infrastructure expenses as they can present a very expensive oversight.

Refer to Appendices 1 and 2 for a sample Operational Budget and Construction Cash Flow Summary.

## **COURSE ARCHITECTURE**

The final layout of your golf course should represent the most exciting but efficient use of the property you have selected for your facility. Although in theory there is only one perfect course for each undeveloped property, your attention to the reality of a course's design is necessary to achieve this perfect course.

### ***SELECTING AN ARCHITECT***

The most important decision an owner or developer can make is the hiring of a golf course architect. This person will mold the property and, like an artist, paint a picture that will become real life art.

A proven designer will command anywhere from \$400 000 to \$2 million dollars to design your facility. At this stage there are two schools of thought that can dictate the direction of the project: on the one hand you may choose to design and construct a course for just the minimum dollars; or you can decide to spend what is necessary in order to get a big name golf course architect.

Naturally, spending as little as possible will not suffice at a world-class facility. That's not saying that you must seek out and hire a Bobby Jones, Jack Nicklaus or Tommy Fasio to design your course, although certainly it adds to your marketing powers to attach a big name to your facility. I have had the pleasure of working at a club with a top name designer, as well as a world-class facility that hired an up and coming local architect. Both operations are extremely successful and both command top dollars for play. Again, a lot of whom you hire depends on your market. At the big name facility it was not a destination resort and really was dependent on local traffic and the domestic consumer. The big name provided the marketing impetus to attract the local market in an environment of competition. The other course is located in the Canadian Rockies very near Banff Alberta, a world-renowned tourist destination. As a result marketing dollars were less and players were attracted naturally based on the location; a big name was not necessary.

Your goal is to find the architect who not only has a proven track record in the industry, but also, more importantly, buys into your dream 100% and fully understands your vision. In a lot of cases your site will dictate who your course architect should be. Every architect has his or her own style; and at each course it is quite obvious who the designer was. It may be the use of railway ties, the rough look of a British Isles course, the use of water

hazards, or the natured look; All of these features leave a signature of the designer. The natural terrain of your property will possess a character that your architect should enhance, and the architect should be the one who is most capable of highlighting the characteristics that will make your course stand out.

The end result of the selection of your golf course architect must always be a first quality golf course; one which stands apart in the market place, and is inviting enough that golfers will return to play again and willingly share their golf experience with others. The most credible advertising is word-of-mouth: to be the beneficiary, a golf course must have a quality, playable design that is challenging yet accommodating and impeccably maintained.

### ***COURSE DESIGN***

In establishing guidelines for the actual design of your course, I rely, as many others have, on the wisdom of Dr. Alister Mackenzie. Established in *Golf Architecture*, Mackenzie outlines thirteen essential features of a well-designed course:

- The course, where possible, should be arranged in two loops of nine holes.
- There should be a large proportion of good two-shot holes, two or three drive-and-pitch holes, and at least four one shot holes.
- There should be little walking between the greens and tees, and the course should be arranged so that in the first instance there is always a slight walk forwards from the green to the next tee; then the holes are sufficiently elastic to be lengthened in the future if necessary.
- The greens and fairways should be sufficiently undulating, but there should be no hill climbing.
- Every hole should have a different character.
- There should be a minimum of blindness for the approach shots.
- The course should have beautiful surroundings, and all the artificial features should have so natural an appearance that a stranger is unable to distinguish them from nature itself.
- There should be sufficient number of heroic carries from the tee, but the course should be arranged so that the weaker player with the loss of a stroke shall always have an alternative route open to him/her.
- There should be an infinite variety in the strokes required to play the various holes – viz., interesting brassy shots, iron shots, and pitch-and-run-up shots.
- There should be a complete absence of the annoyance and irritation caused by the necessity of searching for lost balls.
- The course should be so interesting that even the plus player is consistently stimulated to improve his/her game in attempting shots s/he has hitherto been unable to play.

- The course should be so arranged that the low handicap player, or even the absolute beginner, should be able to enjoy his/her round in spite of the fact that s/he is piling up a big score.
- The course should be equally good during winter and summer, the texture of the greens and fairways should be perfect, and the approaches should have the same consistency as the greens.

Although you can imagine how difficult it is to maintain this last standard in the eight-month season we are able to run in Alberta, I am not trying to say that there is no flexibility within these guidelines. What I hope to convey is the ideal that was so carefully established within Mackenzie's approach: a world-class golf facility need not be difficult but rather exciting; need not look expensive but rather naturally meticulous. The goal is to impress each player by virtue of their experience and the shared enjoyment by golfers of all skill levels.

The goal of your course architect is to create an "excellence of design" that is "more felt than fully realized by the player, but nevertheless it is constantly exercising a subconscious influence upon him/her". The perfection of a course lies in its subtle beauty; elements that come together in an apparently effortless manner to create a consistent experience that acts upon each golfer without him/her recognizing the details.



## **CONSTRUCTION**

The construction of your course is the largest and most important expense in creating your golf facility. Again I rely on Dr. Alister Mackenzie to relate: "The more one sees of golf courses, the more one realizes the importance of doing construction really well, so that it is likely to be of a permanent character. It is impossible to lay too much emphasis on the importance of finality."

### ***DIRT WORK***

Your dirt work will include the excavation, transportation and placement of material to establish all necessary elevations required in the construction of the golf course features and to provide surface drainage as per plans and specifications.

### ***IRRIGATION***

The purchase of an irrigation system for a golf course is no different than buying a suit. Each golf course is unique and must be considered individually.

The best procedure is to obtain the services of a competent engineer or irrigation company to tailor fit the system to meet the specific watering needs of your golf course. The design and installation of a fully automatic irrigation system for an 18-hole golf course can be priced up to \$1 million or higher. An investment of this magnitude dictates that the job be handled by qualified engineers and irrigation companies.

Too often a system is purchased on the basis of the "lowest bid", or which company had the best salesman. Since the golf superintendent is the expert in growing turf grass and will have the responsibility for operation as well as maintenance of the watering system, s/he should be involved at the outset: from the initial stages to the follow-through and every phase of installation. The superintendent should insist on having a system to meet specific watering demands of his/her golf course. It is essential to know and understand the function of each component, the location of every pipe, valve and fitting as installed, and also to know exactly what the system is designed to do. The irrigation schedule must be programmed in accordance with the specifications built into the system.



Installing the main irrigation line.

**The installer and/or superintendent should make an accurate as-built map of the irrigation system. This map should show the precise location of each component, and may have changed from the original plan due to obstacles found in the field.**

**The pumps in your system must be adequate to produce 1200 gallons of water per minute. The number of irrigation heads will be approximately 900 to cover all areas in play. Isolation valves for each hole are required so that problems at each hole can be worked on without shutting down the entire system. You should also plan for irrigation options around the clubhouse and for all flowerbeds.**

## ***BUNKERS***

Construction of the bunkers will include drainage, edging and sand installation. The silica-sand requirements of each bunker will be established in the course contour plans and the bunkers will be carefully constructed to minimize maintenance requirements.



Cutting out the bunker.

