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**Association News Round-Up**

The South Wales branch is to stage a one-day seminar at Pencoed College of Agriculture, near Bridgend, Mid-Glamorgan on April 15.

Speakers confirmed are David Jones, course manager at the St Pierre Golf and Country Club, Archie Patterson of Watermation and Tony Horne, grounds manager of Cardiff Arms Park. A fourth speaker is to be announced.

Please make every effort to attend and support greenkeeper education. Members will receive more details shortly — in the meantime, information can be obtained from me on 0656 771335.

Raymond Hunt.

The final golf competitions of last season in East Anglia were, as ever, well-supported. Abridge Golf and Country Club attracted over 50 members to do battle for the Ransomes watch. Phil Staines with 37 points won on a countback from Paul Bertenshaw.

In the 19-28 section, Brian Measor took the top honours with 48 points, while the leading guest was David Chapman. Prizes were presented by John Robson, captain of Gog Magog.

Dipping further back into the archives, Doug Neville retired from the Gogs in July after 34 years service. The staff bought Doug a greenhouse so they could still keep an eye on him! Lyndon Upham is the new boss.

In October, ten EIGGA members played a match at Heath Farm GC — unfortunately, they were trounced. Thanks to Sam Sylvester for organising the event and to the club members for their hospitality.

Back in November, the STRI, led by Dr Peter Hayes, planned a small seminar at Stoke by Nayland and over 140, representing 45 clubs throughout East Anglia, turned up!

Steve Noye is to be congratulated for the professional way he chaired the occasion. The Christmas draw was donated to John Young who, incidentally, has had yet another operation. We wish him and his family a much better 1987.

I would just like to say thanks to the trade boys for supporting EIGGA. Where would we be without 'Big' Bob Chelsham, Brian Richardson, 'Moycey' and Ken Stern? Answers on a postcard, please! Long live Steve Noye — the lad's been an inspiration to us all.

Finally, I leave you with a quote from Napoleon. 'Always forget the past. No man ever backed into prosperity.'

Mick Lathrope.

Pictured are two of the top winners at the Elmwood Agricultural and Technical College's annual awards ceremony.

Distance appears to be no object for those wanting to attend the Cupar, Fife college's block-release classes in greenkeeping.

Trevor Dennis (left), who comes from Norfolk and works at King's Lynn Golf Club, received the St Andrews Links Trust Award for the best practical greenkeeping student. Trevor is currently enrolled on the college's...
Dear Sir...

I write as captain of my golf club and a former greens convenor and with the full knowledge and approval of my head greenkeeper.

We have argued in a friendly way for eight years over autumn maintenance and, in particular, the timing and method of the hollow-coring and topdressing programme.

We are an inland Scottish club some 400ft above sea level with a south-easterly exposure on free-draining soil. I believe hollow-coring should be carried out in late September/early October. Without fail and that, having cored the greens, the topdressing should be applied and brushed into the resulting hollows.

I well remember 20 or so years ago at Gleneagles watching this job being done by five greenkeepers with SISIS hand hollow-corers, followed by a team of spreaders and sweepers.

At our club, we hire a hollow-corining machine which whizzes round the course and does the coring all right but, by the time we get around to applying the topdressing, it could be weeks depending on the weather, the cores have overgrown or have been trampled in.

I am convinced we should buy a hollow-corining attachment for our Hydromain, so that one green can be completed at a time. Our greenkeeper thinks it is better to hire and that it does not matter if the topdressing goes into the holes or not.

While I don’t see every issue of your magazine, I enjoy reading it very much.

Name and address supplied.

It is refreshing to learn of your interest in course upkeep – most golfers don’t want to become too involved, writes John Campbell.

Your reference to the use of SISIS hollow forks takes me back to the 1930s when hand forking greens was the vogue. As a young greenkeeper in the west of Scotland, we used to do all the greens on our two 18-hole courses with Paul hollow-tine forks. This was extremely tedious, back-aching work when labour was plentiful and golf courses never had the amount of play they receive today.

