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THE BRITISH GOLF

# GREENKEEPER

HON. EDITOR: F. W. HAWTREE.



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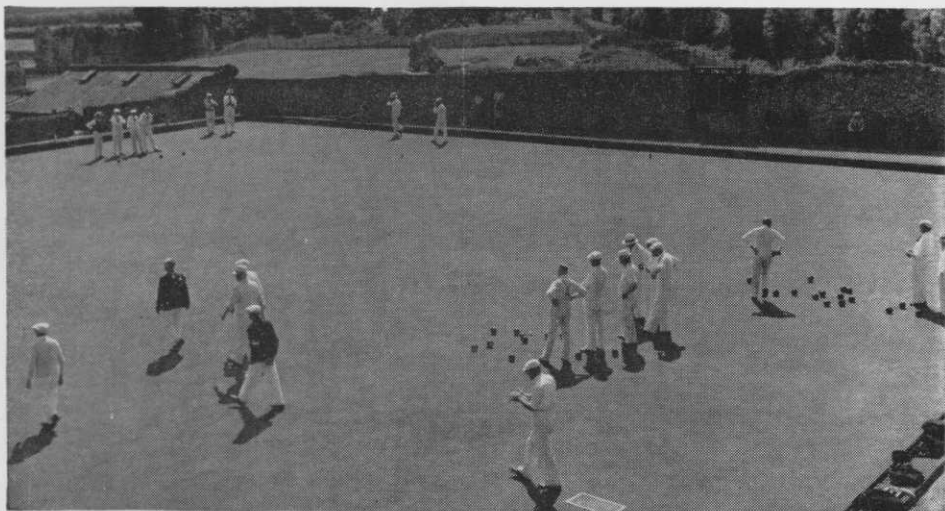
*Don Herold.*

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S.G.G.A. NEWS AND SITUATIONS  
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# TEE SHOTS



by the Editor

## EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

WE were communing lately with a well-known golf architect. (Golf architects are always written of as well-known, reputed, or noted, but the description is more a credit to the writer for having heard of them than a tribute to their renown.) We asked him, as people unfortunately do, which golf course he considered to be his best. This knowledge would greatly interest our readers.

He removed the straw from his mouth and appeared to cogitate. After years of weighing replies to questions from Green Committees, he would not be rushed into a hasty verdict. We could understand his reluctance but another digression may be needed if you are to do so too.

### Gem

When visiting almost any course to play with a member, you have known that moment on a certain tee when he says: "*Henry Cotton* (or *Dai Rees* or *James Braid* or any such distinguished golfer) *said this was the finest short hole he knew when he played here in 19 . . .*" No record remains of his opinion of the other seventeen holes. After many repetitions of these judgments at different courses, you have realised that a civil visitor was obliged to let fall some crumb, however eagerly it might be snapped up and preserved for the amazement of posterity.

A short hole will normally give a reasonable excuse for spontaneous exclamations because it is so often a device to bridge what is otherwise unplayable. A sniff of danger from lake, stream, or chasm still twitches the golfer's nostrils however used he may be to stately, roughless rounds at home. And "fine" is warily non-committal on the vital issues, leaving personal honour untarnished and audience not dissatisfied.

### Grass recognition

Our golf architect regarded his straw with growing interest. This evidently showed the prominent keel of *Aira flexuosa* not the unbroken cylinder of *Festuca elatior subsp. pratensis*, as he had first suspected. Signs of imminent speech were rising and we waited sympathetically. Hardened by clients primed with all the opinions of great players since their course opened and eagerly awaited his, lost in the contemplation of a vivid past, swimming with green links, he pondered, selected, and finally affirmed.

"Ur!", he said, replaced his straw, and left us.

We do not know the courses ourselves and, on reflection, did he perhaps mean "Er . . .", leaving you to fill in the details?

# DEVIL'S ADVOCATE 5

by  
Goblin

*"Every year there is absolute merry hell if on any morning the Captain, Committee, Secretary or Head Greenkeeper decides now is the time to use them."*

## WHAT PRICE FROST HOLES?

EVERY year the Green Committee decides to have them. Every year the turf research people publish solemn warnings about the need for them. Every year the greenkeeper eventually cuts them—after a fashion. And every year there is absolute merry hell if on any morning the Captain, Committee, Secretary, or Head Greenkeeper decides that now is the time to use them.

