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THE BRITISH GOLF

GREENKEEPER

HON. EDITOR: F. W. HAWTREE

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No. 336 New Series

MAY 1973

Front Cover Picture:
Putting on the 12th green at Hoylake.
Dear ‘Besieged’ of Tunbridge Wells...

If it’s any consolation, you are not alone in your difficulties.

Every week, groundsmen and greenkeepers write to me from all over the country, worried about the state of their turf; and the effect it’s having on their players.

I tell them that what they really need is a proper turf service. The best one I know of is operated by Fisons of Cambridge.

Not only do they offer an unusually fine range of products; but something that is invaluable in this day and age – a sympathetic ear.

They’ll send a man round to see you, free. You can talk things out and sort things out. (All their people are thoroughly trained in all aspects of turf culture.)

Then he’ll recommend the best course of action in your particular case; although, of course, you’ll be under no obligation.

Anyway, why don’t you get in touch with them yourself? The address to write to is: Fisons Ltd., Recreational and Industrial Dept., Harston, Cambridge, CB2 5HU. Or you may call them at 0223 870312.

Meanwhile, may I suggest a stout padlock?

The complete fine turf service.

The British Golf Greenkeeper
The Atco Groundsman.
A cut above other mowers.

The 28" and 34" Groundsman are now available in both electric and kick-starter versions.

The electric version has a 12 volt self-starter, battery and automatic charging system as a standard fitment.

Apart from this and their cutting widths, they share the same features.

To start with, they're both fitted with six heavy duty blades which give 81 cuts per yard—an unusually fine cut for their size.

They can be power driven with the cutters stationary by operating a cutter release clutch.

What's more, either machine may be used with or without the optional standard Atco trailer seat.

Another feature is the tubular handles specially designed for added manoeuvrability when turning.

They can be adjusted quickly to suit individual operator heights by means of an instant clamping lever.

There's a new 'swing over' type glass fibre grass box. It is mounted on tubular steel support arms and its lower section is recessed so it can be used with swivel front rollers.

Then there's a large capacity fuel tank which holds one gallon of petrol.

It takes one professional to recognise another. Is it any wonder then that Atco mowers are used on some of the most famous stretches of turf in this country.

ATCO As famous as the lawns we cut

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Now there's a mosskiller that doesn't clog up the works.

It's the first one in a peat-based granular form. This means it flows free and easy without missing strips along the way.
It’s four times more concentrated than most mosskillers you’re used to.
(You need only 1oz. per square yard.)
It contains the right balance of nitrogen: as the moss goes, grass grows.
It’s clean and pleasant to handle.
And it’s called Hi-lite.
The choice is yours: like it or lump it.

**Hi-lite Mosskiller.**

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Driven by a robust and test-proven 5hp engine, this scarifier will flail out grass cuttings, bed fibre and all forms of debris to leave you with a perfect sward. Wherever professional standards count, just remember the name BLUEBIRD... we defy you to find better value for only £192.50.

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Rear mounted on the hydraulic, 3-point linkage of an ordinary tractor, the cutting head is fully guarded and discharges cut material downwards for safety. Mulchings quickly disintegrate leaving no after collection problems. High quality cutting, low maintenance costs and sheer work-hungry versatility, make the Bandit 2500 a real winner.

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A LOT OF OLD FRIENDS met again at the 42nd Annual Fine Turf Conference organised by the University of Massachusetts in Springfield, Mass. during the first week in March. Professor Joseph Troll was the organising genius with the active co-operation of his staff and the New England chapter of the G.C.S.A.A.

We met Leon St. Pierre, editor of the Chapter's Newsletter, who showed us round his course at the Longmeadow Country Club. The signs of spring were already beginning to make members hope that golf would not be too far away.

Dr. Dick Skogley was also at the conference. He was in England some years back with Fisons on a sabbatical and hopes to come again soon if he can fit into a useful programme of research.

We also met Eb Steiniger who has been at Pine Valley for the last 30 years or so and still likes it as much as the first day he went there.

About 700 attended the conference and it was also a useful meeting point for superintendents and would-be recruits to maintenance teams who had just completed one of the courses arranged by the University.

* * *

I.C.I. have brought out a new slow release nitrogen fertilizer the Gold-N. It assists growth and colour by releasing nitrogen slowly and continuously over a period of between 3 and 6 months. It thus has special importance on difficult sites prone to leaching. It comes in 56lb bags and the nitrogen is essentially present as urea – an organic amide. The Chipman Chemical Company of Dorking has already started contract spreading.

* * *

Work will start shortly on the new Hilltop and Manwoods Scheme planned by the City of Birmingham in a big sporting complex. Golfers will have both an 18 and a 9 hole course.

* * *

The City of Leicester is also adding a further 18 hole Municipal Course to its present facilities. This one will probably be done by the Parks Department itself with the assistance of consultants.

* * *

Note for the Diary
Heat - A Solution to Soil Compaction

Dr. B. P. Warkentin is professor of soil science at MacDonald College of McGill University, Montreal, Canada. His research interests are in water in clay soils. He received his Ph.D. degree from Cornell University. G. P. Laflamme teaches soils at the Institute of Technology, La Pocatiere, Que., Canada. He received his M.S. degree from McGill University in 1971. As part of his thesis work, he carried out the studies described in this article on stabilizing soils against compaction. This article is adapted from ‘Heat to Stabilize Fairway Soils Against Compaction,’ published in the February 1972 issue of The Greenmaster, whose permission was given for this adaptation.

by B. F. Warkentin, PH.D., and G. P. LaFlamme

IN THE COURSE of managing turfgrass, the golf course superintendent must contend with both man and nature. The former plays a major role in creating the problem of soil compaction, for it is traffic that compacts the soil on the fairway.

Compaction is much greater on wet soil than on dry soil because the soil aggregates are weaker when they are wet. Therefore, adequate drainage is the key to keeping fairway soils from becoming heavily compacted.

Inadequate drainage is the cause of most fairway compaction problems. But even with good drainage, some clay soils with weak aggregates will become compacted. With the increasing traffic on most golf courses and the increasing demands of players to play under wet conditions, we have to think very seriously about stabilising fairways against compaction.

The worst damage from compaction of wet soils occurs in the top inch or two inches of the soil. The soil aggregates are squeezed together, eliminating the large pores through which water and air move into the soil. This decreases the infiltration rate, leaving the surface wet and leading to even more compaction. When compacted soil dries, it becomes very hard. Bare spots or weeds tolerant of these poor growing conditions appear.

It is prohibitively expensive to replace soils on the fairway with soil mixtures that resist compaction. This practice is reserved for greens, tees and other special areas. We then must look for ways of increasing the stability of the soil in place on fairways.

Since compaction occurs primarily at the soil surface, we need to think of stabilising only the uppermost layer. Materials such as lime, flyash, water repellent coatings and organic soil conditioners have been used for stabilising soils. Each of these amendments works under certain conditions; an amendment should be used only on the basis of soil tests or on the basis of experience with similar soils. Clay soil aggregates can also be stabilised by heat.

Heat Stabilisation
Heating has been used occasionally in the last 40 years to stabilise soils for road bases. The method has been used successfully in Australia and in other countries. Special equipment is required to move a flame over the soil, or to lift a layer of soil, thoroughly heat it, and redeposit it as the machine moves along. The temperature required for stabilisation depends upon the kind of soil and is usually above 500 degrees F.

Since heat stabilisation has been shown to be successful in changing certain properties of soils, it could also be useful for stabilising fairway soils against compaction. We tried soil heating on an experimental basis, both in the laboratory and in the field near Montreal.