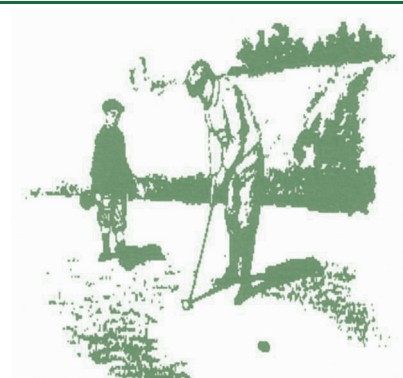


The Long Game

Newsletter of the Golf Society of Australia

No 32, September 2009



Don Lawrence Trophy Winners



Don Lawrence Trophy winners Barry Donaldson and Max Eise with the President

The Don Lawrence Trophy was held on 22nd June at Woodlands with 14 pairs competing. The day was sunny but cool while some of the scores were hot. Winners of the magnificent silver tray were the last pair to finish, Barry Donaldson and Max Eise with 46 points. Cliff George and Peter Gompertz scored 24 points to win the front nine; the back nine winners, compiling 24 points, were Havel Rowe and Dick Curtis; Paul Burgess and Max Findlay combined well to win the secret nine with 24 points.



Peter Gompertz has just been told that he is to be the new editor of *The Long Game*

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For the Diary:

16 October—Hickory Day
Commonwealth G C

9 November—Doug Bachli Trophy, AGM & Cocktail Party
Victoria G C

The Golf Society of Australia was formed in 1982 to research and preserve the history of golf in Australia.

As part of this role, the Society manages the

Museum and Library for Golf Australia.

Golf Australia supports the Society by providing office space and administrative assistance.

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Perry Somers, who wrote this piece, was a member of the GSA when he was the Pro at Sorrento Golf Club. He now lives, and teaches, in Germany

I have just returned from a wonderful week of hickory golf in Europe. I was in my element, wearing plus fours every day and playing with like minded souls. I have made a lot of new friends and have been proposed for membership of the British Golf Collectors Society. They hold a lot of hickory golf meetings and the amount of historical knowledge of golf and its equipment that they have makes these events even more interesting. One can pull up a chair at any table and learn so much.

My first event was the German Hickories Championship held at the Bad Wildungen course, a rare example of a course laid out by the lesser known brother of Dr Alister McKenzie, Charles. About 30 ladies and gentlemen, some with caddies and suitably attired, from all over the world had entered. It was won by a scots professional, Iain Forrester, who lives and teaches in Holland. He has fifty sets of hickories and runs Hickory days for company outings as well. Iain shot a 73 while I fin-

ished second, putting together a 77 despite problems on the greens. Finishing third with 78 was Randy Jensen an American hickory guru who had come to play and win; he also conducted a clinic on the practice day. Randy has written a book on playing with hickories and has a ball sponsor. After the golf we had a very pleasant evening with the other competitors swapping stories and experiences.

Next day we were off to France for their championship. On the way Randy, I and Christoph Meiser, organiser of the German Championship, stopped off to play a round at Compiègne Golf Club one of only two courses in the world to have been an Olympics venue; here in 1900 and just outside Berlin in 1939. The Compiègne course is inside a race course which was quite common in the late 19th century, the fairways are lined with dense rough and the greens are postage stamp size as was then fashionable. We had a 30C summers day and the course to ourselves. Mr Jensen wanted to play for something so we played a skins game and the match came down to the last hole with a carry over jackpot. We both drove well and had short pitches with our mashie niblicks to the green. Randy put his shot to the back of the green while I managed to get the ball to three feet. He went for his putt a bit too

hard, missed the one coming back and conceded my birdie, and the money. Conversation was a little strained for the rest of the journey.

The inaugural French Hickories Championship was hosted by the Golf Club de Chantilly who were celebrating their centenary. The 'opening round' saw an exhibition match between Arnaud Massy, The Open Champion at Hoylake in 1907, and Jean Gassiat the Chantilly professional. Gassiat also designed, and made, some unique clubs including a Spade Mashie, and the 'Flat French' a rectangular putter and very collectable. Three Gassiat putters were used in this competition. They have a shape very similar to today's Nike driver with wooden shafts that are formed and worked in such a way that they appear twisted; the shafts are actually one piece of wood that fit the hand perfectly. Rules at the time allowed forming the shape of the shaft to suit the wishes of the player so one can imagine how many, and varied, were the grip shapes in use.

The course was designed and laid out by Tom Simpson a contemporary of Harry Colt. Simpson designed many courses in Europe but his masterpiece is Cruden Bay, 20 miles north of Aberdeen. **(contd p7)**

Cooking with golf balls.

