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HON. EDITOR: F. W. HAWTREE.



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JULY 1962

*No bird soars too high, if  
he soars with his own wings.*

WILLIAM BLAKE.

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# TEE SHOTS



by the Editor

**M**ORE bouquets were handed out to the greenkeeper by players, Press, and public during the Amateur Championship at Royal Liverpool Golf Club last month. Lou Lowcock had defeated a malicious spell of weather and neither first-round casualties nor seeds that failed to germinate could blame the greens.

For sheer golfing atmosphere, few links can match Hoylake in the soft evening light over the Dee when it broods on the surprises in store for the morrow. The evolution of the natural virtues of the site over so many years and the jealous retention of man-made obstacles of cop, road, and boundary have reached towards a ruthless and challenging simplicity which many golf clubs discuss but which few have the courage to achieve. Its relatively flat holes tend to be more controversial than those in the sand-hills because they are less firmly fixed by contour. Even so there are only seventy bunkers on the course and three holes with none at all.

Coupled with this economy, many isolated built-up tees have been combined on a lower level and a few spots subject to winter flooding adjusted. Greenkeeping can thus concentrate on the vital tasks though during a Championship the greenkeeper is never free from urgent appeals.

\* \* \*

A crisis even arose a fortnight before when a Jack Russell bitch disappeared up a drain outlet on the shore. Lou traced the drain across the links towards the 10th green and indicated to firemen called by the owner where Sue would be holed up. The owner said after the rescue, "The firemen were wonderful. They only made a small hole in a patch of semi-rough and fortunately I think the course will be alright in time for the Amateur Championship".

It certainly was. Let us quote Mr. Henry Longhurst writing in the *Sunday Times*.

*"For thirty-three years, the Royal Liverpool Club had a celebrated greenkeeper in Tom Bridges, who retired five years ago. He must have been a difficult man indeed to follow. As I walked round this morning, I found myself lifting my hat in spirit to his successor, Lowcock, who is a tremendous worker, out at all hours of the morning with the rest of his staff. If ever Hoylake could claim to have 'the best eighteen greens in the world', they could surely claim it now."*

# LENGTH, LINE, and CARRY

SINCE the last issue of the Greenkeeper went to press, the 1962 run of events has taken golf writers to a variety of different kinds of course. Moortown for the English, Ganton for England v. France, Sunningdale for the Gold Vase, the Berkshire for the Berkshire Trophy, Porters Park for the new Junior Gold Vase, Wentworth for the Daks and Hoylake for the Amateur. The professional watcher is left with an almost embarrassing wealth of impressions.

One that stands out, though, is the way an extra bit of length in a top player's game can make an astonishing difference to his scoring ability; and how this can be decisive or disastrous, depending on how straight he hits the ball. At the beginning of this sequence we had the new Michael Lunt at Moortown. "The new" is justified, since he has spent the winter shortening and quickening his backswing, and incidentally getting rid of the loop he used to have. The result is a magnificent-looking method, which has not only kept his old length, but actually added to it.

*At the 1st, he was able to knock two straight calm woods to the heart of the green, when few others in the field could get near it. At the long 2nd he once got up with a drive and a 7, when others were ending short with two woods; and at the longish 3rd, he was in range of the green with an iron out of thickish rough, when others were battling all out.*

## Heroic Scramble

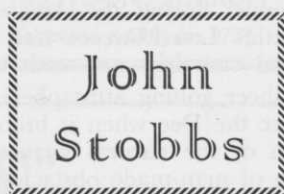
Against Shepperson in the semi-final, he drove straight, and won irresistibly. In the final against Bonallack, he lost his compass and, inevitably, went down, even after a day's heroic scrambling. His sort of length, worth about half a shot a hole when it is under control, can cost  $1\frac{1}{2}$  shots a hole when it isn't; even for a man whose powers of recovery are so well-trained by past misdemeanours as Lunt's are.

But the effect also depends on the course. At Moortown many of the long

holes allow a drive straight up the middle and then a straight beat through an open entrance into the green. Other courses are not so kind; and indeed it is a nice point of golf argument whether they should be or not.

