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THE BRITISH GOLF

GREENKEEPER

HON. EDITOR: F. W. HAWTREE



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TEE SHOTS



by the Editor

The Easthampstead municipal course project is still only a fond dream of the three local authorities concerned. Negotiations to acquire the necessary land have fallen through. R.D.C. and Berks County Councillor Sir Louis Dickers is reported as saying: "This is a tragedy of the first order".

* * * *

Seventy-three local residents objected to the siting of two holes on Sheffield's new miniature golf course in Longley Park. Members of the Recreation Committee visited the course and played a round. Result? Two holes will be re-sited this autumn and opening will take place in early spring.

* * * *

Fifty-year-old Arthur Ready, a non-golfer, is converting an old football pitch near Brentwood, Essex, into a driving range. About £10,000 is being spent on the 12-cubicle range with floodlights, water splashes and the old clubhouse which will become the new 19th.

* * * *

The Ministry of Housing and Local Government has overruled the Aldridge Brownhills Council's refusal to allow 136 acres of agricultural land to be used for a new golf course. The Minister agreed with his inspector that this part of the Midlands has less than the national average of golf facilities in relation to the population.

* * * *

Peel's 18-hole course, one of the Isle of Man's best tourist amenities, is threatened by a plan to open a second sand pit on adjoining land. Removal of the sand would have to be across the links.

* * * *

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DEEP BUNKERS ARE SAFEST IN A THUNDERSTORM

by PETER HEFFORD

The tragedy which befell a Hertfordshire man while on a golfing holiday in Norfolk a few weeks ago reminds us sadly that golf is not always a safe and tranquil game. Playing in a four-ball at Thetford Golf Club, Richard Clarke, of Harpenden, was struck by lightning and killed. Maurice Robson, of Sarratt, was badly burned and taken to hospital.

The coroner at the inquest on Mr Clarke commented that the only safe thing for a golfer to do during a storm is to go off the course and go indoors.

Naturally this is the soundest advice — but it is not easy advice to carry out on the average golf course.

The nearest shelter is usually a mile or so away. It is not considered safe to stand beneath trees. Although the golfer has a bag full of steel shafted clubs he is disinclined to abandon such valuable property in the middle of the course.

The record books include an unfortunate number of cases of golfers struck by lightning — enough to be significant. The most widely publicised case in recent years was that of the brilliant Scotland and Tottenham Hotspur footballer, John White, who was killed on the course while playing at Enfield.

Some players complain that most golf courses do not have small hut shelters at certain points off the fairways. It would give some psychological comfort to be able to take cover in

such a shelter — but official advice states that such places are dangerous in a storm.

In fact, most places seem to be unsafe. Isolated trees, wire fences, hilltops and wide open spaces are to be avoided. The rules of golf specifically allow discontinuation of play if there is any danger of lightning — but where to go?

The United States Golf Association, in a guide to personal safety in thunderstorms, recommends seeking shelter in one of the following places — a cave, a depression in the ground, a deep valley, the foot of a steep or overhanging cliff, dense woods or a grove of trees.

It is regarded as dangerous to raise an umbrella or golf club above one's head — the umbrella ribs or the steel shafts may attract lightning. It is also advisable to lay one's bag of clubs flat on the ground.

While it may sound rather drastic and uncomfortable, it has even been suggested that golf shoes with metal spikes should be taken off.

The main fact arising out of all this advice is to make oneself as inconspicuous as possible, to merge in with larger objects or to lower oneself below the level of the surrounding ground.

It is not easy to do such a thing on, for instance, the flat and open spaces of seaside links, but I imagine one could do worse than lie flat in a deep bunker if a storm becomes desperately bad.

An all-weather putting course on the Hoe at Plymouth will be ready for Mayflower year. The course will not only have a service of "extruded polypropylene felt" but nineteen holes into the bargain.

* * * *

Dornoch in East Sutherland is debating a plan to build a second 18-hole golf course with golf chalets, enlarged clubhouse, swimming pool, indoor recreation centre, restaurant and licensed air strip.

* * * *



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M-W. 185

The British Golf Greenkeepers' Association

Minutes of the 52nd Annual General Meeting held at the Pyle and Kenfig Golf Club near Porthcawl, on Monday, 11th August 1969, at 3.00 p.m.

