

How to be blessed by your grandchildren

by David White

Back in 1981 I fell in love with a book. Honestly, I'd never before been smitten so by a single, individual tome, though I'm blessed with over three thousand highly individual little beauties in my golf library. I loved the book and its subject so much that I persuaded its authors, golf course architect Geoffrey Cornish, and architectural editor Ronald Whitten, that a niche existed for a leather-bound, limited edition, and that I should produce it. That special book, 'The Golf Course', came into being as an Ellesborough Press collectors' edition, with copies now changing hands at two or three times the original price. If I'd only known, I'd have done a touch of 'laying down'...

So, what was so special about it? It covered a subject that had not to any great degree been examined before: a history of the men who practiced the art of golf course design and the way their art evolved. More than that, it profiled several hundred men who made important contributions to the history of course design. Not content, it also contained the most comprehensive listings of architects' works ever compiled, plus, to cap it all, another section contained a master list of golf courses, cross-referenced to their designers. In short it was, or soon became, the 'Bible' for all journalists working within the golf industry; dog-eared, coffee-stained, a copy was found on every desk.

That first edition representing some 40 years of research for Cornish, and if it has been indispensable these past twelve years, the new edition will most certainly replace it as the 'darling' for all golf writers, by making us appear more knowledgeable than we really are, though we'll hardly discard the original, old friend that it is.

Make no mistake, this is no 're-hashing' exercise, for the new book, apart from quite properly gaining a new title, *The Architects of Golf*, is a completely revised and expanded edition, a survey of golf course design from its beginnings to the present, with an encyclopedic listing of golf architects and their courses (so bang up-to-date some of the courses listed are still at the grow-in stage). Described by its publishers, Harper Collins, as the ultimate reference source for anyone interested in golf, it contains a ton of new material. With umpteen million golfers world-wide, the market potential is enormous, but more than that, it's a hell of a good book. I urge you to buy a copy, your grandchildren will bless you for your foresight.

The Architects of Golf, by Geoffrey Cornish and Ron Whitten, (648pp hardback) is available from Grant Books, Victoria Sq. Droitwich, WR9 8DE, price £42.75 including postage.

Thirty five years of searching, but I never did find a copy of a rare book of golf architecture entitled *Hazards; The essential elements in a golf course without which the game would be tame and uninteresting*. We collectors should never despair, for nearly always there is someone to the rescue when the search is almost abandoned, and now a whole new generation of grateful readers can enjoy the collection of articles and discourses collected by Aleck Bauer in 1913, which helped him in his work on the Ravisloe course in Chicago. In particular he assembled a selection of famous golf holes which were noted for their terrifying hazards, with spice added by contributions from Alister Mackenzie, Ted Ray, Donald Ross, Dr Laidlaw Purves and Harry Colt. Good enough, you might think, but in this reprinted and enlarged edition there are further features also by Peter Thomson, Fred Hawtree and Peter Dobereiner, plus a fascinating argument propounded by Philip Truett, in which he questions whether bunkers should be raked or not, expressing a desire to see old traditions retained, making golf a test of skill supplemented by a large slice of fortune – good or bad. I imagine many greenkeepers will have something to add on that subject!

Hazards, by Aleck Bauer (88 pp hardback, limited edition of 750 copies) is available from Grant Books, price £28.50 including postage.

Harry Colt's famous little work, *Some Essays on Golf-Course Architecture* first saw the light in 1920, when it was heralded as a minor classic. Colt, perhaps the first of the dedicated architects, left an indelible mark on golf course architecture and his influence in this century has been and remains enormous. He worked closely with Alister Mackenzie on a number of projects until about 1928, thereafter working with C H Alison and J F Morrison until 1961.

This little book brings to life Colt's desire to work with nature and natural configurations, at his best when propounding the merits or otherwise of bunkers, which he used to great subtlety. Starting points, sites for greens, length of holes and blind approaches are all skillfully discussed. The placing of bunkers, compulsory and optional carries, protective hazards and freak greens – all come under his scrutiny. Colt's philosophy is as appropriate today as it was in 1920, perhaps even more so.

Some Essays on Golf-Course Architecture by Harry Colt (78 pp paperback) is available from Grant Books, price £18 including postage.

'Costly' British courses

It used to be that British courses were considered something of a bargain when it came to green fees. No more, for in a recent survey, Britain featured (ashamedly) in the six most costly, world-wide, edging out Canada, Ireland, USA, Mexico, Jamaica and Australia. It will come as no surprise that Japan topped the league, with \$125 (US) as the average for a single (weekend) round, Spain at around \$90, Taiwan at \$82, France and Germany neck and neck at \$65, whilst Britain averaged \$45. The USA was as low as \$30. (£1 = \$1.48). I suppose this explains why more and more Brits are making for Myrtle Beach, South Carolina; for with over 80 courses on a 30 mile stretch of coastline, all in spanking condition, and all welcoming the British invasion, the tourist/golfer there is seen as something of a 'treasure', rather than an infidel out to be fleeced.

Toro sales top £450m

Toro's worldwide sales for the fiscal year ended July 1993 were an impressive £456m.

"We are extremely proud of the tremendous strides by all within the company in helping achieve this solid platform," said chairman and chief executive Kenrick B Melrose. "We will aggressively pursue our strategies to maintain worldwide leadership in the turf machinery world."

Lely (UK) Ltd, distributors of Toro commercial products in the UK are naturally delighted with the news from the Toro company – particularly when considering the economic and competitive element in the industry. The release of new products to both golf and other commercial outlets has reflected in a healthy increase in sales for Toro products throughout the UK and it is anticipated that demand for the Toro range will continue in 1994.

Poking fun at pretension

Remember 'Caddyshack', one of the ten most rented movies of all time and regarded as one of the great storehouses of one-liners? In it, actors such as Rodney Dangerfield and Chevy Chase poke fun at country club pretention, adolescence and golf course bravado. Now, some 13 years after its release, Atlanta based Ford Trading Co. are to market merchandise including tee-shirts, hats, bag tags and so on, with Bushwood Country Club and 'Be the Ball' logo – a small brown gopher who digs tunnels and generally wreaks havoc throughout the course. Purchase of any Bushwood item carries lifetime membership of Bushwood, the motto of which is, "If you don't cheat, you're only cheating yourself." Testament to that fact came at their annual tournament played this spring, when one member turned in a scorecard posting an 18 hole total of 18!