



Despite an earlier decision not to increase subscriptions, they were raised by a full 20% in 1956, with gentlemen paying 12 guineas and ladies 6. Unfortunately, relations between the ladies and the men were, once again, not always amicable. A number of members rather hastily signed the suggestion book complaining about the ladies being allowed the use of the Men's Lounge on Friday June 1st, which was the occasion of the Ladies Open Jubilee Meeting. 'The Captain was authorised to reply that permission to use the Lounge had the full support of the Committee for this special Jubilee event.' In fact the ladies made a profit on their Jubilee Meeting and a cheque for £50 was donated to the Jubilee fund. Members also raised objections to the system of playing three-ball Medal Rounds in men's competitions on the grounds that this system tended to slow up play.

The Handicap Committee was required to consider the matter: 'No decision was reached but it was agreed that members of the Committee should enquire from members in order to ascertain the wishes of the majority.' The condition of the course remained a source of pride, although how fresh it smelled can only be surmised: 'Purchase of 10 tons of sewerage sludge at 27/6 per ton plus cartage was confirmed.' Clearly it worked, for in the following year, 1959, 'The Greens Chairman was authorised to purchase 40/50 tons of Sewerage Sludge when the time was suitable. 20 tons could be stored in one bay of the car park shed if necessary.' What would Health and Safety have to say about that nowadays?

These days the term 'Bogey' has come to mean a score of one-over-par, and in professional or good amateur play is thought of as a failure. In James Braid's *Advanced Golf* of 1911 it was defined: 'The difference between par and bogey is, of course, that the former represents perfect play and the other stands for good play, with a little margin here and there'. But to most players in the past, par and bogey were indistinguishable and the term bogey, equivalent to par, seems still to have been in use at Stockport in March 1958 when the suggestion was made of making the 6th hole into a '5 Bogey and to lengthen the 12th, to get standard scratch score amended to 72.'

Few middle class women had jobs in the 1950s and, by extension, few lady members of Stockport worked for a living. But an early sign of

change came in April 1958. An application was received from the Honorary Secretary of the Ladies' Section asking permission for 'business girls, unable to play monthly medals on weekdays, to play on one Sunday each month, starting between 12.30 and 1.15pm. The number playing would be about six.' This application was granted.

Today it is required of golfers that they repair their pitch marks on the putting surface. Players are allowed to repair any they encounter that may have been missed by players in front. This has not always been the case. In 1957 and 1958 the Royal & Ancient advised on the wording of a Local Rule, allowing the pressing down of pitch marks on greens before putting. Members of Stockport were reminded that this was a Local Rule and not a Rule of Golf, and would be in force during the winter months only. However, elsewhere on the course, not all players were replacing divots and a letter was sent to all members emphasising the importance of replacing them. It was also suggested that a Divot Club should be formed. Members would make it their duty to see that other members and visitors replaced divots. They would wear a special badge. Unfortunately, it is not recorded whether this club actually came into being, although members did from time to time volunteer to repair divots in order to help the greens staff.

Subscriptions rose by a further 2 guineas for men and by a guinea for ladies in June 1959 and it was also suggested that the sum paid in entrance fees should be reserved for paying off the debentures. No decision was taken as yet. With a full membership, 'It was decided that in future applicants for membership should be advised that there was now a waiting list, and that when vacancies occur the proposer should introduce personally the prospective members to two officers of the Club before any nomination sheets could be issued. It was also decided that no member of under three years standing could propose or second applications from new members.' Following the theft of money from the locker room, it was decided to purchase a safe to be kept in the bar. Members were advised to deposit their valuables with the steward.