## ***SHAPERS***

Rough Shaping will include the grading of the material placed during the major earthwork process. The material will be shaped to the approximate final elevations as shown on the contour plans, less a specified topsoil application. This includes the shaping of bunkers, green subgrades, mounding, fairway subgrades, cart paths, teeing areas, etc.

## ***FINISHERS***

Finishing the course shaping includes the blending of all slopes, after topsoiling, eliminating low areas and, in general, putting the entire golf course at finished grade.

## ***SEED PREPARATION AND INSTALLATION***

Once the shaping of a course is complete, seed preparation is conducted, making all of the necessary soil amendments as determined from soil test results for all seeded and sodded turf grass areas of the golf course. You will be preparing all areas of the course, including: fairways, tees, grass, roughs, native areas and erosion areas especially around the bunkers.

Then, when installing your turf, you must consider costs:

- sod: \$10-12, 000/acre
- hydro seeding: \$1600-2000/acre
- dry seeding: although definitely the cheapest, can cause concerns arising from wind, water and limited accessibility in tight areas.

As an example in selecting your seed and sod areas: imagine a new golf course in Alberta. In preparing the course, we can opt to sod the fairways, grass and erosion areas; and seed the tees, roughs and native areas. Your superintendent can make suggestions as to the most cost effective method of ensuring a quality grow-in for your course.



Laying the big rolls.

## ***DRAINAGE***

The natural drainage patterns of the property have already been carefully considered in the layout of the course to prevent maintenance problems and allow the course to remain open for play as much as possible. In the construction phase, grading will be done to further control where the surface water flows, directing drainage away from areas that come into play most frequently. The drainage pattern will also be manipulated to locate for impoundments which can be used to maximize the collection of rainfall for use in irrigating the course or as features incorporated into the golf holes. These impoundments often serve another purpose: to control the surface runoff during storms and to prevent erosion problems from occurring either on or off the property.

## ***DRIVING RANGE AND PUTTING GREEN***

The driving range at a world-class facility will serve as a warm-up range at one end, with approximately 30 hitting areas, spaced 9 feet apart. The range balls will be positioned on the tee-deck for the golfers' use and also included in their golfing fees. The range is not meant to be a practice facility as such, only a warm-up area before commencing your round. Naturally, the range will have target greens built at various distances.

The opposite end of the range will be set up as a teaching centre, with practice bunkers and a putting green. This will accommodate all of your teaching requirements for the golf academy.

Another large putting green will be constructed of approximately 8 – 10, 000 square feet in close proximity to the driving range and 1<sup>st</sup> tee.

## ***NURSERY GREEN***

This is something that can easily be missed during construction, but do not underestimate the importance of a nursery green. You will always be looking to replace areas on your regular greens damaged due to winterkill, machinery leaks, vandalism, animals, inclement weather etc. To bring in sod is not only very expensive but severely labor intensive. To avoid these costs it is best to maintain a nursery green of around 8000 square feet.

## ***CART PATHS***

Continuous cart paths will allow course play to continue under extreme wet conditions. In constructing these paths, make certain that they are a minimum nine, preferably ten feet in width to allow for oncoming traffic to pass and maintenance equipment to maneuver. Curbing is also very important around the greens and tee areas. This will assist with drainage and give the course a finished appearance.

## **BUILDINGS & INFRASTRUCTURE**

The buildings of your facility should complement the course and provide all the necessary amenities and added comforts that make your course a place to enjoy the total golf experience.

### ***CLUBHOUSE***

When siting your clubhouse there are many factors to keep in mind to maximize visual impact. You want to arrange the layout in such a way to:

- Provide visual control of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> tee boxes and the driving range from the Pro Shop.
- Allow easy access with routed cart paths to the 9<sup>th</sup> hole concession and washrooms.
- Maximize sunlight and minimize the effects of prevailing winds on outdoor patios.
- Plan the dining room, lounge and patio to take visual advantage of the 9<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> greens, golf course, irrigation pond, etc.
- Arrange the kitchen to minimize the effects of kitchen exhaust.
- Provide easy access to power cart storage and visual control of the staging area from the Pro Shop.

Considering these constraints that arise before a design is even established, it is not hard to believe that often not enough thought goes into exactly what the functions of the clubhouse will be. For instance, will you be hosting major events? Are you going to have numerous tournaments and will these be corporate or for charity? Are you going to be strictly private?

The biggest mistake you can make in designing your clubhouse is not to allow for sufficient storage space. The kitchen, for example, never seems to be big enough. Often the locker and staff rooms are too small, the dry storage area is not sufficient or there is not enough freezer space. The Pro Shop never seems to have enough storage room, the outside service area is often too small, or the cart facility is not designed properly. Odd, since these are the main areas that must be addressed at the design stage, but I believe that someone in operations must have input into the functionality of each area.

The goal of your clubhouse design is to provide an overall aesthetic element or aesthetic elements that may be introduced within adjacent or other visually noticeable golf course structures: your Power Cart Storage, Irrigation Pump House, Maintenance Building, etc. You should attempt to provide a functional building program of space allocation for clubhouse

areas and seating capacities. Your clubhouse should provide easy access to washrooms and locker rooms, ample capacity for day-to-day functions and minimal but sufficient space for back of house operations and storage.

Once your layout is set and you are satisfied that all the above requirements are included, the next step is controlling the spending. Not many projects come in under or near budget. Nevertheless, your goal is to create a visually pleasing and comfortable interior regardless of budgetary constraints. This can and should be accomplished with the help of a capable Clubhouse architect.

### ***PRO SHOP***

In locating the Pro Shop, you should allow for direct and easy access in and out from both the exterior and interior of the clubhouse. The Pro Shop is your course hub, and should provide an area for easy and effective merchandise display, easily reconfigured to maximize the visual impact of your inventory. In addition, your front counter should provide visual impact, allow for staff to conduct multiple transactions, and be an area to control tee boxes and power carts with convenient access to both.

Although your focal point in the clubhouse, your Pro Shop does not have to be 2,000 square feet. A Shop with 1000 sq.ft. is quite adequate to provide lots of counter space for check in and purchasing and a bright and uncluttered display area. Millwork, though, is important and you begin with the design of your front counter location as relevant to the 1<sup>st</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> tees, driving range and staging cart area. You want your traffic to flow through the shop to the front counter.



The Pro Shop Interior.

Displays are also important for visual impact and merchandise sales, and a successful retailer will tell you to change your displays regularly and keep your shop looking new and fresh. By designing the Pro Shop effectively, you can allow for both day-to-day and seasonal changes that will provide interest and stimulate sales.

### ***ON COURSE SHELTERS***

Once again the look of all your structures on the property should have a theme and take on the look and feel of the clubhouse. On course washroom facilities, one on each nine should include an overhang to accommodate 10-16 golfers to take refuge in case of a thunderstorm or inclement weather. The locations of these structures are generally placed on holes 4 or 5 and on holes 13 or 14. It is also a good idea to have a washroom facility located near or included as part of the clubhouse adjacent to the concession building between nines.

