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Greenside Comment...



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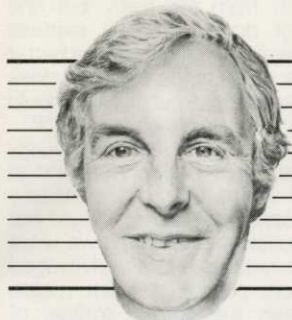
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John Lelean

What's done, needs to be seen to be done

In January this year the newly formed Association of British & International Golf Greenkeepers' came into being, formed by the amalgamation of the long established British Golf Greenkeepers' Association, the southern based English & International Golf Greenkeepers' Association and the Scottish Greenkeepers.

This coming together, following years of acrimony among certain members of the greenkeeping profession, was precipitated by the Royal & Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews in the interest of furthering the future and recognition of those men who maintain our golf courses, without whom there would not be a game to play.

Such a move was welcomed by all sections of the golf industry, the greenkeepers themselves, the controlling bodies in golf and those who come under the general heading of - Trade.

All accepted the work involved in organising an Association could no longer be left to honorary officers regardless of their dedication and must be the responsibility of a full-time official.

The decisions made twelve months ago should now be bearing fruit, but greenkeepers

nationwide are asking - WHEN, and so they might.

Last month the National Greenkeepers' Tournament held at Verulam Golf Club, St. Albans, was organised by the Mid Anglia Section of the now defunct BGGGA. It was a highly successful tournament, patronised by many of the active participants of previous years, in fact the majority of competitors were the 'Old Faithfuls'.

This year there was no Annual General Meeting for the new Association and greenkeeping business was confined to informal discussions in the 19th hole.

The Chairman Mr. Walter Woods did attend and said a few words at the conclusion of the prize giving, but the newly appointed Executive Director Mr. Neil Thomas did not. He was said to be moving house to Bingley where his office will be incorporated within the headquarters of the Sports Turf Research Institute.

Cautionary words of advice from many quarters warned of the dangers of rushing into the new venture. Advice largely ignored by its architects, for reasons best known to themselves.

To bring together three distinct, separate bodies, each with its own administration, varying philosophies and regional differences requires delicate negotiation and a degree of diplomacy.

What has now been created is a vacuum. The old groupings have gone and the new, as far as greenkeepers are concerned, is not functioning.

This could have been avoided if the BIGGA had been set up as an umbrella association with three individual associations continuing to operate until the time was ripe for a smooth transfer.

Finance has never been a problem. As reported last month the R&A in a massive grant payment to various golf bodies around the world allocated £37,500 to form the new Association.

Greenkeepers are expecting positive action from their management committee, with the priorities of improved status, better working conditions, an enhanced training scheme and an agreed salary scale reflecting their contribution to the game of golf. So far, all they have received are promises.

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NEWS ROUND-UP

PEOPLE, PRODUCTS AND DEVELOPMENTS
IN THE GOLF COURSE INDUSTRY

'Why is it that all the news that comes out of Northern Ireland is bad?'

This was the question put to golf writing colleagues over dinner in the magnificent club house at Royal Portrush.

'Because that is what the English want to read', was the reply.

Unfortunately the answer was not far from the truth, but one cannot do more than express sorrow that so much of the better facets of life in the province does not receive the publicity it should and that certainly goes for golf.

The reception and hospitality enjoyed over a long weekend at Royal Portrush and the nearby Portstewart Golf Clubs could not be faulted and although we were in somewhat of a privileged position, playing a team match between the golfing scribes of Yorkshire and our counterparts from the Belfast press the reaction of others from the mainland to the golfing delights of County Antrim confirmed similar feelings.

The Northern Ireland Tourist Board have what must be one of the hardest jobs in the world to convince people that Ireland is the place to go for a golfing holiday. What must be even more frustrating, is the fact, they have a product that is quite superb.

