

# PRO OR AM?

Patrick Smartt

It would not be inaccurate to say that golf course architects (I know three, though not closely) in general view golfers, in particular committees, as morons. Golfers, in their turn, incline to regard the architect as an invention of the devil, and the committee morons for calling upon him. They dislike paying out money for a task they consider could be carried out by themselves.

I have in mind alterations to existing holes. It should be obvious that the planning of a new course out of virgin woodland, or using to their best advantage the sweeps and folds of commonland can be left only to the professional designer. He has three primary qualities: knowledge, experience and imagination. He can see the wood for trees.

Though, to adapt the words of P. G. Wodehouse (I think in reference to bishops), the incidence of insanity among architects is not high, two of these gentlemen, of different firms and editors of different journals, have accepted my effusions. I put that forward as the reason for my presumption in discussing the make-up of golf holes. I have been on both sides of the fence. During 25 years in the colonies (an archaic word), in the absence of anyone else I was invited on three occasions to 'improve' holes, thus becoming, may I be forgiven, an amateur architect. The bush had already been cleared, inevitably in dead straight tram-lines . . . no imagination.

A good golf hole is one that makes the useful player scratch his head a bit when on the tee. His drive must be placed so that the green, if not the flag, should be 'open house' for the second. But, *and this is important*, the ordinary club member who is not looking for and unlikely to achieve a four, must have an alternate route so that he may enjoy his game; which when all is said and done, is the reason why he pays a subscription. And that surely is the practical idea of a hole. It is possible for a single, intelligently sited bunker to govern the tactical play of a hole.

In this discourse I should mention, with the purpose of my editor retaining his reason, that there is a clause in most journals to the effect that the editor does not necessarily agree with his contributors' opinions.

It is interesting to take a look at some old courses that have not altered over the years. It can be that even the old die-hards would agree with certain changes. I believe that the first act of an architect would be to abolish a large number of bunkers. These in the old days were placed to punish the poor players. A stupid policy, for in that category he has quite enough on his hands in reaching the hole at all. Those pointless bunkers, those ancient barrows planted with primness on either side of the fairway to catch the sliced or pulled drive, and repeated some way from the green to trap the inferior second. They are, so far as the good striker is concerned, redundant. Today he can carry them. Fill them in. They cost money in upkeep. Let the long-handicap player when he errs, which is often, finish in the rough; that will give him plenty of food for thought. The erasing of bunkers should be left to an architect, otherwise you have conflict in the club between the habitual slicers and the habitual hookers.

It is the good player who should be challenged, both in his thinking and his stroke-making. He must be forced to calculate risks: by how much dare he cut off a corner, will it or will it not pay him to go for the pin with his next? He should be made to think on every stroke in the round.

There is a school, small, may Allah be praised, who wish to replace rough grass, heather or bracken—with trees. In earlier days a ball in the rough could be counted as costing half a stroke. With trees it depends which side of the tree the ball strikes.

The only bad hole is one that is featureless and dull. Luck? We hear too much of so-called unfairness. Bernard Darwin when writing on this asked: "Do we wish to raise the game to the bloomless heights of chess?" I confess to a weakness for blind holes—fun and luck. I can, however, picture what would happen to the professional designer who introduced one into his plan. And yet life consists of wondering what lies on the other side of the hill.

There is a delusion that a good player can lay out a good hole. There was a famous amateur international, a good friend of mine now dead, who for no apparent reason layed down a green close to the existing one. I paced its area one day. Seven paces wide, 12 from front to back. He did me the honour of asking what I thought of it. My reply was that given a medium or long iron to this unwatered green, I would bet against Henry Cotton at his best leaving the ball on that green more than three times in 20 attempts. It was never used.

I recall a course which was altered by a famous professional. The members, who contributed to the cost, now find it takes half an hour longer to complete the round. There is a new short hole, a feature of which I cannot fathom. The teeing-ground is at the top green defended immediately in front by a stream. An out-of-bounds fence on the *left*. Just over the water hazard and a sentinel over the left entrances to the green stands a tree. The right-hand side is open, calling for a downhill chip. So far, so good. But just beyond that tree is a bunker. What for? One or the other is dispensable. That is an isolated case. If alterations are to be made, I come down heavily on the side of the Pro architect against the Am.

