

RANCHO GOLF COURSE

of the

Los Angeles City Recreation and Park Department

Good fortune, civic alertness, and a sincere interest in golf on the part of Los Angeles municipal authorities combined to make possible the splendid new Rancho Golf course which makes its debut to the golf public and the sports world generally as the locale for the annual U. S. Amateur Public Links Golf Championship.

Fortune smiled brightly indeed upon the City of Los Angeles and its residents when the opportunity came along for the municipality to acquire the strategically located 184 acres of land on which Rancho Golf course is now situated. An alert city government backed by enthusiastic citizens recognized the opportunity and saw this project through to completion as the outstanding golf and recreation facility which it is today.

Old-timers will recall the original Rancho Golf Club which occupied the present site of the modern Rancho Golf course. It was a private country club which won fame as the scene of many great golf tournaments in bygone years. But the old Rancho Golf Club, like many others, fell victim to the great depression of the 1930's; eventually it was taken over for delinquent taxes by the federal government. What would have become of this fine property, no one can say; but the City of Los Angeles, recognizing the tremendous value of this area for a future golf course and park development, stepped forward with an offer to take it over.

After long negotiations, in which the former Park Commission of the City was given excellent support and assistance by Mayor Bowron and members of the Los Angeles City Council, the City reached an agreement with federal authorities under which the municipality obtained ownership of the property.

The cost represented a mere fraction of the land's true worth: \$200,000 paid to the federal government to settle the government's tax claims against the land and an additional sum to pay off outstanding bonds and other obligations, bringing the total cost to the city up to \$225,643. The acquisition of the land by the city was completed early in the year 1946.

One of the truly amazing circumstances in this land purchase and its subsequent development, is the fact that this entire golf course project has been carried out not by the use of tax funds, but with surplus revenues from the operation of other city golf courses, principally those of Griffith Park. Despite a very modest schedule of fees, the City by careful operation and a program of savings accumulated a sufficient fund not only to buy the Rancho property but also to pay for the complete golf course development aggregating altogether in excess of three-quarters of a million dollars.

In redesigning the 184 acres of Rancho Park, the City's Recreation and Park Department has been able to provide on what was once an 18-hole golf course only, an up-to-date full-sized golf course, plus a pitch and putt course, a driving range, and all other required golf facilities—and still have some 50 acres left over for general park, playground and recreational development.

On the acreage saved for general recreation purposes, in the southeast portion of Rancho Park along Motor Avenue, there are now under construction a splendid modern swimming pool, bathhouse, community clubhouse, tennis courts, children's playgrounds, athletic field, picnic grounds, fly casting pool and other facilities, all financed out of a Los Angeles City bond

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THE RANCHO CLUB HOUSE

The architecture of the club house is of the Spanish period in California. The construction, however, is modern. Of painted brick with a red tile roof, the building is fully air conditioned and soundproofed.



Griffith Park with its beautiful summer light operas and its art exhibits, the interesting Griffith Park Zoo, the unusual Cabrillo Beach Marine Museum, and various gardens and historic landmarks, all adding to the City's park and recreation attractions.

RANCHO GOLF COURSE (Continued)

issue for general playground and recreational development. These features plus the golf courses add up to a million dollar golf course, park, and recreation center at Rancho.

The course has been entirely redesigned and re-engineered, changing it completely from its contours and alignment as it was in the old Rancho Golf Club days. To carry out this work more than one and a quarter million cubic yards of earth had to be moved. The most careful thought was given to every possible angle of golf play. For example, the direction of fairways was determined with full consideration of both morning and afternoon sun, prevailing winds and the contour of the ground. With the realization that there are more golfers who slice their shots than those who hook them, the course was designed so that sliced shots would remain in bounds but only badly hooked shots go out of bounds. Greens were placed so as to have adequate air circulation, and each green, tee and fairway was given an individual characteristic with special plantings of shrubs and other landscape features. More than 20,000 trees and shrubs have been used, the varieties include eucalyptus, acacia, pine, olive, Virginia oaks, sycamore, redwood, and others.

Fairways run parallel with valleys and canyons instead of across them, so as to make possible easier walking, and tees have been located in such a way that players will not have to walk across the green to get to the next tee.

On parallel holes the play as much as possible has been planned to go in the same direction so as to eliminate extra dangers. On long holes, fairways have been arranged so that shots would be made with the wind; on short holes against the wind.

The number of traps has been reduced to just fourteen, but the course has been toughened through the slope of the greens and the placement of trees and shrubs.

Tournament play was very much in the minds of the designers of the Rancho Golf course. For example, at four points on the course, it is possible for the gallery to cover a number of greens at the same time without a lot of walking. At the 9th and 18th greens plenty of space has been provided so that large galleries may assemble without crowding the players. The No. 1 hole has been designed for quick get-away in tournament play, offering a short wide fairway and a wide open green trapped on both sides.

The Recreation and Park Department has provided many special features which will help in maintenance of the course. One is a system of pop-up sprinklers throughout the course for easy watering. The 18 greens all contain automatic control devices for shutting off sprinklers when the proper amount of water has been used.

The Rancho Golf clubhouse is a splendid new building which provides a fitting crown to the golf course development at Rancho. The building was designed by Architect George Lindsey and erected by the Bell Construction Company for the city at a total cost of about \$200,000.

