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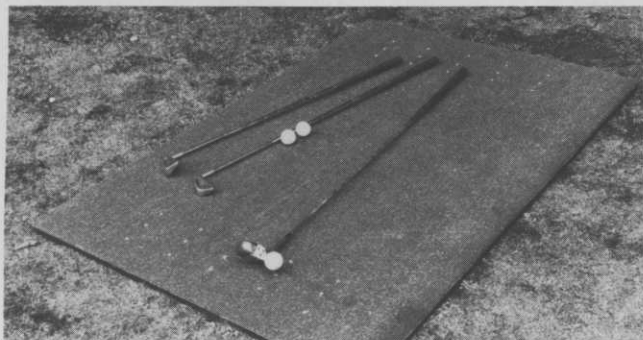
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Front Cover: October - hurricane force winds and floods bring devastation to many UK courses.

the Golf Course

OCTOBER 1987

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BY the time you read these notes, all paid-up members should be in possession of both membership card and legal advisory service card - any member who is not please contact me as soon as possible. The establishment of the membership list has been a major exercise, with many changes of address to be documented and cheques arriving without application forms and vice versa, apart from cheques for incorrect amounts! I will now be seeking the assistance of Section Secretaries to break down the membership list on a sectional basis. Membership applications have nearly reached the 2000 mark. Of this figure approximately 35% are new members not connected with the previous Associations, which means that approximately half the members of the previous Associations have yet to join BIGGA. Whilst the initial response is, therefore, most encouraging, it is clear that a major membership drive is necessary in line with the new subscription year commencing in January.

UPDATE

The General Purposes sub-committee has now considered entries for the logo competition, which were of a high standard. These were considered alongside commercial artist submissions to ensure that in deciding on a logo, the best possible choice was made for the new Association. The final choice was extremely difficult but, in deciding to choose a logo submitted by a commercial artist, the sub-committee agreed that an award should be made to the best entry from an Association Member. This award goes to Mr. Jim Russell, Assistant Course Manager, Hankley Common Golf Club. Well done Jim! - A blazer badge for the Association will be on its way to you in due course.

Now that we have an official logo, details are being finalised with regard to the Association's uniform. Members can, therefore, give early consideration to their requirements as it is hoped to make an official announcement on colours, costs etc. in the next edition of 'the Golf Course'.

Members may well be aware through their sections that Regional Meetings are being held

Continued on page 6

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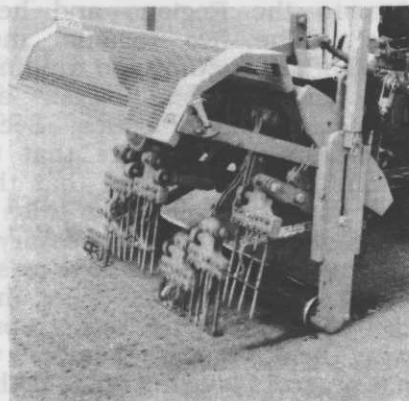
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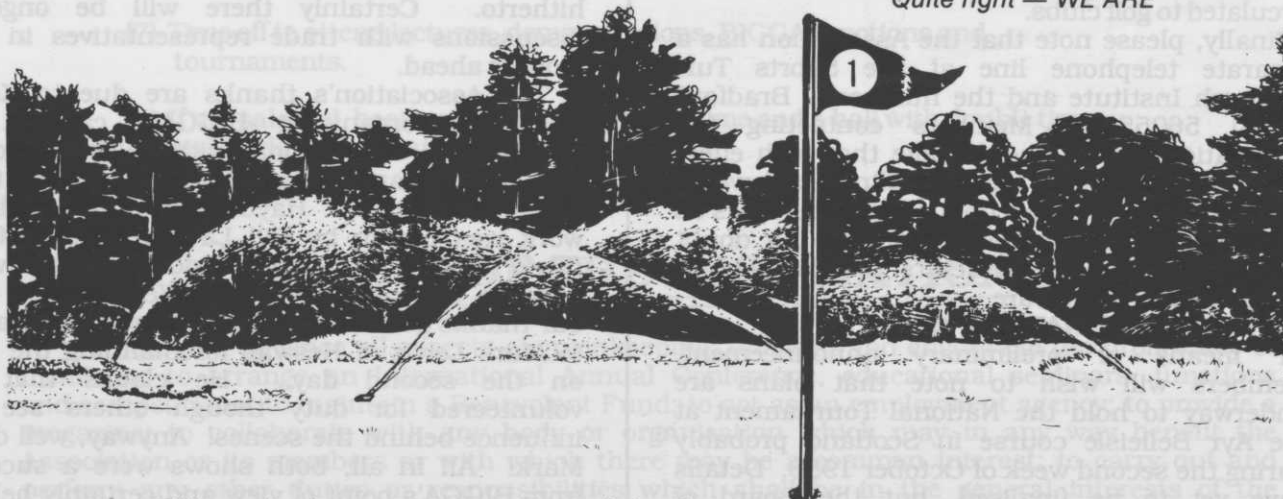
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continued from page 3

