



Betchworth Park's par-4 16th

COURSE OF THE MONTH: Betchworth Park

In one particular scene in Jane Austen's novel *Emma* you get an idea of how beautiful Box Hill is. The views offered from the North Downs summit are superb. It should come as no surprise, therefore, that Betchworth Park Golf Club – neatly tucked away below the famous Box Hill beauty

spot – is very picturesque indeed. Central London may only be 20 miles away, but when you tee it up here you'd have no idea that the 'big smoke' was so close.

Betchworth Park was founded, like this very magazine, in 1911. Harry Colt designed the course and it provides a stern challenge.

With sudden changes in elevation and sloping greens, there really is no let up. Though length is not a prerequisite to success, you'll soon realise this is a course that requires a sound strategy from the tee and more often than not anything but crisp ball-striking will be punished.

There are opportunities to open your shoulders. One such chance comes on the signature par-4 4th which plays from an elevated tee into the valley below. In the main, however, with renowned Colt fairway bunkering a feature throughout, the emphasis is on plotting your

way round, staying patient and paying careful attention to the undulating greens. It has been a busy year for Betchworth, who joined *Golf Monthly* at Hillside in June with a number of other clubs celebrating their Centenary year. Of particular note the club hosted the final qualifying round for the British Senior Open that was played at Walton Heath.

Words: Michael Weston | Photography: Kevin Murray

Over its 100 years the layout has seen a number of changes; the ordering of holes is the greatest alteration to the 1911 original – this came due to a new clubhouse being built in 1966. The most recent changes were in 2001 and the course now has two very distinct nines. They include an eclectic mix of par 4s and 3s, as well as two particularly long par 5s – the 9th and 18th. The former

requires an aggressive tee shot up and down into a valley. From here even the longest of hitters will find it hard work to get on the short grass in two.

Congratulations to Betchworth Park in its Centenary year and a note to anyone who has not played here: add this one to your must-play list, but don't all rush at once, this classy place will be around for a long time to come.

ESSENTIALS

ADDRESS: Betchworth Park Golf Club, Reigate Road, Dorking, Surrey, RH4 1NZ

T: 01306 882052

W: betchworthparkgc.co.uk

STATS: par 69, SSS 71, 6,329yds

GF: £40-£50

DID YOU KNOW: The club has one of the oldest academies in Surrey and has over 180 members.