We did not always follow up hollow-forking operations with topdressing. The cores were allowed to dry out after which they were broken up with a drag mat and worked back into the turf with birch brooms.

Many old greenkeepers favoured leaving the tine holes open through the winter and declared this assisted better surface drainage during periods of high precipitation, as well as allowing the frost to get into the ground to break up panned soil layers.

Nowadays, aeration work is highly mechanised and the job has to be done more quickly and efficiently with a minimum of labour. You take the view that hollow tining should immediately be followed by topdressing, doing one green at a time. This would slow the job down and most greenkeepers do not have the time to do things this way – they prefer to get the work done in methodical stages.

Some do six greens at a time, others nine, while there are those who like to do all the greens at once – hollow-coring first, then following up with topdressing. It’s a matter of timing and other factors have to be taken into account, such as the amount of play, weather, club fixtures, etc.

Golfers often get upset when these cultivating activities begin on the greens, particularly hollow tining – life is never easy for the greenkeeping staff and it is often difficult to get all the work done according to plan.

If one is intent on replacing poor-quality soil in the greens with something better, then it makes sense to proceed one green at a time, working the dressing into the core holes with the back of a wooden rake or birch broom. This is a slow process if done properly. But you have a ‘good free draining soil’ on the course and are not trying to replace it with something new!

I am inclined to have the same view as your greenkeeper, who is obviously very experienced and knows that all topdressing is gradually absorbed by the turf – some material finds its way into the tine holes, some of it gets pushed down and is mixed with the soil through other cultivating techniques, such as slit and solid tining. The main objective with topdressing is doing it on a regular basis to build up a smooth resilient surface that will cope with all the wear and tear.

Having your own hollow-tining equipment would be an advantage, but it’s not necessary to hollow-tine every year and it should be remembered that a lot of good topsoil can be removed from the greens (if it is done too often), which may have taken a long time to build up with topdressing.

3rd P. Weston (14) 54 points and 4th J. Russell (12) 52 points. S. McMillan (13) had the best morning score, totting up 35 points, while the afternoon’s honours went to R. Glazier (10) with 22 points.

Brian D. Pierson presented the first winter lecture at Malden GC and our thanks go to the club and Brian.

Paul Pearse.

Surrey reports the death of Stuart McKay and offers its condolences to his family and friends.

The branch’s autumn tournament was held at The Berkshire and 40 members turned out. Our thanks go to the club for allowing us the use of the course and clubhouse and to Bernie Tomlin and his company, Rigby Taylor, for providing a superb prize table.

Scores: 1st G. MacNiven (13) 60 points, 2nd P. Pearse (4) 57 points,
Using what comes naturally!

ELIE Golf Club head greenkeeper Brian Lawrie is cashing in on a couple of natural assets that lie right alongside his fairways - sand and seaweed from the shores of the Firth of Forth. Brian and his assistant David Bowers have combined these with grass clippings from the course to make a giant compost heap and they feed the rotted-down result back on to the grass.

The work of collecting the sand and seaweed and then turning the compost used to be a back-breaker - all done with hand shovels. But, three years ago, Elie invested in a McConnel Ditch King, a three-point linkage-mounted digger/loader that fits on to the back of the club's Massey Ferguson 135 tractor.

The arrival of 'the machine age' heralded a vastly more efficient operation, with the Ditch King's grab scooping up large amounts of seaweed and its digging bucket collecting the sand in a fraction of the time needed for the hand operation. Splay feet on the Ditch King enable it to work safely on the beach.

It then just remained to transport the material from the beach the 500 yards to the compost heap. Armed with the digging bucket, the backhoe also turns the compost. The increased amounts it turns over compared to a hand-digging operation mean the heap rots down more quickly. This also means the golf course benefits from frequent small dressings of compost, rather than the occasional heavy dressings that were the norm before the Ditch King arrived.

The Ditch King and bucket have also become essential items for excavating and shaping Elie's bunkers. Again, prior to the machine's arrival, this job had to be done by hand.
meadow grass and far more serious problems remain a complete mystery to them!

