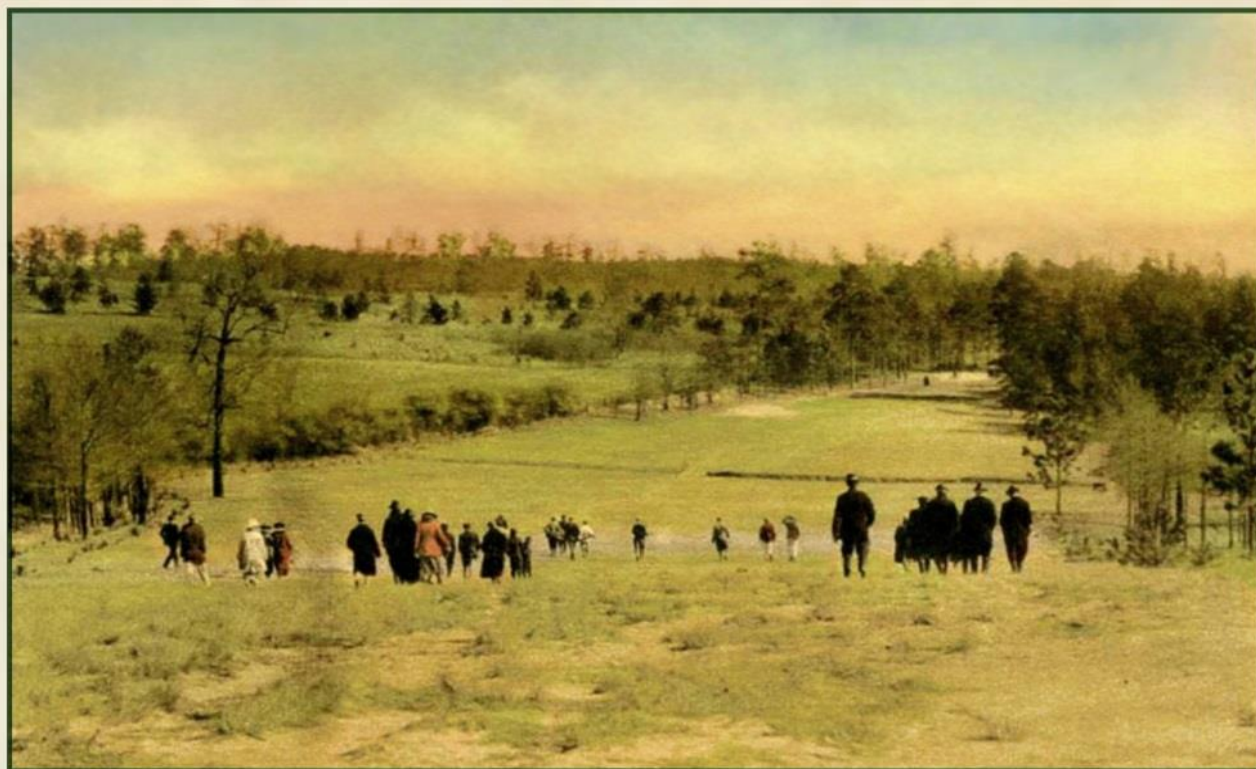


SOUTHERN PINES GOLF CLUB

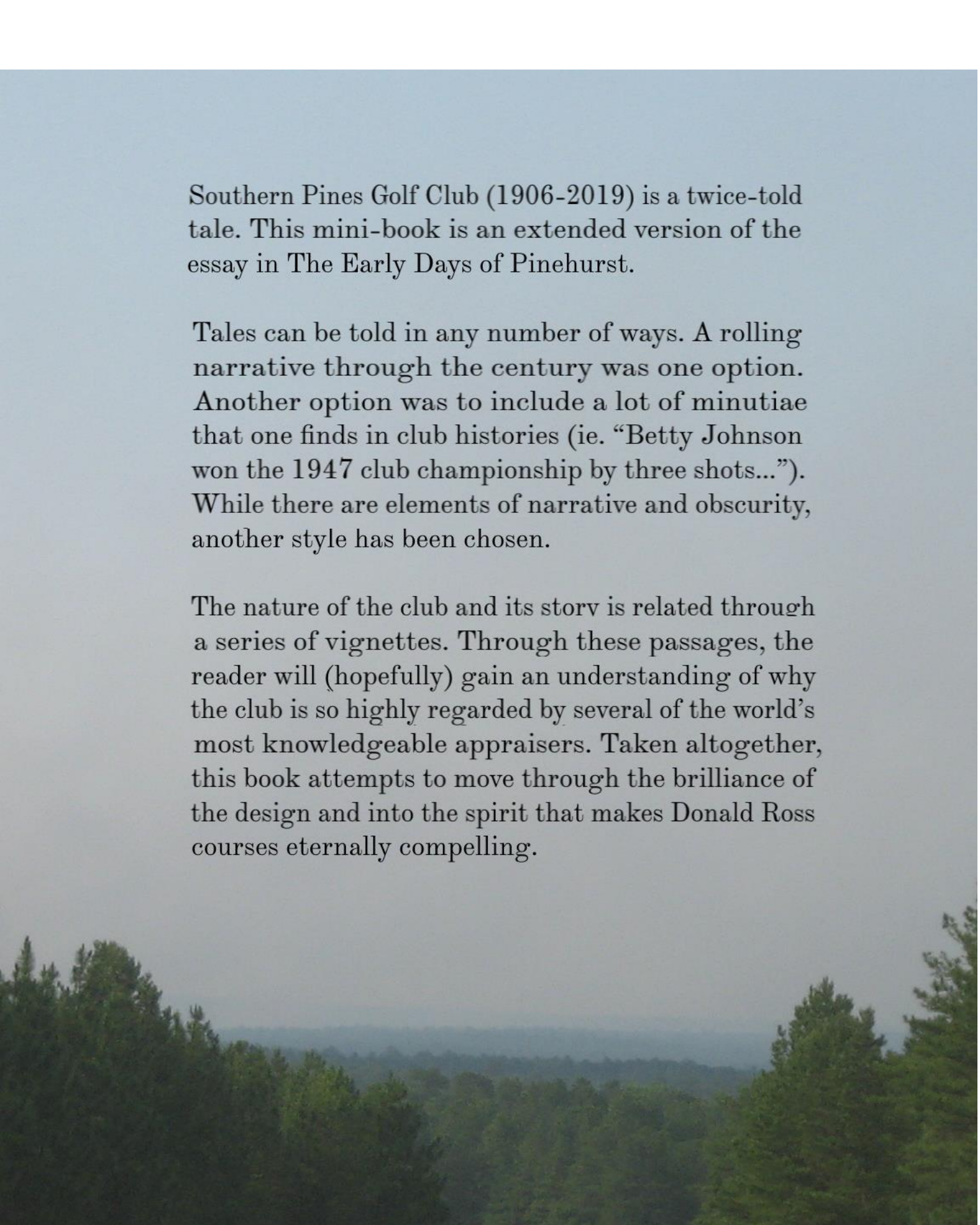


CHRIS BUIE

SPGC



1906

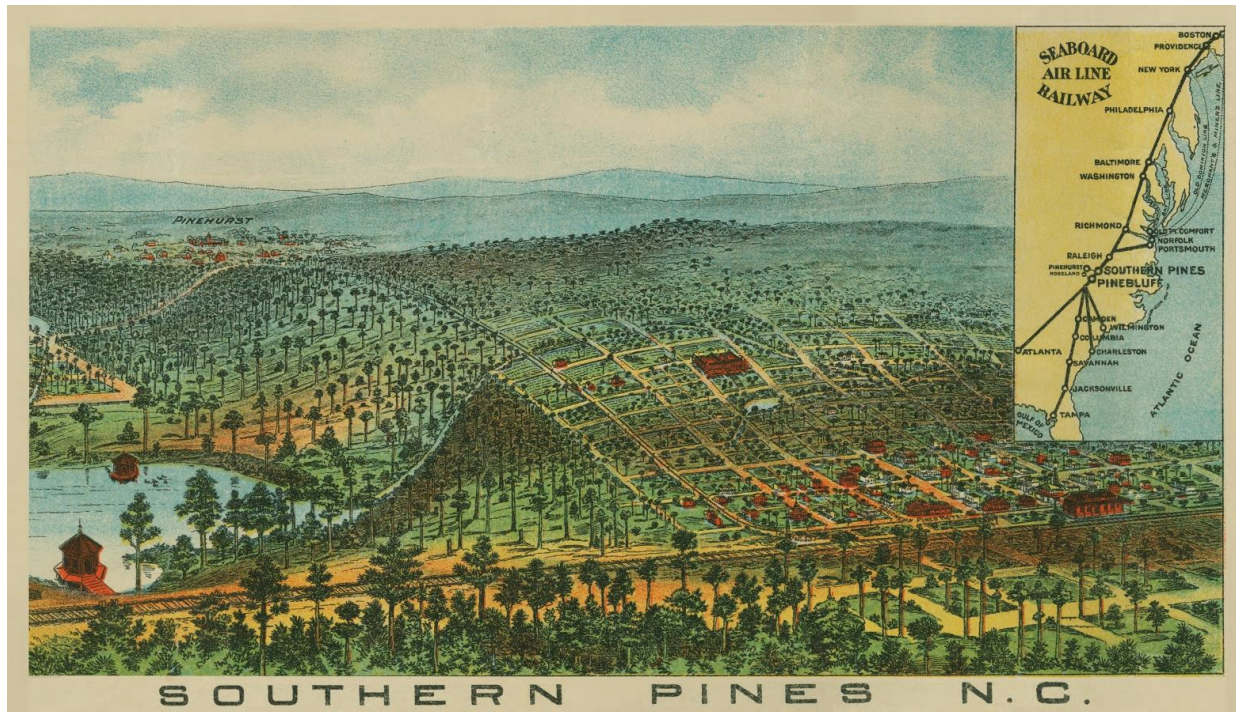


Southern Pines Golf Club (1906-2019) is a twice-told tale. This mini-book is an extended version of the essay in *The Early Days of Pinehurst*.

Tales can be told in any number of ways. A rolling narrative through the century was one option. Another option was to include a lot of minutiae that one finds in club histories (ie. “Betty Johnson won the 1947 club championship by three shots...”). While there are elements of narrative and obscurity, another style has been chosen.

The nature of the club and its story is related through a series of vignettes. Through these passages, the reader will (hopefully) gain an understanding of why the club is so highly regarded by several of the world’s most knowledgeable appraisers. Taken altogether, this book attempts to move through the brilliance of the design and into the spirit that makes Donald Ross courses eternally compelling.

“The hills are rugged little mountains, giving all the charm desired to a climb or a walk in the pursuit of the game or in a ramble among the pine woods, where walks and roads and springs and forest foliage suggest the primeval.” – SPGC Advertisement



North Carolina Collection, Wilson Special Collections Library, UNC-Chapel Hill

At the turn of the 20th Century, Southern Pines was just another crossroads town. Businesses associated with the lumber trade had more or less sustained the area for decades. But with the vast forest whittled down to just about nothing, the economic outlook was grim.

One thing the thinly populated area had going for it was the Seaboard Air Line. The mighty train traveled the entire East Coast - Maine to Florida. While the train brought with it the prospect of progress, most of the benefits went with the trolley to the neighboring village of Pinehurst.

The Tufts family of Boston brought in a group of world class artisans to transform the dusty lands a few miles from Southern Pines. The father of American landscape architecture (Frederick Law Olmsted) designed the town. The minister was also the Chaplain of the United States Senate. School teachers were from Oxford and Princeton.

In short order, it became one of America's premier resorts.

Although the impeccable nature of the village held great appeal, it was ‘the old Scotch game’ that became its main draw. Golf’s popularity became so great that thousands had to be turned away each year.

This had their Scottish professional continually building more courses for the resort. Soon his eye would turn to the lands beyond the resort.

At the same time, the neighbors turned their attentions in his direction. The source of the booming success next door was not lost on Southern Pines. It did not take long to see ‘the old Scotch game’ kept people rolling in. With this, civic leaders got to work. In 1906, it was announced that Southern Pines would have its own proper golf course.

Soon their once barren fields would prove a worthy addition to the marquee courses of Pinehurst.



The assumption is that Sandhills golf began in Pinehurst. In actuality, it was being played in Southern Pines for more than a year before Pinehurst built their first course.



View on Golf Links, Piney Woods Inn, Southern Pines, N.C.

North Carolina Collection, Wilson Special Collections Library, UNC-Chapel Hill

The Piney Woods course also pre-dated the Southern Pines Golf Club by more than a decade.

"A new and spacious structure, was first opened for the accommodation of guests in January, 1896."

"It is a pretty sight when the saddle riders assemble at the hotel front porch for the morning ride."

"The golf links at Piney Woods start off immediately at the hotel. They consist of a nine-hole course—some fine natural hazards. The turf is firm and hard and kept in good condition. A tennis court and croquet grounds, and numerous large swings upon the hotel grounds afford pleasure and comfort in their use. A pack of hounds for those wishing to go on a fox hunt and fine bird shooting."



PINEY WOODS INN, SOUTHERN PINES, NORTH CAROLINA.

(Left) Pilot Newspaper – (Right) From The Illustrated American 1897

The introduction of golf mirrored a broader trend that was taking place across the country.

Backcountry towns found themselves with shops, restaurants and expansive ideas. Naturally, this modified the fabric of these towns. Those who come of age in the newer environments turned out differently than previous generations.

Southern Pines found its first exposure to a different world with the Piney Woods Inn.

The hotel was primarily a winter home for Northern visitors of means. The following vignette conveys a sensibility that contrasted sharply with the local reality of the day.

