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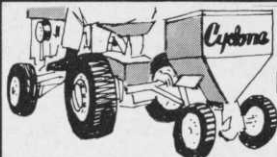
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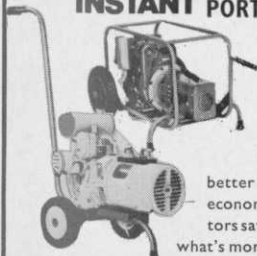
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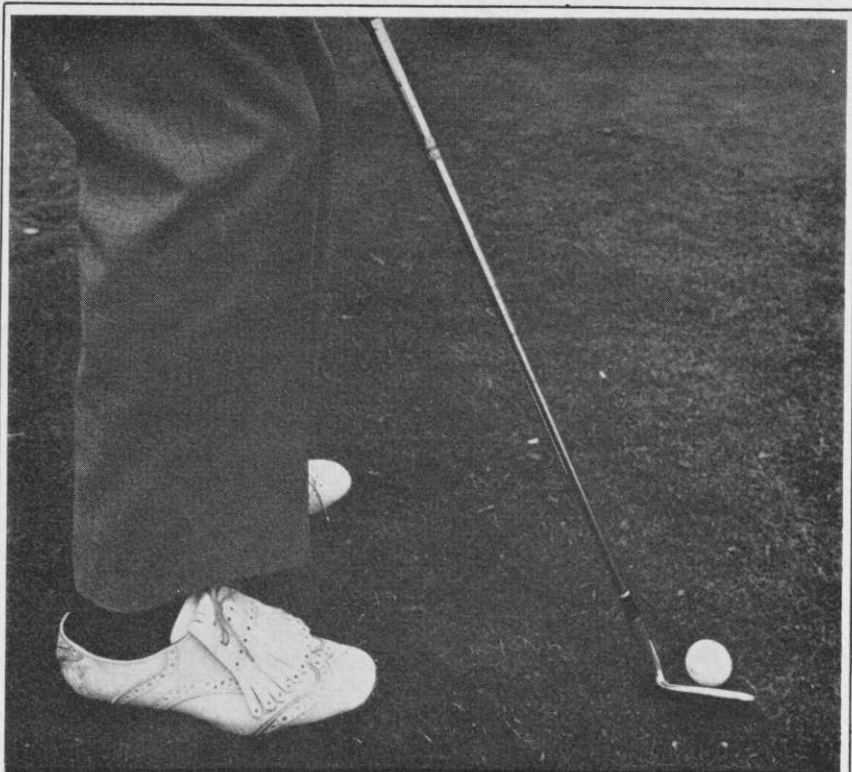
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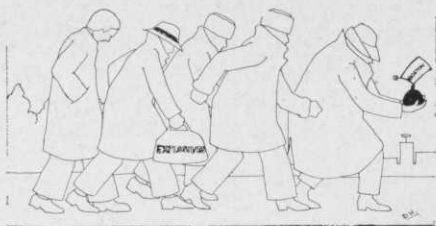
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Boston Re-invasion

or An Association to Revere



THE TASK FORCE gathered at Shannon (news was not leaked to the IRA in time for them to take evasive action) and came from the four corners of Britain with support from 'Anglos' from France and Switzerland.

It was dark when some of us left home for the assembly area and starting to get dark again before we left it. Between those times we had variously used different routes so as to delay the suspicions of any double agents.

We arrived at Shannon from Edinburgh, from Manchester (via Liverpool and Dublin), from Birmingham (via Dublin) and from London. Information must have leaked to the Airline about our plans, though. They put us all on one plane at Shannon and sat us together.

Someone on board had evidently received information about our sortie as they had installed beautiful young girls in brightly coloured uniforms to offer us drinks and many good things from trolleys to dull our senses. This was simply a fore-runner to many offers of bribes which we were to receive in the 'Combat Area'.

I guess the pilot was on our side. He circled the city of Boston and the airport several times to give us a chance to consolidate our plans. During this manoeuvre he cunningly made the 'plane bump and bounce to make 'them' think that we had problems. And so by the time we touched down, he had played his ace. We were an hour late and who would have thought of keeping a reception party waiting for that period with the temperature at 12° below freezing!

From that point, 'they' tried every trick imaginable to make us surrender, but I am not aware that any of our force succumbed. 'They' arranged indoor temperatures at what felt like 100° and outdoor temperatures anything from 12° to 40° below freezing.

Most of us were installed in an hotel called the Essex (surely to give us a further sense of security) but then, of course, they made sure that breakfast was not available in the hotel and we had to seek it in the drug stores, delicatessen and cafes within walking distance, which again took us through sub-zero temperatures.

