



# Newsletter

**An official publication of the Golf Society of Australia**

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## From the President

This year it is our intention that our Golf Society will develop and expand throughout Australia. The motion passed at our last AGM enables your Committee to proceed to organise the Golf Society in the other States and Territories. This is no small task and a sub-committee has been established to create the blueprint for the expansion. Because this is a big project it has been decided to hold more Committee meetings to cope with our increased activity which will also include more dinners this year.

Members can diarise the following tentative program -

15th April	Dinner at Kingston Heath	
11th May	President's Trophy at Victoria	
31st May	Hickory Day at Kingston Heath	
11th June	Dinner at Metropolitan	
13th August	Dinner at Victoria	
22nd October	Dinner (Venue TBA)	1 8 t h
November	Doug Bachli Trophy, AGM and Cocktail Party at Commonwealth	

The dates and venues are subject to confirmation. A function to recognise the Presidents Cup is also being planned - more details at a later date.

You will note that a new function has been added to our calendar; the President's Trophy. The format will be somewhat different from current forms of play and will require competing members to hone long forgotten skills. The President's Trophy will be in addition to our Don Lawrence, Hickory and Doug Bachli competitions.

The collection of items for the museum will always be an essential function of our Society. Last year, at the Australian Ladies Open Championship at Yarra Yarra, Anne Reynolds obtained an autographed piece of memorabilia from the winner, Jane Crafter. Thank you Anne.

As foreshadowed at the AGM a modest increase in subscriptions and joining fees will be required this year.

May I wish all Society members good golfing for 1998.

Daryl Cox, President

## Golf Trivia Quiz *(Answers on Page 6)*

1. Name the Frenchwoman who won the US Open as an amateur? What do you know of her father?
2. Who won the 1984 British Amateur? Who was the runner up?
3. Who is President of Augusta National Golf Club - home of the Masters? Who will be President in 1999.
4. Who was the first non American to win the Masters? When?
5. Who was the first Australian professional to win a major championship?
6. When was the first Ladies Golf Club founded?
7. Robert T Jones' driver was named Jeannie Deans after Sir Walter Scott's heroine. Who made Bobby's club?
8. How far could a featherie ball be hit?
9. Tom Morris was keeper of the greens at St Andrews for many years. Where was he employed prior to St Andrews?
10. Today in St Andrews, Peter Lewis would invite you for a walk around the woods. What does he know about golf?

## Quotable Quotes

"Should the rest of us go and change?"

Sam Torrance after Seve Ballesteros turned up wearing the wrong Ryder Cup sweater.

— ooo —

"All my life I have wanted to play golf like Jack Nicklaus - and now I do!"

Paul Harvey after both he and Nicklaus shot 83 in the Open Championship at Royal St Georges in 1993.

— ooo —

"I don't say my golf game is bad; but if I grew tomatoes they'd come up sliced"

Miller Barber, US professional golfer

## Insights into the R & A

*Some recollections of the presentations given by Ian Webb, Chairman of the R & A and by Michael Bonallack, Secretary of the R & A. Recalled by The Editor and Ken Shepherd*

Over 100 members of the GSA and their guests attended a special dinner held at Commonwealth Golf Club on 26th November 1997. The dinner was held in conjunction with the Australian Open Championship and provided the unique opportunity to meet with and listen to the key leaders of the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews. The Society is indebted to our member, AGU Executive Director Colin Phillips, for identifying this opportunity and for facilitating its happening.

The R & A is organised into a Committee structure with the various Committee Chairpersons responsible to the overall management Committee known as the General Committee. Mr Ian Webb, from Royal County Down, Northern Ireland is the present Chairman of the General Committee (effectively the Managing director of the R & A). Mr Webb was accompanied by his wife Helen. Mr Michael Bonallack, who is the Secretary of the R & A, is also well known to most golf enthusiasts as one of Great Britain's foremost amateur golfers. Mr Bonallack won the British Amateur Championship on 5 occasions and is remembered for a number of visits to Australia - particularly for his outstanding score of 66 during the 1968 Eisenhower Trophy played at Royal Melbourne (Composite Course). Mr Bonallack was accompanied by his wife Angela (Nee Ward) herself an outstanding amateur golfer.

