

## Putting on the style ancient and modern

Fred Hawtree looks at the basic design of rights and wrongs

**L**ast month we touched on the matter of a difference between British and American styles of golf course architecture. Then I read in Cornish and Whitten's book, 'The Golf Course', which we also touched on, 'American style became the dominant influence on course design after World War II.' Now Gilbert Hanse, who spent a working winter and Spring with us at Woodstock, has written from Cornell University to which he has returned to complete the final year of his course in golf course architecture. 'Is there a difference?', he asks.

Being assured of at least one reader, I can now set to and in one of those pithy maxims which stud the Hawtree prose like blue diamonds give you the answer. It is 'Yes and no'. Perhaps, before you return to grinding those cylinders (if you still do), I should explain.

The answer is No! if you mean the basic principles of design. It is Yes! if you mean the trappings, the landscaping and the hype.

Every golf course architect, whether over there or over here, gets something like the following into his quotables when quizzed by Press or Committee.

'My aim is to produce a golf course on which pars are difficult and bogies (if he is American) are easy. If he is British, you will hear something like 'I aim to design a golf course fair and enjoyable for all classes of player. While it will be testing to the scratch man, higher handicaps will always find a suitable option, though it may well cost them an extra stroke'.

Nothing controversial or contradictory in those two statements. I have used them myself since the year Dot and they always elicit a low rumble of approval ('Sound stuff that') and get you off the hook.

**O**ther favourites common to both sides of the Atlantic include the popular 'The layout should call for every club in the bag' and the terms, 'strategic and penal' applied to bunkering and design generally. Although 'heroic' as a third classification gets more

currency on the west side because the terrain is often more dramatic and inspiring. Over the basic rights and wrongs of design there is, in fact, no schism amongst golf course architects like that which divides the senior profession although the junior one has also produced its quota of prima donnas of whom there are still a few around now.

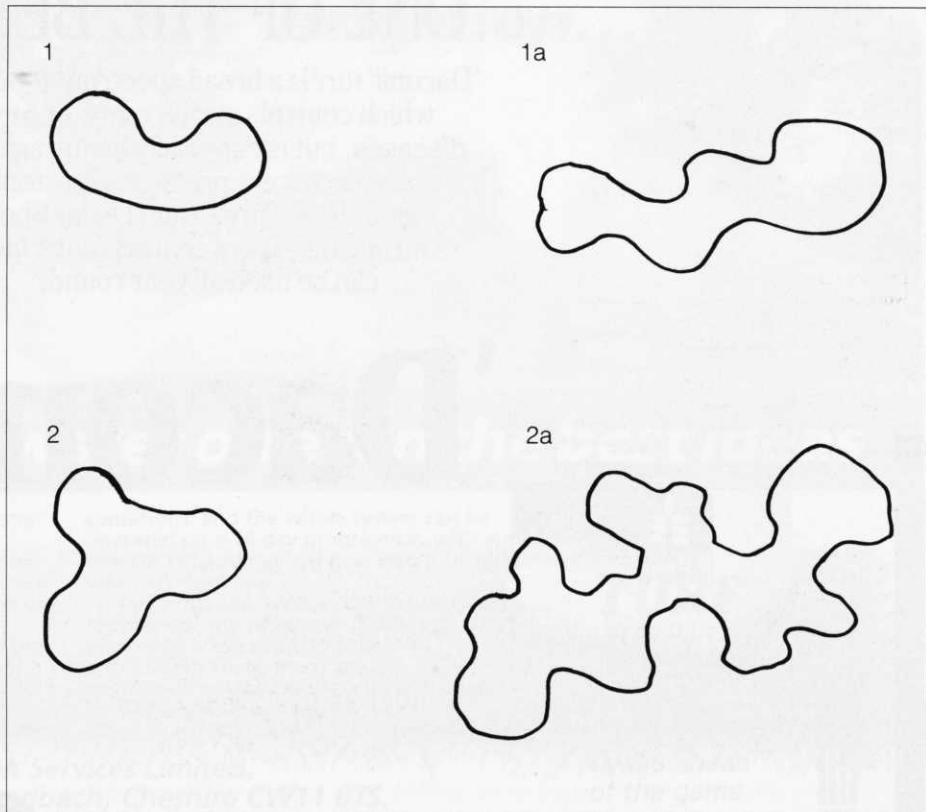
But when we come to the full frontal view, the façade or elevation, we can detect the divergence; nothing like the carbuncle on the National Gallery (though rocks in the bunkers take some digesting) nor like a glass stump next to St Pauls; but significant and general enough to constitute a declaration of 'style'. Here are some comparisons.

2a, of course, is a Romantic revival but because it looks well in colour pictures, British architects have taken it into their repertoire and gone very big too. Unfortunately, one or two have gone big but not beautiful and we are back where we started but buying ten times more sand.

