

## Golf Balls have their own way of Seeing the World

Hello! I'm a golf ball with a story to tell. But I'm not just any old ball. I am rather proud to be a Slazenger B51 XD+ "two piece" but I am extra special because I am a Buxton and High Peak Golf Club CENTENARY BALL, with 1887 – 1987 tattooed on my outsides. I was made to recognise the first 100 years of the Club and I can really tell a story now because my golf ball friends told me all about the first 100 years and I can fill in some of the rest. The second part of this story is a bit sketchy, but I will come back to that later....

You see, the thing that not many people know is that golf balls do listen. They don't just listen to their owners telling them what to do (go, Go, GO; stop, Stop, STOP!!), but they listen to each other as well.



I've actually known a few golfers listen to their balls, but that is another matter entirely.

So while I was rattling around in a bag with some of the old balls, I did happen to hear the story of how the Club started. That was back in 1887 and I know this is true because one of the balls had been in Mr W.R. Bryden's pocket on that very first day in the summer of 1887 when he went up on to Fairfield Common and hit a few balls. That very same ball was at the inaugural meeting of the Club at 41, Spring Gardens, Buxton. They only had to cope with 9 holes each round, but even that must have been hard work as Mr Bryden (naturally) won the first competition with 148 shots. That is a lot of being smacked, even though having a gutta percha inside makes it less painful. Someone said that the balls really complained when they had to cope with 18 holes from 1894 and they have been a bit uncooperative ever since. That explains a lot.

Over the years other balls told me how things have changed in the Club buildings we use to rest between rounds. The old Liberal Club on The Front (now some nice new houses) was too hot in the summer and too cold in the winter. We were all very pleased when, in 1905, generous golfers from Buxton, Manchester (and even London) raised some money to build a

new Clubhouse. The story of the Debentures is told elsewhere. However, even though we had a nice place to rest up between rounds, we were still being hit quite a lot. At some point we even decided that we could stand up for ourselves if we were bigger than the old balls, but it did not seem to make any difference.

But the greatest pleasure for any golf ball is being hit by one of the more caring golfers. They gently massage you around the course and you feel that you want to repay their care by helping them when you can. I have heard lots of stories about the care taken by golfers such as Joe Armit, the Reverend Foster-Pegg and someone told of the excitement of being hit alternately by two talented Artisan golfers Cyril Ashmore and Ken Holmes in a competition years ago. What fun that must have been. Naturally any golf ball will appreciate being treated well by a lady and there are stories of great partnerships between golf balls belonging to Mrs Elizabeth Howe, Miss Alison Howe and Mrs Windsor Needham. These lady golfers are legends in the golf ball community.

However, this is where my 100 year story comes to a sad end. In 1988, a wayward drive (someone said it was Mr Sidney Armit who was Men's President in the Centenary Year, but this has to be verified) put me in the rough for over 30 years. A chance find by a local dog walker (thanks to Pete Evans for this info) brought me into the light again and let me tell this story which I hope you have found enjoyable. I hope to be given a little rest in the Clubhouse; you can say hello to me in the Bar.

From what I hear, the Club appears to be flourishing and the Course looks great. It is still one of the best Courses in England and golfers still come from far and wide to play here. You will always receive a warm welcome at the oldest Golf Club in Derbyshire.

It's good to be back!

Your Centenary Golf Ball

Celebrating 131 years of Buxton and High Peak Golf Club

*[Note: this is as told to Jon White by the Centenary Ball and with special thanks to 2018 Captain Mr Drue Turner who made the introductions]*