Ian Webb spoke first and briefly outlined his introduction to the R & A. His first bundle of papers arrived at his home in Northern Ireland in a "post pack" which caused some consternation in the Webb household as such postal items often contain explosives! He spoke at some length on the diverse nature of the R & A activities under his supervision including the need to maintain a proper balance between running The Open Championship et al and properly representing the interests of the 95%+ of handicap golfers who are not in a position to enter "The Open".

The R & A has about 1800 members who live in many different countries. There are a number of GSA members among the 70 Australians who are currently on the membership list.

Mr Webb told a number of amusing anecdotes including Lady Astor's "Scotch Whisky" story - *A speaker was condemning the evils of the "demon" drink to a largely committed audience and demonstrated his point by dropping a worm into a glass of water. The worm swam around happily in the water. He then dropped the worm into a glass of scotch whisky. The worm quickly died. "What do you make of this?" he asked of his audience. There was a quick reply from the back of the hall - "If you've got worms, drink plenty of whisky!"*

He also spoke of some interesting challenges on amateur status arising from the rapid expansion in

interest in golf particularly in Europe and Scandinavia. In one particular instance the Committee had to grapple with the status of over 1600 Swedish golfers who had contravened the current rules for the value of trophies. They were subsequently re-instated.

Mr Webb fielded a number of questions from the floor. The issue of the legality of "long putters" was raised and he indicated that the R & A and the USGA were close to agreeing a position to be included in the next changes to the Rules (due January 2000). He was also asked whether or not the Open rota might be extended to include either Royal County Down or Royal Portrush (both in Northern Ireland). He saw this as most unlikely listing the very considerable logistics requirements for staging an Open. These include car parking for 12,000 cars, large areas for tented village etc. which most courses including those named cannot provide.

Mr Bonallack spoke of the workings of the R & A Committee structure and introduced an informative video presentation. The video commenced by showing the annual ceremony of the new Captain being initiated by driving a ball from the first tee of the Old Course and presenting the caddie who retrieves the ball (in a mad scramble) with a gold sovereign. On this occasion the incoming Captain was from South Africa and the "winning" caddie received a gold Rand coin. The video showed in detail the different R & A Committees and their roles and responsibilities. The Committees include

- General
- Championship
- Rules of Golf (liaising with USGA)
- Implements and Ball
- Amateur Status
- Golf Course Advisory

Mr Bonallack told a number of amusing anecdotes.

*As a competitor in the Open at Royal Birkdale, he was standing on the first tee at Royal Birkdale with fellow competitor Lee Trevino waiting to tee off. Suddenly a police car came racing down the drive way with its siren blaring. It came to a screeching stop beside the first tee. As the police emerged from the vehicle, Trevino grabbed hold of Bonallack and shouted at the top of his voice "don't worry, I've got him!"*

He also told of some unusual local rules which had come to the attention of the Rules Committee.

*At a golf club in India special consideration was necessary for the (sacred) cows found grazing on the course. In the event that a golfer's ball becomes lodged in the rear passage of the cow, the golfer is permitted to blow gently into the nostrils of the cow in an effort to dislodge the ball. Should the ball become lodged in the nostrils of the cow (!!!!) the golfer is permitted a drop without penalty.*

The night was enjoyed by all and voted a huge success.

**PS: If you have access to the internet, look up the R & A at [www.randa.org](http://www.randa.org) for much more information.**  
**Ed.**

## To the Editor of Golf 24th April 1891

Extracted from The Bulletin No. 85

SIR,—

In about the year 1860, at Westward Ho! four idiots (so called then), were following two white balls over the Northam Burrows—three of the number were clergymen, two of them distinguished schoolmasters, both double firstclass men, and the other a barrister of exceptional ability—under the tuition of the Rev. Golfstone Gossamer.

