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A MEMBER OF THE CLARKE DEMOLITION AND CONSTRUCTION GROUP.
The New Association

A FURTHER meeting of the Steering Committee of the three Greenkeepers Associations with the English Golf Union and the Royal & Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews was held at York on Monday the 17th of February 1986. The following points were then agreed.

The Steering Committee was informed that all funds required for the purpose of setting up a headquarters can be made available by the R & A and English Golf Union.

Each member of the present three Associations would automatically become a member of the proposed Association.

A constitution will be prepared by Mr. Peter Wilson for consideration by the present Associations. In particular it will provide that the first Executive Committee of the Association will comprise an equal number of representatives from each of the present Associations.

The creation of the new Association and the dissolution of the present Associations should be simultaneous.

That any surplus funds available after the provision of an appropriate contribution to the new Association should be placed in an Educational Trust for the benefit of greenkeeping.

It was agreed to recommend for adoption the name “British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association”.

A further meeting to consider the draft constitution has been arranged for Saturday 15th March in York.

Editorial Comment

It is to be hoped that at the meeting at York in March matters can be finalised and that further progress on greenkeeping education can be made.

There are obviously other matters which will need clarification. Where will the new Association’s headquarters be? what will happen regarding a magazine to represent the Association? and what will membership offer the existing Associations members? It is to be hoped that in all these matters amalgamation will provide improvement.

No doubt with strongly held views around the table total agreement will not be easy and compromises will have to be made by all sides.

Greenkeeper wishes the talks well — in the hope that a new Association will at long last really put greenkeepers on the professional map.
Can't tell your Anagallis

Well it doesn't really matter. Not with Super Verdone.
Sprayed onto mature active growing turf, Super Verdone will pick out the broad leaved weeds and leave the grass to grow free from competition.
Super Verdone controls all the weeds shown above, and more. It is particularly effective against difficult weeds like Speedwell and Parsley-piert.
So whatever your weed problem in turf look to Super Verdone. The best-known name in selective herbicides.
from your elbow?

Super Verdone.

ICI Professional Products
WE ARE always being told – especially by those who do not know anything about greenkeeping methods – that there are alternative schools of thought in greenkeeping. This, in fact, has been a problem from which native schools of thought in ing methods – that there are alter- especially by those who have little knowledge of the physical principles of the game and equally by those trying to find new markets for products, that, in most cases, have little or no relevance to true greenkeeping practice.

What has altered, of course, is that golf is no longer a game played by a handful of enthusiasts outside Scotland and by the majority of Scots, however far from their native heath. Equally, it has also become a spectator sport with massive commercial overtones. You wonder when watching the Open Championship, let alone a major tournament, and listening to the comments of nearby spectators, whether they have ever been on a course before, let alone held a golf club. One man was heard to say at a major event that he thought it was “the prettiest course he had ever seen.” He enquired which green he was looking at, and was not in the least abashed when told that the admired turf was, in fact, the fairway and ryegrass at that! And this was from one of those who had paid to watch. What of those who watch only on TV?

Greenkeeping has had to alter drastically to accommodate far more intensive winter play and techniques that were standard practice only a decade or so earlier are now impossible to implement, partly because of the lack of time and partly because, with busy courses, you cannot get at the greens for golfers.

Top-dressing is a typical example. Not so many years ago, greens were closed in late autumn and very early spring and heavily top-dressed – often with far from finely screened material, which was brushed in as and when the greens dried out. In those days, there was no winter play to talk of and so the pin could be placed on the apron without serious inconvenience or subsequent damage and even if it took three weeks before the top-dressing was absorbed, few grumbled.

Today, to top-dress when there is no growth is fatal because, even if there is no growth to aid absorption, there will still be plenty of traffic, smearing and smothering the turf and disease is inevitable. Midseasonal, little and often, applications of necessarily finely-screened materials has had to replace this pattern.

In passing, I must comment that fusarium is widely reported as being an increasingly serious disease. This is a classic example of the first error of logic, namely correct observation, but wrong deduction. I am reminded of the young medical student being taught that he must both observe accurately and deduce correctly if he wished to make accurate diagnoses. Strictly in accordance with his tutor’s instructions to go out and observe the human race, he found himself in London’s Windmill Theatre and observed correctly that the first few rows were occupied exclusively by balding old gentlemen. He, incorrectly, deduced that watching nudies induced baldness! So with fusarium!

**Fusarium**

Indeed, there is a great deal more fusarium about and the damage to some greens throughout autumn and winter has been so great that they are virtually unputtable. There are a number of reasons for this. First, our EEC masters in Brussels have decreed that the use of the super-efficient mercurials should be banned (despite the very low rates used in greenkeeping). So, we have to apply less efficient fungicides more frequently. The main reason, however, is management and if greens are heavily fed with fertilisers in late summer and heavily top-dressed when there is no growth, disease is inevitable and often almost uncontrollable – especially as such treatment creates annual meadow grass dominant greens and this grass is especially susceptible to disease.

I still find errors of greenkeeping being perpetrated – ammonia and iron applied in autumn instead of straight iron; top-dressing applied after growth has ceased or greens not mown or brushed regularly, inducing high humidity levels and thus disease.

It is all the more regrettable and a serious retrogressive step that we hear of some fertiliser companies (not those, I hasten to add, that have supplied the majority of clubs with their modest needs for nitrogen only, which is all our courses need) pressing the sale of autumn fertilisers. Surely, no one, save those with a commercial axe to grind (or fungicide to sell?) now advises NPK fertilisers in autumn. Few, if any, advise anything other than light nitrogen applications in spring and summer. This is no new fad. Ian Forbes of Stewarts of Edinburgh confirms in his letter (reproduced here) that the use of nitrogen only as a sort – goes back as long as greenkeeping history.

Another factor that encourages a greater incidence of disease is linked with the fact that trees grow! Unless sensible tree management is enforced, thinning out too closely planted trees and clearing scrub and undergrowth near greens and tees (which shade and increase humidity), light and ventilation are reduced and disease is encouraged.

We are constantly bombarded with news of this and that ‘marvellous new product’ – the result, we are told, of years of research. Such research as has been done is almost always concerned with topics totally unrelated to greenkeeping, or even to UK farming. At one research station, some years ago, I was, however, equally...
surprised to find that almost all the research was, at that time, concentrated on one weed – Morning Glory (Ipomoea), which I was assured was the worst weed and most difficult to control of all tropical crop production.

Naturally, in the course of true (multi-million pound) research, products discarded for the purpose of that specific research may have spin-off value, which can be investigated in other aspects of cultivation, but the truth is that virtually no fundamental research is done (or has ever been done) into specific greenkeeping problems.

In greenkeeping, we use only products that have a major agricultural use. This should not be construed, in any way, as denigrating the investigatory work – i.e. checking products and the claims made for them – but this is not, in the strictest sense, research.

The pathetically small sums that golf generally still contributes to the work of the Sports Turf Research Institute can never be expected to produce results for golf. In no way is the substantial contribution now being made by the R & A to the STRI not acknowledged gratefully by those of us who want to see Bingley fully regain its place as the centre of such investigatory work, if only to provide an authentic, independent counter to extravagant claims or mad theories, but it is not, and never can be, research.

Current propaganda about the benefits of research into fertilisers in greenkeeping, made by firms serving largely the agricultural market, is nonsense. We do not want phosphates and very little, if any, potash in greenkeeping. The use of nitrogen on any well-managed course must be minimal. Few clubs with good courses spend more than £100 to £200 a year on fertilisers as such – compared with 25 per cent of American clubs which, we are told, buy the equivalent of £35,000 a year.