Royal Portrush, regarded as one of the top courses in the British Isles hosted the Open Championship in 1951. It is the only course in Ireland to have done so and fittingly, was won by Max Faulkner. If ever a links was worthy of staging the event again, it must be here, but sadly,

Continued page 5

Northern Ireland – A Golfing Paradise



The pictures of Royal Portrush Golf Club (front cover and this page) have been provided by courtesy of the Northern Ireland Tourist Board.

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the ugly side of politics must forbid any such consideration in most of our lifetimes.

Laid out by Harry Colt in its present form it was described by Bernard Darwin a golf writer who stands tall even in the company of men such as Henry Longhurst, 'as a monument to Mr. H. S. Colt, more enduring than brass'.

Every hole is a challenge, even those that seem reachable with no more than a good drive and a pitching wedge to the putting surface. The famous 5th-hole is a case in point. It was here the ravages of the Atlantic Ocean undermined the cliff face and the green almost fell into the sea. Members and golf lovers the world over rallied round and raised sufficient money to build a retaining wall to hold the green in place.

The Dunluce Course, better known of the two at Portrush (the other is the Valley) is the favourite of Fred Daly, the only other Open Champion from Ireland. He was born at Portrush and though now in his seventies is still a far better than average player.

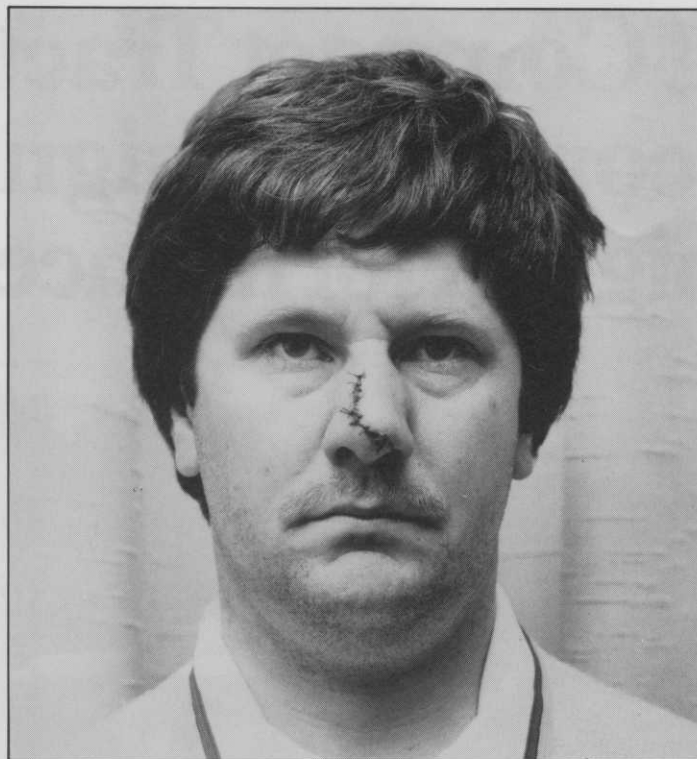
The Causeway coast is also renowned for one of Ireland's best known exports - Black Bush. For those who have not imbibed a 'drop of the Irish' they have a treat in store.

The distillery at Blackbush dates back to the beginning of the 17th century when a licence 'to distil whiskey' was granted by James I. It is now exported to 106 countries around the globe.

Each year in June, Black Bush sponsor the Causeway Coast Amateur Golf Tournament, played over the links at Royal Portrush, Portstewart and Castlerock. Entries come from all over the world and this year there were golfers from Canada, the USA, Australia and Zimbabwe as well as strong contingents from the UK.

The weather was not especially kind for the tournament, but to quote a phrase 'the price was right' and there was always the whiskey to provide the internal warmth.

NEWS 1



(above)
Eric Green needed 17 stitches in his nose when a plastic coupling broke off the control valve.

(below)
Eric shows the broken valve.



One of the leading members, Bill Hawthorn of Watermation Ltd. has commented.