One of the great problems of golf course design on a restricted site is where to put the practice areas, so that they are convenient enough for members to use before play, yet do not hinder the best routing of the golf course. In 1959 it was decided to proceed with a scheme of making a practice ground near the 1st tee. Two practice bunkers, a green and a tee

April 1959

JAN 1960 NEWSPAPER HEADLINE: GOLFERS TACKLE SEVEN COURSES IN COMFORT. (THE SEVEN COURSES WERE SMOKED SALMON, CONSOMME, PLAICE AND EGG SAUCE, ROAST CHICKEN, SWEET, CHEESE AND BISCUITS, COFFEE). REPORT OF THE ANNUAL DINNER.

were to be constructed. As mentioned earlier, in those days tees were marked with crosses and plates. Crosses marked the exact yardage

of each hole, plates providing the greenkeeper with some latitude in day-to-day play, so that tees did not become excessively worn in particular spots. This system did not find favour with all, so *'It was decided that at the next Medal Competition members should be advised to play from the crosses, and the plates should be left in a forward position.'* Around this time, an article appeared in the Manchester Evening Chronicle making reference to slow play in competitions at Torkington. It was written by a member. His actions were viewed with disfavour by the Committee. Nevertheless, the Captain spoke following the next competition, impressing on members the need to keep their position on the course.

Back in 1923 the club appointed a Manager to run the club. This forward-looking venture was, unfortunately, short-lived, brought to an abrupt halt by a serious financial problem. In 1959 thought was once

again given to how the workload of the Honorary Secretary might be lightened. This time it was not proposed to go down quite the same road but, instead, to look to the appointment of an Assistant Honorary Secretary who would, as the title implies, assist the Honorary Secretary and deputise in his absence. The added advantage

of such an appointment would be that continuity in the office of Honorary Secretary could be maintained. He would be elected as an Officer of the Club and for this reason an Extraordinary General Meeting would have to be called in order to change the Articles of Association of the Club. That was achieved on September 5th 1959, the Articles of Association being changed to include the Honorary Assistant Secretary.

A proposal was put forward to build temporary tees at the 6th and 12th holes to see what members' views might be. That at the 12th was to be placed in the corner of the course behind the 11th green. On the 6th it was to be located so as to necessitate driving between the two trees behind and to the left of the existing tee which at the time was located behind the 5th green, behind and to the left of the present tee. Only that at the 12th still exists. The summer of 1959 was very dry and water was in short supply, resulting in rough so short that members complained that



September 1961
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IT WAS ALSO SUGGESTED THAT THE CLUB SHOULD PURCHASE A TELEVISION SET.

AFTER SOME DISCUSSION THE SUGGESTION WAS REJECTED.

it did not punish a shot missing the fairway. Green staff had difficulties with maintenance and, following the dry summer, fairways were easily damaged. As winter approached *'It was decided that nudging by the club head should be introduced immediately to preserve the fairways.'* Consideration was also given to constructing a reservoir near the 6th tee, and to the boring of a well or wells. In due course it was decided to make a reservoir by extending the pond between the 5th and 6th. There was no objection from the neighbouring farmer of Broad Oak Farm. In return, the club agreed to allow him to water his cattle at the reservoir. It was also decided to enquire if the farmer would be prepared to sell the water rights of the moat situated on Broad Oak Farm. This did not find favour with the farmer. A further 3,000 trees were to be purchased from Macclesfield Forestry Commission, also Poplars (*Lombardy and Manchester*) from Matthews of Alderley Park.

Bureaucracy features increasingly in the club's minutes as the years progress. For instance, in March 1960 notification was received from

Hazel Grove UDC that the clubhouse would shortly be in a smokeless zone and that an inspector would visit the club to advise on details of the alterations required. And towards the end of the year, in November, an unforeseen problem arose concerning the reservoir which had been constructed to help supply water in

times of drought. When the water pipeline had been laid in 1938, the club had the foresight to obtain the right to abstract water from the new pipeline on the course for use on the 8th, 18th and 16th greens. Stockport water authorities pointed out that the greens pipes could not be reconnected to their mains after un-sterilised reservoir water had flowed through them. The Stockport water engineer was called in for inspection and advice, and it appears that this arrangement came to an end.

