

A.V. MACAN

(1882 – 1964)

Golf Course Architect Richmond Country Club

The remarkable career of A.V. Macan spanned nearly six decades. From the time of his arrival in Victoria, British Columbia in 1912, until his death in 1964, few other individuals have had a more lasting impact on the play of golf in the Pacific Northwest. Some 43 golf courses along the coast remain as a testament to his creative genius . . . golf courses that have not only enthralled weekend golfers, but also tested the mettle of Canadian Open and amateur championship contenders over the years.

Born in Ireland and later educated in law at the University of London (England), Arthur Vernon Macan had a reverence for the game of golf that was even stronger than his full time position with the B.C. Government Division of Lands and Forests. He was a scratch handicap golfer in his youth and won B.C. Amateur, Washington State Amateur and Pacific Northwest Amateur titles, along with several other notable tournaments. In 1913, he received his first opportunity to design a golf course in the Victoria area. With the outbreak of the First World War a year later, Macan served overseas with the Canadian Armed Forces, losing his left leg below the knee at Vimy Ridge (France). Upon returning to B.C. he continued his passion for golf course design and competitive golf, maintaining a six handicap for years.

Recognized as a master among his peers in golf course architecture, Macan earned the respect of golf legends such as Gene Sarazen and Robert Trent Jones, Sr., who regarded his greens as 50 years ahead of their time. He designed undulating greens with drainage suitable for the Northwest's wet climate and with enough contour to defy the backspin players. Believing that distance shots and spinning the ball through the air required only a modest amount of talent, Macan felt that the real art and creativity in golf came from playing the ball along the ground, up and over slopes, mounds and swales. His greens traditionally slope from front to back and from one side to the other, making an approach, chip or putt a formidable challenge.

While he loved to test the star golfers, he ultimately believed the game should be enjoyed by every caliber of player.

A partial listing of the better known courses designed or renovated by A.V. Macan includes:

Canada

Royal Colwood (1913), Qualicum (1913), Cowichan (1922), Marine Drive (1923), Gleneagles (1927), University Club (1927), Gorge Vale (1929), Victoria (1930), Kelowna (1949), Nanaimo (1953), Richmond (1958), McCleery (1959), Shaughnessy (1959), Capilano (1960), Penticton (1961).

United States

Inglewood (1920), Columbia-Edgewater (1924), Fircrest (1924), Broadmoor (1925), California Golf Club (1925), Seattle (1950), Overlake (1953), Yakima (1956), Everett (1962).