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HON. EDITOR: F. W. HAWTREE.



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SEPTEMBER 1962

*Nothing happens to you that
hasn't happened to someone else.*

WILLIAM FEATHER.

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TEE SHOTS



by the Editor

MORE and more Southport ladies are joining the Formby Ladies' Golf Club where they can enjoy their own club-house, their own course, grumble at their own Committee, and never have men getting in the way if they don't want them. The sharp division is carried right through the staff on the course where Bert Rimmer and his two assistants (male) retire to a group of tarred huts by the Ladies' 18th tee while Len Partridge and his four enjoy more sheltered accommodation by the men's club-house.

This is not to say that a helping hand is not lent in emergency. But Stan Wilson, whom we met driving a gleaming Massey Ferguson Diesel on Men's No. 6 with venerable but still effective Lloyds gangs in tow, admitted that if he was asked to mow a Ladies' course fairway, he generally had to ask the way.

This was in holiday month but both courses were beautifully turned out and the trim carpets of heather in bloom were a picture. The Ladies' course is a compact 5,292 yards protectively surrounded by the championship course which tops 6,800 and warrants all of its two extra staff. The three green mowers take five each and then converge on the club-house for the nearest three. Last man home, we suspect, gets the 18th which is 19 yards wide and just 56 yards long! By the time the operator has ripped the tops off the few million grass blades contained in this elegant sward he has covered a comfortable mile and a quarter.

* * *

We have always suspected that grass on the red soil of Devon is shades greener. The Torquay Golf Course has finally convinced us. A familiar figure was at work though the spectacles deceived us momentarily. But it was the same George Long behind them running his Verticut tenderly over the 16th green. He confessed that he needs them now after—what?—forty years on Petitor? George followed his father as head man and is 65 next year, so he is not grumbling. By the look of his course—neither are his members!



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BEEFING ABOUT BUMPS

by John Stobbs

THE Open Championship which Arnold Palmer won at Old Troon in July will go down in the records as one of the most interesting of all time. This, not only for the play itself (and the way Palmer in the end all but wiped out all opposition completely despite Kel Nagle's two sub-par rounds beside him on the final day), but also for the odd state of the course and the conditions which came with it.

The American magazine, Sports Illustrated, in a report of the event, describes Troon as follows: "*A dour, forbidding links . . . one of those eerie, unnerving British golf courses surrounded by evil dunes, vile shrubs and an atmosphere more suited to the Hound of the Baskervilles than to sport . . . The Fairways are narrow, splotched with steep-sided bunkers that look like moon craters and burned brown by one of Scotland's worst droughts . . . the rough is full of those bushes that are as prickly as the Scots conscience: varieties of spiny broom and an impenetrable menace called whin.*" Well, that's how their correspondent saw it! In point of fact, in some ways Troon was rather easier than usual, in that the rough was hardly grown at all and—certainly by traditional standards—the gorse was kept well back and under control.

Champion's plan

What was true, though, was that the course was as dry as tinder and the fairways hard, fast, and, as a result, bumpy. It was this, more than anything else, which seemed to frighten the foreigners—all except Palmer. Palmer studied it all carefully, decided how best to play each hole, set out to do so, and did so. His four performances at the 11th—where even the U.S.A. Open Champion, Nicklaus was terrified into taking a 10—were models of absolute consistency of aim and pattern. A drive (three times with a 1-iron, twice with a spoon) across the scrub country to exactly the right spot in the fairway, five yards or so short of the aligning gorse: then a long iron banged up towards the railway with a slight hook on it to curve up towards the green and run into the heart of it.

This was not just high golfing intelligence and confidence; it was the absolute courage and mastery of his game.

Where lesser men beefed and grumbled about good drives bumping into the rough, and consistent scoring being impossible, Palmer ruthlessly proved what nonsense they were talking with his 71, 69, 67, 69: 207.

