



View of #11

North Course Commemorative Edition 2010

THE NORTH COURSE.

BY ROBERT E. COOPER, PRESIDENT

The opening of the North Course is the culmination of a five-year project to restore George Thomas' greatest design.

Beginning in 2005, the Board of Directors concluded that the time had come to undertake a complete renovation of the North Course that would present it as the classic golfing treasure that it is. What followed was an ambitious undertaking, initiated at first by the Board and Club management with the help of a small cadre of dedicated members, which then evolved into widespread participation of a large number of our members who discussed the renovation plans in an interactive process – a process that reflected the great affection our members held for the North Course and that ultimately culminated in a broad consensus endorsing the contours of the project and a commitment to proceed.

The overall effort began in earnest with the selection of Gil Hanse as the architect in 2007 and the preparation of the architectural Master Plan in 2008. Mr. Hanse, whose lifelong passion has been golf design, had recently completed several of his own designs of note: Boston Golf Club and Castle Stuart as well as acclaimed renovations of classic courses such as Plainfield Country Club in New Jersey. While ensconced in a D-5 bulldozer during our fairway bunker renovation last year, he was awarded Architect of the Year by *Golf Magazine*. The work of Hanse Golf Design is also reflected in the work of Mr. Jim Wagner. As a partner in the firm, Jim was responsible for many of the fine details in the architectural design. Like Gil, he manned various equipment while shaping the bunkers and barranca features in the course. Additionally, Jim provided expertise marrying the architecture with the maintenance. Gil and Jim have remained true to their design philosophy and handiwork by personalizing the renovation to the North Course.

Mr. Hanse retained Geoff Shackelford, the author of George Thomas' biography *The Captain*, to provide historical background regarding George Thomas' and William Bell's design concepts. Geoff assisted Gil as he perfected his architectural plans as well as during the actual construction. Geoff's research into Thomas' and Bell's design work proved instrumental in guiding Gil's restoration efforts. His photography has also been an integral part of the record keeping during the project and we have been fortunate to have his work featured in our Club publications conveying the exquisite work being done.

Kirk Reese deserves much of the credit for the success of the entire project, from inception to conclusion. He was the motivating force behind the project from the outset, and devoted countless effort and time to overseeing every aspect of it, from the initial design planning, to the bidding, and ultimately the construction itself. And lastly, Russ Myers' contribution was extraordinary in so many respects, even though he only arrived on the scene in February of 2010.

An Ad Hoc Committee was formed consisting of several board members and other members involved in the golf industry to help oversee the project. I enjoyed serving on this committee with the following members: Michael McRoskey, Don Rice, Mike Donovan, John McClure, Paul Major, assisted by our staff: Jim Schaeffer, Russ Myers, and Kirk Reese. This group met every two weeks, or as needed, and we were fortunate to have had the opportunity to watch the project evolve to its successful completion, while participating from time to time in on-the-fly decisions that needed to be made.

In the fall of 2008, on the cusp of commissioning the project which would have entailed starting construction in February 2009, the economy nose-dived, so the Board took the prudent step of postponing the project for a year. However, this posed a problem for Gil Hanse, as he was committed to re-doing Tokyo Golf Club in 2010, and he wanted to be on-site at LACC during most of the construction work, and indeed wanted to personally run the bulldozer to shape the bunkers. So we decided to have Gil construct the fairway bunkers on the original schedule, during the winter and spring of 2009, which in turn would ensure that he had the time he needed during the larger construction project in 2010 to personally oversee it, as well as shape the greenside bunkers.

The first bunker excavated during the 2009 phase was the second fairway bunker on the 17th hole that had been constructed as part of Herbert Fowler's design in 1920-21. Much to the delight of Gil, who was operating the bulldozer, a cache of sand was discovered under the topsoil, signaling success in locating the original bunker. This "forensic architecture" would be repeated many times over, at different locations throughout the course, during the two project phases.

Our members playing the North Course during 2009 followed the progress as Gil shaped the course's fairway bunkers, and they were enthusiastic about what they were seeing, despite the challenge the new bunkers presented to the wayward golfer. In addition, during 2009 fairway lines were established to compliment the new bunkering, and tree removal commenced, opening up some lost vistas on the course and further revealing Gil's vision for the North Course.

It was during this interlude that the Board decided to pursue Gil's design that called for re-establishing the original routing of

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the 2nd and 8th holes. Despite initial member skepticism of the routing of the original holes, Gil believed Thomas' architecture for the 2nd and 8th holes were integral to the design and flow of the course. After a dialogue with the membership, the Board moved forward to commission the integration of both the 2nd and 8th holes into the project with the caveat that the par five green on the existing 2nd hole would be retained. With that, the project's final architectural scope was defined.

In December of 2009, Russ Myers was hired to become the Director of Golf Courses and Grounds. The second phase of the project began on February 1, 2010, and Russ started his assignment one week later. Within two weeks Russ and Gil and the two major contractors were underway, and the project sailed along despite some inclement weather. Fortunately much of the rain fell on weekends to the dismay of golfers playing the South Course but to the delight of the contractors working on the North.

Soon after joining the project, Russ Myers proposed several important concepts for the project which were adopted, including installation of hydronics under every green, agronomic adjustments to better accommodate drainage, and establishing a more uniform rough through sprigging with Bandera bermuda. Additionally, Russ influenced the placement of features for drainage irrigation design, storm water management, and aesthetic purposes such as the pine straw beds. As these new ideas were adopted, the marriage of course conditioning and maintenance to the architecture was dramatically enhanced.

The 2010 phase of the project began with the construction of the 5th green complex, followed by restoration of the short par four 6th green complex, the alter ego to Riviera's famed 10th hole designed by Captain Thomas several years before his work on the North Course. This was a seminal moment in the project as the excavators went to work. After digging over six feet into what would become the restored 6th green complex, sand was struck indicating the back bunker of the original green had been found. The original green had been covered by a massive amount of topsoil, but careful digging revealed the original green mix, and the contours of the original Thomas' green were discovered. Then, the excavators re-established the ridge behind the green creating the first "courses within the course" feature, the par four 7th tee. Next the fairway slopes were established, and following tree removal, the barranca's importance in Thomas' design was revealed. The risk-reward philosophy of Thomas' short but challenging par four 6th lived again.

After work concluded in the lower course (the 2nd through 9th holes, and the 17th hole), the construction effort shifted to the upper holes where tree removal exposed sweeping vistas not only across the differing elevations of the course itself, but also across the Los Angeles basin. Views from 11th, 12th, 13th, 14th, 15th and 16th holes span the Santa Monica Mountains, Griffith Observatory, and the downtown skyline all the way to a view of Palos Verdes peninsula rising beyond Los Angeles International Airport.