"Royal welcome to the Governor. Southern Pines crowds the Piney Woods Inn to honor the chief magistrate. Governor Aycock in his happiest frame of mind captured his exotic constituency long before he arose to speak. The ladies vied with each other in the matter of elegant dressing. The brilliant lights, the floral decorations and the handsome toilettes of the women gave an air of luxury and gaiety not often seen so far away from large centers of population. It was an enthusiastic assemblage. Aycock said he came to capture the Yankees and found they had captured him."

– The Pilot

The hotel occupied the high point of the town. This vantage point on the hill – especially from the turrets – offered a panoramic view of the surrounding area.



A ground level photo which captures a small section of the 360 degree view. – Courtesy of UNC – Chapel Hill

The wooden structure burned to the ground in 1913. A few years later, the owners donated the 7 1/2 acre tract to the town. The only stipulation was that the land be used “in perpetuity” as a park.

“The property is within twelve minutes walk of three quarters of the population. It is a natural bird sanctuary, having dense foliage and spring water, with some twenty varieties of birds. Over the ditch several rustic bridges may be thrown and the banks sown with wild flower seed. At a small expense this might be made a show place as well as a community center for our winter guests”.

– The Pilot -1929

The donation by the Millen family was in line with the spirit of the times. The prevailing wisdom was that the layout of population centers played a significant role in the well being of citizens. Places of public revitalization were seen as essential. The well designed city could anticipate a bright future. A deficiency along these lines was believed to invite undesirable ramifications.

Unfortunately, this property followed a trend that was to become more prominent in modern times. The beautiful overlook was turned into a mediocre housing development.

History of the Land

The land which was to become SPGC passed through several hands before becoming a 36 hole golfing area. The region itself was almost entirely settled by Scottish immigrants in the 18th century. Their customs arrived with them and stayed in use for generations. It was only after the Civil War that the use of the Gaelic language faded away.

Most of the immigrants were granted sizable tracts in the Cape Fear region. These were primarily used for farming and logging/naval stores. A number of those original farms still remain with those families to this day. However, as the years progressed, these parcels (or parts of them) were often sold off for a variety of purposes.

The earliest known records show the pre-golf land was originally owned by a man named Daniel Blue. Blues' tract was sold to George Kemp - one of the first Northern settlers. He attempted to turn the area into an orchard and a vineyard. The subsequent owner, H.P. Bilyeu continued Kemp's horticultural path.

It was on this land the club began taking shape.



SPGC - 1908

Donald Ross

Some turns along the timeline are known, some remain a mystery. For SPGC, the biggest question mark has been whether or not Donald Ross designed the course.

The short answer is yes.

Turn of the century American clubs started with primitive courses. A large field would be located beyond the edge of town. Flags would be staked out at what appeared to be the right distance. There was little rhyme or reason to the design.



Believed to be the first photograph of SPGC.— Courtesy of the Moore County Historical Society

As more took to the game and knowledge grew, courses were expanded and modified. When the membership was keen, an expert would be called in to sharpen up club. The level of improvement would depend on a number of factors – funding, available land and the skill of the architect. In many cases, this amounted to a redesign so thorough that their work could be considered a new course.

This was the path SPGC followed.

Although the exact configuration of the original nine is not entirely known, there are documents which shed light on the topic.

From the January 1913 USGA Bulletin:

“A nine-hole golf course was laid out by the Board of Directors.

“The nine-hole addition was laid out and constructed under the direction of the present manager, G. Irving Lenker, assisted in the planning by the president of the club, Dr. W.P. Swett and Mr. Peacock.”

On the right is a slightly different account from the local newspaper:

Mr. Peacock is included in both accounts. As you can see, in the second version he is joined by James Macnab. Who were Peacock and Macnab? They were Donald Ross's assistants for many years in Pinehurst.

