Respecting coring, the greens at Ham Manor are about 500m² and are what would be regarded as average size. The Ryan G400 we use is a remarkably fast and efficient tool for hollow coring, and is far and away the Cushman Harvester, we can (and indeed do) core and clear 18 greens in an eight hour day.

**George Barn** Course Manager, Ham Manor Golf Club

• May I convey my sincere thanks to all those at Aldwark Manor who worked with us in the recent Toro/PGA European Tour Student Greenkeeper awards. Our Association representatives and the Toro and PGA personnel all made us feel most welcome. May I wish the winner and runners-up the very best of good fortune at all official or invited functions, such as the Kubota core and clear 18 greens in an eight hour day. May I wish the winner and runners-up the very best of good fortune.

**Mark Ellis** Woburn Golf and Country Club, Bedfordshire

• With BIGGA offering an ever increasing variety of official uniform, dress, do you think it would be a good idea to provide official uniform for the 'greenkeepers' of the future? A small range would do much to improve the professional image we try so hard to create.

**Peter Lacey** Pernard Golf Club, South Wales

**Moves** are indeed afoot to make BIGGA neckties and blazers obligatory wear at all official or invited functions, such as the Kubota Randle Challenge and the Ransomes International Tournament, and indeed such a ‘uniform’ greatly improves one’s professional image. At work the choice is perhaps one of greater individuality, though there is certainly merit in a smarter, uniform turn-out.

**Jon Allbutt** Biggin Hill, Kent

• I have now read and re-read Mr Jim Arthur’s article entitled The Quick and The Dead, which appeared in your November issue. On behalf of our Tournament Committee and senior colleagues I write to advise you that the Tour are appalled at his ill-informed references towards our efforts to assist greenkeepers involved with Tour events. Indeed, we believe that elements of Mr Arthur’s comments are potentially damaging to the Tour and look to your magazine to reproduce this reply.

I question Mr Arthur’s current knowledge of principles or methods that are now employed on the PGA European Tour, as the consultancy relationship the Tour had with him ended several years ago. It should be pointed out that the Tour look to putting greens: 1) as being true as possible, free from bumps and ‘snaking’, 2) having a consistent resilience for bounce and grip, i.e. a poorly struck shot should not hold the putting green; 3) having as fast a speed of putting surface as possible taking account of slopes and grass species and; 4) having consistency on all 18 greens, practice putting green and chipping greens.

I will, however, reiterate that the sound principle of aeration and sensible levels of water and fertilisation for putting greens preached by Mr Arthur still hold true today. Our approach in recent years has been one of gentle persuasion to build up a good working relationship with host greenkeepers. In the last three years we have organised two one-week seminars to enable all greenkeepers and managers of the Tour venues to meet and exchange ideas. We feel these exchanges can only be good for the game, believing that no one person can honestly claim to have total knowledge.

In our experience of running professional golf tournaments, which even Mr Arthur might concede is considerable, we have found that the wish of everyone concerned at a Tour venue is to achieve perfection in terms of presentation for their tournament week, and if we are asked to provide practical help, we will continue to do so.

It is quite wrong to suggest that the Tour have advocated professional ‘shaving’ of greens to achieve speed alone. Indeed, all the methods mentioned by Mr Arthur – including rolling – have been used to good effect and certainly in taking the long term health of the Tour golf courses into consideration, Mr Arthur seems to suggest that the Tour have no care or consideration for the venue when the final putt of the tournament is holed. I regard this as so contemptuous that it does not even require further comment.

It seems that the inclusion of Tour representatives on the R&As Joint Golf Course Committee does not meet with Mr Arthur’s approval.

Our wish, and we believe it is also that of the R&As, is that with all parties ‘pooling’ ideas constructive ideas may be forthcoming.

I suggest to Mr Arthur that many if not all readers of your magazine would dearly love to read constructive ideas from a man who was, for so long, the agronomist. I am sure that he can pass on a great deal of knowledge, rather than embarking on yet another attempt to discredit other organisations or individuals.

**J N Paramor** Director of Tour Operations, PGA European Tour
Winter play on greens – a topic never to be brought up in polite conversation. But just what is the answer to this perennial problem? James T Snow, National Director, USGA Green Section, considers a few of the alternatives

It is common knowledge that three topics are simply too controversial and should never be brought up at social functions: politics, religion, and winter play on greens. Not too familiar with the last? If not, then you apparently haven't spent much time at golf courses during late autumn and early winter.

Few subjects raise such an emotional response from greenkeepers and golfers alike. Golfers can become irate at actions restricting their access to regular greens during late autumn, winter and early spring, while greenkeepers are just as unyielding in their view that play should be kept off the greens at those times.

Who's right?
As with most topics of this nature, qualifications have to be tacked on to any firm answer. It is safe to say, however, that winter play can only harm the greens and in many instances it has a significant negative impact on the health and playability of the turf during the following golf season.

Repercussions of winter play
It is not hard to understand why many golfers are sometimes sceptical about claims concerning the negative effects of winter play, because to them the turf on greens that have been played throughout the winter usually appears the same as the turf on greens that have been closed. The effects of winter traffic, however, need not be obvious and dramatic to have significant and long-lasting repercussions.