Its facilities include the golf starter's and manager's offices, men's and women's locker rooms and showers, grill and restaurant and up-to-date golf shop. In keeping with the traditions of the Rancho course, the building is of Spanish style suggesting a hacienda of early California.

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In addition to the main golf course, golf facilities at Rancho include a 9-hole pitch and putt course which has been in operation since last year and has won great popularity among Los Angeles players. The pitch and putt course has a total 1,150 yards with the holes ranging from 100 to 170 yards. A driving range of 350 yards is an additional feature.

Parking arrangements which will accommodate 650 cars around the Rancho Golf course are part of the development, and additional parking has been provided for users of the playgrounds, swimming pool, community center, and other park and recreation features on the Motor Avenue side.

In carrying out the City's objective of making Rancho one of the nation's finest municipal golf courses, unflinching support has been given by the heads of City government including Mayor Fletcher Bowron, City Council president Harold A. Henry, Councilman J. Win Austin in whose district Rancho is located, Councilman Harold Harby as chairman of the Council's recreation and parks committee, and Councilmen Don Allen, G. Vernon Bennett, George P. Cronk, Parley P. Christensen, Ed J. Davenport, Lloyd G. Davies, Ernest E. Debs, Kenneth Hahn, John C. Holland, George H. Moore, L. E. Timberlake, and Leland S. Warburton.

Under leadership of President Maurie Luxford, "Mr. Golf" of Southern California, the city's Board of Recreation and Park Commissioners has given the utmost in thought and careful planning and guidance to the Rancho Golf course development. In addition to Maurie Luxford, the Commission includes Mrs. Rollin Brown, vice-president; C. Tony Pereira, Mrs. William J. Wilson, and Robert L. Burns.

Administration of the many phases in the development of Rancho was carried out under the inspired leadership of

George Hjelte, general manager of the Recreation and Park Department. Associated with him in this work was Gilbert L. Skutt, superintendent of parks.

Rancho Golf course has been designed with the expert advice and consultation of the well-known golf architect, William Bell, George Von Elm, the former National Amateur Champion and Johnny Dawson, famous amateur; general direction of the construction and development of the course was carried out by William Johnson, manager of Los Angeles City golf courses.

The main Rancho Golf Course has a total length of 7003 yards, measured from the back of the tee to the back of the green. From the center of the tee to the center of the green it measures 6643 yards.

Par for men is 35-36 or a total of 71; par for women is 36-38 or a total of 74. Here are the figures for the 18 holes, center of tee to center of green:

| Hole | Yards | OUT | |
|---------|-------|-------|-------|
| | | Men | Women |
| 1 | 386 | 4 | 4 |
| 2 | 446 | 4 | 5 |
| 3 | 188 | 3 | 3 |
| 4 | 528 | 5 | 5 |
| 5 | 370 | 4 | 4 |
| 6 | 385 | 4 | 4 |
| 7 | 366 | 4 | 4 |
| 8 | 204 | 3 | 3 |
| 9 | 380 | 4 | 4 |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| | 3253 | 35 | 36 |

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| Hole | Yards | IN | |
|------|-------|-----|-------|
| | | Men | Women |
| 10 | 488 | 5 | 5 |
| 11 | 439 | 4 | 5 |
| 12 | 198 | 3 | 3 |
| 13 | 375 | 4 | 4 |
| 14 | 365 | 4 | 4 |
| 15 | 443 | 4 | 5 |
| 16 | 179 | 3 | 3 |
| 17 | 520 | 5 | 5 |
| 18 | 383 | 4 | 4 |
| | 3390 | 36 | 38 |
| | 6643 | 71 | 74 |

Rancho Golf course makes its bow in the U. S. Amateur Public Links Golf Championship, to be played from July 9 to 16, 1949. This is the first time this tournament has been held in Los Angeles. It also will be the first time in the history of major golf competition that a top-ranking national tournament has been played on a brand-new course. This is a tribute to the imagination and initiative of Los Angeles and its many golf-minded citizens. The response to this idea has been most generous, and golf players, no matter how great their eagerness to play the new course, have exhibited patience and understanding in their willingness to await the conclusion of the tournament before themselves receiving an opportunity to play the course.

Immediately upon the conclusion of the tournament, Rancho Golf course will go into regular public service.

Ten Commandments for Golf Galleries

1. Do not move or speak when a player is making a shot. Silence is golden, especially at a golf match.
2. When lining up to watch shots, whether at the tee or through the fairway, dress back in V shape. This will afford you better vision and give the players a wide course for the finish of their shots; thus you will see perfectly, there will be no danger of being hit, nor will the ball be stopped.
3. Do not stampede for vantage point immediately as the last shot is played. Your anxiety is psychological, and the moment you start to run others will do the same.
4. Avoid applause until the last player has holed out.
5. Walk around greens; never cross them. Ladies should never walk with high heels on fairways or greens.
6. Please do not go through bunkers. Go around them. Footmarks in sand often cost a player dear.
7. A sight of the pin is necessary to the player for judging distances of approach shots.
8. Allow players to pass through and reach the next tee; do not forget when following one match that you may be in the way of another—give the players who have no gallery a fair break.
9. In the course of a match do not accost a player no matter how well you know him. Give him a chance to concentrate on his game.
10. Always consider the player first. Golf is a gentleman's game and by doing your part you render the players and your neighbor an infinite service.



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