Sturdy conservative green-keepers, pressed for time, will look in some dark corner for a spade and set about converting No 2a into No 3. But one can see No 3 on new courses in France. Their design tradition missed out on the Classic period and they are trying to make up for it. However, do not trust these stereotypes entirely. Augusta National bunkers are often closer to the old fashioned style. I will not try to describe to you what they are doing in Japan but if you think that 2a is going a bit far, you are in for a surprise next time the Annual Tournament goes to Nagasaki.

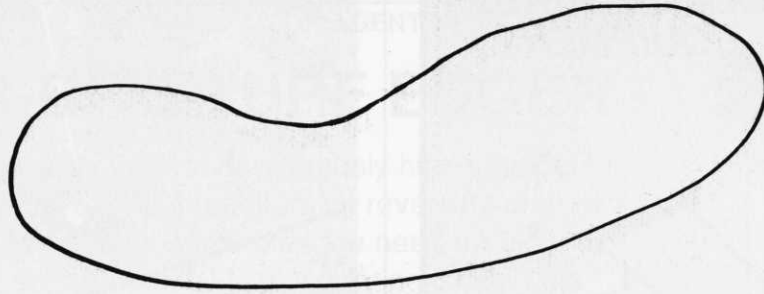
**M**y own favourite rebound from the far west is the lengthwise fairway bunker.

**A** gradually rising floor shows up the sand, delivers surface water to one end whence it can be easily drained away on heavy soils and provides a variety of shots. The Ancient Britons could do



# OPINION

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nothing like this and had to content themselves with three small ones.

If you wish to observe the differences between UK and US styles, you had better be quick about it. Architects are not slow in meeting the challenge of contemporary environmental factors, which is their 'in' phrase for nicking other people's ideas.

I suppose, finally, that we can also generalise on differences in tee

and green design but these features reflect individual taste rather than national boundaries, being tailored to the needs of the particular landscape and budget. But it is interesting to see how at least one American installs moundwork on inland sites which is reminiscent of a style popular over here in the Twenties and earlier.

More of all this next month when, for the first time in any international publication, this magazine will

print a key to the styles of British Golf Courses. You will at last be able to identify the man to whom you have so often wished to speak in moments of desperation. You will not unfortunately be able to tackle him direct because he will have passed from amongst us to even higher things. I shall not be discussing the styles of my contemporaries as the agm of the British Association of Golf Course Architects is not so far off.

## PENSION UPDATE

Time is running out to take advantage of the Government's special offer to people in work who opt for a personal pension.

All you have to do is sign a simple application to contract out of SERPS, the State Earnings Related Pension Scheme.

The Government is offering rebates of National Insurance contribution to employees currently covered by SERPS with the money being invested in a personal pension scheme.

To take maximum advantage of the Government's offer you must backdate the rebates to April 1987. The deadline for doing this is April 5th this year, but for pension providers to get an application through the official procedures it must reach them by mid March.

Leaving it any longer could mean an average earner missing out on two years rebates amounting to over £1,300.

The bonuses do not apply to members of employers schemes already contracted out of SERPS. They too can opt out if they wish, but in most cases it is not advisable. Male employees over the age of 45 and females over the age of 40 will probably be best to

remain members of SERPS and not seek to contract out.

The contracting out decision will not cost either employer or employee anything whatsoever but will provide an opportunity to secure a better pension at state retirement age.

Benefits can of course be enhanced by payment of additional premiums by just the employee or indeed by both employer and employee and generous income tax relief is available. The main attractions of a personal pension are as follows:

**Income Tax Relief On Your Contributions** which are payable net of basic rate tax (any higher rate tax is recovered separately). Employer contributions are eligible for tax relief also. You may contribute up to 17½% of earnings, if you are aged 50 or less, increasing to 20% between ages 51 and 55, 22½% between 56 and 60 and 27½% between 61 and 75.

**Flexible Contributions** Contributions can be of a regular or irregular nature and you can 'mop up' any unused relief in the previous seven tax years.

**Tax Free Investment** Investments are free of capital gains tax and income tax.

**Retirement Age** You can elect to retire at any age between 50 and 75 and do not need to make this decision at outset.

**Death Benefits** Life assurance can be included.

**Disability** You can arrange for contributions to be waived during periods of absence through illness or accident.

**Tax Free Cash** A proportion of the benefit can be taken at retirement in the form of a tax free cash payment.

In choosing a personal pension you should examine the Insurance Company's investment performance, the scope of the benefits covered, the administrative charges and discontinuance penalties. A reputable Independent Financial Adviser will take all these factors into account when making a recommendation.

Further information can be obtained by contacting G N Kingdom, Fenchurch Financial Services Limited, Grosvenor House, Anlaby Road, Hull HU1 2NT (telephone 0482 25177).

*Fenchurch are Independent Financial Advisers with branches nationwide.*