Crans-sur-Sierre

Long-Range Master Plan

December 13th, 2023

Long-Range Master Plan

Introduction

Back in 2022, Nicklaus Design was invited by the Golf Club Crans-Sur-Sierre to come visit the existing 9-hole Jack Nicklaus Golf Course, which was designed/constructed back in the late 1980s.

The goal of these visits was to see the course, evaluate its state, and meet various people at the golf course, in particular Pascal Schmalen and Richard Barnes, in order to discuss the options and planning for the improvement of the existing 9-hole course.

A site-visit report for both visits was prepared and distributed, and a follow-up design report was prepared in October 2023.

Nicklaus Design has now been appointed in order to prepare the Master Plan Booklet for the renovation and partial re-design of the current 9 golf holes, and depending on approval by various parties in the future, another 3 holes might be added to the existing 9-hole golf course. The focus will now be on the existing 9 holes.

Purpose

This Master Plan booklet summarizes the thoughts and suggestions made by Dirk Bouts during his visits in September 2022 and July 2023 and they relate to the various meetings we have had with the Team.

These Master Plan improvements are suggested to modernize parts of the course while also identifying areas where steps can be taken to improve the overall state of the golf course, improve/update the design, and, where possible, improve the presentation and maintenance practices. By all means, these adjustments do not need to be undertaken all at once or even in their entirety. As the Club decides to move forward with these suggestions, Nicklaus Design can create the documentation to complete the work. Moreover, in order to preserve the design intent and control the quality of the work, Nicklaus Design will provide periodic on-site construction supervision.

History and Approach

The Golf Club Crans-Sur-Sierre was designed back in the 1980s.

The setting for the course is truly spectacular, and you have mountain views on 5 of the holes.

As expected, however, the course is "old and tired" and ready for renovation and some re-design.

The Club has already started renewing the irrigation and the drainage, but now the time has come to address the golf features like the tees, green complexes, bunkers, etc., evaluate the existing trees and their impact on the course, and while doing so, see if an opportunity exists to update/improve the design of the golf course.

The Club wants to make sure that they follow Jack's philosophy as well as make sure that the course gets renovated to the proper current standards, not just from a design point of view, but also from an agronomic and construction point of view.

The main idea is to keep the golf course as is, but then renovate/update it, within the existing irrigation system and drainage system, where possible.

The Club is also looking forward to incorporating new stuff where it makes sense, and it is important to make sure that the members will be interested in playing the Nicklaus Course and not always the 18-hole course.

It was made clear that it is not the intention to completely redo all the surfaces for the golf course within the treed areas, and the focus will be on the tees, greens, bunkers, some parts of the fairway (where needed), clear/manage some trees, and also setting up proper areas for the paths.

The theory of minimum disturbance is followed.

Routing

The routing of the golf course will remain as is, however, here and there, we will be adjusting the center points in order to be more accurate and/or where shortening and/or lengthening a golf hole is required.

Length

When renovating and/or redesigning a golf course, the Club typically likes to explore the option of lengthening the golf course.

In the case of this course, it makes no sense at all, as it is already short, and actually, this is part of the appeal of the golf course.

As the golf course has become tighter and development has encroached over the years, we should consider shortening a hole in order to make it work so much better. A good example is hole # 4, and by moving the tees forward, you will eliminate the major issues with the tees, their playability, view towards the fairway, accessibility, proximity to the neighboring development, etc....

Drainage

We were informed that the current fairways drain well as they are, so there won't be any need to add more fairway drainage. An intense top dressing practice/program has been implemented over the years, and some new pipes were installed when the irrigation was done a couple of years ago. Currently, the areas that remain to have drainage issues are being treated locally by means of sand slitting, aerating, topdressing, etc... and it is the goal to continue doing so, all through the golf course.

We need to study, however, how to handle the drainage in the redesigned and/or renovated areas, as new and proper drainage will need to be installed where renovation takes place.

There's an existing drainage network on the golf course, and all the drainage goes towards the 5th hole. It will be very much the goal to use this system and connect to it with the newly renovated areas.

A proper as-built for the drainage does not really exist, but the Club mentioned they have some old hand drawings that can be checked. The rest will have to be located in the field.

