

CHARLES DRAPER

I'll bet you've always wondered why there's a disparity between your golfing index and handicap! Of course you do! Well if questions like that keep you on the edge of your seat try this one on for size. Where do the slope and course rating numbers on your score card come from? Now there's a real poser! No they are not drawn arbitrarily from some course architects hat. Hey, you demand! How can they possibly rate this course harder than another course everyone considers to be much more difficult? After the earth movers, bulldozers, graders, sand trap masochists and landscapers are all done creating this magnificent new course who decides what its rating will be? Well I'm glad you asked!

Once upon a time the only numbers associated with a golf course were its length, what par was determined to be (i.e. 72) and who held the course record. Can you imagine the chaos involved in setting up tournament flights at your home venue no less inter club championships? Bobby Jones and me paired as equals, I think not! In a galaxy far far away (a long time ago), this became a quandary shared by most clubs and the resolution, of sorts, was for them to form associations and attempt to establish some semblance of equanimity among the courses unique physical setting and other difficulty factors.

State and regional associations came into existence. The Pacific Northwest Golf Association (PNGA) claimed authority over Washington State, British Columbia, Alberta, Idaho, Alaska and sections of Oregon and Montana. However each of these same states and provinces established associations of their own. The USGA however assumed a leadership roll over them all. So be it! Draper as course rating chairman of the PNGA and President of the Washington State Golf Association oversaw the control effort by the PNGA on a different light.

As an alumni of the University of Washington Draper had subscribed to the U.W. computer program and the I.B.M. 660 System to handicap his home golf course membership. In a few seconds 350 members scores could be processed at a minimal fee. The PNGA system was way over priced so Charlie suggested the service be provided on a national level. Although impeached from his PNGA chairmanship the promotion of golf was his endeavor, not to fund a district dynasty.

Golf was becoming a multimillion dollar industry, needing management, more courses, new equipment and foremost the "Rules of Golf". Charley Draper became the go to guy! As a business man, engineer, entrepreneur, company president, and not a bad golfer in his own right, having a penchant to set course standards he was the logical arbiter to offer golfers the uniformity they sought.

He was honored by the USGA at the Top of The Mark annual dinner meeting. Sitting above the salt with USGA President Sandy Tatum and Charlie were Alister Cook, Bing Crosby's daughter there to accept a posthumous life time award on behalf of her father. What an experience, a privileged place among the elite of the golfing world.

If you ever have the pleasure of making his acquaintance you will notice he is not the most humble guy you've ever met. You want to know why that is? My guess is that his confidence in the knowledge you are about to experience is nearly absolute. Do not confuse his demeanor with ego, because he is a very

comfortable man to be around, he is just very knowledgeable about most everything. So here he is accepting the position of someone who has to visit all the golf courses in the region and establishing a standard acceptable to all the associate clubs. Going to all those courses! Can you imagine? Myself, if I were to be put in that position, well to quote Brer Rabbit, "Please, Brer Fox, Please, Brer Bear Please, don't throw me in that briar patch." But that's just me! So many courses, so little time!

Apparently the success of standardizing the northwest region courses was being realized around the other regions of the country. After years of meetings, agonizing and overcoming the innumerable personalities the USGA was eventually brought into existence and national standards were established. Now teams of assessors have been sent far and wide to bring the national membership a semblance of uniformity. Charley was a representative and participant in helping the USGA realize its national standardization. Not the easiest thing when dealing with the personalities of private and public club presidents.

Charley, at that time, was the President of the Washington State Golf Association and in that capacity helped establish the I.A.G.A., which as everyone might not know is the International Association of Golf Course Administrators. The I.A.G.A is an adjunct of the U.S.G.A. and the Royal and Ancient Golf Club (R & A) which are the governing bodies responsible for the organization, development and administration of the rules of their respective group. As an aside the R & A was established in 1754, just a few days before the U. S. of A came into being. There is a neat sign outside their club house, "No dogs or women admitted", note the order of importance!

If time allows, someday peruse the U.S.G.A. manual "Course Rating System". An engineering or physics degree may be helpful interpreting the charts and indexes used therein. Did you know 'squeeze' can actually be measured and assigned a weight as it applies to the vagaries of topography and eventually be assigned a difficulty factor. This is only one of the innumerable influences that comprise the difficulty factor of a course. This manual, which is about an inch thick, is chock full of measurements most of us never considered, but this is what the U.S.G.A committee uses to rate courses. Guess who helped compile this manual? Charley Draper, Dean Knuth and Arizona's Johnny Riggles!

While several pros were practicing on the driving range at Charlie's home course before the local championship at the West Seattle G. C., a contest of sorts began to see who could come closest to the pole with the 230 yard sign mounted on the far fence. Many came close and some even hit the post, but Charley hit the sign itself and after the challenge of "I bet you can't do that again" he proceeded to hit it four more times, consecutively. Pure dumb luck times? Well for someone who holds the course record of 57, I think not!

Some folks are born with a silver spoon in their mouth, which is Charley's case, but with the influence of a wooden spoon and a stern old man, he became his own man. A successful business man, husband to Glee who herself is an accomplished golfer in her own right, father to a great bunch of children and grandchildren! You would think that by this time he would be resting on his laurels, but such is not the case. He still consults innumerable courses with questions regarding their ratings after they have

experienced redesigns and various alterations. On their drives between Seattle and San Clemente guess who can't restrain himself from visiting the occasional unrated course?

Charley suggested I make mention of Ole' Hanson a Seattle transplant to San Clemente by way of Wisconsin. Ole' born and raised and passed the bar in Wisconsin, migrated to Seattle where he practiced law invested in real estate served as mayor for several years before moving south. He was instrumental in the incorporation of San Clemente which is named after the off shore island. Having purchased several thousand acres may have had something to do with its development. Just some old Norwegian migrant from Seattle who, 'done good'!

Once upon a time there was a coastal commission, numerous water districts, a county called Orange, a city called San Clemente and companies who contrived or conspired to develop our area. There were ground rules established to control the growth, oversee the laws regarding environmental impacts, i.e. drainage of the hills and valleys that could no longer be given over to the canyons which had carried the run off for millennia. What we see today is a magnificent community, generations in the making, whose development has abusively ignored the laws established for its growth, progression and approved blindly or maliciously by all the representatives of the aforementioned agencies. Just a pet peeve when it comes to all the litigation involved for our innumerable slides. Everyone is pointing their finger at who they deem to be at fault. It is blatantly obvious that when pointing ones finger most of the other fingers are pointing at yourself.

Charley's admonition is that the true golfer is first subject to know the rules of play, then how to play. The true political player must first know the rules (laws) then be able to physically and mentally put them into service. Charley's first question for the player is: Do you know the rules?