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HON. EDITOR: F. W. HAWTREE



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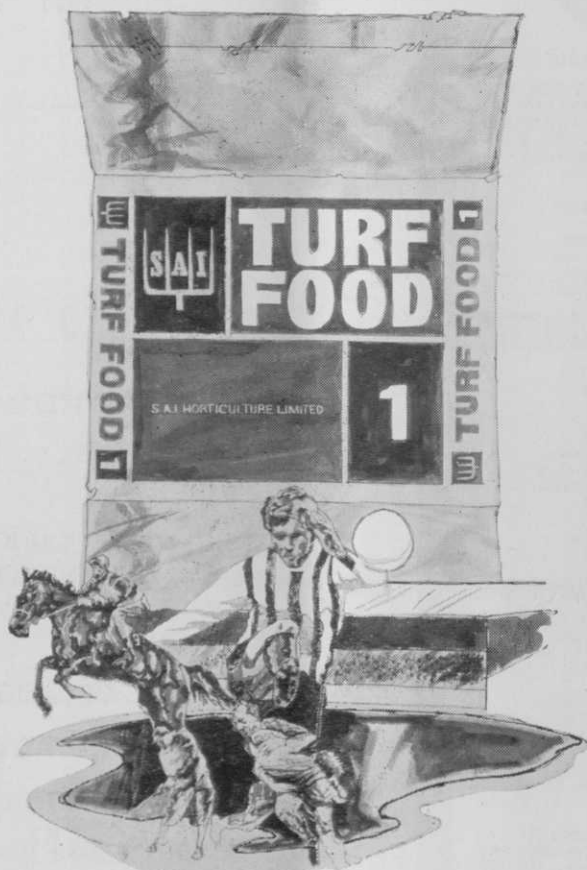
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TEE SHOTS



by the Editor

A second 18-hole course for Lossiemouth is strongly supported by the Town Council. Tourism is apparently the only growth industry in Lossiemouth and another golf course is expected to encourage it. Some of the Members are not so sure.

* * * *

Extra Gardai have been drafted to Oughterard, Co. Galway, to prevent possible trouble during the construction of a new golf course covering 170 acres of a local estate. Local smallholders have been demanding that the land should be divided between them. Outhouses on the estate have already been set on fire and explosives have been found near the home of one of the developers.

* * * *

The Oundle Golf Course opened its extension to 18 holes on May 2nd after 80 years as a 9-hole course. The number of Members just after the last war was twelve. Now there are 250.

* * * *

Kent County Council has agreed to another nine holes in Lullingstone Park. Mrs Kathleen Herbert, Chairman of the Dartford Rural Council's Estates Committee, said that when the original course was only nine holes there were many women golfers. When it was extended to 18, a lot of them stopped playing. Now they will be able to start again but Mrs Herbert stressed that the new course was not solely for their use.

* * * *

An American-European company, Hamblyn-Collett (Europe) is looking into the possibility of building a new course overlooking the Severn Gorge in the new town of Telford in Shropshire.

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18 HOLES WITH HAWTREE

No. 16 — Every Man a Golf Architect

by F. W. HAWTREE

Twenty-five new courses were building in 1970. Probably 100 or more are being planned. Last month in Essex and nearby I counted seven schemes on the move — 11 in East Anglia at least.

The golf club secretary will often be consulted. Damping misplaced or encouraging justified enthusiasm may save one man a needless expense and another a missed opportunity. Forget about golf architects for the moment. Do it yourself. This is how to sum up a site and may even help decide if that field on which your committee has had its eye for a long time is worth acquiring or not. But, if in doubt, the golf architect may be the only person able to handle the complicated relationship between layout, cost, construction, maintenance, the strategy of the game and players' psychological reactions.

1. Area

Reckon 100-150 acres for 18 holes. The upper limit applies where steep slopes, bog, woods or rock have to be avoided. The lower limit, or rather less, is adequate on flatter sites or where, say, 5,750 yards will be acceptable. Let the site dictate length not an arbitrary standard. The worst mistake is planning for too much length in a small site. A good nine-hole course is generally preferable to a very short and congested 18. If only nine holes are possible, however, future extension to 18 should at least be visualised in some form.

