



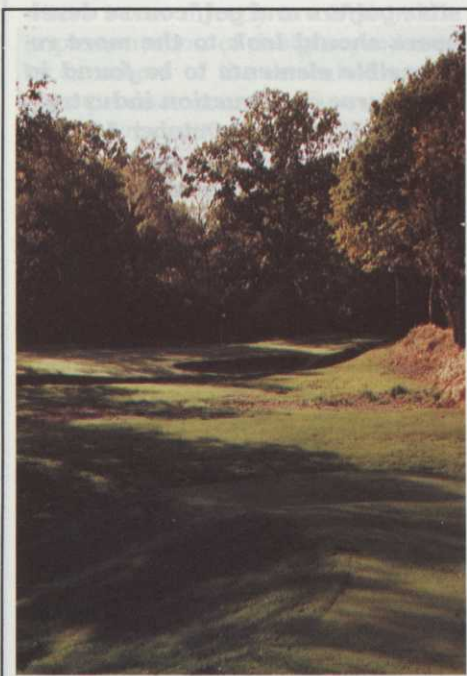
## The South Course at Wentworth

As previewed in the 1988 April issue of "the Golf Course" the construction of the South Course at Wentworth has been completed. The course was planned, not as an overflow from the existing East and West courses but as a tournament venue in its own right. Meticulous planning by Wentworth's managing director Richard Doyle-Davidson, in obtaining permission to build the course, by taking all the interested parties along with him resulted, not only in the prospect of an exciting golfing facility, but as an object lesson in how to deal with red tape and pressure groups in these environmentally sensitive days. This has meant an ongoing interest by the Surrey Wildlife Trust in the management of Wentworth's wet wood which has been a significant factor in the course's progress.

It is interesting to note now, that back in April '88 the owners of the Wentworth estate, AMEC, expected a return on the capital employed in the construction of the new course over a six to seven year period. How must they feel now after having sold the entire Wentworth operation for just under £17 million to see the new owners Chelsfield PLC recoup nearly £54 million by selling off only 40% of the shares.

However, when the contractors Golf Landscapes actually arrived on the

site in the Spring of 1988, they found a very different situation from that for which they had tendered. Tree clearance had indeed taken place and the resulting open space had been de-rooted and rotavated. This work had been carried out according to the original site survey, which was apparently drawn up incorrectly. It meant that some holes, as envisaged by the



*The well guarded short 2nd*

architects, John Jacobs in consultation with Gary Player and Bernard Gallacher, would just not fit in. Furthermore, with the difficulties experienced in obtaining planning permission in the first place (see "the Golf Course" April 1988) there was no possibility that the owners could take on the conservationists and cut down more trees.

A complete reappraisal of the project had to take place under the direction of the then project manager, the highly experienced Michael Hunter.

Peter Dunning, Golf Landscapes managing director, had to re-negotiate the contract which was reduced in value in accordance with the reduction in the size of the site. The contractors next problem occurred when it was discovered that there were no drawings for the greens, due to the revised area of site clearance. The contract greens and tee drawings were not compatible with the area that had been cleared. To maintain progress, setting out greens and tees was achieved by day to day approval of the architect. Work on shaping fairways, green and tee construction proceeded satisfactorily, despite the wet winter of 88/89, with sowing taking place in the Autumn of 1988. All the greens and tees were turfed with Inturf SS1 which has taken well, having been grown on a nearly pure sand base to the STRI's