My message to the new entrants into the fertiliser game is that the market is so small that it is not worth exploiting! Their reputations, as well as the courses, will suffer serious harm by adopting agricultural standards and practices. Keep your ideas for agriculture.

I know of no adviser without commercial attachments advising NPK fertilisers for golf courses today. I am sure that any who do will not fail to tell us why, if they still are!

Firms extolling their soil analysis service should quietly forget about it. Such analyses tell the experienced greenkeeper or adviser nothing that he should not be able to deduce from the character of the vegetative cover of that soil. If the pH turns out high – i.e. over pH 5.5-6.0 – what can we do about it? Precious little, save increase the sulphate of iron dressings or think of applying sulphur to wet, badly draining clay fairways. If it is very high (pH 6.5 or over), this need not be a nuisance if the soil is sandy – e.g. links turf, due to its receiving heavy applications of shell (and thus lime) in blown sand, but no clay in the ‘soil’. If it is low, give thanks – certainly, never apply lime!

I still hear of nitro-chalk being applied to acid fairways – irreversibly altering the acid-tolerant grasses to alkaline-loving ones and creating lush lies) but, of course, ‘nice and green’ fairways. Usually, all such turf ever wanted is air!

The main difference today in presenting courses for a tournament or an R & A championship can be simply described by the fact that the R & A has no wish to alter course character (and course design only where it is necessary to improve course handling). They would not select courses where massive upheaval is necessary.

Furthermore, the R & A – and I know where the championships are to be hosted years before the event and long-term planning is possible.

With professional tournaments, the accent is on ‘tarting’ up the course often at short notice for the week of the tournament, so that everything appears lush and green under the eagle eye of the television camera. Often substantial commercial interests are at stake in associated hotel complexes and, since the hotel will be dealing with largely unskilled golfers who measure quality by colour, who can wholly blame them?

In case I am accused of being patronising, let me make it clear that the biggest problems facing those like me who strive to retain old standards and thus the

Dear Jim

As a regular reader of your articles, which I enjoy immensely, I just felt that I had to write as you recently mentioned that soot was a slow-acting nitrogen fertiliser. It brought back memories of long ago.

I have vivid memories of which bags of soot arriving from the various chimney sweeps with which the company maintained connections. The soot came in hessian sacks with about as much soot on the outside as there was inside and it was an absolutely filthy job handling them.

However, the real snag arose when we had to put the soot through a riddle in order to remove lumps of stone and cement that had been disturbed from the old city chimneys during the sweeping process.

Not only was the soot sought after by greenkeepers, but also professional gardeners used it as a repellent to carrot and onion fly. They dressed it along the drills.

The view was also expressed that the continual application of soot particularly to light soils helped them to warm up as the dark colour absorbed more of the sun’s rays. This sounds reasonable and it was certainly an act of faith with many of the older gardening brigade.

Unfortunately, most of our records were burnt during the war, but it might interest you, in view of the eternal argument about fertilisers, if I give details of the oldest mixture I can find, which was Stronghold Grass Manure in 1901.

The mixture was 8cwt bone meal (very finely ground), 4 per cent nitrogen, 3cwt Liebeg’s Guano 6 per cent, 3cwt dried blood 12 per cent, 3cwt super phosphate 35 per cent, 2 cwt potash and 1cwt sulphate of ammonia making 20cwt in all. Ian Forbes, Stewart & Co Seedsmen, Dalkeith.
Now the TRIPLEX 171 gives you an even better finish on the green

Ask your Ransomes dealer to show you the New Triplex 171 Mark 2, you'll immediately see changes we know you'll appreciate.

The new Greens Cutting Units give you an even finer finish—whatever the conditions. The smooth flow of grass from the cylinder, makes the Triplex cleaner in operation—cleaner than any greens machine you have ever handled. The grasscatchers are just that bit wider to give you excellent collection. Even the adjustments are more simple and more positive to set.

With its low centre of gravity, the Triplex has always performed well on slopes. Now increased ground clearance at the rear of the chassis makes manoeuvring on bank bordered greens easier than ever before.

With just one machine, you can cut 18 greens in under four hours, giving you the kind of finish your golf course deserves—the very best.

Yet the Triplex 171 is one of the most competitively priced greens cutting machines on the market.

It all adds up to make the Triplex a better investment than ever.

Optional accessories available to mow tees and green surrounds, verticut and spike—all fitted in just a matter of seconds.

Ransomes build mowers as carefully as you choose them.
character of the game, is that most golfers are not category one players, by definition. Too many high-handicap golfers seem to get their kicks by getting on green committees and endeavouring, thereby, to impose their ideals - soft target greens and lush leafy lies - on everyone. When I have remonstrated with them that this inevitably means long periods on temporary greens in winter, they inform me that this is no concern of theirs because they play little or no regular golf in winter.

Perhaps we should yearn for the days when, as Bernard Darwin used to say, golf was a game played by all Scots and some gentlemen and no gentlemen dreamed of playing golf before May 1st! At least then course management was left to the control of the fanatic few who opted for all-the-year-round golf - quite apart from the fact that there was no money to waste on fertilisers, etc., and so few mistakes were made. Those that were, were made on a modest trial basis to save expense.

Today, those in charge of presenting courses for a one-week tournament seem to go overboard with money, spent on a scale that is breathtaking in its extravagance, with little thought for the repercussions in the state of the course for the other 51 weeks of the year, not to mention massive expenditure on fungicides, deworming, weed control or doomed attempts at reversing the lush meadow-like character that such over-generous treatments bring with them.

Golf, thankfully, is still a game controlled by amateurs for amateurs and the ugly face of commercialism has been limited, if only because few clients have the money, even if they lack the sense, to implement gross expenditure on the American scale, which seems to me to be the aim of too many tournament professionals, though, thankfully, not all. I should, perhaps, qualify my remarks by observing that I count many club professionals among my personal friends, especially when they are such devoted servants to their club.

Equally, I am well aware that there is still something very much wrong with the management of many of our courses. I tend to see those not without problems, but those that have taken the first step to solving them by admitting that there are problems. There must be hundreds of courses in Britain that never see an independent adviser. At best, they only see a series of trade reps, some, but by no means all of whom, put sales before science. Members at those clubs accept three inches of soggy thatch as inevitable 'because their course is on clay not sand.' Yet, many of our best courses are on clay. There is not much sand at Walton Heath, but there is no thatch on its excellent all-weather greens and fairways. Everything hinges on proper management and that, in turn, means proper greenkeeping education, but that is another story!
Take - All Patch (Gaeumannomyces Graminis)

Rings of yellow or orange grass 0.1 to 1.0m in diameter. The disease kills off the bents (Agrostis spp), leaving the centre of the ring populated with weeds and non-susceptible grasses.

The disease can occur on all types of turf and is often induced by the application of lime to neutralise an acid soil. It is also favoured by poor drainage.
Extensive trials by Levington Research Station staff show that Tritox has a faster kill of common turf weeds — and it is effective against 'difficult' weeds such as knotgrass. They’re not just knocked out — they’re dead.

2nd. Test: value for money
Tritox proves so efficient there is less need for a second application. You use less product, less time, less labour — and save money.

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Tritox has been approved under the Agricultural Chemical Approvals Scheme, an independent endorsement of product efficacy. The active ingredients are MCPA, Mecoprop and Dicamba.

4th. Test: packaging
Tritox is easy to handle and apply. It comes in sturdy 5-litre and 20-litre polythene containers. We even attach the instruction leaflet so that it’s always at hand.

5th. Test: distribution
Tritox is widely available through Fisons national network of stockists.

This is the breakthrough in weed control you’ve been waiting for. Put it to the test!
The annual EIGGA conference is almost upon us and, again, it is not being as well supported as it should be. An excellent programme has been put together for you, the membership, and the conference promises to be a lively and informative event with plenty to interest everyone.

