

MISSING LINKS

EACH proposal for a new university is a dagger pointing at the heart of the golf clubs. And well they know it, those shrewd, jolly men from the banks and the insurance offices. They are accustomed to look death in the face—nothing yellow about any of them when they fought the Hun—and they won't go down now without a fight. But what can they do against those smart fellows at the U.G.C.? The plan to take away their golf course, hatched with some boulder from the county council, is bound to go through in the end. Look at the way, they tell themselves glumly, poor old Norwich was sold down the river. The very idea of destroying a golf course to put up a university! And so they drink up, and try that dicey short hole by the stream once more, and do it in bogey, only to be bunkered at the long fourteenth by the water-tank.

It is tragic, of course, to think of the golf clubs being closed down all over the country. But nothing—not even the cultural traditions of the golf club—must be allowed to stand in the way of our university expansion programme. Those green, smiling oases, which the golf clubs nobly preserved from speculative builders, must now play a still more vital role in our economy. Picture the pile-driver on that elevated third tee, from

where a full shot with a brassie could break a window in the club house. Bulldozers will lumber along the fairways, and excavators devour the greens. It is sad, and yet exhilarating. In a couple of years a senior common room will stand on the site of the club house. Then it will be port, instead of gin and tonic, that circulates round the table. And instead of the artless conversation of golfers you will hear the marvellous erudition of dons.

"You can expel nature with a pitchfork, but it will always return." HORACE may be right. Will the ghosts of departed golfers still walk the long fairways and stand reverently by the greens? Will Dog Leg Hall (as the first new hall of residence will be called) echo to the eerie cry of "Fore"? The dons, at any rate, will exult in the creation of a new sort of Redbrick. Instead of gowns, the academic body will wear Fair Isle sweaters. Spiked shoes will be compulsory at lectures. And after raising £5m. by public subscription, the new university will build a brand-new golf course on its site.

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NEW THREAT TO GOLF COURSE

FINANCIAL considerations, plus the shortage of building land, may lead to a critical examination of the need for Brighton to have three golf courses.

Some members of the town council are awaiting with interest the final figures for the year of takings and expenditure at the three courses—Hollingbury, Waterhall and The Dyke.

Because they are so obviously in the "green belt", Waterhall and The Dyke are not likely to be threatened. But Hollingbury's days could be numbered.

Some of the councillors feel that the southern part of the course will eventually have to go for housing, and that the northern section would then have to become an extension of Moulsecoomb Wild Park.

Such a park would serve an area which has rapidly increased in population since the war, with the building of new estates and the planning of further development if Hollingbury ceases to be a golf course.

In the year ended 31st March, the last for which detailed figures are yet available, Hollingbury golf course cost £7,278 and brought in only £2,794.

For Waterhall the figures were £4,038 and £2,529, and for The Dyke they were £7,564 and £3,926.

These figures show an "in the red" result of £9,531 for the three courses; or almost £2 spent for every £1 of receipts.

Miniature golf seems to be a much more paying proposition from the ratepayers' point of view.

The course at Roedean brought in £7,688 for an expenditure of £4,451, and at Rottingdean the receipts were £5,841 and expenditure £3,146.

Even putting greens showed a slight profit in the last financial year—£2,940 in green fees against an expenditure of £2,915.

With acknowledgments to the "Brighton Argus", 19th December.