during November. These are essential in establishing the lines of communication through the Board of Management/Headquarters to the Regions and hence to the Sections. The five regional meetings will consider both structural and funding matters at regional and sectional level, as well as geographical boundary issues. Secretaries and Administrators should note that the Regions sub-committee has decided that the structure will henceforth have only two titles i.e. Regions and Sections. Where necessary, therefore, amendments should be made to existing titles. I look forward to attending these meetings and getting to know section representatives. Following them, I'm sure members will begin to feel that progress is being made both at the local and regional level.

You will find the latest Newsletter enclosed with this edition of 'the Golf Course' as promised in my update for the September issue. I would wish to acknowledge criticism from some members with regard to the Association's intent in respect of the Newsletter. The aim will be to produce a Newsletter with every edition of 'the Golf Course'. Again, I would ask that sectional secretaries submit material to me (and not 'the Golf Course') regularly and in good time for each issue. If this happens there will be no problem in producing a regular Newsletter.

Included in this month's issue is a recommended minimum salary/wages structure in response to many requests from both greenkeepers and golf clubs. The scale is applicable from 1 January 1988 and it is intended to update it on an annual basis. It is difficult to produce a scale appropriate for implementation across the United Kingdom as a whole, but the Board of Management is confident that the recommended scale is a fair and reasonable basis for negotiation between greenkeeper and club. The structure will be circulated to golf clubs.

Finally, please note that the Association has a separate telephone line at the Sports Turf Research Institute and the number is Bradford (0274) 560556. Members contacting the Association's office should note that with effect from 2nd November Miss Caroline Holdsworth will be taking up duties on a permanent basis as my secretary/personal assistant and no doubt she will often represent the first point of contact for members in the future.

NATIONAL TOURNAMENT 1988

BY means of preliminary announcement, members will wish to note that plans are underway to hold the National Tournament at the Ayr Belleisle course in Scotland probably during the second week of October 1988. Details have yet to be finalised, but the Board of Management is considering combining the Tournament with an International Conference and running the event over five days. Facilities are excellent and the course of international

standard. Consideration is being given to appointing a sub-committee to plan and arrange this major event with Ayrshire members playing a leading role and liaising with Board of Management and myself. Further details will be included in 'the Golf Course' as they become available, but it would be helpful if sectional secretaries could give me an early indication of members expressing an interest in attending.

INSTITUTE OF GROUNDSMANSHIP SHOWS - WINDSOR AND HAYDOCK PARK

I WAS in attendance for two days at both Windsor and Haydock Park and thoroughly enjoyed my first experience of these exhibitions. They can be viewed from different angles - Windsor is now a vast affair and more than one greenkeeper was seen to collapse in the BIGGA caravan as he made a tired exit! Certainly three full days are needed to do justice to the event. Haydock Park on the other hand is set to expand and, with the success of this year's event, will rapidly develop in terms of size and scope. Criticisms would be minor in that it is easy to lose oneself at Windsor and better signposting would be in order. At Haydock Park there was the pitiful sight of Bill Lawson, David Golding and myself begging for a roll at the SISIS stand at 3.45pm having failed to obtain lunch - they had run out of food! No doubt these matters can be put right next year!