Registration for delegates will be on the first day, Friday April 4, from 9am-11am. The conference itself will be opened by EIGGA’s president, Dennis Ayling, at 11am. At present, there is only one amendment to the conference programme – the lecture session from 4.45pm to 5.30pm on Friday April 4, will now be taken by C. Mardon, course manager at West Mailing Golf Club, Kent. His talk will be entitled Back To Hand Mowing.

If you have not yet reserved your place, please do not delay further. The success, or failure, of this conference depends upon your support and, while the conference is more than ably promoted by a first-class gathering of speakers, it will be a poor reflection on this association if the lecture theatre is only half full.

EIGGA asks that all golf club secretaries and committee members ensure that their club’s greenkeeper/s and/or yourselves attend this important educational event in the greenkeeping calendar. To do so, can only be of benefit to your golf club. The number of places reserved to date will ensure that the conference does not make a loss but, unless more places are taken up, the future of the annual conference will be in jeopardy.

It is noticeable that the same people who attended the 1985 conference are reserving places this year, which must be a good recommendation in itself, but I am concerned that the greenkeeping world is suffering from either the apathy of golf clubs, which are not sufficiently concerned with the condition of their courses to fund the education of those persons they employ to maintain them, or the apathy of greenkeepers themselves. I hope to be proven wrong on both counts.

**Good programme**

I can promise those who do attend that they will not be disappointed. As well as a very good programme, the conference provides a marvellous opportunity for greenkeepers to socialise and exchange views. The venue – once again, the University of Warwick – boasts excellent facilities and the meals and accommodation are of a high quality.

On the first evening, there will be a wine reception preceding dinner and, later that evening, Rigby Taylor will sponsor and host a lighthearted team quiz. Saturday is a full day, with lectures from a wide variety of speakers, including representatives from the Greenkeeper Training Committee and the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews.

The EIGGA AGM will be held later on the Saturday from 6.00-7.30pm and, as the meeting will be dealing with some very important matters regarding EIGGA’s future, I trust that it will be well attended.

The AGM will be followed by the formal dinner and EIGGA is honoured to have as its guest speaker Sir Rex Hunt, formerly civil commissioner of the Falkland Islands. Dress for the dinner will be an EIGGA blazer and tie or suit.

Sunday brings another full day of lectures, including a session given by the Golf Course Superintendents’ Association of America, and the conference closes at 5.00pm, allowing most delegates to get home at a reasonable time.

The application form below is for your use and if you require further information or a copy of the conference programme, please write to me, Danielle Jones, General Administrator, EIGGA National Headquarters, 11 Cae Mawr Grove, Caldicot, Newport, Gwent NP6 4EW. Tel: 0291 424235.

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**Three free places to the EIGGA conference were on offer in a competition open to all apprentices. The essay subject was Greenkeeping – The Future. The best entry was submitted by N. Beckford and so high was the overall standard that four other apprentices were awarded free conference places by the EIGGA board of management. Greenkeeper is sure that they will all find a great deal to interest them in the three days at Warwick University.**

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**Name** .................................................. **Club** ..................................................

**Address** .................................................

|---------------|-------------------|--------------|-----------|------------------|----------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|

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I wish to reserve a place at the EIGGA Annual Conference and enclose a deposit of £20 made payable to the English and International Golf Greenkeepers’ Association.

Post to Danielle Jones, General Administrator, EIGGA National HQ, 11 Cae Mawr Grove, Caldicot, Newport, Gwent NP6 4EW.

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12 GREENKEEPER MARCH 1986
Surrey

Members should have received entry forms for the annual dinner and dance to be held at the Drift Golf and Country Club on April 19- tickets are £12 per head.

Anyone who has not had a form and would like to attend should send their remittance, together with a stamped SAE, to A. Bradshaw, 61 Windsor Avenue, New Malden before April 2.

The spring tournament will be played at Hankley Common GC on May 13. Entry costs £12 and forms will be forwarded in due course.

It is with regret that we have said 'goodbye' to branch general administrator Mike Hayle, who has been appointed club secretary at Wimbledon Park GC. On behalf of the branch, I wish Mike the very best of luck in his new post.

Paul Pearse.

North-West

The Cheshire Union of Golf Clubs held a meeting at Chester GC recently to tell north-west clubs about greenkeeper training.

The meeting was well-attended and those present included G. Ashton, CUGC president, who opened the proceedings, Roger Robinson for the R & A, Peter Wilson for the EGU, Dr Frank Hawkins, CUGC liaison officer, and Dr Dennis Mottram, senior lecturer at Reaseheath College.

The branch thanks the club and its secretary Vic Wood for their help.

Dennis Mottram has graduated two more very successful students - Alan Frost (Astbury) and Alan Huxley, head greenkeeper at Astbury GC. Well done, lads!

A presentation was made at a committee meeting to Raymond Hunt, who is leaving the area to join Bruce Jamieson as assistant head greenkeeper at Royal Porthcawl.

SISIS sales director Arthur Harrison is now recovering from illness and I'm sure that the best wishes of all EIGGA members go to him.

This year's EIGGA conference runs from April 4-6 at Warwick University and I hope to see the north-west there in force!

Bill Lawson.

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From A Greenkeeper’s Wife

When I married, greenkeeping meant little to me. Now I know about all the hard work that goes into the job, especially the paperwork that has to be done ‘after hours’, which employers sometimes don’t realise.

We often wondered what it would be like when John retired and we could pass a golf course in the car without him saying: “Just stopping to look at the greens – won’t be long.” All would be well if the greenkeeper wasn’t around; if he was, there was little else to do but settle down with a good book!

Now, after minor operations, John has been forced to give up his job and he doesn’t know when he’ll be able to return to greenkeeping. We now know how much we were both involved.

Often he would come home at night and say: “Sorry, I forgot to ask you this morning. The ladies are having a match tomorrow, could you bake a cake?” While father and son settled down by the fire, I would be in the kitchen.

On another occasion, one of the men was off work, so I was brought in to rake the bunkers and change the flags! So, it was up at six and off to work and just as we were ready to leave for home, “Will you have time to type this report? It’s needed for a meeting tonight.”

At one of my husband’s clubs, I was picking up stones in the morning and pulling pints at night!

We spend our holidays on the north Norfolk coast and we must have visited every course in the area. Now he has our son on his side and I think that golf might be the game for me when he is able to play again.

Back at home, we have a small lawn that has to be cut the right way. “Brush it first, then cut it,” I’m instructed. I even have to spike the lawn with a garden fork, but I agree it does look good.

If any wives are fed up with being grass widows, especially at night when their husbands have to check the watering system or tackle a job that can’t be done while the members are playing, I would say: go with him! He’ll enjoy the company and, remember, a job can be done quicker with an extra pair of hands.

I take this opportunity to thank all the members of EIGGA’s East Anglia branch for their good wishes and get-well cards. It’s nice to know John is still remembered and he hopes to see you all again in 1986.

Mrs John Young

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Support your association at EIGGA’s annual conference – Warwick University, April 4-6
The new Greenmaster range from Fisons gives more accurate control of fine turf growth than ever before.

Between them, these five new formulations provide a year round fertilizer programme for all situations.

They are produced in medium density, dust-free granules to a uniform size for easy and accurate spreading.

Greenmaster will resist disturbance by wind and rain and because of its light colour can be seen when spreading to avoid over or under application.

All this means that you are able to apply it more evenly and so much more cost-effectively, whilst minimising patchy growth.

It has taken a great deal of development work at Levington Research Station and many user trials to produce Greenmaster.

Here then are the results.

