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# TEE SHOTS



by the Editor

The North Kent Golf Foundation, six enthusiasts planning to build a new 18-hole course, have been disappointed with the site at Wrotham but now hope to solve all their problems on land at Addington in Kent, not far from Maidstone. The site runs alongside the A.20.

\* \* \* \*

Following last month's news that the Wigtown and Bladnock Golf Club had bought its course for £3,750, we hear that an offer of £5,000 by the Kintore Golf Club has been turned down by the owner. He wants £140 an acre for the course, which comprises 40 acres plus about 10 acres rough land, but the Provost said "£140 an acre is prohibitive. It is just nonsense".

\* \* \* \*

The 230-acre Freshwater Bay Golf Club is also up for sale. Its owner, former army intelligence officer and scratch golfer Alan Pemberton, bought the land in 1946 for £5,000 and transformed it into a picturesque length. Now at the age of 56 he plans a move to Sussex.

\* \* \* \*

Two more big cities have plans for municipal golf courses. Bristol, where the need has been particularly pressing for many years with half a million population and only six golf courses, has already had a site at Ashton Court inspected. Now Plymouth has a proposal to examine sites and evaluate costs; the *Western Evening Herald* says "There is no reason at all why this splendid scheme should fail—unless, of course, the Council intends to maintain the greens to the same standard as some of its other pitches".

\* \* \* \*

To commemorate European Conservation Year, Dullatur Golf Club have bought 1,400 trees to plant on their recently purchased golf course.

\* \* \* \*

Shortlands, Kent, residents have distributed 4,000 leaflets urging householders to oppose development of the Shortlands Golf Course by Wates Limited. One of the residents' main concerns is that the 35 acres golf course provides a natural soakaway for the surrounding areas.



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# SOME PECULIAR HOLES

by PATRICK SMARTT

"There are more things in heaven and earth . . ." spoke one of Shakespeare's characters. There are some golf holes on earth that the professional course architect or greenkeeper have not dreamed.

I came across them, indeed played over them, in foreign parts; in those days called colonies. While in the capitals there would be 18-hole courses, which could be called adequate. Once, that is, you had become inured to driving off from baked-mud teeing-grounds—the ball perched on a rubber tee—and approaching to sand greens, known in some places as "browns". In fact, I should place Royal Salisbury in Southern Rhodesia, Royal Nairobi and Keren (both Kenya) as good, the last being the nearest to an English course I met.

It was when visiting the isolated outstations, where the best had to be made of the ground available, government officials but lightly versed in the game gave full range to their imagination. They also, bless them, held the admirable idea that the game was meant to be fun.

Unique is a much abused word, but it may be applied with safety to the holes I shall attempt to describe. I can only hope that the professional expertise of our editor will not receive a shock detrimental to his health.

Two holes stand out in improbability. The first, a short hole, where between the tee and the green was a bungalow (the government office). A tall palm tree served as a rough guide post. The tee lay close to the building, and it is to be remembered that the shot, a No. 5 iron or rather a mashie, had to be swept cleanly off a rubber tee, no downward punch—unless you felt inclined to fracture your wrists, or the shaft.

The second was on a full course at Bulawayo in (then) Southern Rhodesia. It was one of three clubs at which the Rhodesia Championship (Northern, now

Zambia, and Southern, now the Republic of Rhodesia) was played. The tee was beside a broad stream which flowed under a railway bridge. You sighted the green by peering under the bridge. It was, again, a short hole, and there was no way to cope with it other than playing over the bridge. As in the previous instance, you dare not pitch on the green. A ball will not grip on a surface of hard mud covered with a thin layer of sand.

That disposes of the first two. The Americans favour water hazards near the green, but there is a more brutal defence in the form of a circle of pineapple beds, leaving a narrow entrance. There was no cissy local rule allowing a pick and drop without penalty. No lifting was permitted. I would give my miniscule worldly possessions to watch a world-class player devising a recovery stroke from such a place on to a brick-hard green, not to mention his lacerated ankles. My goodness me, what a time the press would have reporting the criticisms of the contestants! A pineapple plant's leaves could give a porcupine a third and beat it.

The blind hole today is regarded in the same light as a misdemeanour. For myself, I have always regarded them as exciting. I was not playing for my living, merely to beat the other man. Blindness or siting can be overdone if the conditions border on the ridiculous. Picture an ant-hill 15 feet high, sliced off at the top to form a green—sand of course—of restricted area. It was a matter of being on, rolling back, or over. I question if Pine Valley has anything more diabolical. One could expend a number of strokes, a lot of energy climbing up and down, and excessive blood pressure hitting a ball to and fro over that confounded pyramid. And yet, one looks back upon it, and the other freaks with affectionate amusement.

