

New teeth for Dye classic

Jerry Pate will oversee a ‘facelift’ of Pete Dye’s Teeth of the Dog in 2025.

Pete Dye’s Teeth of the Dog at Casa de Campo in the Dominican Republic is widely considered the best course in the Caribbean.

It opened in 1971 and Pete and his wife Alice, who had a winter home on the course, continued to tweak the layout for nearly half a century.

Pro golfer Jerry Pate was the lowest scorer when USA won the 1974 World Amateur Team Championship on the course, and he has been a regular visitor since. He was a friend of the Dyes – he and Pete memorably shared a dip in the lake at the eighteenth at TPC Sawgrass following Pate’s victory at the inaugural Players tournament in 1982 – and with his senior designer Steve Dana is now course consultant for Casa de Campo. In 2025, Pate and Dana will renovate the Teeth of the Dog.

“There will be no major changes,” says Pate. “Our work is more to do with improving the quality of the course conditions and there may be some lengthening of holes. The real strategy of the golf course will remain the same. Golf should be an enjoyable experience and not too difficult. But yes, we’re putting more of the teeth back in, mainly with fairways closer to

bunkers, making bunkers a bit deeper, and adding some contours and slopes to greens.”

According to Pate, work on greens will mainly be “reinstating half a per cent in the green contours here and there”. They will also do some sandcapping to enhance soil depth, level tees and make cart path repairs.

“The Teeth is a great piece of art,” says Pate. “We won’t be taking any bunkers out, there’ll all stay in the same places, although we might add a couple. Our work here is more about tweaking and improving them so they still look and feel like Dye bunkers. They are strategically well positioned, particularly those on holes 14 to 18, but following the project they’ll have new drainage, updated faces and new sand.”

Pate says a key component of the project is “bringing up the course’s level of agronomy” through the regrassing of tees, fairways and greens with saltwater-tolerant Pure Dynasty paspalum, developed by Pure-Seed Testing, Inc. and marketed by Atlas Turf International and Pure Seed.

“Teeth of the Dog, while iconic and inimitable, does present significant challenges to growing grass,” said

John Holmes, president of Atlas Turf International. “Several holes sit so close to the Caribbean Sea that ocean spray is a constant. Pure Dynasty seeded paspalum was the perfect choice when considering a new turfgrass to replace the mixture of older varieties of paspalum and bermuda.

“From the Pure-Seed Testing, Inc. breeding programme, Pure Dynasty

delivers the heat and drought tolerance needed for the Caribbean, as well as unmatched salt tolerance. Pure Dynasty will be planted wall-to-wall at Teeth of the Dog, and with its tighter density, finer leaf blade, and ability to be mowed as low as 0.08 inches, this advanced turfgrass will deliver excellent playing surfaces from the tees all the way to the greens.

“Having one turfgrass throughout the course simplifies maintenance practices. This advantage, along with the overall superior turf quality, was just part of the reason the resort’s longtime golf course superintendent, Eusebio Nunez, is a proponent of Pure Dynasty.”

The renovation is part of an ongoing project at the resort, which has 90

holes designed by Dye: the 18 on Teeth of the Dog, 27 on Dye Fore, the 18-hole Links layout, and the 27-hole members-only La Romana design.

Presently, plans are being developed by the design team and the resort for a fourth nine at Dye Fore as well as a new par-three course near the Links layout and a large Himalayas-style putting green near Teeth of the Dog. **GCA**



Jerry Pate wants to respect and restore Pete Dye’s Caribbean gem