



GARY GALYEAN'S GOLF LETTER

THE INSIDE REPORT ON WORLD GOLF

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Dear Subscriber:

THE 119th U.S. OPEN Pebble Beach

It was a U.S. Open so appealing that it quieted the early and ever-prattling professionals and commentators, or at least left them in silent contempt until Winged Foot is presented next June.

This year's 100th anniversary of the Pebble Beach Golf Links was a fitting time and place for the restoration of confidence in the national championship. The course is set on the Monterey Peninsula's finest coastal property. Samuel F.B. Morse, the most influential visionary of the Pebble Beach area, deemed from the very beginning that the southern shoreline of Carmel Bay was where the golf course would be built with as many holes as possible along the ocean. He hoped to give Pinehurst a run for its money as a destination golf resort and an oceanside course would create publicity and excitement. He felt that house lots on the hill with views overlooking the course would be easier to sell than house lots on the hill overlooking other houses; and oceanside views along the course would attract more visitors than a course lined with oceanside houses.

He chose two accomplished amateur players, Jack Neville and Douglas Grant, to determine the routing and lay out the holes. While construction began in 1916 and the course Christened on May 31, 1919, the evolution of the course as we know it today had just begun.

A notable 16th century Italian sculptor, painter and architect commented that an artist "arrives late at novel and lofty things". Measure and proportion, he elaborated, should be "kept in the eyes". That is clearly how Pebble

Beach ultimately found its flow, charm and exacting strategic demands.

Following Messrs. Neville and Grant's contributions, Alister MacKenzie advised on bunkering, H. Chandler Egan renovated, William Herbert Fowler perfected the 18th, and Jack Nicklaus designed the new 5th.

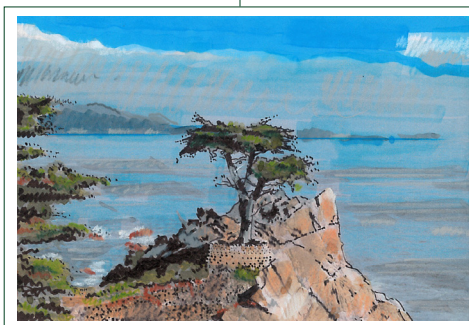
The result is the best *series* of par 4s in the world- the 8th, 9th and 10th; four of the best par 3s [All five leaders on Sunday bogeyed the 12th; the 17th determined the winner as it had also done in 1972 and '82; and the 7th determined the winner in 1992.]; and three of the most exacting and memorable par 5s in major championship play - the beautifully precarious 6th, the exacting 14th, and a home hole where two trees

and the ocean demand distance, accuracy and often recovery.

[NOTE: The green at the par 5 14th was rebuilt three years ago, returned to its original 4,000 sq. ft. allowing for a right hole location that had been lost years before. The original putting green design was the work of Francis McComas, a large mural painter, who was a native of Tasmania and moved to the Monterey Peninsula at the turn of the 20th century.

His most notable contribution to the area was his verbal summary of Carmel Bay, which is often erroneously attributed to Robert Louis Stevenson. An excerpt from PEBBLE BEACH GOLF LINKS - THE OFFICIAL HISTORY:

To set the record straight, the actual quote is, "The greatest meeting of land and water in the world." The credit belongs to Francis McComas ... the real story is that he did not make the statement about Pebble Beach, but rather nearby Point Lobos!]



✓ fairway in reg. RR right rough RB right bunker
 ✓✓ green in reg. LR left rough LB left bunker
 (3) birdie • par [5] bogey [6] double bogey



Sunday's Early Leaders

	McIlroy	Oosthuizen	Koepka	Rose	Woodland
	-6	-7	-7	-10	-11
1	✓ ✓✓ •	✓ ✓✓ (3)	RR ✓✓ (3)	✓ ✓✓ (3)	RR ✓✓ •
2	LR LB, RR [6]	✓ ✓✓ •	RB LR •	✓ RB [5]	✓ ✓✓ (3)
3	LR LR •	✓ ✓✓ •	✓ ✓✓ (3)	✓ ✓✓ •	✓ ✓✓ (3)
4	✓ ✓✓ (3)	✓ ✓✓ (3)	✓ ✓✓ (3)	LR ✓✓ •	✓ ✓✓ •
5 ₃	LR [4]	LR •	✓✓ (2)	✓✓ •	✓✓ •
6 ₅	✓ ✓ ✓✓ (4)	✓ RR LR •	✓ RR ✓✓ •	✓ ✓✓ • (4)	✓ ✓✓ ✓✓ •
7 ₃	✓ (2)	✓ •	✓ •	✓ •	LB •
8	✓ RB [5]	✓ ✓✓ •	✓ RR, RB [5]	✓ RR [5]	✓ ✓✓ •
9	✓ ✓✓ •	LR LB •	✓ RR •	✓ ✓✓ •	LR short [5]
	36	33	32	35	34
	-5	-9	-10	-10	-12

