

The British Golf Greenkeeper

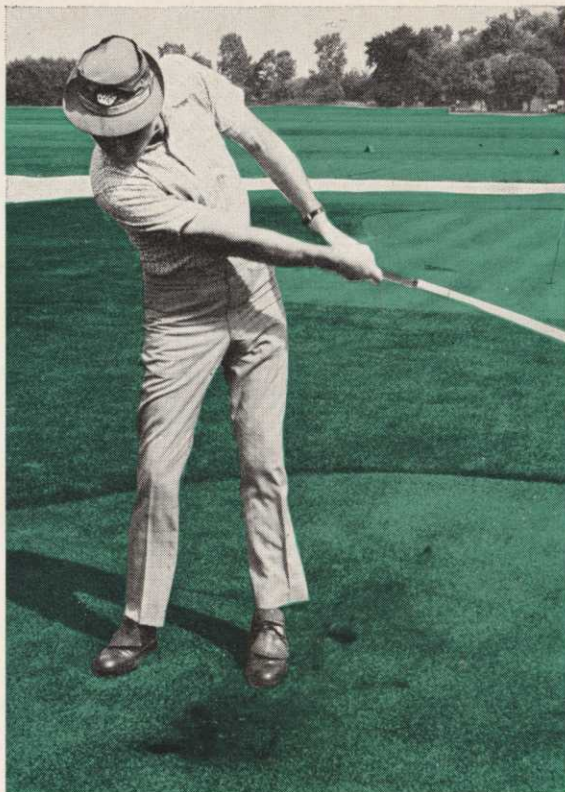


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GREENKEEPER

HON. EDITOR: F. W. HAWTREE

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FEBRUARY 1973

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*Different types of fine fescue in rows at Bingley to
compare appearance and maximum growth when
mown only once or twice a year. (S.T.R.I. copyright)*

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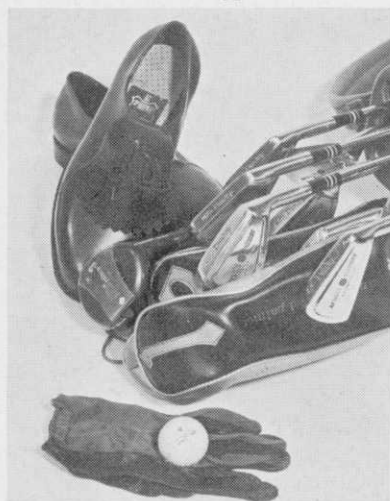
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Winter Maintenance

by

W. N. S. Bisset, S.D.A., *Advisory Officer, The Sports Turf Research Institute*

THE WINTER PERIOD may be the time when there are fewer golfers about, and when the weather is rather inclement for working outside at times, but there is still a fairly full programme of work which should be carried out on the golf course. This work is required whether the committee wants any major construction work done or not. As in the summer, there is no reason why the staff should not be usefully occupied although there is not the same urgency.

OUTSIDE WORK

Greens

In the winter there is not a great deal which can be done on the main putting surfaces although the few items involved are important.

Aeration work should be carried out occasionally when suitable weather conditions allow. Slit or solid tine aeration should be provided and hand spiking may be necessary in addition on some wetter areas in order to achieve a general improvement. With soil conditions being naturally more moist in the winter there are more opportunities to achieve deeper penetration, thus allowing water to pass more easily to underlying levels or to drains. Spiking is required particularly where main greens receive heavy winter use.

In the late autumn and early spring, Fusarium patch disease may appear and a supply of a suitable fungicide should be in stock to provide treatment at the first sign of disease. If the course is prone to Fusarium attack, then preventive sprayings may be carried out but this is not generally recommended. Switching regularly to drop dews in the mornings can help in disease prevention.

During the same period, when mild, moist weather conditions prevail, worm activity may reach proportions when control measures become necessary. Care should be taken to apply the chemical strictly at the rate stated on the container.

Topping of the greens with the mowers set high should be carried out not only to maintain a tidy appearance but also to prevent the sward growing too long and thus becoming more susceptible to disease attack. This work should be confined to periods of open weather when there is little chance of a severe frost.

Winter greens or temporary greens should have been prepared during the late summer and autumn period but, if the surfaces have become soft and bumpy, do not hesitate to apply a light dressing of a suitable sand.

Tees

To maintain reasonably open surfaces on the tees, thorough slit or solid tine aeration should be provided on occasions during the winter. Light sanding of winter teeing areas can also be carried out to maintain firm, dry stances for the golfer. Any tees which have been badly worn as a result of summer play should be renovated by turfing, in the early part of the winter, using turf from either a nursery or a suitable 'out of the way' part of the course, e.g. practice ground. Top dressing with a sandy compost to true-up levels after turfing is also important.

