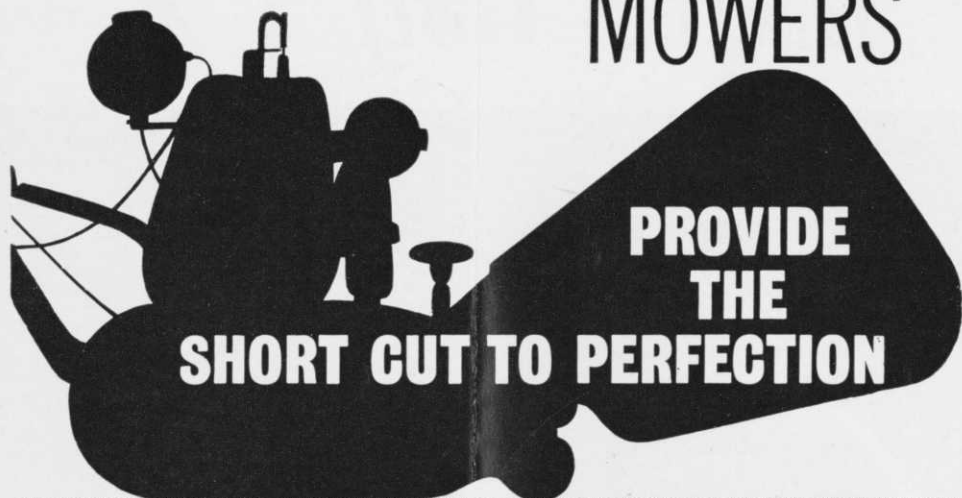


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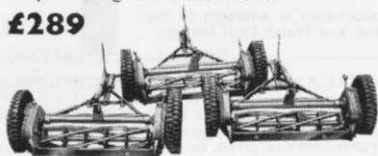


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TEE SHOTS



by the Editor

Greenkeepers should relax over Christmas, because on 1st January the new Standard Scratch Score scheme comes into force. The basic S.S.S. will be fixed on the total length of the course, measured as before, and will go up one stroke from 70 in every 200 yards above 6,400 and down one stroke in every 200 yards below 6,200. For instance, 6,123 produces a 69, 5,987 a 68, 6,500 a 71, and so on.

You may, therefore, expect to see your Green Committee prowling round the course looking for the number of yards necessary to put them above the next milestone. Sometimes it will only be 20 yards or so if you are lucky with a 5,982 or 6,182, but if you are only just over a minimum, you can expect to be building quite a few new tees next year.

* * *

T. O'Brien has moved from the U.S.A.F. Base golf course at Chateauroux in France to the new course under construction at Domont. This is on the N.1 out of Paris going north to Boulogne so anyone taking a car abroad this summer may find themselves passing by and be able to look him up. He got married between moving from one course to the next and we hope that Mrs. O'Brien is settling down happily in her new surroundings.

* * *

This reminds me that a corner for Mrs. Greenkeeper will appear regularly from next month. Mrs. Mawson from Bardsey in Yorkshire has kindly undertaken to help solve the recurring problem of greenkeepers' healthy appetites. She will be glad to have suggestions from other readers' wives and I can think of several that I hope she will hear from.

* * *

Meanwhile, I wish you all a Merry Christmas.

Work and Play by John Stobbs

"There has been a regrettable tendency to think (and say): 'How can he do his work when he is out there playing golf?'. Clubs should insist that one or two games a week with the pro., Green Chairman and a member is part of the job . . ."

Thus the regular columnist Fred V. Grau in the American magazine on club and course management, *Golfdom*.

Is it a point which applies over here, too?

Student Golfers!

Grau insists that it is not enough for the man in charge of the course to know how to grow turf. "The time may not be far off when a turf student, in order to graduate in turf-grass management, will be required to develop proficiency in golf just as he now must pass technical subjects. Truly, he cannot qualify as a turf manager unless he knows the quality of turf desired by golfers. Grass can be grown without too much difficulty. Grooming grass into high-quality playing turf, pleasing to players, is the highest art in the profession."

The idea is so obvious as almost to be ridiculous to state. Yet, over there, there seems to be a need to say it. Over here, on the other hand, one would think that the proportion of Greenkeepers who do not play and love the game is very small.