2. Length

A rough guide for estimating potential length is as follows:—

	Acres	Yards
A	90	5,600 - 5,800
B	100	5,800 - 6,000
C	110	6,000 - 6,200
D	120	6,200 - 6,400
E	130	6,400 - 6,600
F	140	6,600 - 6,800
	150+	6,800+

These lengths will be exceeded on easy sites but will be reduced by physical obstacles or awkward boundaries which limit land use. The clubhouse area will need 3-4 acres and a practice ground at least the same.

Resist the temptation to provide 7,000 yards in 100 acres and especially preparing a plan to show how it is possible. It isn't.

3. Contour

Slopes of 1 in 10 are just golfable sideways. Steeper slopes need special treatment. A continuous series of steep slopes may rule out the site. Frequent changes of contour in a short distance also lead to visibility problems in planning. Many abandoned courses were very hilly. Ignore the enthusiast who talks about "flattening it out with a bulldozer". This should only be necessary in restricted areas.

4. Shape

Most farms and old parkland lend themselves to golf course layout but sometimes sub-division leaves odd shapes. Where fields jut out they should be not less than 140 yards wide and preferably 350 yards long = 10 acres. A smaller one might do for a practice ground near the clubhouse. Clubhouse sites at the end of a long, thin field rule out a second starting point nearby.

Sites split up into two or three separate areas need extra care even if total acreage looks adequate. Road crossings between holes are not agreeable except in rural areas and introduce slight maintenance problems.

5. Soil and Drainage

Mixed farming implies an acceptable site but light land with poor return on cereals is preferable to clay. A slow draining clay site will produce poor playing conditions unless considerable extra money is spent. Good drainage is vital for heavily used courses. Improving fairways might cost £12,500 and close drainage as much again. In comparing costs of alternative sites, therefore, add up to £250 per acre for a wet site as against a dry one.

Provided trees are fairly isolated or in groups, old parkland is very satisfactory because of the thick cover of mould developed over the years and the ready-made landscape. But putting too many holes into a landscaped park may

destroy the one thing that should be preserved.

Sites on industrial waste may attract Government grants but absence of top-soil always suggests great expense. Less than a 4in. depth may also cause difficulty. Technical advice is needed before a final decision.

Heath land and rough grazing will generally produce a good course provided there is a fair cover of soil and reliable drainage. Bad drainage, however, may only be due to a pan which can be broken by sub-soiling.

6. *Vegetation*

Meadowland can usually be worked down to a fair turf and this saves money. But a surface very uneven or hoof-marked will have to be cultivated and sown.

Creeping buttercup, sedges, rushes, marsh thistle, tufted hair grass and water mints indicate wet land. Where grass is retained, there will be no question of improving soil conditions except by land drainage.

Scattered trees are very desirable but woodland is expensive to clear because roots have to come out. This leads to a lot of disturbance. Tree clearing on clay sites in winter may damage soil structure for years.

7. *Practical Factors*

Good access is prized by planning authorities. Entry off fast roads or by long, narrow lanes is not approved if the course will generate much traffic. Objections on this score seem to diminish if the authorities want the course there in the first place, but they grow if there has to be a public enquiry.

Footpaths through the site may lead to inconvenience, danger and vandalism. They can sometimes be diverted to a boundary but closure is rare. On the contrary, some urban authorities are now looking for new paths through golf courses because these areas may be last nature reserves left in their district.

Busy roads and back gardens near the site spoil atmosphere but can be screened. An extra safety margin will be necessary. This can reduce the acreage for planning the course by an acre per 150 yards of boundary concerned.

Streams, lakes and ponds can generally be worked into the layout to

advantage. Rivers may pose bridge problems. If flooding occurs, think twice and find out how often and how deep. River boards may object to changes in contour in flood plains where flow might be impeded.

A water supply is essential for a high standard of maintenance. Automatic systems save labour but cost £9,000-£10,000. Maximum water requirement (greens only), 12,000 gallons per day. Automatic systems should apply this at night in, say, eight hours = 1,500 gallons per hour.

Buildings on the site may be useful for machinery or conversion to staff houses. Unless they have some historical or aesthetic value, converting them to a clubhouse is to be discouraged.

8. *Summary*

Walk the site with a plan. Remember that the total acreage will be reduced by awkward shape, steep or boggy land and potentially dangerous boundaries.

Assess the soil as light, medium, heavy, pure sand or absent. If it is farmed, it can be worked. If it is derelict or only grazed, be careful. Sites with no true top-soil may be suitable but too expensive to develop. Grassland involves least expense; arable land, average expense; dense woods, poor drainage, heavy clay, absence of top-soil, greatest expense.

