Readers of this magazine will be well aware of my enthusiasm for the course design excellence of Harry Shapland Colt, the golf course architect of genius who left a lasting legacy of perfection on every course he created. The player who is jaded by dull routine, or exasperated by the weird, monster creations of many of the latter-day pro-cum architects, has only to seek out a Colt course in order to re-discover the proper meaning of golfing joy and its many delightful examinations.

Consider the attractions of the wonderful Colt courses in Britain such as Beaconsfield, Betchworth Park, Blackmoor, Calcot Park, Churston, Denham, Edgbaston, Ham Manor, Longniddry, Moor Park, Northampton County, Princes (with Guy Campbell), Rye, St Georges Hill, Stoke Poges, Sunningdale New, Tandridge and Wentworth, the delicious St Cloud in Paris and the glorious Pine Valley in the USA, where his hugely effective influence resulted in the greatest course creation of all time, and you will instantly appreciate why Colt is still held to this day as the consummate course artist of all time.

Already reviewed in these pages in August, I make no apology for bringing the book Colt & Co., Golf Course Architects, by Fred Hawtree to your attention again, simply because in my view it is a work of merit that will add greatly to the greenkeepers understanding and appreciation of the way the great man operated: his ideas, dreams and design concepts.

My views on Colt’s brilliance are endorsed by almost every modern day architect, with this further exposure encouraged by the knowledge that the publishers, Cambuc Archive, are to make available a special BIGGA members only offer over the winter of 1991/2 (ends March 31st 1992), reducing the price of the book to £21 inclusive of post and packing, representing a saving of £6. The book is a numbered limited edition of just 1,000 copies, and if present trends in golf book collecting continue, is likely to become a highly prized collectors item before too long. The offer made is strictly on a first come first served basis. I ended my original review by urging every reader to buy the book. I still do!

Colt & Co., Golf Course Architects, by Fred Hawtree, (214pp hardback), published by Cambuc Archive. Readers should send a cheque made out to BIGGA for £21. Orders received before December 15th will be posted in time for Christmas.

Congratulations are due to NTC and NAAC for a much expanded and revised ‘Amenity Code’, officially titled: The New Revised Code of Practice for the use of Approved Pesticides in Amenity and Industrial Areas. The very difficult job of knitting the legislation is required by operators who use pesticides, another example is the guidance given to the problem of when certificated examiners are obliged to ask test candidates questions on spray quality. Overall the Code has been very well revised and is now an invaluable and essential reference work for all involved in the use of pesticides – order your copy now! JON ALLBUTT

Copies of Code of Practice for the use of Approved Pesticides in Amenity and Industrial Areas (80pp soft cover) are available from The Secretary, NTC, 3 Ferrands Park Way, Harden, Bingley, BD16 1HZ. £12 including postage.

The recent STRI publication, David Lawson’s Fertilisers for Turf, is one that will find considerable appeal amongst greenkeepers, though some of the more learned sectors (‘learned’ being editorial jargon for ‘over my head’) contain chemical formulae written perhaps more to please the technical laboratory boffin than the practitioner. That stated, the chapters on sources of mineral nutrients for turf, fertiliser programmes (including timing), and an eminently understandable chapter on soil pH and turf growth, make this a standable chapter on soil pH and turf growth, make this a valuable and practical working manual for all within the amenity turf industry. Copies of Fertilisers for Turf (47pp soft cover), published by the STRI, are available from The Secretary, STRI, Bingley, W Yorks BD16 1AU, at £4.50 including postage.

Conservationists are often vociferous in their condemnation of new golf course developments, more often vehemently than when crumbling country mansions or ‘stately homes’ with adjacent parkland are the subject of a developer’s attention. This writer is all for preserving our heritage, but must express horror at the almost total damnatory attitude expressed in a report for The Georgian Group – In The Rough? – which puts all such development – often nothing more than sensitive rescue plans to save otherwise decrepit houses and overgrown and neglected parkland from oblivion – as the work of The Devil incarnate.

How much happier we would be if the antagonists could also see our point of view through their tinted spectacles of prejudice, exercising some restraint in their carte blanche dismissals and accepting the better compromise of seeing such lovely places survive and prosper. In the knowledge that it’s wise to know thine enemy, In The Rough? (40pp soft cover) will prove invaluable to those in the business of rescuing such properties. £3 plus postage from The Georgian Group, 37 Spital Square, London E1 6DY.

Perhaps the greatest gift available to man is a sense of humour. There’s no question about it, some are blessed with the sense in abundance, whilst others stumble through life with their nose to the ground. Failing to see anything but dooms and glooms.

I like to believe that most greenkeepers are of the gifted majority, for in their work they are exposed to average doses of pompous hypocrisy, with an ability to see the funny side often their salvation. If you doubt me, ask yourself how many other professional groups have upwards of 500,000 members, all of whom know more about their work than they do!

How fortunate we British are to have so many great cartoonists, many of whom specialise in sporting absurdities and including the handful who capture the ‘funny side of greenkeeping’. One such is John Hart, whose Hart of The Green, a collection of cartoons based on characters that are the figment of John’s fertile imagination, is guaranteed to bring a chuckle to greenkeepers – because it is all about greenkeepers and the absurdly comic happenings witnessed in their everyday tasks. The sketches are never mocking or hurtful, though often tart, clever, and draw on the escapades of the Headgreenkeeper (the one with the tie) and Harry, a YOP trainee called Harvey and the inevitable Chairman of Greens, who is described as being ‘loved by his mother’ and who delivers requests through a powerful index finger and a bark! Above all they project the conflict between traditional views and new technology, attitudes toward members, green committees and pro’s ever their one salvation. In many of whom specialise in sporting absurdities and including the handful who capture the funny side of greenkeeping. One such is John Hart, whose Hart of The Green, a collection of cartoons based on characters that are the figment of John’s fertile imagination, is guaranteed to bring a chuckle to greenkeepers – because it is all about greenkeepers. Hart of The Green, Humer for Real Golfers, (96pp soft covers) is published at £5.95 and is available from W H Smiths or direct from Thirwell, E10 Square, Newcastle Upon Tyne NE1 3ER. Add 75p postage.