Test of golf

He also proved, incidentally, if one stopped to think about it, that we in these islands have no reason whatsoever to be in any way ashamed or doubtful about our sort of championship golf, played on rolling seaside courses, often fraught with penal hazards, and to greens which have to be seduced a little bit more subtly—or at least craftily—than by the transatlantic-type here-welcome-and-hold-it sort of approach. One can even hang quite proudly on to the notion that it is really the best sort of golf in the world—as I think it is. Who on earth really wants to reduce golf to a laid-on practice ground exercise, which is what a lot of tournaments are over in the States, and are beginning to be on some inland courses in this country! Let the championship links variations through-the-green last for ever, and may they never be less difficult, less puzzling, and less fraught with evil possibilities (particularly in a wind).

There is, after all, only one thing in a course absolutely essential to good golf. It is not, as some people have been trying to tell us, that all the greens should hold a demonstration up-in-the-air pitch shot like glued felt. On the contrary, it is that once the player has got the ball on to the green somehow—anyhow he likes or has the wit to!—then he should be able to feel absolutely secure that the ball will roll true to the putt. He deserves to be sure that it shall not joggle or screw about: and that there shall be no unfairly deceptive variations of pace from one green to the next.



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Up to the green, the sky and land alike are open to him, with thirteen clubs to use them. He is at complete liberty to make the ball fly how and where he likes. But once he is on the green he is absolutely powerless to do anything but roll the wretched little ball across the ground. The sky is no longer his limit; his only limit is in his own courage, nerve and skill—plus the simple mechanical performance of the turf, as it has been prepared.

If any moral comes out of the Championship at Old Troon, it is that no decent golfer need ever beef about the impossibility of the ground between tee or green; for it is the same for everyone and he is at liberty to craft out his way however he likes. If the putting is fair once he gets there—then it's up to him to think, and play: not moan and run away.

Greenkeepers' problems

Greenkeepers, beset as they so often are by fatuous complaints about the rough being unfair here and there, or one thing and another being wrong, disgraceful, untidy, idiotic, or utterly bad between tee and apron, can hardly be blamed if occasionally—seeking, as we all do, a life without strife and some measure of independence and peace of mind—they tend to explode to themselves that the blighters can't expect us to do everything at once, and if that's all they care about, well then. It must be tempting for many a man to turn a blind eye for the moment to his greens, in an attempt to give his time and attention to keeping the more wretched members quiet. It leads to no peace of mind in the end, though; because if there's

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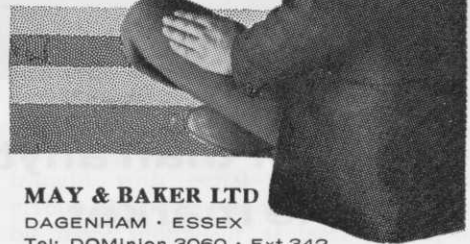
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one topic they'll all start blinding and bellyaching about in no time—if they have the slightest or remotest cause—it's the greens, of course.

Whatever one's views and feelings about putting (and mine are unprintable) greens are the one part of a course that can decisively make or mar the golf it has in it: and the man who looks after them has more claim that any other to be recognised—and perhaps occasionally harried—as the V.I.P. of golf.

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ENDURANCE TEST

The Annual Tournament in South Wales

The wettest for fifty years?

THE Pyle and Kenfig Golf Club offered every hospitality and golf in the classic tradition. Their's is a setting in the old and, many say, the best tradition—common land by the sea, few bunkers, short-cropped turf, a seaward leap into dunes piling on pressure as it goes, and no frills.

One has to be hardy to play this course well in winter. Monday's Stableford round showed this when a blustery wind and grey skies matched the grey stone cottages in the villages. But the greenkeeper can stand an English August as well as anyone and when the first three disappeared over the brow of the first hole at 8-45 a.m., the practice swings of those waiting were as supple as ever. Many stayed supple as far as the 9th where four arrived with the regulation 18 points, G. Woodward (Walsall), D. D. Beaumont (Moor-town), G. Payne (Maidenhead) and D. J. Lord (Swansea Bay). W. J. Kirkpatrick of Dulwich and Sydenham, playing from scratch, had gone one better with 19 points from his one under bogey 36. J. K. Glass on his last day as Chairman and A. Crawford (Whitecraigs) were on 19 with him. But the man of that particular moment was W. J. Kingston (Reading), who had compiled 21 points and was still looking for more.