There remains one question. Provided the course is not one of those that caters for professional tournaments, or upkeep is a burden, why not leave things as they are? In short, committees are not elected to change a course.

## 60 golfers join Omega Hole-in-one Club in 1972

No less than 60 golfers have joined the Omega Hole-in-One Club, founded this year and open to all golfers belonging to recognised U.K. and Irish golf clubs scoring a hole-in-one while playing for the Captain's Prize.

Each of the golfers achieving this feat has now been presented by Omega with one of the Swiss watchmakers' Chronostops, inscribed with the player's name and the date on which the hole-in-one was scored. The most successful club to take part in the scheme was the Knock Golf Club, near Belfast, with the surprising tally of three hole-in-one scorers in the Captain's Prize. This remarkable feat was achieved by Mr. V. Skillen and Mr. A. V. Reid (both 16 handicap players) and Mrs. W. T. Dawson (handicap 26), from the ladies' section.

The Southport and Ainsdale Golf Club, Southport and the Peterborough Milton

Golf Club, Peterborough, also each produced two qualifiers.

Irish golfers were well to the fore with 10 players from the North and Eire qualifying. Seven Scottish golfers scored holes-in-one in the Captain's Prize, and Mr. Dennis L. Jones from the Morrision Golf Club, Swansea, was the sole Welsh representative. Out of the 60 players qualifying, 11 were ladies.

Commenting on the scheme, a spokesman from Omega said: "We have been delighted with the response given to our 'Hole-in-One' Club in its inaugural year. Over 1,000 clubs signified their wish to take part in the scheme, and we have had a most enthusiastic response from golfers joining the Club and our dealers have been delighted to be associated with the presentations made at the various clubs." Omega will be advising clubs about next year's plans in the New Year.

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### Appointments at Sisis

Sisis Equipment (Macclesfield) Ltd. announce the following appointments and internal changes effective from 1st January, 1972.

Albert Howe, Sales Representative for many years, who will be well known to many of our customers, is now based in North Wales and will cover the North Wales, Shropshire and the Wirral area, and his telephone number is Deganwy 83486.

Ken Heath, Sales Representative, also well known to many of our customers, will be covering the Lancashire/Cheshire area, telephone number Wilmslow 25478. Adam Cargill, is moving from his present location in Glasgow, and will be based in Dumfermline, telephone number Dumfermline 26661, to cover the East of Scotland. He will have overall responsibility for Sisis Sales and Service for all Scotland. He will be supported by Mr. Eric Burgess, who has had considerable experience as demonstrator with Sisis Equipment (Macclesfield) Ltd., and has been promoted to Sales Representative to take his place in the West.

An addition to the Sisis staff is Mr. Barry Cummings, who takes over as Demonstrator, and will be based at Macclesfield.

### Peat land handed over

Fisons have handed over to the Lincoln-

shire Trust nearly 300 acres of peat land between Goole and Scunthorpe. Nature Conservancy indicated that this was a site of special scientific interest with an unusual diversity of ecological situations to encourage plants found in only a few other localities.

Certainly after peat has been removed, if one can use the vast Irish peat fields as an example, ecological situations settle down to one vast brown, barren waste, which not only seems to go on and on but also down and down.

### Hayters exports rise by one-third

Export orders during the past 12 months were up by 30 per cent over the previous year, it is announced by Hayters Ltd., of Spellbrook, Bishop's Stortford, Herts.

Exports have accounted for an increasingly larger share of Hayters' turnover in recent years, and the past 12 months' figures represent nearly a quarter of the company's turnover. During the year the company appointed new agents in Greece, Norway, Ethiopia and Nigeria. In addition to the continued expansion of its overseas orders, the company's home sales also showed an appreciable increase last year.

