



Dublin 2 Week Seminar

Diary for R&A

European Institute of Golf Course Architects
Post Graduate Diploma in Golf Course Architecture

Stuart Rennie

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53.5°



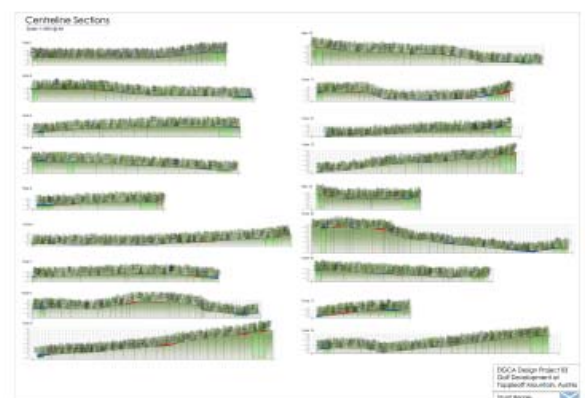
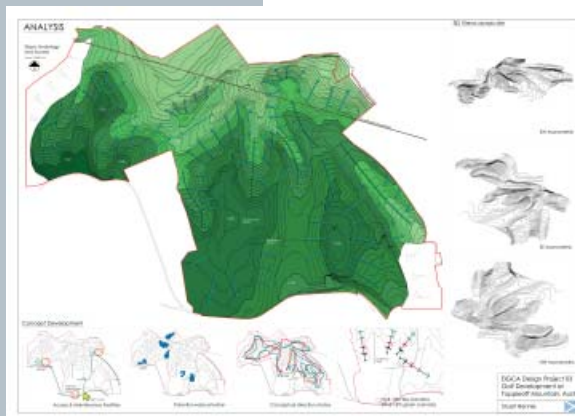
EIGCA

Seminar 3: University City Dublin, Ireland

Arriving in Dublin on the Sunday afternoon before seminars prompted a group of us to arrange a round of golf at the Island Club Dublin. Jumping of the plane straight onto the wind swept links course was enough of a welcome to any golfer. We were lucky to avoid wet weather but were hit by some of the strongest winds I've played golf in for some time. We were lead to believe that Martin Hawtree had been commissioned to carry out re-design work on the Island, which was discussed during our round. There were some spectacular holes on the Island tucked in between the high rolling dunes, but it was evident that there could be improvements made along with the ones, which had already taken place. This round at the Island was a great start to a trip I was more than looking forward to, and to round the day off with a pint of the black stuff whilst chatting to some of the local golfers and fellow students couldn't have been better.

Day 1

As we did in Germany we kicked off the Dublin seminars with design project presentations of the Topleftoff Mountain project. The presentation for this project included, Analysis, Routing Plans, Detailed Masterplan and Sections showing Cut and Fill. The critique with Ken Moodie was extremely beneficial, Ken prompted discussion after the general presentation giving informative feedback to each individual. It was again good to see how some people with lesser presentation and drawing skills improving their standard from the previous seminar. A day of presentations is generally quite a long day to endure but these days are more than beneficial to each individual student.



DESIGN PROJECT 2 - ANALYSIS AND CUT/FILL



DESIGN PROJECT 2 - MASTERPLAN

Day 2

We were eased into the second day with a site visit to The Heritage Golf and Country Spa where Jeff Howes carried out a presentation about the design and construction of the Heritage club, thereafter we walked the course asking Jeff questions and prompting discussion. After lunch we moved onto to the production of a bunker and contours exercise which was not of great benefit. This would have been better taught in the studio with someone with a teaching background. Understanding contours is not an easy subject for those with no experience in this area therefore additional grading exercise were requested.

Day 3

David Williams based in Wales presented us with our next design project, which involves a three-hole design for a site in north Wales. David talked through the design project followed by tutorials with individuals; the day was then rounded off with a presentation about Hazards and Bunker Design.

Day 4

The morning of day four was changed at the last minute to make way for Martyn Jones lecture on Soil Science and Turf Culture as well as Maintenance Principles. Shortly after this we made our way to the K Club where the golf course manager gave a very interesting presentation about how they set the course up for the Ryder Cup 2006. This was a very beneficial introduction to the K Club before heading out onto the golf courses. After the trip round the Palmer course where the Ryder Cup was held we were given the opportunity to play the Smurfitt course which most of us obliged. It was interesting to see such a development and understand the extent of investment, which had gone into the project and how such a project can be sustainable in the long run, if it can?

Day 5

Day 5 was a day everyone had been looking forward to due to having the pleasure of meeting Martin Hawtree one of the most respected and leading British Golf Course Architects. On arrival at Royal Dublin Golf Club we met Dr Hawtree where he gave us a short presentation on the re-design and development of the Royal Dublin Golf Club. Thereafter we walked part of the course with him to see some of the changes and influences he had had on the design. It was interesting to see a particular hole, which had been completely redesigned with old features still evident in the landscape. After our visit to Royal Dublin we moved onto the Island Club where some of us had been on the previous Sunday. Hawtree accompanied us on this trip giving us a task of working out where changes could be made to better the design, prompting discussion.