Then came the seaward half. "No excuses", said Jock Glass, "I just played badly". Kingston, too, dropped away and only gathered a further 12 points. Kirkpatrick, after a useful birdie at No. 11, dropped shots at 14, 15, 16 and 18 for 16 points and a total of 35, but Crawford maintained the same form throughout and came home with one five at No. 11 and eight fours at all the rest for another 19 and 38. New Chairman Lord knew the back nine's snags but though he was level fours till the 16th tee, three fives at the last three only brought him up to 37 points and second place above Kirkpatrick. A steady rearguard action by W. Sumner (Grange Park) added 17 to 17, and a deserved fourth place, but here unfortunately the list closed, so that was that.

Convivial atmosphere

The rain was of less consequence in the afternoon as the assembly went into plenary session, and deliberated the affairs of the Association under the Chairmanship of the President. The official record is elsewhere so we need not elaborate the practical outcome of the debates. The atmosphere, as is proper, reflected something of the convivial refreshment which preceded it and was in sharp contrast to the orderly spirit which prevailed at the last gathering in Wales when heavier rain put it forward to the morning. Two members indeed felt obliged to refresh

themselves during the meeting but their attempt to seduce a senior official from the line of duty was not successful. Any ground which they gained over the rest of the attendance however was soon lost when at 5 o'clock informal business was resumed in another place.

Conditions worsen

On Tuesday the weather went from bad to worse. The morning was wet, the wind blew hard; the afternoon added torrential downpours and lightning playing round the course.

At lunch-time only four players, understandably, had broken eighty: G. Piggott (Henley), playing off 10, had a nett 75; R. J. Pugh, G. Payne 78; while D. Jones, J. K. Glass, D. J. Lord and D. D. Beaumont were bracketed on 79. The leading match of low-handicap golfers were all in the eighties.

It was a mercy that the cup for players aged 65 and over was decided over the morning round only, but there were many less

PYLE & KENFIG GOLF CLUB Length, 6,441 yards

Hole	Length (yards)	Bogey	Hole	Length (yards)	Bogey
1	486	5	10	410	5
2	420	4	11	460	5
3	200	3	12	187	3
4	480	5	13	383	4
5	280	4	14	380	4
6	147	3	15	230	3
7	337	4	16	400	4
8	333	4	17	440	5
9	489	5	18	379	4
	<hr/>			<hr/>	
	3,172	37		3,269	37

advanced in years who jibbed at going out again in wet clothes with only the prospect of a few million volts to put an end to their misery. It was equally a mercy that the Rules of Golf make some provision for such conditions and that the hardier spirits continued the competition.

G. Woodward went round in 79, a miraculous score in the circumstances, and secured the Scratch Prize to the general satisfaction. He was particularly unlucky at Worthing when the weather played similar tricks less continuously, and though he had thirteen years out of greenkeeping and away from golf he has come back to both with skill and distinction.

R. J. Pugh, 157, took the first prize in the Senior Division and D. Jones, 154, the first Junior, also the best nett score of the day. As the results show, there were even enough

players finishing to claim all the rest of the prizes. They should all have been awarded a special citation for outstanding courage in the face of the elements. If this report is silent on their performances at individual holes they, better than anyone, will understand the reason why.

Visit of Mr. T. S. Morris

One of the few bright spots in the day was the visit of Mr. T. S. Morris, J.P., President of the Welsh Golfing Union. We were most grateful to him for coming to see us and for his kind gesture in contributing to the Prize List as well.

Wednesday began as bleakly as the other two days but suddenly, about 11 a.m., patches of blue sky appeared and the sun shone. This enabled the competitor who had saturated three outfits in turn and had none left, to put on each in turn and dry them out. The 18 hole medal round was windy but warmer and F. W. Ford (Hampstead), playing off 16, had soon returned a 73 nett. S. A. Tucker came in with 85—11, 74. Then D. Jones (Pyle and Kenfig) returned another 73, but Ford's last nine holes were better so he remained the winner.

