



Staff News

Issue 21 - April 2019

Inside this issue

- New Appointment at HO
- Senior Management Update
- Awards Night 2019
- Golf Division News
- Adventure Leisure News
- Wycombe Range Update

BGL welcomes Janice Moore!



Janice Moore

Learning & Development Manager

It turns out that the arrival of someone to “do training” has been eagerly anticipated. I’ve been so lucky to receive welcomes ranging from “hooray, you’re here” to “OMG you’re real.”

I apologise to those of you that I haven’t managed to meet in person yet, but I can confirm that I really do exist as the new “training person” (although when it comes to my girls sharing out smarties in the car, my existence is questionable!). I feel very lucky to have joined such a friendly, motivated and hard-working team, and I can’t wait to get to know more of you.

Not surprisingly, quite a few people wanted to know what I do exactly, and how I can help them or their team, so I thought I could go some way to address that here ...

In days gone by the expectation of The Training Department was that there would be a menu of training courses that people could choose from, and we would take orders from customers. Managers would send a staff member along to training with the expectation for them to come back ‘fixed’. Happy Sheet completed. Boxes ticked. Job done.

We will have some core programs that focus on areas such as sales, customer service, HoD development and other skills, but I’m very pleased to say that future L&D at BGL will also be supported by bespoke, on-line resources that address real needs that our people have said they have; Personal Development Plans; Apprenticeship Schemes; projects that meet a business need and provide opportunities for supported development at the same time; professional development support; knowledge sharing forums; ask an expert sessions, and lots more. I’m steering us toward a blended approach to L&D that will move us from courses to resources, and where learning is happening at the moment of need, and while in the flow of work.

Outside of work, I am privileged to spend most of my time with my husband and girls (ages 7 and 11) at our home in Kingston. It’s beautiful to hear my youngest sing the Duck Song while we cook together, and hear my eldest obsess about Harry Potter.

Zoe wrote and posted a letter to J.K.Rowling the other day, and the day after posting it, when the door bell rang, Amy shot up out of the chair shouting “Zoe, it might be J.K.Rowling!!!.” It was Gousto, delivering our recipe box for the week.



Colin Mayes
Chief Executive

We have started 2019 very well. The winter has been remarkably mild with some very warm weather in February which has helped the golf course business get off to the best start that I can remember since joining the business back in 2006!

Our Adventure Leisure (AL) business also continues to grow with two more sites opening late last year in Bournemouth (October 2018) and then Birmingham (December 2018). Both of these new openings are trading very well indeed as is the rest of the AL business. We are already on site at our next opening scheduled for June this year in Basildon and in final discussions on two more sites that should see us open a further three new businesses this year as a minimum.

In February we held our Annual Awards evening at Aldwickbury Golf Club and you will see full details about the evening and the winners further on in this newsletter. It was a great evening celebrating our successes throughout 2018 and everybody that attended had a thoroughly good time with many saying it was our best evening so far. I was also delighted that our Chairman Edward Clive and Lord Iveagh were able to attend and help with the presentation. I would like to congratulate the Aldwickbury F&B team for looking after us all so well. The standard of both the service and the quality of food and drinks served was excellent and the room looked wonderful. So a big thank you to our team at Aldwickbury for a job well done.

As I have been visiting our businesses in recent weeks, I have seen that all of our golf courses are in great shape thanks to the hard work that our greenkeeping teams have put in over the winter.

Now that spring has arrived and the clocks have jumped forward golfers will start to clean up their golf clubs and head back to the game. With any luck the weather conditions will be good and this will entice golfers so that we can get off to a really good start to the golfing year. British golfers will surely be inspired by the British success at the recent Players Championship at Sawgrass in the US with Rory McIlroy winning and Tommy Fleetwood, Eddie Pepperell and Justin Rose all playing well. The Masters always produces interest in participation if we have some good British performances, so let us hope for a British winner there too.