Greenmaster Autumn 6:4:12 + 6% Fe
Specially designed for autumn-long moss control combined with good colour response from the iron and nitrogen. Improved sward resilience from the potash.

Greenmaster Spring/Summer 14:2:4
Balanced nutrient treatment for a fast, even colour response. Only 2% phosphate.

Greenmaster Mosskiller 14:0:0 + 8.9% Fe
A unique 'high iron' formulation for excellent moss control with a nitrogen level designed to stimulate rapid grass regrowth.

Greenmaster Extra 14:2:4 + Selective Herbicides
Two powerful herbicides - MCPA and mecoprop - give excellent weed control combined with a fertilizer ratio calculated to give a fast, even colour.

Greenmaster Super N 24:0:0 + 2% Fe
A full 12 week growth and colour response achieved by incorporating 50% of the nitrogen content as slow release IBDU. Added iron ensures a better colour response.

That is the Greenmaster range. Scientifically balanced for superb results. In fact, all you would expect of Fisons.

Isn't it time you put on a fine spread?
New Greenmaster fertilizers from Fisons.
YOU WON'T FIND A MORE VERSATILE RANGE ON COURSE.

Keeping a course in condition all year round requires all the greenkeeper's dedication, experience and skill. It also requires the versatility of the Kubota range of tractors and attachments that enable you to do more than just mow. With the Kubota, you can dig, load, haul, spray and spread.

Take up the Kubota challenge, and compare the Kubota range with the competition. Take into account Kubota's attractive finance packages—up to 100% at just 11/4% for 12 months or longer at very competitive rates, subject to acceptance.

You won't find a more versatile range anywhere on course.

L4150—two or four wheel drive, with a smooth 5 cylinder 45hp engine and finger tip hydraulic shuttle shift. Also two wheel drive available with mechanical shuttle transmission and dual clutch. Perfect for gang mowing.

G3HST—with hydrostatic transmission and 44" mid-mounted mower, that makes short work of light rough. Highly manoeuvrable, with miserly fuel consumption and minimal maintenance.

B7100HST—4 wheel drive has a powerful 16hp diesel engine, controlled by hydrostatic transmission, which includes creep speeds as standard.

B8200—with a 3 cylinder, 19hp engine (and the option of hydrostatic transmission), this is the perfect machine for heavy duty work.

No-one offers more.

Please send me full details of your range of tractors.
Name: ____________________________
Address: __________________________
Tel: ________________________________
Kubota (UK) Limited, Dormer Road, Thame, Oxon OX9 3UN. Telephone: 084 421 4500.
West
Since the last executive, a series of winter lectures has been undertaken by the section. Presented by D. Coleman, A. Connell and J. Kidd, they were also given to third-year students at Woodburn House.

The section wishes every success to D. McLellan on his appointment as head greenkeeper at Eastwood GC in succession to A. McDougall, who has become course manager at Stirling GC.

Finally, the committee wishes Bob Fitzpatrick (Whitecraigs GC), section vice-chairman, a speedy recovery to full fitness after his recent operation.

A. McDougall.

Ayrshire
Proposals by J. McKean were discussed at length during a recent committee meeting. The wording of a letter from P. Wilson caused concern and the committee wished clarification on the points raised.

It was felt that there should be an increase, on a sliding scale, in subscriptions for the new association.

Ayrshire finished 1985 with 70 firmly paid-up members, an increase of some 20 on the previous year.

The spring outing is to Thornhill on April 17, while the autumn outing courtesy of Muckhart GC on Thursday September 18.

Since the New Year, the chairman and secretary have been busy at meetings, the first of which was with Raddix Training, organisers of the Youth Training Scheme in Ayrshire. They are keen to make sure that students have the best possible training and, with this in mind, the chairman and secretary have been invited to sit on the programme revised team. At a further meeting, the general secretary of SIGGA will also attend.

The same two representatives travelled on to Turnberry to welcome the new course manager George Brown. Arrangements for bunker rakers at the Open were discussed and plans formulated for discussion at the next executive.

The chairman and secretary then met the Ayrshire Golf Union to discuss methods for greenstaff and golf clubs to develop better lines of communication. It emerged that the clubs were unaware of the aims and aspirations of our association and it was felt that some detailed correspondence on this matter would assist them.

It was also stated that it would be possible for articles to be published in the Scottish Golf Union's magazine.

We have been in touch with the Northern Irish greenkeepers since they showed interest in joining SIGGA. They have been invited to our spring outing at Thornhill to play golf and discuss the subject.

We welcome new members G. Irvine, H. Logue and S. Rooney and hope they will take a full part in section activities.

Jim Grainger.

Central
Section events organised for the coming year include a spring outing courtesy of Lundin GC on Tuesday April 22 and an autumn outing courtesy of Muckhart GC on Thursday September 18.

Congratulations go to these members upon their new appointments: Craig Stewart, who moves from Stirling GC to become assistant links supervisor at St Andrews, and Douglas Mackinson, promoted from assistant greenkeeper to head greenkeeper at Braehead GC.

Agronomist Martyn Jones gave a talk to the section recently. Sixty members were treated to three hours of interesting, informative and, in his own words, at times controversial aspects of greenkeeping.

We are indebted to Martyn who, despite his father being seriously ill, travelled up from Preston. Our thanks to Dunfermline Golf Club for the use of its clubhouse.

We are pleased to welcome five new members from Carnoustie GC, one from Crieff GC, one from Falkirk Tryst, one from Grangemouth GC and one from Souters of Stirling to the section. Tulliallan Golf Club staged the section AGM, at which Sandy Brown retired as chairman and Elliott Small took his place. Jim Cameron (Callander GC) was unanimously accepted as vice-chairman.

John Crawford.

North
After a committee meeting at the Bon Accord club, a carriage clock was presented to Doug Grassick in recognition of his hard work and service to the section. Best wishes for his future were expressed on behalf of all north section members and Doug replied by saying how honoured he was to have served the section over the years.

We welcome N. Metcalf, K. Wood, K. McGrath, D. Wilson and M. Pearson as new members to the section.

I. Hamilton

East
The date of the spring tournament has been brought forward from Tuesday April 15 to April 8. Royal Musselburgh is the venue for the autumn tournament on Wednesday September 24.

It was gratifying to see a large turnout of the membership for an extraordinary general meeting recently.

W. Blair

Executive Report
The AGM of SIGGA will be held on Thursday March 27 at the Golden Lion Hotel, Stirling at 8pm. A comprehensive agenda was set at an all-day executive meeting recently.
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Out on the course

John Philp, links superintendent at Carnoustie, recently met Greenkeeper's regular correspondent John Campbell.

The town of Carnoustie is a small unpretentious resort on the Angus coast - a popular spot for family holidays. Its main claim to fame is a championship golf course, well-known all over the world. Carnoustie has carried the game to most corners of the golfing world and, since the early days, has produced many teaching professionals.

To Americans, Carnoustie is holy, for it was in copying the swinging of Stewart Maiden that Bobby Jones learned to play. The famous links has been the scene of many epic events including the Open Championship, which was last played there in 1975 when Tom Watson triumphed. The quality of the test of golf is reflected in the names of other Open winners there - Player, Cotton, Armour and Ben Hogan.

The man recently appointed to manage the links is John Philp, formerly assistant links supervisor at St Andrews. John is an energetic and enthusiastic student of golf-course upkeep with a knowledgeable viewpoint on many aspects of his chosen profession.

"I was attracted to greenkeeping when I used to play a lot of golf at Pitreavie Golf Club in Dunfermline, my home town," he said. "During school holidays, I worked on the course and found the style of life and involvement in the game appealed. On leaving school, I was offered a job with the club as apprentice greenkeeper and my career has gradually blossomed from there."