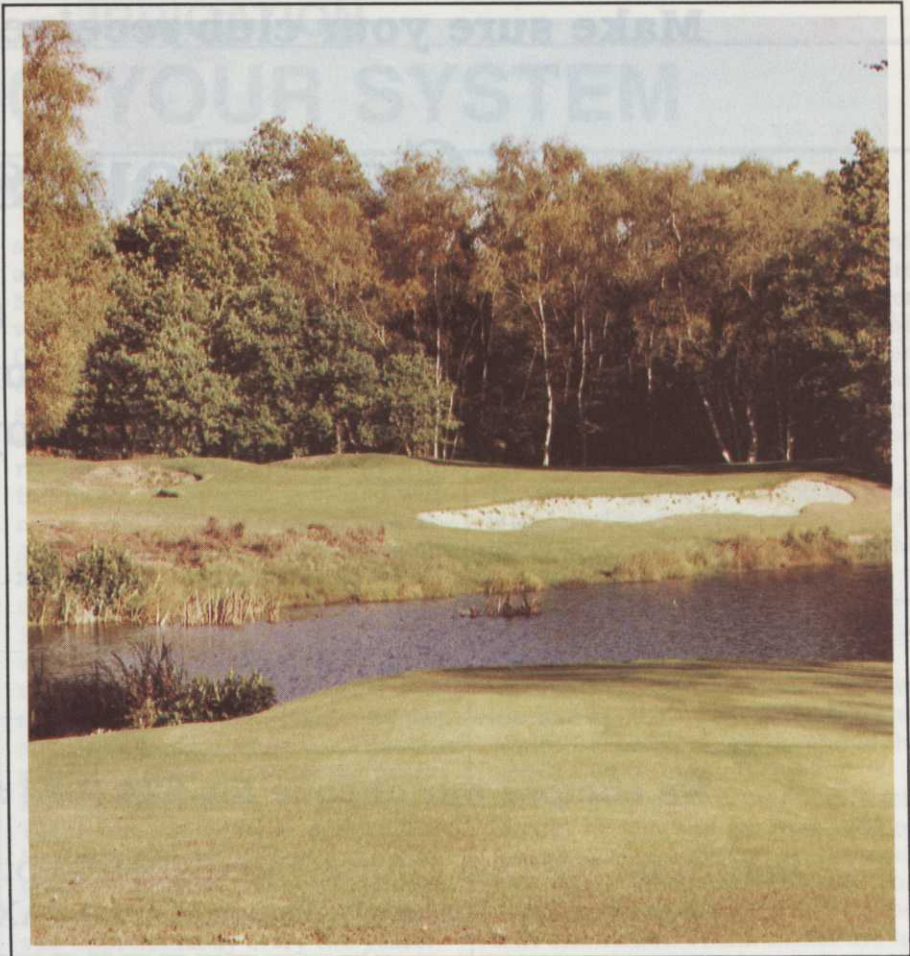


specifications. Hollow tining during the summer, having removed the small amount of soil that was left. One or two greens, particularly the short 4th, which are in shade, have not come on so quickly but a programme of clearance to let in more light is due to be carried out this Winter.

The resulting course that Golf Landscapes has built has smaller greens and little or no space for spectator viewing alongside the fairways and it is questionable whether the PGA European Tour would now view this as a suitable tournament venue. The South course is however, going to provide an enjoyable test for members and visitors alike as there are some spectacular holes, the short 2nd and 17th will undoubtedly become the subject of much discussion in the 19th. But it would have been a poor architect who could have produced anything but a good course from such an exceptional site.

The South Course project has been overseen by the STRI's Dewar Wishart with Dr. Peter Hayes making regular visits. Wentworth's insistence on the construction of sand only greens to a specification drawn up by the STRI will be a point for long discussion in the future, although the head greenkeeper for the South course Graham Mathieson has managed the greens exceptionally well so far.

Golf Landscapes are very pleased with the South Course and they are already working on alterations to the East Course as well as finalizing the par 3 course and driving range. They undertook several additional contracts at Wentworth, with their expertise in drainage being fully utilized in dealing with the problems that they found on the 18th fairway. The 18th fairway and green location, set in a woodland marsh area, was supposed to have been drained prior to commencement of construction work, by the AMEC Group, however, their efforts were not



The short 16th

effective.

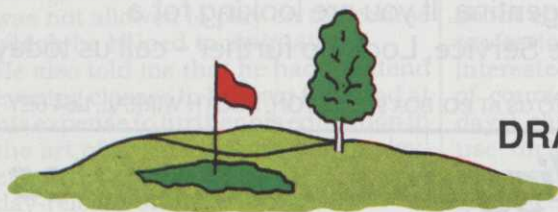
Golf Landscapes Ltd, were given instructions to drain the area, this was achieved by installing a 200mm diameter twin walled PVC pipe, surrounded by 200mm diameter gravel, at depths of 2m to act as a cut-off drain. By the time 150m length had been installed a full bore discharge of water was being obtained.

Within 2 weeks there was a band 20m wide dry enough to be walked on. The above was repeated along the middle and lower side of the fairway, following a reduction in level by major earthworks, 80mm diameter lateral drains

were installed followed by sand banding at 1m centres once the grass sward was established.

The Company has successfully completed two 18 hole courses during 1989, one at Graveley near Stevenage, Herts which was designed and constructed by the company, the other for Hawtree and Son at Brampton, Huntingdon, as well as alterations at Kirby Muxdoe Golf Club, Chesterfield, Kent, Moor Park, Walton Heath, and Camberley Heath. The company has a very healthy order book for golf course work, contract maintenance and drainage work during 1990.

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