Construction Method

Currently, the areas/features that get renovated on the 18 holes are having the turf stripped and buried (which can be used to fill in places when needed), then put the topsoil/root zone on the side, do the required work as fast as possible, install drainage, etc..., reinstall drainage, gravel blanket and approved new root zone in the greens, spread old root zone/topsoil mix where needed and consequently turf everything, even the greens.

This is the only way to get the work done in a timely manner. For example, when doing the work in the Spring, the goal is to start them in April, finish them by the 3rd to 4th week of April, and get everything turfed and "open-for-play" by the 1st week of June, which is when the course opens. Thus, a very short grow-in period of 5 to 6 weeks.

It is the goal to follow the same procedure on the 9-hole golf course.

As it relates to the cut and fill, it is very much the goal to do the earthworks/rough shaping within the overall area of the 9-hole golf course, and preferably work within each hole.

The Club mentioned that accessibility for heavier equipment to the golf course is very difficult and limited, so we also need to keep this in mind.

It is assumed that typically, the first 1 to 1,5 meters (sometimes 2) can be dug before hitting rock. The rock is loose and not suitable for exposing and/or creating rock faces or using it for rock walls.

With regard to the greens, regardless of their design or possible desire to be altered, they will have to be cored out and have proper drainage, a gravel blanket and approved root zone installed using proper construction methods.

As mentioned many times, the goal will be very much to try and preserve as much of the existing irrigation as possible. This is a good example of why it is important to have a proper shaper do the work in the field to accommodate and/or adjust where needed and while doing the work.

Shaper

We all agreed on the importance of using the proper shaper, as he will create the best results, require the least amount of work and time, adjust/adapt as needed, and ensure a smooth process.

We can only show so much on a plan, and the preferred approach is to use the plan as a guideline for the shaper to do the work, and he can make it even work better in the field.

Doing it this way will also keep the area to be disturbed to a minimum, as he will only disturb what is needed.

Irrigation

A few years ago, a new irrigation system was installed, and the drainage was also upgraded.

This is somewhat unfortunate, as it would have been better to do all the work at once. Now, we will have to take the new installation into account, work around it where possible, and be limited in some areas, but it is also clear that in some areas, the new installation might have to be altered.

The irrigation system is by Toro and the irrigation study is being done by "Arrosage Concept" out of France. The club likes their work, so we will work with them. They can then make the irrigation plans/adjustments as needed and make sure it all works well.

Working within the existing irrigation system will not be easy, as the system is cabled and not a decoder system. This makes changes more complicated, as everything needs to be recabbled.

Greens

The green complexes will all be renovated as explained above, and here, the view into the greens will be very important, as currently, there are many blind areas/features when playing into many greens.
We need to look into the relationship between the greens and the surrounding trees (shade, roots, etc.), and we will need to decide on the preferred size for the greens.
Access to and from the greens will be very important.
We discussed installing runoffs around the greens, and this was well received.

Tees

The tee complexes will have to be redone, and we need to decide on the size, the location (shade/view, playability), etc.
Currently, many tees are very small, many have shade issues, access is limited and sometimes very tight, and visibility is not always what you would prefer.
The tees are getting worn out, some more than others, but it is very apparent along the perimeter of the tees, which have settled and are lower than the center of the tees, which have raised over time because of the repair topdressing as they only seem to be used in the center.
Everybody agrees on the need to redo the tees, but since the irrigation has been redone recently, it is preferred to change the tee's location as little as possible.
I explained that the main goal is to level out the tees, make the tees as large as possible, accommodate the shade issue where possible, and make sure visibility is as good as possible.
Tees on holes 2, 4, 5, 6, and 8 definitely need addressing.
Per the Club, the tees actually don't get beaten up that bad as the majority of the shots are off a tee, even on the 6th hole.