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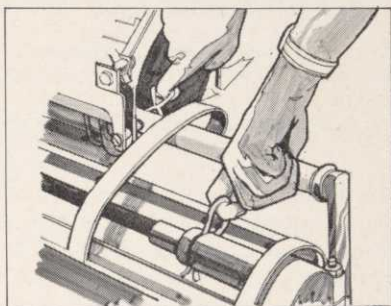


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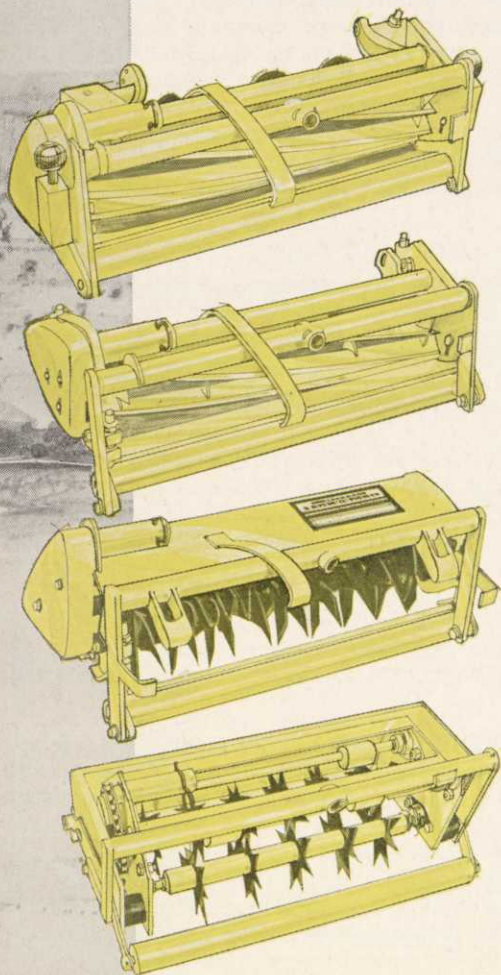
Verti-Cut units use durable, yet thin offset blades to remove thatch and grain as they begin to form. With 67" of cut (the Verti-Cut units are the same width, work at the same speed, and use the same grass catchers as the greens and utility units) and a riding vehicle, these attachments are ideal for preventing the development of thatch etc., lessening the need to take greens out of play for renovation.

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Drainage - The controlled release of water

by

W. A. Adams, *Soil Science Unit, University College of Wales, Aberystwyth*

It is not by accident that the majority of British golf courses of high repute are on natural deposits of sand. There are a number of reasons, but one major one is a priority requirement for good drainage. All sands drain well, although natural deposits vary in their coarseness, angularity and degree to which the sand has been sorted into particles of similar size. It is the dune sand upon which most of our foremost seaside golf courses are constructed which shows a high degree of uniformity in particle size and degree of sorting.

Dune sand is a fine sand blown a short distance inland off the beach by strong sea breezes and thus separated from the coarser particles which cannot be transported. It is also cleaned of particles of very fine sand and silt which are carried further inland by the wind. Dune sand is therefore a clean, wind-sorted sand which contains particles within a quite narrow size range. For example a typical dune sand would contain around 90 per cent of its particles in the size range 0.15 - 0.45 mms. There are various sand deposits sorted to a greater or lesser degree by wind or water, however, I have drawn particular attention to dune sand because both theoretically and in practice it is a suitable material for golf green construction.

Pure sand does, however, have its drawbacks. It may be subject to drought depending on the depth of sand and nature of the sub-stratum as well as weather conditions. It is also nutritionally a poor medium for grass growth. With modern irrigation facilities drought need not be a problem on a golf green; nevertheless leaching losses of plant nutrients are high and fertilizer use inefficient. The limitations inherent in sand deposits can be overcome to a substantial degree if golf green drainage is approached as a matter, not simply of getting rid of water, but of controlling its release.

To achieve satisfactory water control it is necessary to have an impermeable base to the green and to have stringent control over the depths and combinations of materials in the construction. Water flow from the construction can be controlled to maintain a fixed water-table height and, should irrigation be necessary, this can be achieved by backflow of water from the drain outlet, i.e. sub-irrigation. Whereas golf green construction by this technique has been developing steadily over the last five years or so in the U.S.A., little, if any, progress has been made in Britain. In fact, the only pure sand construction of which I am aware, having the facility for water-table control and sub-irrigation, is an experimental five-a-side soccer pitch built to our specifications at the Cardiff College of Education.

