

The Greenkeepers

No. 1 — JOCK GLASS

This is the first in an occasional series about greenkeepers and the courses they care for.

JOCK GLASS is the Head Greenkeeper of Thorpe Hall Golf Club at Thorpe Bay in Essex. The course is a flat open one although many new trees have been planted over the past few years. The club has over 600 members and a green-keeping staff of five.

Before working at Thorpe Hall, Jock was assistant greenkeeper at Prestonfield G.C. at Edinburgh from 1921-1934, when he took up his present position, completing 40 years service with the club this year. He was chairman of the BGGGA from 1949-1951 and again in 1961-1962. In addition he was chairman of the Southern Section for many years.

The club owns a Ransomes Hahn Triplex mower with all attachments, seven Auto Certes 18 in. mowers, 2 Marquis mowers, one ride-on mower and four Hayter rotary mowers. In addition there is a crop-guard sprayer for fairways, two small sprayers for greens and a Patisson self propelled spiker.

Other equipment includes 2 Fordson tractors, one with a front loader, another with a tip up trailer, a Ransomes 5-gang Sportcutter for fairways and a Ransomes 3-gang Magna for rough. Finally the club boasts a chain saw.

For a fertiliser Jock prefers Fisons Greenkeep 1 and 2, also sulphate of ammonia and iron and hoof and horn. For a fungicide he uses May and Baker Maysan fungicide and May and Baker Dicotox Extra weed killer.

With such a large playing membership one of the biggest problems is keeping greens and tees in condition. This is achieved by applying a complete fertiliser spring and autumn, with

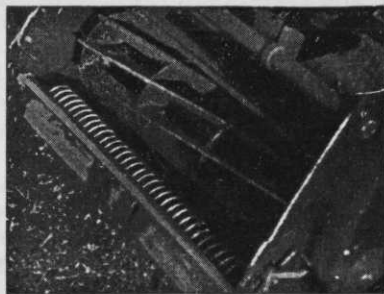
monthly doses of sulphate of ammonia and iron with compost during the summer. There is also a fair amount of fusarium, which is kept under control with a fungicide. Thatch is another problem and much scarifying, spiking and slitting has to be done.

Although the course is only 200 yards from the sea it is on heavy clay and in some parts below sea level, causing it to become very wet in winter.

Drainage is controlled by ditches, one of them being the main drainage ditch for roads and farmland for miles around. After heavy rain this ditch overflows and floods the course in places making playing difficult. About three years ago an automatic sluice gate was installed which helped quite a lot. With this gate the water table can be controlled in summer, which helps keep fairways green with plenty of grass.

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