

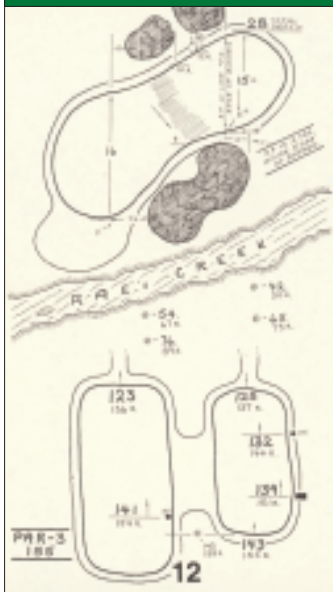
The Hole Story

Augusta National

BY GORJUS GEORGE LUCAS*



No. 12 ■ Par-3 ■ 155 Yards



In 1983 I made my first trip to Augusta National. I was to meet Hord Hardin, the club chairman, to get his approval to become the first person to map the course. I sat on an L-shaped couch with Dave Spencer and Bob Kletcke, the co-head pros, and Jim Armstrong, the general manager, while Mr. Hardin sat at his desk scrutinizing one of my books from another course. It was dead silent until Mr. Hardin suddenly lifted his head and asked, "What does J.I.C.Y.R.F.U. stand for?"

Dave and Bob looked at each other nervously. Finally, Dave said, "Well, Mr. Hardin, it means 'Just in case you really f--- up.'"

After a pause Mr. Hardin smiled and said wryly, "Oh, we are *definitely* going to leave that out of our book, aren't we?"

My favorite part of the job is mapping 12, the Golden Bell, because it's the greatest hole on earth. You could write a book

about 12's challenges, but the biggest ones are the green—the shallowest on Tour—and the swirling winds that funnel through the pines in sudden and mysterious ways. A pro might swing a seven-iron because he feels a two-club wind in his face, but a midswing wind shift could cause his ball to sail 40 yards long.

*For 28 years—the last eight with his dog, Squeaky—Gorjus George has crisscrossed the U.S. drawing the yardage books used by the pros at Tour events.



2¢ WITH LARRY MIZE

■ **BOBBY JONES: STROKE OF GENIUS** I hope it's done well. There hasn't been a good golf movie yet. ■ **ADAM**

SCOTT Pretty awesome, isn't he? ■ **CHAMPIONS TOUR** It's coming up fast, but I'm not finished here yet. ■ **ATLANTA** Nice city, but they can have the traffic. It's brutal. ■ **GROWING UP IN AUGUSTA** Great memories of going to the Masters and getting tees from Lionel Hebert. It was a blast. ■ **AUGUSTA NATIONAL** I love it. ■ **MASTERS** I'm playing better and feel like I might be able to sneak in there. ■ **ARNIE'S LAST MASTERS** I hope not. ■ **THE CHIP-IN** Chip-in? What chip-in?

The Best Putter Is...

Who's the best putter in pro golf? The PGA Tour rates players on putts per green-hit-in-regulation, which doesn't take into account the length of a player's putts. If someone finishes a round with 18 one-putts but all of them are from less than six feet, that means he's a great iron player, not a great putter. Instead, we've examined Tour putts from 12 distances and compared how many putts a player made from each with the Tour average from that distance. For example, over the last 15 months our winner, Ben Crane, attempted 177 putts of 15 to 20 feet in length, and he made 45 of them (25.4%). If he had made the Tour average (19.2%), Crane would have holed 34, so he had a +11 rating (45-34=11) from that distance. Crane, in fact, had a plus rating in 11 of the 12 distances (three feet or less; four to five feet; and so on, up to 25 feet and more). Overall, he made a total of 70.9 more putts than average, which, divided by his number of rounds (93), gives him a percentage of .762, meaning he saved three quarters of a stroke per round over the average player.

This system debunks the notion that the Tour is a putting contest. Based on data from January 2003 to present, only two of the top five putters (Brad Faxon and Jay Haas) finished in the top 30 on the 2003 money list. Meanwhile, no one in the top 10 World Ranking is among the top 25 putters. —David Barrett

BARRETT-O-METER

BEST PUTTERS

PLAYER	RATING
Ben Crane	+762
Brad Faxon	+734
Aaron Baddeley	+645
Jay Haas	+638
Scott McCarron	+600

WORST PUTTERS

PLAYER	RATING
Sergio Garcia	-700
Gene Sauers	-628
David Sutherland	-606
Ian Leggatt	-574
Joe Durant	-512

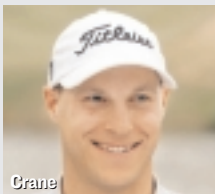
TOUR STATS

BEST PUTTERS

PLAYER	PPG
Scott Verplank	1.717
Stewart Cink	1.722
Aaron Baddeley	1.723
Tiger Woods	1.728
Chris DiMarco	1.729

WORST PUTTERS

PLAYER	PPG
Matt Kuchar	1.856
Ian Leggatt	1.856
John Morgan	1.818
David Sutherland	1.814
Chris Smith	1.812



Crane



Garcia



Verplank



Morgan

TOUR: BILLY LOW/AUGRA (LUCAS); ERIC S. LESTER/AP (CRANE); ANDREW REDINGTON/GETTY IMAGES (GARCIA); A.J. MESSERSMID/PHOTOFEST (VERPLANK); BOB PALLET/THATCHER SIM (MORGAN); SAN DIEGO/PHOTO.COM (MIZE)

2 Tour winners in '04 not in the Masters (Johnson and Heath Slocum).

\$306,000

Third-place money Scott Hend won, his first check on Tour.

1 Miguel Angel Jimenez's Ryder Cup standing after his win in Portugal.