The other hardy annual concerns hollow-tine forking. I must have missed some article or talk that extolled the virtues of this type of aeration, since my telephone has been red-hot on the subject. Hollow-tining has been repeatedly proven by engineering research to be less effective than deep chisel-tining or slitting as a method of achieving maximum sub-surface cultivation with minimal surface disturbance. This has made it far less popular, especially with the accent in recent decades on much more intensive all-year-round slitting and, of course, in the last seven years with Verti-draining. Frankly, the only function of hollow-tining is to aid the introduction of soil ameliorants into the soil profile and, in any case, this is much more easily achieved after Verti-draining.

I am horrified to see a resurgence of the totally disproven practice of intensive hollow-tining and heavy sanding — disproven in every case and by the latest US research, except on pure sand greens — and, be it noted, this does not mean sandy construction to USGA Green Section specification. Again, history repeats itself and 40 years ago hollow-tining was condemned by many old Scottish links greenkeepers on the grounds that it let in annual meadow grass in pure links greens. I cannot see any point in hollow-tining and leaving the holes open. Yet, if you hollow-tine late to avoid upsetting the autumn meetings, then it is difficult to top-dress afterwards without risking a massive attack of disease.

If regular deep-slitting is carried out, with perhaps chisel-tining in summer to avoid disturbing putting surfaces and if Verti-draining is carried out when and where needed to deal with sub-surface pan formation, I can see absolutely no point in hollow-tining, and especially if this is part of a heavy sanding programme. Very little of the sand goes down normal hollow-tine holes and it merely sits on the top and causes, eventually, a severe root break. It used to be said of some greenkeepers that they earned undeserved good reputations for good greens by feeding and watering and heavy sanding, but they had to move every five years to avoid being sacked in the face of impending disaster.

### Engineering research

I must stress that engineering research shows that slit-tining is the ideal method of sub-surface aeration and hollow-tining, which used to be a useful method, not more often than once a year, has largely been superseded by better methods. We must beware of resurrecting old ideas that have no relevance to today's problems — and those advocating it must remember that 25 years ago you could do what you liked to the greens between October and Easter and hardly a member would ever see what was going on. Today, we play golf all the year round and, hopefully, on good putting surfaces. If we have to upset members at any time, let it be for good, valid and unavoidable reasons and not unnecessarily.
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"In fact, I reckon that for most heavily used sports areas, Core Cultivation should be a routine part of any turf maintenance programme. Not just a problem solver. Obviously, how often you use hollow tining varies according to different soil conditions. I find once in the Spring and Autumn is about right."

"Why do I think Ryan hollow tine aerators are the best?"

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"So what's this core cultivation all about?"

"First, hollow tining actually removes cores of soil—and thatch of course. That obviously relieves soil compaction far better than a spike or slitter. As a result, it opens up the soil giving better movement of air, water and fertilisers. If the soil is good, breaking up the cores, either by a scarifier or a Ryan core processor, separates the thatch, which can then be removed easily."

"Then there's the way the tines actually penetrate the soil. Ryan have a really clever design which makes each tine go in and out absolutely vertically. Unlike other makes, where the tines sort of rock to and fro which can damage the surface."

"It's that sort of thing that makes Ryan aerators the best. In fact, you should have a look at the whole range of Ryan turf maintenance equipment. It's the best you can buy".

"New vigorous growth after hollow tining"
Pesticide legislation in greenkeeping

OCTOBER 6 1986 was a momentous day for the chemical industry. After decades of non-statutory codes of conduct on the development, marketing and use of products, it signalled the change to statutory controls which will not only affect chemical manufacturers, but anybody involved in selling them through the established distribution chain in the UK. From January 1 1989, users of these same products will also be controlled.

By Michael Coffey

The chemical industry is, of course, deeply involved in the new statutes. It needs to be because it will be most affected. Within this side of our industry, plans have been made for a number of years, expecting the inevitable and consulting with government to ensure a smooth transition from non-statutory codes to legally demanding controls.

There was a simple aim to the legislation, based on part three of the Food and Environment Protection Act 1985. This was: 'to protect the health of human beings, creatures and plants; to safeguard the environment and to secure safe, efficient and humane methods of controlling pests.'

