

The Hacker

No 2 Mad Dogs.....

Mad dogs & Englishmen..... Think golfing in the snow is fun.

Alright so it is not exactly as Noel Coward wrote it, but if he thought that playing in the midday sun was balmy then thank heavens he didn't pen his famous lines during a cold wet English winter from the comfort of a 19th hole.

Then he would have seen the crème de la crème of mad Englishmen.

Even an outsider with not even the merest hint of interest in golf must see the attraction of the sport when the sun is beating down in Mid August. Even the creamiest milk bottle legs get an all over colour – though sadly the colour is more likely to be lobster than honey! In your shorts & T-shirt your muscles warm through and your swing glides like a well oiled machine.

Cut to winter!

The wind is blowing a hundred miles an hour; the wind chill is at a record low and you are wearing almost every piece of clothing that you own. On your feet are a pair of £150.00 super dry Atlantic-proof pair of shoes that let in water quicker than the Titanic. Your socks are a freezing patty of mud and 'casual water' that by the halfway house weighs heavier than the whole of your golf bag. Underwear, long johns, two vests, two jumpers and a pair of trousers later and you get to the piece de resistance – your waterproofs.

What part of waterproof don't the manufacturers understand?

They seem to be made from a revolutionary material that manages to not let a single drop of moisture out – allowing your sweat to break out into it's own Eco-system – whilst magically welcoming every drop of rain from within 5 fairways to pass straight through to your jumper.

Then it starts snowing. With your eyes frozen together you start hunting around in your bag for luminous balls. With a few luminous reds, pinks & blues you might actually be better off turning your club around and playing snooker.

Every single wedge into the frozen greens bounce back into the air like a bouncy ball before skittling across the green as if you were trying to chip across a tiled floor. A 6ft putt allows enough time for the ball to build itself into a snowball too big to drop into the hole even if you did hit the right line.

Then just when you think you've cracked it, it's time to get out the driver - a lethal weapon in most of our hands at the best of times. But still you fancy yourself to crack this one down the middle. How?! With 38 articles of clothing on you're like the Michelin man's fatter brother. Despite the fact that when you turn one part of your body the rest lolls round with it a few seconds later, you let rip. True to form the ball soars off into oblivion. Whether it was hit with a fade, draw, hook or slice (note that I didn't include straight) the ball is a goner in the snowdrifts doubling up as rough.

So let me give you a little advice about winter golf – stay at home! Turn up the heating, turn off the early morning alarm, buy in the bacon and leave your clubs in the garage to gather cobwebs until at least Easter.

For every non-golfer reading this, no doubt your non-playing status sets you up as estimably sensible people, and I'm sure this advice will be carefully taken on board and religiously adhered to.

Alas for the rest of us, there is no such hope. We know that the advice is not only sound & considered but also total common sense. So does this mean that we'll follow it? I think I'll leave you to battle this question out with your own golfing demons. Personally I never was one for a fight so I'm off to buy a pair of Footjoy ski boots in time for the next blizzard....