

CORRESPONDENCE

Centre Dandenong Road,
Dingley Village,
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Australia, 3172

Dear Mr Dix,

Many thanks for your welcome letter received on the 30th May.

Further to my last comments, we are now in winter conditions, but quite different to those in the United Kingdom. The frosts here are only surface frosts and no snow at all. The real trouble is rain, somewhere in the region of three inches has fallen lately, which has made my greens very wet. I have had to put the deep slit tined machine on them to keep them opened up. Fusarium is very common here—everyone gets it, with the very humid conditions. The temperature, usually around 55 to 60 degrees during the winter months, and the heavy morning dews is ideal for Fusarium.

We have a new fungicide here called Benlate. It is applied at the rate of 4 ozs. per 100 sq. yards and is normally effective for about ten weeks, but there is a variation — much depends on the state of the greens, the more "poa" the more risk of Fusarium. Removing the dew is often carried out here as it helps to spread the spores.

The old "little and often" is the general practise here when it comes to fertilisers. Roughly $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. Balanced to the square yard every three weeks to keep a uniform growth as one must remember the grass grows here continually. I have to cut my greens three times a week without fail right along the line—fairways and tees likewise. I would think 60 per cent of the work is general maintenance, the damn grass never seems to stop growing.

On the machinery side Scott-Bonnar are the Ransomes of Australia, although

Ransomes machines are about and Flymo are also here with their three-unit Ride-On Models, but of course the price is too high. I have five Scott-Bonnar Super Cuts here for the greens—they are much the same as Ransomes 20-inch cut, ten blades—and they make a real good job of it. I also have three Massey Ferguson tractors (135) and they are very good, five powered Rotary Rough Cutters and a tractor-drawn Whirlwind Rough Cutter Rotary — I have a large amount of rough to cut. The members here don't like rough anywhere — with golf balls at 10/- each I can see why!

I received my journal last week and I was pleased to see that the Toro people from Watford had published my picture riding on a Toro 70 beside the first green at Wentworth Golf Club when I was working there as Head Greenkeeper — that brought back memories!

The mornings are getting lighter now. It starts getting light at 7 a.m. and dark at 5.30 p.m., but we are in our shortest time now. Average temperatures are now between 45 degrees minimum and 60 degrees maximum. By the end of September the temperatures will have reached 65-70 degrees and of course from November to February they jump sky high to anything up to 100 degrees and then watering is the main part of greenkeeping and is usually done during the late evening or from about 4 a.m. before the sun rises which is round about 5.30 a.m. This allows the water to soak into the turf before the heat of the day dries it up.

I will be pleased to hear from you at any time.

Your sincerely,

Len Partridge.