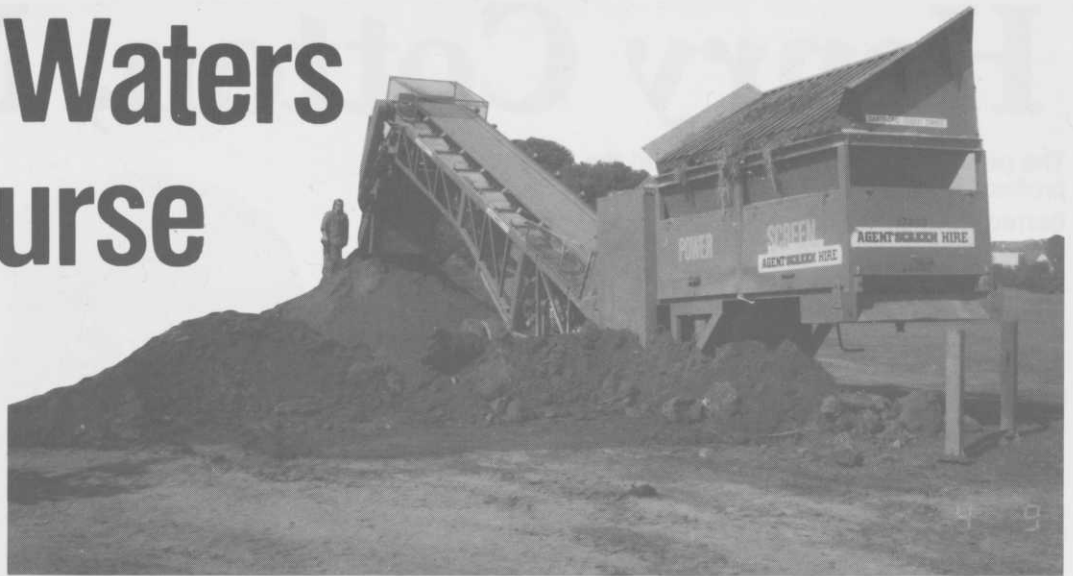


Fairlop Waters Golf Course

Golf was cancelled for days on end at many clubs in the South of England following the great October storms. But not at one of the newest courses in the country, Fairlop Waters at Redbridge, Essex, where only a couple of days were lost.



This reflects the quality of workmanship which has gone into creating the main full 18 hole course out of an area which had been a fairground, a wartime fighter airfield, a gravel pit and a refuse tip. Fairlop Plain, as this flat-as-a-pancake 350 acre site in the Borough of Redbridge was called, has been all of these things, but over the past five to six years it has been transformed into Fairlop Waters, a landscaped amenity with sailing, angling, country park, adventure playground, horse-riding and now a magnificent 120 acre golf course and golf driving range.

Like all the other amenities at Fairlop Waters, the course, on land owned by Redbridge Borough Council, is operated by Norstead Leisure Limited on a 125 year lease, with profits shared by the Council and the company.

Creating the golf course presented all the expected problems of land drainage and irrigation on restored land. It was subject to settlement and suffered badly from flooding.

First enquiries by the Council suggested that it would be difficult to drain the site which is very flat, with only an 11ft fall in about 1,100 yards. Anglian Sportsturf Ltd of Witham, Essex, who are specialists in sportsfield and leisure area creation and improvement, believed it could be done.

Technically, the drainage of a site so flat with Anglian Sportsturf's design expertise and previous experience is possible. However, in order to install the pipe drains with sufficient falls to overcome shifting levels in the ground, it was first necessary to design a drainage scheme that would take account of any natural

drainage fall already existing. In fact, the natural ground gave little help. However, a scheme was designed that would take what advantage it could from the existing levels. Even so, it is difficult to install pipes with a very shallow fall, that this design demanded and the use of specialist laser controlled trenchers are essential. Anglian have pioneered the highly sophisticated computer controlled laser technique and with machines equipped with this technology, the fundamental pipe drainage scheme was installed.

Considerable difficulties were encountered during the course of installation, due to the debris - everything including the kitchen sink - being buried in the tip.

Following the installation of the pipe drainage scheme an inter-connecting matrix of Sand/Gravel

Every part of the Fairlop course is man made, with the help of enormous machines. This machine is screening top soil for drainage.

drainage channels were installed. These pick up the surface water and carry it to the pipe drains. This enables the intensity of the drainage to be dramatically improved to an acceptable level for all year use of a facility of this kind.

Anglian's work has been so successful that the drainage system has proved an effective safety valve, allowing the gas to be vented in a controlled manner so that it has little or no effect on the grass.

John Jacobs Golf Consultants were retained to design the course and supervise its construction in conjunction with the Director of Technical Services. The first parts to be constructed were the tees and greens, giving these the maximum time to settle down before play would begin.

Unfortunately the company to which this work was contracted went into liquidation and Anglian Sportsturf agreed to complete the contract. The company continued to maintain the course and do necessary horticultural work until the course opened during the early summer.



This was how the first green looked during the first summer after seeding. The greens were the first part of the course to be made in order to give them time to settle down before play began.

Every feature of the Fairlop Waters golf site is man-made. Starting from a flat surface, 6,300 yards of interesting and enjoyable golf course has been built, with 87 bunkers, some very large, as well as ditches and lakes. Over the course 5,000 trees and whips have been planted. The teeing areas are very large, which means that they have a longer life during heavy-play times in the summer, and there are holes which would tax a very competent golfer.

The 7th, is extremely long and the 14th requires a straight drive as the out of bounds area lies just to its left and a man-made gully lurks on the right.

All this adds up to a two-and-a-half hour round for a good golfer, with another hour for a less competent player.

Tony Bowers, who controls the course, is delighted with the first four months of Fairlop Waters. With 250,000 people living in the area and a mid-week round costing only £2.75, the course is well patronised.

Fairlop Waters site had many uses over the years, from wartime airfield to rubbish tip. This was how it looked when work began on the construction of the golf course.



Naturally the course is improving with time and as the young trees mature it will take on a new appearance, but comments are becoming more favourable and people are coming a long way to play.

He is particularly pleased that Fairlop Waters has coped with the rainstorms of the early autumn and feels that the drainage system has proved itself highly successful.

Together with a driving range and a magnificent centre where meals and snacks are available, Fairlop Waters is a popular lunchtime rendezvous for business people. With a whole range of other sports facilities on hand, the centre also attracts families who come, not just to play golf, but to sail, fish, ride or just walk.

John Topping, Norstead's general manager for the whole Fairlop Waters Complex, sees the new course as a great amenity and a triumph.

From a most unpromising site a huge new amenity has been provided for Redbridge.

TECHNICAL 2

Article by.....

HUGH DOUGLAS



Do you think of Watermation as Europe's leading
TURF IRRIGATION CONTRACTOR
the one with systems in all the best places?

Quite right — WE ARE

Did you also know we are now Europe's leading
MANUFACTURER OF TURF IRRIGATION EQUIPMENT?

Right again — WE ARE

No need to look any further, we can provide you with everything you need for your turf irrigation.
Telephone us on Woking (04862) 70303 or 21009 for our catalogue

WATERMATION LTD., Monument Way E., Woking, Surrey GU21 5LY. Telex 859224 FLEXON G.
Telephone Woking (04862) 70303/21009 or Stirling (0786) 70252, or Dublin (0001) 760964 or Paris (010 331) 47 06 04 19