Members, at many clubs anyway, care more about the fun of the particular morning than the state of the greens in one month, three months' or six months' time; and "frost holes" are something they don't really understand the need for. "After all", Muggins will say to Plomp, as they set out on one of those horrible mornings when a two inch deep frost is just beginning to thaw on the top, "After all, we played when it was like this last year, and the greens were all thawed out by mid-afternoon. Make a lot of fuss about nothing, some of these people. The course *is* for the members, isn't it?"

### Deciding factors

What the answer is to people like this only well-run clubs can say. Perhaps well-run clubs don't have people like that—on the principle that the morale of the troops depends on the R.S.M. and that it is part of a good Secretary's job to be one. But there is an undoubted practical difficulty about the exact moment and circumstances at which it really is essential, or at least wisest, to declare the greens themselves out of play, and turn the players on to the frost holes on the approaches.

How do you guess what the weather is going to do next? Do you worry

more if the greens are hard all the way down, or frozen just on top, or frozen underneath but thawing on top, or just slushy and beginning to freeze in an east wind: or what? Do you adopt a rule-of-thumb penknife test—so much depth of blade before you hit frozen ground and it's O.K. (or not O.K.?) to play on them today? Do you invoke oracles for advice, examine entrails, search the sky or believe the 8-0 a.m. weather forecast. ("Fog, some bright intervals, slight rain or snow, possibly frost later in some areas.")? Or do you just go on the principle of taking no risks?

### No argument

Why not the latter? But who's to say? Really—and we all know it—the only man to say is the Head Greenkeeper. If he doesn't know his ground, his grasses, his greens and his local weather signs—then he shouldn't be there at all! Even if he doesn't, he may as well be presumed to be in the position of "the best prime minister we've got". If he is to say, he is to do also: just put the flags in the frost holes and be obeyed. But is he? It is not unknown for opinionated members, out early, to want to know who's been tampering with the flag sticks—and put them all back in the greens again. The answer is, that if the Head Greenkeeper tells the Secretary he is going to put the flags in the frost holes, and the Secretary puts up a notice saying that's where they are, there should be no argument about it.

What, of course, is ludicrous, is where things get to the state in a club where some of the older (and perhaps lower handicap members) are more concerned

*Continued on page 16*

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# HARE RAISING

*"Natural enemies of the young hare are so numerous that, as soon as her litter is born, the doe distributes her young individually away from the nest."*

by HENRY TEGNER

YOUNG hares are particularly vulnerable to vermin of all sorts and the doe always separates her litter, after birth, and hides them individually in separate forms, or couches, in the grass, so that when a leveret is discovered it appears as if it were the only offspring. It is this practice that has given rise to the belief that the hare has only one young at birth, when in actual fact a doe hare normally gives birth to five leverets. Hares are said to transport their young as a cat will carry her kittens—by holding the infant with her mouth by the scruff of its neck. This post-birth transport operation has scarcely ever been witnessed, and it is believed to take place mainly at night.

Leverets are born fully furred and with their eyes open. They are active as soon as they are born. The young rabbit, on the other hand, is born hairless and blind.

## Natural Enemies

Hares have numerous enemies besides men and dogs, who are probably the two most terrible of all. Foxes and eagles must come close behind, but there are others such as stoats and weasels. Leverets, because of their diminutive size and utter defencelessness, are nearly every predator's game—from the rat and carrion crow right up to the fox.

The hare can belie his reputation for timidity and be a very pugnacious creature. This happens, particularly in February and March, during the peak of the rutting season, when buck hares will fight over their does even to the death. The hare, of course, has earned his reputation for madness as a result of his antics during March. Hares have been known to stand up and fight sheep and cattle that have disturbed them. They fight not only with the powerful legs but with their teeth as well.

The best known voice of the hare is his scream of pain, but he makes other sounds as well. In the past his speech was frequently imitated by poachers. The commonest sound is rather like the word "don't" without the "d"—a sort of "oont" or even "aunt".