1907

The formal opening of the Southern Pines Golf Club links took place on the 23rd. A 9-hole match was played by professional E. M. Fitzgerald and W. W. Irwin, score 39 to 54 in favor of Fitzgerald. The day was cold and gloomy, temperature, 28 degrees. About 150 spectators followed the players, then partook of tea, wafers and bonbons in the sun parlor of the Piney Woods Inn. The course was laid out by J. N. Peacock, assisted by James McNab.

The Pilot



James Peacock



Donald Ross



James Macnab

Both were close to him personally as well as professionally. MacNab was a Scottish immigrant who co-owned the Pine Crest Inn with the great architect. Peacock headed a Ross course in Canada during the summers.

With Peacock and MacNab working for Ross at the same time they were building SPGC, there is no doubt Ross was familiar with the project. This was also the time when Ross's primary focus became course design.

While there is no record of Ross's involvement during the earliest years, subsequent efforts were documented. The most detailed account was from the 1914 Charlotte Daily Observer. The article depicts a sweeping rearrangement - hole by hole. (see page x)



Through the years, there were a number of items which indicated the authorship of the course.

SPGC frequently advertised their courses as Ross productions. He would certainly have been aware of the use of his name. He would also have put a stop to it, had it been false.

But the definitive document comes from a list of courses Ross personally directed. The 1930 booklet places SPGC along with others he considered significant achievements.

While all of these documents leave no doubt of Ross's involvement, the real story is found on the course.

Glenns Falls Country Club	18 Holes
Glenns Falls	
Sagamore Club	18 Holes
Lake George	
Bellview Country Club	18 Holes
Syracuse	
NORTH CAROLINA	
Pinehurst Country Club	72 Holes
Pinehurst	
Mid-Pines Country Club	18 Holes
Pinehurst	
Pine Needles Country Club	18 Holes
Pinehurst	
Southern Pines Country Club	36 Holes
Southern Pines	
Biltmore Forest Country Club	18 Holes
Biltmore	

SPGC



1906



SOUTHERN PINES COUNTRY CLUB

1939

The Land

Most golfers are not greatly concerned with the nuances of design. That's perfectly fine. Courses are made to be played rather than analyzed. It's like that with any number of experiences. Take wine, for instance. Is it necessary to know about tannins or what temperature the cellar was kept to enjoy a glass? Or, do you really need to know what was in the roux to enjoy a bowl of gumbo? Certainly not. Knowledge of what underpins the presentation is not necessary for the golfer or the epicurean. Still, it is human nature to look into the things that interest us.

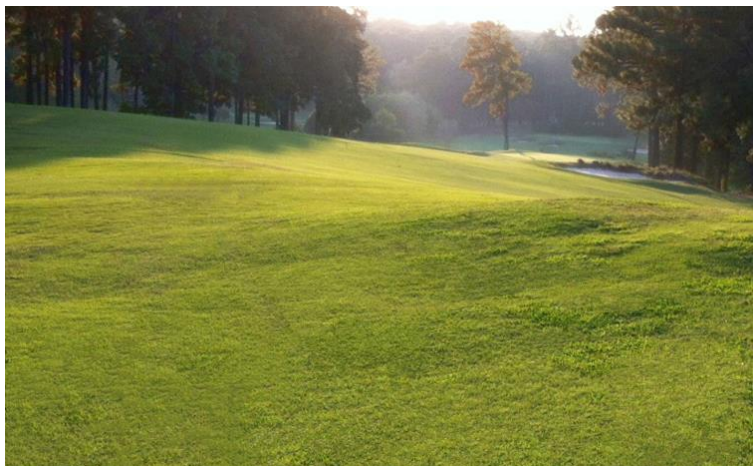
There are several reasons why SPGC has been held in high esteem for over a century. It began with the soil. The area would never have become the American golfing mecca without the ideal sandy loam. But it was not entirely sand. The general area was (and remains) 25% clay.

From The Early Days of Pinehurst:

This mixture provided the correct balance needed for grassing lands firm enough for golfing – yet porous enough to provide the designer with a canvas upon which subtleties could be introduced and retained. A heavier soil would not work because a lack of drainage leads to frequent muddy areas – and this places limitations on which design features can be crafted. Soil that is entirely sand is not what you'd want for golfing either. That would be called a desert – and that doesn't work out too well. Modern technologies do expand the percentage of land which can be worked for golfing. The difference being the earlier designs worked, of necessity, in close harmony with the natural world.



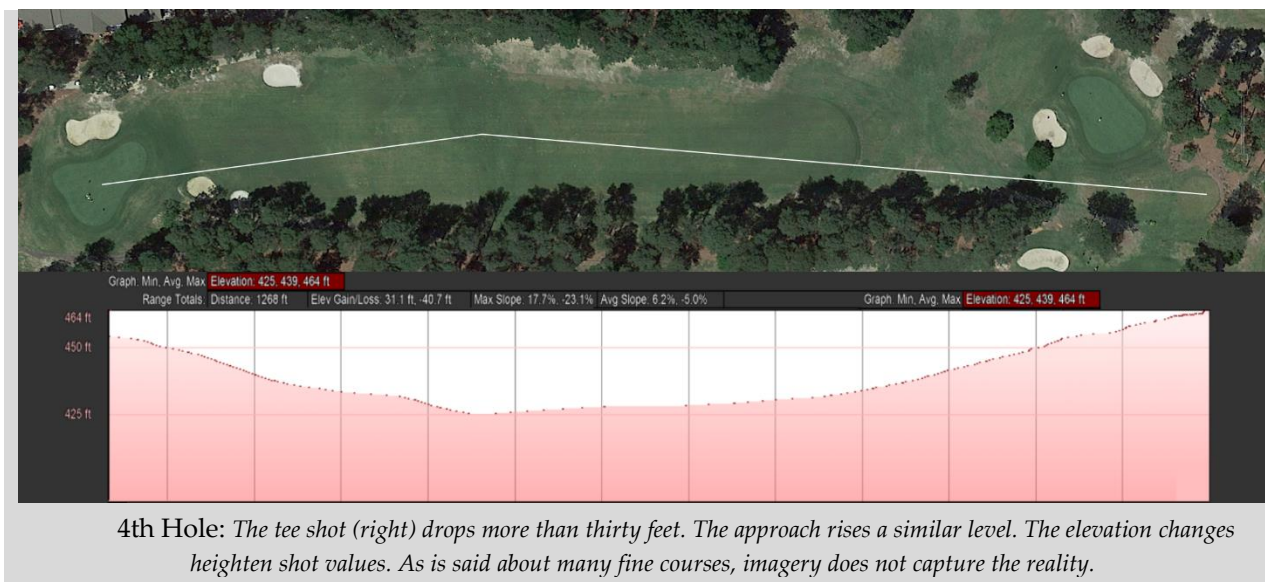
The ideal soil continues to sit on the most dramatic golfing terrain in the Sandhills. The level areas are set amid a landscape which continually turns around knolls and ridges. The frequency and slope of these hillocks offer endless playing variations. A bounce may kick in unpredictable directions. Some prefer predictability, but the adventurous player relishes the element of chance.



The 8th fairway

Flat terrain is not ideal for golfing. The same can be said for land that is full of sharp hills. The ideal course is found between those two points.

The majority of SPGC does not feature stark changes in elevation. But, in a few places, Ross incorporated ground on the edge of golfable land.



The pronounced jumps are mixed in sparingly at specific points along the trail. And that is the third key to the exceptional nature of the course: Ross's use of the multi-faceted grounds.

Anyone can build a golf course. You simply place 18 flags around a field. But, building a first rate course is an entirely different matter.

"Rendering a course of outstanding quality requires a complexity of thought on a level that is parallel with advanced mathematics. It is a highly complex exercise to assess the vast number of routing variations. It's not a matter of identifying one well-conceived hole at a time. While crafting one hole, the skilled designer is assessing how the others will relate to the overall concept. This can lead to adding or eliminating elements of the current hole without losing quality. To weave the entire project together with grandeur is creativity on a grand scale."

The path of a superior course seems natural – as if the use of the land was a series of obvious choices. Curiously, the higher the architectural skill, the less the work stands out. The lesser skilled leave glaring signs of bumbling and hackery. With the ideal course, a player cannot tell where design ends and nature begins.

Notable Events

The following is excerpt from this author that was published by the New York State Golf Association. Although it concerns Irondequoit, the sentiments fully apply to Southern Pines GC.

ICC has always been highly appreciated. If the name has not carried far and wide, it has not been due to any lack of quality. Aficionados attest to that without hesitation. The status of 'hidden gem' has been due to the fact that the ICC never felt the need to call attention to itself.

While the club has continued along the same upright path for over a century, contemporary perspectives have shifted.