### ***STARTER BUILDING***

This structure should also have the appearance of the clubhouse, with the same design and roofline. This structure need only be 10' x 10' to include a large opening window that slides facing the #1 tee and also a window facing the driving range and putting green area. This building will function as an office for your starter and marshals. It will house your scorecards, pin sheets, daily tee sheets, a first aid station, yardage books, bag tags, pencils, etc.

### ***MAINTENANCE FACILITIES***

With a maintenance facility, what is too big? I've designed a number of buildings for various clubs from 3000 sq.ft. to 20,000 sq.ft.

To me a building of approximately six thousand square feet is quite adequate for your main maintenance area. This area will accommodate all of your mechanical requirements, including an area for the mechanic to work on equipment and a room 10' by 10' for sharpening the reels. Your maintenance facility will also house the offices of your course Superintendent, Mechanic, Assistant Superintendent, Foreman and possibly your Horticulturist. The main building should also have a storage area of approximately 200 square feet to store all of your irrigation parts.

Another area of approximately 3000 square feet should be constructed for your cold storage that will accommodate all your equipment and small tools. It is also in this building that you would separate an area for your fertilizer storage.



Another small building should be constructed for your chemicals, which should always be housed separately.

You will also want to construct a wash bay as well as proper storage tanks for your gasoline and diesel requirements.

And finally, you will need another area designated for sand, gravel, bunker-sand and topsoil storage.

### ***COURSE FURNISHINGS***

After construction has been completed what now do you require before golfers arrive at the first tee? The following list provides approximations for the furnishing requirements of an 18-hole course.

- 27 flags, flagpoles and cups
- 3-4 rakes/bunker (average)
- ball washers on every cart (not cluttering the tees)
- yardage markers:
  - 100-150-200 yard fairway markers
  - 150 yard rough markers
- cart path markings
- directional signage
- hole signage
- tee markers (to reflect the nature of the course and its surroundings. If elaborate statues make them heavy to discourage theft)
- putting green cups and pins
- driving range supplies
- air horns
- bag racks
- spike brushes
- rope and stakes
- proximity markers
- hazard stakes
- garbage containers
- water containers

I am certainly not a big fan of benches, ball washers or a lot of signs on a course. To me they clutter up the surroundings and take away from the tranquil setting of the facility. Therefore:

- Your electric cart should be equipped with a ball washer.
- Your tee markers should reflect the terrain: they may be small rocks or cut timbers found on site. (Certainly this does not require a large budget).

**Directional signage is a must, as the golfer will likely be consumed with the layout and condition of the course, not necessarily paying attention enough to find the next tee or the nearest washroom. Your facility will no doubt allow the players to easily follow the routing plan of the course, but you must also think of the many corporate outings that will operate as shotgun starts potentially leaving people very disoriented upon completion of play as to where the clubhouse is, etc.**

**Also, your hole signage must reflect the overall image of the facility, staying as close to Mother Nature as possible. Regarding your flags on the greens, I am a big believer in one-color flags: white and logoed. Daily pin placement diagrams are placed in the electric carts and the greens are divided into three segments: A, B and C that are changed in a daily rotation.**

**All of the sprinkler heads should be measured and marked to the centre of the green. You will also want rocks on the side of the fairways to designate 150 yard fairway markers, and cart paths marked with a small, circular dome on the middle of the path indicating 100, 150, 200, and 250 yards at the centre of the green.**

### ***GOLF CARTS***

**In addition to being a major source of revenue for a facility, a golf cart fleet can contribute to a facility's image and affect the customers' enjoyment of their golf experience.**

**Careful planning is the key to achieving both financial and customer service goals, whether you are putting together a new golf cart fleet for a start-up facility or upgrading an existing fleet. If you are in charge of fleet planning or are advising facility owners or senior managers about fleet operations, you must be able to:**

- **Examine a facility's golf cart needs in light of the facility's mission, the needs and preferences of its customers, and the physical features of its course;**
- **Set fleet business and customer service objectives;**
- **Estimate revenues, expenses, and profit, and compare lease vs. purchase options;**
- **and Determine the number of cars to acquire, select the dealer and cart brand, model and options and negotiate an acquisition package.**

**A well-chosen golf cart fleet will benefit the golf club by:**

- **Serving as a direct source of cash and profit;**
- **Helping to compensate a PGA professional or enabling other program improvements;**
- **Promoting more rounds of play by indirectly generating additional revenue from playing fees and sales of merchandise, food and beverages;**
- **Enhancing a facility's image when the fleet is attractive and well-run;**
- **and Helping offset increases in playing fees by generating facility income.**

**Drawbacks associated with any golf cart fleet include:**

- **Possible damage to turf or the general environment;**
- **Accident and Damage Liability; and**
- **Possible net financial loss if the fleet is not properly managed.**

**A well-chosen fleet will always provide more health than headache to a world-class facility, providing convenience and added enjoyment to every golfer on the course.**

### ***EQUIPMENT***

**The equipment needs of your course should be discussed with the course Superintendent to ensure s/he has all the necessary equipment to maintain the course once it has been constructed. You can usually negotiate a new golf discount to alleviate some of the cost of acquiring a new fleet of course maintenance equipment. Although brand specific, the sample Equipment list attached as Appendix 3 represents a typical full range fleet for an 18-hole course in Alberta. Often a dealer will offer a consultation to the course, and assemble an offer to assist you in meeting your equipment needs.**



## ***SMALL TOOLS***

The small tools requirements for a golf course can be the most variable based on differences in size, layout, features etc. But, the list below should provide a guideline of equipment you will likely need on hand to operate your facility:

- hand watering supplies: hoses, nozzles, tanks
- cup cutters, pullers and setters
- shop supplies: rakes, brooms, screwdrivers, pliers, etc.
- ball mark repair tools
- drag mats (top dressing)
- soil samplers
- paint guns and paint for turf
- hard hats and protective netting
- fertilizer spreaders
- tarps for greens
- chainsaws and protective clothing
- fuel tanks
- rain gear
- cleaning supplies: for washrooms, carts, etc.

## **LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE**

Now that you have created a theme in the construction of your course and its shelters, you want to tie it all together with landscape features that mask the functional elements of your facility and accentuate the natural beauty of the surroundings. A good landscape architect will help you develop installations that will enhance your course's theme year-round.

### ***CLUB HOUSE AND ENTRANCE FEATURES***

The Landscape Architecture on your course property should begin at the gate and continue in a theme, creating an atmosphere that invites the golfer to exist in a different world while at your facility. Your goal is to create an ultra-natural setting that looks good throughout the seasons and transports each guest to an outdoor haven from the moment s/he enters the property.

Your guest's should receive visual identification of the Pro Shop and main Clubhouse entry when first approaching the golf course parking lot. There should be access to and identification of the passenger and golf club drop off, and site grading to minimize the clubhouse entry stairs, handicapped access ramp, and power cart ramp. The siting of your clubhouse should be in harmony with the natural surroundings, with minimal visual impact of loading areas, garbage and bottle storage, ground located mechanical units and air conditioning/make up air installations.

Working with your Superintendent, your Landscape Architect will mold the land to provide visual stimulation while creating something that requires minimal maintenance time or cost.