J D Dunn, *Bulletin of USGA*, 1900

This article is more particularly written for the benefit of golfers in out-of-the-way places where there is no professional or dealer to do the work. And again, some enthusiastic amateurs may come to look upon it as a pleasant pastime for a winter's evening.

Purchase a can of lye, costing fifteen cents. Half a can of lye in a pail of water will take the paint off six dozen balls in about six hours. Ball-makers use a very strong solution of lye, which they put in an apparatus similar to a washing machine. This brings off the paint in shorter order and does not injure the gutta-percha. Amateurs should stir the balls in the lye occasionally.

After the balls have been in the lye for about six hours, take them out with a vegetable strainer. Place them in some lukewarm water, and then brush off the old paint with a nail brush.

The balls must now be placed in a pot of water that is almost on the boil. Don't have more or less than half a dozen balls in the pot at the one time, and always keep replacing them with others. It is not necessary to let the balls get heated right through. Take the balls out of the pot with a table-spoon and work out the cuts if any, with your thumb. Roll the ball round in your palms until it is slightly egg-shaped. Do not keep so long in your hands that the outer surface gets cold, or the gutta-percha will not take the impressions of the marking. Should the balls be sticky in the hands a little water or linseed oil may be used as a preventive?

When the ball is in the mould squeeze it up in a press. It is not absolutely necessary to have a ball press. A book press or vise will do almost as well, and the expedient brings the cost down considerably.

For very little additional cost you can have your initials on the mould. This will save you the trouble of marking your ball before playing in a match, and settles all disputes about ownership.

Allow the ball to remain in the mould about a minute, and then put in a pail of cold water. You can afterwards cut off the "fin" with a sharp knife. On a large scale this is turned off on a machine somewhat like a lathe. The same machine also makes an impression similar to the rest of the markings on the ball. This is not necessary, although it looks better.

The next operation is to paint the balls. This is best done by putting some paint in the palm of one's hands. Rubber gloves may be bought for this work, although they are not nearly as good for the work as bare skin. The paint does not do any harm and it will wash off easily in warm water. The paint should be put on in four very thin coats. Only the second coat should be rubbed into the markings. After painting, the balls should be stood on a wooden frame to dry.

Stand proud you noble swingers of clubs and losers of balls....
A recent study found the average golfer walks about 900 miles a year.
Another study found golfers drink, on average, 22 gallons of alcohol a Year.
That means, on average, golfers get about 41 miles to the gallon.
Makes you proud to be a golfer. Almost feel like a hybrid.

From the President

I am pleased to announce that Peter Gompertz is to be the new editor of the Long Game. Moira Drew has produced the newsletter since March 2006, and in that time there have been 10 issues. Moira considered that it was time that someone else had a go and Peter is willing to accept the challenge. It is a job that many people would not be able to take on, as there is a lot of preparation required, and many hours of work that need to be put into its' production . The newsletter is a vital communication with all members, as it informs everyone of the Society's activities. Thank you Moira.

Two golf events have been played since the last newsletter; the Don Lawrence trophy was again at Woodlands, thank you Woodlands, and the President's Trophy was at Royal Melbourne. The Don Lawrence trophy was won by Max Eise and Barry Donaldson playing on their home course. At Royal Melbourne the winner was Peter Gompertz, who defeated Graham World in the match play final. Graham travelled from Canberra to play and thoroughly enjoyed the day. The hickory day that was postponed earlier in the year, due to bad weather, has been rescheduled for the 16th October at Commonwealth, so please come along and enjoy the warmer weather.

A meeting of Golf Club Historians was held at Huntingdale Golf Club in June. The next meeting will be held at Royal Melbourne during History week in late October. The Golf Society is a member of the Royal Historical Society that runs History Week annually and this is the first time we have joined in their event. The meeting will be different from the normal format, as the general public will be invited, and several special historical segments will be on the agenda.

Ian Rennick

The Wreck of a Golfer

It was the Bondi golfing man
Drove off from the golf house tee,
And he had taken his little daughter
To bear him company.
"Oh Father, why do you swing the club
And flourish it such a lot?"
"You watch it fly o'er the fences high!"
And he tried with a brassie shot.
"Oh, Father why did you hit the fence
Just there where the brambles twine?"
And the father he answered never a word,
But he got on the green in nine.
"Oh, Father hark from behind those trees,
What dismal yells arrive!
'Tis a man I ween on the second green,
And I've landed him with my drive."
"Oh, Father, why does the poor Chineese
Fall down on his knees and cry?"
"He taketh me for His Excellency,
And he thinks once hit twice shy."
So on they fared to the waterhole,
And he drove with a lot of dash,
But his ball soon in the dread lagoon
Fell down with a mighty splash..
"Oh, Father why do you beat the sand
Till it flies like the carded wool?"
And the father he answered never a word,
For his heart was much too full.
"Oh, father why are you shouting 'Fore'
And screaming so lustily?"
But the father he answered never a word,
A pallid corpse was he.
For a well-swung drive on the back of his head
Hand landed, and laid him low
Lord save us all from a fate like this
When next to the links we go.

