

Donald J. Ross
NEW ENGLAND
PROFESSIONAL GOLFERS' ASSOCIATION
HALL OF FAME
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Transplanted Scotsman Donald J. Ross transformed the American sports landscape in the first half to the twentieth century. At his death in 1948 he left behind a legacy of 413 courses, including such gems as Pinehurst No. 2 in North Carolina, Seminole in Florida, Inverness in Toledo, Ohio, Oakland Hills in Birmingham, MI and the site of the 1996 U. S. Open, Oakland Hills outside Detroit. Over 100 U. S. national championships have been played on his designs.

Donald Ross was born in 1872 in the north Scottish coastal town of Dornoch. He apprenticed as greens keeper at St. Andrews under the tutelage of 4-time British Open champion "Old" Tom Morris. In 1899, Ross migrated to the United States to build and run the Oakley Golf Club in Watertown, MA. The next year, he was enlisted to design and rebuild four courses at the Pinehurst Resort, none with more care than the No. 2 layout. He revolutionized southern green keeping practices when he oversaw the transition of the putting surfaces at No. 2 from oiled sand to Bermuda grass, finishing just in time for the 1935 PGA Championship. The result was devilishly quick domed greens and a sense of impending doom for any wayward shots. During his summers, Ross designed and built courses throughout New England. Eventually, his practice spread into the Midwest and down the Southeast coast. In New England, Donald Ross' best are represented by Worcester Country Club, Worcester, MA built in 1913; Essex County Club, Manchester, MA built in 1917; Salem Country Club, Peabody, MA built in 1925 and Wannamoisett Country Club, Rumford, RI built in 1914. Donald Ross left a legacy as one of the best golf course architects of all time.