The act gave ministers the power to:

- Control the import, sale, supply, storage, use and advertisement of pesticides.
- Make information supplied in connection with the control of pesticides available to the public.
- Enforce these provisions with powers of seizure, disposal or remedial action.
- Call for data on all products.
- Issue codes of practice.

- Charge fees.
- Authorise enforcement officers.

These are the main issues likely to affect greenkeepers with, of course, the first being the most pertinent.

Let us go back to the key dates. From October 6 1986, only approved pesticides were able to be supplied, stored or used. Only provisionally or fully approved pesticides were able to be sold.

This definition of approval is rather different from the old meaning. Until October 6, approval applied to products officially awarded the ‘A’ mark by the old Agricultural Chemicals Approvals Scheme (ACAS). Products cleared on safety grounds under the old Pesticides Safety Precautions Scheme (PSPS) were allowed to be sold and used, but manufacturers could, if they wished, submit to ACAS the necessary data on efficacy after two years' use under commercial conditions.

This scheme was non-statutory and mainly designed for agriculture, where proof of efficacy was usually required before farmers risked the use on expensive and valuable crops. It had no meaningful use in the amenity pesticide industry, although many people, most notably local authority unions, refused to use any product without the ‘A’ mark.

After October 6, the word ‘approval’ embraced both safety and efficacy. To meet the statutory requirements, manufacturers have to submit data on both aspects before ministers will grant full approval.

This has, perhaps, been rather long-winded, but with legislation now controlling all aspects of pesticides, all users can be sure that the product chosen and bought will have been effective in proper trials, or is undergoing that process.

This is, of course, only of academic interest to greenkeepers who will usually know what product suits them and which is the best to control the various weed, disease or whatever other problems their course is afflicted with.

What is of more interest is the control on the users of pesticides from January 1 1989. From this date, any user who was born on or after December 31 1984 will need to possess a certificate of competence or else be working under the direct supervision of someone with a recognised certificate.

A certificate is also required for anyone using pesticides in the course of commercial service, such as contractors. Included here also are greenkeepers who may occasionally offer neighbouring clubs a spraying service whether or not a payment of any kind is involved.

Tests of competence for spray operators are being developed by the National Proficiency Tests Council (NPTC), but are not likely to be set up until mid-1987. This leaves only 18 months to handle tests and issue certificates to all who require them. It may be helpful to note here that there is bound to be a long queue for the services of the NPTC. It has 52 county committees and they will be responsible for not only testing greenkeepers, but farmers, contractors, local authority groundstaff and all other categories who would be affected.

It seems clear that help will be needed. As a start, one of the first

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Barrus and Bunton get together

The Bunton 22in greens mower complete with powered rotary brush between the front roller and cutting reel.

"Until recently, the activities of E.P. Barrus were principally confined to outboard motors and garden machinery," Robert Bennett, company chairman and managing director, said, "but we have formed a new division to handle professional grass-care machinery and now represent Bunton, which manufactures products in the USA and Denmark."

The impressive company headquarters at Bicester is well-equipped to handle sales enquiries. After eight years of yeoman service, the Barrus computer has been put out to grass and has now been replaced by a brand new IBM system 600 megabyte unit with 27 terminals. Each sales desk has its own terminal that allows orders to be entered as customers dictate them by phone.

Bunton is well-known to American superintendents, for it has been building commercial mowers for over 35 years. Today, the company markets its equipment all over the world through a network of distributors specialising in turf products for professionals. The product line includes multi-purpose grounds maintenance tractors, commercial rotary mowers with cutting widths from 12 to 61 inches, greens-mowers, edgers, trimmers and a variety of other specialised equipment.

The Bunton special 22in greens mower, manufactured in Japan, has a powered rotary brush mounted between the front roller and the reel. The brush rotates in the opposite direction to raise the grass before it is cut and is easily adjusted to suit the pitch of the bottom blade. The brush can be raised to reduce the amount of pressure on the grass or disengaged completely. A verticut attachment for thatching is also available.