Andrew Barton 'Banjo' Patterson

Claytons' Corner

with Michael Clayton

Woking Golf Course - a hidden gem.

Described as "the best and pleasantest place to play golf that I have ever known" by Bernard Darwin, Woking Golf Club is one of the most brilliant courses on the heathlands of Surrey. Sunningdale, Wentworth and Walton Heath are better known because of all the attention professional play has brought but Woking is a magical course that influenced designers like Harry Colt, Alister MacKenzie, Hugh Alison, Herbert Fowler and J.F. Abercromby. Tom Simpson and H.N. Wethered in their brilliant book, *The Architectural Side of Golf*, picked it as the course they would choose to play for the rest of their lives if they were given a choice of one. It was the first heathland course ever built, and play began there in 1893. Thomas Dunn routed the course but it was the changes made by a member, Stuart Paton, over a full forty years that made it the masterpiece it is today. Paton was never an architect yet he created greens, and holes, so full of strategic influence that golfers can never tire of answering the questions asked. It is the Fourth Hole that Paton transformed into one that has most influenced design-

ers over decades. Dunn's hole was a straight forward par four running alongside the railway line that defined the boundary. The great 16th hole on The Old Course is likewise defined by a boundary and Paton, without consulting the committee, built two bunkers in the middle left of the fairway right where golfers liked to play. Now he had created the same dilemma as the one posed at St Andrews. Do you play boldly to the right



The 4th hole at Woking Golf Club, Surrey, England, courtesy of golfclubatlas.com

between the train line and the bunker to open up the relatively easy pitch down the green, or do you play safely left and deal with the much more difficult pitch across the greenside bunker? The bunkers were controversial in their day. Many today would complain that they are unfair because they catch the perfect drive as though that mystical thing is a shot that simply goes straight and is well struck. The silliness of that argument is beyond comprehension but golfers of today are so accustomed to playing courses where all the trouble is down the sides of the fairways and nothing interrupts the straight line from tee to green. Paton matched his centre-line bunkers with a green that sloped from left to right and protected it with a bunker on the left; in doing so he created one of the first truly great strategic inland holes. It is beyond criticism, but anyone today creating a hole that employed the same principle of putting a bunker right in the centre of the fairway, exactly where the golfer wants to go, would face the same questions that members no doubt asked of Paton way back in 1901. Woking is rated by one of the British golf magazines as the 77th best course in Britain, which makes a mockery of the list. Despite being quite short, around 6000 metres, and liable to be accused of being obsolete by the unthinking, it is a course that would easily rank amongst our top ten and anyone visiting London should seek it out as one of the first courses to visit and study, just as Simpson and MacKenzie did almost a century ago.

Golf Club Historians meeting at Huntingdale Golf Club on 10th July 2009.

The meeting was successful with 44 people attending. **Arthur Ellis a long term member of Huntingdale Golf Club** told of his clubs' interesting past from the day when a group of members at Eastern Golf Club decided to form a golf club on the sand belt choosing a long rectangular block of land in Oakleigh. There were great doubts about the choice of the land and whether it was suitable for a golf course. It was overgrown with dense scrub and swamp tree, infested with rabbits, foxes and snakes. Also the timing was poor as the 2nd World War had just started and materials and labour were hard to find. One of the first projects was to drain the course. Over the years dams were built and many drains installed but this was not completed properly until 2000 when, with modern technology and equipment, surface and sub-surface drainage was completed. Arthur's passion for his Club, and the need to tell the story of its history was evident.

Murray Wilkinson demonstrated a software programme for scanning documents with the facility to save a copy and file it for retrieval. One of the valuable aspects of the programme is that one word can be searched for in all the files saved. To a historian this is a wonderful facility and could save indexing documents such as minutes and annual reports.

Details were supplied on the upgrades to what is available on Golf Australia's and the Golf Society of Australia's web sites. Details were also given of a new website that allows searching of Australian newspapers going back to before 1900.

Roger Mc Donald spoke about Walter Travis and the additional information he has discovered about Travis's early childhood. Michael Clayton at an earlier meeting had suggested that Travis has been omitted from Australian golf history due to the fact that he moved to the United States and changed his nationality. In the USA there is a very active Walter J Travis Society which exists to honour Travis, promoting his legacy as a Golfer, Golf Course Architect, Publisher, Writer and Innovator. Roger will continue with his research and hopefully more information of Travis's early life will be found.

