

# 10.30 you're struggling – it's just heaving'

Dymond. But there are now 36 holes – the 6,243-yard par 69 Church Course and the easier 4,142-yard par 61 Holywell Course, which was completed in 1982. For much of its history, St Enodoc has had 27 holes, although the short course had long periods when it was not used.

Club records show that in the early days the highest handicap for a round of 27 holes was 60, which suggests either the standards of play were low or the course was very difficult.

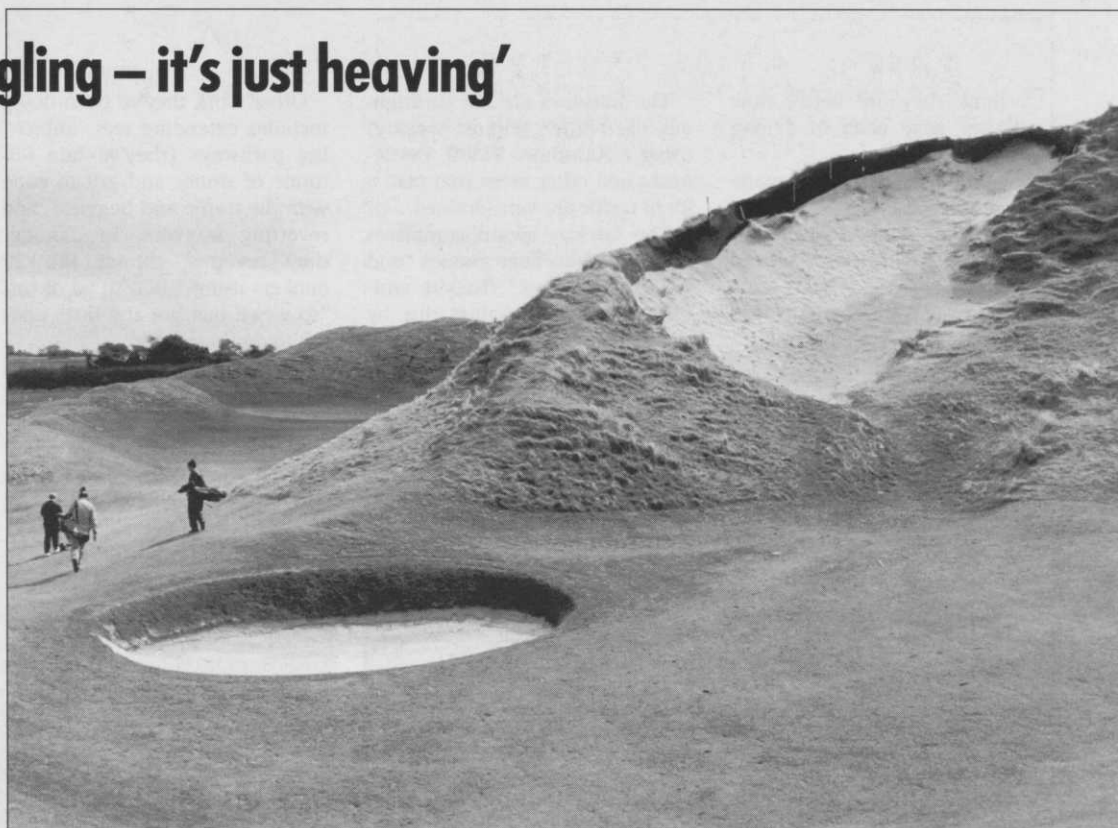
The courses lie in 250 acres of which 40 are fairways, two are tees, and three are greens. The rest is left to mother nature.

The James Braid-designed main course, only called the Church Course since 1987, hasn't changed much since Darwin's day, but it has seen a tremendous increase in traffic, which has necessitated a great deal of aeration work to relieve compaction.

## 75,000 rounds

In 1949 the club took 1,123 green fees, in 1989 the figure was 19,645. Now there are 1,200 playing members and 75,000 rounds played per year (over the two courses), the bulk of which comes during our short summer.

"If you haven't done your work by 10.30 you're struggling, it's just heaving," says Stuart, who came to St Enodoc after seven



Golfers who have conquered the Himalayas make their way to the 6th green

years as head greenkeeper at North Wilts and 15 years at Bude, of which ten were as head greenkeeper.

The greens are verti-drained once, in the autumn, using half-inch thick tines and left open. During the winter they are spiked every 7-10 days. In the spring they are hollow-cored to a depth of 4-5ins using quadro and solid tines and topdressed. This is the only topdressing they will receive. "Too much topdressing only causes problems," says Stuart.

The greens are scarified every

fortnight and aerated before receiving their monthly dose of liquid manure and wetting agent.

"It's something we tried last year and it seems to be working – the greens are looking beautiful at the moment," he says.

The greens are about 50 per cent annual meadowgrass, compared with the 99 per cent when he joined. This turnaround has been achieved by a lot of aeration work. "We've never overseeded them, we've spiked and prodded a lot but mostly we've left it to nature," he says.

Many of the greens are old – built in the days when £50 would get you four new putting surfaces – and have sunk in places. Stuart and his team have redesigned two of them since he's been at the course, and he hopes to do a couple more this winter, if he gets the go-ahead from members. Most of the redesign of the 13th and 14th greens has involved taking out the "silly slopes". For example, to remove the hollow on the 14th they had to lift it by nearly 3ft. They started the work on a Monday morning in November and had finished it by the Friday after taking off the turf and top soil, building up the hollow using nearby sand, replacing the top soil, remodelling it and putting the turf back. The green was in play again by January.

Stuart is quick to praise his men for their efforts: "They're a bunch of blokes second to none. They can do a week's work in a day and a half."

## Wear and tear

When he first joined they concentrated on the greens, now they are putting a lot of effort into the fairways. The problem there is a common one: wear and tear and lack of growth. "When I moved down nine years ago we decided to get stuck into the greens first and the fairways were only titivated a little bit. But recently we've spent a lot of time on the fairways – spiking them basically and a couple of applications of potash, which has made a fair improvement to them.

## Equipment update



■ The Jacobsen Aero King PT2448 is a tractor mounted aerator for large turf areas. There is a choice of hole patterns which will match aeration needs, and can be combined with a variety of tine sizes. Easy to fit, it can be used on any three-point hitch, 540rpm PTO tractor with 18hp or more. The Aero King T1224 is a self-propelled aerator which gives you a choice of five coring patterns to handle different aeration needs. There is also a choice of tines.



■ Sisis recently launched the Technicore, a vertical aerator for all year round use. The interchangeable hollow coring, slitting, solid and large diameter hollow tines have quick release fasteners. Multitine and Microcore heads are also available. A wide range of hole patterns can be obtained and a true 127mm depth of penetration. All Sisis tines now have an upgraded hardness specification.