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GREENKEEPER

HON EDITOR F W HAWTREE.



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No. 226 New Series
JANUARY 1964

"Golf may be played on a Sunday, not being a game within the view of the law, but being a form of moral effort"

STEPHEN LEACOCK.

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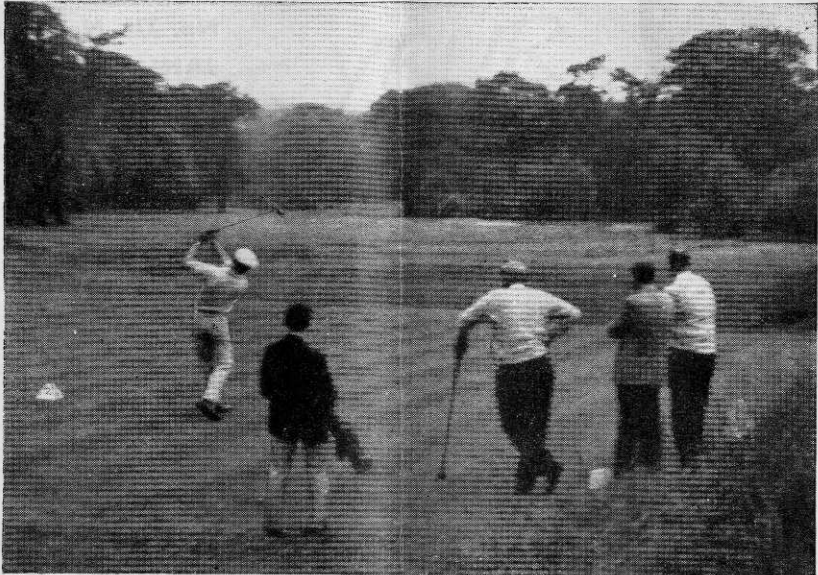
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TEE SHOTS



by the Editor

GREENKEEPER APPRENTICESHIP SCHEME BEGINS

THE Apprenticeship Scheme for Golf Greenkeepers has been approved by the Ministry of Labour and included in the official list of schemes open to young men in Great Britain. This month, 6,500 booklets will go to all Youth Employment Officers in the Kingdom. Employers' Guides and standard Deeds of Indenture will soon be available for all golf clubs operating the scheme.

Three things are important. Firstly, all golf clubs should take on at least one apprentice. Secondly, the apprentice should be registered under the Scheme. Thirdly, he should receive the fullest possible training in the craft. If golf clubs and greenkeepers will co-operate in these three needs there can be greenkeepers in the future up to the standard of the present.

The Scheme will then depend on today's Head Greenkeepers and their staffs. They must patiently train apprentices in the habit of good work as well as the methods. They must try to instil their own pride in that work as well as the know-how. They must arouse interest and sustain it by a programme giving variety and relief as well as solid instruction. There will be failures, but time spent in avoiding others will be doubly rewarding.

I wish to thank the representatives of the National Golf Unions and of the British and Scottish Golf Greenkeepers Associations for helping to formulate the Scheme. Together we thank the Board and Officers of The Sports Turf Research Institute who provide a home and continue to work for the Scheme. With all this help, nearly two years' preliminaries have left unscathed the funds of the two Greenkeepers' Associations whose original anxiety for the future of their craft began this new chapter in golf greenkeeping in its native home.

* * *

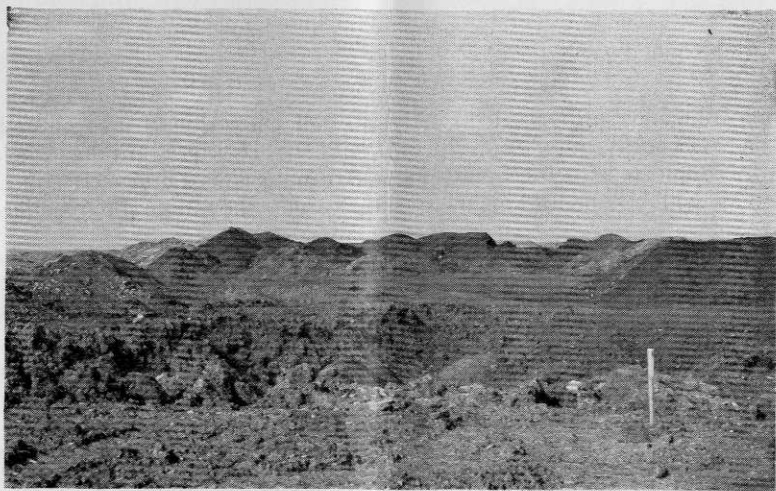
Mr Michael Fenn, Secretary of the Lyon Golf Club, is moving to the new course at Valcros, near Le Lavandou, in the South of France where he hopes to be installed by the Spring. A picture showing part of this attractive new course which occupies a tree-clad mountain valley appears on page 6.

