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As we approach the beginning of another year, 1987 will be remembered for two significant milestones to mark the past and future of British Greenkeepers. As is reported in this issue the first Chairman of the newly formed Association has been unanimously voted into office by the nominated Board of Management, and what a fine choice they made in selecting Walter Woods, the Links Superintendent at St. Andrews.

Walter is the present Chairman of SIGGA and deeply involved in the education of young greenkeepers. As a next door neighbour to the R & A Headquarters, who have been instrumental in bringing the three Associations of Greenkeepers together, he will be able to keep in close personal contact during what is certain to be a challenging year for him and the new Association. Our congratulations Walter and may all the members be with you.

The other significant event is the celebration of the 75th year of the formation of the present British Golf Greenkeepers Association. It has been known by several other names over the years including the straightforward Golf Greenkeepers Association.

Although we now have what is referred to as a ‘new’ Association, in fact it is nothing of the sort, it is the reuniting of the family of greenkeepers and what better event to toast the health of the British and International Association of Greenkeepers than at their 75th birthday.

**PHOENIX CONVENTION**

Although it is realised the cost is prohibitive to many greenkeepers, we have gone ahead this month with the sponsoring of a trip to Phoenix, in Arizona in January, during the week of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America.

Our trip offering seven nights hotel accommodation in a brand new complex nestled into the side of a mountain, only a couple of miles from the centre of Phoenix is fantastic value for money at £579.00. Courtesy buses call at ‘Westcourt in the Buttes’ to pick up guests and take them into the city centre.

The annual conference and trade exhibition, last year supported by over ten and a half thousand visitors, is a major organisational achievement in the world of golf. There has been much criticism in recent years of the ‘American influence’ in golf and golf course management, some perhaps justified in the context of the ‘British game’, but no one could criticise them for their organisational and business approach to their Association’s activities. To experience that alone is well worth the visit to Phoenix.

We hope some of our larger golf club companies will consider such a visit as management training, which it undoubtedly is, and finance the trip as part of their Course Managers personal development.

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**Golf Course Drainage**

Fred Hawtree reviews the history of the Golf Greenkeepers’ Associations.
Golf Greenkeeping have arranged a fantastic trip to Phoenix, Arizona for the 58th Annual Convention of the American Golf Course Superintendents'.

For an all in cost of £579.00 you will be able to fly from London Heathrow to Phoenix by TWA stay in the ultra modern Westcourt in the Buttes Hotel for seven nights and have all your transfers from Airport to hotel included in the price!

This fabulous deal has been negotiated through the London Travel Agents Hep Travel Ltd. with Trans World Airlines. The flight is via New York, as no flights operate directly to Phoenix from Europe, but the transfer is within the TWA terminal and there is no need to handle your luggage. It will be booked direct to the airport at Phoenix.

Phoenix in January is high season and we believe no one - but no one can beat this trip of a lifetime, for either price or the standard of accommodation offered by the brand new 'Westcourt in the Buttes', which opens at the end of this year.

The price is based on twin accommodation, with a supplement for a single room.

Our flight will leave London at 13.30 hours on Tuesday, 27th January arriving at Phoenix at 21.19 taking into account the six hour time difference between the USA and the UK.

We return on Tuesday, 3rd February, leaving Phoenix at 09.15 arriving at Heathrow at 05.55 Wednesday, 4th February.

Throughout the week, a series of lectures and seminars on a variety of subjects can be attended by registering at the Conference on arrival. The cost of the seminars, are not of course, included in the package price of the flight and hotel. On Saturday, 31st January one of the world's largest exhibitions of golf course equipment opens in the Phoenix Civic Plaza and continues until mid-day on the 2nd February.

The 300,000 square feet of golf management equipment will feature the most up to date machinery and act as a launch pad for all the innovations for 1987.