"I was a fairly good player and toyed with the prospect of taking up professional golf and, in fact, I was appointed head greenkeeper/professional at Pitreavie in 1970. After marrying in 1971, the following two or three years were very hectic with my dual role at the club and it became apparent that a choice had to be made."

"The golf professional position was a 'sideline' really and my heart was in course maintenance, so I opted for greenkeeping and have no regrets. It is a way of life I enjoy and you generally find that the vast majority of good greenkeepers or superintendents are dedicated to their vocation."

"In 1974, I moved to Newmarket Golf Club on the Suffolk-Cambridgeshire border, where I had my first experience of triplex greens mowers and automatic irrigation systems. I enjoyed five years in the employ of a friendly and generous club, looking after an attractive heathland/parkland course. From there, I was fortunate enough to be appointed to the new position of assistant links supervisor at St Andrews in 1979."

"Going to St Andrews was a big step up. To be involved with the home of golf and the famous links was getting close to the peak of my ambition. I was tackling a much bigger challenge where there are four and a half golf courses to look after - all public links - which also meant broadening the scope of my experience and getting used to dealing with a much bigger staff."

"I enjoyed working with Walter Woods at St Andrews and learned a great deal from him, as well as from the links engineer George McLaren, for which I am deeply indebted. Now I have the responsibility of managing the Carnoustie links, my ambition has been realised."

John and Helen Philp have three children - two boys and a girl. "At the moment, I am commuting daily to Carnoustie until I sell my house in St Andrews - it's about 40 minutes by road, not always convenient with regular early starts and late finishes."

Open venue

"It is my goal and the wish of the links management to stage the Open Championship again at Carnoustie, but we have to convince the powers that be of our suitability. Of course, there are several aspects to be considered by the R & A, apart from the course itself. However, we feel these can be accommodated and the aim is to get the course into a condition that merits their unequivocal support."

"My brief is to raise the standards by improving the efficiency and quality of the maintenance programme, encouraging the return of true links conditions. We are working in close collaboration with Jim Arthur and the intention is that everything possible be done to achieve our objective."

"We have a big job ahead of us and there is a great deal of work to be done. Bad flooding last autumn from the Barry Burn overflow set progress back and is something that will have to be dealt with in the long term. Although our priority is getting the championship course into first-class condition, we cannot af-

Continued on page 20...
When the excitement, the cut and thrust between winner and loser is over, when crowds have drifted away, Toro sprinklers remain - watering the sacred turf in their own quiet, efficient way. Toro, helping Greenkeepers prepare for sporting battles yet to come...

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For more information, speak to Peter Roberts, personally.
A modern clubhouse overlooks the 1st tee on Carnoustie's championship course.

ford to neglect our other two 18-hole courses, which are an important part of the operation.

"To maintain the three courses, we have 11 on the greens staff and a full-time maintenance engineer, supplemented by one or two seasonal employees and young lads on the government YTS programme.

"We really have to persevere with our system, similar to that at St Andrews, where young men with the right potential, are employed, fully trained through college courses and built up through on-the-job training. We have three young apprentices who recently completed educational courses at the Kingsway Technical College in Dundee and one in training at present.

"We have two major events here this year, the British Youths' and the Scottish Amateur Stroke-play Championships, in addition to a whole host of foreign visitors and golf society bookings, not forgetting local clubs' calendars. About 40 per cent of our income comes from visiting golfers, of which a high percentage are American they boost the revenue and allow us to invest more money on the upkeep of the courses.

"Our maintenance programme is along the lines of proven green-keeping practices. The high volume of play creates major compaction problems and much wear and tear, so regular aeration is an important part of the regime, particularly during autumn and winter. We don't have an extensive automatic irrigation system, but we have embarked on a scheme to provide automatic irrigation on the championship course for greens, tees and approaches. Eventually, we plan to extend this to the fairways and, in phased stages, to the other courses.

"A present priority is improving the drainage on the championship course. We have about five or six fairways where work is needed to get rid of casual water in low 'lying' areas more rapidly. We have done a considerable amount of this work on the 6th, 17th and 18th fairways, where some sunken spot levels have been raised and pipework installed with boxes and drain covers to ensure quick dispersal of surface water into the Barry Burn or open drainage ditches.

"The fairways are dominated by poa annua, which aggravated the surface water problem last year. We intend to reduce this infestation by appropriate management encouraging the indigenous bents and fescues to gradually re-populate the sward. We will be looking closely at reducing seed-head production and will be over-seeding as and when the situation dictates. Routing fairway aeration is accomplished with two SISIS D.P.48s, varying the knife depth. All fairways have been hollow-tined with a fine turf aerator.

"The links management has recently purchased SISIS Triple Veemo units and a Litamisa Sweeper, as well as an Atkinson spreader.

"Approaches to the greens in certain places are dominated by ryegrass, which was probably introduced many years ago by seed or the use of poor-quality turf for repairs. It creates an unsightly appearance, with dense colonies of rye standing proud of the surrounding areas of finer grasses. It is particularly noticeable in the winter and has no place on any links.

"Obviously, the quickest way to deal with this problem is by returfing, but this would require several acres of good nursery turf and we don't have a sufficient supply. Most of our nursery area has been reseeded recently, leaving about an acre of usable material. The new sward is not established well enough for our purposes yet it generally takes about four or five years for nursery turf to be mature enough for use on the links, so a good proportion of our turf requirement is cut from outlying areas on the Buddon course.

"The unused nursery area is dominated, to some extent, by finer grasses, but it has a fair amount of Nardus Stricta, or mat grass, which does not form a good dense sward at low heights of cut. I am reluctant to use it, for it does not blend well due to its habit of growth - it has been used on several tee extensions in the past, but not very successfully.

"Teeing-ground, especially on the championship course, is generous with many holes having well over 1,000sq yds in total. Tee maintenance will be similar to greens, although not so intensive.

"The greens, like the other main playing surfaces, contain a fairly high percentage of annual meadow grass, concentrated mainly in the centres creating a marked contrast with the better quality grasses dominating perimeters and higher spots on most greens. The correct firmness and turf resiliency, critical playing qualities, are almost impossible to achieve while poa annua dominates the sward. This, of course, is not an uncommon situation and the promotion of desirable bent species, which constitute about 30 per cent along with the poa annua on many green centres, will be the initial objective as the small percentage of fine fescues is unable to compete effectively at present in these heavily compacted areas.

"I am not convinced that over-seeding in this situation is the
A heavy-duty spiker with 9in tines works the fairways.

A heavy-duty spiker with 9in tines works the fairways.

Maximum support

How, I wondered, does John view the future of greenkeeping associations? "It is essential that we have strong national associations with maximum support from greenkeepers employed in the trade. I would like to see a situation similar to that in Sweden where membership of the national association is obligatory for all greenkeeping employees. This type of commitment can only improve the greenkeeper's employment situation and general well-being.

"At the moment, there seems to be dissension in the ranks of greenkeepers, but I am convinced that it is only a matter of time before we get together with a united national body. We can still have separate identities, but it is important that we should all get under one UK banner to gain both credibility in the eyes of the golfing world and the recognition we deserve. Only in this way, can uniformity in greenkeeping training, for instance, come about."

"There was some talk about a possible merger, if that's the correct word, with the PGA, but I don't agree with that at all. I think we should be seen to be able to stand as a united and independent group."

John closed by discussing the advancement of greenkeeping methods and equipment. "All turf managers are interested in any machinery developments. Much has been done in the field of aeration to relieve compaction at lower levels and to break through any existing pan immediately below shallower (3in to 6in) spiking depths. Greens are mowed much more frequently than in the past and the compaction from trafficking is vastly increased, so effective aeration is the priority on modern golf courses to afford the opportunity for healthy plant development."