As a meeting ground for BIGGA members, both occasions are ideal and I exchanged views with many members over the four days. Good ideas emerged and will receive further consideration as the Association moves forward. I met many representatives of the trade whose reception for the new Association is a warm one. It gave me the opportunity to outline what I see as a mutually beneficial working relationship between the Association and the trade, but a relationship which I see developing along different lines to those which have applied hitherto. Certainly there will be ongoing discussions with trade representatives in the months ahead.

The Association's thanks are due to Kevin Munt for organising BIGGA's caravan at Windsor in conjunction with Michael Coffey and to the various Board members who took turns of duty. At Haydock Park much hard work was put in by Bill Lawson, Brian Moss, David Golding, Howard McAddey, John Lowery and the committee of North West Section and our thanks go to them. A special word of thanks to Mark Lewis of Heswall for manning the tent on the second day. He claims that he volunteered for duty though others see an influence behind the scenes! Anyway, well done Mark! All in all, both shows were a success from BIGGA's point of view and certainly helped to spread the word!

On a personal note, I was very pleased to meet so many members. Names and faces are beginning to register.

NEIL THOMAS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

RECOMMENDED MINIMUM SALARY/WAGES SCALE

In response to many requests, the Association has formulated a recommended minimum salary/wages scale for 1988, although actual figures remain the subject of negotiation between the golf club and greenkeeping staff. The quoted rates apply to 18 hole golf courses.

| | |
|--|--------------------|
| Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper | £12,650 per annum* |
| Deputy Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper | £ 9,100 per annum* |
| First Assistant | £150.96 per week * |
| Assistant Greenkeeper | £141.54 per week * |
| Apprentice 50% of Assistant Greenkeeper rate i.e. and to increase annually by 12.5% | £ 70.77 per week * |

The First Assistant is a post designed to recognise a third-in-charge where appropriate to the size of the club. In cases where the First Assistant is the recognised Deputy the appropriate salary scale of £9,100 per annum should apply.

N.B. Staff in possession of recognised qualifications should have this reflected in an addition to basic salary.

* Basic conditions of employment should include:-

- (1) where accommodation is provided by the Club it should be rent and rates free with heating/lighting costs borne by the club.
- (2) where accommodation is not provided by the club a suitable remuneration should be paid.
- (3) 40 hour week
- (4) Retirement Pension Scheme
- (5) Telephone costs on club business
- (6) Mileage allowance
- (7) Time off to attend lectures, demonstrations, BIGGA functions and tournaments.
- (8) If not salaried, basic overtime to be paid at time and a half with double time on Sundays and Statutory Holidays.

OBJECTS OF THE ASSOCIATION

To promote and advance all aspects of greenkeeping; to assist and encourage the proficiency of members; to arrange an International Annual Conference, educational seminars, functions and competitions; to maintain a Benevolent Fund; to act as an employment agency; to provide a magazine; to collaborate with any body or organisation which may in any way benefit the Association or its members or with which there may be a common interest; to carry out and perform any other duties or responsibilities which shall be in the general interests of the Association or its members.



I THINK the most important thing about golf I have noticed is that little things mean a lot. If a club pays attention to the small things on a course then it will have a good future.

Many people think Carnoustie was taken off the championship circuit because of the lack of accommodation and facilities, but this was not the case. It was because the course was not good enough in terms of its general condition. The Scottish Amateur Championship was held there four years ago and the course was desperate because no-one seemed to care. It had been a wonderful links course, but everything had gone to rack and ruin. It was not tidy and the greens were not as they should have been.

As a result the person responsible was removed and the number two greenkeeper from St. Andrews took over three years ago. The Youth Championship was held at Carnoustie in August last year and Michael Bonallack, who has played all over the world, said it was the best condition course he had ever seen.

This was due to the greenkeeper being able to generate enthusiasm in his staff and the people he worked for. In two years all the little things had been sorted out.

At Pinehurst in North Carolina there are six courses and hundreds of people working there. No expense is spared and the courses are in tremendous condition. In August the grass dies every year and is re-seeded and the greens are out of this world.