Arthur White who at one time was a keeper at Milton Abbas in Dorset, used to imitate the hare's voice, not to attract others of the same species, but vermin such as the fox and stoat. His mimicry was very successful and he enticed many victims.

It is not generally known that both the hare and the rabbit eat their own dung. This habit is not dissimilar to that of cattle and sheep who chew their cud. In chewing the cud the animal regurgitates partially digested food from the stomach back into the mouth where it is re-masticated. Food passes straight through the hare and rabbit before it is re-consumed.

Many ecologists believe that hares have increased considerably since the advent of myxomatosis to Britain. There is undoubted evidence that this is so.

## Tribal Dances

The hare occasionally engages in what can best be described as a tribal dance. Both the blue, or mountain hare, *Lepus timidus*, and the common brown hare, *Lepus europaeus*, participate.

The first time I saw hares dancing the performance reminded me of group dances at a children's party. It was on the links behind Beadnell bay in Northumberland in March. I first noticed one or two hares coming over the ridge of some dunes into a great central cup. They kept coming until I counted 13 of them. The leader then started circling and weaving in what

*Continued on page 16*



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# OF SOILS AND SPECIES

by Dr. R. F. HUNTER

Hill Farming Research Organisation

**M**OST experimental work on chemical ploughing has been done where ordinary ploughing is difficult and expensive—on hill pastures. Various chemicals have been used, of which dalapon has been studied most.

Our experience dates from the summer of 1959 when surface sowings were tested by dry conditions. Trials that failed in 1959 were re-sown in 1960, but this was so long after the original spraying that it could not be regarded as a fair test. For these reasons we have so far suspended judgment on whether chemical ploughing is a useful technique in hill pasture conditions.

\* \* \*

Dalapon does not affect hill grasses equally; some are more susceptible than others, some are resistant to very high rates.

Both *Molinia caerulea* (purple moor mat grass or flying bent) and *Nardus stricta* (white bent or moor mat grass) are susceptible and 6 lb. to the acre of dalapon applied in summer has invariably killed these two species. *Agrostis tenuis* (bent) and *Festuca ovina* (fescue) are rather more resistant and require 12 lb. an acre if a satisfactory kill is to be achieved, although a considerable reduction can be got with 6 lb. an acre. Bent is more susceptible to spraying in May, while fescue is more susceptible to an August spraying. These two species invariably occur together; thus spraying at different dates will kill one or the other but not both unless a very high rate is employed.

\* \* \*

*Holcus lanatus* (Yorkshire fog) *Holcus mollis* (creeping soft grass), *Anthoxanthum odoratum* (sweet vernal) and *Deschampsia flexuosa* (wavy hair grass) were all resistant to a 10 lb. an acre rate as

were the *Carex* species (sedges) and all the broad-leaved hill pasture plants. To kill the last group broad-leaved herbicide is necessary.

Dates of spraying appear to be unimportant in reducing the cover of native plants, provided they are between June to August inclusive. But as this obviously determines the date of sowing, our practice has been to spray in August and surface sow the following spring.

\* \* \*

Disposal of dead trash is a problem. If there is not too much it can provide shelter for germinating seeds, otherwise it can be burned. Where turf and trash are deep, as on many *Nardus* and *Molinia* pastures, germination is hampered by turf drying out more readily than on normal soil. Harrowing is useful but must be precise: light harrows bounce over the dead turf, heavy harrows tear it away from the soil as a huge carpet. On some sites a heavy pitch pole harrow has been relatively successful, tearing up those plants which are not quite dead and might recover. Where rainfall is high and good germination likely, cultivations are not required.

All reseeded areas should be fenced. This is particularly important on a dead turf where seedlings, until they have grown through into the mineral soil, can easily be pulled out by grazing sheep.

The most promising swards to improve by chemical ploughing are *Molinia* and to a lesser extent *Nardus*. These are generally associated with a peaty soil, very deficient in lime, phosphate and nitrogen. Sowing should be accompanied by liberal dressings of compound fertiliser with high nitrogen, repeated until the sward is sound.