John would be the first to admit that he has a major task ahead of him to restore true links conditions to Carnoustie. His associates know that he is the right type, with the experience, grit and determination, to accomplish the job.

I predict the Open Championship will return to this famous links in the not-too-distant future.
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New National Sales Manager makes history at Supaturf!
For the first time in the 25 year history of Supaturf Products Limited, they have appointed a National Sales Manager for England and Wales following the nationwide expansion of the depots. The man appointed to this is Frank Crookson, previously Supaturf’s Northern Area Manager, who has worked for the company for the past 6 years.

Frank, who is 52 and has a 23 year old daughter, lives with his wife Joan in Birdwell, not far from the Normanton depot for which he is responsible. He is interested in football and motor sports — particularly Grand Prix and says, “I am looking forward to working with the Supaturf sales staff — I feel we represent an excellent mixture of youth and experience, and it will be my responsibility to blend these qualities into a first class team”.

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The Latest From Lely

Lely Beaver's two new hydraulic gang mowers are light and versatile for operation in almost any conditions.

The Lely Beaver TM380 combines the simplicity of tow-behind gang mowers with the all-weather performance of hydraulic drive. The pto-driven hydraulic system includes filtration and overload protection, with automatic cut-off for all units when raised. Six-blade cylinders are fitted as standard, with full width rear rollers and skids, which are adjustable for cutting height.

The working width is 84in, height of cut is from 1\(\text{in} \) to 2\(\text{in} \) and the transport width is 76in. Options include external service spool valves, four-blade or eight-blade cylinders and floating cutterheads.

The drive system to the Lely Beaver TM506 hydraulic gang mower incorporates overload protection and full-flow filtration. There is independent cut-off for the wing units when raised and the three centre units have a master cut-off valve, giving a choice of cutting widths.

Six-blade cylinders are standard, with full width rear rollers and skids, also adjustable. Full articulation allows each cutterhead to follow undulations.

The working width of the TM506 is 142in. It has the same height of cut options as the TM380, while its transport width is 91in. Extras include external service spool valves, four-blade or eight-blade cylinders and floating cutterheads.

Full details of both models can be obtained from Lely Iseki Tractors, Station Road, St Neots, Cambridgeshire.

Fuel For Thought

King's Norton Golf Club in Worcestershire has achieved savings on fuel costs for its mowers by switching from petrol to propane.

With 250 acres of grass to maintain, course manager Peter Bailey decided to convert his six biggest mowers to propane last March. As he keeps accurate fuel records, he was able to calculate the exact benefits of the changeover.

"When we switched to propane, the cost of two-star petrol was 36.5p per litre. We had been buying a total of 11,000 litres each year, of which 8,000 litres, costing £2,520, went on the six mowers - 8,000 litres of propane cost £1,288, a big saving, even taking into account the cost of converting the machines plus the tank rental."

The mower conversions were carried out by Turfgoods, which operates in conjunction with propane supplier Flogas. "Turfgoods took just a day to convert each mower, with a mechanic working in our workshop," Peter added.

A one tonne storage tank, equipped with a hand pump, was installed by Flogas. This is topped up when necessary.

Peter was advised that he would probably use more propane than petrol. So far, he has not found this to be the case - perhaps because the mowers are kept in tip-top condition.

"The performance of the mowers following the conversion has been excellent with no loss of power. In fact, they now seem much smoother, which may be due to the fact that propane is lead free."

As propane is an unvapourised fuel, it cannot be introduced into the engine, so there is less wear and tear. This means that spark plug and oil filter life are increased and oil can be used up to 400 per cent more.

"I am also impressed by the environmental benefits of propane. There are practically no fumes, filling the mowers' tanks is easier and cleaner and if a leak did occur, the grass would not be damaged, as with petrol." Peter also pointed out that pilfering was impossible.

For further information, contact Glynn Harby at Flogas. Tel: 053021 352/416.

*At the time of going to Press, petrol prices were falling. Peter Bailey's story was told prior to this trend, therefore the examples quoted should only be treated as such. Ed.*
A UK First

Golf Landscapes designed and installed a new Toro irrigation system for the greens, tees and approaches at Royal Berkshire last year.

A feature of the system, which uses Grundfos CR vertical multistage in-line pumps, is that each of the 36 greens is watered by four pop-up sprinklers, controlled individually to maximise efficiency.

Most irrigation systems in the UK are of a block design, where all sprinklers on a green are activated at the same time and, so, apply equal amounts of water to each part of the green. The single head system at the Royal Berkshire club adds flexibility to the irrigation programme.

Tees and approaches on the two courses are watered by Toro sprinklers, which give full circle, adjustable part circle and two speed heads as each location demands. Certain fairways are watered with quick coupling hose points and Toro's new travelling sprinkler.

Three Grundfos CR 16-18 and one CR 4-120 vertical multi-stage in-line centrifugal pumps provide the boosted water for the pop-up sprinklers. The CR 4 acts as a jockey pump, monitoring the system requirements. When flow is insufficient, one or more of the CR 16s is activated by a solenoid.

The system installed at Royal Berkshire includes computerised control, as well as some 800 individual sprinkler stations.

The concept could pave the way for single head control irrigation systems at many more British golf courses and full details can be obtained from Grundfos Pumps, Grovebury Road, Leighton Buzzard, Beds. Tel: 0525 374876.

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Since Maxwell Hart launched the Broadleaf P4 polymer soil additive in 1984, the benefits of moisture retentive materials have been put to widespread use. But the company emphasises that users should ensure such materials are functional, too.

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The SISIS Hydromain Seventeen spraying Farmura Green at the Stoke site.
Supaturf has appointed Frank Crookson its first national sales manager.

Frank, 52, joined Supaturf six years ago as northern area manager.

Palmers horticultural and amenity division has made Ivan Hubbard, 38, sales rep for Cambridgeshire, Norfolk, Suffolk, Lincolnshire, Essex, Nottinghamshire and Hertfordshire.

CDC Landscapes of the Chapel Works, Waldringfield, Woodbridge, Suffolk IP12 4PT (Tel: 047 336 733/4) has designed and is now constructing a nine-hole course at Priory Park, Nacton, Essex for Peter Little, who owns the site, part of a caravan park on the banks of the River Orwell.

Greens and fairways have been seeded and the course is due to open early next year at the latest. It will be run on similar lines to the Heath Farm course at Waldringfield, which is owned by the chairman of CDC Landscapes, Mr A. Clarke, and was designed and built by his company.

A clubhouse is already established in the Old Priory, where changing rooms will be provided. Membership for between 250 and 300 will be created, while visitors will be welcome to play the compact course well-populated with mature trees.

Last summer, Richard Adam left Melton Mowbray Golf Club in Leicestershire to join Maldon GC, Essex as head greenkeeper. His wife Diane (24 handicap) was already a playing member at the new club when Richard (18 handicap) partnered her while making his competitive debut on New Year's Day. The couple won the competition thanks, in part, to Richard's ace at the 166-yard 14th. A jubilant Richard said: "What a start! The first day of 1986, my first competition and my first hole in one. Not bad, eh?" Not bad at all!
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The 8000BCR Series of contamination-resistant, 1" to 3" bronze valves is so tough and dependable that Weather-matic is backing them up with a new 7-year limited warranty!

But there's even more. Our direct burial, remote control valves are available in other models, too. The new 7000E Series offers competitively priced bronze valves in ¾" to 2" sizes. The 11000 Series features 1" to 2" sizes of high-strength, glass-filled plastic construction. Both carry 1-year limited warranties.