The final ceremony followed after lunch when Mr. L. Williams, the Captain of Pyle and Kenfig Golf Club, presented the prizes to the worthy winners, all of whom, in spite of their ordeal, stepped up in sprightly fashion as if it was all in the day's work, as indeed it often is. J. J. O'Gorman's charming daughter, Marion, presented a bouquet to Mrs. Bretherton, and Mr. Dix thanked the Club for their hospitality, their fine course, and the welcome comfort which their catering had so constantly and promptly provided. Whatever the trials of play or the problems of the A.G.M., there is a wonderful atmosphere of bonhomie in these concluding moments which makes all the work worthwhile. And the work put in by Mr. Dix, the Hon. Secretary, with the able and willing help of Mr. Southgate and Mr. Payne of Messrs. Ransomes, Sims & Jefferies who were joined

on Tuesday by Mr. Soutar and Mr. Wilson from the Ipswich headquarters, was continuous, devoted and precise. We are very grateful to all these gentlemen for their cheerful running of the office side of the Tournament and to all those who turned up and turned out to make it a success.

One final word. This was, let us be frank, a badly attended Tournament. Forty odd competitors, thirty odd at the A.G.M.—these are silly numbers for an Association with over five hundred members. Some even question the morality of asking our many kind friends for prizes if the turn-out is only to be about 8% of the membership. All sorts of reasons can be advanced and, depending on the persuasiveness of the speaker, will gain more or less support. The usual statements are—Too far! Too long! Wrong time of year! Clubs won't help with time off or expenses! Interferes with holidays! Can't leave course at that time! Things aren't what they used to be!

Future decisions

All cogent points no doubt, but who is to say if they are right? Only those directly concerned, namely as many of the members as possible! Therefore we shall ask you next month to send us back a questionnaire which is being prepared. Your answers are the only useful basis for future decisions. If there are factors which prevent members attending a tournament in August, the Committee want to know what they are and whether anything can be done to overcome them. This is a changing world and if the old pattern does not fit modern requirements, then the pattern must change. The future pattern may depend on your answers. Be sure to give them next month. It will involve putting a few ticks on a piece of paper and sending it back to Head Office. Then the facts will be known and the right decisions can be taken. Of course, the small entry may have been due to the smallpox scare in the district earlier in the year. If so your answers will reveal this factor. The matter lies in your hands.

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News



from the Sections

MIDLAND

By F. Cashmore

Chairman:
G. HART
(Gay Hill)

Hon. Secretary:
76 Four Oaks Common Road
Sutton Coldfield, Warwickshire.

I MUST APOLOGISE TO MEMBERS for my failure to send notes for the August journal. I was on holiday and let it go by. Sorry.

Annual General Meeting

We had quite a fair attendance at the Annual General Meeting at the Robin Hood Golf Club on 25th June.

Our President, Mr. Carl Bretherton was in the Chair and a number of our Vice-Presidents attended.

E. Benbow presented his last Balance Sheet which was adopted. There were many expressions of thanks for the sterling work he had done as Treasurer ever since the Section was reorganised after the war.

Mr. Bretherton was unanimously re-elected as President and we were very glad he accepted the office.

The Vice-Presidents were re-elected en bloc with the addition of Messrs. H. G. Lunt, Edgbaston G.C. and C. F. N. Boulton from Stourbridge.

The following Officers were re-elected:—Chairman: G. Hart; Vice-Chairman: W. Mason; Secretary: F. Cashmore, and on the proposal of E. Benbow, seconded by W. Barton, G. Wilson was elected as Treasurer; E. Benbow was re-elected as our representative on the Executive Council.

G. Hart expressed the thanks of the Section to our Honorary Auditors, Messrs. E.

Ballenger and K. Sargeson who were re-elected.

On his retirement from greenkeeping, our old friend, Harry Drewitt was elected an Honorary Life Member and we wish him many more years amongst us. Mr. R. Stanley of Messrs. Ransomes was elected an Honorary Member of the Section. The President asked members to stand for a moment in respect for Charles Fletcher who had passed away during the year.