Surprisingly enough this prototype construction was formulated as a natural development of our detailed analysis of drainage problems on top-class soccer and rugby grounds in Britain. We have met problems, as might be expected, nevertheless we are confident that this experimental pitch will be a key factor in providing sound data for future sand-based constructions in golf and bowls as well as soccer and rugby. It would be interesting if a major future development in golf green construction in Britain were to stem from a resolve to overcome drainage problems on intensively used soccer and rugby pitches. Particularly since the construction referred to incorporates the very common golf course material, dune sand, as a key constituent.

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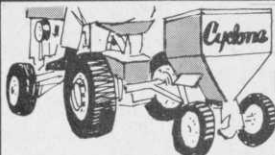
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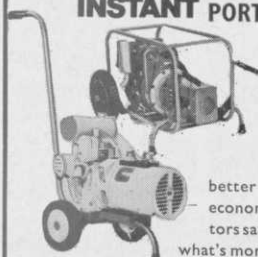
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MOATS

by

Patrick Smartt

THE UNEXPECTED SIGHT of a constructed water hazard on the Downfield course, over which the Sunbeam Electric Scottish Open was played during the summer, made one old geezer pensive. No doubt others of the same vintage rubbed their eyes in wonderment.

It was in front of a green. We have all been tested by burns, an occasional lake and rivers. I seem to recollect that before the war, at Stoke Podges, at a short hole (the 17th?) there was a lake. At Worplesdon there is a similar hole in that a lake has to be carried. The Burn, at the first, on the Old Course at St. Andrews is near the green, but it is narrow. At Carnoustie the Barrie Burn has the effect as Frank Pennink put it; 'which gives even the best players "water on the brain".' Unlike that on the Old Course, it is twenty-five feet wide and a real menace at the final holes.

A memory, the bitterness of which has diluted with the passage of years, is of a hole on the Bulawayo course in (then) Southern Rhodesia. I can pronounce the name of the river that crossed and re-crossed it, the spelling is now beyond me. It was in the Rhodesian Championship (medal) and, for me going well, that water cost 16 strokes.

All those hazards were natural and the best tactical use had been made of them. So it would appear, from watching on television, was that created 'water bunker' on Downfield. It posed a question which I dare suggest is the hallmark of a good hole. While the ordinary player could not reach it in two, the good one had to make a choice of going for it or playing safe. The handicap player, from his teeing-grounds, could probably pitch over it easily with his third, save for magnet in front of him. Each of us has suffered that.

Despite all that, to the rheumy eyes of an ancient, it did not somehow look right. There was a sense of some chromium article of furniture placed among antiques.

The idea of water bunkers started in the United States. As has been the custom for many years, it looks as if we shall copy them again. While in full agreement that hazards are there to be avoided, I prefer them natural – something the course has been built round. Except on links, it has to be accepted that bunkers are not natural; they were handed down through history, the sand of the old links brought inland. There are, doubtless, round the country, holes that have streams encircling the green. The short Island Hole at Royal Ashdown Forest is an example. These are little more than ditches, shallow in water content, and usually too narrow in which to swing a club. Consequence, a lift and drop with penalty.

I am confounded in my mind as to the purpose of water bunkers guarding a green. It is one thing for an errant stroke to cost half a stroke, as it was deemed to do in days gone by. It is puzzling why water has to be brought in as a 'No Go' area. One of the notable coaches in golf was questioned as to the correct stroke from water. He admitted he had not tried.

Has this innovation been introduced to counteract the expertise of the 'name' players putting the ball from sand to six or four feet from the flag?

At this stage, I think it only fair to make it clear that at no time is there any consultation with the Editor as to what I write about. Thus my opinions, amateur versus professional architect, are probably ageing him before his time.

We had the niblick as the recovery club in the long ago. We have had the sandblaster, and now the sandwedge. Do we look forward to the waterwedge? I have always thought moats to be connected with castles, granges, and monasteries, inhabited by carp.

If we are to create artificial moats, is some day-dreaming fisherman with rod and line to be startled by an umbrageous bellow of 'Fore'?

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The manufacturers of Benlate, Du Pont, have just brought out a leaflet on turf diseases recommending Benlate for Fusarium Patch, Red Thread and Dollar Spot. Benlate at 6 oz. in 2 gallons of water per 1,000 sq. feet is recommended for Fusarium Patch Control and at 4 oz. in 2 gallons of water per 1,000 sq. ft. against Red Thread and Dollar Spot. It is probable that after further work a recommendation will also be made for the control of OPhiobolus patch.