The best results have been achieved on *Molinia* swards sprayed in late July

*Continued on page 16*



# ATCO

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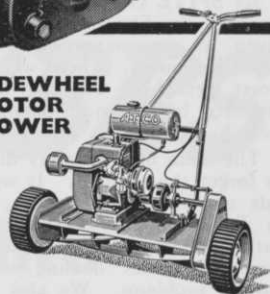
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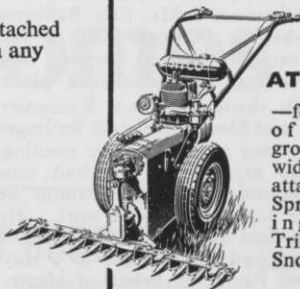
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# News



from the Sections

## MIDLAND

By F. Cashmore

*Chairman:*  
G. HART  
(Gay Hill)

*Hon. Secretary:*  
76 Four Oaks Common Road  
Sutton Coldfield, Warwickshire.

IN SPITE OF VERY UNFAVOURABLE weather, the film show by Messrs. Ransomes, given in conjunction with the N.A.G. on 19th December, when we experienced the worst period of fog for many years, was attended by eleven members. The groundsmen had a similar number present.

The main film certainly did much to make us forget the weather. It was a tour of seaside resorts of East Anglia, from the Wash to Felixtowe, showing the beaches, parks, bathing beauties, the lot, and of course Ransomes machines dealing with many grass cutting problems. We also saw a short film dealing with the care and maintenance of the Certes machine, and another very interesting film of the journey from Scotland to London in three days, made by students on a Ransomes motor mower. Mr. Eric Ballinger of Messrs. Parker & Ballinger said a few words between each film, and at question time some very interesting discussions took place.

Mr. Bill Wells thanked Messrs. Ransomes, Mr. Bill Payne and Messrs. Parker & Ballinger for a very interesting and instructive evening, and went on to say that as we had now viewed the machines on film, it would be interesting to see them actually at work. He suggested that a field day may be held in the Spring as he had had the promise of a suitable site. Mr. Bill Payne, on behalf of Messrs. Ransomes and Messrs. Parker & Ballinger were all in favour, so it would appear that we can look forward to a very interesting day in the near future.

## Appointment.

We congratulate Barry Powell, late of the North Worcestershire Golf Club, on his appointment as Head Greenkeeper to the Kenilworth Golf Club. His address is now 6 Hyde Road, Kenilworth, Warwickshire, and we wish him every success in his new job.

## NORTHERN

By J. Parker

*Chairman:*  
G. W. MASON  
(Halifax West End)

*Hon. Secretary:*  
8 Goit Stock Terr., Harden,  
Bingley, Yorks.

OUR ANNUAL SPRING TOURNAMENT will be played over the course of the Otley Golf Club, on Thursday, 26th April, 1962 (by kind permission of the Committee). Please make a note of the date.

## December Meeting.

This was held at the Old Queen's Head, Bingley, on 12th December, when forty members, a most encouraging number, attended a combined Educational and Social Evening. A Brains Trust occupied the first part of the evening, when the panel consisted of Messrs. K. Chamberlain, T. Hullah, W. Mountain and J. Parker with Mr. G. W. Mason acting as Chairman. After the panel had expressed their views on questions raised, many of which came from our old friend Horace, other members joined in the discussion. A most interesting session was held, and this was followed by a pie and pea supper with seasonal drinks. On behalf of the Committee, Mr. Mason expressed best wishes for 1962, and Mr. S. Smith responded on behalf of members.

## Mr. J. M. Mawson.

Members will be pleased to hear that, as an expression of appreciation for his services to the Scarcroft Golf Club, Mr. J. Mawson has been elected an Honorary Member of the Club.

## Mr. J. Temple.

Mr. J. Temple, who has been assistant to Mr. G. Geddes at Moor Allerton has now retired. John has been a staunch supporter of the Association and I am sure that I am expressing the feelings of all members in wishing him well in his retirement.

## New Members.

We welcome the following new members to our Section. Mr. G. Ackroyd, 55 Lingfield View, Moortown, Leeds 17; Mr. A. Walsh, 31 Stonegate Farm Road, Meanwood, Leeds (both of Moortown Golf Club), and Mr. A. B. Jowett, of Grosvenor Engineering Co., Bradford (Associate Member).