We have continued to invest in new machinery for the golf courses and within our club houses throughout the winter. We will be reopening our Driving Range at Wycombe Heights in April following an extensive improvement to its outfield and a complete refurbishment of the Driving Range building.

We have further invested and installed our second fitting (the first being at our Sidcup range) of the latest golf ball tracking technology Toptracer. The whole team at Wycombe lead by our GM Sarah Blunden have been doing a fantastic job in preparing for the new range and training the team to ensure the opening is a great success.

We are entering the start of the golf season in a great position and our businesses are in excellent condition, we have some great people working for us so I am expecting another record year for BGL. Thank you for your hard work over the winter and I look forward to seeing you in the business when I next visit.

Warmest regards

Colin



Jim Conlan
Group Finance Director

Golf Division

The golf industry had a tough year in 2018 and Burhill was no exception. Wet weather in the winter months and in the first half of the season was followed by a scorching, fairway burning summer and of course the football World Cup which distracted our golfers. All of this adversely affected the activity levels in golf, reducing rounds played at most of our locations.

The core Golf Division managed a total revenue growth of nearly 4% due to increased food and beverage sales and great success in health & fitness sales at Birchwood Park Golf and Country Club. Operating cost increases did however exceed this revenue increase and the Golf Division missed its operating profit budget for the year and was slightly below 2017. This illustrates the importance of paying close attention to both sales and effective cost control. For every £1 of revenue, we incur almost 90 pence of cost, so it does not take much for the benefit of hard-earned sales to disappear in cost increases.

Although 2018 was a tough year, we should remember that running a successful and efficient golf business is fundamental to the Burhill Group strategy. The continuing growth of the contribution from the Golf Division is key to the Group's success. This importance is reflected by more than £2m capital expenditure being invested in the business in 2018 and plans for continued investment in 2019.

Adventure Leisure

The strategy to establish Adventure Leisure as an independent, less weather dependant business began to pay off in 2018. Cheltenham opened in October 2017 and new openings at Newcastle, Milton Keynes, Bournemouth and Birmingham in 2018 increased the number of Adventure Leisure operating units to nine in total, with over £4m of

capital expenditure being invested in the business. The total revenue of the Adventure Leisure business increased by +130% to over £7m, profitability more than doubled and the financial targets were exceeded which bodes well for the future. The Adventure Leisure team are now working hard to consolidate this success with further new openings in 2019.

Burhill Group

With the great efforts in Golf Division and Adventure Leisure combined with results from our Estates and Manor of Bosham business we can all be proud that the Burhill Group will demonstrate significant growth when its audited results for 2018 are published later this year. This puts us in a strong position to continue pursuing our ambitious business plans, so well done to all.

Burhill Group Operational and Financial Control, Systems and Administration

Burhill Group is going through a period of significant growth and as a rapidly growing business it is a high priority to ensure all existing and new locations are managed in an orderly manner. It is the responsibility of us all to follow correct procedures in our areas of responsibility. There are guidance manuals available in all key areas of finance, operations & administration. In addition, a comprehensive GDPR policy manual is available at each location. Will you please make sure you continue to familiarise yourself with the processes in the areas relevant to your role. Your Line Manager will be the key source of information should you need any help.

Trading trends for 2019

I am pleased to report that improved weather in the first quarter of 2019 has given us our best ever start to the year in the Golf Division. Adventure Leisure new openings also continue to perform well. As a result, the Burhill Group has performed significantly above budget and prior year for the first quarter giving a sound foundation for success in 2019.

Finally....

Good luck for this year, we are off to a great start and have it all to play for with the Masters teeing off the main golf season this month!