Benlate (under the name Tersan 1991) is already being successfully used on a wide scale in the U.S.A. for the control of turf diseases. There is no doubt that it is destined to

meet with an equally enthusiastic reception from groundsmen and greenkeepers throughout the U.K.

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Letters to the Editor

Dear Sir,

It was with great dismay that I read in the British Golf *Greenkeeper* that it was proposed that our title should be changed from Head Greenkeeper to Golf Course Superintendent.

Is the reason for the proposed change that after all this time we are ashamed of our title as were the dustbinmen, sorry Refuse Disposal Operatives? Or is it that our counterparts in the U.S., which we inevitably copy sooner or later, have such a title?

Maybe it is that we are trying to gain some recognition. Surely such recognition comes from protracting our skills and the way we conduct ourselves.

I myself am proud of my title – HEAD (A chief person, the first, top) GREEN-KEEPER (Keeper of the greens) and do not wish to malign the men who were proud to bear it before me.

Personally the changing of our title would not amount to a change in our status, but would be regarded as a load of bull's nitrogenous waste.

Yours faithfully

R. BARNES

(Head Greenkeeper, Sand Moor G.C.)

Dear Editor,

I have read the article by G. P. Simpson entitled 'Aeration on the Golf Course' and congratulate him on drawing attention to this vital process.

There is, however, one aspect he omitted. This is the use of vibrating blades which destroy any sub-surface pan but leaves the turf unimpaired. Operating on golf greens at a full 7 ins. depth, this is probably the most valuable of any single operation, although it should supplement other work rather than replace it.

Yours faithfully,

G. W. DAVIDSON

Cambridge Soil Services Ltd.

News



from the Sections

Special occasions

- Jan. 23 South Coast Section Lecture
Feb. 1 Sheffield Section Lecture
7 Southern Section Lecture
12 North West Section Lecture
21 Midland Section Lecture
Mar. 7 Southern Section Lecture
23 Southern Section Annual Dinner
30 Midland Section Annual Dinner

SHEFFIELD SECTION

Chairman:
G. HERRINGTON
(Lindrick)

By H. Gillespie
Hon. Secretary/Treasurer:
63 Langsett Avenue,
Sheffield S6 4AA

Retirement

We all wish a long and happy retirement to Harold Tanfield, Head Greenkeeper at Renishaw Park Golf Club, who retired at Christmas.

Harold started his greenkeeping career at Lees Hall Golf Club and joined Renishaw Park after the war and so completed 26 years on retiring. He joined the committee of this section in 1947 and has been no mean performer in competitive golf, playing off a single figure handicap for many years.

Good luck and best wishes to you Harold!

Lecture

The lecture on 1st February, 1973, will be given by Mr. J. B. Ball of Vitaseamin Ltd and the subject 'Calcified Seaweed'. With the increasing use of soil conditioners, this should

be a very interesting lecture; the venue as usual is Abbeydale Golf Club, 2 pm.

The March lecture at Abbeydale, on the 1st, is on 'Course Architecture' by Mr F. W. Hawtree, this should provide a full house.

5th April will bring a visit from our old friend Mr. Glyn Vaughan of Ransomes with a demonstration of their 'Course Management Equipment'.

A Happy New Year to everyone.

NORTHERN

By Walter Heeles

Chairman:
J. SCOTT
Wetherby Golf Club

Hon. Sec.
7 Tentergate Close,
Knaresborough, Yorks
HG5 9BJ

October

The first of the Winter Lectures took place at the Horsforth Golf Club on Thursday, 26th October, 1972. The subject of the Lecture was 'Turf Diseases', which was put over very aptly by Mr. A. R. Woolhouse of the Sport Turf Research Institute.

November

What could be described as one of the highlights of the Northern Section Calendar for 1972/73, took the form of a visit to the Nacton Works of Ransomes Simms & Jefferies, Ipswich. In spite of the general lack of support for the occasion, 28 Members mustered for the visit.

Following the arrival at our overnight stop at Felixstowe, a dinner was provided by our hosts and, later, to make the evening pleasant, a plentiful supply of liquid refreshments, etc., was provided once again by courtesy of our hosts, Ransomes. The next day our party travelled to Ipswich to witness the behind the scenes story of the birth of an Auto-Certe's, or a 5-7 Gang Mowing unit, not forgetting the many other kinds of machines manufactured at Ransomes.

Lunch was as a parting gesture, once again furnished by our hosts, after which our Chairman, John Scott, thanked Mr. Wilson, representing the firm, for his close attention and for his firm's generosity.

Our thanks are also due to our President, Mr. W. Mountain (Bill), for his generosity towards the cost of the coach.