	McIlroy	Oosthuizen	Koepka	Rose	Woodland
	-5	-9	-9	-10	-12
10	✓ ✓✓ •	✓ LR, LR [6]	✓ ✓✓ •	✓ RR •	✓ ✓✓ •
11	✓ LR (3)	RR ✓✓ •	✓ ✓✓ (3)	RR LR •	RR ✓✓ •
12 ₃	RR [4]	RR [4]	LB [4]	RB [4]	RB [4]
13	✓ ✓✓ (3)	✓ ✓✓ •	RB ✓✓ •	✓ RB [5]	RR ✓✓ •
14 ₅	✓ ✓ ✓✓ •	✓ ✓ RB [6]	RR ✓ LR • -10	✓ ✓ ✓✓ •	✓ LR ✓✓ (4) -12
15	LR RR •	✓ ✓✓ •	RR ✓✓ •	LB RB [5]	✓ ✓✓ •
16	✓ RR [6]	✓ ✓✓ •	✓ ✓✓ •	✓ ✓✓ •	✓ ✓✓ •
17 ₃	LB •	✓✓ (2)	✓✓ •	✓✓ •	✓✓ •
18 ₃	✓ ✓ ✓✓ (4)	✓ RR ✓✓ •	✓ long ✓✓ •	RR ✓ ✓✓ •	✓ ✓ ✓✓ (4)
	36	39	36	39	35
	72	72	68	74	69
	-5	-6	-10	-7	-13

Ten years after opening, Pebble Beach was chosen as the first course west of the Mississippi Basin to host a U.S.G.A. championship - the 1929 U.S. Amateur. Bobby Jones arrived to defend his 1928 win, became the medalist, and was defeated in the first match play round by Johnny Goodman (1 up), who worked passage on a cattle train from Omaha to get to Pebble Beach with his golf clubs.

The National Amateur returned four more times: 1947, '61 (Nicklaus' second U.S. Amateur win), '99 and 2018. The U.S. Open did not arrive until 1972 after the Pebble Beach Company granted the U.S.G.A. a \$250,000 minimum guarantee regardless of the championship's proceeds. The U.S.G.A. feared few would attend such a remote venue, and few would volunteer to work. Both concerns were proven wrong. Pebble Beach's U.S. Opens have cemented the course's extraordinary place in American golf history.

The success of this year's championship was preceded by five U.S. Opens four of which were embarrassed by confusion blamed on setup decisions. Only at Oakmont (2016) was the confusion caused by a poorly administered Rules decision rather than a setup problem. Regardless, it was a five-year stretch of disappointment from which the U.S.G.A. sorely needed to reverse itself.

John M. Bodenhamer, now U.S.G.A. executive director of championships, was picked and promoted by Mike Davis, U.S.G.A. executive director and C.E.O., into the course setup responsibility that was once Mr. Davis' exclusive domain. The point was that the Pebble Beach championship would break the association's recurring series of acrimony and disgruntlement.

In his own words, Mr. Bodenhamer became the man "with a bullseye on my back". Some say it is the end of the Davis era and the beginning of the Bodenhamer era. *Era* is a big word normally used more about building B-29s or pyramids than watering and mowing grass, but we live in an *era*, if you will, of exaggerated language.

Some say Mr. Bodenhamer returned the U.S. Open to its "old setup" style that always included narrow

fairways, high rough near the edges of the fairways and greens, and putting speeds closer to 12 than 14. Before longing too much for the old ways, we need to remember there was an awful lot of griping about those too.

Pebble Beach has the smallest greens in championship golf. The Bodenhamer setup surrounded them with high rough that kept errant shots near the putting surfaces rather than repelling them as was the case at Shinnecock Hills last year. Playing to narrow fairways and at just 7,040 yards, recovery shots and good putting again became the keys to low scores rather than long drives.