The horrific accident to Eric Green, Head Greenkeeper at Woodcote Park Golf Club resulting in facial injury occurred because of a failure of the plastic nipple underneath the manual hydrant. Failures of this nature are not uncommon if this method of installation is used. For this reason many years ago Watermation devised a different method of mounting valve assemblies at the greens having the hydrant supported on a metal nipple attached to a robust metal tee, in order to withstand the mechanical loads which inevitably are placed upon the hydrant when hoses are attached.

Toro, whose General Manager Peter Roberts is Chairman of the Association, has recently published a guide entitled 'The Thinking Man's Guide to Golf Course Watering', a publication that all golf green committees should read before asking companies to submit tenders for irrigation systems.

Naturally this booklet is biased towards the Toro product as any sales literature should be in a competitive market.

Other systems, such as that marketed by Watermation, could suit a club equally as well. The club must seek tenders for the product that best fits their need within a price bracket they can afford.

What they must not do is to take the lowest price, without ensuring the system fully meets safety standards and their staff are not put in a position of danger.

We are publishing the photographs of Eric Green's injuries, not from a sense of tabloid press sensationalism, but simply to bring home to Greenkeepers and those involved in Golf Club Management, the need to be ultra careful when dealing with water under extreme pressure.

NEWS 2

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NEWS ROUND-UP

NEW GREENKEEPER GOLF CHAMPIONS

Mel Guy, Head Greenkeeper at the South Leeds Club has won the National Greenkeepers News of the World Cup for the best gross score over three days at Verulam G.C. at his first attempt.

Mel, has been a greenkeeper for only two and a half years, stepping into the job, when he was made redundant as a fabrication engineer.

A six handicap member at South Leeds he had often helped the club with engineering work and then made the decision to move permanently to greenkeeping. Eighteen months ago he was appointed Head Greenkeeper, but still remains a playing member at the club.

His gross score of 79, 73, 79 for a 231 total, although higher than most winning scores over the past few years was enough to get his name on one of the most prestigious trophies in amateur golf.

Congratulations are also due to the Northern team who won the Team Championship for the first time in many years.

Backing Mel Guy were Mick Hannam from Moortown and the evergreen Don Roberts, the retired greenkeeper at Bradford's West Bowling. Their total three day score was sixteen shots ahead of the field.

It is also worth a mention that Mick Hannam, Captain of the club at the 9-hole Roundhay course last year achieved the first 'ace' of his career in a recent monthly stableford. Although he finished with 35 points, he was still nine points adrift of the winner. Not surprising to those who know the scores put in by some of the Roundhay members in the local pro-ams!

MONDAY, 17th AUGUST

1st	I. Toon	Nett 65
2nd	P. Fitzjohn	67
3rd	G. Payne	68
4th	D. Roberts	69

Over 60's R. Plain 73

Maxwell Hart Trophy		
2nd	R. Thompson	73
Coming of Age Cup		
3rd	R. Gates	80

TUESDAY, 18th AUGUST

36 Holes Scratch

R. S. Barker - 149
Toro U.K. Trophy

36 Holes Nett (0 to 11)

I. Toon - 130 Ransomes Cup		
2nd	M. H. Guy	140
Universal Cup		
3rd	M. Sheehan	141
Golf Illustrated Cup		
4th	Martin Smith	142
5th	P. Fitzjohn	142
6th	E. R. West	143
7th	J. M. Hannan	144
8th	D. Murtagh	144

36 Holes Nett (12 to 18)

D. Roberts - 138 Pattison's Trophy		
2nd	P. Wentworth	140
President's Cup		
3rd	N. Whittaker	145
May's Cup		
4th	I. Holoran	146
5th	A. Panks	148
6th	J. Wells	148
7th	P. Malia	151
8th	B. Moss	151

JUBILEE CUP

NORTHERN
(422)

M. H. Guy
D. Roberts
J. M. Hannan

18 HOLES NETT:

1st	Martin Smith	65
Hamilton Stutt Cup		
2nd	R. S. Barker	65
Supaturf Challenge Cup		
3rd	I. Toon	65
4th	M. H. Guy	67