Here, a most exciting set of tee complexes awaits the golfer. The teeing grounds shared between the 11th and 16th holes encompass ten different tees that may be interchanged to vary the line of play and strategy for either hole. Thus the 11th may be played as either a short 295 yard par four or a par three with varying angles and distances (166 yards to 277 yards) to the reverse redan green complex. The 16th may be played with various distances and doglegs from a straight shot down the fairway or at a 20-degree angle that forces the player to fly the tee shot over a deep pitch to carry the fairway.

Finally, the golfers are directed to the crescendo of strong par four finishing holes, the 16th through the 18th. The 16th with its dangerous tee shot, the 17th with its fusillade of bunkers, and the 18th which, despite the girth of its fairways, requires two precisely struck shots to carry the dual cross bunkers. Clearly the golfer must save the best for last in closing out the round.

One of the last initiatives of Gil Hanse was an ode to architect George C. Thomas to re-establish the old 17th, a short par three that played a key role in the final round of the 1926 Los Angeles Open. This hole, designed by W. Herbert Fowler and built by the Captain in 1920-21, was coined the "105 yard terror" in accounts of the tournament, and upended many of the professionals playing in the tournament (one noted professional carded an eight with seven putts). As a consequence, old 17th was abandoned in Thomas' sweeping changes to the Fowler design in 1927, despite the fact that it was one of the Captain's favorite holes. Fortunately, the site remained untouched until 2010, save for the trees and brush growing upon it, so it was not difficult to rebuild the green to the its original contours, and to the same specifications as all the other greens on the North Course. Although not part of the regular course setup, this hole may be used as a betting hole, as part of a tournament horse race or even as a 19th hole for the pleasure of the membership.

On the back page we have listed the Committee members and others who richly deserve the thanks of the membership in renovating a classic championship course that affords challenging play for all levels of golfers. But in a larger sense, the successful renovation of the North Course is very much a product of all of our members, who participated in a meaningful discourse that culminated in broad support for the project. We can all take pride in the accomplishment that is our storied North Course.

Robert E. Cope

RESTORING THE NORTH COURSE

By GIL HANSE AND GEOFF SHACKELFORD

After the 1932 death of George C. Thomas Jr., the *Los Angeles Daily Express* noted that he "was the idol of The Los Angeles Country Club and had come, to a certain extent, to take the place of the late Edward B. Tufts as that club's most prominent member."

Remembered as a father figure who greeted golfers every Saturday morning on the putting green, Captain Thomas' legacy will always be defined by his devotion to improving the Club's golf courses.

The amateur golf architect, rose hybridizer and decorated World War I captain first became associated with LACC's design after joining the Club in 1920. As a founding member of Pine Valley who had designed three courses on his own, Thomas was enlisted to supervise construction of English architect Herbert Fowler's North and South Course renovations.

During a remarkable 10 year-stretch, he authored the seminal book on course design, Golf Course Architecture in America, and with partner William P. "Billy" Bell and crafted some of the greatest works in the history of golf architecture. Each new course, starting with Santa Barbara's La Cumbre and the Ojai Valley Inn layout, grew more eye-opening in their aesthetic beauty, engineering marvel, bold strategy and use of natural hazards.

Upon completing the daring Bel-Air Country Club design in 1926 and the masterful Riviera Country Club in 1927, Thomas turned his attention to updating LACC's two courses, noting that the time was right to "produce a test of golf with supreme diversity, but also one which would contain the latest developments in design and construction."

He planned to transform Fowler's geometric bunkering into the looser-edged, nature-inspired look that defined his co-designs with Bell. The duo also planned to take full advantage of the many wonderful natural features to give the courses a distinctly Southern California feel, while also creating better drainage during our infrequent but heavy winter rains.

But most of all, Thomas would inject much needed strategy that he believed was the "soul of the game." Included in his renovated North layout was his revolutionary "courses within the course" concept of creating alternate tees and hole locations that Thomas saw as a revolutionary way to provide "supreme variation" for member play.

After several months of construction in the fall of 1927 and ending in the spring of 1928, four new holes and extensive renovations to all other holes debuted in the fall. Thomas declared: "There will be no easy par holes on the new course. There will be a great variety of shots for expert and beginner alike. It will surpass Ojai, Riviera or any other of my former courses. I expect it may be my last."

In the years since his passing, Captain Thomas has become considered as one of the game's master architects alongside the likes of Alister MacKenzie, A.W. Tillinghast and Donald Ross. While most of his courses with Bell have been altered, the bones of his renovated North Course remained very much intact, a tribute to the Club.

This Commemorative publication reveals many of the 2010 North Course improvements while lending insight in hopes of adding to your golfing experience. But most of all, we hope this serves as a tribute to an ingenious design, one we have been honored to help recapture.



George C. Thomas, Jr.

1ST HOLE

The change in North Course tee style will be apparent as you step off the concrete path, walk through turf paths between the beautiful roses, and commence your day on the tightly mown turf surrounding the first tee area. A large, artificially elevated box tee has given way to a lay-of-the-land with added flexibility. From the tee, the view down the fairway immediately reveals the evolved Thomas-Bell bunker styling that was a major component of the North Course renovation. Some elite players using the black tees might even find those bunkers to be in play thanks to added yardage. Another key improvement to the first can be found down the hole, where the fairway has been expanded over the far right fairway bunker leading into the green. This will allow golfers to take advantage of an artful approach constructed by Thomas and Bell that was previous cut as rough. By lowering the evolved bunker face, hole locations have been restored in the front and back left of the putting surface which still is deceptive in slope.



BEFORE



AFTER

2ND HOLE

The restoration of Thomas' and Bell's 2nd hole greensite returns Thomas' trademark starting concept of a relatively benign par-5 followed by a stern two-shotter. The greensite prior to the project, as seen here, was carefully located after removal of the eighth green complex, ultimately revealing the boundaries of the putting surface and even the remnants of old cup cuttings in the soil profile. The barranca look is a major component of this hole. Its aesthetic presentation will be an ongoing and evolving project, relying on a combination of man's hand, Mother Nature's touch and the aging of native plant material planted during construction. The goal is to present an irregular mix of sand and grass, with the ability to easily find a ball but with no guarantee of a simple recovery shot.



BEFORE



AFTER

RESTORING THE 2ND AND 8TH HOLES By Gil Hanse and Geoff Shackelford

To complete George Thomas' vision for the North, it was essential to restore the second and eighth holes. After healthy debate and much reflection, these two holes have returned to the North and coupled with the return of the sixth green, returns the front nine ebb-and-flow so ingeniously crafted during Thomas' and Billy Bell's 1927-28 redesign.

