

# Aberdeen American News

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## LONG AND STRAIGHT

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### IPSWICH RESIDENTS PITCH IN THEMSELVES TO REFURBISH THEIR GOLF COURSE

IPSWICH --- It's easy to see that Ipswich residents love golf. Three of them were willing to stand out in the pouring rain to talk about their recently refurbished course.

Gary Bosanko, Leroy Kilber and Duane Perrion smiled through the downpour as they described the efforts some three dozen Ipswich folks took to make the town's course state of the art. The name was changed to Split Rock Country Club this spring. More than 20 acres have been added, and the layout of the course is substantially different.

The project started two years ago when a sprinkler system was installed with six miles of pipe and 265 sprinkler heads. A double sprinkler system was installed into the rough.

"We have a real unique system," said Perrion. "The fertilizer is injected right through the sprinkler system."

Lots of work

A 1-million-gallon holding pond was dug, a well was sunk, tee boxes were built up and grass greens replaced sand greens with drain tiles installed underneath. It was all done to meet U.S. Golf Association specifications.

And it was all done by volunteers.

"We got a \$25,000 grant from the USGA as a test to see if volunteers can really build a golf course," said Leroy Kilber, the head groundskeeper.

The Ipswich course was one of the first golf courses in South Dakota. According to town history, the course was built shortly after World War I. Golf enthusiasts rented some pasture land on the west side of town, south of U.S. Highway 12. Eventually the land was donated to the city by Mr. and Mrs. John B. Taylor.

In 1968, a new club was built and in 1978, a ten-stall golf cart garage was added and golf leagues formed.

Sixty acres

The newly upgraded nine-hole course is spread over 60 acres with a creek meandering across six of the fairways. "Everything slopes to the creek," said Perrion, a board member. "There are bunkers by the greens, trees in the rough and the creek plays six holes." Ah, the wonderful water hazard.

The course rating for men is 71.2 with a slope rating of 124. The course rating for women is 71.4 with a slope rating of 122.

Golfers started using the grass greens late last fall.

"Right now we have the best-looking greens in the country. Because they're new, they haven't developed any diseases yet," said Perrion.

It's par for the course that small-town residents want to give credit where credit is due. Bosanko, Kilber and Perrion are no different.

"Mike Heinz did a lot of the ground work and worry," said Kilber. "He's the president of

the Golf Association and was a huge motivator. He made hundreds and hundreds of phone calls getting everything lined up."

Two summers

"There was a huge fundraising effort," said Bosanko, who describes himself as a "grunt" and board member. "We got \$180,000 worth of pledges and \$164,00 have been collected. If we'd have paid to have the work done it would have cost about \$400,000."

"We didn't realize when we started the project just how much work it would take," said Perrion.

"I don't think that Ipswich has ever taken on a project of this size before," said Kilber.

"It was two summers out of everybody's life," said Bosanko. More than 30 volunteers pitched in to bring the dream into fruition.

And in the process, they learned a lot about golf course construction. "When you build new greens, first you have to lay pea gravel and top it with seven feet of a sand/peat moss mix," said Perrion.

"We had 50 semi-loads of sand brought in from Summit," said Kilber. The sand had to be a special masonry sand. "Most sand is waste sand," said Perrion, "and contains clay."

Future plans

Plans for the future are to haul in a large split rock to place in front of the sign, plant more trees, and perhaps a bigger clubhouse and building for golf cart storage.

Green fees increased from \$5 for nine holes to \$12, and cart rental is \$10 for nine holes.

Family membership is \$400 per year and single membership is \$250.

The course is open to the public. The women's league is Wednesdays, the men's league Thursdays.

The three men seem to feel all the hard work was worth it. "This has spurred a lot more interest in the high school kids," said Kilber.

Bosanko agreed. "This is a real benefit to the community."

When Ipswich folks set their minds to doing something, they don't "putt" around.

Caption:

American News Photo by Dawn Dietrich-Sahli

Two years of volunteer labor: The main photo above shows the ninth hole at the Ipswich golf course. In the inset photo above, Gary Bosanko, left, Leroy Kilber and Duane Perrion discussed the improvements made to the Ipswich Split Rock golf course over the past two years. Courtesy photo

Course layout: The layout of the Ipswich golf course has been changed substantially. The nine-hole course is spread over 60 acres with a creek meandering across six of the fairways.

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