

British Old Age Pensions in Portugal

BY MARY SIMMONS

The question of non-payment of British old age pension increases, due to there being no reciprocal agreement between England and Portugal, has long been a vexed one. It may be of interest to readers of Algarve News to know that there is a possibility of this problem being resolved in the not too distant future.

Many people are aware of the tremendous amount of work done by Mr. F. W. Adams, formerly of the British Hospital, in bringing this matter before the appropriate authorities. The writer has also been involved in voluminous correspondence with the various "powers that be". Here is a quote from a letter I received from the Department of Health and Social Security, London, dated July 6, 1977:

"As you are aware, retirement and widows' pensions under the Social Security Scheme are payable to people living abroad at the rates which were current when they left the United Kingdom, or when they first became entitled if they were abroad at time. Subsequent increases are not payable unless it has been possible to make a reciprocal agreement on social security with the other country, under which each country undertakes to pay pension increases to its pensioners living in the other. These

agreements, of course, go further than that, and cover a wide range of matters to the advantage of people moving between the two countries. There is no agreement with Portugal.

"However, as announced in answer to a recent question asked in Parliament, discussions have already begun with the Portuguese authorities, and consideration is being given to the possibility of concluding an agreement on social security. I am sorry that at this early stage I cannot comment on the likely outcome of the discussions or on what provisions such an agreement, if concluded, may have in relation to specific social security benefits such as retirement pensions. However, I hope you will accept that the question you raised in your letter is already under active consideration."

In a further letter to the Department of Health and Social Security, I asked if I could be advised of the outcome of the negotiations, but was informed, on August 11, that "It is not possible to advise individuals who are interested in various aspects of the possibility of such an agreement, what progress has been made... If and when an agreement with Portugal is reached, and if such an agreement

affects you personally, you will be advised in good time."

Since then, I have received a letter from Mr. Adams informing me that the question of negotiations on a reciprocal agreement had been mentioned in a broadcast on BBC World Radio, and that the following statement had appeared on August 19 in Peterborough's column in the London Daily Telegraph:

"Robert McCrindle, the Tory MP for Brentwood and Ongar, whose perseverance was largely responsible for an agreement which enabled retired Britons in Spain to receive their pensions at full rate, tells me that a similar arrangement with Portugal seems to be in the offing. Talks with Lisbon have taken place, and details of a reciprocal agreement are being worked out. This would greatly ease the lot of 1,100 British pensioners in Portugal, some of whom are receiving only £2.50 per week."

In view of the difficulties being experienced by people living here on modest incomes (helped by the devaluation of the escudo, but offset somewhat by ever increasing prices), perhaps we can all look forward to an early settlement of the present negotiations, which will enable some of us to live a little less close to the bone.

We all enjoy the sound of waves pounding on the shore. But have you ever thought about the energy that is going to waste? Now plans are afoot to use this power to generate electricity. A former science editor of the Financial Times reports —

POWER FROM THE POUNDING WAVES

by C. L. Boltz

The International Energy Agency of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development has asked Britain to play the leading role research to assess the

possibility of using the power of sea waves to generate electricity. As a result, a Wave Energy Steering Committee to coordinate the programme has been established, with representatives from six British research centres and the Department of Energy.

This government department has now announced that it is sponsoring a two year feasibility study to assess the possibilities of wave power.

Everyone who has been at the seaside has seen evidence of the energy in sea waves. The force with which they pound sea walls and with which they can break up steel ships is enormous. Measurements have shown that every metre of wave can expend

some 50 or so kilowatts of power. One kilometre of wave could therefore produce 50 million watts.

The problem which must be solved is how to tap this energy in a useful and economic way. So far, the teams working in Britain have assessed about 34 devices, of which four have been chosen for further research.

One of them is the Salter Duck, invented by Stephen Salter of Edinburgh University, basically a wedge shaped raft that rocks as it moves up and down. Through a series of these units runs a shaft which is jerked round by each unit as it rises and falls. By employing enough "ducks" the shaft can be made to rotate continuously.

Sir Christopher Cockerell, inventor of the Hovercraft, is responsible for another system called contouring rafts. These are hinged together, and as they oscillate they increase the pressure in a fluid for use in hydraulic motors.

Britain's National Engineering Laboratory has what is known as an air pressure ring buoy. In this, the waves force air into and out of an inverted box. The fourth device, by Robert Russell of the Hydraulic Research Station, is the Russell Rectifier; this allows the waves to drive water into high level reservoirs and extract it from low level reservoirs with the flow high to low used to drive a generator.

The four devices are to be built to a hundredth scale so that efficiencies, stability and so on can be measured.



GOLF WITH McGUINNESS

I am grateful to the several dozen readers who have taken the trouble to write to me about their golfing problems. Here are two of their questions. Perhaps, in my answers, there is a lesson for you, too.

Question

For years I had a very bad out-to-in swing and, despite many lessons from various pros, found it impossible to cure. Recently, however, I was watching some of the tournament pros playing at Penina during the Portuguese Open, and noticed with particular interest their backswings. I discovered that they all had a small wrist cock. This I have now adopted, and find to my amazement that the ball goes straighter and further. Can you tell me whether at last I have found the answer to my golfing problem?

Answer

Your out-to-in swing obviously caused you to hit the ball with the blade open, so that a slapping action occurred. Now that you have reduced wrist cock, the club face remains more square, and on target line at impact. This action also improves longer shots, as it makes the angle of attack much wider. All that you have described seems to be perfectly correct, and appears to be the answer to your problem.

Question

Can you give me any advice in keeping the ball low off the tee. I find great problems when playing into a wind. I thought that teeing the ball low would be the answer, but it just seems to worsen the problem. My 3-wood shots off the fairway are good, often going further than my driver shots!

Answer

You may find the answer to your problem in the wood itself. A lot of pros use a lofted driver, but they are nearly always deep-faced. Tee the ball up, and sweep it off the top of the tee.

It is important, when trying this, that your head is behind the ball, and your hands opposite the ball at impact. Teeing the ball down only makes your problem worse. It will tend to make you hit down on the ball, producing a backspin, and resulting in a high shot.



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