

Footgolf Tournament – October 2020

1. There are rumours that Stoke by Nayland is to host a Footgolf event. Is this true? When is it going to happen?

Yes, it's true. The UK Open will be held 15th – 18th October of 2020 where the Gainsborough course will shut for 4 days. A practice event is scheduled for Mid-August but will not affect play.

2. So why Footgolf?

Footgolf UK normally play their number 1 event each year, the UK Open at Celtic Manor. This year they looked to change venue and approached SbN to see if we would be happy to host. After much deliberation and after carefully assessing the feasibility of the event, it was agreed that SbN would host the event for 2020.

In what has been a really tough few months for the hotel, Footgolf provides the hotel with an opportunity to fill some bedrooms and recoup some of the huge amount of lost business over the last few months.

The event will also bring a large amount of press coverage to SbN.

3. Will it damage the course?

In short, no. we don't envisage any damage to the course.

Obviously the biggest change from golf to Footgolf is the size of the hole. The first thing to stress here is the holes are NOT on the greens. The vast majority are on fairways with a few additions to approaches / winter greens. When repaired correctly and with the expertise of the Greenkeeping team, we can't see any reason why recovery would be a long process.

Footgolf rules protect certain areas which may become more susceptible to damage, like the greens. Players are restricted on run ups and told they must only enter a green if absolutely essential.

There may be a perception that tackling is a skill in Footgolf. It isn't. For those who are unsure of what the event entails, we've attached a video with this communication that should shed a little more light.

4. What about people's footwear, surely they can't wear football boots on the greens?

No, categorically not. Footgolf footwear normally consists of flat, running style shoes or dimpled style shoes not too dissimilar to what is used in modern day golf shoes.

It means there is little to no chance of seeing any scarring or damage to greens or any other part of the golf course for that matter.

5. Does that mean the golf course won't be maintained when its closed for Footgolf?

No, again let us stress that SbN is and always will be primarily a golf course. Normal routine maintenance will still be carried out post, during and after the tournament.

6. So you're telling me Gainsborough will be closed, what about Constable?

Constable will be open as normal. Whilst golf breaks will be allowed to play, in reality most of our hotel rooms will be booked out for Footgolf so there will be little opportunity for golf groups to play on those days. We will also close that course to pay and pay visitors for the duration of the Footgolf tournament so members receive full priority.

As normal, Karl will also seek to gain a small number of course courtesy's at local clubs so members have the ability to play away from SbN for no fee.

7. How are you going to ensure this doesn't affect the course?

We understand that this may be difficult for members to swallow.

Believe us when we say that the golf club are working very closely with the hotel to ensure the safe execution of the event in terms of the protection of the golf course. It is our prime focus.

Strict rules will be enforced and the management team will work closely with the event team to ensure our prime asset is protected.

There is a practice event in August where members will be invited to experience Footgolf. From there, you'll be able to see how controlled the event is and understand its lack of impact on the golf course.

8. So, what about the future, is this the new normal?

No, we have no intent to turn any of the courses into Footgolf courses. This event is initially staged for 1 year. We do have an option to extend a further year. No decision has been made yet on 2021.

We are fully committed to enhancing the golf experience at SbN and this event does not change that. Our landlords have committed to further investment in the 2 championship golf courses we have at SbN.

9. For any members who are interested in understanding more about the event, how can they find out what is involved?

To find out a little more, you can head to the following URL: <https://www.ukfootgolf.com/>