The original 2nd green sat just over the barranca and played as a long, difficult and slight dogleg-left par-4. Several members who recall playing the 2nd described it as one of the finest on the course and former USGA President Frank "Sandy" Tatum, who grew up playing the course, fondly remembers the 2nd as an "absolutely marvelous hole."



The old 2nd green circa 1934. Photo courtesy of USC.

Thomas' and Bell's par-5 eighth played some 30 yards shorter than its predecessor to a tiny green guarded by the current right side bunker and on the left by a grassy hollow and mounds. In restoring the eighth green in this era of hi-tech equipment, we have embellished the left greenside depression by making it a sand-filled tributary of the barranca, adding more challenge and intrigue with hopes of creating a tantalizing risk-reward par-5 in the vein of Augusta National's 13th hole. Though there will rarely, if ever, be water in this tributary, the same kind of uncertainty surrounding the lie one's ball may find in the hazard should only add to the decision-making drama of going for the green.

In between the restored 2nd and 8th greens, a dividing ridge has been restored to create a natural separation between the greens, with native grasses established to

soften the look of the hill while also reducing maintained turf.

The restored second retains the current flexibility, with projected Black Tee yardage ranging from 460-490 yards, with White Tee yardage from 400-430 and Red Tee yardage from 400-420 and playing as a par-5 for women. The restored eighth can stretch to 537 yards from a new back tee on the hill immediately behind the 5th tee, 504 yards from the White Tee and 484 yards from the new Red Tee.

We hope you will find that the restoration of these two holes accomplishes the following:

- Returns the unique ebb and flow to the front nine, presenting a varied mix of extremely challenging holes (2nd, 4th, 5th, 7th, 9th) and more accessible risk-reward holes susceptible to low scoring with good play (1st, 6th, 8th). Few nines in golf compare in terms of producing such a dramatic mix of difficulty and potential eagle opportunities.
- By restoring Thomas' and Bell's re-design, this makes LACC North the closest of their remaining creations to the original intent and perhaps the purest Golden Age era design in America (while also taking into account the modern game where necessary).
- Improves one of Captain Thomas' more ingenious design intentions: the opportunity to play short "loops" of holes. Besides the loops of 1-18, 10-16-9 and 10-16-17-18, players will more conveniently be able to play a four hole loop of 1-2-17-18 or a three-hole run of 1-2-9.
- Allows for the retention of the par-5 second green up the hill, adding a playing option and unique alternative in line with Thomas' "courses within the course" concept.
- Brings the barranca back into play, twice. The second green now features a heroic approach shot over sandy scrub. Indeed, the length of the second hole will force some to lay-up, but in match play situations we know this can quite often turn out to have been a fortuitous shift when your opponent is unable to carry the hazard as you take the more conservative play. For the eighth, a diagonal carry will be required if players are approaching from the tee side of the barranca. We anticipate recovery shots to be possible for this barranca tributary, though it will be a difficult shot with no guarantee of a decent lie.

Most of all, we sincerely hope these restored holes reflect the original designer's intent, as spelled out in *Golf Architecture in America*.

"The spirit of golf is to dare a hazard, and by negotiating it reap a reward, while he who fears or declines the issue of carry, has a longer or harder shot for his second, or his second or third on long holes; yet the player who avoids the unwise effort gains advantage over one who tries for more than in him lies, or fails under the test."

3RD HOLE

The 3rd green was restored to its original dimensions and contouring best seen from this angle. Note the extension of the putting surface's front left and right areas, creating the "molar" effect of the original Thomas and Bell green. With the restoration of these front hole locations, the tier behind the front center bunker was also returned to allow for putting from one front side to the other. While these are exciting new hole locations, keep an eye on back left and back right positions that have also been restored. They will reward drives placed on the corresponding fairway side with the best angle of attack. Drives up the right will have a nice view of the back left holes, and vice versa for back right cuppings. The tee has been extended 20 yards bringing the fairway slope and hazard more into play for elite players.



BEFORE



AFTER

This downhill par-3 has seen a return of a sandy hazard around the green, a return to the original Thomas-Bell bunker configuration and styling, and a slight shift of the tee toward the left to present a better view of the green. The teeing area has also been reconstructed to better fit the landscape. At the green, note a restored front right hole location over the bunker and the conversion of the back left hillside to native grasses for less long-term maintenance and improved aesthetics. A run-off at the back of the green makes for a challenging recovery for balls that have been hit long.



BEFORE



AFTER

5тн HOLE

The good news? The fifth fairway has been widened and trees removed to no longer obstruct views of the right half of the green. The bad news? The fifth remains extremely long and no less demanding. Besides removal of non-natives down the right side, the green has been restored to its Thomas-Bell configuration with expanded hole locations in the front left and right. Two non-original greenside bunkers were removed and replaced with fairway approach. As outlined by Captain Thomas, a new forward tee has been constructed for an alternative option as a mid-length par-4 playing to the difficult front right hole location.



BEFORE



AFTER

RESTORING THE 6TH HOLE BY GIL HANSE AND GEOFF SHACKELFORD

When the North Course project commenced on February 1, 2010, one of the more exciting challenges was the opportunity to return the sixth hole to its original green site. Little did we know the process would turn into an archaelogical dig! First, a little background.

Every great course in the world features at least one par-4 under 350 yards allowing for multiple playing options. Designed with an eye toward risk and reward, these devilish little two-shotters accomplish one very simple axiom, as so eloquently written by George Thomas in *Golf Architecture In America*.

"The strategy of golf is the thing which gives the short accurate player a chance with a longer hitter who cannot control his direction or distance."

With that in mind, it was decided to rebuild the sixth green in its original location until it was eliminated in the late 1960's, six feet below and to the left of the hole's most recent rendition. (A well-intentioned attempt at restoring Thomas' original green and bunker design, but in a location better suited for the difficult growing conditions.) However, with the elimination of non-native trees and shrubbery, leaving only the glorious oak trees as the focal point, turf growing conditions should improve and the green could now be returned to its original position.

Little did we know it was sitting there all along.

Golf course construction contractor Geoff Porteus' team featured many talented men, none more essential to the project's success than Adelino Vierra. He is masterful on the excavating machine used for many purposes, including soil removal on the sixth green site. Armed with just a few photos, we set about situating the sixth green in its original location.

