

## A chance to win and to help Blind Golf Championships

■ A unique golf team competition in which every Club in Britain can compete against every other Club is at the heart of a bid to raise funds to stage the World Blind Golf Championships in Britain in 1992.

A letter from Peter Alliss, Patron of English Blind Golf, has gone out to every Club secretary. In which he asks the Clubs to take part in the 'Hot Shot Golf Challenge' and for every player who enters to donate one pound to the fund.

The target of the competition is the short par 3 hole in the May 1992 medal round at every Club in Britain. Each participating player has his or her drive at the short par 3 measured from the pin. The distances in inches of the best six drives are totalled, any holes-in-one count minus 24, and that is the Club's recorded score.

The winning teams, both ladies and men's, will win for that Club greenkeeping and landscaping equipment and supplies to the value of £5,000. The individual players will receive inscribed trophies and the prizes will be presented at the World Blind Golf Championships at Patshull Park, Shropshire in August 1992.

■ It was with a smile that I read Seve's comments after scoring a double-bogey seven on the 645 yard tenth in the Turespana Balearic Open in March, critical of the greens: "They were much quicker – I don't know why they cut them so much. You lose your touch and rhythm. I should be leading, but you just have to be patient". It seems that green speed is the one thing that can never be right for everyone and why indeed do 'they' cut them so much? Almost certainly because 'they' are instructed to. Seve later went on to win in a gift-from-heaven play-off!

■ The IOG, which came in for some well deserved criticism following sloppy handling of the press at their last

trade show at Peterborough, have suffered a further set-back with the resignation of Gerald Snook and Frank Scott as organisers of the show, following reported internal conflict over the re-scheduling of the exhibition and some apparent accusations that Scott and Snook had put the institute in a mess over agreements with the East of England Showground owners.

The conflict was sparked off when Scott and Snook made arrangements to move the IOG show forward a week to avoid a clash with the August bank holiday weekend. The revised move to September 8th-10th, though dodging said bank holiday, now means that a part of the showground will also be occupied by a kit-car show.

The IOG are playing the whole matter down, claiming that their HQ staff, though somewhat slimmer in numbers following recent personnel cuts, can handle the bulk of administration for the show, but as has been observed before and will now be watched with even keener interest, there is no substitute for getting professionals to do a professional job.

It must also be said that the previous masterminding of the IOG exhibition by Dianne Mowat, deposed two years ago as the show organiser, is mourned in many circles, for she remains the essential 'missing link' that IOG so desperately need again.



■ A special word of praise for Rhone Poulenc on their initiative in chipping in a massive 10% of their distributor representative financial awards to the worthy charity, Physically Handicapped, Able Bodied (PHAB). Rhone Poulenc have come in for a mite of criticism just recently over the 'worm killing' saga, but on this occasion they may step forward for well deserved accolades.

## Just leave the countryside alone, golf course developers are told

The Countryside Commission wants any plans for golf courses in areas designated for their scenic beauty to be bunkered. In a position statement, shortly to be set out as an advisory booklet for planning authorities and golf course developers, the Commission recommends a general presumption against new courses in:

- National parks, including the Broads.
- Areas of outstanding natural beauty,
- Heritage coasts.
- Historic parklands.
- The New Forest.

In other areas the go-ahead should be given only where such a development would contribute to and enhance the character of the landscape. And it should proceed only after a thorough environmental assessment of the likely impact, says the Commission.

Manicured greens, contouring, planting of often alien species, sandy bunkers and the removal of hedge-rows and stone walls can give an 'imposed' look which would conflict

with beautiful landscapes – especially as, on average, an 18 hole golf course spreads over 50 hectares of land. There are fears, too, that such a facility could be the thin end of the wedge, with clubhouses, hotel accommodation, roads and other development following. But the Commission is not against the idea of golf course facilities in less sensitive areas of the countryside.

Preference should be given, it says, to locating them where they can make a positive contribution to the area – for example, within degraded landscapes, such as those affected by mineral workings or where intensive agriculture has already left its mark. The 12 new community forests being planted in different areas of England, or the New National Forest being created in the Midlands, could make suitable locations for new golf courses, it suggests.

But, says the Commission, in all circumstances where golf courses are allowed, consideration must be given to their effect on

the conservation of wildlife and historic features, as well as on local communities. Furthermore, appropriate management of new or retained landscape elements should be a condition of any planning permission, together with arrangements for the provision of public access to the countryside.

The Commission, with the help of consultants, is to publish an advisory booklet on the subject later this year, giving guidance to local authorities and golf course developers on the way in which the principles should be applied.

It will cover matters such as environmental and landscape factors to be taken into account when considering a new course, design guidance for landscape treatment and enhancement, and opportunities for creative conservation, together with guide-lines for future management and after-care.

• Source: "Countryside", newspaper of the Countryside Commission