**FEBRUARY**

28th Southern Section, Lecture, Stirling Castle, 6-30 p.m.

**MARCH**

8th East Midland Section, N.A.G. Film Show, Blue Boar, Southgate Street, Leicester.

9th Southern Section, Annual Dinner, Talbot Restaurant, London Wall, E.C.

20th Northern Section, Film Show, White Swan, Call Lane, Leeds.

22nd East Midland Section, N.A.G. Lecture, Blue Boar, Southgate Street, Leicester.

**APRIL**

26th Northern Section, Spring Tournament, Otley Golf Club.

**AUGUST**

13th, 14th and 15th B.G.G.A. Annual Tournament, Pyle and Kenfig Golf Club.

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## Film Show.

Arrangements have been made for the loan of films of the 1958 and 1959 Penfold Swallow Tournaments played at Prestwick and Barnton. These will be shown at the White Swan, Call Lane, Leeds, on Tuesday, 20th March.

## SOUTHERN

By W. Mason

Chairman:  
J. K. GLASS  
(Thorpe Hall)

Hon. Secretary:  
18 Albert Road, Hendon, N.W.4.  
Tel.: SUNnyhill 0245

OUR FEBRUARY LECTURE WHICH will be given by Mr. W. H. Bartle of the S.T.R.I. will be held on Wednesday, 28th February at the Stirling Castle at 6-30 p.m. Mr. Bartle is well-known to most of our greenkeepers and it is hoped that members will make every effort to come along and welcome him.

## Annual Dinner.

Arrangements have now been completed for the Section Annual Dinner, which will take place on Friday, 9th March, at the Talbot Restaurant, London Wall, E.C. Please apply to me for tickets, the price of which will be settled at our next meeting. We have been fortunate in securing the services of Mr. Mickey Morris, the Keyboard Comedian, a member of the Concert Artistes Society, who will entertain us after dinner.

## Mr. D. S. Gould.

We are pleased to welcome to the Section, Mr. D. S. Gould, Head Greenkeeper at Stoneham Golf Club. Private address: 35 Hamilton Road, Bishopstoke, Eastleigh, Hants.

## SOUTH-WEST

By A. Cockfield

Chairman:  
G. GILBERT,  
(Warminster G.C.)

Hon Secretary:  
(Shamcastle G.C.)

IT WAS MOST UNFORTUNATE THAT Mr. Hawtree's film show on course design and construction was so poorly attended. Any lecture requires considerable preparation. Mr. Hawtree had a long way to travel and in all probability had given up a more important engagement to fulfil this date, it was therefore, to say the least, most disappointing to have such a poor turn out at this end.

For those who did turn up, it was a most enjoyable evening. The slides were colourful and most interesting and the discussion which followed went a long way towards ensuring that Mr. Hawtree's visit was not entirely in vain. On behalf of the Section I wish to express our thanks to Mr. Hawtree, and to Mr. Southgate who always comes along to say a few words at the right time.

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## Five Pointers from a Short Report of a Meeting of Secretaries and Handicapping Convenors organised by the Lothians Golf Association

★ It was agreed that generally speaking most courses in the Lothians could adopt a Special Scratch Score on each Competition day because ground conditions do alter and bring a course into a different Course Category from which it had been allocated in assessing the Standard Scratch Score. This applies both to lowering and increasing the Standard Scratch Score.

★ It was recommended that the Special or Standard Scratch Score be fixed prior to play on the Saturday morning so that players could see the target which had been fixed but on the other hand some Clubs felt it was better to do this either during the day or at completion of play. It was pointed out that the Standard Scratch Score has nothing to do with the play of Club Members but is a theoretical calculation of a Scratch golfer playing imaginary shots of a defined length according to Course Category which defines run of ball plus 35 putts

and taking into consideration Course Value and overall average length.

★ Regarding handicapping it was pointed out that the Golf Unions have issued new recommendations in reviewing Category 1 players. It was suggested that somewhat similar, though perhaps less stringent recommendations be adopted in reviewing players in Categories 2, 3 and 4.