PAST CHAIRMAN'S CUP

J. Richardson

VITAX KEY TROPHY

36 Holes Putting Competition
P. Nason

WEDNESDAY, 19th AUGUST

18 Holes Medal

1st	J. Cole	66
Fisons Bowl		
2nd	P. Wentworth	66
S.T.R.I. Cup		
3rd	R. Howlett	68

54 Holes Best Nett

1st	P. Wentworth	206
S.A.I. Longlife Trophy		
2nd	I. R. Toon	206

54 Hole Scratch Championship

M. H. Guy — 231
"News of the World" Bowl

NEWS 3

CADDY OFFER

A small advertisement in the Yorkshire Post under the Personal Column is expected to produce a deluge of replies. Headed - Unattached Gentleman Golfers, it read; 'Do you require an attractive tall blonde lady caddy in her early 40's, with perhaps hopes of forming a friendship off the course. There is no indication whether she was prepared to carry or required a trolley.

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Echoes from the long, not so hot summer.

... by Fred Hawtree

Another mish-mash of delicately balanced social, technical, historical and personal gossip from the fluent pen of you know who.

South-Westerly

Spoke to Bill Pile, Devon and Cornwall Secretary, on the telephone. How was he getting on since he left the Downes Crediton Golf Club and started travelling the West Country on behalf of D O Hunt Limited of Devon? They supply everything for the golf course, except machinery!

He likes the life, he likes the job, he likes meeting his members more than ever before. In addition to golf greenkeepers, he also calls on bowling greenkeepers or, more usually, the bowling club committee. They get some useful advice as part of the deal. One club was told to cut back

trees and bushes to get some light and air to the rink. This was so effective that they slashed their order for fertiliser from 50 to 25kgs. Bill was still happy: "They'll come back again".

Don Hunt, founder of the firm and President of Bill's Section, is Chairman of the Green Committee at the Teignmouth Golf Club on Haldon Moor. If you have ever played at Mont Agel, you will remember the view of Monte Carlo harbour spread below you as you look over the back of the old 4th Tee. The club house at Haldon offers you an equally impressive panorama, even if the yachts are less opulent and the River Teign differs in certain important respects from the Mediterranean.

Jack Moor's new office and machinery sheds are also impressive. The staff dining room has fridge, cooker and all, not to mention the pink curtains.

Some bright firm should sponsor a Ground Staff Quarters of the Year competition. It might encourage any clubs still living in the corrugated iron era to see how it should be done.

They are now in deep shock and grow wild-eyed whenever they hear the word 'golf'. The members of the British Association of Golf Course Architects still try to fit the golf course to the site, not vice versa, and hope that a simple diet and devoted nursing, accompanied by gentle repetition of this message, will restore Caradon's faith in humanity and hope for the future.

Beyond the Tamar

Being in Caradon recently, (Caradon? Caradon?, you ask. It is the first bit of Cornwall beyond Plymouth). I took time out to cast a jaded eye over the new St. Mellion. After passing below the flags of all nations at the entrance and through two rows of black blobs, which turned out to be spherical pine trees, I was apprised of the green fee. (£25 to play the 'Nicklaus' but knock off a fiver if it's with a member).

So I walked past the back of the 9th Green instead but haven't slept a peaceful wink since, due to nightmares in which the earth rolls and heaves on a scale far beyond anything which Richter could devise for your average seismograph.

Volcanic ranges have popped up between fairways as the earthquakes proceeded and there are ant-like machines crawling all over them to cut the grass. The foothills are very much in play and most of the peaks as well. If this is a stadium course, there did not seem to be a lot of elbow room for spectators, but I only saw one or two holes. At least they will get good exercise on 'them thar hills', if their ankles stand up to it.

I do not know what Cornwall did to deserve this fate, but J Nicklaus has certainly put his stamp on it and nobody will ever be able to rub it out.

Unfortunately the local planners, after years of jealousy guarding their farming hinterland, have got a little bit of Ballybunion crossed with the Grand Canyon slap in the middle of it. Even their attempts to oppose further building development were frustrated owing to the employment which it would attract.

