"FATHER, what's the value of a grassland sod?"

"The books put it this way, son. A sod is a complex conglomeration of the roots of pasture plants; decaying vegetable matter; fibrous residues of animal dung; mineral rich worm casts and is teeming with bacteria and other lower forms of animal life. It may vary in depth from very little to several inches and lies within and above the true soil surface.

The boys like dung but anything the humans call humus will do. The more work we do, the more we breed and then there are more of us to do even more work."

"What happens in poor conditions—when you get waterlogged or when the soil surface runs together and is sealed so that you can't get any air?"

"Strict union rule; no working in water. We're out, mate, the lot. There's a lot of idle renegade bacteria that come with the water but they're no good to anybody. Puts us back two months or so to get rid of them and clear up after the water has gone. Air? well—cut off the air and that's our lot. But the worms usually help us out by going up and letting in a bit of air."

"How are you affected by artificial fertilisers?"

"We like them. They make the old grass grow and this means more dung and urine from up top and bigger and better roots down here."

"Thank you very much Mr. Bacteria."

"That's all right, Guv; me successors will look forward to meeting you later on, if you know what I mean."

My eyes are now accustomed to the light and I can see animal life in many different forms; coming towards me is a very small white worm hardly bigger than a pin head. "Hello my little man. What's your name and what do you do around these parts?"

"My name's Enchy something. There are millions of we Enchys to the acre in a good sodded sward. We do a lot of the soil moving that is usually credited to the worms. We bring dung and decaying leaves and vegetation from the soil surface and dump it near the roots plants. When there has been too much help, we blot up the surplus moisture, then give it out to the soil particles at some later date. They pass it on to the plant roots. This humus material we have been working on helps prevent loss
of moisture from the soil in times of
drought by preventing evaporation.”

“What do you like best?”

“A good friable sweet smelling soil
with plenty of air and lots of lovely grub.
We’re a bit dependent on these lazy bac-
teria devils, you know, because they
make our food a bit more digestible for
us. Mind you, they do have a lot to put
up with at times, especially when these
stupid humans pack the top of the soil
and exclude the oxygen.

“There is one tribe of the bacteria
race we have a very high regard for.

As I moved about down here I can
see moisture coming into the air spaces
so I guess it has been raining pretty hard
up there. The mass of fibrous, sponge-
like material which surrounds me is
greedily sucking it up. It is also quickly
seized upon by the millions of new grains
of soil which have been brought up to

kept in circulation. There is plenty of
co-operation on all sides to keep it
flowing. The soil grains when they have
supplied the roots, draw on fresh supplies
from other grains at a lower level and
these in turn are freely fed by the spongy
humus. The more humus material there
is to hold the soil particles apart from
each other, then the thicker is the cover-
ing of water on each particle.

Before I return to base there is one
other group of people I must talk to.

“Mr. Earthworm, would you tell us
about your job?”

“We do the work of chemist and
engineer but we can also tackle air con-
ditioning, debris collection, and general
soil amelioration. We are best known as
earth movers. We load up with raw soil
from the lower layers and then move
up to the surface where the load is
dumped. The return journey is usually
made with a leaf or some other part-
rotted material.

“We use humus as food to keep us
active, and where there is a good supply

(Continued on page 15)
THE ANNUAL SPRING TOURNAMENT was played at Otley Golf Club on the 26th April, by kind permission of the Committee. Forty members took part in what must be regarded as a most successful day. Weather conditions were ideal for golf and some good scores were returned—the handicap committee will have some work to do.

Results: Scratch Prize—P. Geddes, (Clitheroe) 70—76=146. 1st Division, 1st, S. Smith, 68—70=138; 2nd, J. Scott (Belle Vue), 67—71=138; 3rd, D. Beaumont (Moortown), 68—71=139; 4th, M. Henderson (Ganton), 73—69=142; 5th K. Driver (Bacup), 72—72=144; 2nd Division: 1st, D. Storey (West Bowling), 63—62=125; 2nd, G. Geddes (Moor Allerton), 71—75=146; 3rd, M. Tucker (Headingly), 74—73=147; 4th, C. Moore (Northcliffe), 73—78=151; 5th G. Bennison (Otley), 75—77=152. Veteran’s Prize: G. Gomersall (Headingly), 65 (one round only). Pro-Greenkeeper, D. Cooper (unattached). Vice-Presidents: 1st, F. Walker (Chitheroe) 69—73=142; 2nd W. Hanley (Ogden), 74—72=146. Special Prize for Highest Score: P. Williams (Northcliffe), 86—82=168.