Best regards
Jim Conlan

BGL Awards 2018



Employees of the Year 2018

Greg Tilbury
PGA Professional
Abbey Hill

Holly Parsons
Senior Weddings & Events Coordinator
Aldwickbury Park

Kerryn Smalley
Centre Administrator
Birchwood Park

Gemma White
Senior F&B Supervisor
Wycombe Heights

Darren Bardall
Senior Sous Chef
Burhill

Michael Heard
Maintenance
Hoebridge

Mark & Lousie Brooks
Head Chef & F&B Supervisor
Thornbury

Alistair Booth
Financial Controller
Head Office

Tom Wilson
PGA Professional
Ramsdale Park

Mark Beetlestone
Greenkeeper
The Shropshire

Lee Martindale
Pro Shop Assistant
Redbourn

Karen Hepton
Administrator
Mr Mulligans, Milton Keynes

BGL Awards 2018



Employee Spotlight



Welcome to the new Employee Spotlight section. This month we talked to Alistair Booth, Group Financial Controller based at BGL Head Office.

BGL: What's your current title. How long have you been with the BGL?

ALISTAIR BOOTH: I am the Financial Controller for the group and I have been with BGL for 2 years.

BGL: How long have you been in the golf industry and what was the journey to where you are now?

ALISTAIR BOOTH: BGL is my first taste of the golf industry but I have been working in the leisure industry for about 7 years. My previous role was with travel operator TUI Group, and my very first role was with the cricket charity Chance to Shine based at Lords Cricket Ground.

BGL: In 3 words describe your job?

ALISTAIR BOOTH: Engaging, demanding and fulfilling

BGL: What's your favourite part about working in the BGL Group?

ALISTAIR BOOTH: The people and the environment in which we work I think stands out amongst many other employers. Thankfully I get on with most of my colleagues, and it is a privilege to work in such a picturesque setting.

BGL: What's the best thing you have achieved since being here?

ALISTAIR BOOTH: Switching banks and the system upgrades have probably challenged me the most yet provided the most fulfilment over the last couple of years. As a team we have achieved much more and have positioned ourselves well to ensure we continue absorbing the demands in the areas of growth.

BGL: Can you play Golf?

ALISTAIR BOOTH: I would describe my golfing abilities as half-decent. I have always enjoyed Golf but simply don't play enough to ever really improve. Shooting anything under 100 would be considered a good day.

BGL: What is your dream car?

ALISTAIR BOOTH: Fancy cars are not really my thing but if I had to choose it would probably be an old classic like a Ford Cortina. In green.

BGL: What are your hobbies?

ALISTAIR BOOTH: My weekends in the summer are usually spent on a cricket field somewhere in Surrey. I also like to run, cook and spend time in the garden.

BGL: What would your "death row meal" be? Starter, Main and Dessert?

ALISTAIR BOOTH: Butterfly prawns with lemon butter, toad-in-the-hole, strawberries and cream

BGL: What keeps you motivated?

ALISTAIR BOOTH: Working in a beautiful environment with people I get on with and work that challenges me, keeps me going strong.

BGL: And finally, what advice would you give to someone wanting to do your role?

ALISTAIR BOOTH: Finance is a fairly competitive market so becoming qualified these days is essential. And like in any job, master the basics and find roles that continue to challenge you.