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# News



## from the Sections

### Special occasions

- Mar. 10 Midland Section Dinner & Dance  
24 Southern Section Annual Dinner
- Apr. 12 Southern Section Trip to Ransomes  
18 South Coast Section Spring Tournament  
20 North East Section Spring Tournament
- May 18 North West Section Spring Tournament  
24 Midland Section Spring Tournament
- June 7 East Midland Section Spring Tournament

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## NORTH-EAST

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*Chairman:*  
MR. J. SIMPSON

**By G. Jeffries**  
*Hon. Secretary:*  
55 Brackenfield Road,  
Framwell Gate Moor,  
Durham.

### Autumn tournament

Our Autumn Tournament was held on Thursday, 23rd September 1971, at the Ponteland Golf Club, by kind permission of their Captain and Committee.

### RESULTS

Best Scratch score over 27 holes: D. Cooper (Wickham G.C.) 117—Joseph Miller Salver and Table Lighter. The Ransomes Cup and Watch was won by P. J. Bryne (Dinsdale Spa G.C.) for the best nett 107½.

March 1972

2nd. T. Nutman (Tynemouth G.C.) 112—Blanket and the Jack Wroath Trophy for the over 50 age group.

3rd. C. Maston (Billingham) 116—Travel Alarm.

4th. S. Graham (Newbiggin) 116—Flannel Sheets.

5th. G. Gainford (City Newcastle) 118—Bed Spread.

6th S. Pope (Tyneside G.C.) 118—Blanket.

7th. G. Thompson (Goswick G.C.) 118—Pocket Watch.

8th. S. Farrington (Warkworth G.C.) 119—Table Lamp.

9th. C. Baxter (Whitburn G.C.) 120½—Lighter.

10th. T. Oliver (Gosforth G.C.) 123—Shopping Bag.

11th. J. Richardson (Tyneside G.C.) 123—Alarm Clock.

12th. W. Arrowsmith (Gosforth G.C.) 124—Bed Rug.

13th. T. Robson (Ravensworth G.C.) 124—Towels.

14th. A. Lowes (Chester-le-Street G.C.) 126—Knives and Forks.

15th. J. Carss (Dunstanburgh Castle G.C.) 128—Casserole.

The Association Prize went to R. Hinson (Tynemouth G.C.) 108—Casserole.

Our Chairman J. Simpson thanked the Captain and Committee for the courtesy of the course and club house; he then introduced the Captain Mr. Bolton and the Chairman, Mr. Batley of Ponteland Golf Club, who had a few kind words to say to the section. Mr. Bolton then kindly presented the prizes. Our chairman than thanked the Steward and Stewardess, and staff for two most enjoyable meals. Thanks must also be given to J. Simpson and his staff for the splendid condition of the course.

Thanks to our Chairman, Norman Fraser, Jim Taylor, and Graham Forbes, for their work with the score cards, and to Tom Oliver for his work with the raffle tickets. Our thanks are due to the members of the trade, and golf clubs for kindly contributing to our prize fund.

### Spring competition

The Spring Competition will take place at the Gosforth Bridle Path Golf Club, on Thursday, 20th April 1972, by kind permission of the Captain and Committee. This will be an 18-hole event, starting at 1 p.m., arrangements can be made for those staying for tea.

## New members

We welcome to the section P. J. Bryne, Head Greenkeeper of Dinsdale Spa Golf Club, and P. Dawson, first assistant of Westerhope Golf Club, and hope their association will be a happy one.

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## NORTH-WEST

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*Chairman:*  
J. GILLET,  
(St Anne's  
Old Links)

**By H. M. Walsh**  
*Hon. Secretary:*  
Horrobin Cottage,  
Old Links Golf Club,  
Montscrat, Bolton,  
Lancs.

### Lecture

Our thanks to Mr. A. R. Woodhouse, B.Sc., of the STRI, Bingley, for the very interesting talk and the excellent slides with which he illustrated his lecture on the various fungal diseases which help to keep the greenkeeper on his toes, in his battle to give his members the best of courses to play on.

### Spring tournament

Due to the kindness of the Captain and Council of the Hillside Golf Club, Southport, we have been granted the courtesy of the course, for the playing of our Spring Tournament on Thursday 18th May 1972. Once again I ask you to please let me have your entries as soon as possible to facilitate catering arrangements, etc. Further details if necessary in the next issue of the journal.