Slopes steeper than one in 10 should not be general and, if so, assess the effort of nine uphill holes on the gradients walked.

A short access off a "B" road to an elevated clubhouse site looking southwards across the course would be ideal. Farmhouses are often put in such position but a new clubhouse will generally be cheaper and better than a conversion.

In general, sites unsuitable for a golf course are either too hilly, too wet, too barren or too small.

9. *Site Factors in Brief — 18 Holes*

Area.—100 - 150 acres.

Shape.—"Farm" shape, compact, and free of awkward salients.

Contour.—Long, steep slopes may involve nine uphill holes. Short, steep slopes complicate good planning. Easier

(Continued on page 12)

WHICH?

Patrick Smartt

BESET daily as we are by accounts of shows of hands, secret ballots and heated arguments, I have wondered, if such goings-on came to pass in a club, on which particular point members would concentrate?

We shall exclude annual general meetings, at which arguments are not unknown. The few who start these are not on the committee and regard the occasion as an opportunity to play Aunt Sally. The aftermath of these meetings is rather amusing and euphemistic. When the meeting has been contentious, the committee will tell you that it is a good sign: members displaying interest in their club. If all goes smoothly and the meeting is over quickly, then it shows how satisfied members are. That this last could be attributed to lethargy is never mentioned.

Looking at the many facets of a golf club, it is unlikely that more than 50 per cent would choose the same item. Let us list the main headings. The course, clubhouse amenities, catering.

Much will depend on the current captain and his priorities. Also on his committee. The most vociferous members usually find their way on to the committee in the end, and very often assume a pomposity and pseudo-knowledge that is out of all proportion to their ability. Others regard themselves as representatives of members' interests, though they cannot avoid entirely their personal inclinations.

As an old "square", I shall choose the course first. In the reasonable notion that a golf club is there for the purpose of playing golf and the ancillaries of indoor comfort and the food are of secondary importance. A view that will be hotly disputed; I remain unrepentant.

Golfers hold varying ideas about the most desirable aspect of a course. There are proud courses, and carelessly tended courses; each reflecting on the secretary and the head greenkeeper. It is probable that my estimate of 50 per cent would be wrong where greens are concerned. These are the first thing a player will complain about — particularly when he

is putting badly. Good greens are the first thing I look for when visiting other courses. Well-kept teeing-grounds — not easy — are a shop window and therefore desirable.

The biggest bones of contention — in addition to the craze for lengthening courses — will be the width of the fairways and the depth of the rough. The rough, alas, we can dispose of quickly. Overcrowding on courses in the present era means that so far as possible any delay in searching for a ball should be eliminated. That is the reason given to me for cropping the rough, leaving little advantage to the man who is down the middle. So much for that. Times change.

Friends ask me how wide a fairway should be; that is for club members, not the stars. It is a question I can answer only from the first category. I should have asked our editor. It must be governed to a certain extent on the terrain, the length and nature of the design of the hole. No one should want an uninspiring polo ground to drive into. But committees change, and with them the width of the fairways. I am no expert in these things, but the answer has been 35 to 40 yards. That does seem unduly tight to me, especially when the rough is less luxuriant than some of the younger players' hair.

I have paced a fairway as being 70 yards wide, which detracted from a semi-dog leg because the player could get on the green from anywhere. At the opposite extreme, I have paced fairways on a course over which no professional tournaments are played, and found them to be under 30 yards. Not satisfied with this, the ruling body so shaped them that there was a waist round about the 200-yard mark — the area in which we may expect the average player to finish. Beyond that they expanded again, thus giving the longer and better player more room.

No longer an active player, I cannot be accused of bias. Surely this portrays

(Continued on page 12)

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THE JOINT COUNCIL FOR GOLF GREENKEEPER APPRENTICESHIP

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ANNUAL REPORT TO THE EIGHTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD AT BINGLEY ON MONDAY, 26th APRIL 1971

REGISTRATION

A total of 35 new registrations were made in the year 1970/71 and eight further registrations await approval at the Ordinary Meeting to follow the Annual General Meeting.

These reflect a generally healthy position in the Scheme as a whole though the reduction in the number of Deeds issued suggests that next year will show some decline.