At Bradford Golf Club many years ago, Gilbert Kendall, the greenkeeper, had only a little old tank which he used to hitch up to the back of a tractor in order to water the greens. In July and August the members expected the greens to be hard, fast and true. It was a sterner test of golf and there was a greater differential between the better and poorer players.

I believe this is the way it should be and that there is no harm in it. I do not think the

arguments for automatic water sprinklers are valid. British golf should not be compared to American golf because the climate, terrain and sub-soil are all different.

When Tom Watson came to play in the Open at Sandwich in 1981, where they have water on all the fairways, he was not very pleased with the course and was overheard saying, "There is no point in me coming to Britain to play on a links course if it is going to be like this. I can play every day in America where the ball goes from A to B, and that is not what I want out of the game".

Championship links courses are made so that in the summer the ball is expected to run for ever and ever. That is the way I think golf courses should be. I am certainly against watering and feel our courses should be natural. Inland courses are different: The bounce is much more severe and more frustrating.

I like to see trees on inland courses, but trees that are kept under control. There is no use having a nice little copse which is so thick that it cannot be played out of. You have to have trees on an inland course from an aesthetic point of view as well as a test of skill, but they must be kept in trim so a golfer has a sporting chance to play

FACE TO FACE

**An extract
from a talk
given by
Rodney Foster
to members
of the BGGA
in 1986**

out of them.

Golf overseas is a totally different game, mainly due to the climate. Some people say golf is a climate game and certainly the players from warmer countries seem to perform better than we do. You can only play sensible golf here for a maximum of six months of the year. If you get a bad start to the golfing year in terms of weather, it ruins the amateur golfer's season because he cannot put the work in. I am sure the same thing is true of greenkeeping.



A modern clubhouse overlooks the 1st tee on Carnoustie's championship course.

There is something else missing in this country which seems to be present abroad, and that is money, in the form of machinery and men. I think everything should be done to give greenkeepers a chance to attend to the little things to get the general standard of housekeeping up to scratch. Abroad, this seems to be done with out financial restraints.

If you go to Ganton, which I think gets as many golfers as other clubs and a tremendous number of visitors, you will see that they do tend to be lucky because when they sand and seed tees, they do seem to germinate quickly. On inland courses this takes more time. One article I read asked why tees could not be just like greens but a little longer. On a short hole, of course, it is not possible, but on a driving hole I cannot see why the tee cannot be presentable and attractive.

On links courses the formation of bunkers is easy: you dig a hole and it is there, but you then have the construction to look at. It is turved down the face or open? I prefer to see them open, but I appreciate that on a links course turved faces are very attractive, but I would have thought that the maintenance was a little harder.

With inland courses the trap that is often fallen into is to try to make the bunkers like those on seaside courses and you cannot do it. You cannot have a seaside bunker on an inland course. It does not work.

This lovely white sand is so attractive until you get in it!

Your foot goes in, you have maybe a couple of shots and then you look behind you at the mess and then have to spend five minutes with a rake tidying it up to make it presentable again. On inland course bunkers are in a worse condition, not through the fault of the greenkeeper, but, in most cases through frustrated golfers.

I would rather see the gritty, darker, firmer sand. Let's not make pretensions that our inland courses are like the ones at the seaside. They may be bowls of dirt to some people, but they are eminently more playable and they are easier to keep in good condition.

I think one could be more daring in the terms of the shape of bunkers. At my own club they have tended to be oval with a straight line at the front. I think this is a bit unimaginative and I think it is the same with fairways. I think it is nice to see a bit of shape to a fairway, whether on a championship course or an exciting local course. This is something which can be done with very little effort and the beauty of it is that it is not irreversible. If you decide it does not look right you just let the grass grow.

These are the sort of steps I would much rather see greens committees take with the connivance of the greens staff before they start altering the basic design of the course. I think moving greens and tees is an awfully big step to take.

You may have to lift the green because it has thatch but that is

a different problem.