I had seen them often, but my special attention was called to them when I was breaking in a horse on the beautiful springy turf of what is now the Royal North Devon Golf links. It was raining hard, and the black suits of the three clergymen shone like wet mackintoshes. They took little notice of me, though I was nearly pitched off when I pulled up for a moment to witness the exertions of the barrister in his drive from the tee. All the sympathy I got was, "you should come down and play." "How," I afterwards remarked, "can educated men waste their time in such a childish dribbling game." These ideas, from that date to now, have been held by hundreds who have never taken the hickory wand in hand.

My first game. I lunched with a disciple of the Rev. Golfstone Gossamer, who has since been made famous by the inimitable sketches of Major Short Spoon. His other guests were an admiral, whose hands were as hard as a log ship, and a colonel, who, for about forty years, had been liberally supplied with ramrod soup, the one as awkward and strong as they are made, the other as stiff as a poker. It was snowing slightly, and I was induced, having nothing to do, to accompany them to the links. The said disciple was, in theory, a professor and yet a thorough duffer; but I gratefully accepted the loan of his clubs and his copious instructions. He took me as his partner and paid special attention to my style. And after I had got my hands and feet placed according to his directions, and made a few misses, I found I was able to drive as far as my teacher, and with quite as much precision as my opponents. I know on one occasion I covered forty-five paces from the tee, and nearly carried a bunker thirty yards distant. Our average strokes for the hole were about twelve or fourteen, but he did some in as few as eight or nine. None of the holes then were more than from 150 to 200 yards, and some shorter. After a very exciting match, we won at the last hole by one.

Strange to say, after this experience I altered my opinion with regard to the Educated Quartette. I became the possessor of clubs and balls, and have since agreed, with many practitioners of the noble art, that life without Golf is a poor affair.

I am Sir, &c.,  
OLD GOLFER

— ooo —

Surely you must have a contribution for our Newsletter. A favourite recollection, an experience or an opinion on golf - past, present and future. I'd love to hear about it!

Ed.

## Golfer faces £250,000 bill in lost libel case

*You may have missed this little gem extracted from the London Daily Telegraph, of Thursday April 28, 1994. Ed.*

A Golfer who took the rare step of suing two fellow club members after they accused him of cheating lost his libel action against them yesterday and now faces a legal bill of £250,000. Mr John Buckingham, 57 a retired insurance broker said he was "naturally very disappointed" by the outcome of the case, which is believed the first of its kind in England.

He was nevertheless comforted by the jury's apparent acceptance that he did not break the rules at four holes during matches played four years ago with Mr Reginald Dove, 50, and Mr Graham Rusk, 33.

After the unanimous verdicts at Nottingham County Court, the jury forewoman read out a note saying the jurors were concerned lest the outcome was interpreted as proof that Mr Buckingham definitely cheated. "This is not necessarily the view of the whole of the jury," she said. "But as reflected in our decision. we did not feel that Mr Rusk or Mr Dove acted maliciously."

To win his libel claim, Mr Buckingham needed to show the two men acted with malice when, in letters to the club secretary, they accused him of cheating. He had claimed they fabricated allegations in order to hound him out of Sherwood Forest Golf Club in Mansfield, Notts, because of his humble origins—he had been a miner before building up his own insurance business.

The complaints were heard and rejected by the club's disciplinary committee. Yesterday Mr Buckingham said he was now obliged to accept they did not act with malice. But he added: "I have never cheated at golf and I will vigorously challenge any person who accuses me of doing so." Mr Buckingham is considering an appeal. "For the moment I want to forget the whole incident and get back to leading a normal life which will include a lot of golf," he said.

The jury, of seven women and one man, took four-and-a-half hours to reach its verdict after a 10-day trial that saw jurors and counsel grappling with golfing terminology and the courtroom scattered with props of the game. Mr Buckingham's counsel Mr Patrick Milmo, QC, explained that cheating was not only against the rules but "repugnant to the whole spirit and ethos of golf".

Mr Dove had claimed that during the club's open medal tournament in August 1990, Mr Buckingham — a 10 handicap player—kicked his ball to a more favourable spot and twice dropped new balls out of his trouser leg to replace lost ones. In another game, he said, Mr Buckingham moved his ball after it went in a bunker.