Upon deconstructing the existing sixth's USGA green mix and substructure, Porteus and Vierra began the process of shifting soil from the proposed new sixth green site up the hillside. As they were removing the soil, these veterans of golf construction began to notice subtle shifts in soil color and texture changes. There were the topsoils and clays first noticed and separated, then bright white sand emerged. Careful digging by Adelino found more and more sand until it



The restored sixth green today.

was obvious based on old photographs that we had stumbled on the old sixth hole's back bunker, fully intact with 1960's era sand! This was soon followed by the discovery of an odd gray and moist soil layer that must have been the old putting surface, soon followed by more careful digging that revealed the fronting bunker. Before we knew it, the old sixth green emerged. Few golf course contractors would have been able to detect such subtle differences and as architects we were tremendously grateful for the detail-rich approach by Hawkshaw since it left us with no questions about what Thomas and Bell had constructed. They literally unearthed the original sixth green.

Once the green's outline was determined, we went about the process of analyzing the few old photographs in our possession

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while studying video of the early 1960's challenge match involving Jack Nicklaus, Arnold Palmer, Gary Player, and Phil Rodgers. We learned a few things about the green contours along with other elements related to the dimensions and contours of the 3,732 square foot green. Prior to construction, other decisions had been made to restore the original fairway dimensions to the hole in order to provide as many options as possible.

The result, we believe, will be a hole that gives "the short accurate player a chance with a longer hitter who cannot control his direction or distance."

Your playing options are many and varied, we believe.

- A very simple straight away play down the fairway will leave a difficult second shot to most hole locations. Drives can go 275 yards before reaching trouble. The further down the fairway, the better the angle to approach the green, much as the player who lays up far left at Riviera's tenth receives an optimum angle. But this goes against most golfing instincts as you are seemingly taking a longer route to the hole when a more tempting shorter route exists. Which is precisely why we believe the sixth will be so much fun to play.
- Players with a little more distance in their game--after making sure the green is clear--can take a straight crack at the putting surface. This shortens the hole to about 300 yards but also brings a world of trouble into play. A small apron of fairway may allow for drives to roll onto the green, but they must be struck very accurately as contouring will deflect the slightly imprecise shot. Also, those driving the green will want to make sure to have scouted out the hole location from the fifth fairway as some flagstick positions may reward a layup tee shot more than others.

It remains to be seen how various hole locations will play, but we believe those on the far left and center of the green sandwiched between hazard and backslope will be best approached from the main landing area, while those on the right side of the green will be most susceptible to those driving the green or players laying up well down the main fairway.

We believe these options will yield many birdies and also plenty of big scores to careless players. Furthermore, the sixth hole's place as an option-filled, risk-reward hole, in between a very long par-4 and testing par-3, restores the ebb-and-flow to Captain Thomas' wonderful front nine vision. Coupled with the more difficult second hole as a par-4 and the shorter, more perilous par-5 eighth, the front features three holes with risk-reward elements that give both short and long hitters reward for skillful play. In other words, the North features more strategy. Which, as Captain Thomas so famously wrote, "is the soul of the game."



The old 6th green begins to emerge during construction.



The back bunker, mostly intact after having been covered in the late 1960s, is exposed by Adelino Vierra.



View from the fairway end prior to restoration.



View from the fairway end after restoration. Drives reaching the end of the fairway are rewarded with an optimum angle of approach to the long, slender green.

The hole is viewed here before and after from the new optional par-4 tee that is to be used on occasion with a restored back right hole location as part of Captain Thomas' courses within the course. Note the removal of non-native pines to accentuate the attractive oak savannah on this portion of the property. The hazard area has been planted with natives and has also seen slight reconfiguration to better handle extreme winter rains while also retaining a sandy look. For golfers looking to gain an edge, the fairway has been expanded up the slope leading into the left hand portion of the green, allowing a well struck shot to roll onto the green of this demanding one-shotter.



BEFORE



AFTER

The final component of restoring Thomas' and Bell's vital risk-reward holes remains a par-5, but one that elite players may find more tempting to have a go at in two shots. However, they had better be precise as the small green places a great premium on accuracy and can easily swing the advantage in a match toward the player who has struck two solid shots and faces a short approach. Historic photographs displayed a hazard left of the green but in a nod to changes in the game, that tributary of the barranca has been embellished to add a bit more peril. Players will also note subtle changes at the tee, where new back and forward tees have been installed, and in the landing area where sycamores have been trimmed to reward well struck tee shots with a reasonable look at the fairway for their next shot.



BEFORE



AFTER

9тн HOLE

Players will notice the most dramatic green contour changes on this wonderful par-3. Employing old photos, the original shape and contours of the putting surface were restored to re-introduce the many intriguing hole location options built into the original. Note the restoration of the bunkering, with the faces lowered after years of flying sand had left too much build up that encroached into valuable green square footage. This is most evident with the right bunker, which had eliminated upper right shelf hole locations and a front right position that may be the most difficult on this revitalized one-shotter. The tee has also been expanded slightly left for a better view of these restored positions and for more versatility.



BEFORE



AFTER

THE THOMAS COURSES

By GIL HANSE AND GEOFF SHACKELFORD

When George Thomas authored the seminal Golf Architecture in America in 1927, he suggested that his designs and those of counterparts like A.W. Tillinghast and Alister MacKenzie would someday be seen as primitive.

"The question of strategy is of the utmost importance to the golf architect and to the golfer, and such strategy will be developed more and more during the coming years."

When Thomas reconstructed the North Course, he hoped to inject some strategic unpredictability by establishing "courses within the course." Captain Thomas felt this idea of "supreme diversity" within each hole would add great interest to playing the course and prevent it from ever becoming predictable.

The most notable examples of this can be found on the fifth, seventh and eighteenth holes, where Thomas created hole locations specific to tee placement. In the case of the fifth, a forward tee would correspond with a far right hole location, while on the seventh, a back corner hole restored during the 2010 project is specific to the new par-4 tee as outlined by Thomas. The restored back left hole location on the 18th is designed for times the hole is played as a short par-5.

While the concept of altering par on a daily basis might seem difficult due to handicap and course rating issues for stroke play competition, four "courses within the course" as outlined by Thomas, can easily be given a rating by the SCGA and used on special occasions to add interest, challenge and grill room fodder for the Club's variety of competitions.

For golfers hoping to get a flavor of the options built into the North Course, an optional scorecard is available under the banner of "The Thomas Course." A men's and women's set of yardages has been designed to offer an alternative playing of the North that should appeal to those looking for just the kind of variety envisioned by Captain Thomas, including the playing of the restored second hole as a short par-5 and the seventh hole from the new optional par-4 tee. The scorecards are available from the golf course starter.