To make a 440 yard hole into a 480 yard hole just to make a par 5 is a very limp and silly thing for a golf committee to embark upon. It is very easy to ruin a good hole for the sake of length. I have played a course in Estoril where there is a marvelous little 320 yard dog-leg right and it is one of the trickiest holes I have ever played. Not unfair but an awfully good hole.

I would like to see, as in Scotland, a greens convener appointed for a minimum of five years and I would have thought this was much more sensible than the system in England where you have a member who is on the greens committee for the two years he is on the board and the third year he is appointed chairman because he has had experience of two years on the board. That is neither use nor ornament. If this was changed I am sure courses would be in the sort of condition I would like to see them in.

Continued on page 30

FACE TO FACE

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RUDDINGTON GRANGE

THE idea for a golf course at Ruddington Grange, near Nottingham was first thought of some thirty years ago.

The original Grange dating from the 1700s was bought by a local brewing magnate, together with some 110 acres of land. The new owner tore down the existing mansion and set about building a modern replacement. Costing a staggering £63,000 in the 1950s, this dream home boasted aluminium double glazed windows, under floor ducted heating, air conditioning and an indoor swimming pool. There was a separate building to accommodate twelve staff.

All this was just for a private house, but the owner, being a farsighted businessman, evolved the plans in such a way that the whole property could be easily converted into a country club.

Working on the building at the time was engineer Jack Johnson who, knowing the owner well, made a promise that he would be the next owner of Ruddington Grange. Jack's wish eventually became reality fifteen years ago when he acquired the estate. The brewery chief and his wife had died, leaving the property to their 14 year old daughter. Jack had to wait a further seven years until the daughter came of age before completion of the sale could take place and he could take up residence. During those years the Grange was looked after by a caretaker and gardener.

Now, after a further 15 years, Jack Johnson has commenced development of the Grange and estate. Alterations to the house and other accommodation have already begun and he has awarded a substantial contract for the construction of an 18 hole golf course to CDC Landscapes of Waldringfield near Ipswich. CDC are a diverse group who have previously built courses near their base, including Waldringfield Heath which they have recently

extended to 18 holes. John Small, a recent past President of the Nottinghamshire County Golf Union has been appointed manager. A fine golfer himself, he has been able to advise on various aspects of course design.

CDC's site manager is John Glasgow, who is working with one of the group's directors, Phil Pilgrem. They have been fortunate in that the estate had considerable areas of high quality turf and several fairways have been mown out with little need for reparation and only minimal need for spraying against weeds. Construction of the greens, which are sand and peat over a stone drainage carpet, is already complete with all of them being sown this year with a mixture of bent and fescue. Tee construction is also well advanced. Particular attention is being paid to the construction of the greens areas. While the original layout did not offer detailed greens drawings, CDC's architect Phil Pilgrem made comprehensive drawings for each site, which now embrace all the natural undulations, grassy hollows and tight bunkering - all the hazards appreciated by the skilled golfer and dreaded by the novice!

Great care has been taken to preserve all the mature trees, which contain some fine species and unusual varieties, including Cedar Lebanon and Spanish Chestnut. There will need to be some very careful tree surgery this winter and some additional trees planted to ensure that the course has maximum definition.

There are two man-made lakes, both of which come into play and which will not only serve to supply water to the course, but are large enough to be stocked with game fish. The design for the lakes and drainage was of particular interest to Jack Johnson, whose specialty in civil engineering is hydrodynamics.

The construction of the Ruddington Grange course, a par 71 of 6,500 yards, has certainly not lacked detailed supervision. The result will be a pleasing parkland course which is certain to be a good test of golf, with an especially demanding finish in front of the imposing clubhouse. The club has already opened its doors for membership and the alterations to the clubhouse are expected to be completed in time for a Christmas opening. The golf course will not be in play before the autumn of 1988, although foregreens have been cut well away from the proper putting surfaces to ensure that members can get the feel of the course next spring.

Future plans for Ruddington Grange include the rehabilitation of the 60 stall stables as an equestrian centre, the construction of tennis and squash courts as well as other sporting facilities.

No doubt the club will become quickly established with over 800 applications for membership already received. Ruddington Grange Golf Club will be a fitting testament to farsightedness of the owner and the care which has gone into its construction.