## **POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

Although your golf facility is designed to provide leisurely enjoyment for its golfers, you will need to establish rules and expectations to govern both course staff and guests. I cannot predict the environment that you will eventually create, but there are certain policies that should be outlined at every facility.

### ***STAFF MANUALS***

First, your golf club should create and uphold a mission statement that guides each employee as to proper behavior while at the facility, whether on or off duty. Remembering to refer to this mission, you and your management team can then continue to establish the policies and procedures that will govern your club. You should outline expectations as to:

- your overall service policy;
- duties and responsibilities for each employment category;
- staff golf privileges;
- time off requests;
- staff meals;
- staff discounts;
- punctuality;
- uniforms;
- sexual harassment;
- tipping;
- staff accounts;
- lockers;
- and smoking.

Your staff manual should also contain a section regarding procedures in the golf shop, as it is the hub of the facility and a main centre for guest contact. Ensure that you include details regarding expectations for:

- check-in;
- booking procedure;
- merchandising;
- product knowledge;
- special orders;
- inventory control;
- and receiving merchandise.

### ***REGULAR PLAY***

In addition to coordinating your staff, your club should establish and maintain a series of guidelines for your guests and be sure that they understand and adhere to these expectations. Every golfer should be well informed of your course policy regarding:

- pricing;
- booking;
- dress code;
- rain checks;
- club storage; and
- rentals.

Although creating these policies is the first step, I cannot stress enough how important it is to keep guests well informed and adhere to these policies at all times. Being firm and consistent with rules around the club will help you maintain the image you are striving for and prevent future headaches.

### ***TOURNAMENT PLAY***

Your Director of Golf should work with your Tournament Coordinator to establish guidelines for booking and facilitating all tournaments. Your guide should include pricing, payment policy, a sample contract, an individual tournament schedule and a list of duties and responsibilities for all staff on the day of play. Remember to specify differences for each kind of tournament you may run, and try to be consistent so that new developments are easily addressed in a manner that is in line with existing procedures.

## **THE MANAGEMENT TEAM**

In creating a management team for your course, you are recruiting the expertise needed to operate the course to its optimum potential every day. Before you begin hiring you will need to do each of the following for every position you wish to fill:

- create a detailed job description
- outline a benefit package
- create a schedule that details hours of work, holidays, overtime, etc.

In searching for the appropriate candidate for each position, you should select a person who you feel can contribute to a team effort in course management while fulfilling all of the responsibilities outlined in the job description.

As with any good business venture, one must assemble a strong team of professionals to form the foundation of the company and to launch the club on its feet. Your Director of Golf should be in place from the beginning, to develop and maintain course initiatives that will be upheld by the rest of the management team. Still early in the development process, you will hire a course superintendent. This person must be on board during the construction phase of the course. Having made your selection, your superintendent will then work closely with the project manager and become involved in every detail during construction. Approximately six months out from opening, the rest of your administration team will begin to unfold.

Appendix 4 is an organizational chart displaying the key members of your management team and their position within the club.

### ***CONTROLLER***

The controller is accountable for the provision of effective and efficient financial functions and the overall operation of the club's administration office, overseeing all daily functions.

Your Controller will:

- Oversee the entire payroll function, and ensure that input to the payroll software is performed in an accurate and timely manner.
- Maintain the club's documentation according to normal business practices and recognized accounting procedures.
- Act as a key liaison with the club's auditors during preliminary and final audits.



- Ensure that all invoices are coded correctly to a chart of accounts and posted to your financial reporting system.
- Ensure that all payments to vendors are made in a timely manner according to the terms, so as to keep the club in good standing with suppliers.
- Maintain the computerized accounting system on a strict fiscal cycle to ensure financial statements are prepared promptly at month end.
- Work in conjunction with other department heads to prepare annual budgets.
- Prepare all monthly bank statements from all financial institutions.
- Ensure that all internal controls are in place to prevent theft.
- Assist with the club's long range financial planning.

### ***DIRECTOR OF GOLF***

The golf shop is the hub of operations for the club and is led by a qualified, experienced CPGA Director of Golf who is augmented by a complete staff of highly skilled professionals. It is the Director of Golf who is responsible for ensuring that the overall objectives, policies, programs and fiscal practices of the facility are implemented, administered and maintained.

#### **Your Director of Golf will:**

- Act as chief operating officer and be responsible for marketing total facilities and services of the club.
- Interpret and enforce the policies, rules and regulations of the club.
- Prepare and submit for approval an annual budget and administer that budget in a fiscally responsible manner.
- Maintain daily cash receipts and account for safekeeping of same according to established, written policy and procedure. Certify and categorize all invoices for payment.
- Promote all activities that are within the scope of services that are provided by the club which will generate operating revenues and create interest.
- Maintain close cooperation with community officials and develop strong community awareness within the people of the community.
- Be current on developments in the world of golf and present the facility as being a leader in positive innovation.
- Work closely with other officials associated with the facility, allied associations of golf and others that might contribute to the facility's success.
- Speak at various clubs, educational or civic functions, on behalf of the club, as required.
- Strive to operate the facility according to established fiscal parameters. Assist in budgetary development and related matters as required.

- **Oversee the publishing and distribution of informational and promotional literature.**
- **Supervise and be responsible for the detailed operation of the golf course, clubhouse and golf shop, including supervision of the greens superintendent, head golf professional, food and beverage manager, and controller.**
- **Responsible for hiring, disciplining and/or terminating employees according to facility policy and procedures. Establish wage rates for assigned employees.**
- **Ensure that guests adhere to club policies and/or regulations.**
- **Devise and control purchasing policies and procedures; establish inventory levels and ensure the distribution of merchandise and supplies to assigned departments. Prepare related reports and records.**
- **Coordinate overall scheduling of the golf course to ensure that guests, tournament functions, etc., do not pose any conflicts. Revise schedules as required.**
- **Create an increased public interest in golf that includes all age groups.**
- **Ensure that golf educational programs are conducted for guests as needed.**
- **Participate and become involved in organizations whose purpose will be of benefit to the facility.**
- **Coordinate and communicate with local news media, commercial firms, civic organizations and other entities to promote the development of the golf facility's policies and programs.**

**To operate successfully, your Director of Golf must:**

- **be a CPGA member in good standing.**
- **possess a personality that will make people feel welcome and that reflects favorably on the facility. This includes public speaking skills as well as personal relations.**
- **be a qualified and proven administrator.**
- **possess a college degree from an accredited college or university or its equivalent from other training courses and/or an experienced background that would equal such proficiency.**
- **be a competent golfer with considerable experience in teaching and organizing instructional programs and in tournament management.**
- **have demonstrated merchandising and golf shop operational skills**
- **have the respect of his/her peers.**

## ***SUPERINTENDENT***

The primary reason that a golf club is successful is the positive level of the total golf experience, and the first consideration is the course itself. The course superintendent should be carefully selected and trained; a good superintendent will be familiar with the turf and vegetation characteristics of a specific geographic region. This person must be equally skilled in managing people and departmental budgets as s/he is in growing and maintaining turf. S/he must also possess a high level of attentiveness to environmental sensitivity.