## Lottery

Certainly it is not any of those long holes which stand out in the mind at Moortown, but a more modest one, the 9th. It is only a drive and a medium or short iron; but, to me at any rate, its construction is classical. The drive is on to a fairway sloping slightly to the right, away from an out-of-bounds wall running right to the green, and then angling behind it as well. On the right of the fairway is open moorland, where the lies are a lottery but mostly possible.



The only easy way into the green is to drive courageously up the middle left of the fairway, disdaining the threat of the wall. If you drive out to the right into the safe country, as Lunt usually did and many others with him, then you have to pitch high through the air straight on to the green, which is plateaued on its right, and guarded there by yawning bunkers, with the pin just on the top above them. Take the safe line for the tee out to the right, and you have to play a really closely calculated and bravely executed pitch, before you get a putt for a three; take the bold line from the tee up the middle, and you have an open shot straight along to the pin. You are offered your choice of courage and challenge; and this seems, to me, to make a good hole.

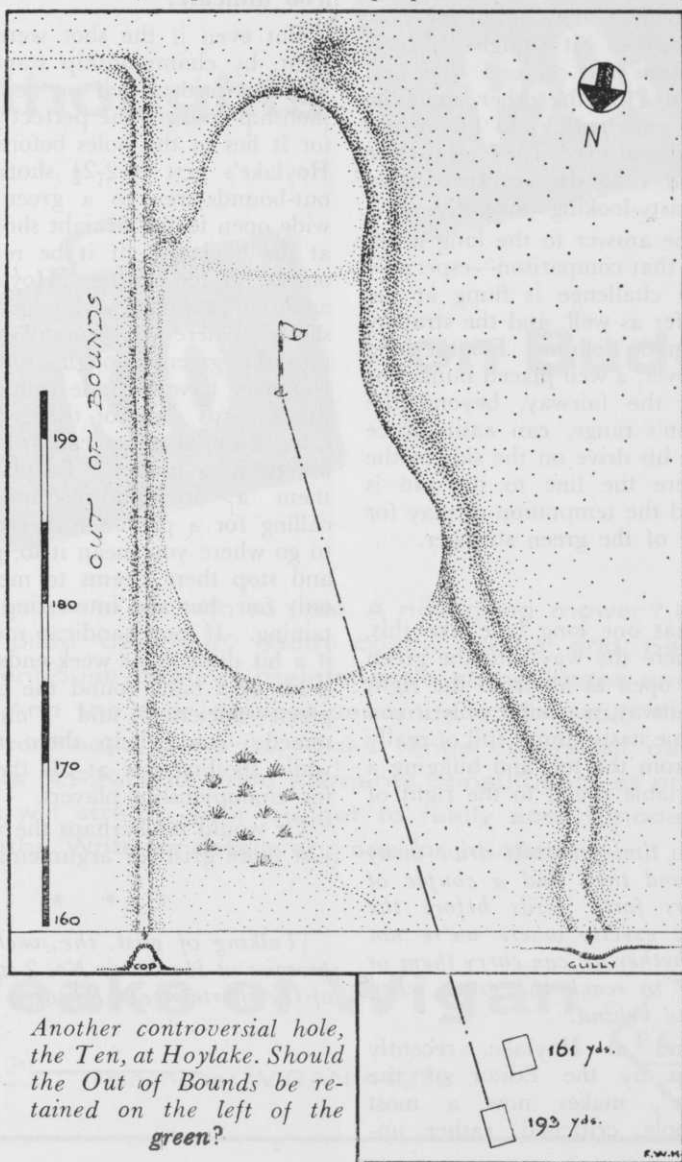
At Hoylake again we saw the long hitting of Joe Carr. It is noticeable, when you watch the construction of his

scores carefully, that even when he goes crooked, as he often still does, particularly with his second shots at long holes, he still wins himself quite a short little pitch or chip. The 15th has an open entrance to the middle of the green; and there, with the wind against, Carr was able to get the length every time; shorter players, after two perfect strokes, would still have anything up to a fifty yard pitch, while Carr, with two not very straight ones, would still have a 20-30 yard flip or chip from the edge of the green. In fact, to put him out,

Chapman had to play some of the mightiest golf ever seen in a championship, making up for his less length by iron shots ruled again and again at the flag, and perfectly judged for length.