In addition to conference speakers from the world of golf including Alwyn Y.C. Tai, the Course Manager of the Chung Shan Hot Spring Golf Club in mainland China, our own Jack McMillan from Sunningdale, Howard Swan of Golf Landscapes Ltd. and Jim Arthur have been booked to present papers at the Convention.

On Monday, 2nd February, the week of activities and festivities closes, with the GCSAA Banquet and Show in the Phoenix Civic Plaza Ballroom when the 'Old Tom Morris Award' is presented to the famed golf course architect Robert Trent Jones.

The cabaret to follow the gala dinner and awards ceremony, features the dynamic Marie Osmond and the Osmond Brothers.

DOING IT IN GRASS? — DO IT

INTURF
Schedule of Meetings and Seminars...

The Convention consists of a series of twenty-eight seminars, throughout the week, backed by over seventy concurrent educational sessions.

The Exhibition opens on Saturday morning, 31st January to be followed in the afternoon by a series of lectures under the auspices of the International Golf Course Management, the American Society of Golf Course Architects and the National Golf Foundation. Pick the subject and speaker of your choice.

On Sunday morning the major speaker sessions are held between 8.00 a.m. and 11.30 a.m. leaving the afternoon free to see Phoenix or maybe a swim in the pool.

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One of the main criticisms levelled against the majority of modern fine turf swards, especially on golf course turf, is the over prevalence of Poa Annua. But why is Poa Annua hated by some and tolerated by most?

It is the most common unsown grass species found on British turf surfaces. Poa Annua occurs as two major types each having their own characteristic growth form - one species is a very upright growing plant that flowers and sets seed very quickly, under good conditions in less than 60 days, and produces a reservoir of dormant seed. When conditions are right the seeds will germinate and fill any gaps in the turf.

The sub species are Erecta, mainly found in arable land and Reptans which inhabits golf and bowling greens.

It will withstand close moving. Golf greens are being continually defoliated and Poa Annua will happily exist in these conditions. It grows in almost every type of soil.

It can survive with a shallow root system and exist in sour, wet soil overlying very compacted below surface soil. It will also grow on very compacted ground where other grasses will not grow. Poa Annua, or annual meadow grass, is unwanted on a golf course because:-

- It is frequently in flower and often has poor colour, especially when under stress, i.e. under drought conditions, nutrient starvation and in winter when frost is about.
- It is very susceptible to disease, particularly Fusarium patch disease.
- It competes strongly with other grasses. As very quick growing grass, striving to flower, seed and germinate, Poa Annua, by virtue of its name, will rapidly colonise bare areas cramping the style of the more desirable, but perhaps less aggressive, grass types.
- It slows down the playing surface. Poa Annua, indeed any grass will produce an open straggly sward if not kept in check by management practises. Putting green turf grasses are actually existing in the most unnatural state - think of Bonsai. There is no such thing as a miniature oak tree!
- It produces thatch quicker than festuca and agrostis and requires relatively higher nutrient levels.
- By ensuring the drainage on your greens is first class will go a long way to controlling Poa Annua. This treatment will also encourage the establishment of the festuca and agrostis grasses that need cultivating to improve the putting surfaces.

My personal opinion, and probably the view of most practising, informed, and intelligent greenkeepers, is that if you don't get your drainage right you will never control Poa Annua or iradicate the spongy thatch we hear so much about, spoiling winter play. I am convinced, however, and it will take a great deal of fresh evidence to change my opinion, that bad drainage contributes more to spongy greens

than does Poa Annua. It is no good slitting and spiking to let the water through the top 6” of soil if the water continues to lie below the surface instead of draining completely away. I believe that if all the Poa Annua were to die overnight on British golf courses there would be hundreds of golf greens without much grass cover and there would be many conscientious greenkeepers looking for work, for the simple reason they would not be able to provide a decent putting surface.

The climatic and soil conditions are such that greenkeepers would find it very difficult to get a good cover of festuca and agrostis from over seeding in most parts of the British Isles.