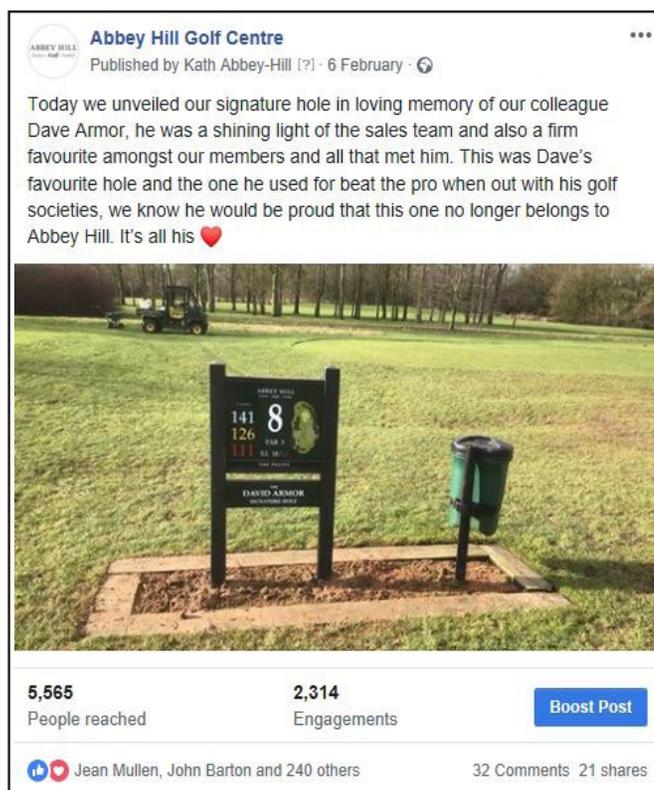
David Armor

February saw a new tee marker at Abbey Hill's signature 8th hole with a special plaque in loving memory of Dave Armor. The 8th was Dave's favourite hole and the one he used for "Beat the Pro" when out with his golf societies, we know he would be proud that this one now belongs to him.

Dave was very much loved & this Facebook post that went out on 6th February had over 240 likes and 32 comments with people sharing that he meant so much... Comments included;

"Dave gave me a short lesson on this hole when he represented Abbey on a Charity Day. He stuck every ball to within 6 feet of the pin."

"Soooo beautiful & what an amazing tribute! Resting in eternal peace watching down on all his friends, colleagues & family in his favourite spot."



It comes in three's for Ramsdale

It has been a great start to the year in 2019 for Ramsdale Park.

February saw Ramsdale earn their prestigious Golfmark award plaque, which is taking pride of place for all to see.

F&B & the Sales team have had new starters with Steve Brindley-Bates as F&B Manager and

Megan Beers joining as Group Golf Co-Ordinator. We wish them all the best at BGL.

Will Davies, Head Professional has been nominated as Vice Captain for Notts PGA and will be captain in 2021. This is a great accolade to have so well done Will!



Old Course 6th hole project at Burhill

As part of the future development plans for The Old Course at Burhill, the 6th green had been highlighted for improvements to its playability as well as to create a green which allows more pin positions.

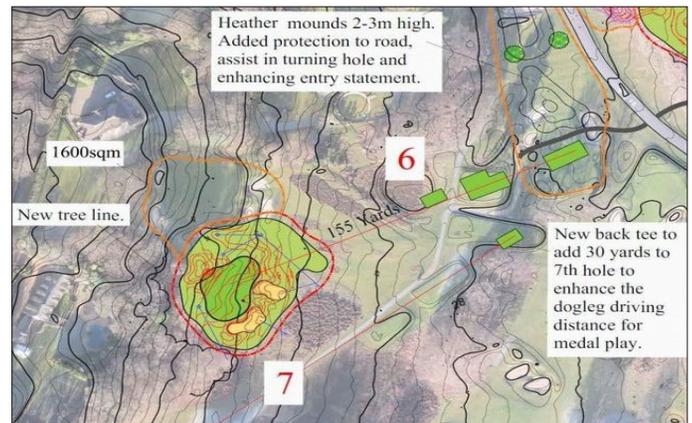
The course had been faced with the following issues:

- 70% of the back tier of the green is unusable due to the slope
- The bottom tier of the green suffers from flooding after heavy rainfall

The decision was made to move the hole to rectify these issues by moving the green and creating a better hole in terms of playability for all levels of golfer.

The new hole will measure 135 yards to begin with and a further 20 yards will be added once the re-design of the 5th hole takes place.

Take a look at the progress Rob Surgey and the team have made.



Celebrations at Sidcup

Happy 25th anniversary to Sidcup Family Golf!

