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# Return to splendour

**The number of golf clubs which boast a rich heritage is greater in the UK than in any other country in the world. To have clocked up 100 years here joins a club to a well deserved if not particularly exclusive group, while to have 200 years of history makes a club rare but not unique.**

It is fantastic to know that you can often be playing the same course as the legends of the game, but it does also cause problems.

Courses can become tired; they can become too short for the modern equipment and they can become rendered almost indistinguishable from the original as a result of tinkering by well meaning club members - ill placed bunkers and non indigenous trees providing the main evidence.

Returning such courses to their previous splendour is not always easy but the best approach, finances permitting, is to buy in the advice and expertise of the professionals.

That is exactly what Moortown Golf Club has done in bringing Ken Brown, Ken Moodie and John Nicholson to restore the classic Dr Alistair MacKenzie course - the first British course to host the Ryder Cup - to its former glory.

The bunker work, which has been designed by the two Ken's and carried out by the Moortown team and a shaper, is wonderful and the two "new holes", the 6th and the 7th, ensure that there isn't a weak link on the course.

But, as you will see in the Moortown profile on page 16, it's not just as simple as unearthing the old bunkers and rebuilding them in a MacKenzie style to take account of modern equipment a best guess as to where MacKenzie would have placed the bunkers if he had been designing for the modern golfer has to be made - although there is some of that.

As Ken Brown says in the article, you have to take account of how far the ball will be travelling in another 30 to 50 years and that is influenced by both technology and regulation - should the R&A be minded to take a stand. The great Mystic Meg, on her best form, would struggle to predict that, but professional expertise certainly gives the greatest chance of coming up with the best results.

I watched the last round of the Honda Classic last night and was delighted on two counts. One, it was great to see how well Rory McIlroy played the back nine - scrambling superbly and, although he was missing greens, never really looking out of control despite the intense pressure. He fully deserved his win, with the added bonus of reaching the top of the World Rankings. He might take some shifting.

Which brings me to my second reason, as the man, most likely to knock Rory off the perch, made a stunning return to form to tie for second two shots behind.

Tiger Woods has been showing glimpses of his old form, but last night with a magnificent eight under 62 in less than perfect conditions, he demonstrated that he was well and truly back.

That Rory held off his charge so well makes his own achievement even more laudable but won't it be great to watch the rivalry over the next few years?

Scott MacCallum  
**Editor**