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## MIDLAND

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*Chairman:*  
G. HART  
(Gay Hill)

**By R. Goodwin**  
*Hon. Secretary:*  
4 Burton Old Road,  
Streethay, Lichfield,  
Staffs.

### Annual Spring tournament

The Spring Tournament will be held over 27 holes at the Droitwich Golf and Country Club, Ford Lane, Droitwich, on Wednesday, 24th May 1972, by kind permission of the Captain and Committee.

Please send your entries to me before 12th May so that I can advise Mrs. Robinson, the Stewardess, of our catering arrangements.

### Subscriptions

There are still a number of members who have not yet paid their subscriptions for 1971. These should be sent to the Treasurer, Mr. Cashmore, without delay.

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## EAST MIDLAND

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**By S. Fretter**

*Hon. Secretary:*  
4 Queens Drive,  
Leicester Forest East,  
Leicester.

*Chairman:*  
J. CARRICK

### Knock-out competition

You have by now received your forms for this competition. The Cup for this competition has been presented to us by Messrs. Supaturf Limited. Would you please return these forms as soon as possible.

### Spring tournament

The Annual Spring Tournament will be held at Charnwood Forest Golf Club, Woodhouse Eaves, on Wednesday 7th June, 1972. Details of this competition will be in the April Journal.

### New members

We welcome to this Section a new Vice-President—D. Berry, Esq., Manor Farm House, Medbourne, Leics.

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## SOUTHERN

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**By F. W. Ford**

*Chairman:*  
C. A. MOORE  
(Stanmore)

*Hon. Secretary:*  
68 Salcombe Gardens,  
Mill Hill, N.W.7.  
Tel: 01-959 2847.

### January lecture

Thirty-three members were present at the Ship Tavern on Wednesday, 5th January, and spent a very pleasant and rewarding hour listening to Mr. Robert Morris talk on green-keeping in general. Aided by a small but efficient projector he covered a wide range of subjects, mainly topical, such as FUZZ, WORMS, MOLES, DRAINAGE, etc. Members troubled by moles may be interested to know that a treatment of lead arsenate all around a tee, for instance, will keep the moles out of that area—they will not penetrate the ring.

Question time found its way back to automatic watering again and Mr. Morris agreed that the draining systems of most of our golf greens were not adequate to take the amount of water made available by POP-UPS. Until such times as the greens were lifted and re-drained, problems such as thatch, etc. would occur, and in any case a programme of scarification and aeration would have to be carried out.

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Our thanks to Bob Morris for making the journey from Levington to lay on such an interesting and educating evening for us.

### Trip to Ransomes

There will be a coach trip to Ransomes at Ipswich on Wednesday, 12th April and as in previous years the arrangements will be the same.

A coach will leave Charing Cross underground station (EMBANKMENT SIDE) at 8 a.m. sharp, arriving Ipswich 10.30-11 a.m. A tour of the works followed by lunch at 1 p.m. Continued tour of works at 2 p.m. with approximate departure for London at 3 p.m. So that members may obtain as much information as possible on the trip, I have been asked to limit the number to 40. Members wishing to avail themselves of this enjoyable day out let me know as soon as possible. First come first served!

The coach will pick me up at Hendon Golf Club at 7.15 a.m. Members finding this more convenient, will be welcome with the warning that it WILL leave at 7.15 a.m.

I have written to the London Golf Captains Association to let them know of our intended trip and to thank them for their splendid donation to our funds which helps to make these trips possible.

### Bereavement

It is my sad duty to report the sudden death of one of our oldest members—A. M. Webster, Head Greenkeeper at Bush Hill Golf Club. He died on Thursday, 30th December. 'Mac', as he was known to all his friends, was greatly respected at the club and indeed by all who knew him. This was evident by the number of people who attended the funeral. In her letter to me, Mrs. Webster said he was 69 and had been with the club for 33 years and that it was even more sad as he had been contemplating retiring shortly and was looking forward to a few years of leisure after a hardworking life. In his earlier years he had led a varied life and had at one time played professional football for Scunthorpe United.