Traditionally, the top honor of a golf club has been to host a major championship. While it is still a great honor, the case is somewhat different today. In contemporary times, it has become a badge of honor for vintage clubs not to have held a major championship.

Why?

The original brilliance was never compromised.

Like places such as Holston Hills or Mid Pines, ICC fits solidly within a special rota of Donald Ross courses. To play these courses is to experience a full measure of Scottish genius.

While the original Maples greens have been modified to an extent, the Ross layout is the same. Had the course been part of the modern tour, the original brilliance would have been changed.

Although the length is not suited for high tech drivers that fly over 300 yards, the course fully served the heaviest hitters through the 1950's.

(Right: The Pilot)

P. G. A. CONFIRMS MARCH 23 FOR SOUTHERN PINES

Confirmation was received yesterday from Robert Harlow, representative of the Professional Golfers Association of America, of the date for a professional best ball tournament at the Southern Pines Country Club on Monday, March 23rd, 1936. This will be the first professional tournament held on the course here, and is expected to be the forerunner of an annual event.

Most of the country's leading professionals will be in the Sandhills at that time, as they tee off the following day in the 34th annual United North & South Open Championship at the Pinehurst Country Club. It is probable, therefore, that Southern Pines may look for a big entry list for its premiere professional event. The match here will be at 18 holes over the No. 1 course.



In 1924, the British Open champion played the U.S. Open champion. They were joined by two other top pros – one of whom had just won the French Open – to make it a 4 ball. 3,000 spectators watched Walter Hagen lead the American victory at SPGC.

Walter Hagen won the British Open four times, the U.S. Open twice, and the PGA five times. In 1924, he played an exhibition at SPGC.



French, Havers, Ockenden, Hagen

Emmet French was one of Hagen's favorite partners. While the head pro at SPGC, French won three tour events and was runner-up at the 1922 PGA on Oakmont. Prior to his professional years, he was Captain of the Walker Cup.

Southern Pines Open

November 8, 1946

Southern Pines Golf Club

Sam Snead - 63

Ben Hogan - 71



Sam Snead Breaks Course Record In Open Golf Friday

by Howard F. Burns

Shooting sub-par golf, Sam Snead of Hot Springs, Va., last Friday led a field of 103 top-notch pros and amateurs in the Southern Pines open, touring the 6,340-yard Southern Pines Country Club course in 31-32-63, eight strokes under par, to establish a new course record, winning top money in the 18-hole, \$2,000 tournament.

On the outward voyage, Snead scored birdies on the par four first, par four fourth, par five fifth, and the par three seventh. On the inward voyage he was one over on the 10th, even with par fours on the 11th, 12th and 13th, one under on the par three 14th, and scored an eagle three on the 450-yard par five 15th, a birdie three on the par four 16th, even on the par four 17th, and one under on the par four 18th for a 32. Previous course record was held by Johnny Schoonmaker, Greensboro, who in 1939 posted a 66.

Snead's Card: out 354-344-243-(31); par 453-454-343-(35).

Snead in: 544-423-343-(31); par 444-435-444-36.

Another notable competition was a tour event from the early 1950's. The Southern Pines Open lasted only a few years. But it featured stellar players at the peak of their form. Sam Snead bested Ben Hogan in 1946 by setting a course record that lasted for decades. (Snead's signed scorecard was displayed in the pro shop for decades.)

There were many other high caliber competitions through the years. One of them featured the top four women players of the day. It was considered such an event that Fox Movietone filmed it to be shown in theaters.



*Snead and Hogan's last meeting in the Sandhills - 1974. New President Gerald Ford (right)
Courtesy of UNC-Chapel Hill - Photo by Hugh Morton*

There were many other high caliber competitions through the years. One of them featured the

top four women players of the day. It was considered such an event that Fox Movietone filmed it to be shown in theaters.

FILE UNDER NO.		LIBRARY INDEX CARD FOX CASE CORPORATION NEW YORK, N. Y.		NEGATIVE FILED UNDER NO.		21 C. D. 5 CARD 4	
GOLF		5-706					
SUBJECT & SCENES Jo. PINES N.C.				CROSS REFERENCES			
Golfers... Glema Collett, Virginia Van Wie, vs Helen Hicks, Maureen Orcutt.				CAN 729 S			
NAME OF CAMERAMAN WALDRON 9				NAME OF SOUNDMAN WILLIAMS			
DATE SUBMITTED	POSITIVE DUPE	NEGATIVE	QUALITY	FRAME	LENGTH	1400	
USED	1930	USED IN	3-55	DATE	HOLD-OVER	TO BE RETURNED	RETURNED

University of South Carolina - Moving Image Research Collections

The film was a 'one-off'. But there was an annual women's tournament that ran for many years:

"The big event of the season for women, the Fifth Annual Women's Mid-South championship, 36 holes at medal play, is scheduled for Wednesday and Thursday, March 17th and 18th. This event always attracts leading women golfers from all parts of the country."

- The Pilot - 1932



Beside the 13th looking toward the 5th - University of South Carolina - Moving Image Research Collections

All in all, having world class events move on to longer venues is for the best. SPGC has been left to the most important player: the so-called "average golfer".

The Challenging Years

The era of depression and war found the club continually on the edge of closure. Each year groups pieced together various ways to keep the club open.

These groups were a combination of civic leaders and Donald Ross's associates.



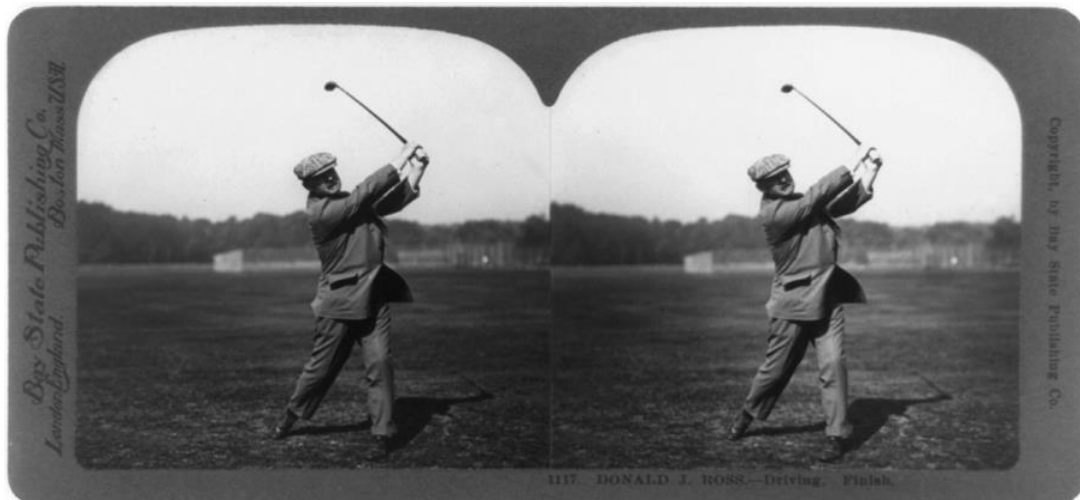
Pilot Newspaper - 1934



Pilot Newspaper - 1937

To understand Ross's influence at SPGC, it is necessary to view the matter from a broad perspective.

Ross place in history has been that of a prolific architect. His actual role went far beyond that. He was a master with every aspect of the sport (club making, agronomy, teaching, playing, tournament presentation, administration, etc.). In the end, the astonishing breadth of his work made him the patriarch of American golf.



Courtesy of the National Archives

One of his lesser known roles was that of a godfather figure. Dozens of men worked directly under Ross. Through their apprenticeships, many became masters in their own right. Several became head professionals at Ross designed clubs. Others became expert club makers or agronomists. All absorbed the authentic Scottish ethos and spread it from their respective posts.

Brothers Frank and Angus Maples were among Ross's closest associates. Although busy as the primary care takers of the Pinehurst courses, they found time to keep SPGC conditioning up to specifications. During these years, Angus also found time to craft SPGC's first grass greens.

Ross's SPGC influence also was found in the man he personally drafted to head the golfing operations.

Following a meeting of the newly appointed Country Club Committee held the latter part of last week, an announcement was made by City Clerk Howard Burns of the acquisition of the services of Roy Grinnell, formerly of the Pinehurst Country Club professional staff, as professional at Southern Pines Country Club.

The Pilot – 1937

Grinnell grew up in Little Compton, R.I. His grandfather was the founder of Sakonnet Golf Club. Seated on the rocky shores of the Atlantic, it remains one of Ross's finest courses. It also happened to be the architect's summer home.

Grinnell followed the path of many associates. While a youth, his potential was noticed by Ross. He was cultivated and proved himself worthy of carrying on the Scotsman's approach to the game.

In 1914, Grinnell became the youngest person ever admitted to membership in the Professional Golfers Association.



