



# TEE TIMES NEWS BULLETIN

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## Is that light we see at the end of the tunnel?

ON SUNDAY the Government will announce its plans for a programme to begin the release of the country from lockdown.

This will be a gradual process and there is no indication as yet that this may include an immediate return to playing golf in some form or other.

What is sure is that when we do resume it is going to be a drastically changed game and it will be some time before we get back to the normal roll-up and comp routines that we have come to accept as normal.

The R&A has published a framework for safe golf for when we start playing.

There is a brief summary of the R&A proposals that have the full backing of English Golf on Page 2 Col 3.

More details will be provided in TTNB once the actual playing conditions are known.

Our chairman, Kevin Hopwood, explained to TTNB: "It is with something approaching wild optimism that we contemplate that we could be playing golf within the next week or so.

"However unrealistic this may be, it is the task of the general committee, in

association with Bournebridge Golf, to be ready for whenever we do resume playing.

"The committee is actively engaged in studying all aspects of the report and we will discuss these with the club operators after the Government review is announced to decide how we go forward.

"I can assure members that we will be as ready as we can be when the time comes."

We wish the GC luck. There is a lot of work to be done but it will be worth it because although it will be different it will be golf.

## Season 2020 post the storms and post lockdown

I'M SURE we are all frustrated and disappointed to be denied the opportunity to smash our drives straight down the middle of the fairway on the way to a personal best score - even if it is in only our dreams!

It seems a long time ago now but, if you remember, as a result of inclement (to put it mildly) weather, the competition programme was already compromised long before lockdown.

I thought therefore that it might be useful to remind members of where we are and what we are likely to lose whenever we return to golf.

We managed to complete Round 5 of the Winter League before lockdown. It wasn't ideal, but we got it done, so we have Round 6, the multiplier, to finish off.

Apart from losing the regular mid-week stablefords and medals plus the Saturday stablefords and Sunday medals we have lost, or look like losing, the following competitions:

April 19, Clama Trophy: a greensome stableford for pairs (one over and one under 60) played off the white tees.

April 26, Jersey Cup: a stableford for men and ladies, the maximum handicaps being 18 for men and 24 for ladies.

May 10 and 17, Lambourn Trophy: a medal played over two Sundays, decided by the best aggregate score.

June 14, President's Putter: format to be determined by the President.

June 21, Seniors' Champs: a medal for men members over 55 played off the white tees.

June 27 and 28, Club Championship Weekend: involves the men's and ladies' championships and, for men, the Wise Trophy (handicaps 13 to 18) and the Bennett Cup (handicaps 19 and over). All are medal competitions played over 36 holes off the blue tees for men and red for ladies.

It remains to be seen if we're able to complete some of these competitions on the scheduled dates and competitions later in the year may also be compromised.

We do have some dates set aside for fun competitions that we can replace with more important competitions if we're allowed back on the course. However, there aren't many of these, so we may have some difficult decisions to make concerning which competitions to prioritise.

We will endeavour to keep you informed in these pages, the WBGC website and,



once we have access, the club notice boards.

Stay safe and well and I hope that we will be seeing some meaningful action at WBGC in the near future. Best wishes.

**Patrick J Wilmore**  
**On behalf of the comps committee**

**Many thanks to the Hopwood Ash Financial Planning Consultancy for printing this bulletin**

If you have any items or ideas for TTNB or you would like to receive a copy please email Dave Ware at: [dgw.ware@gmail.com](mailto:dgw.ware@gmail.com)

## OPINION

*Dave Ware discovers:  
It's official, golfers really are different*

IN THESE pages some time ago I pointed out that golfers are different to other sportsmen.

I used the example of when asked how they got on in the weekend fixture a footballer, cricketer, rugby, hockey or tennis player will give the score and perhaps add a little local colour with a quick reference to the pitch, referee or opposition. Ask the same question to a golfer and he or she (but more certainly he) will invariably begin with: "Well on the first ...."

Judging from an article I read in the web-based magazine, National Club Golfer, this attitude carries itself forward into the coronavirus debate.

The article in question was an interview with the new England Golf chief executive Jeremy Tomlinson about the governing body's response to coronavirus and when the sport may be able to resume.

A very valid topic and most of it was highly informative and practical. But a few of the questions posed were real jaw droppers for me such as:

*"Why did England Golf instruct clubs and courses to close?"*

*"How will the decision to resume be taken? Will that be dictated by the government or will England Golf have the autonomy to make it?"*

*"There's a rising sentiment among some golfers, and clubs, that England Golf didn't have 'the right' to instruct clubs to close. What's your view on that?"*

The government has decided that to contend with this disease countless shops, restaurants and businesses should stop trading and millions of citizens could leave their homes only for essential work, shopping and to take exercise for half an hour a day.

Despite this there seems there was an element of the golfing fraternity that thought that golf should be an exception. It seems that it's OK for a family of four to be confined to their two-bed hi-rise flat in Balham but golfers living in the leafy shires expected to climb into their cars and toddle off to play golf with the gut wrenching proviso that the bunkers are out of play because there are no rakes. Such hardship!

It really does beggar belief.

## Golf will be back - but not quite as we know it.

This is a brief summary of the R&A safe golf proposals that include:

- \* Allocation of tee times with intervals of at least ten minutes and numbers that are likely to be set by government guidelines
- \* Only social match play rounds rather than stroke play competitions
- \* No competitions involving players in different groups and no handling or exchanging of scorecards
- \* No clubhouse facilities apart from access to locker rooms
- \* The removal of bunker rakes and ball retrievers
- \* Flagsticks should not be touched and a hole liner should be used to prevent balls from dropping below the surface of greens
- \* Trolleys and carts would not be available for hire unless safe sanitising practices can be guaranteed
- \* Players to remain two metres apart at all times and not to touch stray golf balls

Not quite the roll-ups we know and love but it would be good to be back.

## Nothing new under the sun

YOU MAY be surprised to know that this lockdown business is not a modern phenomena. The game of golf was banned in Scotland from 1457 to 1502 by King James II to ensure that the Scots would not waste time playing golf instead of practicing archery in preparation for a possible invasion by the English.

It seems to have worked quite well apart from a bit of a skirmish in July 1482 when an English army led by Richard the Duke of Gloucester captured the town of Berwick-upon-Tweed and also briefly occupied Edinburgh.

He was soon kicked out of Edinburgh but Berwick has remained in English hands ever since.

## Sort that swing

PAUL SIMPSON is offering all West Berks members a free swing analysis service while the course is closed.

Just send a video of you chipping from the garden or putting on the carpet to:  
[paulsimpsongolf@gmail.com](mailto:paulsimpsongolf@gmail.com)

## You have to smile

*Three definitions that may amuse:*

- Golf:** A game of fetch played on your own.  
**To put:** To move an object to a specific place - OED.  
**To putt:** To hit and hope - TTNB.

## Dine in with Foxes

ALL WBGC members who have experienced the delight of Karen and Nick's culinary mastery will be delighted to know that Foxes Catering is now offering a home delivery service.

This will be available on Fridays and Saturdays starting on May 8. The home service menu is available now to place your order please visit the website: [www.foxescatering.co.uk](http://www.foxescatering.co.uk) or visit the Foxes Catering Facebook page.

TTNB wishes Karen and Nick every success with their new venture.