Before calling on Mr. C. Barritt (Captain, Otley Golf Club), Mr. G. Mason (Chairman), thanked all who had helped to make a most enjoyable day. This was without doubt due to the Officials and all members of the staff of the Club, to whom nothing had been too much trouble. He especially thanked the Stewardess for first class meals, and Adrien Robertshaw, Greenkeeper, for his hard work in getting the course into such excellent condition for the Tournament.

In a short speech, Mr. Barritt welcomed members to the club, and expressed their pleasure in allowing us the courtesy of the course for the occasion. He went on to say that the work and skill of the greenkeepers was beginning to be more appreciated by Golf Clubs.

A vote of thanks proposed by Mr. J. Scott was heartily endorsed.

We were pleased to have with us Mr. R. B. Dawson, O.B.E., (Director of the S.T.R.I.) and two old stalwarts of the Section, Frank Smith and Gilbert Kendall.


New Members

We welcome to the Section the following new members: A. Christie, 6 Spring Close, Gilstead, Bingley, T. Pritchard, 2 Heaton Royd, Bingley and W. Wilkinson, 2 Beckfoot Cottage, Bingley, all of Shipley (Beckfoot Golf Club), also T. W. A. Harrison, Seriby Park Golf Lodge, Bawtry, Doncaster.

Transfers

Messrs. T. Kirtley (Brancepeth), D. A. Earsman (Arcot Hall), T. Nutman (Tyne-mouth) and L. Lowery (Ravensworth) have rejoined the reformed North East Section and are members of the new Committee. We thank them for their past support and wish them good luck.

SOUTHERN

Chairman: Hon. Secretary:
J. K. GLASS 18 Albert Road, Hendon, N.W.4.
(Thorpe Hall) Tel.: SUNnyhill 0245

THE SECTION AUTUMN TOURNAMENT will be played at Sunningdale on Thursday, 30th August. Will members please make a note of this date in their diaries. Full details will be given in the July Journal.

New Member

We welcome to the Section the following new member: Mr. A. P. Gowers, 36 Farr Road, Enfield, Middlesex.

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THE SPRING COMPETITION FOR THE President's Shield took place at the Pennard Golf Club on 3rd April under ideal weather conditions. We had a good entry of 24 members. The Pennard course is a good test of golf and it came out best in this Competition. Our praise is due to Jack Martin for the great improvement to this fine course in the past few years. We are grateful to everyone who subscribed to the Prizes, and to our faithful followers, also F. V. Southgate who travels from Bristol to do all the spade work at every meeting.

The Captain, Dr. O’Kayne presented the prizes and welcomed the greenkeepers to Pennard.

T. S. Morris, Chairman, Welsh Golf Union, praised the work done by greenkeepers.

Mr. I. G. Nicholls, our President, spent part of the day with us, but owing to a prior engagement had to make an early return to Cardiff.

Mr. M. Geddes, Section Chairman, replied on behalf of the Greenkeepers, thanking the club for their kindness, the Steward, the Professional, and all the Staff for making the day a great success.

The Prizewinners at Pennard were as follows: 27 Holes—S. A. Tucker (unattached), 130—1=119; D. G. Lord (Swansea Bay), 126—7=119; D. Jones (Pyle & Kenfig), 135—14=121; B. D. Jones (Pyle & Kenfig), 139—15=124; A. Price (Garmarthen), 137—11=126; J. Rees (Pyle & Kenfig), 136—9=127. Handicap 24—M. Young (Whitchurch), 149—24=125. First Year—W. J. Cox (Southerndown).

New Members
I wish to welcome the following new members to our Section: J. Tahy, 41 Blackweir Terrace, Cardiff (Glamorganshire G.C.); M. J. Thomas, 37 Lewis Avenue, Blackwood, Monmouthshire (Blackwood G.C.); D. Dunn, 107 Connought Road, Cardiff (Glamorganshire G.C.) and W. J. Cox, Belle Vue, St. Brides Major, Nr. Bridgend, Glamorgan (Southerndown G.C.).