Mr Dove and Mr Rusk celebrated outside court with their wives. "The verdicts reaffirmed golf as game of honesty and integrity" said Mr Dove who is the Managing Director of an Insurance Company.

# The People in Front

By Bernard Darwin

It is true that they are not, as a rule, in the least to blame for the delay; so much we grudgingly admit, but it does not make their little ways the less irritating. They waggle for hours; they stroll rather than walk; they dive into their monstrous bags in search of the right club and then it is the wrong number, but they are not sorry that we have been troubled; their putting is a kind of funereal ping-pong. We could forgive them all these tricks, if it were not for the absurd punctilio with which they observe the rules. They will insist on waiting for the people in front of them when it must be palpable even to their intellects that the best shot they ever hit in their lives would be fifty yards short.

Generally, as was said before, the people in front are not the real culprits. "I know it's not their fault," we say in the tone of the man who, as he broke his putter across his knee, exclaimed, "I know it's only a d - d game." That being so, it ought to make no difference to us who are the people for whom we have to wait. We should go no faster and no slower if Bobby Jones and Harry Vardon were playing in front of us instead of that old lady who scoops the ball along with a club that goes up so obviously faster than it can ever come down. I suppose we must be golfing snobs because it does make a great difference. To be kept waiting by the eminent (I mean the eminent in golf) is to be reconciled to the inevitability of things, whereas we always believe that the scooping lady could get along faster if she tried. Moreover, there is the disquieting hope that she may lose her ball. It would be of no real help to us if she did, but instinct is too strong for us. Every time her ball is seen heading for a gorse bush our heartfelt prayers go with it, and though attainment will swiftly prove disenchanting, it is a great moment when at last she waves us on and we stampede courteously past.

It is at that precise moment that we are most likely to hit our own ball into a gorse bush, for it is a law of nature that everybody plays a hole badly when going through. To be there and then repassed is one of the bitterest humiliations that golf can bring. But, of course, no rational being will endure it; for rather would we surrender the hole and make a rapid though undignified rush towards the next teeing ground. By this time, it is true, we are hot, flustered, and angry, and wish that the woman had kept her ball on the course.

My original list by no means exhausted the crimes that can be committed by the people in front. They call us on and then, finding their ball in the nick of time, go on themselves, but that is an offence so black and repulsive that I cannot write about it. They can try over again the putt they have just missed, and this crime has become more fashionable since we have been taught to admire American assiduity in the practising of putts. They can take out a horrid little card and pencil, and, immobile in the middle of the green, write down their horrid little score. In that case, however, there is compensation, for there is no law of God or man that can prevent us from letting out a blaring yell of "Fore!" To see them duck and cower beneath the imaginary assault

may not be much, but it is something. They may think us ill-mannered, but what does that matter? The worst they can do is to write an article about the people behind.

*Reprinted from "Through the Green", December 1997 with thanks to the British Golf Collectors Society.*

## The Pace of Play (or lack thereof) Vintage 1910

"The game of golf is in a fair way of becoming unplayable in America, on account of the amazing and unconscionable slowness of American players. The prevalent idea that the American is a born hustler is sadly belied on the golf links. It may be that just because he has learned to travel in express subway trains, the American has forgotten how to walk on the golf links.

But that is not the only reason why he takes such a long time to get round the course. Because Walter Travis takes a practise swing before most shots, the beginner appears to think he cannot become a good golfer unless he does the same. So he takes a preliminary swing, and then waggles his club needlessly over the ball, or crouches over it with glaring eye as if by sheer hypnotic power he would compel it to fly. As a result, it is almost impossible to get round a crowded links in less than two hours and a half"

OUTING, 1910

*Reprinted from "Through the Green", December 1997 with thanks to the British Golf Collectors Society.*

— ooo —



'A fast game's a good game!'

# For Those Who Take Three Putts

Extracted from *Golf in Australia*, February 29, 1936

*The following article was kindly provided by GSA member John Fawcett as a good example of his late father's writings.*

I once read an article on putting by a well-known American amateur who had some years before won not only the American championship, but also the British event, a feat of no mean merit in those days, when the game of golf was nothing like so popular in the States as it is now, and England was recognised as easily the foremost golfing nation. The player referred to won the English event almost entirely owing to his phenomenal skill on the greens, putts going down from all distances with monotonous regularity. I think, if I remember rightly, that he used a Schenectady putter—one of those centrally shafted heads which have now been banned by the ruling body at St. Andrews, but at that time were quite new and perfectly legal.