Bunkers

The course was designed/constructed back in the 1980s, and at the time, part of the area was completely graded/shaped, so no trees were present. In order to create separation between the golf holes, they installed mounding and support, some strategically placed bunkers, and some trees were planted.
40 years later, the trees have grown considerably, to the point where the trees now create the desired separation between the golf holes, however, many of the old bunkers are not valid from a strategic "point-of-view" anymore as well that they are located within the trees and thus create for a "double-penalty", which Jack does not like at all.
This can be fixed by going in and eliminating some of these bunkers, and it seems this has already happened in some places. This will have to be looked at in more detail in order to reinstate the intended character/look of the golf course as per Jack.
At the same time, many of the bunkers have become invisible, in particular the ones when playing uphill. This will also need to be fixed.
The current bunker style looks good, and it is not the intention to make the bunkers too large.
Eliminating bunkers has an influence on the intended strategy of the golf holes.
This, along with the fact that the course has now become a treed golf course, means we need to double-check the strategy for the holes and also make sure they don't end up looking similar.
While going through the strategy of the golf course within its current setting, it seems that some bunkers can be strategically added in order to make up for the lost ones.
As the bunkers will be renovated, the Club stated that the bunkers will have Capillary Flow installed, which has been used successfully on the 18-hole golf course.

Fairway/Rough Cut Grasslines

With regard to the rough and fairway cut, we should also define (show on the as-built) where the fairway is cut and where the rough is mown. Depending on whether the grass is different or not, we can play and adjust this in the field.
I mentioned that in certain areas, the fairway was cut where it could/should be rough, and in other areas, the rough is cut where it should be fairway.

Tree Management

As it relates to the trees, they have grown tremendously over the years.
This is great and gives the course a true parkland feel, provides separation between the holes, and gives the holes more character.
However, it also creates issues with shade, roots, visibility, playability, etc…
All this needs to be taken into account when renovating/re-designing the existing course.
A proper tree management program should be set up, not just for now but also with the future in mind. This is an exercise that can be done with the Team, which has been doing it already.
Over the years, a lot of trees have been planted, however, more and more need to be cleared for maintenance, playability, agronomical reasons, aesthetics, and creating and/or avoiding certain views.
It was confirmed that when needed, it is OK to eliminate trees (shade, playability, views, roots, etc…)

Water Features

The existing ponds on the 5th hole were discussed.
Even though they are important, it is understood that if we redo the ponds and/or turn them into 1 pond, it will actually create a better drainage scenario and might become more environmentally interesting.

Cart Path and Lack of it

While discussing cart paths, it is not the intention to have a full cart path system installed. Some guidance on traffic might have to be given along the tees and greens, and this needs to be discussed further.
When reducing/renovating the bunkers, we need to figure out the best paths for the access on and off the greens.

Agronomy

The agronomy issues/items are being handled by Richard and the Agronomist from the European Tour, so we will follow their lead on the use of materials, etc…

Plans and Documents

When discussing the type of documentation to be prepared, we listed the following;

- Master Plan Booklet : This booklet will show each hole with the proposed renovations and possible alterations. These proposed renovations and/or alterations can then be listed in order of importance, and for the Team to decide which ones to do or not.
- Once the Master Plan Booklet is approved by all, this booklet will be the guideline for the renovation program, but we will be making more detailed plans in order to execute the work and use them in the field;
  - > The Master Plan Booklet will be the guideline for the work.
  - > A Strategy Plan showing all the golf course features (tees, greens, fairways, bunkers, water features, path location, trees, grass lines, etc…)
  - > A Contour/Grading Plan, as needed, in order to have an idea of the required work associated when more extensive earth moving is required (for example, hole 5). Cut and Fill/Quantities can be prepared for this as well.
  - > Green Details where required, but to a certain extent, as we want to make sure that the shaper has the "freedom" to make the green work within the setting, the existing irrigation, surround trees, etc…
  - > A Conceptual Drainage plan for the areas.
  - > A Clearing and/or Tree Management plan.
  - > A Disturbance plan showing the areas that need to be disturbed.

Information

A proper as-built has been prepared in order to mark-up and use for the Master Plan.
We will need to know the exact location/elevation for all irrigation-related items (heads, valve boxes, etc.) and the same for drainage (catch basins, main pipes, overflows, ponds, etc.).
We need to confirm the exact property lines where required. Are the property lines shown on the plan the actual and correct ones? For example, there's an outparcel between the current holes 6-7-8, and it would be good to know where the exact boundary/limits are?

Timing-Schedule

The current time frame to do the renovation works on Jack's course is 4 to 5 seasons, with the goal to start the initial work in the spring of 2024, depending when the spring works on the 18-hole course are completed.
On the 9-hole course, the work will start on the 5th hole.

Conclusion

This Master Plan Booklet summarizes pretty much the view/approach for the renovation and re-design of the Jack Nicklaus 9-hole golf course, and we look forward to working together with the Club and the Team in order to proceed in the best possible manner.