Or is it? Who knows? Anyone? Certainly, when you come to think of it, there are a number of cases around of Head Greenkeepers who do not play the game at all: and countless more of Greenkeepers who never play it with the same affectionate dedication as the weekend maniacs they prepare the course for.

Understanding

Can a man who isn't wedded to the game himself, as a regular hobby, really understand what greenkeeping is all about? At the least, it's doubtful. (And the same might certainly be said of the

turf advisers whom clubs call in to prescribe treatment for greens.) But this surely is known well enough. And even the non-golfer can at least take an interest in putting; and make a point of trying out all his greens himself regularly with a putter and a few balls.

The Club's Attitude

The real question Grau may be raising for our purpose is: what is the club's attitude to the greenkeeper's right to play the game? Is it just assumed that they'll play in their spare time: summer evenings, Saturday afternoons, and after any mowing and dew-levelling on Sundays? Left like that, the Greenkeepers' golf can be something of a busman's holiday! If you've been working on the course all the week, every week, do you want to spend your free time there, too? Not every man does, by any means.

The ideal answer is, of course, that a club should expect its Greenkeepers to play a bit of golf, if not wholly during working hours, at least dovetailed into them. I remember how the greens staff in my own club before the war—one of the best and most skilled staffs anywhere, at any time—used to play five holes three or four times a week more or less during their lunch hours, apart from regular weekend games. Certainly every man among them enjoyed and understood the game, and knew from his own experience and instincts what the golfer wanted from a course (above all in those subtle qualities of play which only practical experience can teach); and equally certainly the state of the course benefited immensely from it.

Competent Player

It's probably true, too, at present, that those clubs where the Head Greenkeeper is a pretty competent player benefit from the fact. Moor Park, for instance, springs to mind at once, where the Miller brothers are two of the tigers of the County, and the two courses are kept in splendid trim.

Grau tells one story which, owing to the different nature of our grass and our general attitude to course conditions, isn't likely to apply on any but a small minority of British courses, but which still makes an interesting example of how a practical knowledge of the craft of the

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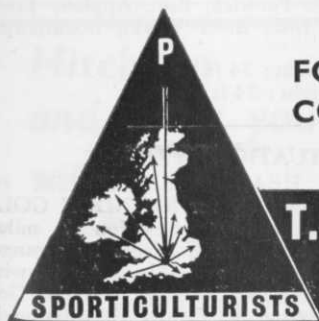
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game can help solve a troublesome problem on a particular course. In his own words:

"The complaint was that, in spite of heavy watering, greens would not hold a shot. The bent grass was suffering from too much water as a result. I was playing low-handicap golf then so, to test a theory, I hit a number of balls to greens from 80 yards out. Sure enough, they wouldn't hold, but the answer was in the fairway grass, not the greens.

Feather-bed

"The non-golfing superintendent, to keep the fairways 'lookin' purty', kept the thick Bermuda cut at $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The ball sat on top of a 'mattress' so that no one could impart control to the ball with the club face. The 'balloon ball' floated to the green and kept right on rolling off the back. By lowering the fairway cut to $\frac{3}{4}$ inch, we gave controlled shots back to the golfers, the greens held better and were healthier with less water."

Normally, in this country, you're only likely to get a "flier", as our pros. call it,

from thick wet grass in the rough. What causes it is a matter of fairly complicated golfing ballistics: but in essence it's a matter of backspin being reduced by the fact that the ball is not struck-off against a firm surface, "squeezed against the turf" as the old-fashioned jargon used to put it. You can, in fact, get much the same sort of result—a kind of "flier" if not what Grau calls a "balloon ball"—off thin, loose, sandy turf on seaside courses. But Grau's does make an interesting illustration of how a tricky problem, making everyone scratch their heads at a course, may really be a quite different problem shown its effects in such a way as to disguise its real cause.

It's also an example, of course, of how the playing quality of a course has to be examined as a whole, and understood as a whole—which only a practising enthusiast for the game is ever likely to be able to do.

Which brings us back to where Fred V. Grau kicked off. Playing the course is part of the Greenkeepers' job; and any club that doesn't recognise this ought to have its brains examined.