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North Course

➡AED Locations: Clubhouse at Front Desk; Driving Range Office; North Course, between holes ₱7 and ₱13. Emergency phones located on holes ₱5 and ₱14 tee boxes. All members should thoroughly familiarize themselves with the "CUIDELINES FOR GOLF PLAY".

PLAYIf a group fails to keep its place and loses more than one clear hole on the players in front, it **must** allow the following group to pass.

CARTS

Comply with the 90 degree Rule as posted on the 1st tee of each course.

Non-compliance with cart rules will result in disciplinary action. Keep proper distance from tees, greens and wet areas. No carts beyond yellow lines.

OTHER

OTHER

of Trees: Relief must be taken from the entire tree, not just the stake.
Relief must be taken from all prepared planting beds. Rule 25 lb.
Embedded ball rule 'through the green.'

All decomposed granite cart paths are obstructions.
Carry a rules book at all times. aked Trees: Relief must be tak

place divots. Please smooth tracks in bunkers, d enter and leave from rear of bunkers. U.S.G.A. rules apply at all times.

10тн HOLE

This par-4 has seen several features restored, starting with the tee complex returning to one mown area tying into the clubhouse lawn look for a more elegant feel as you walk off of the ninth green. The tight-mown look also allowed for a back tee to be added for select events such as the Men's Club Championship, restoring the risk and reward for those able to just get their drive to the fairway downslope. The fairway has been expanded off the tee for functional and aesthetic purposes, and also reconnected with the sixteenth hole as seen in historic photographs. Bunkering has been given the Thomas-Bell styling while the green features a restored back left hole location.

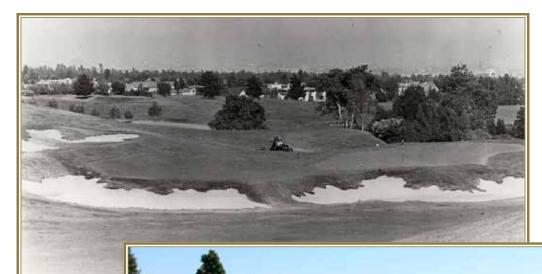


BEFORE



AFTER

This dramatic one-shotter and reverse Redan hole remains essentially as it was before. The shift from box tees to free form has improved visibility of the restored front bunkers while creating new playing options for both the eleventh and the par-4 sixteenth hole. An optional par-4 tee has also been installed for the 11th, stretching the hole to nearly 300 yards for occasional match play diversity. The historic photo below was used to restore the many intricate shapes to the fronting bunkers, with some expanded to give the appearance of age and evolution. The green was expanded several paces in the front and back right to return lost hole locations.



Circa 1929



BEFORE

Don't be fooled by what appears to be merely a cosmetic improvement to the bunkers: the 12th features several restored hole locations and more length for those braving the black tee markers. Pay particular attention to the approach, which has been narrowed back to the slim opening created by Thomas and Bell. A restored front hole location has been brought back to toy with the golfer's depth perception. Other restored hole locations on the left and right fronts of this magnificent putting surface figure to add more intrigue as well.



BEFORE



AFTER

RE-IMAGINING THE TEES

By GIL HANSE AND GEOFF SHACKELFORD

Golfers will notice a new look and feel to the North Course tees, a result of reconstructed tee complexes, a shift in design philosophy, and finally, new tee markers inspired by early course photos. Each of these changes was developed in conjunction with club committees to help improve the North's overall "walk in the park" feel.

New Tee Markers

Since LACC has some of the most distinctive flagsticks in the world of golf, it was decided that the North should re-open with tee markers reflecting the craftsmanship and individuality of these wonderful homemade flagsticks. It's been a southern California tradition to employ distinctive tee markers, whether it's Wilshire's painted drill-bits donated by member Howard Hughes, or Riviera's painted-over shotputs employed during its days of Los Angeles Athletic Club partnership.

Old photographs from the North revealed mini-replicas of the Club's world-renowned and instantly identifiable logo incorporated into markers. It was with this concept in mind that a return inspired by those markers was developed. The Club's in-house craftsmen, Umberto Sanchez Sr. and Nicholas Negrete, took several ideas and put together prototypes which, like the flagsticks, could be homemade. The goal was to provide a distinct-looking marker hearkening to the old version, while updating it to include stylings from the Club's logo.

Superintendent Russ Myers points out that the new markers do not kill turf underneath them if left in the same position, saving precious manpower on days the North is closed for maintenance.

New Colors

The colors most associated with the Club, either via its logo or flagsticks, were used for the new tees. Instead of blue, black is now the back tee color followed by white, red, and for the new forward set of tees, green.

New Benches And Fountain Covers

With the project's tree removal, ways were sought to recycle the wood harvested from select redwoods and sycamores. It was determined that enough redwood was culled to resurface the lockers while the sycamore could be used to craft new course benches. Seaborn Design of Santa Barbara set up a milling workstation on the property to prepare the wood. Working alongside them was golf course manager Joe Meyer, who has crafted distinctive new benches to add a more rustic appeal while better blending benches into the landscape. Also note the new redwood drinking fountain adornments recycled and crafted in-house by Negrete and Sanchez.

Tee Shapes

Elevated box tees became associated with classic courses during the late 1990s, but a look at old photographs of George Thomas and Billy Bell constructed courses reveal simpler, "free form" tees that meld more into the ground level around the teeing area. Nearly all of the North tees were lowered slightly while the shapes were made quieter and simpler. The main change golfers will notice is the softening of the elevated corners that have become synonymous with the "box" tee look.

Also emphasizing the "walk in the park" feel meant adding more short grass area around greens and leading into tees. Besides the new tightly-mown lawn area in front of the clubhouse and enveloping the first tee, golfers will notice these transitions from green to tee at seven holes. In other areas cart paths have been shifted or changed to the more rustic surface, always with walkers in mind.

The return to the free-form tee style also allows for more flexibility in the course setup, something Captain Thomas preached and which we believe, along with the aforementioned improvements, will only elevate joy of walking and playing the North.



The new white tee markers.



Rustic benches made out of sycamore recycled from the project can be found throughout the North.



 $The \ North's \ previous \ square \ tees.$



The new tee style post-renovation.

13тн HOLE

This long par-4 has seen the return of a wider landing area which puts a premium on drives placed down the leftside by rewarding such precision with a view of the putting surface. A new vista includes Bel-Air and Benedict Canyon as well as a wonderful stone pine right of the green. Tight turf left of the 13th green runs down into the 14th tee. The left greenside bunker, not part of Captain Thomas' original, has been removed and replaced by a small hillock seen in historic photographs. With the green's deceptive tilt from left to right, golfers missing left of the green will continue to face a difficult up-and-down.