VETERAN GOLFER— Roy Grinnell, retiring after 51 and a half years as a pro, shows his successor, Andy Page, a rare club from his collection—a driver carved from a single piece of wood, once owned by Harry W. Richmond, president of the first Continental Congress nearly 200 years ago. Setting is the pro shop at the Southern Pines Country Club. (V. Nicholson photo)

(Andy Page carried on the tradition at SPGC for decades.)

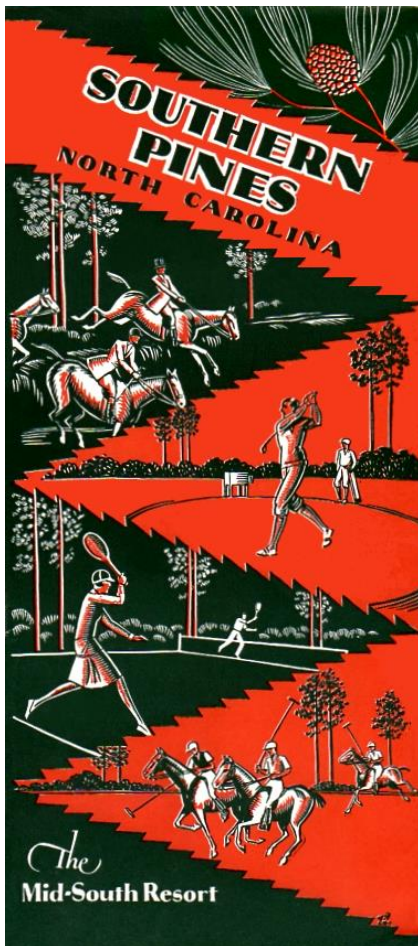
Like several of Ross's men, Grinnell was something of a renaissance man. By age 18, he was an Army pilot flying over Europe. The next year, 1919, Ross brought him to Pinehurst.

Grinnell ended up working at SPGC for almost 30 years.

While Ross's men provided the expertise, civic leaders were the ones whose actions saved the club.

Without the actions of these unheralded leaders, the club would have been lost.

The list of those who saved the club includes (but is not limited to) Howard Burns, Eugene C. Stevens, J. C. Barron and Robert Hart.



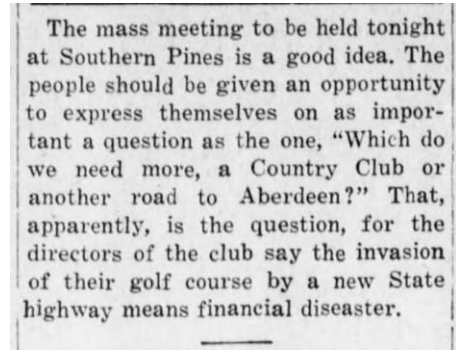
One of the survival tactics was to stir the will of the town. It took a concerted effort to persuade the citizens that *it* was in the town's best interest. After all, the majority of the population were not golfers.

The crux of the argument was that the town had little in the way of industry. The club attracted many visitors who would winter in town. The aesthetically beautiful course was a central reason they chose Southern Pines over hundreds of other options.

Without the patronage of these visitors the overall economic vitality of the town would have suffered greatly. Woodworkers, plumbers, landscapers, farmers and the like all benefited from the guests. Though they may not have much enthusiasm for the game, the peripheral benefits were critical to their well being.

No sooner would the club survive one life threatening battle, then another would arise. Perhaps the most formidable challenge was the State's plan to run a highway through the center of the golf course. Again, the leaders were aided by the newspaper.

Efforts to save the club were greatly helped by the local paper. The editorials of the Pilot played a decisive role.



The Pilot

The road was rerouted and once again, the club survived. And, once again, another potentially fatal challenge arose.

Despite all the creativity and fortitude, the club fell into insolvency during the early 1940's. One of the individuals to whom the club owed money was none other than Donald Ross himself (\$1,400).

The town government propped up the club until a suitable buyer could be found. Wilton W. Sherman of Hartford, Connecticut purchased SPGC in 1946. One of Sherman's first acts was to bring in Scottish professional Tommy Armour. The three time major champion (PGA, U.S. and British Opens) stayed for the winter season.

Another multi-major champion came to work at SPGC soon after Armour. At the time Julius Boros was the club accountant. Later on he won the PGA and the U.S. Open.

Sherman attempted to do great things for the club. He installed a sprinkler system. He revived the Southern Pines Open. But it was a tough go for Sherman. In 1951, he sold SPGC to the Benevolent & Protective Order of Elks. They remain the owner to this day.







Today & Tomorrow

Clubs reflect the eras they move through. The post WWII years found SPGC settling into a relatively comfortable routine that continues to this day.

The club has carried forth largely as a center for a middle class segment of the community. A pool was added. People held wedding receptions. The Little Nine thrived for decades along with the 18 hole course.

Being located so closely to the middle of town has made this a natural fit. But there has been and continues to be a substantial amount of tourism – especially in the Spring with the florescent shrubbery trailing along the fairways and throughout the town.



Once played the course usually ends up on the visitor's annual or semi-annual area rota. The fact that it has retained the character Ross instilled make it worthy of being selected – even with so many extraordinary options around. As the course continues to measure around 6,500 yards, it is playable to virtually all. Yet even at this length the sharp players find it curiously resistant to scoring. And it is amusing to see the college teams which regularly pass through puzzling over this while wandering back to their vans.



Following the 2008 economic disaster, the Little Nine closed. Since that time, it has remained fallow and overgrown. Its ultimate fate remains indeterminate. At publication time, a debate over the destiny of the land is in process.

Here is an excerpt from a presentation at one of the debates:

As you can see, this land has been significant to the town in multiple ways for over a century. The number of people whose lives have been enriched by it runs into high numbers. Now its winding timeline has reached a turning point whose importance is not to be underestimated. Any decision will effect generations of citizens.

The Elks could have sold the property for a small fortune. That they have not indicates outstanding stewardship and consideration on their part. Still, they must find a use for the Little Nine area. And, they deserve to be properly compensated for it.

We are fortunate they have given us a say in the future of this tract.

Across the nation we've seen a trend toward vast development. Jobs and economic growth are necessary for civic well-being. A vibrant economy obviously bodes well for the country. But, there are other factors of great importance to our well-being.

Ultimately, it comes down to what sort of place we would like to be.

What sort of town, what sort of country do you have when its exceptional elements are diminished or eliminated? There is a sharp contrast with areas that are robust with cultural elements that inspire and invigorate.

The choices and actions we take with this land will go far in defining what kind of people we really are.



Although the fate of the Little Nine remains undecided, the full course will undoubtedly continue. Exactly how it will continue through the coming years is impossible to say. There are several possibilities.

It could continue with a modest budget for greenkeeping. Another possibility is that the club might find itself with a sizable budget. This would allow the club to receive a thorough renovation. If SPGC received the same sort of attention as Mid Pines, it would render a course of stunning beauty.¹ It would undoubtedly acquire a phenomenal level of popularity. That sort of appeal cuts both ways. In all likelihood, it would make SPGC more crowded and expensive. The Sandhills already has clubs like that. It is best when there are golf is available for broad segments of the population. Seeing this club moved away from the population that has supported it for all these years is not necessarily a desirable path.

However the future plays out, it should be done with the knowledge that the course is an authentic American gem – by way of an ingenious Scottish hand.

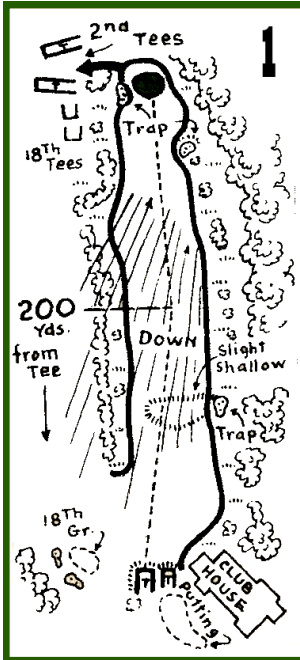
¹ – See images on pages x, xx, xxx

COURSE TOUR

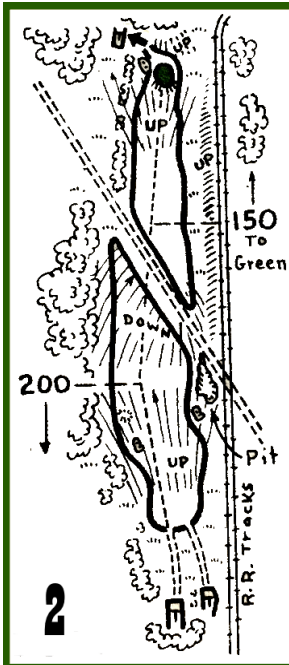
BY RAN MORRISSETT







First hole, 360 yards: An appealing opener, with everything laid out below for the golfer to see, as the hole tumbles downhill. The green rises in the back right third and the effect is to create tough but interesting hole locations. The prospects from the elevated first tee appear inviting and the golfer is keen to get out on the course.