In the 'show and tell' segment Leon Rowbell passed around the audience, a Huntingdale embossed medal for the Prisoner of War Fund, showing the winner as I A Beach in 1941.

Arthur Ellis advised that a club member, Ern Austin, who owned an engineering works made monthly medals for the club. Max Findley showed a hickory putter with the name Travis stamped on it. Max is unsure if it is a "Schenectady Putter" which Walter Travis played with, and promoted, until the R & A had it banned..

Have you missed a Dinner but would like to hear the speech? In most cases, when the speaker agrees, we record the after dinner speeches at Golf Society functions. If you would like to hear any of the presentations they can be made available on CD for playing on a computer or CD player. Please contact the Secretary	New Members. Welcome to:- Graham Ryan Anne Wooldridge Geoffrey Henshall
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from p 2

His Chantilly course looks-very similar to those in south west London; like Sunningdale it is almost a heathland course. Writing about the Golf Club de Chantilly, Herbert Warren Wind, a leading golf writer of the 20th century, who coined the description 'Amen Corner' for the 11th, 12th and 13th holes at Augusta, suggested that 'Chantilly gives an immediate impression of dignity, peace and space. Nothing is confined or cramped with ample room around the greens and tees, and between the holes. The course falls quietly away from the clubhouse rather as does Augusta National. All around is the great forest and nowhere is there the slightest glimpse of an alien modern, world.' An appropriate venue for this event. The American star, the Scotsman Hickory Champion, and the Aussie pretender were teamed together in the final group. We were playing the 1904, par 75, of the course with specially printed score cards and a 'commemorative' yardage book. Due to the



Perry on the third tee at Chantilly

hot French summer the course was hard and dry so all the holes were playing short. Randy Jensen played solidly and had the lead all day until the 16th hole. I had been erratic, starting with an eagle only to follow it up with a double bogey, the result of a thinned mashie niblick. Iain Forrester played well from tee to green but had a hard time on the greens which were superbly fast I had missed too many short putts and was convinced I had handed victory to America, however the last three holes turned things around. The 16th is a par 4 in today's terms but on the card is a par 5, as is the 18th. We were both on a very slippery green in two, but above the hole. Randy two putted for a birdie and I managed to hole a curling fifteen footer for an eagle. He looked a little rattled. He was more so when I found the centre of the green on the delightful 160 yard drop shot, 17th green. He fozzled one short of the green onto the cut apron and required three putts to get down while I two putted for my par. This left it all tied up playing the 18th. On the tee he actually enquired what my score was. Because I had been so erratic he had lost track and was probably hoping I wasn't as close as he suspected. He could be excused for not knowing exactly how I stood as he had been playing par golf while I had three putted three times but also had three eagles. After he enquired Iain was

happy to advise him that we were indeed tied on level par. He said 'we have a game on here' to which I replied how delighted I was to 'have made it more interesting for him'. We both found the fairway and, although a par 5, the green was in reach with a mid-iron. I was away and, trying to use the contours of the well bunkered green, managed to hit the ball so that it kicked left into a bunker. Randy now had a clear advantage as bunker shots with mashie niblicks are difficult due to the lack of 'bounce'. Gene Sarazen invented the bounce aspect of the modern sand wedge just as steel shafts were becoming popular and very few Mashie Niblicks exist with bounce. Randy has one. Perry does not! Randy then made contact with his mid-iron shot very close to that part of the club where the head joins the shaft, into some trees some thirty yards right of the intended flight. He was away and had a clear chip from the trees, playing a good running shot that fetched up 12 feet past the cup. I somehow splashed out to fifteen feet and was away. In for four she went, that delightful little sphere. As an anti-climax Randy had a three putt after all sorts of histrionics with deep breathing and reading the lines from every conceivable angle. The upshot is that the 2009 French Hickory Champion is the little Aussie upstart.

Presidents Trophy Report

The Presidents Trophy was played for on 10th August at Royal Melbourne. Rain threatened but it stayed dry and cold, as 27 members played 10 holes on the East Course in a stiff breeze. After a light lunch in the clubhouse, the top four qualifiers went out to play sudden death matchplay (with stymies). GSA President, Ian Rennick lost to Graham World on the first hole and long time Royal Melbourne member, Meriedie Graham lost to Peter Gompertz, also on the first. Peter went on to defeat Graham on the second hole.



Semi-finalists Peter Gompertz, Meriedie Graham, Graham World & Ian Rennick

