



BETH M. HOWARD

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Dallas Price chips away at golf's old boys' club.

Dallas Price wants to make it easier for women to play golf. So she must be a great golfer, right? Wrong. As coowner and vice president of the American Golf Corporation (AGC), which operates more than 200 courses throughout the country, she's setting new precedents for women golfers but doesn't play the game.

Price is seeing to it that women get equal rights on the greens. "I want to make the sport more accessible to women," she explains.

If she has her say, the discriminating men-only days and men's early-morning, priority-tee-off times will be a thing of the past on all courses, not just AGC's. Price is even fighting for women to get on the courses of some clubs that still deny women the right to play.

Designing shorter tees is another project. "Shorter tees encourage more women to play," explains Price. "It's the same in any sport. If you can't compete on an equal level, then you don't want to do it." On most AGC courses, Price has made multiple tees available on each hole, allowing both male and female players to drive the ball from the level of difficulty they choose."

"We're trying to accommodate whomever, at whatever time they want to play," she says.

Price is also improving amenities in women's locker rooms by coordinating the redesign and construction of clubhouses and dressing areas through her other company, California Design, Ltd. "I'm working on getting a better selection of women's clothing in the pro shops, too," she says.

One would think that this 62-year-old women's golf activist would be aching to tee off. "It's

strictly an element of time," says the grandmother of eight. "I want to give it my full focus when I'm ready to learn."

Until she has enough time to set out on the links, Price is mountain biking as often as possible through the trails of the Santa Monica Mountains that lie in her backyard, or tooling around Los Angeles on her Harley Davidson. She also has completed six marathons, including the New York City Marathon twice. "I started running in the '70s while I was raising my five children. I like the discipline and the training."

Her greatest passion, however, is mountaineering. Price has climbed the highest peak on each of the seven continents. After climbing Antarctica's Vinson Massif in 1994, her guide told her she was the oldest woman ever to do so.

Price was nonplussed. "I don't relate to age," she says. "It's just part of moving along."

So when will she fit in her first round of golf? It could be on May 18, which she has proclaimed as Women in Golf Day. To that end, AGC courses will offer free golf lessons to women, seminars on etiquette and pointers for pros and beginners. Maybe then, she'll pick up a nine iron.

—Beth Howard