The second highlight of the Northern Section took place on Monday, 27th November in the form of a Buffet Dance which was held at the Knaresborough Town Hall. 108 members and friends took part and a most enjoyable evening was had by all. A general discussion was held at the Horsforth Golf

variety trials (2) seed mixtures trials (3) other miscellaneous trials (4) machinery.

Bed, breakfast and evening meal charge at the local Midland and Fleece, at this moment of time, is £2.50. They will be booked by me at a later date when I know how many are going. The Coach will be free.

Will those who intend going, let me know in plenty of time to complete final arrangements with the Research Station, hotel and coach booking.

This is an educational trip and it is in the interests of the Golf Clubs, so bring it to the notice of your Greens' Chairman and collect the expenses!!!

February Lecture

The Speaker for Wednesday 7th February 1973 at the 'George', will be Frank Smith of Maxwell Hart. His subject will be 'Grass Seeds'.

New Members

A warm welcome to the following new members:

V. Edmonds	(Addington Court)
R. G. Thyeson	(Muswell Hill)
R. P. Denning	(Woodcote Park)
D. Green	(Shirley Park)
J. T. Dunn	(Welwyn Garden City G.C.)

Annual Dinner

This will be on Friday 23rd March 1973 at the Walton Heath Golf Club, Tadworth, Surrey. As in the past, there will be a Stableford Competition in the afternoon in which Members and their Guests may take part.

There will be a sweepstake of 50p per person and tickets for the Dinner will cost £2.00.

Dinner places will be reserved only on receipt of appropriate amount. Nice and early please!!

NORTH EAST

Chairman:
MR. J. SIMPSON

By G. Jeffries
Hon. Secretary:
55 Brackenfield Road,
Framwell Gate Moor
Durham

Appointments

Colin Moseby who has been First Assistant at the Bedlington Golf Club, has now taken on the post as Head Greenkeeper at Blyth Golf Club. As most members will know Colin was Head Greenkeeper at Blyth before

moving to Bedlington, I am sure that all members will join me in wishing him every success in his new appointment.

This is a letter written to me by Sam Farrington who was Head Greenkeeper of Warkworth Golf Club, we wish him well in his new appointment also.

Flat 1,
Prior Hall Golf Club,
Corby,
Northants
8th December 1972

Dear George,

By the time you receive this letter I will be on my way to the above golf club to take up my new appointment as Head Greenkeeper.

I would like to thank you and the chairman for running a first class NE section, for the lectures and tournaments you have run, and for the comradeship I have enjoyed with all the lads in the section; may I wish all the section seasons greetings and a successful future.

SOUTH COAST

By H. MacGillivray

Chairman:
I. GREENFIELD
Goodwood Golf Club
Sussex

Hon. Secretary:
Fail-Toc
2 Whickers Close
Rowlands Castle
Hants.

Seasonal Greetings

May I send best wishes to our President, Vice-President, to all our members and never forgetting the various friends who have helped us throughout the year.

Future Lecture

We are commencing the New Year with a lecture arranged for 7 p.m. on 23rd January, when we hope to have speakers from Flymo Limited. The venue is to be Ampfield Golf and Country Club, Winchester.

Retiring Secretary

Let me express on behalf of all our members in the section our sincere thanks to Tom Graham for what he has done for the section. Many people, I feel, failed to realise the hard work put in by him, especially as he is one of the founder members of the section.

However, though stepping out of the chair, his familiar face will be around as much as ever and I dare say his hands on our golf prizes as well, as he now has more time to play.

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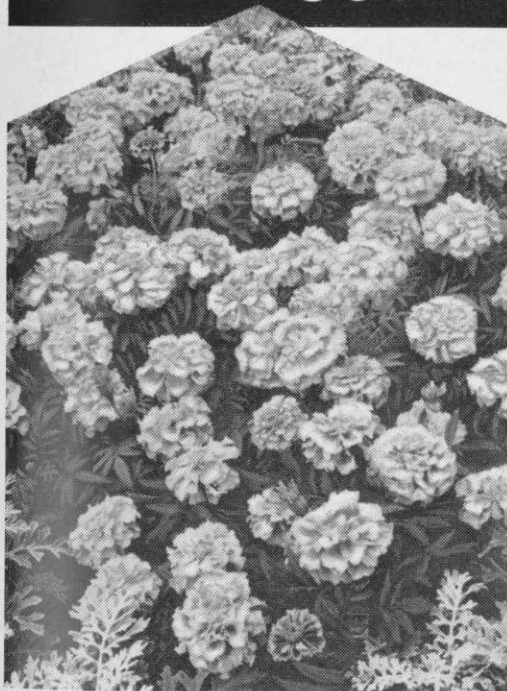
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