Educational Supplement

Literary Review and

(Part 1)

...by Fred Hawtree

I am sure they meant well but I have only just finished the book they gave me for Christmas - A Walk with a White Bushman by Sir Laurens van der Post. It is meaty stuff but I invented a new reading system to cope with the tough stretches and to forestall brain damage. I would open the book randomly and beam away until the mind boggled. Then I'd let it unboggle for a time before diving in somewhere else.

Eventually, I began to recognise familiar sections and finally string them together. This is unusual when I am dealing with heavy stuff because my memory tends to be fluffy and, like the filling of a superior duvet, non-absorbent and easily washable.

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He spots a lioness creeping up to a tin of Corned Eland and throws a branch from the fire to scare her off. Unfortunately it lands on a reporter's note book and that sets light to all the sound recorder's and T.V. cameras which are essential equipment on safari these days. Pretty soon the Kalahari, too, is no more than a smoking ruin.

A likely tale, I hear you saying; and what has all this got to do with golf greenkeeping? My lucky lads, you have been distracted by the coating on the pill. We have been talking about education, which today's head greenkeeper has to consider with all this apprenticeship training and job experience grafted on to his other duties. The raw recruit should think about it too because if he is to progress in an increasingly competitive environment, he cannot learn too much. BIGGA will provide him with lectures and discussions, the Greenkeeper Training Committee will guide his progress, the STRI and some agricultural colleges will provide him with educational courses. But the influence of his head greenkeeper will be paramount in shaping his attitude to a potentially rewarding job.

You will have to wait impatiently until next month before I give you the low-down on education in Part II. Meanwhile you might like to think about how you are teaching your job or how you are learning it. You'll find a few clues in the preceding scenario.

There is a lot of greenkeeping lore which you will not find in the text-books. Watch this space next month to find out how to sock it to them and how to soak it up.

Last month's Word Power Test
Robert Dickson from Wanstead has written to tell me that 'Baffy' is also a Northern Scot's name for his slippers. Thank you Robert, that was news to me. Chambers' Dictionary of Scots Dialect says "Baffy" (adj) = chubby: The Oxford (Shorter) Dictionary only gives Baffy - 'short wooden club for lofting'. Chambers' Etymological Dictionary doesn't give it at all.

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