1

PAR FOUR

- 299
- 265
- 245
- 239

Nice starting hole with a downhill tee shot and looking towards the mountains. In order to make the hole turn better, we will install a fairway bunker, as was intended by Jack. We will also reinstall the front right green bunker and make sure the green is visible when playing into it.

1. Enlarge and move the tees more left, depending on the irrigation situation.

2. Install a new fairway bunker to the left of the fairway, which will frame and make the hole turn better. It seems there was a bunker there in the past.

3. Check on how we can "separate" the 1st hole more from the existing pitching area to the left, as right now, it feels pretty open. Material could be deposited in this area.

4. The green needs work, we can reduce the depth and lower the front of the green in order to make it more visible.

5. Install a bunker to the front right of the green, where you have the depression, and eliminate the existing bunker to the right.

2

PAR FOUR

- 299
- 265
- 245
- 239

This is a problematic hole, as the tees have become very tight with the encroaching trees. Obsolete bunkers will be eliminated, and a new right side fairway bunker will be installed in order to frame the hole, while also making sure that the front left green bunker becomes visible.

1. Improve the access to the back tee.

2. Check the property line on the right.

3. Resolve the shade issue at the tees and look at clearing some trees to the left of the tees.

4. Make the tees larger and wider, where possible.

5. Take out some trees to the front left of the forward tees to create a better view from the back tees.

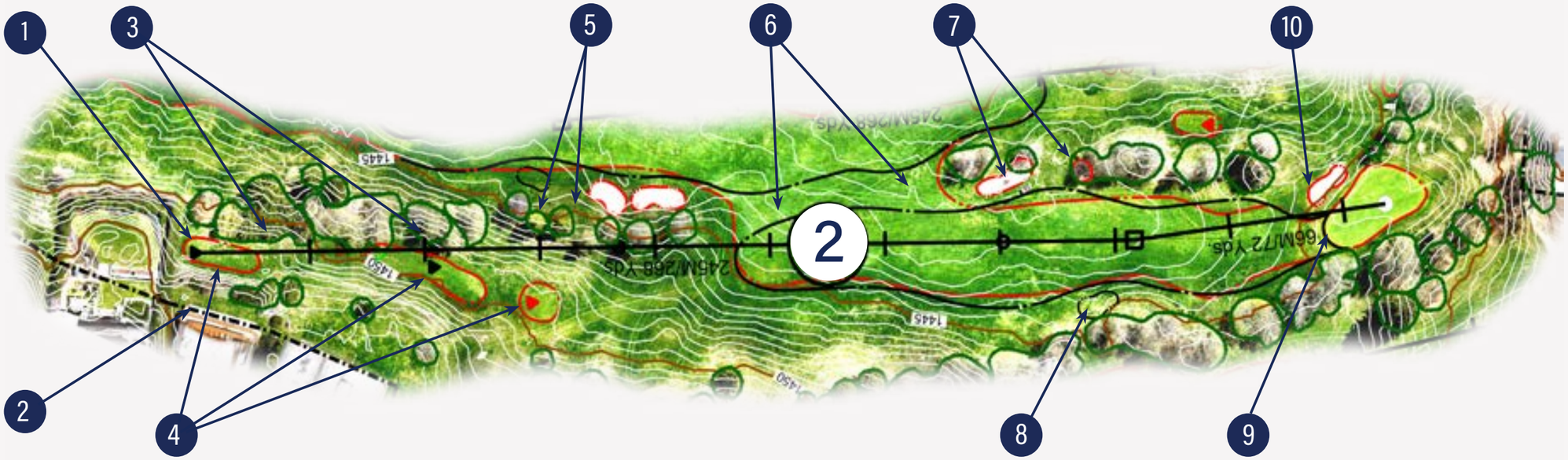
6. Eliminate the connected fairway with the 3rd hole, as it will create a better separation, and we don't have it on the rest of the holes.

7. Eliminate the current left fairway bunkers, as they make no sense anymore, since there are now trees.

8. Install a bunker in the right side knob at the landing area, which will frame the hole and also help with strategy.

9. The front of the green is very high and creates visibility issues. We should look at lowering the front half of the green.