It was traditional that Honorary Membership of Stockport Golf Club was given to each new President of the Cheshire Union of Golf Clubs for the period of his presidency. In April 1960 Jack Milner commemorated his year as President by donating a new starting hut for the 1st tee. His son, John, generously financed its refurbishment



during the Centenary year. Out on the course, preparations were already being made for the following year with Stockport Corporation being contacted to reserve 120 tons of sewage sludge in the spring. It was the Lady Captain herself who, in June, suggested that ladies should not play on the occasion of the major competition days: President's Day, Captain's Day, Invitation Day and Scratch Gold Medal. Ladies' fashions also briefly entered proceedings of the House Committee: *'In view of the hard wear which the floor would receive from spiked shoes and stiletto heels, it was considered that the most satisfactory flooring would be obtained by Asphalting in a smooth finish. The House Chairman was asked to....consult with the Ladies Committee whether this would be acceptable.'* There is no evidence that it was!

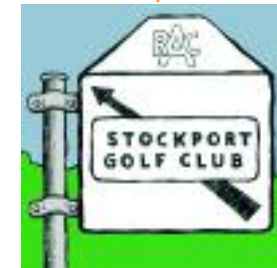
January 1961 opened with a discussion about what might happen if the Head Green Keeper, Peter Campbell, decided to retire. In order to attract the right man it might be necessary to offer housing accommodation, and a Sub-Committee was set up to look into this. Funding such a project without, once again, turning to the membership

for donations was thought to be possible through the clever use of club land. Since 1960 the club had been trying to apply for permission to develop the land fronting Offerton Road, not actually to develop the land, but to obtain ca £1,300 compensation for being turned down! The sequence of events included a developer buying White House Farm and also applying for planning permission. There were risks involved, the main one being that such an application might have provoked Stockport Council to develop the land on their behalf. Happily the ploy was successful and in September the club's solicitors advised that the planning application had been rejected and that compensation amounting to approximately £1,300 would be paid to the club within a few weeks. No action was to be taken on building a green keeper's house until the £1,300 had reached the club. Meanwhile the club had approached the farmer, Mr J Platt, to see if he would give the club an option on the sale of his land adjoining the 3rd, 4th and 6th holes. This eventually became reality some 39 years later with the purchase of the fields adjacent to the 3rd and 4th holes.

In March 1961 an inspection by Macclesfield Forestry Commission revealed that, with the exception of the copse on the left of the 3rd and

one on the left of the 14th, it appeared that very few of the newly planted trees were still living. Fortunately in April it was found that some of the trees reported dead had in fact sent up new shoots. In May of the following year *'It was agreed to order further small trees from the Macclesfield Corporation for planting later in the year. As it was not felt desirable to plant trees haphazardly, the Chairman and Honorary Secretary were asked to search for the original tree plans, made some years ago.'* The Greens Committee then ordered 2,000 Larch trees from Macclesfield Corporation at a cost of £7.10.0 per thousand, followed by 1,000 Scots Pine. While the tree planting was in full swing, the rest of the course was not neglected and in February 1962 it was suggested that a *'greens nursery'* might be started to provide suitable turf for patching or repairing greens.

As has already been noted, the pace of play at busy times had been an issue for many years. At the 1962 Annual General Meeting the suggestion was made from the floor that the course should be divided in some way between two-ball and four-ball matches, to prevent



1961
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WITH VISITOR NUMBERS SIGNIFICANT, THE RAC AGREED TO PUT UP SIGNS TO THE CLUB FROM THE MAIN ROAD IN HAZEL GROVE.

overcrowding and slowness. The Captain undertook to consider the matter. However, when the Committee members gave their minds to the suggestion, it was not felt to provide a solution to the problem.

Interestingly, slow play has always been a problem and during the Centenary Year, Committee decided to appoint a Course Marshall with power to penalise all players found to be responsible for slow play. David Wicks, a Past Captain, made a good start in this role and medal rounds were completed in an acceptable 3 hours 45 minutes.

That year Sutton's inspection of the course revealed *'a very good sample of water'* from the reservoir and that it might actually be beneficial to the greens. It was decided, therefore, to water all greens from the reservoir whenever possible. It was also resolved to remove all guide posts on the course.

February 1963 brought the big freeze. Inevitably, the course was closed *'but would be reopened as soon as the Greens Committee felt it wise to do so.'*