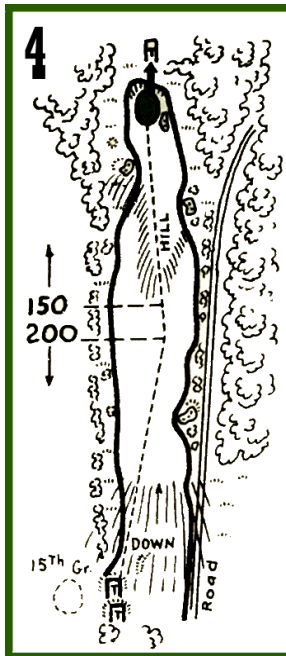


Second hole, 495 yards; A big drive over the crest of the hill allows the green to be reached in 2. But the remaining challenge is twofold. First, the tee ball is guaranteed to finish on a downslope while the elevated green is located atop the far hill. Putting a clean hit on a ball from a downslope is tricky and anything less than perfect is likely to end up in one of the two deep greenside bunkers. The second challenge is that the green is the most heavily contoured on the course with a three foot deep bowl in its front giving way to shallow wings on either side.

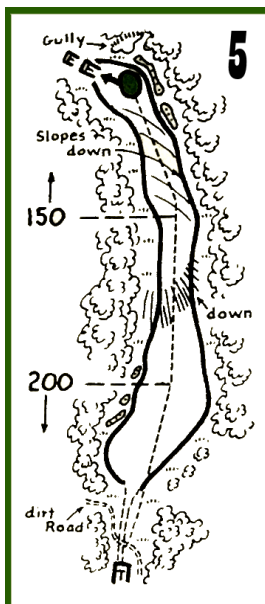


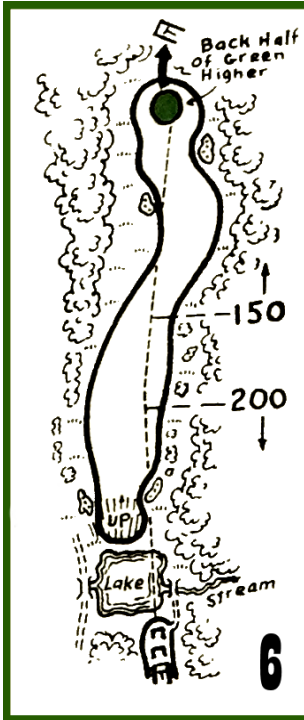
Third hole, 195 yards; In regards to visibility, a game at Southern Pines offers the best of both worlds. Some holes like the second (as we saw), the fifth, sixth and thirteenth offer blind drives over crests of hills. Other holes, in particular its set of par threes, offer well defined targets where it is clear what the golfer must do. In this case, the golfer standing on the elevated tee soaks in the view of the entire putting surface. After a few rounds, it becomes evident that the object is to stay below the day's hole location as the this green features some of the most pronounced back to front tilt of any on the course. Though the task is straightforward, judging and executing a shot of this length is not. This one of the more respected holes in Moore County.

Fourth hole, 385 yards; Measuring just under 6,500 yards from the back markers, some golfers mistakenly think they will have an easy day of things. When you combine the number of times that drives hit into the side of hills (and thus kill any significant bounce forward) plus the number of overtly uphill approach shots, Southern Pines plays significantly longer than the card suggests.

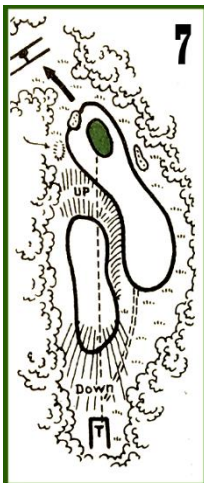


Fifth hole, 535 yards; Southern Pines enjoys great topography but that natural advantage would have been wasted if Donald Ross had not captured the rolling nature of the property in all sorts of different ways and manners. Here at the fifth, the fairway abruptly falls thirty feet downhill in the 245 yard range from the tee, just where the hole bends slightly to the left. Good club golfers delight in trying to hit a draw and have their tee ball get a big kick forward off the downslope. If successful, the green is reachable in two.

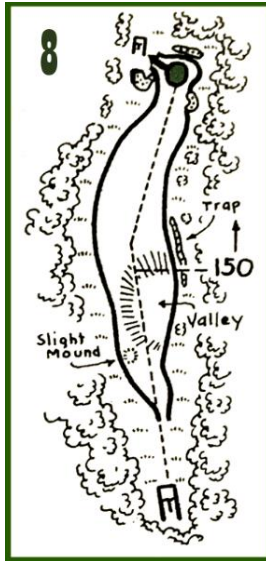




Sixth hole, 425 yards; The classic Donald Ross give and take is much in evidence throughout the round with the stretch from the second through the sixth being a case in point. The second is a reachable par five to a severe green and while many strong golfers get near the green in two, getting down in two is another matter. This par 4 1/2 hole is followed by a pair of tough holes but then comes another three shotter that can be reached in two if the golfer can turn his drive from right to left and have it bound down the hill. The 'give' of this potential birdie hole is followed by Ross's 'take' at the next, which is the longest two shotter on the course at 425 yards. And so it goes for the rest of the round, with the golfer given several opportunities to score well while still always being challenged.

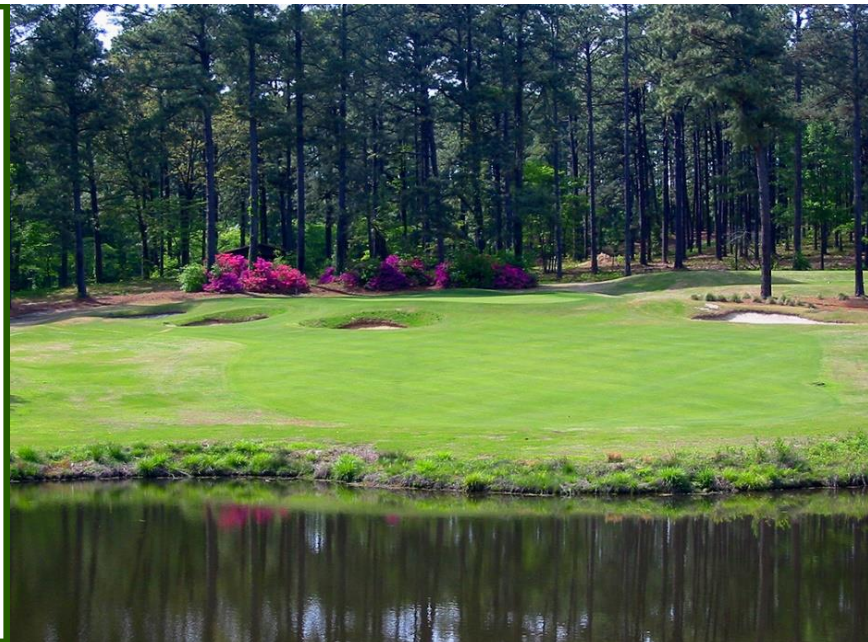


Seventh hole, 165 yards; The 7th is considered the best par-3 in the area by some. It plays over the rim of a sandy bowl to an angled green on the far side. There is a two club difference between the front and back flags. The timid can play to the right of the sunken pit. The bold can attempt to play right over it. Woe betide those who challenge the pit without a solid strike.



(Above) A computer aided rendering of 8 with trees removed to open the view.

Eighth hole, 375 yards; A charming slight dogleg that needs to be approached with caution and where a driver may not be prudent. The fairway may be the most important one to find on the course as peril lurks on either side. Routed along the spine of a hill, a drive that misses the fairway right kicks sharply toward a lake while a drive that misses the fairway left kicks further left into pine trees with low lying brush.

