

Round 260 - The Rose & Crown Course, Highworth - 11th Nov 2007

Dear Diary. Been looking forwards to today's match for ages - a four-ball Stableford against Biffo, Tufty and Rhino at some god-damn out-of-the-way hole called Highworth that Tufty knows. Somewhere near Swindon. Ghastly place, full of estate agents and solicitors, I shouldn't be surprised. Hardly Wentworth, but Tufty is staying with his people at Lechlade - river frontage, bit o' shooting in the afternoon if we get round in time. Apparently the food at the clubhouse is diabolical, but there are a few decent pubs which run to a spot of cold pheasant and a half-decent Chablis.

Of course the dashed inconvenient thing is that it's Armistice Day, so we shall all have to turn out on Church Parade sporting the bowler, pin-striped and furled umbrella. Medals optional, which will bugger poor old Rhino. Not quite sure how many DSOs they awarded in the Pay Corps. No matter; he still wields a nifty mashie-niblick out of the rough.

Later: Damned awful day. Bloody Tufty. We all turned out in full mufti at 10.45 at this blasted Highworth place - worse than you can possibly imagine. So there I am, outside the church, two minutes to the Last Post, tear already gathering in the eye ready to drip off the moustache, when some bounder in a confounded Škoda almost runs down the constable on point duty and drives clean over my polished brogues as he veers right down the High Street. Miserable-looking cove, balding, glasses, ridiculous side-whiskers. The bastard.

Dismiss, nip off and change at the club-house. Bloody awful course, open to the public, would you believe, so full of lower orders in football shirts and 'shell-suits', as I believe they're called. Even worse, apparently the local village idiots have decided to run all over the fairway at the first hole. So much for care in the community. But I'm told they've cleared orf. 11.25 and Biffo pegs off first, hooking right as always. Then Rhino and Tufty, usual garbage, 150 yards. I however am feeling absolutely tickety-boo, aided no doubt by a stiff sharpener at the 19th hole before bully-off. Just as I am in the middle of my swing, some lanky old sod, dressed in baggy shorts and a T-shirt, if you please, lumbers into my field of vision and I slice the bloody ball off into the hinterland somewhere. Bastard seems vaguely familiar.

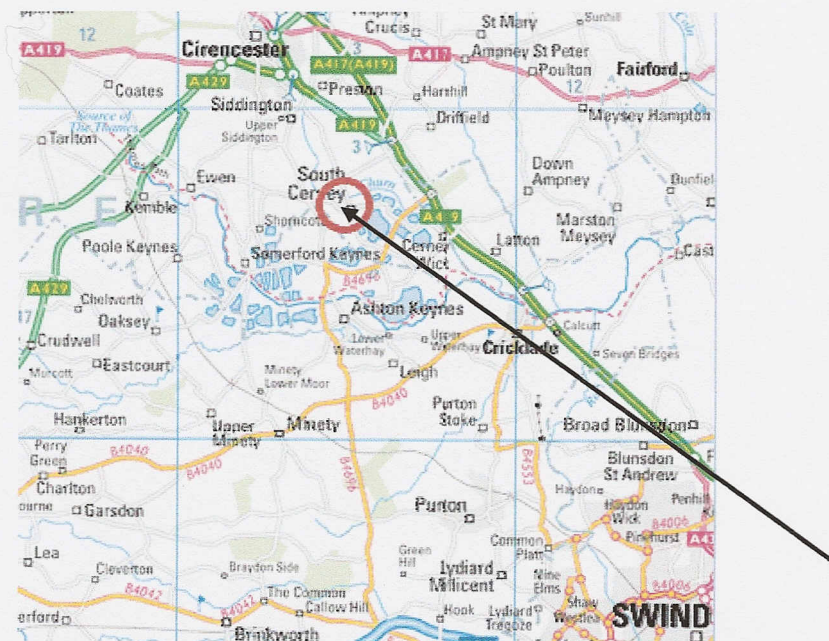
Takes me ages to dig myself out, plus the filthy temper, so after four holes I'm 10 shots down. However, a pull on the hip-flask and a pipe of Ogden's Walnut Flake restore the tissues, and I'm back into storming form. The 5th is a short hole, so it's a baffy, straight down the fairway, when damn me if the village idiots don't appear, and a mongrel belonging to another lanky old sod relieves itself all over my ball. Two shots down as I have to pick up and wipe the damned thing clean. Break my favourite cleek in frustration. Bastards.

The remaining holes turn into a nightmare. Can do nothing right with the brassie. At the 16th, spot the strangely familiar, baggy-shortened old git plodding towards the green, and with a well-struck spoon shot off the tee, just miss the bastard. He picks the ball up, examines it with some curiosity, and chucks it into the brambles. Down 17. It's him or me....

We enfilade across the road. "I say, Old Thing", ventures Tufty - "we're off target; this is a different course". I snarl. "Chaps - I want you to lay down covering fire whilst I establish a flank attack through the rough." And with that, I'm off on my stomach, snaking through the undergrowth, baffing spoon clenched between my teeth. Biffo and Rhino send down a withering fusillade of Dunlop Titleists, as I wait, hidden behind a Douglas Pine, whilst the idiot puffs up the hill towards me. I step out into the fairway, coolly lay down the ball, pull out my close-combat jigger, take careful aim, and just as I am into my stroke, the creature speaks: "erm, excuse me, do you know how to get to Highworth? I've lost the flour." I hook wildly, the ball ricochets off a tree and hits me right between the eyes. As I collapse in a heap, my last fleeting impression is of the ball trickling towards the flag for a hole in one....

I come to in the bar of a pub. "Drink this", urges Rhino. Cheap brandy passes my lips. My eyes struggle to focus. There, sitting morosely in a circle, are the village idiots, puzzling over a roneo'd newsletter. The old buzzard with the dog is praising another old buffer - apparently from the Andrew - who was seemingly responsible for messing up my day. And there, gasper behind his ear, is that strangely familiar, bespectacled, lanky old sod. He meets my gaze, fumbles in his pocket, and produces a golf ball. "I believe this is yours," he says - "I just managed to stop it from falling down a hole."

Bastard.



Unforthcoming Hash Runs

261 - 25th Nov - The Angel, Purton - Lady Margaret

262 - 9th Dec - The Eliot Arms, South Cerney - Keith2

263 - 26th Dec (Boxing Day, NOT Sunday) - The Keepers Arms,
Quenington - GOM - PJ Party!

If you want to have a bash at a Hash, or find out where The Bugger's Arms is please ring GOM Jeremy on 01672 521064; email jer@xyz.port995.com or The Late Keith Mitchell on 01672 511530 email keithskip9@hotmail.com - website kvhask.mysite.orange.co.uk