10. The front of the left green side bunker needs to be lowered/ opened up in order to make sure the bunker is visible.



3

PAR FOUR

- 399
- 375
- 375
- 323

Another nice tee shot playing downhill, with an even better view towards the mountains. The existing fairway bunkers frame the hole well, but another one will be placed left of the landing area, and it looks like Jack had this in place also. The green sits nicely, and we can work with some runoff areas. The hole has been tightened up with the trees over the years, and this should be opened up more, especially along the right side of the hole.

1. Watch the trees at the tees, and some trees can be eliminated.

2. Tees to be reworked, located more left and enlarged, irrigation depending.

3. Eliminate the connected fairway with the 2nd hole, as it will create a better separation, as now the average player is tempted to hit it left towards the 2nd hole.

4. Existing left fairway bunkers look OK.

5. Re-install the original left fairway bunker, as it works best from a strategy point of view.

6. We need to cut some more trees along the right side of the fairway.

7. The green sits nicely with a narrow fairway leading up to it. We could create some runoffs.

8. We need to watch the shade that is being created around the green.

4

PAR FIVE

- 473
- 435
- 407
- 365

The most troublesome hole on the golf course, especially because of the location of the tees, which just don't work and are very awkward because of the encroaching development and trees. Fixing the tee location will be a must, and it will be preferred to shorten the hole while maintaining it as a par-5. This time, we propose a fairway bunker along the left side of the fairway. The front part of the green needs to be lowered, and false fronts are to be created while reinstalling the front left green bunker, be it less deep and smaller.

1. Over the years and with the encroaching development, the tee shot has become terrible and is a major issue, especially from the back tee.

2. We can keep a back tee for length, but we should make it smaller and locate it as far right as possible.

3. The member's tee should move forward and more to the right.

4. Take some of the netting (if possible) and some trees out on the left corner at the boundary.

5. The Club should consider shortening the hole by about 45 meters, as it will still play as a par-5, but the major issues with the tees will be resolved.

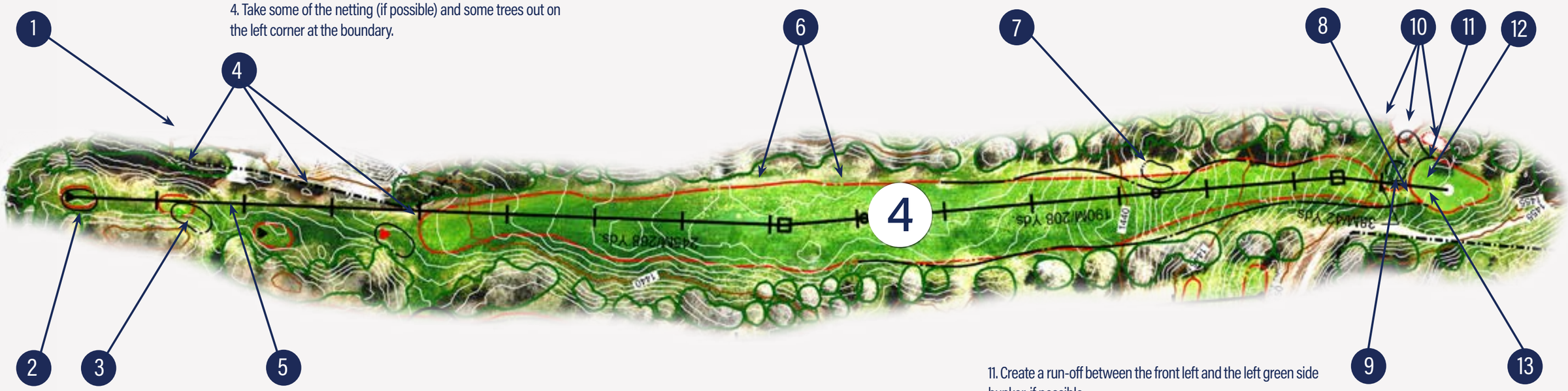
6. Take out the shaping from the old eliminated bunker(s) on the left of the hole.

7. Install a fairway bunker on the left of the hole (make it look different from 2nd hole).

8. Install a false front at the front and, if possible, also on the left.

9. Re-install the front left green bunker, but make it less deep and softer.

10. Review the group of bunkers between the 4th and 9th greens, as they don't work well and are not visible from both holes. Eliminate the center bunker all together.