★ It was agreed that it is the responsibility of the player if he wishes his handicap reviewed to produce cards of Open Tournament performances signed by the Promotee Club Secretary and most important of all a note of the Special Scratch Score for the day.

★ It was ascertained that most clubs have a method whereby a player's handicap lapses after one or two years if no returns have been made and he must thereafter produce cards in the normal way to achieve a handicap.

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## "Goblin" replies to S. C. Dennis of Upminster

To The Editor,

Dear Sir,

S. C. Dennis of Upminster writes in your December issue, complaining that I made a most unwarranted attack on his profession. I am sorry he got that impression; my articles were meant in no such spirit at all.

I have always felt very strongly that the Head Greenkeeper and his men are the most important people on a golf course. In fact I would far rather see a Head Greenkeeper in the position he often had before the war, of some authority over the behaviour of members on the greens, than the position he rather implies many have been reduced to today. I entirely agree with him that the art of greenkeeping is something that should be really well rewarded; and that no course should be understaffed. This is surely a matter of the members being prepared to value their greenkeepers at what a really qualified greenkeeper is worth. It takes years to get to know your greens and to acquire the art of good greenkeeping, which you can certainly only do by experience.

So much else of what he says is again entirely in accordance with what I was saying. The pre-war way *was* to feed greens little and often; and this is still done on at least three of the courses I know where the greens are still good. In general it is not the experienced and enthusiastic greenkeeper who is behind the trouble; it is much more likely to be the general tendency in treatment and advice sometimes thrust upon him rather against his instincts.

He is right too, of course, about the careless and disrespectful treatment of courses by many of the members of the clubs which play on them (see my piece about trolleys).

I can tell him that I wrote not only from the impression of the courses in my own county, which I have known for twenty years or more, but also of many of the courses upon which major amateur and professional tournaments have been played this year.

As far as I am concerned—the very best respects to him and his men.

Yours sincerely,

"Goblin".

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## HON. SECRETARY'S NOTES



A MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE Committee will be held on Saturday, 10th March at the "News of the World" offices, Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4, at 2-0 p.m.

May I remind the members of the above Committee that the Southern Section Annual Dinner takes place on Friday evening, 9th March, at the Talbot Restaurant, London Wall, E.C.2, and I am sure the Southern Section would be very pleased to welcome any of the Committee who can make the trip to London on Friday to join them.

C. H. Dix.



### THE SCOTTISH GOLF GREENKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION

NORTH AND MIDLAND SECTION  
SOCIAL EVENING — OUR ANNUAL Social Evening will be held in Nicoll & Smibert's Rooms, Nethergate, Dundee, on Saturday, 17th March, at 7-0 p.m. Tickets (price 8/- each) may be had from members of the Committee.

Wm. Ritchie,  
Secretary.

### MISCELLANEOUS

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HEAD GREENKEEPER required. Staff of five. Modern equipment. Enquiries, stating age and experience, to the Secretary, Worcester Golf and Country Club, Boughton Park, Worcester. Tel. 22555.

WANTED for Holywell Golf Club, Brynford, Holywell, young couple for Professional/Greenkeeper and Stewardess or young man for Professional/Greenkeeper. Bungalow available if required. For terms of employment and salary, apply to Hon. Secretary.

about possible damage through playing on half frozen greens than either the Committee, the Secretary, or the Greenkeeper. Once the "anything for a quiet life" school takes over the running of a club, or lets itself weaken with the years into that attitude, then hope dies.

### Never recovers

Worse still than indecision is the failure to provide, year by year, decent sites for frost holes, where the grass is evened and looked after well enough to make some substitute for normal putting. If the frost hole is just stuck in an uneven bit of fairway or approach, you can't blame the members for grumbling at being expected to use them. Even this, though, may not be so bad as the weakest way out of all—compromise. Under this system the holes are merely placed near the front of the green throughout the winter, frost or no frost, and left there—throughout the dressing period, and throughout any foul weather that may come. The result, of course, is progressively fouler and more uneven putting throughout the winter, and the whole front part of the green knocked so badly to hell between November and March that it never really recovers from year to year.

