

LETTERS

'Reprinted from the October 24th issue of Golf Illustrated'

Editor,
Golf Illustrated,
8 Stratton Street,
London. W1X 6AT.

Dear Sir,

In recent months there has been a considerable amount of correspondence in various golfing magazines regarding the serious shortage and the status of Greenkeepers in this country. The situation has been brought to a head simply because we are now building more golf courses per annum than ever before and many of these new clubs are finding it almost impossible to obtain experienced staff to take over from the contractors once the course has been seeded.

Fortunately for the Greenkeeper, this has meant that clubs are now being forced to raise the salaries of their greens staff to a more realistic level, rather than rely on the old agricultural standard rates of pay which makes little or no allowance for the genuine skills of the experienced Greenkeeper.

Surely the time has come when some positive action should be taken by the Golf Course Development Corporation to train and encourage more Greenkeepers into the industry.

In America there are a number of Universities where a young Greenkeeper can go on a two or three year course where he is taught by experienced staff the skills of the profession.

Such a course is financed from a central fund to which all golf clubs in the States contribute. If the Greenkeeper leaves with a Certificate of Competance, he knows he can obtain a worthwhile job and after a further three or four years of practical experience he is likely to be offered the position of Golf Superintendent which carries a deserved status together with a good salary.

Such a scheme costs money but with over 1700 Golf Clubs in the U.K., with an average Membership of 300 per club, surely no golfer would object to a 50p levy being built into his annual club subscription which could go towards a training scheme for Greenkeepers. Such a scheme would raise over £250,000 per annum which would enable the Council to approach more than one University or Horticultural Training College to set up a proper two-year training course for Greenkeepers which would be to the mutual benefit of all those interested in golf.

Yours faithfully,
p.p. Twyford Seeds Limited.
Jonathan Franks

33 Knowle Drive,
Exwick,
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7.10.74

Dear Sir,

I feel I must write and say how much I agree with Mr. Mawdeleys' letter in the September Greenkeeper, as we here in the South West are in a similar position.

I would like to see a Greenkeepers' Union. Now this may cause a stir, but we are responsible people who would not treat a union as a chance to strike at any trivial occurrence, (we know who would have to put the