Mr. Bodenhamer restored, or was told to restore, moderation. On Sunday he described his evaluation of the marine layer and wind in managing irrigation and setting hole locations. The idea was to "ease [the course] into Sunday". "We could make it a lot harder than we do," he

commented. "Stupid hard. But we didn't want to make Pebble Beach something it isn't." The result was a winning score of 13 under par with 33 players bettering par in the final round. In 2000, when Tiger Woods won at Pebble Beach by 15 strokes, he was the only player under par. It was the largest margin of victory in a major championship. *SPORTS ILLUSTRATED* called it "the most dominating four-round performance in the history of major-championship golf".

Television viewers liked what they saw. Pebble Beach's audience was 49 per cent higher than Erin Hills and 44 per cent stronger than Shinnecock Hills! Some of that increase can be credited to the East Coast prime time hours of broadcast.

The windless, moisture-filled weather was also a determining factor. All four days were nearly identical: Mid-fifty degrees, a light breeze, no fog, and a marine layer that kept moisture in the air and in the grass. Smoother, softer greens were the result, as were full shots ending where they were hit rather than where they were blown. The players had no one to blame but themselves.

If a course can be judged by its winners it produces, Pebble Beach's six U.S. Open champions put the



course among the most memorable:

- 1972 - Jack Nicklaus' second U.S. Open
- 1982 - Tom Watson's first
- 1992 - Tom Kite's first
- 2000 - Tiger Woods' first
- 2019 - Gary Woodland's first

On Thursday morning the London odds were 66/1 that Mr. Woodland would win. By Friday he had moved to 40/1; Saturday 5/1; and Sunday 2/1. He was a fearless soon-to-be-first-time major champion being chased relentlessly by a fearless four-time major champion. Brooks Koepka was the first player to post four U.S. Open rounds in the 60s and not win.

Mr. Woodland matched the mark for fewest bogeys or worse in a U.S. Open over the past 50 years with just four. His 3 wood second to the 14th green [see page two chart] was the turning point that ultimately earned him the championship. "The 3 wood at 14," he said, "gave me the confidence to even execute the shot on 17. To execute that shot under pressure, under the situation, that shot gave me the confidence. Really going in I felt better after hitting that shot on the golf course today than I had in a long, long time." While it was not clear which shot Mr. Woodland was referring to, his second at the 14th or his chip at the 17th, it really did not matter. Both were pivotal; both executed perfectly; both gave him the winning edge.

Viktor Hovland, the 2018 U.S. Amateur from Oslo, Norway who attended Oklahoma University, set a new amateur 72-hole scoring record of 280. His 4-under total was two strokes better than Mr. Nicklaus posted as Cherry Hills in 1960.



For I.J.P.:

"If he were to walk into a London club the porter would certainly not mistake him for a member; in a Berlin night club they usually gave him the best table. He looked like a man who could make trouble, a man who looked after his money, a man who was not quite a gentleman."

John Le Carré
THE SPY WHO CAME IN FROM THE COLD

Even the U.S.G.A.'s most ill-behaved detractors applauded the four-day test. "Perfect" was a word used repeatedly. The players liked the setup because they could make birdies. The media liked it because the players liked it. While pre-championship anticipation had some notable players criticizing the U.S.G.A. before there was anything to criticize, Mr. Koepka, who generally relies on his clubs to do the talking, was straightforward:

I guess the only reason they're complaining - I mean, everybody has got to play the same golf course. So it really doesn't make a difference. It doesn't make a difference if you put it in the fairway and you hit every green, there's really no problem, is there? So obviously they're not doing what they're supposed to do. So they're not playing good enough. If they put it in the fairway, you shouldn't have to complain about the rough. You hit the greens and you hit it close, you shouldn't have to complain about the greens. I've just been never one to complain, make excuses. It doesn't matter. Nobody wants to hear anybody's excuse. I find it annoying even when I play with guys and they're dropping clubs or throwing them or complaining, like telling me how bad the golf course is or how bad this is. I don't want to hear it. I don't care. It doesn't matter to me. It's just something we've all got to deal with. If you play good enough, you shouldn't have a problem."

How Mr. Bodenhamer sets Winged Foot next June will further reveal the U.S.G.A.'s way forward. We will see if Mr. Bodenhamer's approach turns more stringent, or if he becomes the Mike Lindell [the inventor of MY PILLOW] of U.S. Open setups. The players and the media's lack of U.S.G.A. criticism suggests what the Japanese call *mokusatsu* - "to remain in wise and masterly inactivity" or "to treat with silent contempt".

Yours vy truly,

Gary A. Galyean
Editor & Publisher

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