By the Plym

On the way back to Sludgecombe, filial piety demanded a diversion to look at the 9 hole Elfordleigh Golf Course at Plympton. Hawtree I designed it in 1930. (A month or so previously, filial and grand-filial piety had taken both II and III to Highwoods Golf Club at Bexhill. The greens had sunk a bit on the filled side in the sixty years since their construction, but were still puttable and not much else had changed).

Elfordleigh was an early venture in the hotel-cum-golf course development. It did not do so well as its contemporary, the Selsdon Park Hotel, but then Selsdon was only nine miles out of London and on a much grander scale. Nevertheless, Elfordleigh has survived its ups and downs for nearly 56 years under various owners. Now it is on a high.

There is a brand new pro's shop by the 1st Tee. There are more tees and bigger tees, some with stone walls holding them up to make full use of the limited space.

The site has fairly strong slopes and a stream, so you can guess the final development at the bottom of the valley. Only one guess, I'm afraid. That's right - a water hazard.

Incidentally, I looked out the ledger to see how much Elfordleigh cost in 1935. You can have as many guesses as you like for this one. The answer is £2,500. 400 times less, proportionately, I understand, than its new competitor on the other side of the Tamar, but 'fings', in case you hadn't guessed, 'ain't what they used to be'.



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Westward Ho!

John Davis, Secretary of the Royal North Devon Golf Club has given me a file containing my father's advisory reports on Westward Ho! links from 1926 until 1935, by which time, as a member of the Board of Greenkeeping Research at Bingley, he got the club to become subscribers to that developing organisation.

In view of the reaction in greenkeeping to the discovery that too much fertiliser is too much fertiliser, I skimmed through the reports to see what materials they recommended in those days. I summarise as follows:

- 1926- Dried Blood
- 1930 Malt Culms
Fish Guano
Compost
- 1931 7lbs Sulphate of Iron
3lbs Sulphate of Ammonia
to each cubic yard of
compost
(‘Neither more nor less’)
- 1932 ‘Discontinue S/A and S/I on
Greens 4,6,7,8,9 and 18.
The rest: 5lbs S/I
3lbs S/A
in 1½ cubic yards compost’
- 1933 Back to Dried Blood and
Malt Culms, in compost
- 1934 Poultry manure replaces
Malt Culms
- 1935 1 cwt Peruvian Guano in
1¼ cubic yards compost

‘What no Super?’ you ask. It appears just once, in the very last report: ‘3½lbs Super-phosphate per Green in the August dressing with Rape Meal and Sulphate of Ammonia’. Why? Perhaps I can hazard a guess.

In 1932, T W Evans PhD, AIC, the chemist at Bingley, wrote in the Journal: ‘In conclusion, it can be stated that swards cannot be maintained indefinitely by a system of top-dressing with compost and nitrogenous fertiliser...’.

In 1931, Evans had said, ‘An occasional dressing with a complete fertiliser, providing the phosphoric acid and potash in it is very low, may be applied to greens on poor soil...’. But then he continues, ‘It cannot be too strongly emphasised, that the regular use of mixed fertilisers containing high percentages of phosphoric acid and potash is to be avoided...’.

Who led us astray?

‘Open’ University

The Observer’s Peter Dobreiner sounded a few alarms on behalf of the English adverb when he suggested what players’ comments might be heard during pre-Open interviews. ‘I am hitting it good but putting horrible’ was one of them. ‘I am playing solid enough’ was another. Alerted to the dangers, one became over-sensitive to the foibles of BBC commentators. In between

‘super- shots’, Tony Jacklin described one competitor as ‘fortuitous’ which seemed to cast an unnecessary slur on his parents who may very well have intended to have a golfer in the family. But Jacklin does at least believe in the preservation of the adverb. Indeed, he manufactures them and will turn ‘over-confident’ into ‘overly confident’ at the drop of a hat. I think I overheard a ‘routinely’ too. Time for Dobreiner to go to work on these as well.

