

One of the striking peculiarities about the game of golf, when you stop to think about it, is the manner in which the majority of club members are willing to sacrifice themselves upon the altar of the majority's best interests. In other words, it is the majority who are putting up the cash to provide golf courses of the highest standard procurable upon their particular piece of club property; whereas it is the minority—usually the small minority—who are possessed of the ability to play around the first-class course in figures which are linked up with a high standard of play. I venture to say, moreover, that in rare instances it is the best golfer in the club, or a group of its playing leaders, who lay plans for alterations and improvements which will place that club's links on a higher pedestal in the estimation of foremost experts and critics. Rather, I think you will find that in a majority of instances such alterations, purchases of new property and other improvements have their breeding ground in the minds of the club members or officials who could never hope to break 80 on the round.

It is indeed fortunate, from the angle of progressiveness, that there have been identified with the sport so many men who place their love of golf, and their desire to see their home club possessed of a course second to none, ahead of their selfish interests. If they were only studying their own personal interests they might have the holes made shorter; bunkers placed where they seldom hit;

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By A. Linde Fowler

is not prepared to steel himself against such criticism. If he has been long tramping over the course, ever striving to evolve some new plan for scientific improvement. They watched the play of mediocre merit to one which of all manner of golfers, seeking to has been brought up to a place of high gain inspiration for the placing of new



all greens made saucer shape, so that the approach would be simplified and fairways made so wide that it would take an exceptionally wayward shot to get into the rough. But the men who sponsor improving changes in their courses not only forget their personal interests, but boldly face the criticism of a large body of their fellow members who see in every new bunker and every extension of a hole usurpation of their rights. Many have been the maledictions hurled at the heads of members of Green Committees and many have been the “indignation meetings” in club locker rooms over changes which have made this hole or that so much more difficult. But a man has no business to accept place on a Green Committee who

standard, he knows that in the end criticisms of any one alteration soon die a natural death and ultimately a majority of the members either will grudgingly admit the value of the change or else will tacitly admit it by ceasing their criticisms. There comes to the writer's mind, in this connection, a story told by late Herbert Jaques concerning a hole at The Country Club, Brook'ne, Mass. This course is considered one of the most scientifically bunkered in America. Mr. Jaques and his inseparable companion, G. Herbert Windeler, for a number of years worked together incessantly to perfect the layout. They had the club property charted down to the minutest detail of topography. They studied the

hazards; they visited other courses, and studied them for ideas; they consulted with experts and overlooked nothing which would improve the standard of the Clyde Park course. Mr. Jaques and Mr. Windeler had their full share of criticisms, maybe a little more than their share, at times. I recall that there was a special meeting of the members, a few years ago, brought by those who wished to protest the number of changes which had been made, and were in contemplation. The course was being made too difficult. But after a series of lantern slides had been shown, depicting the course in its various stages of development, and with a detailed statement of why this or that change was made, the meeting of pro-

test almost shifted into one of downright praise. When I started to tell, however, the manner in which criticisms of a change at one particular hole, especially on the part of one member switched suddenly to one of enthusiasm over the new bunkering.

This hole was the fifteenth, measuring 380 yards. The tee shot is a bit blind, being from in back of a knoll, out to level ground, where there is comparatively little roll unless the fairway is baked. It was decided to install a series of rather deep bunkers near the green, so that the second shot has to be practically all carry to give a man any chance to get home. While 380 yards is not considered a long hole in these days of far-flying balls, there were many members in the club who found it most difficult to get their second shots over those bunkers some could get the distance by using brassies, but with that club it was difficult to put the ball on the green and have it stay.

The member who protested most frequently and loudest could not get over at all with his second shot and every time he laid his ball in one of the bunkers in a vain effort to get home in two, he started a fresh protest over such bunkering, declaring that it was all wrong and that such idiotic placing of hazards would in time turn members away from the club.

One day, however, he went rushing back to the clubhouse inquiring for Mr. Jaques. Upon finding him, he rushed up and said something along this line:

“Jaques, I want to apologize for everything I have ever said against your bunkering at the fifteenth. I was all wrong. The bunkers are all right. Any man who thinks he can play at all has no right to kick about them.”

What happened that so completely changed his viewpoint was that for the first time since the bunkers were installed, he had just put his second shot over them and on to the green and he was one of the most delighted of men that ever swung a golf club. There, when you come right down to it, is one of the secrets that account for the spirit in which so many club members of mediocre ability are willing to stand for the changes which make their courses

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