There is no doubt that this would be a much more scientifically constructed putter than those in vogue at the present time, and, no doubt, this helped him a great deal to his extraordinary success on the greens. Knowing, however, his great skill with the putter, I took good notice of his remarks, and well remember the opening sentence of his article, which read something like the following: "There are only two things to be mastered in putting. The first is to hit the ball on a direct line towards the hole, and the second is to propel the ball with just sufficient strength to reach the hole and no more."

I remember thinking after reading this, that these statements could be classed with the axioms of Euclid, i.e., the truth of which is so obvious as to need no proof. It is, however, one thing to say what should be done, and quite another to explain how. I must confess quite candidly that I am unable to say very much about the second "axiom" referred to, as it is practically impossible to tell anyone how hard to hit a ball in order that the latter may travel a certain distance.

This depends on so many things, such as nature of ground, texture of grass, slope, etc., that nothing but practical experience, combined with judgment and commonsense can be of any use whatever. A sense of touch is developed, which tells you instinctively how hard you must hit the ball to place it near the hole, and unless you can cultivate this—and it can be done by practice—it is, I am afraid, useless for me to attempt to lay down any rules on the subject. The only thing I can do, however, is to offer some suggestions with regard to stance and grip, which may be of assistance in achieving this objective. With regard to the important matter of stance, observation of all the leading exponents of the art shows that no fixed rule can be laid down. There is such a great variety presented to us by all the first-class

players that it is impossible to point to anything that is an absolute essential. It would seem that the individual's taste in the matter of stance has absolute free play on the putting green. And rightly so, because I think, above all, that one should feel comfortable, and, with the muscles relaxed, a sense of freedom and confidence should be enjoyed, the latter being half the battle in facing a difficult putt.

When gripping the club, let this be done by the first finger and thumb of the right hand only, the remainder of the fingers merely resting lightly on the shaft. In suggesting this, I am merely stating my own methods, but I am well aware that many fine putters advocate quite different ideas. I find, however, that by gripping in the manner mentioned, I am able to fully control the clubhead, at the same time getting some idea as to the strength required by gently swinging the putter to and

fro, something after the style of a billiardist "cueing" preparatory to making a shot. I find this very helpful, and would strongly recommend its trial by anyone finding any difficulty in their putting.

In all these delicate shots round and on the green, the body should be eliminated as much as possible, and the movement confined to the arms and wrists. It is, of course, impossible to cut out the body movement entirely, but if the weight is sunk down well on the heels during the making of the stroke, the player will find this a considerable help to the desired end.

Now to go back to the first axiom mentioned in the beginning of this article, viz.: "To hit the ball on the direct line to the hole."

The first thing, of course, is to find out what that line is, which can only be done by observation and

common sense. It is only necessary, then, to take up one's stance, and, gripping the club as already suggested, to make a few preliminary swings to see if the blade of the putter will meet the ball at right angles to the line of the proposed putt, the stance being adjusted meanwhile until a perfectly satisfactory result in this respect has been attained. I cannot conceive of anything more important on the putting green, and generally find when I am concentrating on this that my putting is at its best. Finally, I would say that practice at putting is both pleasant and easy to carry out, and there is nothing that will repay you so well.

**By C. H. Fawcett**

*The content remains relevant today - Ed.*



*The late C. H. Fawcett, doyen of putters and a golfer of the highest rank, is seen here addressing his ball for a putt*

## Dr Reginald Henshall Brindley Bettington (1900 - 1969)

### An appreciation by Dr Ken Shepherd

I always wondered how a medico who had just started practice in the depression of 1930 would be able to win the Australian Amateur Championship in 1932. He did this by defeating Harry Williams at Royal Adelaide. The answer to all this will come later. In beating Williams he was 4 down with 7 to play. He managed 5 birdies then laid a stymie on the 17th to win 2 and 1.