1963, when we can look back on it over a longer interval, may prove to have been a year in which several trends crystallised into the pattern of the next few decades. Leaving aside the revived discussions on the larger ball or how English pros. might win the Ryder Cup, Canada Cup, or the Open, a number of less debated but more debatable events occurred in the nether regions of golf which are certain to affect its future.

Europe's first automatic two-tier driving range at Finchley did not suffer from lack of publicity but nevertheless belongs to these background events. It will be interesting to see whether the promised developments on these lines elsewhere produce a generation of practice addicts content with the brief exhilaration of knocking a bucketful of balls to the far netting or whether they will lead more and more players into personal encounters over eighteen holes.

NEW TRENDS DEMAND NEW COURSES

by
The Editor



The half-way stage in work on Corby's new municipal course created out of the desert left by open-cast iron-stone mining. This new layout will measure over 6,300 yards and will relieve some of the problems due to too few courses in Northamptonshire

If this happens, where are they going to play? 1963 at least gave some hope that this fundamental problem would be tackled. There are signs of several new public courses, one in N W London, two in Kent, two in Essex, and another in Birmingham. The new public course at

Corby in Northants should also this year start to satisfy the needs of the many expatriate Scotsmen who support the steel output of Stewarts & Lloyds.

Many urban and rural councils have also changed the views which limited the wider development of the game



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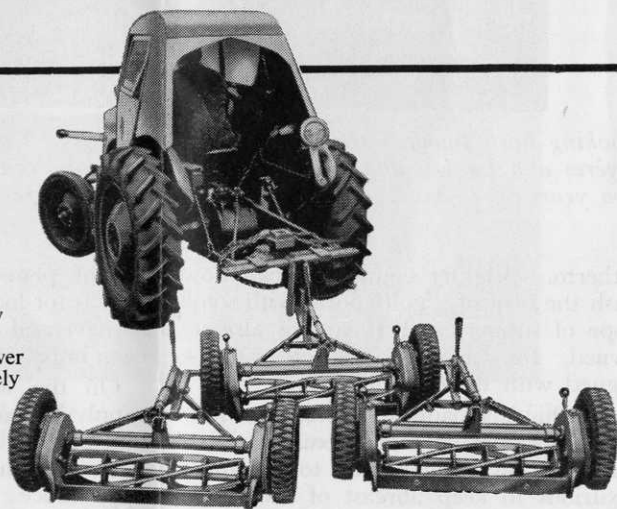
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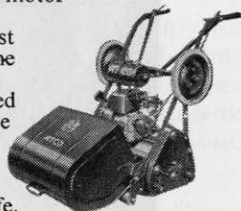
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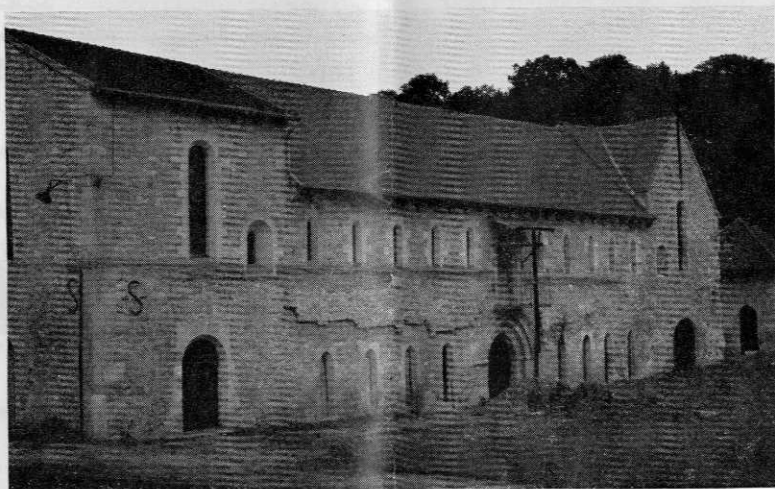
Looking back towards the future 7th Tees at the Valcros Golf Course between Hyères and Le Lavandou on the South Coast of France Vines grew here then, two years ago Now golf is bigger business than wine—even in France

hitherto. Brighter councillors can now push the idea of a golf course with some hope of support and, if land is already owned, the financial aspect can be argued with more confidence.