Reflecting on those four holes, the

*(Continued on page 10)*

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# EARTHWORMS AND THEIR CONTROL

By R. D. C. EVANS, B.Sc.,

Advisory Officer, Sports Turf Research Institute

**T**HE twenty-five species of earthworm found in Britain are of small size compared to the 12 ft. long examples found in Australia or to an Indian species which produces casts 6 in. high, but some of them cause considerable trouble on golf courses, particularly when they occur in large numbers on the greens. To the farmer and gardener the earthworm is a welcome ally, constantly turning over and aerating the soil and so improving fertility. In contrast, it is a serious pest to the green-keeper as its habit of ejecting casts on the surface overwhelmingly negates its usefulness. In fact, only two of the 25 native species actually produce surface casts, but since a wormkiller which will affect only casting species has not yet been developed, the unobtrusive varieties must, of necessity, suffer for the sins of the casting types.

Worms cannot stand excessively hot or cold weather and are also susceptible to injury from drought conditions. They are, therefore, most active during mild, damp weather which is most usually encountered in the spring and autumn and these are the times when control measures are likely to produce the best results. When the weather is cold or drought prevails the worm burrows deeper to avoid surface conditions—they may penetrate 6 ft. below the surface if sufficient soil is available—and there is less chance of them coming into contact with a lethal dose of wormkiller.

## Methods of Control

Leaving aside for a moment direct chemical poisoning of the earthworm, the pest can also be discouraged by managerial practices. Maintaining a fairly acid soil, for example, discourages worm activity as the casting species seldom occur where the soil pH is less than 5.0. Again the application of

excessive quantities of decomposable organic material in top dressings, and particularly in fertilisers, should be avoided as this provides a ready food supply and the worm population is likely to increase. This objection, incidentally, does not apply to peat as most forms of this vegetable are too acid to encourage the earthworm.

## Chemical Control Methods

Chemicals employed against earthworms fall into two classes, the expellents which bring the worms to the surface and the poisons which kill below ground level.

Among the expellents, Mowrah meal was popular in the past, largely because of the spectacular numbers of worms which could be brought to the surface by its use. The substance is fairly efficient if well watered in, but it has very little long-term effect and treatment must be repeated at frequent intervals. It also deteriorates rapidly if stored under damp conditions. Derris dust is similar in action to Mowrah meal, but many worms die below the surface and its effect is rather more prolonged—an application in the autumn should last until the following summer. Copper sulphate has the advantage of cheapness but will scorch the turf if applied too heavily, being a plant poison and also has a corrosive effect on any metal containers which may be used during its application. Plastic containers are, therefore, an advantage, a precaution which should also be taken when mercuric chloride, another expellent, is used. Finally, permanganate of potash can also be used and has the advantage of being non-toxic to humans and ornamental fish.

Although the above materials can produce temporarily satisfactory results,

*(Continued on page 10)*

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(Continued from page 6)

the absence of any prolonged effect is a serious disadvantage. The poisons, which provide control of longer duration, are more popular for professional use for this reason and have the added attraction of killing worms under the surface, so obviating the need for messy sweeping-up operations. The most widely used materials are detailed below.

### Chlordane

This material is available as a liquid (25% emulsifiable concentrate) or in a 20% granular form. Somewhat variable results have been obtained with chlordane up and down the country, between one and five years' control being encountered.

### Lead Arsenate

Lead arsenate is generally more reliable and longer lasting than any of the other materials and this offsets its high initial cost. An application at 2 oz. per sq. yd. can be relied on to produce five years' control and up to eight years' worm-free conditions are not infrequently obtained with this material. Complete failure is, however, occasionally encountered with lead arsenate and in view of this it would be wise to treat one green on a golf course to determine persistency under local conditions before undertaking a general full-scale worm-killing programme.

### Carbaryl

Carbaryl (or sevin) wormkillers have recently been introduced and have the

advantages of low human toxicity, absence of any poisonous effect on beneficial soil micro-organisms and absence of any scorching effect. They do not, however, persist in their effect for longer than three months.

Lastly, a cautionary word would not be out of place. A number of the above wormkillers are harmful to humans and care should be taken during their use. Chlordane in particular should be cautiously handled, as in the concentrated form it can reach the bloodstream by contact with the skin, possibly with very unpleasant results.

(Continued from page 4)

inevitable question is were they golf? Each of us had a club in his hands, the problems identical, the mutual object was to beat the other man. That dreary emphasis on luck can be challenged by the net-cord in tennis, in cricket the thin-edge that escapes the slips.

And now to greenkeeping. It was done by Africans. They kept the grass down by "swapping" with an implement made up of a sharpened piece of hoop-iron, bent like a hockey stick and attached to a wooden shaft. It was done with one hand, but the action strongly resembled a short golf swing. The greens were usually smoothed, after a match had passed through, by dragging a piece of sacking over the sand.

It is doubtful if the greenstaff on those out-stations would be accepted as members of the B.G.G.A. No suggestion of a colour bar. They were recruited from the local prison.

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