Harry Carpenter turned a neat phrase when describing a par round in the wind and rain on the Friday. It ‘staggered belief’. My memory of belief up to that time had been that you begged it. Edwardians would sometimes express amazement by ‘Well, I’m beggared. This may have been a mild form of a stronger expression to which people take less exception to-day, but it sounds a shade old-fashioned. I will ask my grand-children if that traditional game called ‘Beggard your neighbour’ is still an acceptable pastime among the young or has been toughened up so that they stagger him now?’

Belief was both staggered AND beggared by David Miller, writing in The Times when he described the 7th at Muirfield as ‘illusory’. One knew what he meant but have you ever tried cutting a hole in an illusory green? It’s easy if you have got an illusory hole-cutter.

Royal Guest

It was a pity that King Hassan II of Morocco had to cancel his golfing trip to Scotland and perhaps to the Open, due to pressure of work back home after his State visit to Britain. While he was here the Press never missed a chance to score a point over his punctuality, protocol and private entertaining. There was a good deal more about the fact that he was five minutes late for lunch than there was about who else was there. They forgot that the King is a golfer and has never yet been penalised for an infraction of Rule VII.7, although I should be surprised if it ever got into the Arabic version.

When the Queen went to see him, much was made of her lonely vigil in a tent in the middle of the desert and of her long wait for her dinner guest on the Royal Yacht a couple of days later. In my experience she was lucky that he even turned up on the right day. In humbler circles, I have responded to urgent calls for week-end consultations in Tetuan and waited until Monday before learning that the meeting had been put off for a week. Last Autumn I was bidden to a meeting at 11 a.m. for an audience with a Princess. At 1.30, we decided that she was probably

tucking into her cous-cous at some other table. You have to get into the *manana* mood if you are to earn your Queen’s Award for Export. Tap the foot, drum the fingers as she did and you’ll be out on your ear. The Royal Household also seemed to me to be asking for trouble when whoever writes the menu picked that sauce with 32 components to accompany the salmon. It is said that you can knock up a Sauce Bigarade, which has only 16 ingredients, in a matter of 25 minutes, though I should not like to try. But do not think that you will knock up this other one in 50 flat just because it has twice the number of working parts. They can not be spooned into the pot and stirred till ready. The ‘*saucier*’ has to get up early in the morning after a night of prayer and pure thoughts. Taking just two ingredients, he begins the rites. He is towelled down at intervals during the day by his aides as each critical stage is reached and another subtle element added. At 8.47 p.m., assuming the dish is to be served at 8.50 No. 32 goes in and a minute later the sauce is rushed to the table to be served at the peak of perfection.

The Spanish say that a good *paella* is always better when you get round to the second helping

because it has matured while you were scoffing the first. There are classic French dishes which must gently simmer or *mijoter* for a time if the ultimate blend of flavours is to be achieved. Not so this concoction on the Britannia. Keep it hot on the back burner for an hour and you might as well open a bottle of Heinz Tomato Ketchup.

But even if served in the new squeeze container, which deposits its contents on the floor when shaken instead of on the ceiling as the glass one used to do, I feel that some pretty sharp reprimands would have gone down to the galley if the familiar red bottle had appeared amongst the gold plate just because the guests sat down an hour too late.

P.S.

Only a month ago, I congratulated B I G G A on getting an ‘I’ into its title because it sounded like an Institute.

Now I am not so sure.

The Chairman of the Championship Committee at the Open presentation ceremony thanked the British and Irish Golf Greenkeepers Association for raking the bunkers.

Still, whether Institute, Irish, or International, the blazer badges will still be O.K.

FEATURE 1






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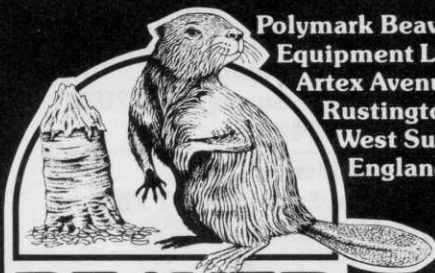
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