

**IN**

## **COMMITTEE**

**by**

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*Chairman, West Section.*  
S.G.G.A.

When asked to write this article I had no idea what to write about, then the thought came to me that the ordinary member had very little knowledge about what goes on in committee.

I know that most people in any association have some crib or other regarding the way the association is run, but the trouble is that the complaint always falls on sympathetic ears and nothing is done if the grievance does not reach the proper quarter. How much more successful our association could be if constructive argument was put forward in the right place at the right time. The place and time being, of course, our Annual General Meetings. However, instead of having a good percentage of the members at the meetings, we are lucky if we can muster up 20, most of whom are committee men.

At the Autumn Tournament and A.G.M. of the West Section, held at Troon Municipal last year, we had 50

members taking part in the golf tournament but only a handful of them were willing to come into the A.G.M. to hear how their Section was being run or to nominate new members on to the committee. I am sure they all enjoyed their day but how much more successful it could have been if everyone had filed into the other room and taken part in their Section A.G.M. Now you may think I am harping on about this, but maybe it is not a bad point if it makes even one or two more take some heed in future, because the person who puts forward an argument to a friend, and there it ends, has absolutely no leg to stand on if he will not attend the A.G.M. and voice his opinion to the body of the meeting.

### **Apprenticeship Scheme Benefits**

I think I am right in saying that the average member does not know half of what goes on behind the scenes, meaning, of course, in the section committees. I am sure you have all heard of the apprenticeship scheme, but have you given thought to just what this means to our job in future? It is a far-sighted view but it means that when these young men have served their time and are treated as tradesmen, they will know exactly how they stand as far as wages and conditions are concerned, and nothing but good can come of this. This year a committee has been formed which consists of members from the Scottish Golf Greenkeepers' Association, the British Golf Greenkeepers' Association, the Scottish Secretaries and English Secretaries, the Golf Unions and Turf Research Institute. They are not only going to discuss the Apprenticeship Scheme but will be going into many aspects of greenkeeping. Many clubs have already started an Apprenticeship Scheme of their own but I am sure they will be quite willing to come into the wider arc of things when our Scheme becomes fully mobile.

Another thing which your Executive Committee has been actively pursuing is a pension scheme. Again, I know that a number of clubs have taken up the Golf Union's suggestion regarding this,



but more and more clubs are falling into line and I think the pension scheme will ultimately come to all clubs. The main scheme which is operating just now appears to be a good one and will certainly benefit the greenkeeper. It is interchangeable in that a member may change his job if he wishes and still remain within the pension scheme if, of course, his new club are running the pension scheme.

Now, on the lighter side of things, we will be running the prize draw again this year, and it will take place at Dundee. Up until now the Association has done very well from the prize draw but I feel that as individual members we could do a lot more. Last year at least 30 per cent of the books were returned unsold. I know in a few cases it is very difficult

to sell raffle tickets of any description, but if an extra special effort is made it is wonderful what can be done and, remembering that money is power to any association, I am sure that everyone who is allocated books will do their utmost to sell them this year.

### Association Ties

It has been put forward at the Executive Meeting that the S.G.G.A. should have a tie of their own, and with the artistic skill of Mr. J. Campbell (St. Andrews) we have finally agreed on the colour and motif. A few dozen have been ordered and will be available shortly from Section Secretaries, but you will hear more of this in the near future.

I have always thought that all greenkeepers in Scotland should be in our Association but in the past our entry form has been rather a stumbling block to anyone wishing to join as he had to find a proposer and seconder which, in some cases, was impossible due to clubs being so far apart. Steps have now been taken to rectify this and now anyone



wishing to join can apply for a form, complete it himself and return to the Section Secretary and be accepted into the Association without all the complicated committee work necessitated by the previous system. What a wonderful thing it would be to have every greenkeeper in Scotland in our Association; then we could truly claim that we represented greenkeeping in Scotland. I am going to suggest at the next meeting of the general committee that when the forms go out for the annual tournament every member should receive a nomination form enabling him to introduce a new member.



### Advantages

Actually, the benefits of being in the Association are numerous—three golf tournaments a year with excellent prizes and a day off to meet other greenkeepers, four lectures in the winter months, covering all subjects on greenkeeping, the privilege of being a paid subscriber to the Turf Research Institute which means that you can ask their advice on any technical matters relating to the golf course, you receive a copy of the Research Institute's Journal every year and the Sports Turf Bulletin every quarter. You also receive the British Golf Greenkeepers' Magazine every month, and all these periodicals are given free to members of our Association. The most



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important part of all is probably that one is able to meet other greenkeepers and talk greenkeeping.

I know that this article appears to have turned out to be more of a lecture, or some might consider it a rap on the knuckles, but if you do not know what is going on you will never learn and I have tried in some small way to enlighten the members of the Association as to what goes on behind the scenes at the committee meetings.

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