The Association Chairman opened the meeting, at which there were sixty-two members, and invited Mr Carl Bretherton to occupy the Chair. Mr Bretherton thanked the Chairman for the invitation but said that owing to slight trouble with his hearing he did not feel that he could justify the position and said that Mr F. W. Hawtree would be very pleased to deputise for him and conduct the meeting. Mr F. W. Hawtree asked the meeting to stand in silent tribute to those who had died during the year as named in the Secretary's Report.

At the suggestion of the Chairman, the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at Seacroft Golf Club, Skegness, on Monday 12th August 1968 were taken as read, and approved as published in the Journal.

Annual Report

This was read by the Hon. Secretary. Its adoption was proposed by Mr F. W. Ford and seconded by Mr Tucker and unanimously accepted.

Financial Report

Copies of the annual accounts had been posted in the club-house and further copies handed round at the meeting. The Treasurer considered that the finances of the Association were healthy and satisfactory and informed the members that the £200 which had been repaid from the Journal funds had now been transferred to the Benevolent Fund, £100 as investments and £100 in the deposit account. This had been requested at the Executive Meeting when the balance of the Benevolent Fund came under consideration at the last Meeting. It was proposed by Mr Folkes and seconded by Mr Finch that the accounts be adopted. Carried unanimously.

Tournament Matters

The Tournament Sub - Committee elected at the Executive Meeting were Messrs G. Herrington, H. Fry, E. Folkes, F. Cashmore and O. P. Jones, three to form a quorum.

It had been agreed that the forward tees on the course should be played during the whole of the Tournament.

The Northern Section had nominated Mr A. Robertshaw as Vice-Chairman to succeed Mr Fry and they were making arrangements for the venue for the 1970 Tournament. They had made enquiries at Filey Golf Club, South Scarborough and proposed, at the request of the Executive Committee, to make enquiries at Ganton.

Election of Officers President

At the unanimous request of the meeting Mr Carl Bretherton was re-elected as President of the Association. Carried unanimously. Mr Bretherton thanked the members and said he would be very pleased to accept this office for 1969/70.

Vice-Presidents

It was proposed by Mr Goodwin and seconded by Mr Drewitt that the Vice-Presidents be re-elected. Carried.

Chairman

It was proposed by Mr Cockfield and seconded by Mr Tucker that Mr H. A. D. Fry be elected Chairman of the Association, in succession to Mr Herrington. Carried unanimously.

Mr Herrington rose and wished Mr Fry every success in his new office and presented him with the badge of chairmanship. He then thanked the President, Secretary and Executive Committee for the help they had extended to him during his year of office which had been again a very happy experience for him. Mr Fry rose and thanked the meeting for their acceptance of him as their Chairman and hoped he would be able to carry out the necessary duties to their satisfaction. He then presented a tankard to Mr Herrington in appreciation of his services during 1968/69.

Vice-Chairman

It was proposed by Mr Benbow and seconded by Mr Noakes that Mr A. Robertshaw should be elected Vice-Chairman for the ensuing year. This was carried unanimously and Mr Robertshaw expressed his appreciation for the compliment shown by his election.

(continued on page 8)

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 **FISONS**

(continued from page 6)

Secretary and Treasurer

It was proposed by Mr Ford and seconded by Mr Machin that Mr C. H. Dix be re-elected as Secretary and Treasurer. Carried unanimously. Mr Dix thanked the members and expressed his willingness to continue in office.

Executive Committee

It was proposed by Mr Payne and seconded by Mr Roberts that the Executive Committee should be elected as nominated by Sections. Carried.

Hon. Auditors

It was proposed by Mr O. P. Jones seconded by Mr W. Sumner that Messrs Smallfield, Rawlins and Co. be re-elected as Hon. Auditors.

Hon. Solicitor

It was proposed by Mr Grealy and seconded by Mr Fordham that Mr R. A. Beck be re-elected Hon. Solicitor. Carried.

Any Other Business

Mr Kingston was of the opinion that something should be done by the promoters of major professional tournaments for this Association to receive a small percentage of the prize money which is made available for these events, particularly in view of the essential part taken by greenkeepers in the preparation of golf courses for these tournaments. After considerable discussion the members were not generally very optimistic of this possibility, but Mr Hawtree said that he would approach Major Bywaters as he thought that if anything could be done this would probably be the best approach.