Bettington was a stalwart of the Oatlands GC and a son of a wealthy family. Born at Parramatta in Feb 1900 he was educated at Kings School and went on to Oxford. He was a burly bear of a man who was known as "Tarzan" by the caddies at Royal Sydney at a later date. He won Blues for rugby, cricket and golf at Oxford; he became notorious for appeals bowling his leg breaks.

The answers to all my questions about Reg Bettington came my way in 1962 whilst serving in HMAS Vampire. We were visiting New Zealand and Even Stevens had just won the Caulfield and Melbourne Cups much to the delight of our Kiwi hosts. Our first port of call was Auckland where we had the usual rugby match against a team from HMNZS Philomel - the NZ equivalent of HMAS Cerberus. We had 5 major injuries after the game; a regular outcome of such games.

Our second port of call was Napier. I had been "dubbed" the entertainments officer. During the inevitable cocktail party I was introduced to the local ENT surgeon one Reg Bettington. He described his early practice days in Paddington during the depression when he would practice golf endlessly in Moore Park. When a patient did arrive, his housekeeper would ring a bell and he would return to his rooms.

Following this meeting we had 3 games of golf which were a great pleasure; in the first two I was Reg's partner and we won two grand matches. The third was me (aged 40) head to head against Reg (aged 61). All square after 16 my teeshot at the 17th was within 12 feet of the hole. Reg promptly put his shot inside mine and holed the putt for his 2; I missed mine of course. The last hole was a long par 5 with Reg on in two and holing another good putt for his eagle 3. Reg's long hitting and delicate touch on and around the greens made a big impression on me.

At this stage he was playing little golf; looking after himself as his wife had died. After one of our games a group from the ship went back to his home for a drink and he made me examine two large photographs hanging in the hallway. One was of the 1931 NSW Cricket team with Bradman, McCabe etc with Reg as Captain. The other was of the 1929 Oxford Cricket Team with Reg again as Captain; in the team as Vice Captain was one Douglas Jardine.

Reg was great company and was keen to hear of Tom Crow's recent win in the Australian Amateur when I had the great pleasure of caddying for Tom. This was a very memorable time for me.

## Experiment in fixing the order of play at Carnoustie

*Extracted from GOLF April 17, 1896*

An interesting experiment was tried the other day at Carnoustie, consisting of a new system for regulating the start at the Golf course. Instead of players putting balls on the tee-board (in many ways an objectionable practice) they are to be asked to put a card with their name on it into a special board for the purpose, which, at the same time, fixes the time at which each couple can claim to start. The board stands upright, and is about three feet high by two feet broad. It is divided into three sections to admit of fixing places for three hours, and each division is sub-divided into twenty spaces, allowing one space for every three minutes. The cards to be used are ordinary visiting cards, or plain cards of the same size, which will be supplied. The players in starting will take out their cards, and the same card can be kept for future use. The benefits claimed for this system are: (1) Each player will know exactly the time at which he can claim to start and he can go away and return at his time for starting unless he prefers to wait at the tee on the chance of getting away earlier should there occur a blank. (2) There will be no disputing about balls being moved or lost, and the players will be known by their names on the cards instead of, as at present, no one knowing who is who by the balls. To Commissioner W. F. Soutar, the Recreation Ground Convener, is due the credit of bringing forward this idea, which bids fair to rob the teeing ground of much that is disagreeable under the present system, or want of system.

## Answers to Trivia Quiz

1. Catherine Lacoste. Her father Rene won Wimbledon in 1925 and 1928.
2. Jose Maria Olazabal defeated Colin Mongomerie.
3. Bobby Jones. He was elected President in perpetuity in 1966.
4. Gary Player of South Africa in 1961.
5. Jim Ferrier, USPGA Championship in 1947.
6. 8th June 1868 at Westward Ho in Devon.
7. Jack White of Sunningdale.
8. In 1836, Samuel Messieux of St Andrews University hit a featherie ball 361 yards.
9. Prestwick from 1851 to 1864.
10. Peter is the curator of the British Golf Museum at St Andrews.

## Acknowledgements

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