Direct wear injury – Thinning of the turf due to direct wear injury is an obvious and important result of winter traffic. Unlike during the growing season, when the turf is soft and able to regenerate new leaves and stems to replace injured tissue daily, winter weather completely halts turf growth; the grass is continually thinned throughout the winter in direct proportion to the amount of traffic. This thinning of the turf canopy can and often does encourage the establishment of such weeds as Poa annua, crabgrass, goosegrass, moss, algae, pearlwort, spurge and other weed pests during the spring and summer. True enough, weeds can indeed be more readily during hot weather and often is more susceptible to a wide array of primary and secondary disease organisms.

Effects on playability – With the loss of turf density from direct wear injury and the loss of turf vigour caused by soil compaction, greens played during winter tend to be hard, slow and bumpy, and they are slower to develop during the spring compared to greens that are not subjected to winter traffic.

Factors to consider

Breaking
can be a real problem. Obviously, courses with older soil-based greens are especially vulnerable to both types of winter injury.

Specific weather conditions – Though traffic on dormant turf will indeed cause some injury, the weather and soil conditions at the time of play will dictate the type and extent of the damage. Traffic on dry, unfrozen soil will cause the least damage, but this condition is rare during the winter. Frozen soil can cause significant wear injury but little soil compaction. Play on wet, unfrozen soil can result in significant soil compaction but less wear injury. Play on a thawing soil (wet on the surface, frozen below) can result in severe soil compaction and wear injury and should be avoided. Finally, frosted turf is extremely susceptible to direct injury and play should never be allowed.

Grass species – Do you have fine bent/fescue greens and want to keep them? Then don’t allow winter play. Thinned turf and compacted soil is just what Poa annua is looking for in the spring.

Cultural maintenance programmes – Winter golfers argue
Temporary greens can be established

that a good head greenkeeper should be able to fix any damage done during winter by aerifying, topdressing, over-seeding, fertilising and irrigating during the early spring. If weed encroachment is a problem, then he should apply herbicides to kill the weeds and pre-emergent herbicides to prevent crabgrass and goosegrass from developing. However, a) it would be a rare case where intensive spring work would completely compensate for the wear injury and soil compaction resulting from winter play, b) chemicals applied to control crabgrass and other weeds have a negative effect on the root growth and the overall health of the turf during the summer, c) golfers despise the intensive aerification and topdressing required during the early spring, since most of them return after a winter lay-off and find their greens ripped up and in poor playing condition for weeks or more, and d) all of the work to renovate the greens takes more money for labour and materials and comes at the expense of other spring course preparation activities.

History of winter injury - The effects of winter play can exacerbate the injury from other types of winter problems, including desiccation, winter diseases and low-temperature kill (ice damage). Winter play should therefore be avoided if the course regularly suffers from other forms of winter injury.

Previous weed problems - Courses that have previously experienced and are concerned about weed problems such as crabgrass, spurge, moss, algae and Poa annua would do themselves a favour by avoiding winter play on the regular greens.

Recent stress problems - Winter play is best not allowed on greens that have experienced any turf loss or extreme weakness during the previous year or years caused by heat stress, secondary disease problems such as anthracnose or summer patch, nematodes or other summer stress problems. Greens like these probably would suffer even greater problems if they were burdened with the vigor-inhibiting effects of winter play.

Trees - Greens close to large trees that suffer from shade, air circulation or tree root competition problems should not be forced to endure the complicating effects of winter play. Compared to turf growing in clear areas, greens in locations like these usually respond very slowly in the spring and tend to be weak during the summer. Many greens on older, mature courses can be grouped in this category.

Standards for play - One of the most important questions to ask in contemplating whether or not to use regular greens in winter concerns what the golfers want from the greens during the regular season. If they want top-quality turf from spring to autumn, involving close, frequent cutting, double cutting, frequent verticutting, lean fertilisation, minimal irrigation or other stress-inducing practices, then it is best to avoid winter play. If the golfers don't mind higher cutting heights, slower speeds and greater inconsistency then winter golf was made for them. Some bias in that statement? Perhaps, but too many golfers want to trample their dormant greens in winter and then enjoy US Open conditions from April through November. There are still some things that money can't buy.

Some alternatives

Given that this article won't end the use of regular greens during winter on all courses, a look at some of the alternatives might prove useful in establishing a winter policy.

Use temporary greens. Many courses avoid winter injury by establishing temporary greens on the fairway approach to the existing greens. Often these areas are aerified and topdressed several times during the autumn and the cutting height is lowered to provide a reasonable putting surface for the winter. Sure, it's more fun to hit to regular greens but isn't it worth sacrificing a little bit during the winter to keep
Established on existing fairways’ the greens in good condition for spring, summer and autumn? The best policy is to close the greens when growth ceases and open them in spring only when growth resumes and the soil has dried enough to resist compaction. Design a winter course. This should be especially appealing to the addicts who simply can’t get enough. Many Clubs play their course backwards, going from green to tee using the tee as a target or establishing a temporary green at the tee end of the fairway. Others use their imagination and design holes in a cross-country style, crossing roughs and water hazards that might rarely be seen or appreciated when golfers play the regular course. Temporary greens can be established on existing fairways or roughs, near fairway bunkers, water hazards or groupings of trees. The possibilities are limitless.

