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Welcome



Bulging Bellies and Dodgy Tans

Driving into work this morning it was great to see the sun shining, blue sky and minimal cloud cover. I know we've had similar in early spring in recent years and it fizzled out very quickly but surely, surely, this will be the start of a decent spell of weather for us all.

It may not be pretty, but the sight of polo shirts and shorts struggling to contain bulging bellies, on our fairways over the next seven or eight months will be unbelievably welcome because it will mean that weather has been conducive to a successful golfing year.

As I write, I've played half a dozen times this year at my own club and I'm quite pleased to have been quite so active. However, only once has the temperature nudged above zero and each time I've gone out I've resembled Nanook of the North wearing about four different layers, a silly hat and those big mitts which look like you're sporting a pair of flippers.

I'm now longing for one of those stupid tans that only golfers sport in the summer months – one brown hand and one white; brown bands around the legs; brown neck, and brown arms from six inches below the shoulder!

With the sun shining, golf courses are very attractive places to be, and whether it be members, their guests, fee paying visitors, members of societies, or those lucky enough to be invited to a corporate day it all means money coming into golf clubs in terms of green fees, over the bar or in the pro shop.

The other good news recently is the return of the Tiger. He may not have won either of his first two events back but, once he's up to tournament speed he shows every sign of being as good as he ever was. We've missed him. Pdraig Harrington may still have won The Open and the USPGA if he had been in the field, but there would have been much more excitement if the Irishman had had a Tiger on his tail.

I return to the subject quite a lot in this column but golf does owe Tiger a huge debt of gratitude. Not since the 60s, and Arnold Palmer in his pomp, has golf possessed the biggest name in all sport and that can only be good for us all. As an aside, how many of us in the 60s and 70s played Pro-Shot Golf - operating a six inch tall Arnold Palmer to swing at little polystyrene balls and aiming at a foam green that would never lie flat? Is Tiger Woods PGA Tour 09 for the PS2, progress? Perhaps...

The one downside with Tiger though is a fashion point. Tiger has changed the golfing look. The collarless shirt has become acceptable in golfing circles and the materials used for a shirt are very similar to those adopted for gym wear – lightweight, breathable etc. They look brilliant on the muscular, wide shouldered, flat stomached athletes who now play professional golf but not quite so splendid on those men and women with the aforementioned bulging bellies!

Scott MacCallum
Editor