

Doc's Dugout - An Inning from our Past & Present

by Dr. Kent Kurtz, STMA Historian

Similarities an Ocean Apart - Part III

The Institute of Groundsmanship (IOG), founded in 1934, is the leading organization in Europe that represents not only groundsmen but also other professionals involved in green-keeping, horticulture, turfculture and amenity management. The IOG's more than 4,000 members represent all facets of the industry from the practicing user to the industry supplier, to the consultant.

The first IOG exhibition was organized in 1938 and was the forerunner of today's SALTEX Sports, Amenity and Landscape Trade Exhibition, which is held annually at the Windsor Racecourse during the first week in September. The SALTEX Exhibition attracts an international audience. The 1999 Exhibition attracted over 15,500 visitors and 420 commercial companies in 3 days.

The IOG's own journal, "The Groundsman," was introduced in 1947 and currently has a circulation of almost 6,000. It serves an essential need for communication and education to the amenity and sports industries, education and training establishments, local government agencies and the IOG members.

The IOG introduced a Consultancy Service in 1990 and its function is to advise organizations regarding construction, development and management of sports and amenity facilities. This service utilizes full-time, experienced grounds managers who are IOG members. They provide site visits for assessment and diagnosis and make recommendations. In addition, turf clinics are held to provide advice on all turf related problems. They design maintenance and management programs for groundsmen, assist with staff recruitment and contract supervision, advise on pesticide laws and safety regulations as well as give advice on staffing and equipment for those involved for the first time in management and maintenance of facilities. They also provide in-house training packages.

The primary mission of the IOG is Training, Education and Career Development. The IOG introduced an examination system in 1953, which conducts an annual program of short courses, which incorporate the latest science and

technology of turfculture as they relate to the maintenance and management of sports and amenity surfaces. This program awards Certificates and Diplomas that are approved by the Secretary of State for Education and Employment and are recognized by the Sport, Recreation, Amenity and Landscape Industries. There are four educational levels available to groundsmen beginning with the basic National Practical Certificate and advancing through the National Technical Certificate to the National Intermediate Diploma, and finally the National Diploma in Turfculture.

Today, the Institute continues to evolve by bringing together the industries and organizations that depend on the expertise of groundsmen and related professionals. And, as the STMA is always striving for continued growth in the same manner, we plan on working closely with the IOG to help perpetuate this growth.



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