Sidcup has enjoyed significant investment with a 46 bay two tier floodlit driving range, with 35 bays featuring the latest Toptracer technology, short game practice facility, coffee shop and 36-hole adventure golf course.



Sidcup Family Golf have big plans for 2019 with the imminent approval of the alcohol licences. We look forward to deliver food and beverage to each bay on the range and turn our customers visit into a day or night to remember, not forgetting the amazing customer service and fantastic golf lessons taught by our Pro's.



What's on the menu at Stevenage?

Stevenage has just completed their brand new F&B area, upgraded seating and now provide a brand new menu. With a kitchen upgrade they now offer hot food options such as sharers, hot dogs, wraps and kids meals...

They will also be offering a hot food option for our popular kids parties and corporate packages



Olympic medalist visits Milton Keynes!

Gail Emms MBE, Olympic medalist hosted her sons 9th Birthday Party at Mr Mulligans Milton Keynes.



Wycombe Driving Range Update

Wycombe Heights Golf Centre, a BGL Golf venue, has completed the construction of a brand-new driving range featuring state-of-the-art Toptracer Range technology.

The club has invested hundreds of thousands of pounds into the new facility. With Toptracer Range technology in 20 of its 24 bays. Wycombe have become the only club in the area to offer the technology and providing the local community with an outstanding golf practice and entertainment hub.

The new driving range at Wycombe Heights is open to all, offering tuition from its experienced team of professionals and a comfortable setting for beginners to take up the game or have fun with friends and family.

Using cameras mounted around the facility, Toptracer Range technology tracks and displays every shot on video screens found at each hitting bay and allows for a host of fun game modes that are scalable to any ability.

Data is instantly recorded and displayed on the screen through a player profile that can be accessed at any time through the Toptracer Range community app; allowing users to return to their stored data on subsequent visits or compare their performance against friends.

Sarah Blunden, General Manager at Wycombe Heights Golf Centre, commented: "We were all so excited to be opening the new driving range and I can't wait to see how it transforms the practice experience here at Wycombe Heights.

"Toptracer technology has become very recognisable to golf fans over the last couple of years and it will really add a new dynamic for both avid golfers and beginners looking to pick up the game in a fun and relaxed environment."

The investment into constructing the new range was extensive, with roughly 100,000 tonnes of soil to re-level the outfield, fitting new bays & updating the existing golf range equipment.

Wycombe Heights' state-of-the-art driving range opened to the public on Saturday 13th April with the club's grand opening event which featured music, a BBQ and much more.

The club also ran a fantastic competition to win a golf membership worth £1,000, with the winner announced at the Grand Opening on 13th April!

WYCOMBE HEIGHTS
Events • Golf • Family

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Head to the first hole and tee up!"