Dates
Please make a note of the following dates and let us have a good entry for these events. 19th June, Annual General Meeting, Royal Porthcawl Golf Club, 11-30 a.m., followed by a Competition in the afternoon, 18 holes for the Duncan and Birdie Cups. 13th, 14th and 15th August, B.G.G.A. Annual Tournament at Pyle & Kenfig Golf Club, and 26th September, Cardiff Cup at Glamorganshire Golf Club, Penarth.

MISCELLANEOUS
Professionals and Greenkeepers having stocks of used golf balls contact Sparkbrook Golf Ball Co., 295 Highgate Road, Stoney Lane, Birmingham, with a view to filling export orders.

SITUATIONS VACANT
GUILDFORD GOLF CLUB—GREENKEEPER WANTED. Previous experience essential. No accommodation. Apply giving qualifications to:—Secretary, Guildford Golf Club, Merrow, Guildford, Surrey.


ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER required by Shirley Park Golf Club, Addiscombe Road, Croydon, Surrey. Trainee considered. No accommodation. Apply Secretary.


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of this we work a seven-day week, 24 hours a day, and in a year, we and the Enchys combined can move up to 26 tons of soil to the acre."

"What a wonderful feat; how on earth (if you will excuse the expression) do you move all this soil?"

"We eat it, nip up to the surface, get the old discharge auger on the go and then nip back again for another helping. By moving around pretty freely we can make sure there is plenty of work for the labouring classes to do as well as maintain good working conditions for them."

"And how about your job as a chemist?"

"We have a secret process for modifying all the soil we eat so that many of the essential plant foods such as nitrogen, calcium, phosphorous, potassium and magnesium are made more readily available when dissolved in water."

"How many of you are there to the acre?"

"The last time we had a census in this particular sod there were 10 cwt. of us, but mind you this is a pretty useful built-up area; plenty of food and plenty of employment."

"Do earthworms or other active soil workers move towards the newly made regions which are frequently ploughed by man?"

"Who would voluntarily go to a place where semi-starvation is a certainty and premature death a high probability? Any migration is in the reverse direction, much of the humus food on which we are so dependent has been destroyed and such lands are able to support only about 2½ to 4 cwt. of our population."

"Suppose there were men who regretted the folly of their ways, what steps could they take to encourage your active co-operation?"

"Just make sure that we have a regular supply of humus food and air. That’s all we ask and we’ll repay them handsomely."

"May I thank you and all your colleagues for taking part in this programme? Listeners will now be returning to the studio, I hope I follow."

"There you have it, son. Just think about it next time you walk across the 10-acre."

With grateful acknowledgments to "The Farmers’ Weekly".
HON. SECRETARY’S NOTES

IT IS WITH GREAT PLEASURE that I welcome the return to the British Golf Greenkeepers’ Association of the North-East Section which has, for some years, been operating independently. I know all members share my feelings. The Association will be all the stronger for their return and I hope that they will feel the benefit of a link with greenkeepers everywhere.

Although our Annual Tournament is to be held at Pyle & Kenfig this year, I sincerely hope we shall have the pleasure of meeting at least a few North-East Section members in Wales.

Annual Draw

The Annual Draw for 1962 will be run on the “News of the World” P.G.A. Match Play Championship to be held at Walton Heath Golf Club from 3rd to 8th September, 1962.

Prizes will again be to the value of £100 and tickets will be 6d. each in books of five. These should reach Section Secretaries during this month.

It was very encouraging last year to note the increased sale of tickets; however, as I mentioned before, there is still plenty of scope for improvement and it is hoped for an even better result this year.

C. H. Dix.

A VERY LONG TIME

“Since golf was played with a feather-stuffed gutty which was clouted with a cleek, women have been agitating for some recognition on the course.”

Scottish Daily Mail, 10th April.

There was, however, much more agitation about the rubber-cored feathery.

FILL UP, DETACH AND POST THIS FORM AT ONCE TO:—
HON. SECRETARY, B.G.G.A., ADDINGTON COURT GOLF CLUB,
FEATHERBED LANE, ADDINGTON, CROYDON, SURREY.

B.G.G.A. ANNUAL TOURNAMENT 1962
Pyle & Kenfig Golf Club, Porthcawl, Glamorganshire,
on 13th, 14th and 15th August.

Please enter my name as a competitor and send me the full programme and conditions of the competition and draw sheet when published.

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