The funeral took place at Enfield Crematorium on Thursday, 6th January, and a sheaf of flowers was sent from all his friends in the Southern Section.

### New members

A warm welcome to two new members and an invitation to attend our meetings and meet new friends: Donald J. Tilehurst, Sales representative to Maxwell Hart and Eric D. Williams, of Langley Park Golf Club.

### Old friends

The following list are names and addresses of Class F members of this section, i.e. life members, retired head greenkeepers who have done so much for the Association in the past by their attendance at meetings and services on committees, etc. To let them know that they are not forgotten men, our Chairman, Charlie Moore, visited several of them at Christmas taking with him a bottle of their favourite Christmas spirits. Money gifts were sent to the widows of recently deceased members and I understand that all our Class F members will be contacted as soon as our new benevolent fund builds up again.

I am sure they would all like to hear from some of their old friends and if anyone with a car in those areas could make contact and pick them up to bring them to a meeting, Annual Dinner, etc., this would also be much appreciated.

G. T. Atfield, 2 Old World Cottages, Camber, Nr. Rye, Sussex.

C. R. Cooke, 64 Fox Holes, Queen's Road, Weybridge, Surrey.

C. Chamberlain, 38 Talbot Avenue, Stud Hill, Herne Bay, Kent.

H. G. Dixon, 481 Baker Street, Enfield, Mddx.

A. Davidson, 39 Ryecroft Crescent, Barnet, Herts.

W. H. Drewitt, 44 Thistledown, Heresham, Walton-on-Thames, Surrey.

A. E. Dash, 12 Wheatsheaf Close, Ottersham, Nr. Chertsey, Surrey.

H. Hughes, Church Cottage, Burrington, Umberleigh, Devon.

S. Morton, 57 The Homesteads, Waterfall Road, London N.11.

T. E. Mason, 145 Devonshire Road, Mill Hill, London N.W.7.

W. Mason, 18 Albert Road, Hendon, London N.W.4.

J. Marton, 50 Stroud Crescent, Putney Vale, London S.W.15.

J. Ness, The Bungalow, Croham Hurst Golf Club, S. Croydon, Surrey.

E. J. Rossier, The Bungalow, Temple Golf Club, Hurley, Maidenhead, Berks.

J. W. Williams, 23 Horley Close, West Horsley, Leatherhead, Surrey.

P. G. Weston, Florida, 301 Stroud Road, Virginia Water, Surrey.

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## SOUTH COAST

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By Tom Graham

Hon. Secretary:  
Waverley, West Lane,  
Hayling Island, Hants.

### Offer of help

I am very pleased to be able to tell you that I have now been offered help in the running of the Section. This offer comes from Mr. David Green of Huxley Garden Machinery and I am accepting it with open arms.

### Spring tournament

The Spring Tournament will be held at the Rowlands Castle Golf Club on Tuesday, 18th April 1972. I am awaiting confirmation of the Summer and Autumn Tournaments.

### New members

The following new members are welcomed to the Section: John R. Stinson (Burley G.C.), Donald J. Hall (Goodwood G.C.), Joseph C. Newman (Ferndown G.C.), Cyril G. Grubb (Ferndown G.C.), Harry W. Care (Ferndown G.C.), Ian P. Rickman (Ferndown G.C.), John Farmer (Goodwood G.C.), Percy Farmer (Goodwood G.C.), Nicholas Devonshire (Sherborne G.C.), Raymond Howlett (Ferndown G.C.) and a welcome to J. Moore, transferring from Langland Bay Golf Club, Swansea in the Welsh Section to take over as Head Greenkeeper at Lee-on-Solent G.C.

## News of Paul Voykin

Extracts from *The Golf Superintendent*

"Indefatigable Paul Voykin, superintendent at the Briarwood Country Club, Deerfield, Ill., informs us that he is running unopposed for a park board commissionership in Lake Bluff, Ill. He also has begun work on his second book, which is designed to tell the new homeowner how to landscape his property without going bankrupt. You may recall that his first book is titled *A Perfect Lawn the Easy Way.*"



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