I stated earlier that it was advantageous to use only nitrogenous fertilisers, the reason being that research workers have found that the continued use of phosphate contributes to rapid seed production and fescues will thrive quite happily on a low potash count.

Golf club management, should judge their greens on performance and not on colour. All greenkeepers have been told at some time that their greens are putting well when they are lush and look well in bright emerald green but, when the colour goes, even when the surface is first class, the golfers say the greens are not as good as they were two weeks previous.

It is very easy for a greenkeeper to take the easy option with a liberal dose of fertiliser and water when the Committee are complaining, but he probably would not have a decent green for them to play on after 4 or 5 years.

There is far more to making a golf course a place people can enjoy, than waging a constant war on Poa Annua.

By controlling thatch and keeping greens well aerated, you can have good greens despite a small percentage of Poa Annua but what is more important - you will provide a good putting surface and give a great deal of pleasure to a large number of golfers, who after all are the paying customers.

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Seasonal greetings to Greenkeepers

The President, J. Hamilton Stutt, Chairman, George Malcolm and Hon. Secretary, Mr. Walter Heeles would like to extend to all members of the B.G.G.A. A Happy and Peaceful Christmas and Best Wishes for 1987

COMPACT CARRIER FOR THE GOLF COURSE

Transporting loads of up to 500kg around golf courses can now be done quickly and economically using a compact general purpose diesel carrier, known as the Yanmar Karikart, from JCM Ltd of Kellington, North Yorkshire.

Being the only carrier of its size in Britain to use diesel, running costs for the Karikart are about half those of equivalent sized petrol driven carriers. Maintenance requirements are also kept to an absolute minimum by using an air cooled engine.

JCM supply versions of the carrier in three wheel and four wheel drive models. The three wheeler is highly manoeuvrable for tight spaces with a turning radius of only 2.4 metres. The advantage of the four wheeler is improved stability and the four wheel drive which can be engaged for rough or slippery ground. Both models also feature a manually operated differential lock for difficult conditions. There are three types of tyre available for various ground situations - conventional hard surfaces, rough terrain and soft areas. For golf course work low pressure wide profile tyres are recommended.

An engine driven hydraulic system supplies power to tip the body up to 75 degrees for efficient discharge of loose loads.

Engine starting is electric, but with a recoil hand start back-up, and the Karikart is equipped with both foot and parking brakes. There is a power take off shaft for driving ancillary equipment.

Further information from JCM Ltd., Roall, Kellington, Goole, North Yorkshire
Tel: (0977) 661700

AWARD FOR STRI HEADQUARTERS DESIGNER

The new Sports Turf Research Institute offices and laboratories at Bingley, opened officially in July by the Chairman of the Sports Council, Mr. J. W. Smith, has won a top award for the architect in charge.

Thirty-one year old Richard Crookes, employed by the William Walker Partnership has been awarded the Architect under 40 prize by the Yorkshire region of the R.I.B.A. Sheffield trained, Mr. Crookes was presented with his award last month. His wife is also an architect.

NEW DISTRIBUTORS FOR ‘LONGLIFE’

Scottish Agricultural Industries have a new arrangement for the sales and distribution of the ‘Longlife’ range of turf products in England and Wales to ensure wider availability.

Within this new agreement, support for the range in England and Wales will continue to be provided by Chipman Ltd. The existing distributors.

Availability of the ‘Longlife’ range in Scotland will be unaffected as it is already sold by the distributors of ICI Professional Products.

Further Information from JCM Ltd., Roall, Kellington, Goole, North Yorkshire
Tel: (0977) 661700
Dear Sir,

As we approach the 75th Anniversary of the British Golf Greenkeepers Association, who first formed themselves into an organised body in 1912, we have reached yet another milestone in our history with the decision by the membership to join the two other greenkeepers associations and form a national group under the banner of the British and International Greenkeepers Association.