To ensure a stable and straight cut, equal power is supplied to both sides of the heavy gauge aluminium alloy drive roller. The nine-blade, cutting reel is resilient and resistant to wear due to its hardened steel construction.

The machine is fitted with a standard handbrake to aid transportation over slopes and banks. Quick-release wheels have pneumatic transport tyres, which give good adhesion on uphill ground. It has an all-gear drive train and a four-cycle Robin engine.

Other features include a plastic grass box designed to catch all the cuttings and hold them.

Greenkeeper plans to keep fully up to date with developments and will report regularly on details of courses and NPTC tests. In the meantime, it would do no harm for BIGGA regional representatives to get to know their local NPTC man.
Aeration is not a passing fad but now a constant necessity

IN 40 years of greenkeeping, I have lived through the acid theory, the alkaline theory, lime recommendations from Bingley in the 1960s and '70s, the 'unable to afford' fertiliser time to the 'as much as you can afford' fertiliser time. There was the time when we used little or no water and the time when it was "give 'em as much water as you can," which was followed by the time when cutting back in water was again advised! Things in this business seem to go in cycles, writes Jack McMillan.

We have now reached a point in our history when another cycle is taking place. Over the last decade, everyone who is employed in the business of preparing and presenting golf courses has realised the importance of aeration. If courses are to become busier then, to keep a very natural structure, i.e. soil healthy, under very unnatural traffic, then we must be allowed to cultivate it.

Aeration programmes have caused so many problems for course management that there is now a move to temper the programmes in the interest of good club-member relations. I can again see a turning back of the clock to all the problems related to surface compaction, for there is nothing that can cause more aggravation, confrontation and pain among golfers than to see an aeration machine on the course.

I remember many years ago listening to an old American turf consultant from Miami, Tom Mascaro, who said that man has known from early in time that if he stirred a soil with a stick, it became alive and plants thrived - early aeration, in fact.

Everyone in the business end of producing golf courses is aware that soil of any structure, whether it be on links, downs, parks or the varying types of heathland, requires aeration to remain healthy.

The machinery trade, consultant agronomists, including the STRI, secretaries and greenkeepers are all aware of the importance of a healthy aeration programme. The only individual not aware of this is the paying customer, i.e. the golfer.

The machinery trade has gone to great lengths to produce good machines to carry out this work. Their responsibility finishes there - they take their money and go. I am sure we all, as greenkeepers, are delighted that these machines are available to us today.

The consultant agronomist, with one exception, gives excellent advice and leaves the greenkeeper to get on with the painful business of applying the programme. Jim Arthur has, over the years, I am sure tried to get the message across to the paying customer, the golfer, not, I may add, without some pain in the process.

The club secretary is, like the greenkeeper, a bit nearer the scene of the crime. It is the secretary who is first in line when any complaints about the course arrive. It is his unfortunate role to justify the programme to the members. Hopefully, he will not be influenced into bringing pressure on the greenkeeper to reduce his programme.

The greenkeeper is the man in the firing line. It is he who is left to get on with the programme and carry it out. This part of the maintenance programme is the one that affects greenkeepers lives more than anything else. It removes him further from the person he is employed to please, i.e. the golfer.

Somewhere, somehow, we have to get the message across to the golfers that rather than it being a problem, aeration promotes his pleasure more than any other operation we carry out.

Without aeration, the benefits from fertilisers are lost, as it is pointless applying fertiliser to a compacted surface. Without aeration, the full value of wetting agents or irrigation systems is completely lost, leaving more serious problems from run off on proud areas, resulting in dry patch, or soft wet areas due to ponding in low areas, causing a stagnant rot. Without aeration, the course's ability to handle wet weather is also affected. Compacted surfaces do not let even normal drainage and infiltration rates work.

One of the more common comments greenkeepers receive is that the course is overplayed. Again, the message must be got over and it is that golf courses are for playing golf on, all the year round, as long as the prevailing weather conditions are right and

Two generations of McMillisns - Jack with son Billy, one of five sons in the business.