All Weather-matic valves are the normally-closed type. Design features include a unique dual ported flexing diaphragm that minimizes clogging and malfunctions without traditional bleed tubes or channels. An easy-to-use manual bleed lever bleeds valves to downstream. And every valve is water pressure-tested before leaving the factory.

Weather-matic valves have been providing top performance around the country for years. Teamed up with our controllers, sprinkler heads and Rain-Stat®, they work and work and work.

That's why more and more irrigation professionals say you can't beat the system — when the one you choose is Weather-matic.

For complete information, write or call today.

What an opener!

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Weathermatic
LAWN AND TURF IRRIGATION
BONUS ISSUE

Greenkeeper is pleased to be able to include with the issue a reprint of Nicholas Parks series of articles on the "Management of British golf courses" which appeared last year in Golf Monthly. The series received such wide acclaim and created such interest that the Royal & Ancient through the Greenkeeper Training Committee commissioned the reprint in booklet form. For those who have not read the articles they will be fascinating and for those who have seen them before the booklet will become an invaluable addition to their reference library.

CONFERENCE CALL

EIGGA’s annual Conference still has places available for all greenkeepers, secretaries, chairman of Green Committee’s, etc. During the three days there are over twenty-five speakers covering a wide range of topics, they include some fourteen greenkeepers as well as Peter Wilson of the English Golf Union, Jim Arthur on behalf of the R & A and Sir Rex Hunt guest speaker at the dinner. The cost for members is £112 including full board and accommodation and daily attendance is possible at a cost of £25 per day, so if you have not yet booked a place phone Danielle Jones on 0291 424235.

CHAIR CHANGE

Michael Chance has retired after five years as Chairman of the National Turf Grass Council. His successor is Howard Swan whose main aim is to see “that in the not too distant future the NTC will come up with a research programme for the benefit of the Turf Grass Industry as a whole”.

TORO SCOTTISH CONNECTION

With a view to increasing their sales of irrigation equipment in Scotland, a second Scottish Dealer — Stewarts Sportsground Construction Limited, Dalkeith, Edinburgh, have been appointed by Toro Irrigation Limited. From a commercial point of view, this development will increase the penetration of Toro Irrigation equipment in Scottish markets, where many systems, especially those using impact-drive sprinklers, installed in the seventies, are now in need of upgrading.

“We did lose our reputation for product reliability in Scotland for some time” admitted Peter Roberts. “But we know from experience gained over the past decade in other parts of the UK, that Toro gear-driven sprinklers and Toro designed Irrigation systems are now probably the best available.”

IRISH ADVICE

The fifty or so golf clubs in Ireland that have received advice over the years from Jim Arthur are now to be visited by the STRI. Dr. Peter Hayes who was based in Ulster will cover the north, whilst Stuart Ormondroyd will visit clubs in the south, reports and advice will be given on a joint basis. Mr. Arthur will continue to act as the R & A’s consultant agronomist to the Championship committee as well as advising many private clubs in England, Scotland and the Continent.

Irrigation Distributorships Available

Weather-matic, a leading U.S. manufacturer of irrigation systems is currently interviewing candidates to become full-line distributors in England, Scotland, Ireland, France and Northern Italy. We’re looking for aggressive, well-managed companies that can help us expand European sales of our complete line of irrigation controllers, valves and sprinklers. Interested parties should contact Mr. E. Gregory Deegan, European Sales Manager, 34 Avenue Victor Hugo, L-1750, Luxembourg. Phone 27455 or Telex address 60123 MACOM.
Five simple ways to take control.

Whether you need a 6, 8, 12, 16 or 24 station irrigation controller, you can't beat the microcomputer Mark Series from Weather-matic. All models are available in three types of housings — U.L.-listed rainproof aluminum; economical plastic for indoors or heavy-gauge, industrial-grade steel — so they can fit every application.

The Mark Series is easy to program, too. A function selector switch and large pushbuttons reduce operator confusion and help cut training time, all but eliminating installer callbacks.

Among the advantages are two watering schedules, four daily start times on each program and 0-99 minute timing at one-minute increments. Plus the new Day-Bright™ LED display — filtered and recessed for daylight visibility.

Special features include a self-charging battery back-up system. This retains the program and clock time in the event of a power failure. And it eliminates periodic battery replacement. The controllers will also detect and skip a shorted valve.

Teamed up with Weathermatic's proven valves, sprinklers, Rain-Stat® and other products, Mark Series controllers work and work and work.

They're five reasons why so many irrigation professionals say you can't beat the system — when the one you choose is Weather-matic.

To learn more, write or call tollfree: 1/800/835-2246. (In Kansas: 1/800/362-2421)

We’ve got your number!
WALTER WOODS – LINKS SUPERVISOR AT ST ANDREWS – RECENTLY COMPLETED A MISSION TO RECREATE HIS BELOVED LINKSLAND ON A TOKYO HILLSIDE. GREENKEEPER CARRIES HIS REPORT AND PHOTOS EXCLUSIVELY.

IT'S A LONG WAY FROM ST ANDREWS, SCOTLAND TO THE NEW ST ANDREWS GOLF CLUB JAPAN. A FLIGHT THAT TAKES YOU OVER SEEMINGLY ENDLESS ICE-COVERED LAND INVOLVES A REFUELLING STOP IN ANCHORAGE AND BREATHTAKING VIEWS OF MOUNT MCKINLEY AND MOUNT FUJI.

ON ARRIVAL AT TOKYO, YOU ARE GREETED BY AN INTENSE HEAT AND HIGH HUMIDITY THAT MAKES YOUR LUNGS DRAW DEEP IN SEARCH OF OXYGEN.

TOKYO IS VAST, WITH A POPULATION OF ABOUT 12 MILLION. IT SPRAWS FOR MILES AND HUGE SKYSCRAPERS GIVE AN APPEARANCE MORE TYPICAL OF NEW YORK.

MOTORWAYS GO OFF IN ALL DIRECTIONS, BUT EVEN THESE CANNOT COMPETE AGAINST THE DENSITY OF TRAFFIC AND ALL VEHICLE MOVEMENT DRAWS VIRTUALLY TO A CRAWL DURING MORNING AND EVENING PEAK PERIODS. THE MODERN SUBWAYS AND TRAINS ARE MORE CONVENIENT AND WELL-ORGANISED TAXIS OFFER AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE INCONVENIENCE OF DRIVING YOURSELF.

ONE THING THAT IMMEDIATELY CAPTURES YOUR NOTICE IS HOW CLEAN EVERYTHING IS – THE SHOPS ARE BEAUTIFUL AND THE PEOPLE WELL-MANNERED AND COURTEOUS. YOU CAN ALSO WALK IN ANY PART OF THE CITY DURING THE NIGHT OR DAY WITHOUT FEAR OF BEING ACCOSTED.

AS YOU TRAVEL OUT, THE COUNTRYSIDE LOOKS SIMILAR TO PARTS OF SCOTLAND, WALES OR THE LAKE DISTRICT AND IT IS NOT UNTIL YOU SEE THE DIFFERENT ARCHITECTURE AND VAST RICE FIELDS, THAT YOU REALISE YOU'RE ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WORLD.

IT WAS SOME 12 YEARS AGO THAT A NUMBER OF GOLFING ENTHUSIASTS EMBARKED ON A SCHEME TO BUILD A GOLF COURSE SIMILAR TO THE OLD COURSE AT ST ANDREWS. THEY RAN INTO DIFFICULTY WITH GOVERNMENT LAND RESTRICTIONS AND LEGISLATION. AN ALTERNATIVE WAS SOUGHT AND JACK NICKLAUS INVITED TO DESIGN ANOTHER 18-HOLE GOLF COURSE ON A HILLSIDE. THE RESULT RESEMBLES A TYPICAL AMERICAN COURSE WITH LAKES AND TIGHTLY BUNKERED GREENS.