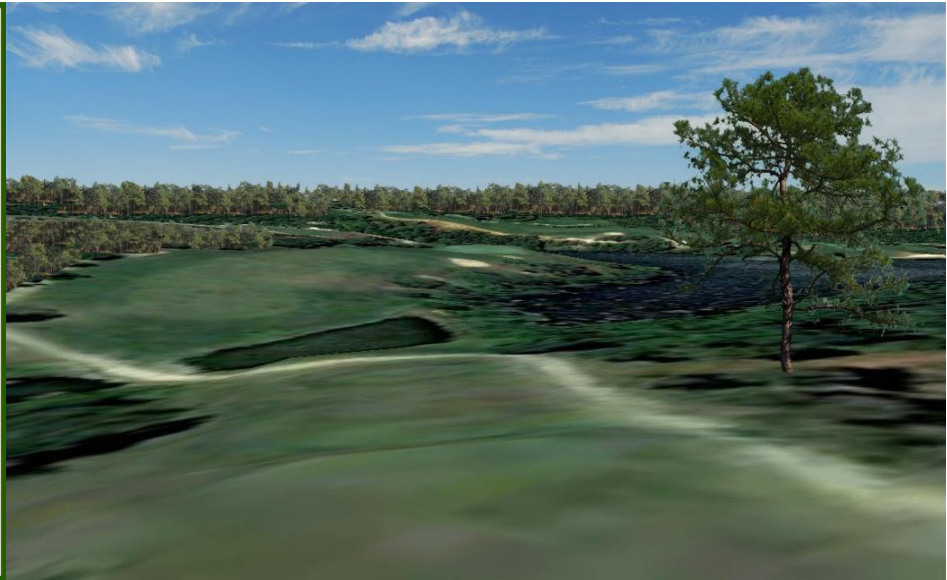
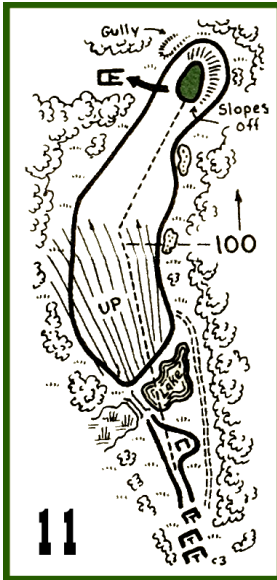


Ninth hole, 180 yards; One reason that the routing works so well at Southern Pines is because the architect wasn't forced to return the first nine to the clubhouse. In fact, the ninth green is more than two thousand yards from the clubhouse and it's the third par three on this side. Most modern architects aren't afforded such latitude. Early architects were freer to find the routing that yielded the finest holes – no wonder that period yielded courses of such high quality.

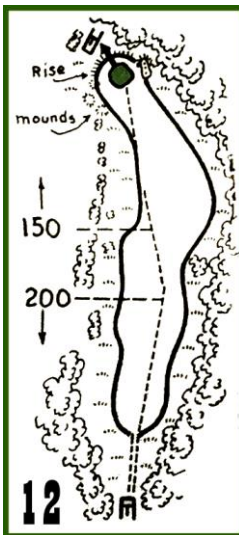


Tenth hole, 335 yards; Wonderful sidehill architecture. A hillock crosses the fairway at the 220 yard mark from the tee and the golfer who can place his tee ball near its broad crest is afforded the more level stance into the green. The green itself mirrors the left to right pitch of the fairway and any approach that ends up above the hole on the left is a three putt in the making. Big hitters who take a powerful swing with their drivers often find it is to no avail as the left to right pitch of the ground encourages their tee ball to end up in the right rough or on a bed of pine needles from where the angle and lie rarely are conducive for a birdie. In short, advances in technology have done little to diminish the playing qualities of this subtle hole.

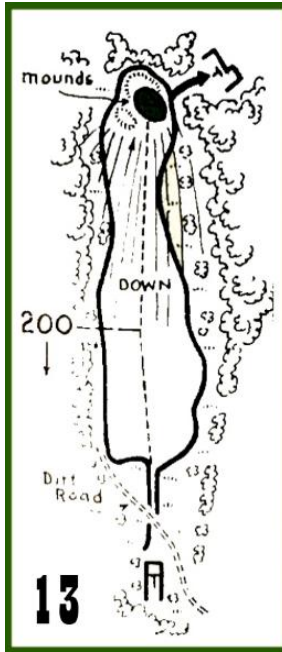
Eleventh hole, 320 yards; The primary defense of 11 is the golfer's own hubris. From the tee is a tempting view of the not-so-distant green. This calls forth visions of glory and the prudent fairway wood is left in the bag in favor of the driver. Realism enters the picture when the golfer sees their mighty swipe headed for inadvisable territory. Though some do find birdie, more end up with a double bogey and a vow not to repeat their foolishness. The reestablished commitment to sensible play is invariably forgotten by the next round.



The image above is a computer rendering of the opened view.....



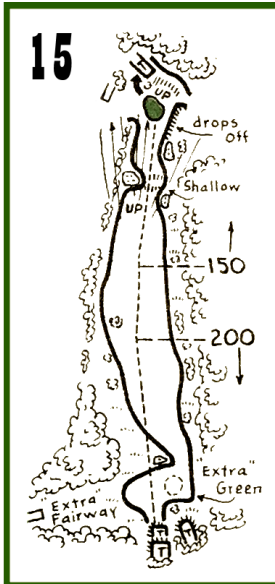
Twelfth hole, 410 yards; After so many holes playing on distinctive terrain, the 12th offers a more familiar scenario. It fits well within the overall pattern because spice is best appreciated when paired with the straight forward. The 12th plays longish, especially when the wind freshens up. With the moderately uphill approach, par is always a fine score on this hole.



Thirteenth hole, 400 yards; From this high point in the terrain, Ross points this hole in the opposite direction of the 12th. Variety continues with the downhill approach. Keeping the journey full of shifting variables is a major factor in the overall experience.



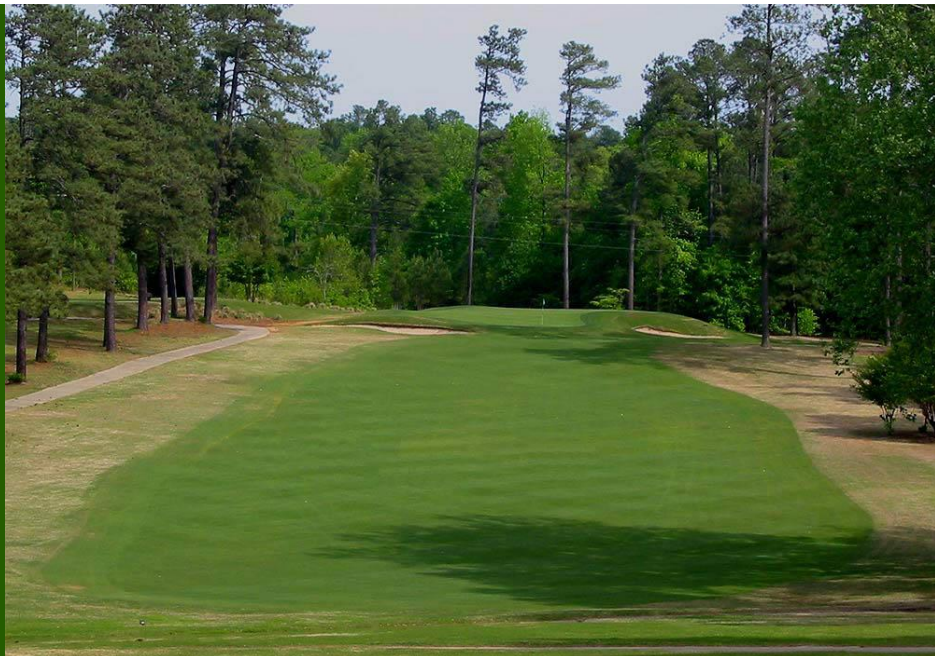
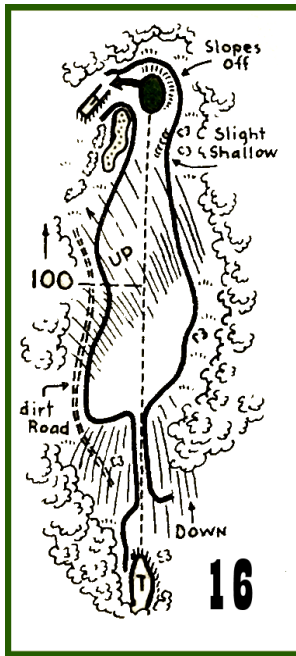
Fourteenth hole, 170 yards; A picture perfect hole, played from the top of one hillock to the top of another. The one shot holes at Southern Pines highlight the need for a crisp iron game. In general, these four holes require a three, six, four and a five iron here at the fourteenth. As with the others, the green site is a natural, with a ten foot deep bunker cut into the right front slope.



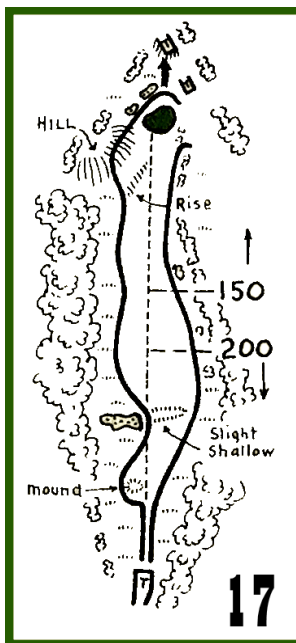
Fifteenth hole, 425 yards; A new tee seventy yards from the prior green made this hole a straightaway 475 yard three shotter. But, the hole is more interesting from Ross's original tee, which remains twenty paces behind the fourteenth green. From there, it plays 425 yards and is a slight dogleg to the right with the uphill second shot requiring some kind of long iron or utility wood. The longish shot to the green again brings variety to the courses other approach requirements. Also, such a hard two shotter perfectly complements the next hole, which is a drive and pitch 310 yarder.