*He actually covered 12 holes from the third tee to the 15th green, in 9 under 4's; and it was Carr's power which mainly enabled him to hold on so well that he only went down by 2/1. Most other competitors would have collapsed by 5/4 at least.*

What golf architects should do about people like Carr and Lunt, and, in the



*Another controversial hole, the Ten, at Hoylake. Should the Out of Bounds be retained on the left of the green?*

professional field, Palmer, Weetman and Alliss—had they the opportunity to re-make championship hazards to deal with them—is arguable. Should the long hitter have the green at long holes open to him, so that he gets his reward for controlled strength automatically? Or should he rather have to play for one side of the green or the other, relying on a chip to get his 4?

His opponent might often prefer the latter; and indeed, a green guarded more firmly on one side than the other does in a way present a stronger challenge than one guarded on both sides. If it is guarded on both sides, the only choice is to try to hit straight. But if it is open and safe on one side and heavily guarded on the other, then the challenge at once springs to life in the player's mind and eye! 'Do I go for the pin or would I be wise to keep away from that nasty-looking bunker?'

Perhaps the answer to the long hitter lies really in that comparison—especially as the same challenge is flung at the ordinary golfer as well, and the strategy of the hole made definite. For the long hitter, moreover, a well placed bunker or dog leg up the fairway, beyond the ordinary man's range, can easily force him to place his drive on the side of the fairway where the line to the pin is narrower and the temptation of play for the safe side of the green stronger.

### Tumps

Hoylake has one long hole like this, the 14th, where the way into the green is only wide open at all from the right side of the fairway, reachable only if you can carry some nasty tumps full of really thick grass from the tee, and hugging a cop with variable rough to the right of it.

*Most of us timid mortals drive away safely left, and then find a couple of cross bunkers forty yards before the green almost exactly where we're not quite sure whether we can carry them or not in order to reach the green, even with the wind behind.*

The second at Hoylake, recently tightened up by the Editor of the "Greenkeeper", makes now a most interesting hole, criticised, rather un-

necessarily I thought, by one or two as being too tight. Certainly the bunkers close well in to the front of the green, and there is a narrow path in only from exactly the right line from the tee, again a bold one over trouble. But there's plenty of room for a high bold shot from any direction to pitch on the green and hold; and there are no hazards round the back or right hand edge at all: so that it is merely a matter of pitching pin-high straight-right to be safely there for a putt, or at worst a chip.

### Too difficult?

But even if the shot were unusually tight, by championship standards—and Hoylake prides itself on being a championship course—the perfect justification for it lies in the holes before and after. Hoylake's first is 2-2½ shots round an out-bounds-area to a green absolutely wide open to the straight shot, and open at the back too, if it be reached with one a bit too strong. Hoylake's third, again, is a fairly wide open long two shotter, where any straight shot will run into the green, though from the right you may have to fade round a bunker thirty yards short of the green on that side. Both of these can be reached by low-running pushes. To place between them a drive-and-medium-iron hole calling for a precise high-struck second to go where you mean it to, pitch there, and stop there, seems to me to be not only fair, but also interesting and entertaining. If long handicap members find it a bit difficult at week-ends, well then a bit of a bank round the back of the green—ancient and unfashionable remedy—could help them to hold it, while spoiling not at all the challenge for championship players.

Or would it? Perhaps the very idea is just more grist for argument.

\* \* \*

[Talking of grist, the week-end compromise at Hoylake's No. 2 is to use one of the shorter tees—Editor.]



