

The Greenkeepers No. 2

Ernest Brown

HEAD GREENKEEPER at Bramshott Golf Club at Dibden in Hampshire is **Ernest C. M. Brown**, who was previously 10 years at Beaconsfield Golf Course and seven years as a First Assistant.

He joined Bramshott when it was opened in June 1974. The course is 18 holes, two-tier, and although some tree planting has already been done, more is to take place. Already the club boasts over 500 members plus ladies and juniors, and there is additional play by members of the public, giving the greenkeeping staff plenty of work keeping the course in good order. Mr. Brown has a First Assistant Keeper and two other assistants, one with a Bingley certificate.

To help him maintain the course there are two tractors, a Hahn Triplex, one Marquis 20 in. set of fairway gangs, three semi-rough magnas, one Certes 20 in., one Auto Turfman, one motorised soil sifter, a trailer front loader bucket link box fertiliser spreaders, one fairways and one greens drag harrow, a 14 cwt roller, a power

take-off, a 66-gallon sprayer, Push Mystifier, Fairway Spiker HJ6, spike roller for greens, two drag mats, one Flymo plus the usual tools.

Mr. Brown uses Parker's F2 and F22 fertiliser but will try other types to obtain the best results. One of his major problems is compaction, and some of his greens are badly drained. Tees have become very compacted and spiking and hollow tining has not solved the problem, which Mr. Brown thinks will be a long term job.

The course is new and has many faults to be cured over the years to come. Tees have taken a very heavy wearing and are now out of use, greens which were, and still are over compacted caused by the use of heavy machines in construction. Sandy clay soil was used for top soil and is not very porous, causing some greens to stay very wet. The course is built on the edge of the New Forest, suffers from some bog areas and is very hard to drain. The bottom of the course is a heavy clay area and more drainage is now being planned to help ease this problem.

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responsibility . . . nor is he affected as much.

One superintendent claims that a man in the profession must find his own niche. "Often this isn't easy", he tells. "For example, what once was a job with little pressure can change over the years. That little nine-hole layout could become ambitious and transform itself into an 18-hole championship course. And all of a sudden, pressures appear that weren't supposed to."

It's only natural that every once in a while a superintendent will take himself into a little room and have a heart to heart talk with himself. In that session he has to ask himself . . . "is it worth it?" Then, he puts the reassessment

measuring stick to work and decides which road he'll travel . . . easy, medium, difficult.

The demands of the recreational and sports participation field are on a tremendous upswing. The family has come to realize that the best vacation buy is the country club. It can gather there and find all of its recreational needs for the asking. There is golf, tennis, swimming, skating, bowling, bridge . . . even curling if you require it. And in the centre of it all stands the superintendent whose job it is to provide the playing grounds.

It boils down to one question: as to how far a super goes: "To sweat or not to sweat." "Only he can answer it.