11. Create a run-off between the front left and the left green side bunker, if possible.

12. Soften the high front left corner off the green, possibly with a run-off.

13. Lower the front half of the green, if possible.

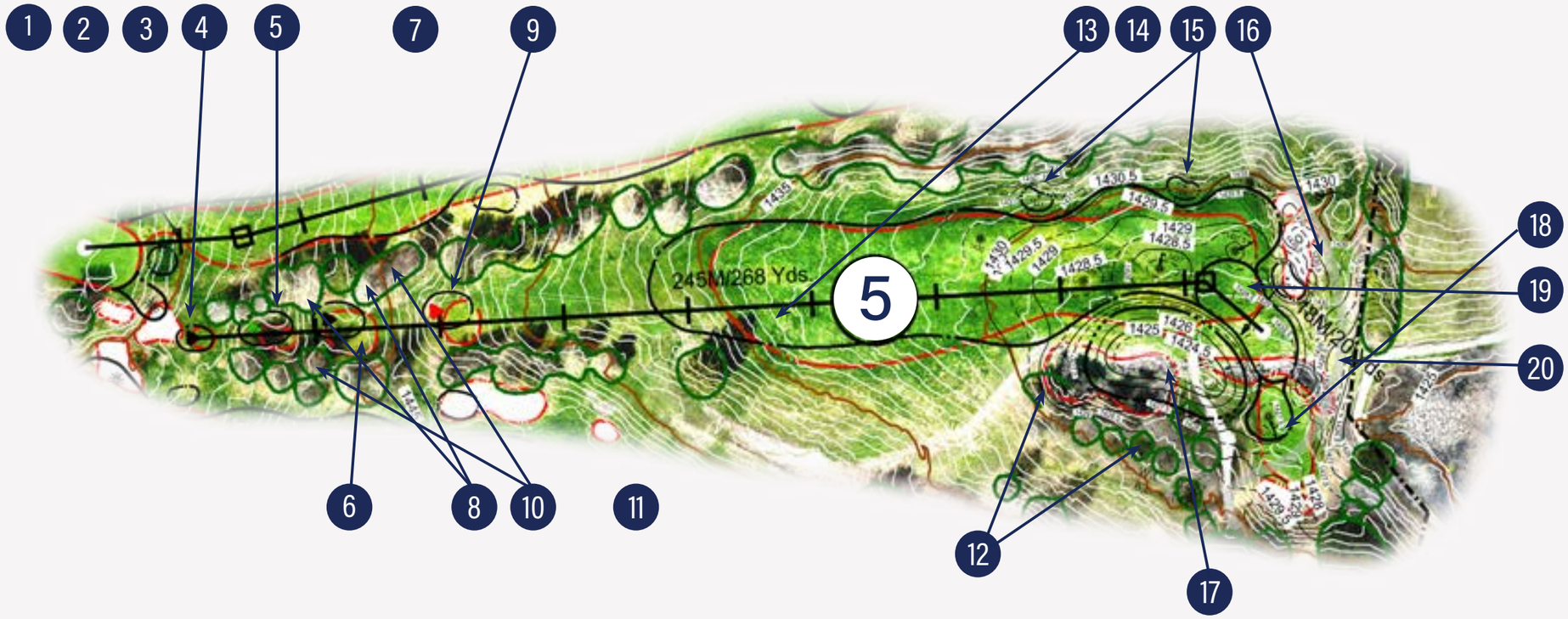
5

PAR FOUR

- 263
- 248
- 230
- 204

What a beautiful setting for a golf hole, with the Bietschhorn mountain in the distance and Lake Moubra nearby. As the setting for the green has been transformed over the years, it is now suggested to turn this hole into a driveable par-4 while making sure all golf features are visible when playing, thus requiring for the green to move left in line with the beautiful views.