For seventy-five years the BGGA has received the support of their members, the Vice-Presidents and the commercial part of the turfgrass industry. Without their most generous assistance it would have been impossible to have reached the stage we have in our endeavours to promote the status of greenkeeping in general and provide the basis for those young men who will, we trust, benefit by improved training in the future.

The Chairman, and Executive Committee of the BGGA would like to thank all those, far too numerous to mention individually, who have had the interest in golf to put their heart and have given their time and their financial help in many ways to this Association.

In complete sincerity...
We Thank You.

Yours sincerely,
WALTER HEELES,
for the Executive Committee BGGA.

GUIDE TO THE GOLF COURSE

Two guides to the golf course are currently on the shelves of the better bookstalls.


The difference between the two publications is primarily in their lay-out and presentation. The AA Guide lists the golf courses alphabetically, except where they are shown under the name of a city.

For instance London golf clubs cover from Wanstead to Wimbledon and Blackheath to Bush Hill Park, but if you need the details about Uxbridge it is shown under the appropriate letter - U. A great deal of information is provided, but it is in the form of AA codes, so the first task is to memorise pages 26 and 27 to ensure one understands the various symbols.

A useful feature is the inclusion of maps at the back of the book showing the approximate location of each of the clubs included in the guide. There is also at least one hotel described near the course.

Golf Guide - “Where to Play and Where to Stay” is a much more conventional publication. The courses are listed alphabetically in regions. Each region is prefixed with a short article by a local golf correspondent discussing the better known course with a touch of golfing history.

It also contains the vital information on how to get to the course. As most golf courses are tucked away from the main road, directions covering the last couple of miles are essential. Despite golf being such a popular sport it is unbelievable how many residents of a town do not know where their local course is situated. Try asking someone!

Can you afford a copy? The AA Guide is priced at £7.95, McMillan Martin’s Golf Guide is £4.00 cheaper at £3.95 and must represent good value for money for the travelling golfer.

WALTER WOODS TO HEAD NEW ASSOCIATION

At the inaugural meeting of the newly formed board of management of the British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association held at the Royal Station Hotel, York on 19th November, Walter W. Woods, Links Supervisor at St. Andrews was unanimously elected the Association’s first Chairman.

Jack McMillan, Course Manager at Sunningdale was appointed to the position of Vice Chairman.

It is understood, BGGA, Chairman George Malcolm was invited to accept the office of Vice Chairman but regretfully declined because of business pressures and the difficulty he might have in devoting sufficient time to the Association, particularly in the early stages of formation.

A press statement issued shortly after the first meeting gave details of the constitution of the board of management and said that constructive discussions took place on the foundation of the new Association which effectively comes into being on 1st January, 1967.

It was also announced that Consultants are to be approached as a matter of urgency to assist in the appointment of an administrator, who would be capable and competent of handling the affairs of the Association.

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT MEMBERS

W. Woods - Chairman
J. McMillan - Vice Chairman
Roger T. Robinson, Royal and Ancient Golf Club, St. Andrews
G. Malcolm - Middlesborough G.C.
E. James - Parkstone G.C.
I. F. Scoones - Long Ashton G.C.
P. McCarron - Leicestershire G.C.
J. Kidd - Glineagles Hotel G.C.
C. N. George - Lenzie G.C.
K. Munt - Royal Dornoch G.C.
W. Lawson - Hendon G.C.
D. Aving - Mannings Heath
J. W. Neilsen - Murrayfield G.C.

TRUSTEES:
Peter Wilson, R&A and English Golf Union
Roger T. Robinson, Royal & Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews

FOR THE GOLFER WITH EVERYTHING

Stuck for an idea for a present this Christmas?

The distillers of Jack Daniels, the Tennessee Whiskey, have produced a catalogue of gifts from the ‘Lynchburg’ Hardware Store and among the various sets of poker playing cards, hip flasks, saloon mirrors and presentation miniatures on offer is a 24ct. golf plated putter.