ROYAL DUBLIN GOLF CLUB

Day 6

On this day we were given an Introduction to our main design project by Martin Hawtree, Jeff Howes and Martyn Jones. This short presentation was followed by a full day's site analysis, walking the site, taking photos and discussing any issues with the prospected clients, Martin and Jeff. Some of our classmates did not take the site visit quite as seriously as they should have, and I believe may not understand the necessity of a thorough site analysis and investigation. This may be partly due to the weather or lack of being advised the importance of analysis. As a Landscape Architect analysis is an extremely important piece of work carried out for nearly all projects we work on no matter what size. The more detailed survey at the initial stages of a project the less likely you are to make mistakes and more likely to be able to integrate a design into a site sympathetically.

Day 7

Sunday was to be our day of rest with most of us taking the opportunity to play golf. We were very fortunate again to be given complimentary golf at Powerscourt West Golf Course, a relatively new course designed by David MaClay Kidd. After visiting Queenswood in Surrey and being very critical about the general lack of consideration to the landscape and environment I was pleasantly surprised to play an extremely enjoyable and interesting Powerscourt West course, which included some well preserved vegetation and introduced enhancing mitigation measures. Some of the reasoning behind the critical comments at Queenswood was generally not about the design of the golf course but more related to the overall landscape design. Changing the PH in the soil killed the majority of mature Turkish Oaks leaving lifeless standing deadwood along fairways, along with a lack of species planted to enhance the biodiversity. Powerscourt on the other hand had tried in areas to be a bit more sympathetic. To be a successful designer it's not just the golf course design that needs to be of high quality it's the big picture of the overall development.



POWERSCOURT WEST



QUEENSWOOD, SURREY

Day 8

A new week and back to the three hole design project, which we received the previous week. This was probably not the best decision to have the three hole design project again, it would have been more beneficial to have a separate project to do in class over those few days and carry on with the 3 hole design at home. After a morning working on the three hole design we moved onto a presentation about Turfgrass by Martyn Jones followed by a presentation by Digitech 3D. Martyn's lecture was extremely useful prompting discussion about key species and species samples he had taken into the classroom. Digitech allowed everyone to gain an understanding of the capabilities of 3D image presentation and what is on the market to help sell your product to the client. 3D visualisation is an important tool to help convey your ideas as quite often people in general cannot read or visualise plans. 3D modelling is a specialism in its own and a very time consuming and expensive one at the same time, quite often general clients are not willing to pay for the high-end presentation but computer programmes such as sketchup allow a quick and easy way of producing a similar output.

Day 9

Another busy day ahead with Martyn Jones starting the day with a lecture on; 'Water movement in soils and soil drainage'. This was followed by a presentation by Landscape Drainage Contractors who talked about the principles of golf course drainage. Thereafter this was taken to the field where we experienced

some actual drainage construction work being carried out by Sol Golf. Michael O'Leary of Sol Golf took us round the project where he had workers set up ready to show us different drainage construction aspects. Thereafter we walked some of the holes, which had already been complete. This was a Tom Mackenzie re-design project, which I was able to discuss with him the following day whilst playing golf.



DRAINAGE CONSTRUCTION
DEMONSTRATION BY SOL GOLF
CONTACTORS

Day 10

Today was an extremely important day, and we did not get off to the best start with the Dublin morning rush hour traffic being as bad as expected. This was the Toro Design sponsored lecture day and off all days to be late this had to be the one. It was rather disappointing to turn up at County Louth Golf Club (Baltray) towards the end of Tom Mackenzie's presentation on the re-design of the golf course. However Tom was kind enough to run through this later in the day, although I was lucky enough to be paired with him for the golf and dinner, which included lots of discussion. It was fortunate for the class that Tom Mackenzie decided to carry out his presentation before the guest speaker who was Tom Doak all the way from America. After reading some of Tom Doak's books I had expected to meet a slightly different character to the one he and others had painted in my head. Doak was an extremely genuine down to earth bloke who talked us through his journey to become the golf course architect he is today. Doak is an inspiration to us all as student and someone I felt I could relate to, he had a Landscape Architectural background like myself and this is more than evident when looking at his designs. The day continued with golf, everyone breaking into their groups and enjoying the company of each other. The dinner, which followed, allowed more interaction with the EIGCA members as well as more detailed discussions with Doak. It was great to see many of the EIGCA members and Tom Doak taking time to attend the Toro design lecture and inspire all the students.



PLAYING COUNTY LOUOH GOLF CLUB WITH EIGCA MEMBERS

Day 11

There were a few sore heads after the night before but this did not stop us moving on with a Woodland Management presentation by Joe McConville who presented the fundamental aspects of woodland management and case studies relating to golf courses which he had worked on. Being a Landscape Architect I have a fair bit of experience in this area but it was beneficial seeing how woodland management can be related to golf course architecture. In the afternoon Paul O'Brian from Jeff Howes Golf design presented a detailed drainage design project, which he had been working on and had implemented, this was followed by a Drainage design exercise.

Day 12

Our final day in Dublin involved a presentation by Brian Philips who talked generally about Specifications, Bills of Quantities, Costing and forms of contracts. The class as a whole would have benefited more from this subjects in more detail as some of this is a requirement of the new project briefs, but I am lead to believe that this will be covered in the future seminars.

Overall Dublin was an extremely beneficial two weeks with a considerable amount of work carried out with a lot of time and effort made in particular by Martyn Jones our course co-ordinator who strives to make the course what it is. It's going to be a busy period up until the April seminars in Portugal with the likes of the design projects and the dissertation topic.