1. There's a very nice tee shot towards the Bietschhorn mountain in the distance.
2. Make the tees fall 1% towards the fairway, as this will help with the view.
3. The tees need to be redone as they are too small, have shade issues and block the view.
4. Lengthen the back tee by 5 meters.
5. Eliminate hills/bumps left of the 2nd tee.
6. The second tee shot is hidden by the front of the 3rd tee, and the front of the 3rd tee also hides the front of the existing higher pond to the right.
7. From the back of the 3rd tee, you can see the fairway.
8. Cut some trees left of the 3rd tee and eliminate the little mound. You can see the fairway from the tee.
9. The 4th tee is fine, but can go left.
10. We need to look at eliminating some trees on both sides of the tees for the shade issues.
11. When looking from the back tee, the left edge of the existing green could be the right edge of the new one. You could go more right, but then you would need to cut trees—at least three trees—which would not be preferred, and it would require considerable earth moving.
12. Preserve the existing trees to the right of the hole.
13. The "bump" at the front right of the fairway comes off a big tree. This bump can stay.
14. The fairway in general is OK.
15. Install bunkers around the fairway for strategy purposes.
16. Create support around the fairway and green in order to frame the hole and separate it from the public path.
17. Create a proper pond that is visible, especially along the fairway and green edge.
18. The green location in its current state does not work at all, and you can't see the green, the ponds hide the green, the green falls away, there's a path in front of the green, and there are safety issues with the public path behind the green.
19. Move the green left and make the hole into a driveable par-4, but make sure all golf course features are visible.
20. Install a cart path around the back of the hole and around the green.



6

PAR THREE

- *192*
- *177*
- *160*
- *144*

A beautiful par-3 with stunning backdrop views. The green sits in a beautiful setting and is the best preserved area of the golf course.

1. This is a very nice looking hole.

2. We need to fix the tee area in order to have sufficient tee space, depending on irrigation.

3. Add a fourth tee, and you will still have a nice view towards the green and the bunker.

4. It was suggested to move the tees left and the path right, but this is not an option as you would have less view towards the mountains, and it is very tight.

5. The setup for the greens complex looks good.

6. Study if clearing some trees behind the green might expose more of the distant mountain views.

7

PAR FOUR

- *291*
- *272*
- *264*
- *222*

Nice, short par-4, but overtime, this hole has become very narrow and tight, and this needs to be addressed. The green is to be enlarged, and we should eliminate the right-side green bunker as it is not visible.

1. The tee shot is very tight, and the shot is blind towards 2/3 of the left side of the fairway.

2. The tees feel very "hidden."

3. Eliminate the single tree to the left of the member's tee.

4. The area to the front left of the fairway needs to be lowered, and this will require for some trees to be cleared. This will also help with the root issues.

5. Eliminate the group of trees to the front left of the fairway. Maybe more trees will need to be cleared, but that is not certain at this point.

6. Try to widen the hole/fairway by clearing trees along the right side (shade) and also some along the left.

7. Find out what the exact boundary is along the left (now the cattle fence), so we can see how we can widen the hole.

8. Enlarge the very small green, depending on irrigation.

9. Move/enlarge the green more left, using the existing mounding to the right, and maybe do some run-offs along the right.

10. The original bunker to the back right of the green does not work well, so we should consider eliminating it.

11. Open up/clean the area around the green, but we need to figure out where the property line is and make sure we don't open it up too much as to expose the neighboring land.

12. Consider moving the path to the right of the green, in the lower area.

8

PAR THREE

- *168*
- *141*
- *108*
- *99*

Another very nice par-3, yet again with a beautiful backdrop. The tees need to be addressed in order to make them work and look better, and the green sits nicely, although it should be enlarged where possible.

1. This is also a very nice hole with nice mountain views in the distance.

2. Tee area to be reworked/enlarged in order to optimize the teeing surface, but also in order to address the shade issue with the trees.

3. Eliminate some trees along the left and right of the tees, and some trees behind the back tee might have to be cut, but again, we need to be careful how much we expose the neighboring land.

4. There's a cart path along the left of the tees, and this looks bad and is right in view.

5. Move the cart path left of the tees and between the existing specimen trees, but need to determine where exactly the property line is, as there's a cattle fence.