All this is in addition to several new private courses on more luxurious lines. But then everything has to be more luxurious to keep abreast of the times. 1963 certainly set a record in the num-

ber of plans exhibited on club notice boards for locker room extensions, mixed lounges and cocktail bars. Many clubs even improved their courses.

On the whole, demand will exceed supply for at least the next six years and this is a healthy sign. One wonders if the growth of heavily endowed events, appearance money, and sponsored amateur tournaments is equally healthy



This twelfth century Priory will form the nucleus of a new, luxury, 36-Hole Golf Club near Paris—Le Prieuré This is the club to which George Wilson went from Coventry

The Royal Birkdale Golf Course is one of the few courses in resorts well furnished with hotels that have the length, quality and area to deal with modern championships. Even so this club is in the throes of major changes to keep abreast of modern needs and to provide for the future



Douglas Pate, Royal Birkdale's Head Greenkeeper, stands on the green of his new 12th Hole being built last Autumn to replace the short 17th which created crowd control problems.

They are an inevitable corollary of the game's growing popularity but presumably Association Football must have passed through the same stage once. To see the dangers, translate the back page of a popular daily newspaper into terms of a golf tournament when it is reviewing the disturbances, carpetings, transfers, suspensions, fines, threats, and boastings, which make up space between football matches. Imagine the fun when Pro. A starts to get shirty with Pro. B for coughing when he was addressing the ball. Was it deliberate? asks A of a bystander "Just let him ask *me* that" says B. Referee takes both names, R & A says something must be done.

Another aspect of these promotions and even of the Open itself is how long club members will happily give up their course to accommodate them (often in-

volving drastic alterations or restrictions) and give up their time to be a steward or general lackey. If the frequency increases, their interest will do the opposite, especially while home-bred talent fails to excel.

Similarly, if the requirements for staging an Open Championship become very much more exacting, it will be even more difficult to find a course with both the quality and the space for this event, even if the members accept it.

The answer to all these problems, fortunately, is that the players that count will continue to enjoy their game of golf in their own way anonymously. Nobody will ever hear from them. The time to worry will be when they no longer turn up in their droves. Therefore, greenkeepers at least make things comfortable for them while they are still with us.

IMAGE

Lt.-Col. K. A. Nash discusses one of his problems as Secretary of the English Golf Union—publicising his publications

IMAGE, PROJECTION OF

OUR problem, we reckoned, is to put over to the average club member what we are doing for golf

Our publication—the Calendar, and the Year Book, are all right for Match Secretaries, Club Secretaries, County Union Secretaries and those sort of chaps, but what does the average golfer know about us?

A good question.

Also a good question is what does the average golfer, or the average club member, *want* to know about us?

Well, he pays a bob a year to us so he is entitled to know

Another good question is what *is* an average club member?

You might say he is the possessor of a 14 handicap.

You might say he's a business man, or a retired serviceman, around about fifty year of age.

You might say that he has a comfortable income.

You might say anything you damn well like, but the only thing you can be sure of is that he enjoys his game of golf and doesn't really care a tinker's cuss about anything else except the bar opening times.

And his subscription.

Unlike his trolley, he can't be pushed around.

He has never got his spectacles with him when you want him to read a notice (or anything else, except his card when he has gone round under his handicap).

The task, then, of projecting one's image (as the ad-men say) to this bloke is a pretty formidable one.

You see, it's rather like talking to yourself

* * *

Nevertheless, we felt bound to make an effort.

We rang up a chap we know—something to do with advertising.

“The current trend, old man, is ‘off beat’ ads. Facetious stuff, you know—full of understatement. Nothing intense, whatever you do. See Schweppes, Roy Brooks or Accles & Pollock. Not to mention Guinness.”

“My dear chap, we practically originated that stuff. See ‘The Golfing Year, 1961’ ”

“Never heard of it ”

“Goodbye, old man.”