Because of the impact a superintendent will have on the quality of your course and the overall facility, s/he will be your director of golf's first team member. This position should be in place during the initial construction phase and he then would start assembling his team bringing on board an assistant, likely during the irrigation phase in construction. This is also the time to hire your mechanic. Generally the construction contractor will be responsible for seeding the course from tee to green and your superintendent will have input into this seeding. Once the greens have germinated, the course is turned over to the superintendent and his staff to handle the maintenance. By this time your maintenance staff would number approximately 15-20 employees. This number would increase to possibly 23-27 for the initial season. With this support in place your superintendent can coordinate the many tasks involved in maintaining your golf course.

During construction your Superintendent will:

- Review all grass selections and confirm selections or make appropriate recommendations.
- Review total water supply, quality, and distribution system to develop the best and most efficient use of water for the golf course.
- Obtain soil analysis to determine the type of fertilization and soil enhancement programs that will be needed to produce uniform, quality turf.
- Monitor and provide general direction for the installation of the irrigation system. S/he will make sure the "as built" plans are correct and test the system to ensure the distribution patterns are correct and the system functions properly including the pump station.
- Review the proposed equipment list and adapt the equipment requirements to conform to the needs for properly maintaining the golf course.
- Work with the golf course design team to inspect the individual holes and develop a punch list of final work to be completed for the owner's acceptance of each completed hole.

- **Develop the schedule for delivery of maintenance equipment and owner cash requirements for purchase.**
- **Review and revise, if necessary, the grow-in maintenance budget as well as the first year's maintenance budget.**
- **Work with the landscape architect in the selection of appropriate materials to ensure that proper plant material is selected for soil conditions and water availability and reasonable maintenance costs.**



**To maintain the course, your Superintendent must:**

- **Possess a thorough knowledge of the construction and maintenance techniques for all areas of a golf course including: tees, fairways and greens.**
- **Be well experienced in the production and maintenance of the types of turf used on golf courses; in planting, cultivating, pruning and caring for plants, shrubs, and trees; and in the characteristics and proper use of various fertilizers and soil conditioners.**
- **Possess a thorough knowledge of herbicides and pest control methods and materials and have the ability to obtain the appropriate applicator's license or permit for turf application of such products.**
- **Be well experienced in drainage control methods, of watering and irrigation systems including wells, pumps and automatic controls.**
- **Possess knowledge of construction and maintenance techniques for golf car paths.**

## **HEAD PROFESSIONAL**

The Head Professional of your course is responsible to the Director of Golf for ensuring that the overall objectives, policies, programs and fiscal practices of the facility are implemented, administered and maintained.

Your Head Professional will:

- Act as supervisor of the Golf Department marketing the total facility and services of the club along with overseeing the inside and outside golf staff and their responsibilities.
- Interpret and enforce the policies, rules and regulations of the Director of Golf.
- Administer the annual budget in a fiscally responsible manner.
- Prepare an employee manual and job descriptions and conduct semi-annual employee evaluations with the Director of Golf. One such session shall include the use of a performance rating sheet and setting of performance objectives.
- Be responsible for daily cash and receipts and account for safekeeping of it according to established written policy and procedures. Certify and categorize all golf department invoices for payment.
- Promote various functions that are within the club regulations and policies, which will generate operating revenues and create customer and community interest.
- Maintain close cooperation with the community officials.
- Strive to operate the facility according to established fiscal parameters. Assist in budgetary development and related matters as required.
- Be responsible for hiring, disciplining and/or terminating employees according to facility policy and procedure. Establish wage rates for assigned employees.
- Ensure that guests adhere to club policies and procedures.
- Devise and control purchasing policies and procedures, establish inventory levels, ensure the distribution of merchandise and supplies to assigned departments, and prepare related reports and records.
- Be responsible for the overall scheduling of the course to ensure that members, guests, tournament functions, etc. do not pose any conflicts. Revise schedules as required.
- Participate and become involved in organizations whose purpose will be of benefit to the facility.
- Coordinate and communicate with local news media, commercial firms, civic organizations and other entities to promote the development of the golf facility's policies and programs.

## ***FOOD AND BEVERAGE MANAGER***

The Food and Beverage Manager is the director of your food service operation including the dining room, lounge, outside concession and beverage cart. This individual should be skilled in cost and portion controls, inventory management, spoilage reduction, point of sale systems and personnel training. The Food and Beverage Manager is a trained professional who is equally comfortable with dining room management as with expediting orders in the kitchen. The focus is on compliance with local health department codes and liquor controls as well as maintaining up to date licensing. Food and beverage is operated as an individual profit centre within the club.

Prior to construction, kitchen plans should be reviewed by the Food and Beverage Manager for traffic flow and efficiency, as well as to ensure that all necessary equipment is in the right place to provide optimum service for the size of the club. Your Food and Beverage Manager's primary concern is to purchase, prepare, and present a food product that consistently meets or exceeds the guest's expectations.

Your Food and Beverage Manager will:

- Plan for and schedule manpower, equipment and supply requirements for the department and maintain accountability for the cost, utilization and performance of employees and equipment.
- Maintain responsibility for the hiring, training and proficiency of employees in the food and beverage department.
- Purchase, prepare and present all menu items according to set specifications and standards. Responsible for garnishing and portion control.
- Instruct cooks and food preparation staff in the details of preparing menu items according to the recipe.
- Ensure that high standards of sanitation and cleanliness are maintained throughout the kitchen, service areas and loading dock entrance.
- Maintain preventative equipment maintenance procedures and standards.
- Work with the Director of Golf to develop club functions and guest private parties, assisting in menus and in all food service related areas.

## **MARKETING DIRECTOR**

The Marketing Director is responsible for marketing and promoting the golf facility in a manner that will establish the course as a world-class club according to approved marketing plans, budgets and advertising schedules. This professional will coordinate all advertisements and marketing efforts of the facility, assist the Tournament Coordinator with tournament planning and provide administrative assistance to the Director of Golf and Controller with various accounting and budget functions.

Your Marketing Director will:

- Facilitate and design for pre-approval a concept and marketing strategy for each season.
- Prepare for pre-approval a yearly marketing plan and advertising schedule.
- Prepare for pre-approval a marketing and advertising budget for the Director of Golf and Controller to be submitted to the corporate officers and Board of Directors.
- Establish a solid contact base with professional organizations, resorts, managements companies, travel- and golf-wholesalers for the sole purpose of increasing market awareness of the club.
- Meet with all advertising representatives to coordinate advertising and printed collateral material.
- Coordinate all collateral for the club.
- Attend professional trade shows for promotional coverage.
- Actively seek out group and tournament bookings.
- Meet with hotel and meeting planners for marketing of the club.
- Assist hotels with booking reservations and setting up golf packages.
- Assist with coordinating tournaments, providing on site assistance where required by the Tournament Coordinator.
- Respond to all donation requests for fund raising events with the Tournament Coordinator.
- Respond to public relations requests and represent the course where necessary to increase club visibility.
- Follow-up tournaments with thank you letters.
- Represent the club on site for problem solving and support to management and staff.
- Answer all incoming calls.
- Prepare internal and external documents and distribute as required.
- Assist the Controller with accounts payable, expense reports, accounts receivable and petty cash.
- Maintain office supplies as required.