One of their number laid on a spectacular fire which cost three hundred thousand dollars to present at a nearby plastics factory. How can anyone afford a PR man with ideas like that!

We crept into their first meeting quietly and un-announced and mingled with their members so cunningly that I am sure none of their officials knew that we had arrived, for several days. They made their lectures and discussion periods so interesting, pretended to be so friendly, and talked of vast amounts of money spent on their Golf Courses, on Club Houses and facilities, machinery and large labour forces, I feel that there were several of our number who could be tempted to change sides.

An exhibition of machinery and other services was also held for three days. My guess is that this was simply a cover-up for as many of them as possible to get our names, rank and number, and as much other information about us as they could solicit. To do this they tried any number of schemes. Some tried the straight forward method, approved by many, of openly offering gifts in the form of pencils, shoe-horns, posters, steel rules,

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Photo by courtesy of the Leicestershire Golf Club.

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HORTICULTURAL SUPPLIES

diaries, notebooks, mowing time computers, golfing caps, etc. Others guessing that we, like them, could be attracted by beautiful girls in hot pants, decorated their stands with them.

One of the exhibitors even had the temerity to suggest that we might be interested in having photographs taken with these scantily clad ladies draped around us . . . passing us quickly on to one of their other schemes, which was to lie in wait for us in the bars, refreshment areas and restaurants, carefully arranged around the conference hotel. There they would encourage us to drink with them, whilst they spoke of many things, in strange dialects, which most of us found we could understand without an interpreter.

Then they had a TEE party and a banquet at which many people were presented; and one of our number responded, before much music and laughter filled the room as they presented hired players for our amusement. By this time we began to sense that perhaps the natives actually were friendly. There was no sign of warlike intentions from them. But, then, there were only 4300 of them. There were 54 of us, and British.

And so in due course, we were able to bid our farewells quite openly, bearing no battle scars. We returned with gifts to our loved ones from these foreign shores and bottles of 'the spirits that cheer' purchased at prices our grandfathers can remember.

The thought of many of us in the party now turn to 1974 and California, where perhaps the thought of a warmer climate may tempt more of our fellow countrymen to join the party and make it more of an invasion than a sortie. Jed Clampett swimming pools and movie stars, and even Disneyland may prove to be bigger attractions than Paul Revere and the Boston Tee Party!

Just in case you hadn't heard, the 44th Turf Grass Conference and Show of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America took place in Boston 7th-12th January 1973. None of our aircraft was reported missing.

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Calling All Golf Clubs —a Letter To The Editor

by

R. Tempest, *H. Greenkeeper, Darent Valley G.C. Shoreham, Kent*

RETURNING, last week, from the 44th Annual Conference and Show of the American Golf Course Superintendents, in Boston, my impressions were of a highly organised Association which is out to find ways of improving golf course maintenance and their own lot by all the latest methods. The educational programme lasted four days.

Quite a few of our own Association members were invited and, for a country that invented the game of golf, we seem to have fallen a mile behind.

There are approximately 1200 golf courses in the United Kingdom which should give us 1200 head greenkeepers, plus about three other staff per club, a total of 4800 potential Association members. In actual fact, our membership is about 900, just 20% of the total work force. Relate this to the PGA membership, which is virtually 100%, and it's pathetic.

The annual subscription is a measly £2.50 per year, but I would recommend a £20 subscription to be subsidised by each head greenkeeper's particular club, and a proportion for other ground staff. In USA, this is considered general practice by clubs and I am sure it benefits them greatly for extra knowledge and skills passed on to their staff.

Golf Clubs here seem to be very inward looking; many do not even know the rate of pay for their ground staff, as this is only published in the Association monthly magazine, and communication is difficult with clubs being dotted all over the country.

At the moment, all secretarial work of the Association is done on a voluntary basis but I would like to see this changed to a full-time, paid Association Secretary who can keep members and clubs informed of all means of apprenticeship schemes, lectures and demonstrations, mainly during winter seasons. This could only be done by increased subscriptions.

I am not decrying the voluntary work, this has been marvellous, but these people have other work to do also, and I am sure they would endorse any suggestion that will further the good of our Association.

Our members are gradually having to learn about things like Triplex mowers, auto-watering systems, new fungicides and fertilizers, but it is mainly self-teaching and here is where an organised Association can step in to pass on information and encourage skills.

Clubs will have to be more selective, as will the Association in the forthcoming years, if we take our Minister of Sport's word for a need for another 500 Golf Clubs in the next few years. This will require another 1000 greenkeepers for maintenance. Somehow these people will have to be produced and taught.