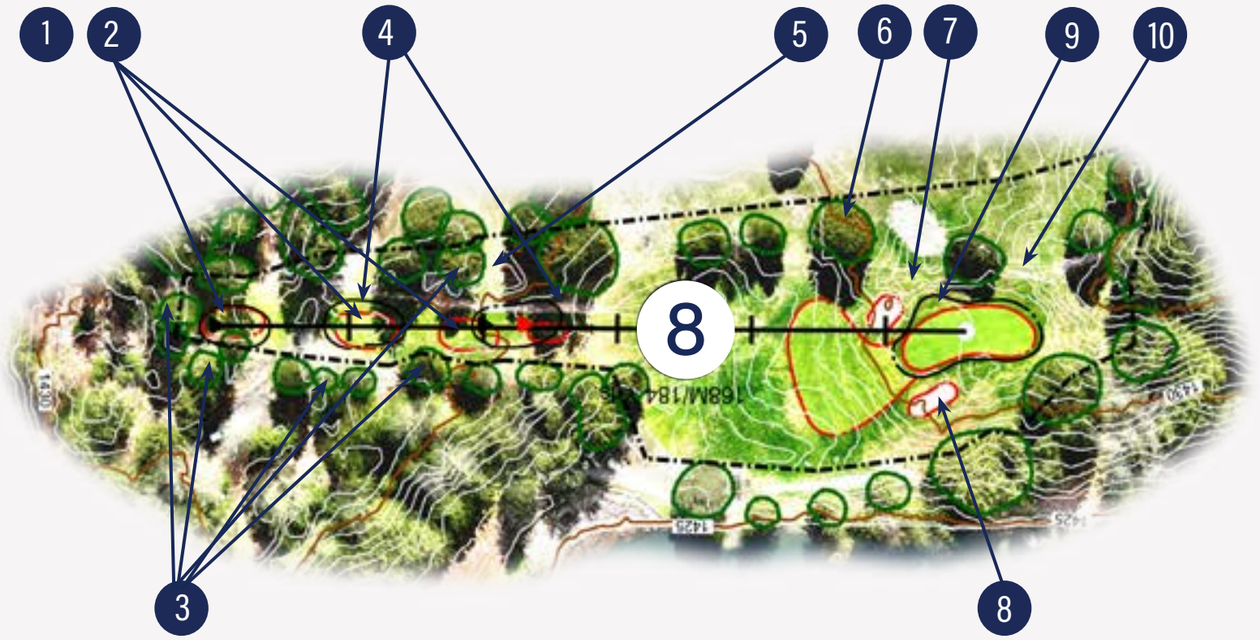
6. There's a very nice specimen pine tree to the front left of the green (not sure if this is on the golf property or not?)

7. The overall green complex/setup looks nice.

8. Make the right-side green bunker more visible.

9. Redo and enlarge the green, irrigation depending.

10. Relocate the path left of the green and study how to handle the traffic to the left of the green area, as this gets worn out and is pretty visible also.



9

- 373
- 320
- 308
- 268

PAR FOUR

Solid finishing hole, with an opportunity to add another tee and gain more than 50 meters. The hole will need to be opened up, and the treed-in bunkers should be eliminated while installing other bunkers that will be visible while playing. The front of the green will be perched, with run-off areas on both sides.

1. Add a back tee on the knob/mound behind the existing path, just inside the boundary. This lengthens the hole by 55 meters. In order to do so, the pathway from 5 to 6 will have to be adjusted.
2. We should make 1 proper member's tee (watch the shade).
3. Cut some trees left of the member's tee (there's a shed).
4. Can the shed be removed?
5. Eliminate the specimen tree to the front left of the fairway.
6. Cut some trees to the front right of the fairway, but watch the impact with regard to the view towards the 5th hole.
7. Take a closer look at where the original bunkers seem to have been filled in?
8. Consider reducing the fairway cut at the lows to the front right fairway.
9. Currently, no bunkers are visible from the tees except for the one to the right of the fairway, and this bunker has become debatable because it is now between the trees.
10. Consider eliminating the fairway bunkers on the right and moving the trees closer to the fairway and further from the tees on the 5th hole.
11. Reduce the right-side fairway bunker and make sure it is visible, so there's no double penalty with the trees. If problematic, install a bunker in the nose on the right side of the old landing area.
12. Add a fairway bunker to the left, but watch for double penalty.
13. Adjust the fairway line accordingly.
14. Add a fairway bunker to the front right of the green.
15. Eliminate the front right green bunker and replace it with a low grass area.
16. Add an up-bunker to the middle right of the green.
17. Create a low grass area to the front left of the green.
18. Make the front of the green fall off towards the left, the front, and the right.
19. Enlarge the green surface, irrigation depending.

Strategy Plan

Grading Plan

Irrigation Plan

Clearing Plan

Disturbance Plan

Conceptual Drainage Plan

Cut-Fill Plan

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