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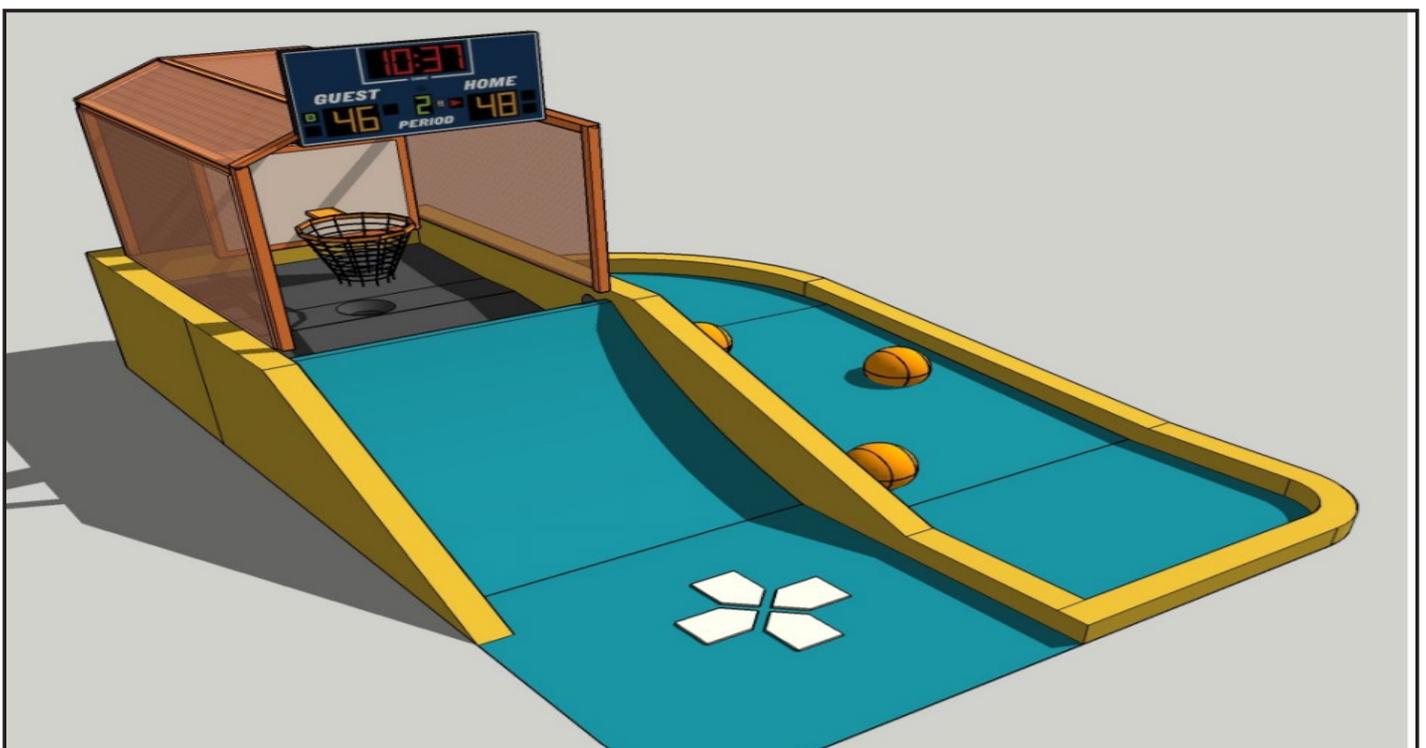
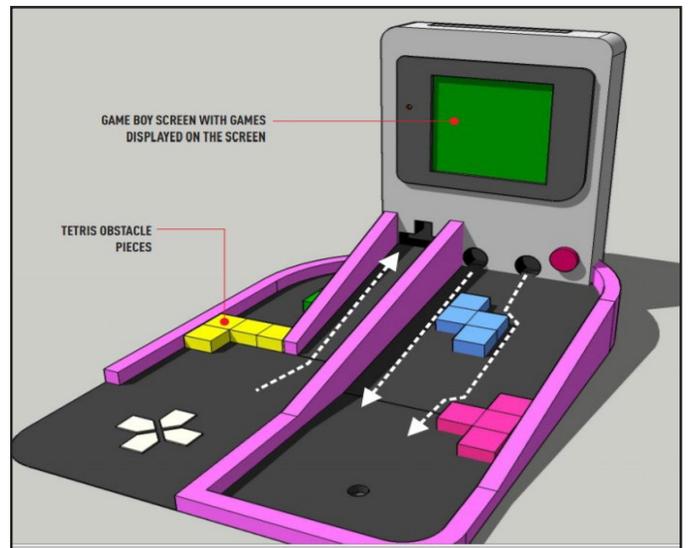
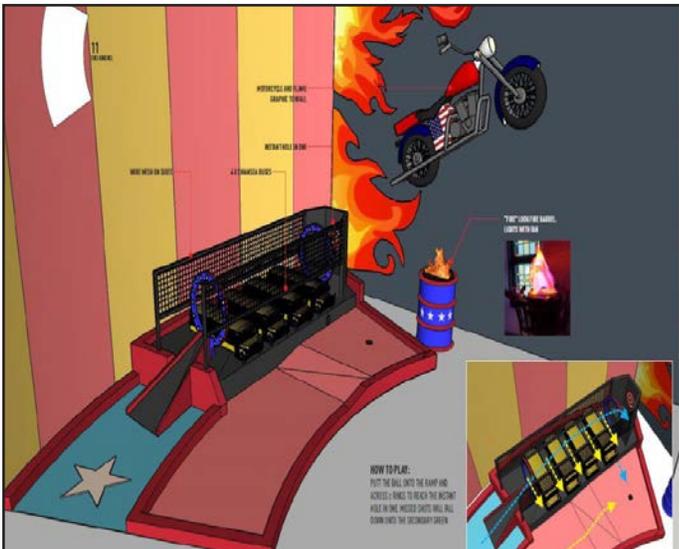
"Fancy a quick round at Pebble beach?
Head to the first hole and tee up!"

