



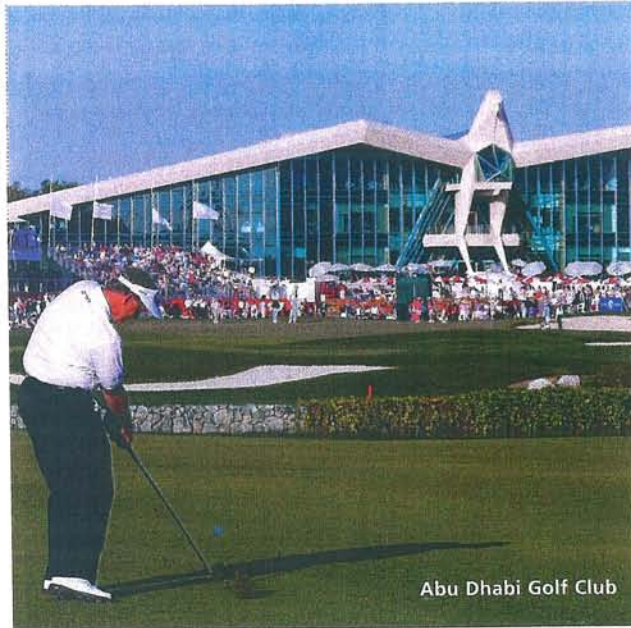
from the designer's desk

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whose design anyway?

There has recently been a strange phenomena among the leaders of the established golf clubs. Whereas most people in private golf clubs revere traditions, these leaders are allowing the tearing down of the elegant architecture of their own clubhouses. These buildings, which have been enjoyed for generations, are being replaced by new, functional ones that include a workout gymnasium and modern decor. Refreshing decor is always a topic when fashions change but to knock down entire buildings and disrupt the club operation for years, only to have a new restaurant facility which is barely financially viable, is excessive. Those who push for a completely new structure often use the need to correct some perceived or technical deficiency in the current clubhouse as an excuse. To repair these defects would be a small fraction of the cost of replacing the entire structure.

These efforts have burdened the members with large assessments and debts not in keeping with the values of the game of golf itself. Any monies required of the membership would be better invested in new irrigation or drainage systems or maintenance equipment needed to keep the golf course at a five-star playing experience. In the Silicon Valley of California or the tourist economy of the Miami, Florida area, clubs which have undertaken new clubhouses, have altered their membership character based on wealth alone.



But in Europe, old chateaux are often restored to serve as the clubhouses for new golf courses. Around Lake Geneva, Switzerland, the Club de Bonmont, the Bossey GC and the Domaine Impérial GC are all such restorations. Therefore, the golf course is designed to begin and end at these worthy old buildings.

In Abu Dhabi, Dubai and in Asia, clubhouses are huge monuments to show off new wealth. In the USA, the new or replaced clubhouses are often generic knockoff of a Southern plantation style building, long "gone with the wind". In Scotland and Ireland, the clubhouses at even the most famous venues are not much more than a good bar and simple changing rooms. The old clubhouse of this year's British Open Championship, Carnoustie, is a good example. Why not let the golf course architecture inspire the restrained elegant style of the clubhouse architecture which is there to serve the sports activities rather than the other way around? ■

quelle architecture?

Phénomène récurrent... Alors qu'ailleurs on respecte la tradition, ici ou là on casse d'élégants club-houses pour les remplacer par des installations modernes, une salle de gym ou un restaurant dont la rentabilité n'est même pas assurée. Les membres apprécient peu, la charge finissant par leur incomber. Cet argent servirait mieux la maintenance du parcours ou son amélioration pour lui garder son statut étoilé. Il en va ainsi en Californie ou en Floride, alors qu'en Europe, à l'inverse, on restaurerait plutôt des châteaux pour en faire de superbes club-houses. Par exemple, du côté du Lac Léman, les clubs de Bonmont, de Bossey et du Domaine Impérial illustrent bien ce fait.

A Abu Dhabi, Dubaï ou en Asie, les club-houses peuvent être d'énormes monuments à la gloire d'une nouvelle richesse. Aux Etats-Unis, un nouveau bâtiment peut prendre la place d'une vieille demeure de style sudiste. Mais en Ecosse ou en Irlande, le club-house est souvent fait d'un vieux bar accolé à un petit vestiaire comme à Carnoustie. Oui, le dessin du golf devrait toujours inspirer celui des club-houses tant ils sont d'abord là pour servir l'activité sportive et non l'inverse.