Mr P. Malia had approached the Secretary with a view to the possibilities of forming a new section comprising the South Coast area of West Sussex, Hampshire and Dorset stating that in this area he thought that about 40 clubs would be interested and that it could well mean a large intake of new members if there was a local centre, possibly in Southampton. His object in bringing forward this suggestion was that the focal point of the Southern Section in London was too far away for the majority of Southern Section members to attend any arrangements made by the Section such as

lectures, tournaments and so on. This idea was discussed at some length but it was pointed out that no decision could be made at this stage and the matter would have to be referred to the Executive Committee for their consideration, who would then advise the Southern Section of their findings. Mr Malia offered his apologies for the incorrect approach to this matter which should have been through the Section and he was quite happy to leave the matter for further discussion by the Executive Meeting when fuller information as to its possibilities would be available.

In reference to the election of Vice-Presidents there was a general request from members that the names of Mr P. Marshall and Mr W. Payne, should be added to the list of Vice-Presidents, in appreciation of the tremendous assistance given by these gentlemen at Golf Tournaments throughout the country. The Hon. Secretary was asked to put this proposition forward for the next meeting.

There was nothing further to discuss and the meeting closed with a vote of thanks to the Chair by Mr Goodwin.

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18 HOLES WITH HAWTREE

No. 7—TREES

by FRED HAWTREE

BY now, we should have got the framework of the golf course as good as the site permits and the time has come to paper the walls.

Ideally, planting trees should form part of the original conception, they may even be essential to full and interesting use of the ground. They should not be relied on as a safety factor, either present or future, but a good plan will use existing trees as strategic playing features.

Once established, the right varieties need little upkeep and make a welcome addition to the limited number of weapons in the designer's armoury.

Those situated in the fairways will be older than the golf course unless subsequent shifts of tees or greens have made use of planting which was marginal when the course began.

In principle, a tree hazard can be used exactly as a sand bunker but discretion will temper its distance from the tee in order to limit the number of players whose best drive will finish just behind it. In any case it is effective over a much wider area and far more interesting when it modifies but does not block a fair shot.

There are few shots in golf more satisfying than one which sails over trees exactly on target. If the line is optional then blindness is permissible; if it is obligatory, a thin screen obscuring some of the air-space on the way to the green but not the green itself is both decorative and stimulating. The not-too-long short hole is very suitable for this device, often found on courses carried out of pine woods. It is also the hole where the idea can be developed on existing courses by allowing small trees in the carry rough to creep up imperceptibly into view and eventually into play.

But most tree-planting programmes will be restricted to the margins. There are two things on which all golfers seem to be agreed. One, though not altogether relevant here, is that the

West Sussex golf course at Pulborough is perfect. The other is that a course with every hole completely isolated from the others is ideal. Unfortunately, many inland courses, especially round big cities, are laid out on closely parallel lines for maximum length and do not allow enough width between fairways for any considerable density. Here it is better to abandon the idea of total separation and plant as thickly as possible in areas where the fairway can be waived, connecting the groups with isolated specimens. A thin single line does not enhance the landscape.

Free spaces are still more important round greens for "air drainage". Trees planted as background to greens receive approbation from all except purists but if planting is carried round the sides it should allow air to move across the surface and reduce the risk of fungal attacks.

In colder climates the angle and direction of early morning sun in winter should also be studied. Frost may otherwise persist too long into the day. If there is drip from branches overhanging the green they are too close in any case but grass does not like it any more than it appreciates invasion by tree roots. Mole ploughing round the green or trenching and painting the severed roots with a hormone weed-killer will be needed.

All these factors apply more frequently to tees because it is relatively simple to put a tee back into woodland without disturbing the general effect and the narrow gap often leads to excessive shade and dampness.

The choice of trees for new planting on a golf course should be related to the landscape generally but it is even more important to plant in keeping with the artificial landscape which the golf course itself creates over its hundred acres or so. By the sea, on sandy or gravelly heaths and in pine woods the answer is ready made. Else-

(continued on page 14)