PRESIDENT'S GOLF PLEA

Gosforth Golf Club's Annual Dinner last night was, as ever, a relaxed social event at which gay quips and entertainment were the keynotes (*writes Ken McKenzie*).

Yet with such a distinguished gathering of members and guests, matters of moment did arise, and county President Mr. Charles N. Storey, of Whitley Bay, took the opportunity to make some heartfelt remarks.

He gave everyone pleasure by commenting, as had Gosforth Captain, Mr. W. G. H. Beaman, on the fine Bridle Path services of Mr. Tom Oliver, who has been greenkeeping at Gosforth for 44 years—and last night looked one of the fittest men present.

"It is one of my ambitions that the status and importance of highly skilled greenkeepers, in these days when specialised knowledge and experience on a course are so important, should be elevated," he said, to warm applause.

(*Newcastle Journal*)

HURLINGHAM SHOW

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"Guessing Height of Pole" Competition

The winners are as hereunder:—

Wednesday, 30th September.

Winner: S. G. Ledger, Esq., East Berks. Golf Club, Crowthorne, Berks.

Gussed height: 29 ft. $3\frac{3}{4}$ in.

Correct height: 29 ft. $3\frac{1}{4}$ in.

Thursday, 1st October.

Winner: R. Fenwick, Esq., Appleby Frodingham Ltd., Steel Works, Scunthorpe, Lincs.

Gussed height: 34 ft. 3 in.

Correct height: 34 ft. $2\frac{1}{2}$ in.

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The first fairway of the future Pals Golf Course on the Costa Brava. Clearing was done in August, soil spread and sown in October. In the warm Spanish climate play should be possible early next Summer.



CORRESPONDENCE

F. W. Hawtree, Esq.,
Hon. Editor,
"British Golf Greenkeeper",
Addington Court Golf Club,
Addington, Croydon, Surrey.

Dear Mr. Hawtree,

I would be very grateful if you could publish my thanks for a wonderful surprise I got after the Presentation of Prizes at our annual Competition at the Northumberland Golf Club, when our Chairman, Mr. Jack Simpson, said they had one more presentation to make, and called on Mr. Leslie Jones to present me with a clock that goes for 400 days. It was really a very pleasant shock as I had not the slightest idea till it was announced. Our Chairman and Mr. Jones said a few kind words. When I got my surprise over I managed to give my very

grateful thanks to the company and I was very pleased to accept this very wonderful present at the Northumberland Golf Club, and again I thank the Committee and all members of the Section. I might add it was the best meeting for attendance I have ever seen and especially pleasing to see so many young members. I will still be attending the meetings as usual and always look forward to them. I am sure our Chairman, Jack Simpson, and Secretary, D. A. Earsman, will make a good team, along with a keen committee, and that the Section will continue to grow. We also owe our thanks to Mr. L. A. Jones and Mr. C. N. Storey for their valuable help to the Greenkeepers' Association. I am also very honoured to be elected a Vice-President of our Section.

Kind regards,
TOM OLIVER.

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P.J.M.
SPRAYER**



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TREES ON THE GOLF COURSE

by

B. C. Clayton, M.A.

*Senior Advisory Officer,
The Sports Turf Research Institute*

Don't Allow Too Many Round the Greens

There are a number of jobs on the golf course which, for various reasons, usually wait until the winter. Not the least important of these is tree trimming. There is no doubt that trees are the making of many a golf course, both as decoration and often with a positive contribution to the design of the various holes. However, trees keep growing slowly but surely, and sometimes it proves necessary to check them. Young saplings and shrubs will grow up almost imperceptibly sometimes among older trees and when a green becomes shielded from direct sunlight and free flow of air by a deep semi-circle of trees and woody shrubs, the turf becomes very susceptible indeed to Fusarium Patch disease. Such a green will be much healthier if the young trees and shrubby growths between the adult trees are cleaned out.

. . . Or Round the Tees

It is just as important to keep trees around tees within reasonable bounds. A tee will never do well in a veritable tunnel of tree branches—as one occasionally sees. When there are too many trees round a tee the grass itself is thin and spindly, and in winter especially the surface is soft, never really drying up at all.

When the tree branches start actually overhanging the edge of a green or a tee it is certainly time that they are pruned back. Rainwater dripping from

the branches and twigs directly on to the turf thins out the grass and encourages moss and surface slime moulds. There is also more risk of Fusarium Patch disease below spreading tree branches.