Mr Mulligans Basildon

Mr Mulligans will soon be opening its doors later this year in non-other than Bas Vegas!

The TOWIE locals will be lucky enough to receive two themed golf courses along with a bar & restaurant mid-way through the year. The venue is situated in Festival Leisure Park and will include a Fairground style course and also an Arcade themed course... the question is will Mark Wright and Joey Essex dare take on the courses!

Spread over 17,000sqft including a fully constructed mezzanine. The course, bar and restaurants will offer both families and adults a fun and vibrant venue to spend their well-earned leisure time!



Did you Know?

1. Samuel L. Jackson is such an avid golfer he has a contract clause to play golf twice a week whenever he films movies.
2. He may be the most famous left-handed golfer of all-time, but four-time major champion Phil Mickelson is naturally right-handed. As a youngster, he mirrored his father's swing and enjoyed so much success that he never needed right-handed clubs.
3. To this day, golf is one of only two sports, along with the javelin throw, to have ever been played on the moon. Back on February 6, 1971, Apollo 14 member Alan Shepard hit a ball with a six-iron, swinging one-handed as a result of his pressure suit.
4. While playing in Atlantic City, N.J., in 1889, Ab Smith hit a shot he defined as a "bird of a shot." His description ultimately led to one of the game's most popular terms, which golfers regularly aim for – "birdie".
5. If you choose to walk, rather than ride 18 holes, you will not only walk roughly four miles, but also burn 2,000 calories.
6. The French word "cadet" pronounced "cad-day" means youngest child and is where the word "caddy" comes from.
7. Golf balls used to be made from wood but also from leather stuffed with chicken/goose feathers.
8. The first golf club heads were made of beech or the wood of fruit trees such as apples. Golf club shafts were originally made of hazel or ash wood.
9. A golf ball will travel further on hot days, because the air is less dense, so it takes less velocity to travel.
10. Until the invention and rising popularity of the golf tee, golfers played off of sand piles they built themselves.
11. The world's first ever golf tournament for women was held on January 9, 1811 at Musselburgh, Scotland.
12. Tiger Woods was only 8 when he got his first hole in one.
13. Insurance actuaries have calculated the chance of an average golfer making a hole in one at approximately 12,500 to 1, and the odds of a tour professional at 2,500 to 1.
14. The average golf ball has 336 dimples. This is the regulation number, though different balls will have different amounts of dimples, depending on the manufacturer or the model of the ball. Between 300-500 is the standard.
15. Rory McIlroy's Father Wins 500/1 bet on his Son. One of the most audacious golf bets in history was Rory McIlroy's father betting £200 that his son would win the Open within 10 years. When Rory was crowned Open Champion in 2014, his dad claimed £100,000. Family and friends also got a piece of the action, following Mr McIlroy's advice and chipping in on the bet.

Burhill Golf & Leisure LTD

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