## ***TOURNAMENT AND MERCHANDISE COORDINATOR***

The tournament and merchandise coordinator is responsible for booking and coordinating golf tournaments, marketing and initiating sales to groups, hotels and corporations, creating new and innovative ways to increase the customer service base, and merchandising and maintaining the Golf Shop.

In planning for a tournament season, your Tournament and Merchandise Coordinator will:

- Actively seek group and tournament bookings for the club.
- Cold call charities and corporations to promote the club as the host course for any company or charity golf outings.
- Mail or fax written proposals for those individuals and groups seeking information on hosting an event at the facility.
- Follow-up with phone calls to close the booking.
- Develop and send contracts to validate the event.
- Make sure all information is on hand to run the event properly. This includes receiving the pairings and setting up the golf carts correctly, making sure the food and beverage department is on schedule and coordinating and outside arrangements ahead of time.
- Be on hand during the event for problem solving and follow up after the event to make sure payment is complete.
- Follow up with thank you letter and try to re-book the event for next year.
- Coordinate with the golf shop, outside service, maintenance and food and beverage so all employees will be aware of the event.
- Make sure the tee sheets are set up properly to avoid double bookings.
- Develop relationships with the area hotel concierge, golf desks, and sales departments to encourage hotel golf bookings, both individual and group.

In addition to these tournament duties, the Tournament and Merchandise Coordinator is responsible for the daily operations of the golf shop. In this capacity, your Tournament and Merchandise Coordinator will:

- set appointments with sales representatives to view and purchase merchandise for "open to buy" seasons.
- Check in, tag and display merchandise received daily.
- Re-stock merchandise daily to maintain a "fresh" look.
- Clean, dust and straighten the golf shop daily.
- Review merchandise weekly to make any necessary markdowns on dated merchandise.
- Conduct and oversee inventory process at the end of each month.



- Prepare month-end inventory reports on merchandise for the Director of Golf.
- Attend seminars and trade shows related to merchandise and general golf shop industry areas.
- Order all uniforms for inside and outside service.

### ***SUPPORT STAFF***

Different individuals within your management team will have their own expectations of the support staff that will help them in their course operation and maintenance functions. Although if you have hired the right management team, you should be confident in letting them account for the staff assisting them, I feel that a course's outside service staff and the job they perform is of utmost importance to the player experience at any world-class golf facility, and as such have taken some time to describe their position below.

Outside service is the first and last impression that golfers will have of the golf club, as well as the days overall golf experience. Club service standards, while appropriate to the marketplace, are a notch above the level that would be typical for the area. From complimentary valet parking, to club cleaning, and computerized distance measuring devices onboard each golf cart, the facility must reflect the latest in golf technology coupled with highly personalized service. Whether an individual tee time, a golf package, a group outing or a large tournament, all golfers are treated with the same level of attentiveness and consideration.

Duties for outside service personnel include to:

- Professionally open and close the outside operation
- Provide impeccably clean and well-maintained golf carts to all players, including all supplies, cups, tees, towels, scorecard, signs and cooler.
- Maintain an impeccably clean and orderly appearance of the facility throughout the entire day.
- Continually service all practice facilities.
- Monitor the pace of play and inform all players of any special rules or playing conditions.
- Greet and assist guests as they arrive at the club. Assist in establishing a "customer friendly" atmosphere:
  - Greet people with a smile and an appropriate salutation. Greetings will be consistent from all employees and delivered in an upbeat and enthusiastic manner.
  - Be standing at the curb ready to open the car door. Take the bags out promptly. Communicate all pertinent information: where to check in; where they will find their bag; etc.

- Use players names whenever possible. Name recognition is essential to good customer service.
- When players finish, make sure they receive prompt attention. Always show a desire to provide assistance to players when they are finished or leaving.
- Assist all players as they depart from the club. Likewise, a last impression of our facility will help establish our goal.

The service level achieved by your outside service staff will set the standard for other operations within your facility. The small differences that can be made by these front line service personnel are the differences that will create that truly world-class experience for your guests.

## **MARKETING**

Your goal in marketing your golf facility is to educate the public, inform them of your unique advantage and increase the number of rounds played on your course. An effective marketing program should be cost effective and reach those individuals who have the potential to become regular guests.

### ***MARKETING PLAN***

The Director of Golf should work with the Marketing Director to develop an annual marketing plan for your club that lays out the goals, initiatives and budget conditions for the club's marketing campaign. Your plan should include:

- an Executive Summary;
- Fees and Booking Policy;
- Collateral Material;
- Advertising;
- Public Relations and Special Events;
- Marketing Programs;
- a Closing Statement; and
- a Budget and Budget Backup.

By developing this plan, amending it annually to accommodate market changes, and adhering to it throughout each season, you will be able to maximize your marketing dollars and increase the number of rounds played at your facility each year.

### ***COLLATERAL MATERIAL***

The purpose of the printed collateral package is to help book rounds of golf. The format of your package should be consistent, informative, visually appealing and current, providing potential guests with a compelling reason to consider your facility. Your package will include all of the sales and promotional pieces that are used in personal contact outside the club, likely including:

- Business Papers (letterhead, envelopes, mailing labels, business cards);
- Presentation Folders (9" X 12" with inside pockets);
- Club brochures;
- Rate cards;
- Scorecards;
- a Yardage Guide; and
- Pin Placement Cards.

To maximize the effectiveness of your promotional efforts, you should brand your facility in the minds of consumers, creating a consistent message that includes the club name, logo, and colors. Providing information on the course in the same format, verbiage, and theme over all promotional materials conditions the consumer to recall your course and it's offering when presented with any material consistent with the club brand.

### ***ADVERTISING***

Your advertising objective is to increase awareness of your club and encourage golfers to try your course. Any advertising done by the club should:

- Educate the market;
- Project a consistent image;
- Create an emotional response; and
- Communicate the features of your course as they benefit the golfer.

In order to produce a successful advertising program you should position your club in the minds of consumers, relative to other competitors in the market. This is not to say that you will directly state that you are better than so-and-so, but, you will encourage the consumer to believe that you have the best prices, the most challenging holes or the most personal service to be had at any course in the area. Your goal is to create a market niche and inform the public of your unique and important advantage.

Once you have decided the merits of the club on which you will base your advertising campaign, you can select and purchase media to use for your advertisements. This selection, between television, newspaper, radio, billboard, etc. will depend on your budget, intended target and the most effective medium for developing your message.

Finally, based on your budget, you can construct an advertising schedule, attempting to saturate the market with your advertising message while adhering to budgetary constraints. A successful advertising campaign should be an investment, rather than a cost to your club and will increase sales as it attracts new guests to your facility.