Root Pruning

Trespassing tree roots are not so obvious, of course, but once they get into a green in force they will rob the turf of very large amounts of water and plant foods. They will usually be fairly near the top of the green and sometimes will actually break the surface. When this happens, the roots need to be taken out and that particular part of the green returfed. A good greenkeeper, though, will have anticipated the danger long before this stage is reached. He will dig a trench between the offending tree and the green and sever all the roots he can find before filling in the trench again.

Leaves—A Mixed Blessing

Autumn leaves with all their splendid colour variation increase the golfers' enjoyment of the course. The greenkeeper regards them with less enthusiasm because he knows that they are going to cause him a lot of extra work. However, there are useful aids to leaf collection these days and the small mechanical leaf-sweepers have proved very handy for getting the leaves quickly off a green. Heavy leaf falls on fairways and rough are very troublesome to deal with. Sometimes a forage harvester borrowed from a local farmer has done good work and I have seen large rotary mowers used quite adequately to disperse the leaves below a large tree somewhere near the middle of a fairway.

But leaves do have their uses and one can make really good compost from oak, beech, birch, etc., if there are worthwhile amounts ready to hand. Built up in layers with a little nitro-chalk sprinkled over each layer to speed up decomposition they will produce first class material for top dressing—mixed afterwards if need be with good top soil, sand, etc. A good shredder powered by an electric or petrol motor will make short work of preparation for top dressing once the leaf mould is sufficiently rotted.

100 Years of

Golf in

North Devon

by

R. A. Pooley

WITH most of their special centenary celebration events now behind them the Royal North Devon Golf Club can look back on the past season with a tremendous amount of satisfaction.

All the competitions were well supported and a crowd of 600 turned up to watch the exhibition match between four famous tournament professionals—Peter Alliss, Brian Huggett, Max Faulkner, and Christy O'Connor.

This large gathering was in sharp contrast to 1853, when the first game of golf was played on Northam Burrows. In the early days just a few hardy individuals tried their hand at a game, which was mainly played north of the border.

But as the number of players increased it was decided to hold a meeting and on 4th April, 1864, in Bideford, these enthusiasts met to "arrange the preliminaries for playing the fine Scotch game of golf on the Burrows of Northam".

Club formed

The proposal was adopted and the club was named the North Devon and West of England Golf Club, with the Hon. Mark Rolle as president.

One of the principal problems facing these pioneers was finding a place to change. This was overcome by renting a room at Beer's Farm, Pimpley, Northam.

This led to another snag—transport. But these staunch sportsmen were not to be denied their game and a horse cart was hired to take them to the course, about two miles away.

A well-known print shows one of the early members, Capt. Molesworth, and several of his associates driving along in what appears to be a reckless manner in a two-wheeled trap.

Capt. Molesworth was truly a great character. All his life he played with only three clubs. With these implements he used to lay big wagers and despite the handicap of inferior equipment, often came out on top. He was just as well-known for his skill at bargaining. Golden sovereigns, suits of clothes and mining shares all came alike to the Captain as stakes for golfing encounters.

Became 'Royal'

When he was 82, Capt. Molesworth took part in a particularly notable match, for the ages of the four contestants totalled 335 years. Dr. W. L. Reid, 87, and Capt. T. L. Gordon, 81, beat Mr. R. B. James, 85, and Capt. Molesworth, by 3 and 1.

When in 1867 the Prince of Wales gave his patronage, and the club became "Royal", the seal was set on its fame. Golfers descended like vultures to play on the course which was then, as now, an adventurous, but fair one. One person ventured to say that it had the "tallest, spikiest rushes in the world and the biggest bunkers to carry".

Another milestone was laid in 1868, when the Westward Ho! and North Devon Ladies' Golf Club was formed. Their course was on the ground now occupied by Sandymere and for some obscure reason they were allowed to use only one club—a wooden putter.

Originally the course—which started from just below the Pebbleridge—had only 14 holes, and three were played twice to complete the round of 17 holes.

Famous golfers

At that time holes were cut out by penknives and marked with gull feathers. There were no greens in those days and the grass was uncut, although the sheep of the potwallopers or villagers in the district kept the grass in check.

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