**Fertile**

**thoughts**



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*Which is the most dangerous tree in a thunderstorm? Where are storms most frequent? Here are the answers to these and many other questions.*

# FLASH

## POINTS by DAVID BOWEN, F.R.Met.S.

**O**UR hottest areas have the greatest number of thunderstorms. Most of Lincolnshire experience just over twenty days of thunder every year, while Leicestershire, west Yorkshire, Essex and the mid-Thames Valley are next in line with between fifteen and twenty days. Western and north-western districts of Britain are the least thundery regions, particularly Scotland and south and east Ireland. In the Shetlands there are only about two days of thunder a year.

Between December and April thunderstorms are infrequent everywhere in Britain. Between May and August there are generally five thundery days in East Anglia, London, and Midlands and the Welsh Border counties for every one to two in the west and south-west. Then, by the autumn, there is a marked change as south-west England becomes more thundery than anywhere else. Dartmoor at this time is four times as vulnerable as any eastern area.

Thunderstorms can be a real menace on the farm, and, seeing that animals will insist on sheltering under lone trees or by isolated hedges or thickets, the comparatively small cost of insuring them against this risk is well worth while.

According to statistics recently made available, the oak suffers more from lightning than any other tree. Next in order came the elm and ash and, last of all, the beech. We should keep away from outbuildings, wire fences, single trees and all high ground during thunderstorms. Rivers and lakes should also be avoided.

### Proximity

Some idea of the nearness of a storm can be obtained by counting the number of seconds between each lightning flash and the resulting thunder. A five-second interval shows that the storm is a mile away, ten seconds that it is two miles away, and so on in that proportion. A flash from a storm immediately overhead

comes simultaneously with the thunder, which, in the experience of most of us (at one time or another) resembles the smashing of several tons of plate glass.

The well-known climatologist, Dr. C. E. P. Brooks, discovered several years ago that the number of thunderstorms over the world as a whole increases during years of peak sunspot activity. Fortunately, the eleven-year sunspot cycle reached its peak two years ago. However, one must also remember that, at any one moment, there are as many as four thousand thunderstorms over the world as a whole, and between forty and fifty thousand of them occur every day. The average annual death rate from lightning is one per million in population in this country, but it is eight times as great in Australia and in the United States of America. In South Africa it is fifty-five times as great, and here the thunderstorm season, between October and February, is a time of terror for those who live in small, overcrowded wooden buildings.

### Lightning Conductors

In recent years there has been some confusion about the value of lightning conductors. They are necessary on tall buildings, and even on small buildings which stand on relatively high ground. They are also desirable on large or small buildings which stand singly on level ground and are not protected by nearby tall trees. However, except on very slim, steeple-like buildings, one conductor is seldom adequate, as it will protect only a small zone of the building. Houses having several chimneys, or which have a broad expanse of roof, invariably need several conductors. To install them is no job for the amateur handyman, and the cost of a large installation could be quite considerable in view of the large amount of copper rod that is used.

Chimneys, of course, are particularly vulnerable, since the lining of carbon

inside the stack makes an excellent conductor for lightning in the immediate vicinity.

People sometimes wonder what to do if they are caught in a thunderstorm when driving. The answer here is not to rush out of the car, for a saloon car with metal roof will (according to laboratory tests) give complete protection to those inside. If the car is struck—and this, as it happens, is very rare—the lightning charge will be conducted through the car to the metal hubs and from here will jump to the ground.

Probably the most dangerous place of all in a thunderstorm is a golf course—the metal tip of a swinging golf club acts as a perfect conductor! Make for shelter as soon as possible, and, in this

blinded by forked lightning) is not very convincing. But its exact composition remains a mystery. Nor is it known how it is formed. According to photographs, it varies in size and occasionally reaches the proportion of a football. It appears to have the habit of drifting through open windows and then exploding.

A single thunderstorm can be roughly compared to an atomic bomb explosion in slow motion. It contains winds that are vicious enough to tear an aircraft apart. A large thunderstorm would have the energy of at least one hydrogen bomb and enough electricity, if harnessed, to light a moderate-sized town for at least a week.

Conditions favourable for the development are to some extent predictable.