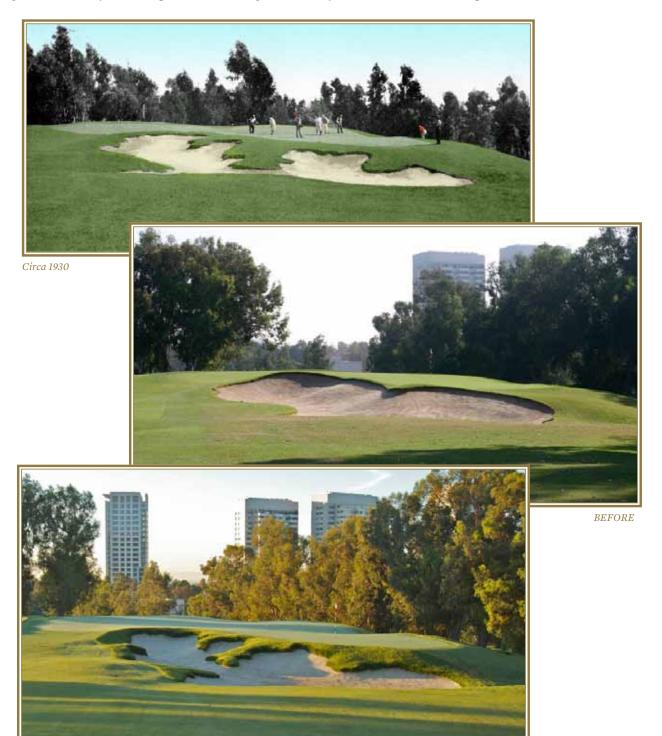


BEFORE



AFTER

The restoration has emphasized the line of play moving closer to the cork oaks guarding the right side of the fairway. The renovated bunkers guarding the layup area disguise the swale that routes imprecise layup shots into the oak trees. This is where the restoration project benefitted from an excellent historic ground shot. Note the boundaries of the green complex and the rear-center dip, as well as a similar rightside change in the green profile. These had been lost over time and were recaptured. The fronting bunker built up over time and was lowered, with shapes and styling to reflect the "evolved" Thomas-Bell look. The front right hole location has also been restored, as has the front left to add even more intrigue to an already fantastic par-5. Also, George Thomas-hybridized roses have been planted next to the tee.



AFTER

Though different aesthetically, many of the 15th's best attributes were saved or even heightened in the restoration process. The tee is now one large surface for all tee placements, with the foreground area between tee and green becoming an extension of the oak, which was converted into a mulch and fescue area diverting irrigation that will improve the long-term prospects of this beautiful specimen. The bunkers have been restored to their original dimensions, extended to the right to guard the newly extended green. Rear bunkers have also been restored to their original and wonderfully eccentric configuration. And the hole's defining feature, the large bump in the center of the putting surface, has been restored to its original size. With the lowering of the evolved front bunker faces, golfers will now have a view of their ball landing and playing off of this distinctive bump.



BEFORE

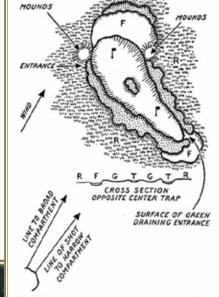


AFTER

15TH HOLE BUMP

Besides recovering several lost hole locations, a priority here was to recapture the full essence of the 15th hole's "bump." The story behind this unique feature has never been clear, and photographic evidence only adds to the

intrigue. Originally, Captain Thomas sketched out a bunker in the middle of the green in an article published in *Golfdom* Magazine. All but one aerial photograph confirms that the bunker was not constructed during the North Course renovation in 1927-28, however, one photo shows a large patch of white where the bump sits. It could be a bunker or it could simply have been a sign of difficulty growing turf on top of the bump. Adding to the intrigue is the recollection of longtime member Greg Kelly, a fine player whose nephew, Bo Hirsch, confirmed that Mr. Kelly still remembers playing the hole when there was sand in the center of the green. During this year's project, while the green was torn up, a search was made for any remnants of sand even though it most likely would have been removed when the greens were reconstructed in 1996. Either way, the bump has become a beloved feature of the hole and every attempt was made to restore its luster. Also note that a similar feature was incorporated into the Club putting green to spice up putting contests and to allow members to mimic putts they may face on the glorious little 15th green.



No. 15. Los Angeles Country club. Green divided by trap into two compartments. The shot may be to either part of green—a rather short mashle niblick pitch with traps short and over a fairly long mashle with safety just beyond by reason of fairway. By raising green at sides and elevating trap in green it is possible to put from any part of either section to cup in other section. Slant from side of green near tee should be slight to avoid skidding forward of pitch. Slant at far side may be bold to holp hold pitch exceet where green is wide. One tee gives proper diversity.



BEFORE



AFTER

Several significant "under the hood" modifications were made here, yet these photos hopefully illustrate that this wonderful hole appears very similar to its pre-restoration look. The tee has been reformulated to eliminate the boxed look, allowing for more flexibility and gentler impact aesthetically so that the focus becomes the beautiful terrain of the sixteenth fairway. Trees down the left side were removed to expose the dramatic terrain. Fairway down the right side replaces pines and tall rough and connects the hole to the tenth in an homage to the Old Course. The fairway bunker was moved approximately 25 yards down the fairway, which, combined with optional back tees, returns it as a hazard for elite players to reckon with while giving the middle-handicapper a little more landing area room. This green has also seen a significant increase in square footage, adding several intriguing hole locations in the back and front right areas.



BEFORE



AFTER

Though undoubtedly a favorite of most, the 17th's many cosmetic changes should only further highlight the beauty of this standout hole. While the tee complex has been dramatically reconfigured to lessen the impact of a cart path, the angle and view remains the same. There is still great reward for drives placed down the center or right to open up the magnificent green complex that has seen two subtle changes. The most noticeable is the restoration of a fourth greenside bunker down on the left edge and the closest hazard on the property to a "pot" bunker. The second restorative change players may notice comes at the putting surface, which has been reduced slightly in size at the back left quadrant to match historic photographs. Golfers may also note the return of a "saddle" on the back edge of the putting surface, as well as an expanded front portion of the putting surface with another saddle and nearby barranca adding great interest to front cuppings. The reduction of undergrowth on the western hillside will allow for better turf growing conditions and more afternoon light highlighting the stately sycamores which play such a major role on the penultimate hole.



BEFORE



AFTER

LITTLE 17 - RECLAIMING A PIECE OF GOLF HISTORY By GIL HANSE AND GEOFF SHACKELFORD



Play in the 1926 Los Angeles Open.

