



Conservation On Golf Courses

Do we, as greenkeepers, do our best for conservation? When the greens committee requests that the long rough grass behind a certain green be cut to semi-rough and kept like that, do we automatically say: "if that's what you want, that's what you'll get," or do we try to argue the case for leaving the area natural from a conservation point of view?

To the majority of golfers that area looks like a bit of rough ground. To someone interested in nature, it is home to a multitude of insects, moths, spiders, voles, etc. Quite often, these natural rough areas are so far away from greens that they rarely interfere with play, except for the fellow that tries to land a full-blooded three-wood in the middle of the green during a summer like last year and then complains that the green isn't holding and he lost his ball in the rough 30 yards behind the green.

There are acres of natural rough grassland being cut down on courses all over the country for the sake of giving a course that manicured appearance. One of the funny things about golfers from inland courses is that when they go to play on seaside courses, they invariably come back with great praise for the condition of that course and probably quite rightly so. They never mention the acres of wild natural dunes, which could never be manicured!

More and more on inland courses, the members want this man-made look, which means we are under pressure to tidy up these rough natural areas.

We have all read and heard of the large scale destruction of millions of acres of forest all over the world and now scientists tell us that it must be stopped before damage is done to the environment. Different species of animals and birds are being threatened with extinction because their natural habitat is being destroyed daily. On a much smaller scale, we are doing the same thing on our golf courses when we cut down this and clean up that to give the manicured look to our courses.

I am sure that word manicured, when talking about golf courses, is another American import and now that we are making great efforts to return our greens to natural British golf greens, hopefully we will also consider the natural look for the rest of the course whenever possible.

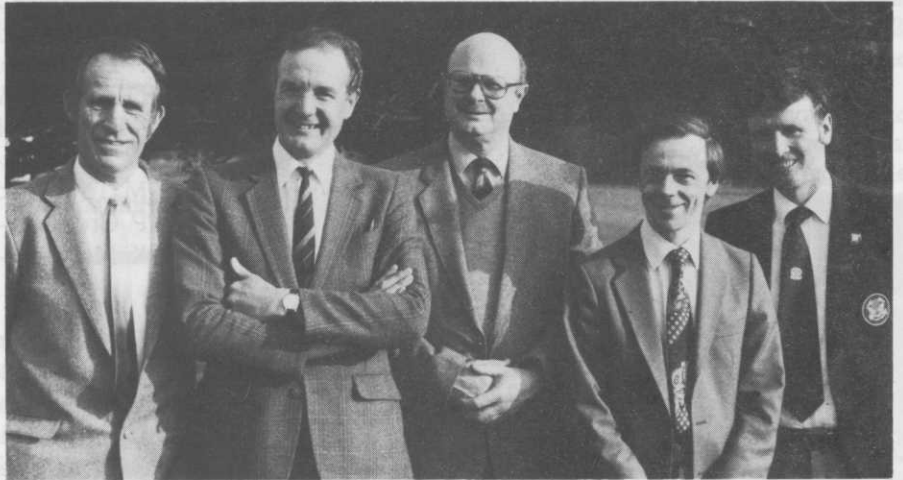
We should all look carefully at these areas of natural rough and before making the decision to cut it down and tidy it up, we should ask ourselves: Is it

absolutely necessary? Does it come into play? Does it really look untidy or does it look natural? If it is untidy looking, is it possible to hide or cover it by means of shrubs or trees?

Remember, you could be destroying the habitat of thousands of living beings.

Elliott Small, Central Secretary and Treasurer.

Some Gathering!



A highly successful early-season seminar was held by the Central and East sections, in conjunction with the Sports Turf Research Institute, at Dunfermline Golf Club. An excellent day was enjoyed by some 130 head greenkeepers, assistants, apprentices and club officials.

Four speakers from the STRI—Gordon McAdam, David Boocock, Dr Peter Hayes and Roy Woolhouse, pictured above with Elliott Small, who organised the seminar—covered all aspects of golf course work, from construction to maintenance and the problems of poa annua and disease.

The group shows: John Crawford (Central Secretary), John Philp (St Andrews), Joe McKean (SIGGA general secretary), Elliott Small (Central secretary and treasurer), Sandy Brown (Central chairman), David Boocock, Roy Woolhouse, Dr Peter Hayes, Jimmy Kidd (Gleneagles), Jimmy Neilson (SIGGA president), Gordon McAdam, Willie Blair (East secretary) and Jimmy Paton (East chairman).