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regard, I am bound to say that a wooden golf pavilion offers less protection against lightning than the underside of a cliff (should one be handy). The object is to get away from the highest ground in the vicinity, if possible.

Quite apart from casualties and damage to property, we suffer a loss of thousands of pounds worth of milk every year during thundery weather, due to the great number of temperature fluctuations (not always felt by human beings) that are associated with it. Winter thunderstorms, however, can be ignored in this respect, since temperature fluctuations have little effect when they are below about 60 degrees Fahrenheit.

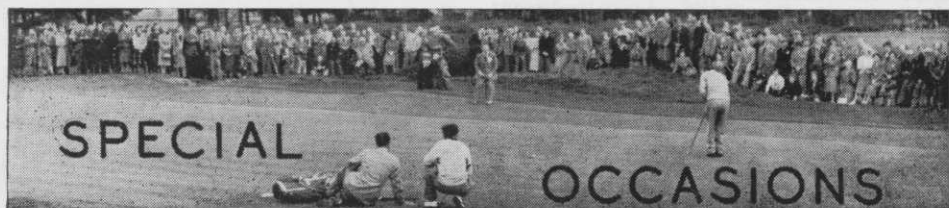
Meteorologists have long argued about whether there is such a thing as "ball" lightning. Due to the numerous reports of it, and even of photographs, the old theory that it is simply an image in the eye of an observer (temporarily

The best guide is to go by the local indications. Turretting cloud tops through the distant haze, a slight fall in barometer level after a very hot spell, or a slight fall of the barometer accompanied by unusually oppressive atmospheric conditions: these are all signs that we should be on the alert.

Don't blame the forecaster too much if he gives the alert, and no storm materialises. For although thundery weather can be general over a wide area, it need not affect the whole of the area at the same time, the point being that slight shift of wind here or there can make all the difference to where the lightning will strike and the rain fall.

Can lightning strike twice in the same place? Most certainly it can—and will. The Empire State Building in New York was once struck a dozen times within fifteen minutes!

*With grateful acknowledgments to the "Farmers' Weekly".*



#### JULY

18th South West Section, Annual Tournament, Weston-Super-Mare Golf Club.

#### AUGUST

13th, 14th and 15th B.G.G.A., A.G.M. and Annual Tournament, Pyle and Kenfig Golf Club.

30th Southern Section, Autumn Tournament, Sunningdale Golf Club.

#### SEPTEMBER

25th East Midland Section, Autumn Tournament, Willesley Park Golf Club, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Leicestershire.

26th Welsh Section, Cardiff Cup, Glamorganshire Golf Club.

#### NOVEMBER

28th Midland Section visit to Messrs. Massey Ferguson.

## ROD DAVIES at HANDSWORTH

IT may cost £2,000 to train an apprentice greenkeeper, but unless clubs were prepared to co-operate, the standard of golf greenkeeping might slip back to the "bad old days."

This was the warning given by Mr. "Jock" Glass, the national chairman of the greenkeepers' organisation speaking after Carl Bretherton's annual match at Handsworth.

He was talking largely to the converted, for Mr. Bretherton's side largely consists of the chairmen of the Green Committees of many Midland clubs, plus those who are interested in good greenkeeping because they are good players.

Mr. Glass stirred up controversy some time ago when he forecast that unless the inflow of young men to greenkeeping increased, golfers would have to take their own mowing machines around with them before long.

"Greenkeeping must keep pace with industry as an attractive proposition to young men" was the point Mr. Glass so rightly made. That would mean that golf subscriptions would have to keep pace with rising wages in industry—and that is something golfers have been loath to see for some time.

Mr. Bretherton raised a fine side for his annual match but it was drawn  $7\frac{1}{2}$  to  $7\frac{1}{2}$  against the keen greenkeepers. Incidentally Charlie Stowe had to finish 3—2—2 to win his games.

As Charlie said at the subsequent supper: "Beware opponents who say either that they have not struck a ball for six months or are having twinges of rheumatism. When you hear that kind of thing, you know you're in for a tough fight".

*With grateful acknowledgments to the "Birmingham Mail".*