### ***PROMOTIONS***

As the final element of your marketing initiatives, club promotions include any public relations efforts and special events that increase awareness for the club without financial cost. A good public relations schedule can provide the course with free advertising on television, in newspapers and

**on the radio, in the form of special interest stories, special event coverage, reviews, ratings and community involvement recognition. It is the Marketing Coordinator's responsibility to capitalize on opportunities to involve the media in charity events, interesting tournaments, special guest visits (your big name course architect, a PGA Tour Golfer, etc.) and any other events that could result in media coverage to promote your facility.**

## **OPENING DAY**

The public introduction of your course is an opportunity to show off your facility and promote its offerings to a selected group who will get the ball rolling, so to speak. The schedule for the day can vary greatly depending on the style of your club and your expected market, but I have provided a checklist that will help bring some organization to a day that always comes too soon.

### ***CHECKLIST***

The National Golf Association of the United States created an opening day checklist in their "Guidelines for Planning and Developing a Public Golf Course". Adapted below for a world-class golf facility, the checklist provides a useful reference to ensure you are ready for opening day.

- ✓ Does your opening day conflict with any other major event in the community? Any religious holiday?
- ✓ Have you made a master list of all communication channels: newspapers, radio, TV, major businesses, schools, churches, government offices, developers, service clubs, chambers of commerce, etc. who have been notified
- ✓ Have you given your staff and any city or corporate staff all the details for opening day? Do they have the latest guest list?
- ✓ Do you have all the merchandise you expect to sell on hand?
- ✓ If your food facility is in operation, are supplies sufficient and is the operation ready to serve the number of guests expected?
- ✓ Is your cash handling system in place and understood? If you have elected to offer charge privileges, have you arranged for MasterCard or Visa or other, and do all shop personnel know how to use them?
- ✓ Is all signage in place and accurate?
- ✓ If you have planned handouts or mementos for the opening, are they on hand and labeled as necessary?

- ✓ Are tee times and opening-day foursomes established? (Are the mayor and other local politicians – if he/she plays golf – among the first groups?)
- ✓ Have you planned special round contests: closest to the pin; longest drive; fewest putts; team competition, etc.?
- ✓ Is the press properly taken care of? Are the press kits complete and on hand?
- ✓ Are press representatives who are golfers scheduled to play with someone representing the city, company or course?
- ✓ Are the golf cars in the staging area and charged or gassed? If they need identification labels are they in place?
- ✓ Have you planned on-course refreshments and an after-the-round party?
- ✓ Are your planned awards and prizes on hand and labeled?
- ✓ Are all aspects of the opening day in place...scorecards, scoreboard, course markings, rule sheets, bag handling, range balls, prize tables, golf car identification, on-course service cart, refreshment tables, speaker system, "banquet", music, etc. all ready for action?

## **CONCLUSION**

**As I sit and ponder over everything that I have witnessed along my career path as a golf professional, and reflect on all the great golf facilities that I have visited or been associated with, I find myself always looking to improve.**

**It doesn't matter how good the service level is, it could be better; the course could be more well manicured; the Pro Shop more inviting; the food service improved; the clubhouse more warm and inviting. I really do find this an intriguing business and will always be searching for perfection.**

**I hope that in reading my thesis you have benefited somewhat from the standards I've addressed and the high service levels I expect.**

**The only way to meet these expectations is to build that team environment and strive to meet the highest levels of service within the industry. Our business is built on developing relationships, not only within our organization but also with our customers. We are a people industry built on character and integrity.**

**Thank you for reading my paper.**



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

**I need to acknowledge my friends and associates for assisting and supporting me in my quest to fulfill my dreams in the golf profession.**

**Although I would like to tell you I am an expert in everything, I could not have written this paper without the advise of Gary Browning, Denis Voigt, Wilf Weinkauf, Ted Genereux, Vicki Robinson, Jim Rouse and the team at Western Golf Properties. Thank you all for your generous assistance.**

## **RECOMMENDED READING**

### **Evangelist of Golf: The Story of Charles Blair MacDonald**

#### **Masters of the Links: Essays on the Art of Golf and Course Design**

- great architectural essays on golf, including the best material ever written on golf courses – old and new – by the greats of the game.

#### **Spirit of St. Andrews**

- Dr. Alister Mackenzie is one of the best golf course architects in the history of the game.

#### **Rough Meditations**

- Architectural Editor Brad Klein of Golf Week has spent a great deal of time studying golf, its courses and architects.

#### **Scrapbook of Old Tom Morris**

- Throughout golf's long history there have been few players more famous than "Old" Tom Morris of St. Andrews, Scotland. This Book by David Joy is truly a unique presentation of the life and golf career of this legendary figure.

#### **Toronto Terror: The Life and Work of Stanley Thompson, Golf Course Architect**

- Stanley Thompson was a genius. Shortly after his death the Ottawa Citizen wrote of him "He left his mark on the Canadian landscape from Coast to Coast. No man could ask for a more handsome set of memorials."

#### **The Art of Golf Design**

- By Michael Miller and Geoff Shackelford – a unique book. Miller is both a golf professional and a landscape architect. Shackelford is a writer and golf historian.

#### **Discovering Donald Ross: The Architect and his Golf Courses**

- No other golf course architect is credited with more fine layouts or is more revered than Donald Ross.

#### **Also – Golf has Never Failed Me**

- Many years before the death of Donald Ross in 1948, the legendary golf course architect wrote a book that was never published. In the mid 1990's the book was miraculously rediscovered and published to great acclaim.

