Doing more with less: how clever design cuts maintenance costs without hitting golfers’ enjoyment

Plus: Harry Colt, golf’s greatest designer; Sitwell Park, MacKenzie’s lost green; Castiglion del Bosco, Tuscan treasure
Jon Ingleton paid a visit
An iconic resort, revitalized.
Dorado, Puerto Rico
the 1955 movie of Masterson took Sarah Brown to Havana in an earlier period, it’s no coincidence that Sky fashions of the time. Although set in a much more reliable and more affordable in the 1950s, resorts began to spring up around the Caribbean. Now, of course, the region is stuffed full of hotels, golf courses, spas and destinations, with golfing celebrities like Bing Crosby using it as a regular winter hangout. With passenger air travel becoming easier, fuelled up as we are by TV shows like Mad Men, in the styles eyes, fuelled up as we are by TV shows like Mad Men, in the styles

First impressions can certainly mislead. While playing the West Course this writer feared that a review of golf in Dorado would not be as favourable as the company he kept in a very enjoyable football with Jim Helms, general manager, Brad Boyd, head of agronomy and Robert Birtel, club professional. With the notable exception of the sixteenth and seventeenth (which have been partly restored in advance of the rest of the West Course to improve the visual appeal of the entrance to the resort and to overcome later issues with equipment access) the course is most favourably described by its unfulfilled potential – certainly in need of the attention that it will be given on the completion of its big brother.

Or the four courses the 7,250 yard East Course is the one with the big reputation. At the time of visiting there were still numerous small jobs that needed completing to give it the immaculate finish that will be required if it intends to be a pretend to the region’s best course title currently held by Pete Dye’s Dominican Republic masterpiece, Casa de Campo. But the appeal of a Caribbean medley that combines the best of parkland and links golf, routed through the forest then glimpses of the ocean before completely breaking out into open coastline holes and stiff breezes is obvious!

From tee to green there are numerous clues to the identity of the course architect, including runway tee-boxes (including one mammoth 150-yarder), expansive fairways, raised and contoured greens. RTJ II has retained and enhanced these design trademarks in this engagement. The project team has maximised its use of indigenous environmental assets during the project work and maintained a strong environmental ethic – reusing felled ausubo sand, the yellow beach sand provides a fine

With thousands of trees of over fifty

Dorado Beach Resort
Dorado, Puerto Rico

A Caribbean medley combining the best of parkland and links golf, routed through the forest with glimpses of the ocean before completely breaking out onto open coastline

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There’s something appealing, especially to our generation’s eyes, fuelled up as we are by TV shows like Mad Men, in the styles and habits of successful bastions of the Fifties and early Sixties. And the Caribbean plays an important part in the tourism fashions of the time. Although set in a much earlier period, it’s no coincidence that Sky Masterson took Sarah Brown to Havana in the 1955 movie of Guys and Dolls, or that Frank Sinatra wanted to head to Acapulco Bay.

With passenger air travel becoming easier, more reliable and more affordable in the 1950s, resorts began to spring up around the Caribbean. Now, of course, the region is stuffed full of hotels, golf courses, spas and the like. But given our fascination with those...