(Right) *The lost par-3 which connected the 4th to the 15th.*





Sixteenth hole, 312 yards; A high-point-to high-point with a sharp drop in between. Long hitters with delusions of grandeur try to drive the green – rarely does their lance find the windmill. Usually, they will find themselves with a stymie – while the sensible player cards the better score.



Seventeenth hole, 410 yards; The right to left fairway slope encourages the tee ball to find the left side of the fairway. The serpentine bunker that extends down the left side of the green encourages the golfer to seek the right side of the fairway. Thus, though the hole itself is straight

and wide off the tee, Ross does a fine job of asking the golfer to hit a fade off the tee to gain (and hold) the preferred angle into the green, which in turn best accepts a draw. The fairway wants to kick the ball toward the left, which brings the left greenside bunker into play.



Eighteenth hole, 340 yards; The kind of finishing hole that is sadly never built today. A knoll 240 yards from the tee in the middle of the fairway oftentimes gives the golfer an awkward stance to the elevated green. On countless occasions, the golfer sticks his wedge into the ground and his uphill approach comes up woefully short. The expected birdie rarely materializes and more times than one might guess based on its modest yardage, a bogey is recorded. Such a swing hole is infinitely more appealing – and memorable – than a long, arduous two shotter. Eighteen is an apt finishing hole.



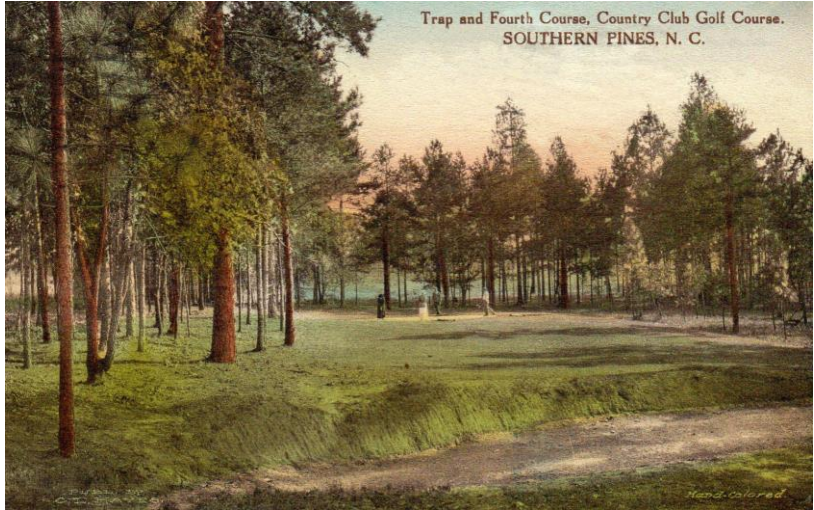


The Mysterious Pre-History

The 1906 nine hole routing is not fully known. Historians (such as Craig Disher) believe it most likely began near today's clubhouse and circled around the practice field beside the entrance. (See top right of aerial on page x)

While the routing is not fully understood, there are some images which, most likely, are from that original version.





Trap and Fourth Course, Country Club Golf Course.
SOUTHERN PINES, N. C.



"The Fifth Green" Country Club Golf Links, Southern Pines, N. C.



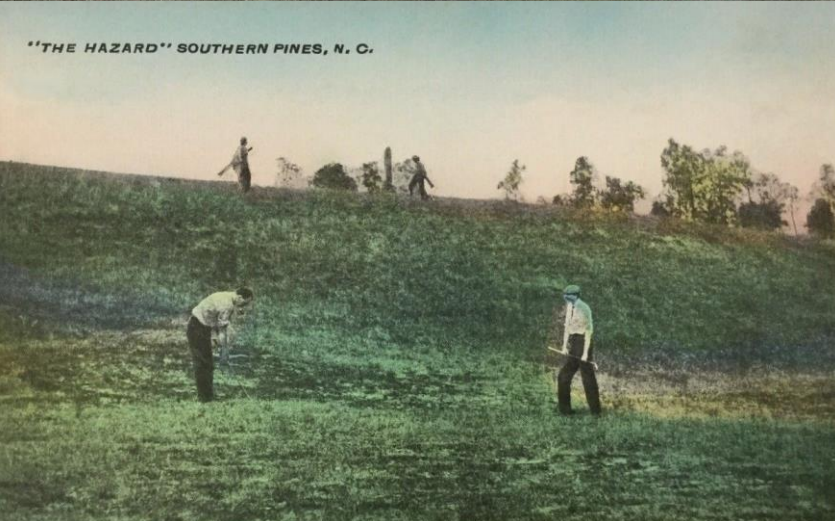
Southern Pines Country Club Southern Pines, N. C.



A View from the Seventh Green, Country Club Golf Links, Southern Pines, N. C.



View from Giant Bunker, 8th Green, Southern Pines Country Club.
SOUTHERN PINES, N. C.



"THE HAZARD" SOUTHERN PINES, N. C.

1914 Charlotte Observer

The club house will be remodeled and removed to a site near the seventeenth and eight greens as hitherto known., the eighteenth hole of last season will now become the first, and will be practically unchanged except that the shoulder will be removed from the putting green. The present second becomes the third and will be improved by moving the putting green a little back so that it will be without shoulders or banks. The present third becomes the fourth and will be changed by the removal of the tee further down the hill to a distance of 175 yards from the ditch crossing the fair green. The putting green is being moved about 25 yards further back. All who play at Southern Pines think ___ about the wood path and the climb from number three green to number four tee and few will regret its elimination.

The new tee will ___ the fourth green, and the old fourth hole, now the fifth will become an elbow hole with no other alteration. The old fifth, concerning which ___ of the fiercest arguments have waged for years past, now becomes the sixth and will be lengthened by the removal of the putting green to a site on the level ground near the spring, thus making this hole a full mashie or jigger shot, and removing the heavy and rather penalty which ___ resulted when a shot was over-played. The present sixth hole now becoming the seventh, will be quite changed in character. Few if any players were satisfied with the new putting green last season and it is to be abandoned in favor of a new one to the right of the present site, and on a level spot where no shoulder or ___ will stop or deflect a well-played approach. The tee is at the same time to be moved to the left of the present position, thus slightly lengthening the hole. Moreover by this arrangement advantage is taken of a natural bunker well calculated to add interest to the hole. These changes do not in any way deprive the player of the pleasure of traversing practically all the familiar fair green with its particularly velvety turf.

The old seventh has been the cause of perhaps more debate and strife of opinion than any of the old nine. Years ago, it was determined to change the position of the putting green, but so valiant were the defenders of the present site, that ist assailants lost heart, and nothing was done. But now the present sixth putting green will be the site of the new eighth tee, and the new eighth putting green will be moved to a site outside the pine grove. No more therefore, will the player of a well-aimed long drive or of a straight approach shot find his ball lying snugly in the shelter of a noble pine to be driven forth at ruinous cost. Whereby it is hoped that the clerical staff of that celestial record office in which words spoken undivinely by golfers are written down, will be spared some of their labors. The present eight hole now becomes the ninth, and will not be changed except by a slight improvement at the putting green, the approach to which will be made a little more gradual.

And so half the golfers journey done, he will find himself once more at the clubhouse, where if he sees fit, he may refresh himself before proceeding on the latter half of the travel.

The first of the new nine holes, last ____ the ninth, now to be the tenth, will be improved by the construction of a new putting green with a fairer approach. The tenth of last Winter becomes the eleventh, and will be made a little longer by the demolishing of the old cabin and the construction of a new putting green on its site.

The eleventh now becomes the twelfth and will be unchanged. The old twelfth - the short hole against the railroad cut - is totally abandoned and the thirteenth will retain its number and identity unchanged. On the fourteenth the putting green will be improved by the drawing out the shoulder so as to offer a fairer approach and the fifteenth will be unchanged. The sixteenth, as it was last Winter, had no friends ____ inordinate length of ____ [450] yards the tee remaining in present position, and a new putting green being constructed. The seventeenth will be formed from the part of the sixteenth thus ____ off with the same putting green as was used last season and will be about 175 yards long. The seventeenth hole of last Winter becomes now the eighteenth and will be an elbow hole and somewhat longer than it was, the tee being about ten yards to the left of the seventeenth green.