THE COURSE IS NOW WELL-ESTABLISHED AND RECEIVES MANY VISITORS, WHO PROVIDE A VALUABLE SOURCE OF INCOME. UNFORTUNATELY, IT IS WELL OUT OF THE REACH OF MANY. TO PLAY A ROUND, WITH THE CADDIE FEE AND USE OF CLUBHOUSE FACILITIES, CAN COST £100, EXCLUDING ANY MEALS. IT IS ALSO POSSIBLE TO PLAY AT NIGHT WITH NINE OF THE HOLES COMPLETELY FLOODLIT!

DIRECTORS AND OFFICIALS OF THE NEW ST ANDREWS GOLF CLUB VISIT ST ANDREWS PERIODICALLY TO CEMENT A BOND OF FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO GOLFING COMMUNITIES AND BECAUSE OF AN UPSURGE IN THE POPULARITY OF GOLF IN JAPAN, THEY RECENTLY DECIDED TO BUILD ANOTHER NINE HOLES.

THEY HIRED A YOUNG JAPANESE GOLF COURSE DESIGNER, WHO HAS STUDIED BRITISH GOLF COURSE ARCHITECTURE AND, IN PARTICULAR, MANY OF THE FAMOUS GOLF COURSES IN SCOTLAND. IT WAS MAINLY FOR THIS REASON THAT THEIR SERVICES WERE REQUIRED.

AT THE GOLF CLUB, I WAS INFORMED OF MY DUTIES AND WHAT WAS EXPECTED OF ME. I WAS THEN INTRODUCED TO THE DESIGNER AND, BETWEEN US, USING AN INTERPRETER, WE DISCUSSED AND IMPLEMENTED THE UNDULATIONS OF GREENS AND FAIRWAYS AND THE SITING OF TEES AND BUNKERS.

ALL THE GOLFING HOLES HAVE DIFFERENT INTENDED CHARACTER – TWO HOLES RESEMBLE CARNOSTIE, SOME ARE LIKE GLENAGLES OR EVEN SUNNINGDALE AND ONE LOOKS LIKE A PARTICULAR HOLE AT ST ANDREWS. ALL WERE INDIVIDUALLY BUILT TO RESEMBLE BRITISH GOLF COURSE ARCHITECTURE.

THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT WILL NOT ALLOW ANY GOLF COURSES TO BE CONSTRUCTED ON FLAT OR AGRICULTURAL LAND, SO ANY NEW PROJECTS HAVE TO BE BUILT ON WASTEGROUND OR HILLSIDES, BUT THIS IS NO PROBLEM TO THE ENTHUSIASTIC JAPANESE. THEY WILL MOVE ANY AMOUNT OF EARTH TO ACHIEVE THEIRAIMS.

MONEY IS NO OBJECT AND YOU LEARN QUICKLY NEVER TO COMMIT YOURSELF TO YOUR FIRST SUGGESTION. IF YOU DID, THEY WOULD HAVE THE TASK COMPLETED BY THE FOLLOWING DAY! I OVERCAME THIS BY DETERMINING AND EARMARKING BUNKER LOCATIONS, DECIDING WHAT GREEN UNDULATIONS WERE NECESSARY OR SUITABLE AND ONLY THEN DID I MARK THEM OUT BY USING CHALK, WOODEN STAKES AND STRING. I THEN CHECKED THEM MYSELF, USUALLY IN THE EVENING.

THIS ELIMINATED ANY MISTAKES AND, ONCE COMPLETED, THEIR SURVEYORS WOULD PUT THE FINAL DECISIONS TO PAPER. EVERYBODY CONCERNED IN THE PROJECT WAS ASKED TO ATTEND A MEETING EVERY SECOND DAY AND EVERYTHING, DOWN TO THE SMALLEST DETAIL, WAS DISCUSSED.

A LARGE WORKFORCE, INCLUDING MEN, WORKED FROM EIGHT UNTIL FIVE, SIX DAYS A WEEK. EACH MORNING, THE SUPERVISORS WOULD HAVE EVERY DETAIL WRITTEN ON A BLACKBOARD AND THE ENTIRE TASK OF THAT DAY WOULD BE EXPLAINED.

Typically impressive Japanese scenery.
before work commenced.
Everybody tackled the manual labour conscientiously. Such work included building bunkers, planting trees or bushes, or turfing fairways - no seeding took place, except to the greens.

On the fairways, the turf used was korai, a native grass that provides a dense surface something similar to that you would find on any British inland course. The greens construction was to the specification adopted by the USGA.

Plastic drainage was confined into a gravel and grit carpet, then covered and contoured with a sand and peat mixture.

This was then seeded with Penncross bent, which appeared to be well-suited to the climate. While the green and tee construction was going on, installation of the irrigation system took place. Not only were pop-up watering heads installed, but also a demisting system. This was organised by the installation of pop-ups at 12 metre intervals on separate pipes right round the greens. These were then linked into valves and could be operated individually or through the irrigation controller.

The fine jets could fire water to create a mist for one-minute intervals and this, in turn, cooled the air for three to four hours, preventing the grass from wilting in the heat and high humidity.

During my stay, I visited many golf clubs and the pattern was similar at each. Clubhouses were as near perfect as they could be and service was exemplary. Courses were groomed to perfection in settings of azaleas, Japanese flowering cherries or many other beautiful flowering trees or bushes - a lesson learned from Augusta National.

The greens superintendent would have about 20 staff and

Continued overleaf...
Night and day, they play – thanks to floodlighting shown in the background.

‘Communications’ to lorry drivers bringing material.

ten or so ladies to hand weed fairways or rake bunkers. Greens, fairways and tees were cut daily, including Saturday and Sunday, which were the busiest days. Putting surfaces were fast and true and fairways firm. Bad lies were difficult to find.

Most courses had Penncross bent on the greens, but I did see some with a mixture of rye and Poa annua – even these were exceptionally good. Machinery was usually maintained by two mechanics and every modern device was available.

Staff rooms were spotless and contained a dining room, changing rooms, wash and shower rooms – shoes had to be removed before entering and slippers were provided. I saw these conditions at every golf club and the ultimate at one club was sleeping rooms for those who had worked extra overtime.

Japan has four main islands – Honshu, Hokkaido, Kyushu and Shikoku – split into prefectures similar to counties or regions. Tokyo, Yokohama and Osaka are the largest cities. Golf was first introduced to the country in 1903 by Arthur Hesketh Groom, an English merchant trader. With some fellow compatriots, he organised a nine-hole, par-three course. It no longer exists, but an 18-hole golf course has since been constructed nearby.

The sport’s popularity has increased tremendously over the last ten years, due totally to the success of Isao Aoki and Tommy Nakajima and as soon as the latter’s name is mentioned, people will immediately reflect on the poor fellow’s disaster at the Road Hole bunker during the 1978 Open Championship – an area that is now referred to as the Nakajima Sands.

In Japan, there are 1,500 golf courses and over 5,000 driving ranges, used by those who only dream of playing a real golf course.

In the near future, more courses will be built for those of moderate and lesser incomes to enjoy. Playing tennis and watching baseball are the favourite pastimes at the moment, but golf is quickly overtaking them.

Young Japanese now watch the major tournaments on television and copy the superstar’s swings and techniques. This encourages them to work hard and to practise during every hour available. Over the next few years, it would not surprise me if they begin to capture the world’s major titles.

Whether it be construction, drainage or irrigation

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The photograph above proves the point. On the left is a grass sample allowed to grow normally and untreated. On the right is a sample which has been treated. Imagine how Holdfast can help you. Saving time, wear and tear and helping to release manpower for more important seasonal work.

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