The comparative figures for the last three years may be summarised as follows:—

	1968/69	1969/70	1970/71	Total April 1970	Total April 1971
Sets of Deeds Issued	37	34	28	220	248
Sets of Deeds Registered	33	25	35	153	188
Sets of Deeds Completed	30	25	28	90	118
Sets of Deeds Cancelled	5	7	7	21	28

TRAINING

There is again some slight improvement in educational facilities as golf at large receives more publicity and at least one firm has arranged a course for apprentices to study for a week in its mowing machinery repair shop. But there are still areas where education is difficult owing to the distance involved and with many golf clubs remote from urban centres of any size this difficulty appears fundamental. Some form of postal course would help to overcome this.

PUBLICITY

We have continued our monthly advertisements in golfing publications. The Golf Club Secretaries' Journal also published data during the year and is very helpful. We have also had inquiries from overseas and Northern Ireland regarding setting up a similar scheme.

FINANCE

Our balances at the bank are satisfactory in the sense that they show no marked variation from previous years but they do not permit more than normal activities. An income which enabled us to develop the Scheme or acquire wider publicity would be welcome.

SECRETARYSHIP

During the year, Mr P. C. French resigned his position of Hon. Secretary and Treasurer and was succeeded by Mr W. Machin, a Committee Member of the Southern Section of the British Golf Greenkeepers' Association. A great deal of detail and correspondence is involved in the position and we are very grateful to Mr French for his excellent services.

CONCLUSION

The Scheme continues to fulfil a need and there are now some 118 trained men in the field with a sounder background than would otherwise have been possible. It is, however, disappointing that there are only some 70 apprentices under training at perhaps 1,500 golf courses in Great Britain.



JUNE	24th	President's Team v. Midland Section Match.
	29th	Welsh Section A.G.M.
JULY	19th	Midland Section A.G.M. and Summer Cup.
AUGUST	23rd) 24th) 25th)	Annual Tournament Hollinwell Golf Club.
SEPTEMBER	8th	Southern Section Autumn Tournament.
	14th	Midland Section Autumn Tournament.
	23rd	Northern Section Autumn Tournament.

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HON. SECRETARY'S NOTES

Hollinwell Golf Club, Notts.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the fifty-fourth Annual General Meeting of the British Golf Greenkeepers' Association will be held at the Hollinwell Golf Club, Notts., on Monday, 23rd August 1971, at 2.30 p.m. Notice of resolutions must be sent in writing to the Hon. Secretary TWENTY-ONE DAYS before the date of the meeting. Under Rule 29 proxies may be voted at all general meetings. A Form of Proxy may be obtained from the Hon. Secretary and returned not later than the first post on Wednesday, 18th August.

THE ANNUAL TOURNAMENT

The fifty-fourth Annual Tournament will be held at the Hollinwell Golf Club, Notts., on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, 23rd, 24th and 25th August 1971. Entry forms appeared in the June journal.

Programme

Monday, 23rd August: Morning—18 holes, Stableford; Afternoon — Annual General Meeting at 2.30 p.m.

Tuesday, 24th August: 36-hole Medal; News of the World Cup (scratch); Senior Division (plus to 11); Junior Division (12 to 24); the Jubilee Cup (Team Prize off Handicap); "The Coming of Age" Cup.

Wednesday, 25th August: Morning—18-hole Medal; Afternoon — Prize distribution, 3 p.m.

Handicaps

Section secretaries will be asked to verify the handicaps of all competitors from their records before the tourna-

ment. All handicaps must be based on the National Golf Union's handicapping system.

Executive Committee

A meeting of the Executive Committee will be held at Hollinwell Golf Club on Sunday, 22nd August 1971, at approximately 5.30 p.m.

Trophies

May I remind holders of trophies from last year's tournament who are not taking part this year to ensure that these are returned to the Hollinwell Golf Club before Saturday, 21st August.

Annual Draw

May I remind members that all counterfoils and monies should be returned to their Section Secretary and NOT to me.

C. H. DIX

THE PRODUCTION OF HIGH-QUALITY TURF

by J. O. WALKER

Technical Manager, Agricultural Division,
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To the agronomist, turf is an extreme example of continuous monoculture under conditions which would daunt those accustomed to growing most other crops. What other plant is required to be raised as a homogeneous mixture of two or three species, in the entire absence of weeds and disease, and also withstand continuous trampling and cutting?

There are, surprisingly, situations in nature where this ideal is virtually achieved without the intervention of man and most people will have heard of the renowned seawashed turf from Cumberland. However, it has proved difficult and expensive to transfer this turf to situations where it is required, and in any case supplies are now nearly exhausted.

A grass sward is produced in practice