DAVID WHITE examines some of the latest offerings from publishers who have the greenkeeper in mind

For those who use pesticides (and who doesn't?), there is the most bewildering range of products available to control pests, weeds and diseases or the regulation of plant growth. The aim of The UK Pesticides Guide is to guide the user in the selection of pesticides, by providing details of all the products marketed and their approved uses, both those recommended on the labels and those which have been officially approved but are not recommended on labels and for which the suppliers will not accept responsibility (off-label approvals). The book is revised annually.

The compilers draw from authoritative sources: approved labels and product manuals, The MAFF/HSE publication Pesticides 1991, and entries in The Pesticides Register, the official monthly publication on approvals (including off-label approvals) up to and including the issue for August 1991.

Coverage, as you might expect, is most thorough, not only in identifying producers but in providing guidance on how to use them safely and effectively, but without giving dose rates, volumes, spray schedules, or approved tank mixes. There are sections on FEPA and COSHH, substances most dangerous (the Red list), use of herbicides in or near water, maximum exposure limits, which diseases or weeds a product will best be suited for, and special precautions that must be taken.

It would be remiss of me not to mention that the bulk of pesticides are primarily used by the agricultural industry, (the book lists them all), but that stated, any greenkeeper will find enough for the book to be a veritable bible of facts and information.

As an interesting aside, and admitting that it is not a book you will ever read from cover to cover, in my investigations I discovered one fungicide, as yet listed as being effective in the control of for golf..." and decided that while in Scotland I would visit 14 famous venues, ostensibly for a 2,000 word article for a golf magazine, identifying Scotland with the birth of golf and giving his opinions on the overall scene as he saw it today. As he was unable to satisfy the former and it took him over 60,000 bright and breezy words to do the subject justice, the magazine never did get its article. Instead came By Yon Bonnie Links! — Sam's fifth full-length narrative hard-back and best summed up with his closing epilogue on page 217: Whether from the Highlands, Lowlands, Netherlands, Midlands — or Papua New Guinea — addicts the world over acknowledge Scotland as the 'Holy Land' of golf. This light-hearted story of a pilgrimage across that 'Holy Land', amongst those who worship at its shrine, should leave little doubt that golf and its history needn't be quite so awesome as some would have us believe!

It's not quite a '1066 and All That' version of golfing history, because although amusing, it is, in every way factual. But thanks to a colourful imagination and love of hyperbole Sam has converted 400 years of 'sacred' lore into a zestful presentation which will please all but the stuffiest of students, and certainly all addicts and non-participants alike.

On reading an early draft, a top golfing historian wrote to the author: "This is good breezy stuff — but whether they'll let you play again at Muirfield is an interesting question!"

The idea of the history of golf — without the boring bits! — certainly delighted me and I believe you'll be equally enamoured by its irreverence.

By Yon Bonnie Links! is published by Aedificamus Press, 113 The Ridgeway, Northaw, Herts EN6 4BG, at £12.95 post free.
Every association of importance needs a disciple and the Association of Golf Club Secretaries were indeed fortunate in having John Crowther as theirs alone for many years. His recent book is an up-to-date, comprehensive guide to all aspects of golf club management, from draft contracts of employment to damming of Golf by driven golf balls.

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