# APPENDIX 1: MONTHLY OPERATING BUDGET

	Annual Total	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Course Operating Budget</b>													
Salaries	\$350,000.00	\$7,500.00	\$7,500.00	\$14,000.00	\$30,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$42,000.00	\$25,000.00	\$12,000.00	\$12,000.00
Professional Development	\$3,500.00	-	\$1,050.00	-	\$1,050.00	-	-	\$350.00	-	-	-	\$1,050.00	-
Remittance Expense	\$2,000.00	\$1,250.00	\$1,250.00	\$2,000.00	\$4,000.00	\$7,500.00	\$7,500.00	\$7,500.00	\$7,500.00	\$6,000.00	\$4,200.00	\$1,650.00	\$1,650.00
Travel Expense	\$3,000.00	\$250.00	\$250.00	\$250.00	\$250.00	\$250.00	\$250.00	\$250.00	\$250.00	\$250.00	\$250.00	\$250.00	\$250.00
Chemicals	\$15,000.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	\$500.00	-	\$500.00	-	\$14,000.00	-
Fertilizer	\$34,500.00	-	-	-	-	-	\$11,500.00	\$500.00	\$11,500.00	-	\$11,500.00	-	\$6,000.00
Seed & Sod	\$8,000.00	-	-	-	-	-	\$1,500.00	\$500.00	-	-	-	-	\$3,000.00
Sand & Soil	\$5,000.00	-	-	-	-	-	\$2,000.00	-	-	-	-	-	\$1,000.00
Office Supplies	\$500.00	-	\$100.00	-	\$100.00	-	\$100.00	-	\$100.00	-	\$100.00	-	-
Gas & Oil	\$15,300.00	\$850.00	\$850.00	\$850.00	\$850.00	\$1,700.00	\$1,700.00	\$1,700.00	\$1,700.00	\$1,700.00	\$1,700.00	\$850.00	\$850.00
Course Supplies	\$6,000.00	-	-	-	\$1,900.00	\$1,300.00	\$1,900.00	\$400.00	\$500.00	-	-	-	-
Landscaping	\$6,000.00	-	-	-	-	\$4,000.00	\$2,000.00	-	-	-	-	-	-
Soil Testing	\$500.00	-	-	-	-	\$250.00	-	\$250.00	-	-	-	-	-
Equipment Rental	\$5,000.00	-	-	-	-	\$1,000.00	-	\$1,000.00	-	\$500.00	-	-	-
Waste Removal	\$2,500.00	\$125.00	\$125.00	\$125.00	\$125.00	\$125.00	\$375.00	\$375.00	\$375.00	\$375.00	\$125.00	\$2,500.00	\$125.00
Shop Supplies	\$1,500.00	-	\$300.00	-	\$300.00	\$300.00	\$300.00	\$375.00	\$300.00	\$375.00	\$300.00	\$125.00	\$125.00
Shop Tools	\$500.00	-	\$50.00	-	\$25.00	\$400.00	\$25.00	-	\$300.00	-	-	-	-
Irrigation Maintenance	\$11,000.00	-	-	-	-	\$5,500.00	\$25.00	\$5,500.00	-	-	-	-	-
Drainage Repairs	\$1,000.00	-	-	-	-	\$0.00	\$1,000.00	-	-	-	-	-	-
Uniforms & Laundry	\$3,500.00	-	-	-	-	\$2,800.00	\$700.00	-	-	-	-	-	-
Natural Gas	\$1,500.00	\$300.00	\$300.00	\$300.00	\$150.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Electricity	\$12,000.00	\$600.00	\$600.00	\$600.00	\$600.00	\$600.00	\$2,400.00	\$2,400.00	\$2,400.00	\$1,000.00	\$360.00	\$150.00	\$300.00
Equipment Maintenance	\$15,000.00	-	\$3,000.00	\$600.00	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	\$240.00	\$200.00
Contingency	\$25,000.00	\$150.00	\$150.00	\$150.00	\$150.00	\$150.00	\$150.00	\$150.00	\$150.00	\$150.00	\$150.00	\$150.00	\$150.00
<b>Total Course Operations</b>	<b>\$777,800.00</b>	<b>\$11,025.00</b>	<b>\$12,525.00</b>	<b>\$21,275.00</b>	<b>\$41,000.00</b>	<b>\$77,075.00</b>	<b>\$84,900.00</b>	<b>\$72,375.00</b>	<b>\$76,275.00</b>	<b>\$53,975.00</b>	<b>\$45,185.00</b>	<b>\$34,465.00</b>	<b>\$47,725.00</b>

An actual operating budget would include allowances for such variable expenses as: Entertainment, Meals, Employee Relations, Postage, Staff Discount, Photocopy/Fax, Printing, Trees, Cart Path Maintenance, Freight Charges, Building Repairs, Water (if you do not have a sufficient water supply), Insurance, etc.

## APPENDIX 2: CONSTRUCTION COST SUMMARY

	Total	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
<b>Construction Cash Flow</b>									
Mobilization - Administration - Bonding	20000	26000	26000	26000	26000	26000	26000	26000	18000
Clearing - Grubbing	80000	-	40000	40000	-	-	-	-	-
Major Earth Work	600000	-	200000	200000	200000	-	-	-	-
Rough Grading - Shaping	180000	-	75000	65000	40000	-	-	-	-
Drainage	180000	-	40000	40000	60000	40000	-	-	-
Feature Shaping - Construction	400000	-	-	135000	135000	40000	-	-	-
Irrigation	1195000	-	-	250000	550000	130000	-	-	-
Finish Shaping	175000	-	-	40000	50000	250000	125000	20000	-
Seed Bed Preparation	145000	-	-	15000	25000	50000	35000	15000	-
Seeding - Sodding	675000	-	-	-	125000	45000	45000	25000	-
Cart Paths - Curbing	410000	-	-	90000	120000	175000	350000	25000	-
Guardrails - Bridges	90000	-	-	-	120000	140000	60000	-	-
Retaining Walls	145000	-	-	-	-	30000	30000	30000	-
Water Supply Pipeline	250000	-	-	25000	25000	50000	25000	20000	-
Water Features - Lake Lining	545000	-	125000	125000	-	-	-	-	-
Bunkers	185000	-	-	125000	225000	75000	50000	50000	20000
<b>Total Construction</b>	<b>5455000</b>			<b>25000</b>	<b>45000</b>	<b>55000</b>	<b>35000</b>	<b>25000</b>	

This Construction Cash Flow Summary does not make provision for contingency items such as: additional topsoil, rock blasting, creek engineering, and erosion control. I would suggest that you make such contingency arrangements in your budget, consulting with your course architect to ensure you have the available cash necessary to arrange for last minute construction changes.

## APPENDIX 3: EQUIPMENT LIST

<b># Professional Turf Maintenance Equipment</b>	
4 TORO Greensmaster 1000 Walkbehind Mowers	\$31,000.00
6 TORO Greensmaster 1000 Walkbehind Mowers with Groon	\$57,000.00
5 TORO Transpro Trailers	\$6,000.00
2 TORO Greensmaster 3250-D Triplex Mowers	\$71,000.00
3 TORO Reelmaster 5200-D	\$144,500.00
2 TORO Reelmaster 2600-D	\$70,000.00
1 TORO Groundsmaster 325-D 4WD	\$26,500.00
2 TORO Sand Pro 2020	\$15,000.00
2 TORO Greens Aerator	\$20,500.00
1 TORO ProCore 660 Aerator	\$26,000.00
1 TORO Workman 3200 equipped for sprayer/spreader	\$25,000.00
8 TORO Workman 2100	\$72,000.00
1 TORO 1800 Topdresser	\$8,000.00
1 TORO ProControl Sprayer	\$20,000.00
1 Pronovost Trailer	\$9,500.00
1 TORO Rake-O-Vac Sweeper	\$36,000.00
1 Kubota L3710 Tractor 4WD	\$22,000.00
1 Kubota M4900F Tractor 4WD	\$25,000.00
1 New Holland LS180 Skid Steer	\$37,500.00
1 Express Dual Reel Grinder	\$23,000.00
1 Express Dual Anglemaster Bedknife Grinder	\$13,000.00
1 TORO Verticutters for Greensmaster 3250-D	\$4,100.00
1 Set of TORO Verticutters for Reelmaster 5200-D	\$9,000.00
1 TORO Snow Blower for Groundsmaster 325-D	\$5,500.00
1 TORO Debris Blower for Groundsmaster 325-D	\$3,500.00
1 TORO Enclosed Cab with heater, fan, wiper for Groundsmas	\$5,500.00
1 TORO Fertilizer Spreader for Workman 3200	\$6,000.00
1 TORO/ETEC Rotary Broom for Groundsmaster 325-D	\$6,500.00
2 TORO 21" Commercial Mowers	\$2,500.00
2 STIHL FS200 Trimmers	\$2,000.00
2 STIHL BR400 Backpack Blowers	\$1,000.00
1 Ryan 18" Sod Cutter	\$5,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$809,100.00</b>

## APPENDIX 4: ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