* * *

Let us, we thought, have a go at the good old Popular Press.

“Well, it's terribly difficult to get space these days, old boy. Of course, if you had a strike by golf stewards, or a colossal row at a meeting

Otherwise there's not much doing at this time of the year

Have you got anything controversial?”

“Well, there is something coming up, but it's got to go through the various Committees, and then the Council has got to ”

“Yes, I see, old man. Well, give me a ring next March—maybe able to get something in then ”

* * *

“Try,” said a chap in publishing, “making your publications more grand. You know the sort of thing—glossy illustrations, first-rate cartoons, articles by

top writers, and all that sort of thing. Raise the standard, old chap. Wrap the message up, as it were. Double the price."

"But we give most of them away"

"Who to?" (He wasn't the sort of bloke who says "To whom?"—he is a very average golfer himself)

"To golf clubs."

"Oh Gawd."

* * *

There is only one thing to do, we thought. Get enough of the trade to buy advertising space so that we can enlarge the scope of the editorial matter and publish every darned thing we do. Cut out all this "social round" stuff. Who wants to read about dinners and speeches and whether they were held in the Café Royal or the Burp and Guzzle?

* * *

The telephone rang.

* * *

"I say," said the caller, "thanks for the write-up you gave our dinner this month. Can you send a couple of dozen copies over for the chaps. Might as well have another dozen Year Books if you've got 'em. I'll send you a cheque."

* * *

The funny thing about this is that it really happened.

With grateful acknowledgments to the Author The E.G.U. Dates Calendar costs 5/ p.a., post free.



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Golf history in the pro's shop

By GEOFFREY COUSINS

DELVING into the past is not always a question of digging. Archaeologists may wield the pick and shovel and spend a good deal of time on their knees sifting rubble for clues to the history of extinct races. But there are other forms of reasearch less arduous, and the game of golf provides an interesting field of study.

Collections of old clubs, balls, club-making and greenkeeping implements, documents and books exist in many parts of the country as evidence of the interest taken in such things, but unfortunately most of them are in private golf clubs or other places not accessible to the general public.

There is a very fine collection in the Royal and Ancient clubhouse at St. Andrews. The Professional Golfers' Association have an assortment of relics at the Bishopsgate offices. At Hoylake, Muirfield, Prestwick and other championship clubs are to be found many objects of historical interest, but visible only to members and visitors privileged to use the clubhouses.

National Museum

I have felt for a long time that a National Museum of Golf should be instituted on the lines of that at Golf House, the headquarters in New York of the United States Golf Association. The only public museum of the kind in Great Britain, so far as I know, is that started some years ago by Mr Ralph Sammell, managing director of Spalding, who felt that a representative collection of golfing relics ought to be available to ordinary visitors to St. Andrews. This museum is in a room at the rear of Forgan's shop a few yards from the 18th green of the Old Course, and much of the credit for the taste and attractiveness of the display goes to Mrs. Laurie Auchterlomie, whose husband, one of the city's leading club-

makers, is the son of the late Wille Auchterlomie, until his death honorary professional to the R. and A.

Laurie Auchterlomie himself gave several pieces to the Forgan museum, and anyone who goes into his shop at Pilmour Links will do well to persuade him to open some of the lockers there, show sets of old clubs preserved with loving care, and gossip about their history and the great golfers or notable characters who once owned them.

Many other professionals who have an interest in the past possess collections of various sizes and this article is inspired by my visit to Walton Heath for the recent Artisans' Championship, when Harry Busson, the professional there, showed me some of his treasures. My eye was caught by three metal moulds used for the manufacture of gutta-percha balls, or, more familiarly speaking, the "gutties", which superseded the feather-stuffed ball and flourished for more than half-a-century before giving place in turn to the rubber-core ball.

Making the "guttie"

All these moulds were similar in construction, consisting essentially of two slabs of metal each containing a half-ball recess. The method of using them was simple. A piece of gutta-percha approximately $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches cube was first softened in hot water and placed in the lower mould. The top mould was then placed in position, and the whole put in a press. The moulded balls were kept for some time to mature before being used, but retained for a long time their plasticity, so that a guttie misshapen or badly cut in play could be softened in hot water and remoulded.

On examining the moulds in Busson's shop I was struck by the fact that one was perfectly smooth inside, the next in-