When George Thomas supervised the North Course's construction for Herbert Fowler from 1921-22, "The Captain" was a new club member after having moved from Philadelphia in search of a better rose hybridizing climate. Among the holes built on that version of the North was a short, 121-yard 17th hole cut into the hillside. The tiny and treacherous little hole sat west of today's glorious 17th, the penultimate par-4 green created when Thomas and Billy Bell revamped the North in late 1927.

Architect Robert Hunter, in his classic book *The Links*, featured a photo of the hole and labeled the green "picturesque situated," but suggested the green slope was "too pronounced." How-

ever, Little 17 hole was legendary in southern California circles for its devilish but alluring nature and immortalized by a Santa Ana-wind induced course setup brouhaha during the inaugural 1926 Los Angeles Open.

When Thomas moved ahead with the North Course renovation, he left the old 17th greens' bones intact. Over the years shrubbery and even an oak tree overtook part of the surface area, yet it remained for any keen observer of golf history to point out. In his epic tome, *Golf Architecture In America*, Thomas penned succinct passages on all topics, yet one elicited more words and passion than any other: Little 17.

In the "Strategy of Golf Courses" chapter, Thomas devotes an extensive section to the hole and we share it with you here:

The ability of players to understand the simple strategy of a hole is undoubted, but too often they play blindly and do not consider their best lines. On other holes where the strategy is more involved, the player does not so often discover his best line until he has played the course several times.

Once in a very important championship, I placed on the left-hand narrow side of a small one-shot green. The shot was a pitch, and near the narrow shelf where the flag waved, there was danger both in front and behind the green; and to hold the ball near the flag required a superlative shot. On the day of this medal round there was a gale of wind from right to left, and the green, which had been in fine condition the evening before, dried out during the night from this strong dry wind/ When the play commenced there was only one safe line for that hole, which was to pitch to the right of the flag in the widened center of the green, where a shot of ordinary merit would hole. Yet in spite of these danger signals near the pin, man after man in the championship played straight for it. Only a few thought enough about the speed of the ground to try the center path of safety.

As the day advanced, and the wind continued, and many feet tramped the green, it increased in pace, and the difficulties which players encountered on it caused the news of its dangers to spread, until soon a large gallery washed from above the green. The thing became exaggerated. One man, a noted expert, missed the shot completely, playing far to the right of the green and behind a large tree. His second was over the green, and he did not reach the putting surface until his fourth effort, after which you for part of the green and total an eight. The score was quoted and the slopes of the green blamed for the existing uncommon condition.

As the play continued, very few use their heads on that hole that windy day, for as the news spread, and they heard about the small green and the terrible sloping high scores, and the tricky conditions, the advancing players showed their nervousness very plainly, and the gallery above did not help them.

continued next page...

TOURNAMENT PLAY

BY JIM SCHAEFFER, DIRECTOR OF GOLF

With the restoration that's taken place, The Los Angeles Country Club's North Course is a visionary masterpiece. These overall changes have not only allowed us aesthetic benefits, but also an ability to play the course in a variety of ways.

We are now able to create different pin and tee placements that literally change each hole and challenge the golfer differently for tournaments or daily play. Imagine if you will the variations that are possible on holes 5, 7, 11, 14, 16, 18. Based upon yardages and placement, a Par 3 can become a Par 4, or you can change the level of difficulty for any particular hole. Imagine the 5th Hole as a short Par 4, playing 363 yards, with the pin tucked in a short front right position. Although the approach shot will likely be with a more lofted club, a golfer will need to decide to go for the pin and face the penalties for a missed shot or use more club, aim left to increase the chance to make par. This variety is unique in many of the holes and will enable us diversity in which to play the golf course.

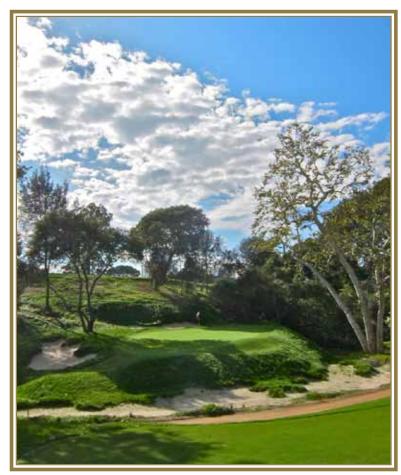
Our famous North Course is breathtakingly better than it's ever been. Unparalleled in its design and beauty, the North Course is unique in its ability to transform our daily round of golf into a variety of challenges that makes us grow as golfers and provides discovery and enjoyment in our games.

continued from previous page...

One man came late. He was a fine, cool, calculating golfer. I watched him rather fearfully, because everyone was finding fault with the sloped green which I had built, and the flag that I had placed. Would this man also fail to play the safe line and ruin his chance to make the winning score, thereby adding more criticism to a green which was very difficult that day, under most exceptional conditions, but which normally played well?

No! Gracefully and confidently he played his pitch close to the center of the green, and then, to make assurance doubly sure he did not take a chance of over-running the cup with the heavy wind behind his ball, and slipping down the slope beyond, he saw the increasing speed of the green and deliberately short putted on his second, laid his third absolutely stone dead, and then dropped the ball in for a 4. I never admired McDonald Smith so much as when he proved to that crowd of golfers that the uncommon and tricky conditions existing could be met by the man who played with his head as well as his hands.

In restoring the North Course, Little 17 has been returned as a unique historical tribute to the Fowler-Thomas version of the North, and most of all for the membership to enjoy as an option during late afternoon or tournament exhibition play. Or, perhaps some other tradition employing Little 17 will develop. Just be careful of those downhill putts on Santa Ana wind days.



A view of the restored 17th.

The closing hole's tees have been reconfigured to present more playing options for all levels of play and as a response to the restoration of the front greenside bunker, converted back into one hazard (from three) and once again extending into the fairway as it did in the original Thomas-Bell configuration. Non-native trees have been removed to open up views of the clubhouse and to reconnect the first and eighteenth fairways. The effect has been to make the green appear smaller in a more vast landscape. However, new "wings" in the back left and right have expanded the hole location options. The rear left location should only be used when the hole plays as a short par-5 in a "courses within the course" configuration or if the par-4 tees are moved up significantly. In any configuration this figures to be a stern and captivating finish to the round.



BEFORE



AFTER

MAKING THE OLD NEW

BY RUSS MYERS, DIRECTOR OF GOLF COURSES & GROUNDS

"In golf course construction art and utility meet; both are absolutely vital; one is utterly ruined without the other." – George Thomas

Balancing the unique architectural vision of the North Course Restoration and the functionality necessary to sustain its design details well into the future, could not have been better stated than by Captain Thomas himself. Archived photos, written documents and physical unearthing of land forms provided the framework for a finished product which reflects a time long past. This work will be maintained so that it can be enjoyed for decades to come by incorporating technological advancements and knowledge acquired since Thomas' day. The North Course project provided a unique opportunity for "art and utility" to meet.