Any monetary help, or time off granted, for learning by Golf Clubs' staff would be a great help, but one other thing which stood out in America was how firms supplying Golf Clubs with equipment, seed, fertilizers, etc., presented their greenkeepers' association with monetary help to improve every aspect of their job.

Another point to mention is the working relationship between Clubs and ground staff, and the number of times, in the United Kingdom, you hear ground staff being told by greens' committees how to do their job. This is having a dog and barking yourself. No one would dare tell his club professional how to play golf. In the USA, they engage a man professionally and expect him to do the job.

One fact which came out at this American trip was that most American clubs gave full expenses and time off to their staff to attend; while, for our part, nearly all had to pay for their own trip and, in some cases, were expected to deduct the time from their annual holidays. Distance was no object and some American greenkeepers travelled further than we did. Even when the Annual General Meeting was held in Blackpool, this applied.

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Are you Bunkered?

by

W. N. S. Bisset, S.D.A., *The Sports Turf Research Institute*

Bunkers are an integral part of the golf course and an additional hazard for the erratic golfer. On land which lacks natural features they create interest in the overall view of any particular hole. The construction or removal of bunkers is the most common concern of green committees while maintenance is seldom considered; as a result the appearance of bunkers often detracts from the general impression of a golf course and irregular maintenance is common.

Many golf courses have large numbers of bunkers and this gives rise to adverse comment from the 'unfortunate' golfer who lands in them and from already overworked greenkeeping staff when maintenance is required.

A maintenance programme should be designed to provide the golfer with a 'fair' lie within the bunker from which to play his next shot as well as to maintain a tidy appearance.

Construction

As with all other types of construction it is important to ensure that bunker foundations are in good condition.

The construction of bunkers commonly involves excavation to form a basin shape and in a heavy sub-soil this will become a water collecting hollow. It is, therefore, necessary to ensure that satisfactory drainage is provided and where required a tile drain should be laid in the base, falling to a suitable outlet. Backfilling with a suitable aggregate or clinker is necessary but the backfilling should be blinded with either ash or, as preferred by a number of greenkeepers, with turves placed upside down to prevent the sand being washed through the backfilling into the drain.

Sand

The provision of the correct type of sand in a bunker is essential to ease future maintenance. On seaside golf courses sand is usually easily obtained but inland courses have more difficulty. It is convenient to obtain a sand from the cheapest and nearest source but bunker sand should be fairly hard, not too fine and certainly free from silt or grit. Fine sand containing silt will tend to pack down easily and form a poor surface from which to play a shot. In addition, this type of sand is more easily blown out by the wind. Soft sand will tend to break down and form a slurry when wet.

Sand with a high grit content should also be avoided particularly near greens where accidental damage to cutting implements may occur.

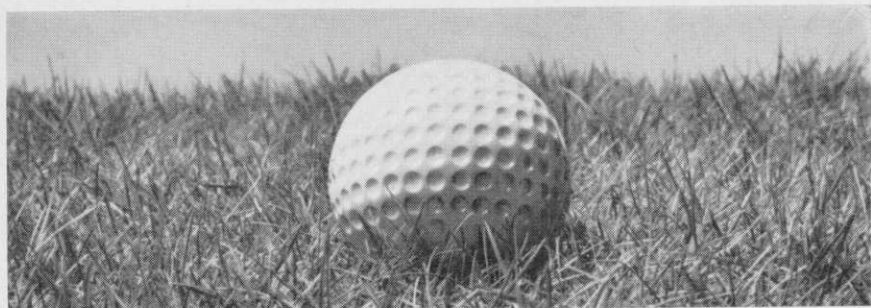
For inland golf courses it is important to avoid a sand which contains a proportion of shell or lime particularly in greenside bunkers. The regular blasting out of a 'limey' sand slowly creates alkaline conditions in the turf which will lead to lush grass growth and the establishment of worms or weeds. Clubs which are in doubt should have a sample of sand tested as it is frequently not possible to identify a sand which contains lime by visual examination.

Having decided on the type of sand the quantity is a further consideration. Sufficient sand should be provided to 'fill' the bunker thus enabling the golfer to play his desired shot out and a minimum depth of 4in. overall is required. The sand is regularly being blasted out of bunkers by golfers and a quantity is blown out by wind particularly in exposed situations, e.g. seaside courses and regular replacement is necessary.

Raking

Ideally, raking of bunkers should be carried out as part of a daily routine to maintain the sand in a loose condition and provide a smooth surface from which the golfer can play. This work is not sufficient on its own, however, and requires the co-operation of the golfer who should be reminded constantly of his responsibility to leave the bunker in the condition which he would wish

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