Where There's A Wall There's A Way

A short hole with a small teeing ground, the 11th on the Ailsa Course at Turnberry has always worn badly. To overcome the problem, management decided to use winter's lull to rebuild the tee and increase its size fivefold.

However, the hole's location against the sea was a major problem. A wall 50 yards long and 17 feet high in places and strong enough to keep out the sea on one side while holding up 2,000 tons of in-fill and earth on the other was needed.

Estimates of cost jeopardised the entire project, then came the brainwave. During the last war, Turnberry was used as an RAF fighter base and parts of the old runway still remain. With a hired HY-MAC, course manager Russell Brown and his 12 broke the concrete into staff manageable blocks.

Using them to build the wall, the team completed the project within a week and at a fraction of original estimates. With the wall in place, Brown and his boys cut into a nearby mound and moved 2,000 tons of rock and earth to build up the new tee before covering with turf taken from the nearby Culzean Estate.

The project was part of a winter programme of improvement that included enlarging the tee at the famous lighthouse hole 9th and lengthening the 12th hole by about 50 yards. The tee has been taken back into ground recently purchased and brings two large bunkers, previously too close to the tee, into play.

In addition, 40 bunkers have been, or are being, refaced. "Most of the changes have been planned for some time," Turnberry general manager Chris Rouse said, "although the lengthening of the 12th hole has been done mainly with the 1986 Open in mind."



The wall that Russell Brown and his boys built.