The process of excavating greens cavities and locating old bunkers made it quite apparent that the Captain and his ingenious construction supervisor Billy Bell, were ahead of their time. We found the use of clay tile drainage in herringbone patterns, chosen materials for bunker sand and the original placement of land forms which left the many parties involved in reconstructing the North Course wondering how they understood the challenges of maintenance so well. The overall lack of tinkering with the original design is no doubt a reflection of Thomas' ability to find the balance between "art and utility."



Subsurface drip irrigation installed to help with the fescue bunker grassing.



Subsurface Hydronics installation on the putting green.

Implementing the technology and practices which have evolved since the days when animals mowed grass can exist in many forms. Advancements in maintenance continue to attempt to solve the same challenges Thomas and Bell faced. Therefore, completing the restoration provided the opportunity to advance or modernize the course in ways which will allow us to achieve the "art" desired in returning the course to a reflection of how Captain Thomas intended it to be played. Here is a little background on some of the improvements we've made.

Greens. The process of blowing air through the drainage system of USGA greens began in the mid 1980's. Over the past 25 years it has evolved to provide a useful tool to superintendents for water removal and oxygenation of the roots without traditional core aerification. In order to make the most of this practice, the greens drainage system features larger drain tile, portable connections and check valves to maximize the amount of air which could be incorporated in the soil profile.

Bunkers. Tall Fescue areas on bunker surrounds and Fine Fescue stacked to create the bunker "lips," were the turf-grasses selected to reflect the distinctive style of architects Thomas and Bell. The chosen varieties can require more water than the Bermudagrass that predominates our fairways and roughs. The use of Drip irrigation provides the ability to irrigate these areas from below the turf, reducing the overall amount of water use and its run-off into bunkers.

Hydronics. The more a golf course Superintendent can control the environmental factors affecting the turf, the more successful they will be at providing top conditions. Controlling the temperature in the soil is tantamount to making rain stop. The Los Angeles Country Club is the first entire course in North America to install tubing in the greens profile which can be used to control the temperature in the greens. "Hydronics" follows the same principels as radiant heating and air-conditioning in a home, where you use a heat pump or chiller to run temperature controlled water through the tubing in the soil. Changing the temperature can eliminate loss of turf due to high summertime temperatures, reduce recovery time from aerification in cooler months and potentially provide optimal growing conditions which make it easier to manage poa annua from greens.

Cart Roads. Another goal of the project was to reduce the amount of asphalt and concrete on cart paths to achieve a more rustic appearance consistent with the overall emphasis on returning naturalness to the North. This provided an opportunity to implement the use of Decompressed Granite with a binding agent. This material provides the aesthetic characteristics more in line with the architectural vision, eliminates many situations where walkers had to walk across concrete paths, while still handling the functional requirements of heavy vehicles and cart traffic.

Landscape Management. Historic photos show that when George Thomas looked out over the North Course, what he saw was much different from that which existed prior to the restoration. Vista's which included snow-capped mountains, views of the surrounding hills, downtown Los Angeles and even the South Bay, had been replaced by 80 years of tree plantings and their growth. While some of this growth is welcome for aesthetic beauty and by providing necessary privacy from surroundings, other areas of non-native trees choked off incredible views, playability challenges in depth perception, alternate routes to playing holes and ultimately damaged playing surfaces by inflicting shade. Targeted tree removals accomplished more for the health of the turf than any other aspect of the project, while still maintaining the feeling of a mature golf course.

THANK YOU TO ALL OF THE PEOPLE INVOLVED



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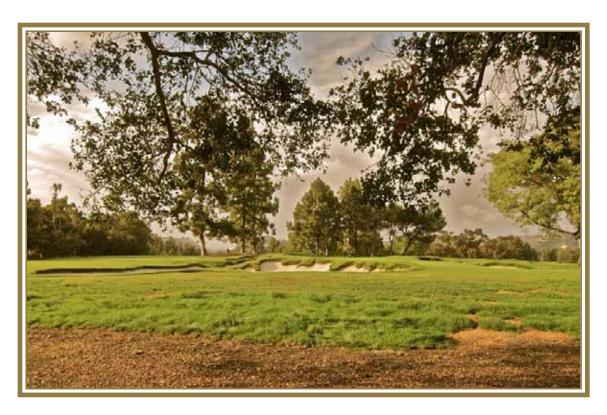
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"There will be no easy par holes on the new course. There will be a great variety of shots for expert and beginner alike. It will surpass Ojai, Riviera or any other of my former courses. I expect it will be my last."- George C. Thomas, Jr.

NORTH COURSE COMMEMORATIVE EDITION

EDITOR IN CHIEF: KIRK O. REESE
ASSOCIATE EDITOR: CATHERINE MATHIS
DESIGN: ASHLEY NIERMAN
PHOTOGRAPHY: GEOFF SHACKELFORD

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Nor	th	Course

The Bos Angeles Country Club

Thomas Courses

	В	L	W	R	R	W	L	R	В			В	R	W	R	W	В	R	W	R				
Men's Thomas Tees 72.7/136	544	491	375	186	420	320	290	484	181	3291	INT	383	197	362	412	532	133	420	412	371	3222	6513		
Par	5	5	4	3	4	4	4	5	3	37		4	3	4	4	5	3	4	4	4	35	72		
Handicap	11	3	7	15	1	9	17	5	13			12	16	14	2	10	18	4	6	8				
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The Bos Angeles Country Club

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The Bos Angeles Country Club

Men's Card

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Red	70.2/131	494	419 474	363	186	420	292	205	484	153	3016		362	197	358	412	499	104	420	350	371	3073	6089		
White	72.4/135	509	428 493	375	199	440	320	219	504	165	3159		374	225	362	431	532	121	437	412	413	3307	6466		
Black	74.6/139	544	484 534	400	210	483	335	242	537	181	3416	INT	383	249	388	468	598	133	469	455	451	3594	7010		

North Course

The Bos Angeles Country Club

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Par		5	5	4	3	5	4	3	5	3	37		4	3	4	5	5	3	5	4	4	37	74		
Red	78.7/143	494	419 474	363	186	420	292	205	484	153	3016		362	197	358	412	499	104	420	350	371	3073	6089		
White	80.4/151	509	428 493	377	195	440	320	219	504	166	3158	INT	374	228	362	431	532	121	437	412	413	3310	6468		