

(contd. from p. 4)

so much in favour; we had our little heated fors and againsts, but we always parted the best of friends. In 1929 I had just taken over Sonning at the age of 24 which in those days was very unusual. Unlike today, you were never considered for a head job with less than five years' experience. Tom Mason was Head Greenkeeper at Hendon for as long as I can remember; he was a few years older than me, but I tried to keep up with him. We often sat and compared our experiences but compost was always the basis of good turf. Greenkeepers before the last war had plenty of time to experiment. We just saw that things were done. I, myself, had a staff of eight, each man saw that the tools he used were looked after and put away clean. A large amount of unemployment kept staff with one club for years, unless they took over a course elsewhere. I myself trained three such men.

Our Annual Tournaments were great fun and often a hundred or more would attend. So many piling into a train carriage with their assortment of clubs and baggage was a sight to be seen.

After the first morning's practice and the afternoon annual meeting we would hold the auction in the evening; there always seemed to be a lot of money around for this event then; not so today; it's a long time since this auction has taken place.

The weather in our play as well as our work has played some funny tricks. I recall to mind our visit to the Research Station in 1930 in a practice round at Hawkworth near Bingley. I was playing with the late Ted Berry, his handicap was plus 1, a great golfer, the rain fell in bucketfuls half way round the course. We were both soaked to the skin. Getting to the 18th green his ball lay in a deep bunker guarding the green, in at least 2½ ft of water. His remark was, "Stan, I can't get any wetter; here goes, straight in to get this ball".

The competition proper followed the next day with seniors marking for juniors, either in the morning or afternoon, changing over next day. I once played with Ted Dunn—he off 7, me off

4. We finished in 75, he 75 on the first day and I led the field by two shots.

Next day I was going well until the 11th a hole about 260 yards with a stone wall running close to the green. Here I met trouble; going for the green I put nine balls out of bounds. I took the last ball out of the bag, put it on the green, and holed the putt for an 11. Out of bounds was fortunately distance only there.

During the war I was discharged from the Army, in April 1941. I did not go back to Sonning at once but to Calcot, on the other side of Reading. It had been run by one of my former assistants who was still in the Army. I recall a long list of old friends—Ted Dunn, Arthur Tydeman, Fred Ney, Alf Honby, Charlie Saunders, Bill Smithers, Dave Ness, Mac Maclean, Charlie Fry, Tom Bridges and the Mason brothers to name just a few. After the war the Association had to be reorganised. There was very little money in the kitty but Sir Emsley Carr of the *News of the World* gave us 100 guineas to put us on our feet. Our founder, the late F. G. Hawtree, worked hard in every way to help all members of the B.G.G.A., and the greenkeepers of the twenties and thirties have done much to help the young ones into their positions today. Now they have opportunity to make real progress in wages and conditions and knowledge.

Mr Dennis' present address is 116 Hall Lane, Upminster, Essex.

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