Establish temporary greens, but use them only when conditions are not appropriate for using the regular greens. This is a bad policy because conditions can go from fair to terrible in just a few hours. For example, greens that are frozen in the morning can thaw as temperatures rise during the day. If play is allowed on the regular greens in the morning, at what point should you switch to temporary greens? Who will decide? Will golfers already on the course be notified of the change? Obviously, the logistics of this policy are difficult and the likelihood of damage to greens is great.

Use regular greens during the winter but close the course on days when the potential for damage is great. This policy has the same flaws as the one previous. In some ways it’s even worse, because the days that the greens should be closed, when temperatures rise above freezing and the putting surfaces become thawed, are the same days that most winter golfers want to be on the course. Greenkeepers can come under great pressure from Club officials to keep the course open, despite their misgivings, and sometimes they are simply overruled.

Play the greens throughout the winter, regardless of conditions. Because the alternatives require difficult decisions and complicated logistics, many courses opt for this worst-choice policy. For the reasons we’ve outlined, these courses are just asking for problems.

Close the course for the winter. From the stand-point of having the greens, tees and fairways in the best possible condition for spring, this is certainly the best policy. There is no doubt that winter play on the tees and fairways can thin the turf and compact the soil just as it can on greens. However, golfers don’t put on tees and fairways during the summer and don’t mind some cultivation and overseeding of these areas during the spring. Nevertheless, many courses establish temporary greens for the winter, or sacrifice small portions of the regular tees for winter use if play is expected to be moderate or heavy. If the Club decides to keep the course open, whether or not regular greens are used, golfers should be asked to wear shoes without spikes or cleats whenever possible and carts should be restricted to paths – if they are allowed at all.

Winter play can do an inordinate amount of damage to the health and playability of the greens in relation to the number of rounds. Every Club considering winter play should question whether or not it is worth the risk of damaging the greens and affecting their playability for a significant period of the regular season by allowing a relatively small percentage of the Club’s members to use them all the time. In the view of most head greenkeepers, turf grass scientists and agronomists, it is not. Unfortunately, even the considered opinion of the experts is unlikely to separate winter play from politics and religion as a topic of controversy among golfers.
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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, Edgaston, 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 of 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 valuable and essential reference work for all involved in the use of pesticides - order your copy now! JON ALBUTT

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 worthwhile 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, never more 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 dammatory attitude expressed in a report for The Georgian Group - In The Rough? - which puts all such development - often more than just a little, as one can see from the standard system taught on pesticide courses. It is correct as far as it goes, but it does not go far enough.

I would have thought that the BCPC guide on spray quality and its importance in minimising spray drift would be very helpful in Part 9 of the Code, for it is something that is being emphasised on training courses and NPTC 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 ALBUTT

The Greenkeeper's Library

by DAVID WHITE
Surely the best way to invest in the future is to invest in people. Training and education are the greatest motivating factors. A more articulate and educated workforce will inevitably lead to greater rewards and an awareness and recognition of the greenkeepers profession.

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GET SET for 1992's world class turf management exhibition, organised by the British & International Golf Greenkeepers Association.

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We'll see you there!
On show: who y

Viscount Whitelaw will open exhibition

Wednesday morning, January 22nd, brings the official opening by the Rt. Hon. William Whitelaw, President of BIGGA, of a wondrous display of products and services, aimed exclusively at our industry and presented by a larger number of exhibitors than ever before. Many exhibitors have hinted that BTME will be their launching pad for introducing new products and services to such an exclusively greenkeeper orientated audience, and with such a large and varied display accessible under cover and on a single floor, visitors can be assured of evaluating the very latest equipment.

A unmistakable air of excitement is erupting from those associated with the greenkeeping industry’s greatest annual event, the BIGGA Turf Management Exhibition and Seminar Programme, to be held in Harrogate during January 20th-24th, 1992. As the day draws near a large number of registrations have flooded into the Association’s headquarters at Aldwark Manor, ensuring a spirited pool of participants for the biggest and most ambitious workshop, seminar and exhibition programme ever staged by the Association.

Looking at the schedule of events, one cannot fail to be impressed by both the substance and the quality of speakers chosen and the fascinating subjects they will present to audiences eager for learned information. The educational seminar programme brings together speakers who will not just educate but also stimulate debate within the halls of Harrogate. Four workshops take place on the Monday and Tuesday.

Among the speakers are:

- Dr Norman W Hummel, Associate Professor of Turfgrass Science at Cornell University, currently on leave of absence to work for the USGA Green Section on a project relating to USGA Specifications, and on methods for testing construction mixes. Dr Hummel has operated a laboratory at Cornell for some years and has worked closely with architects, contractors and superintendents on sand and peat selection. In his Educational Workshop, which he will present with Stanley Zontek, various options for constructing golf course greens will be covered, including the USGA Specifications for greens.

Graham Phillips: Keynote speeches will help delegates handle green committees.

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