It is really a libel on the greenkeeping profession to suggest that such a thing could ever happen. But it does. The only laugh I ever had out of the whole business was when one impatient member solemnly asked: "What's all the fuss? It never *really* freezes in this country anyway!"

Next Month—Why is a Weed?

appeared to be a set pattern around the grassy arena.

Now and then she—for I believe the leader was an old doe—would take her troop out of sight over the dunes to reappear again in the ring with her entourage complete. I do not know how long this performance would have lasted for it was suddenly interrupted by the appearance of a shepherd and his collie. The hares quite unhurriedly, and in single file, evacuated their dance floor and disappeared.

Again, in May, 1959, I saw a similar performance by 14 hares in a grass field, near Grantown on Spey and in October, 1958 I saw a party of eight mountain hares perform in the deer forest of Clova, in Angus.

*With grateful acknowledgments to the "Farmers' Weekly", 24th November, 1961.*

### OF SOILS AND SPECIES—continued.

or early August with 6 lb. dalapon to the acre and top dressed with 2 tons of ground limestone. 10 cwt of basic slag, sown in the following spring, given 3 cwt. of a compound fertiliser and not grazed until autumn.

The object in chemical ploughing is to change sward composition completely, but there may be advantages in selectively changing the composition of natural hill pasture.

*With grateful acknowledgments to the "Farmers' Weekly", 8th December, 1961.*

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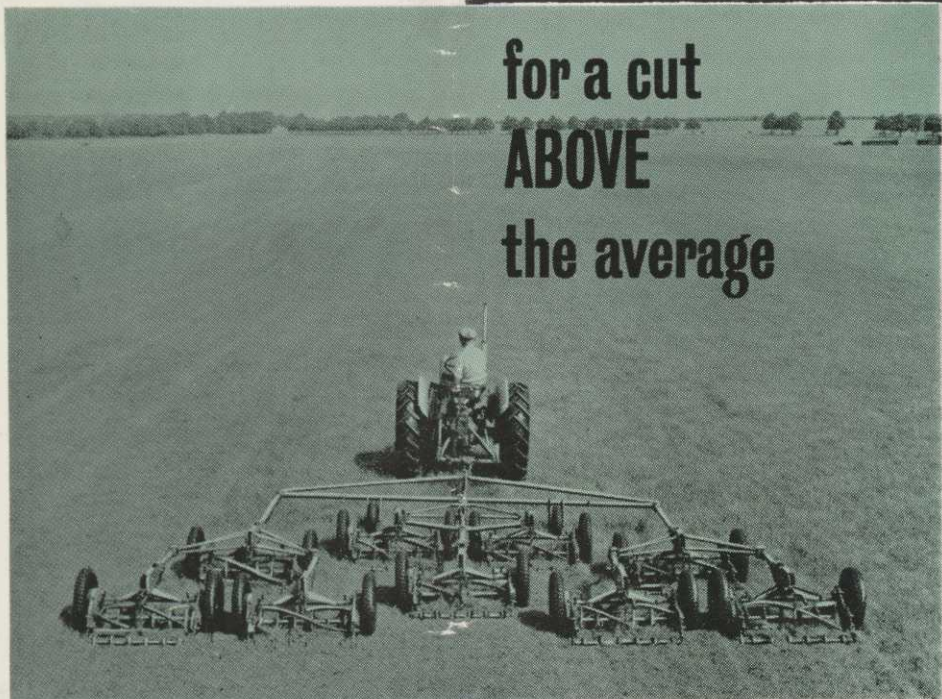
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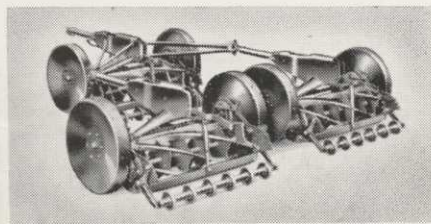
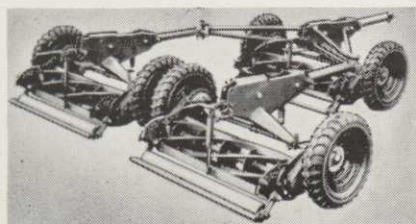
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