Parker Challenge Cup

During the afternoon 14 members played for the Parker Challenge Cup. Result: 1st, A. Mitton, Fenham Park, 86—14=72, Challenge Cup and Tankard; 2nd, T. Jones, Warley, 79—5=74; 3rd, A. Stephens, Moor Hall, 94—20=74.

New Members

We welcome M. H. Williams, 53 Brackenfield Road, Great Barr, Birmingham, 22, who is on the staff of the Handsworth Golf Club and congratulate Bob Goodwin, Shirley Golf Club on his appointment as Head Greenkeeper at Whittington Barracks Golf Club. His address is 167 Birmingham Road, Lichfield, Staffs.

Autumn Tournament

By kind permission of the South Staffs. Golf Club, our Autumn Tournament will be held on their course on Wednesday, 26th September. Will members who wish to play please let me have their entries by 15th September so that I may make arrangements for catering.

Annual Dinner

The Annual Dinner will be held at the King's Head Hotel, Bearwood, on Friday, 14th December. More details next month, but please make a note of the date as we wish it to be as successful as last year.

NORTHERN

By J. Parker

Chairman:
G. W. MASON
(Halifax West End)

Hon. Secretary:
8 Goit Stock Terr., Harden,
Bingley, Yorks.

AT THE TIME OF WRITING THESE notes our well-known friend, Ted Calam, of Ganton Golf Club, was seriously ill in Scarborough Hospital. I have written to Mrs. Calam expressing, what I am sure is the wish of all members, for his quick and full recovery to Good Health.

Mr. Bill Hannam

As a result of an accident at work Mr. W. Hannam of Bradford Golf Club, has had a long spell in Bradford Royal Infirmary. He has had to have an operation on his hip and is now learning to walk again. I am sure we all wish his long lay-up will soon be at an end.

Change of Addresses

Mr. Doug. Cooper has taken up an appointment with Barnsley Municipal Golf Club. His new address is:—20 Wakefield Road, Staincross, Barnsley.

Mr. T. O'Brien has moved to foreign parts. His new address is:—H.Q. 7322 A.B. WG. Box 1332 American Air Base, La Martinerie, Chateauroux, France.

SOUTHERN

By W. Mason

Chairman:
J. K. GLASS
(Thorpe Hall)

Hon. Secretary:
18 Albert Road, Hendon, N.W.4.
Tel.: SUNnyhill 0245

WILL MEMBERS WHO HAVE NOT yet paid their subscriptions for 1962, please do so as soon as possible.

Association ties are available and may be obtained from the Section Secretary.

NORTH-EAST

By T. Oliver

Chairman:
J. SIMPSON
(Ponteland G.C.)

Hon. Secretary:
Heathery Cottage,
Heathery Lane, Gosforth,
Newcastle-on-Tyne 3.

THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE SECTION has now reached 42. This includes a few who have not been able to attend a Meeting but have promised to join.

We thank the Executive Committee of the Northumberland Union of Golf Clubs for a donation of £10 towards the Funds.

We are very grateful to our President, Mr. Leslie Jones for his interest and good work on our behalf. He has been a great help in giving the Section a successful and most encouraging start. Thanks, also, to our Vice-Presidents, Mr. K. B. Hood (President, Northumberland Union of Golf Clubs) and Mr. A. Harrison (President, Durham Union of Golf Clubs).

Sweep

We thank Mr. J. L. Lowery, Assistant Secretary of the Section, for dealing with the Sweep and congratulate him on a good job well done. We hope all tickets are returned in good time.

At a meeting held on 4th August, Mr. Lowery gave all the Greenkeepers an invitation, on behalf of the Ravensworth Golf Club Committee, to play with their Members on Sunday, 23rd September, as they are giving Mr. T. A. Lud a testimonial. He has been at Ravensworth for more than 40 years, and was also our Chairman for about 14 years. Since his illness he has not been able to continue his work. We all look forward to meeting him and thank the Members of Ravensworth Golf Club for giving us the opportunity.

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