Even if you can’t put, for £56.00, this must be the ultimate in golf one-upmanship.
I feel proud and honoured to be elected Chairman of our newly formed British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association.

It has been two long years of Steering Committee meetings, involving discussion, sometimes sensitive, but necessary, to recognise the need for change to arrive at our present situation, sacrifices had to be made, but these were unselfishly overcome, with our thoughts set firmly on the future.

The new Management Committee brings together a group of enthusiastic members with one common ambition, to improve the status of the golf course greenkeeper.

Our first objective is to co-ordinate the framework of our Association to embrace education, finance, communications or any future developments. The Foundation is the most important facet of our operation to ensure that the brickwork is correct. No major decision will be made without formal proposals to the membership.

Our immediate aim is to enlist consultants to employ a qualified administrator and once employed it will be his duty to explore every avenue to discover the means to promote our Association.

Good communications are essential. The Association itself has a significant responsibility to communicate, in many directions through the golfing community and most importantly on a direct and regular basis with its members. The necessity for a well organised and informative magazine with interesting educational articles will play a major role throughout the entire golfing industry.

Over the next few years we will undoubtedly succeed but it will take effort and dedication similar to that provided to us by our predecessors. It took wisdom and foresight to show us why we were wrong to be divided. Together we can move forward to a more rewarding future.

To conclude I would like to take the opportunity to thank the members of the Management Committee for electing me as Chairman and also to the Royal and Ancient Golf Club for their valuable assistance.

Walter Woods
Links Superintendent - St. Andrews.
This month's front cover features the highly attractive golf course signage by a new Lancashire based company, Woodblast Signs.

Some three years ago the Directors of Woodblast Signs visited a number of golf courses in the mid-west of America and were most impressed by the extensive use of wood signage around the courses. Wood in addition to its hard wearing qualities, blended well into the surrounds, providing all the information needed without being intrusive.

Cedar is chosen for several reasons. It reacts well to the sand blasting techniques, it is virtually rotproof because of the natural oils retained in the timber's cell structure and adapts perfectly to the special Scandinavian micro-porous paints which allow the wood to breathe, eliminating, peeling cracking or paint blistering.

A complete tee set of three signs would cost around £170.00, but where the club might wish to offset some of the expense a sponsors name can be added in similar material discreetly underneath the information panel.

No matter how good the golf course, it is always the finishing touches that golfers remember and these signs from Woodblast give a touch of class and distinction to make the round memorable.

Out on the course, in addition to the directional signs to guide visiting golfers around the eighteen holes, the course manager needs to consider the areas of turf he would prefer not to be trampled on.

As well as being an expert in turf management he must also be an amateur psychologist. Why is it that despite all the informative signage that can be strategically placed golfers seem to consider that part of the game is to climb over any obstruction that is between them and the next tee?

Golf course timber can be used to build fences around the tees.

Post and rails and posts and chains are of no deterrent value whatsoever, only if the golfer is pulling his clubs on a cart.

The secret is to keep the obstructions close to the ground and placed in a staggered pattern so if one those 'less time on the course, more in the bar' golfers decides to pick his way through, there is every likelihood of him tripping up.

Cheap plastic covered hoops pushed into the ground will suit the purpose ideally.

There is only one other way to keep the golfer off areas of turf subject to heavy wear and that is to accept that the shortest distance between two points is a straight line and build paths leading away from greens to the next tee as direct as the landscape will allow.

All the golf club signage manufactured by Woodblast Signs are individually designed. The course is visited to see at first hand the location, layout and setting within the surrounding countryside. Each hole is surveyed and a design drawn up for each of the holes to be featured on the tee marker. Where required club crests and logos can be incorporated into the overall design.

The timber posts are usually of oak, again because of the hard wearing weather resistant quality of the timber and fixed with coated steel brackets.