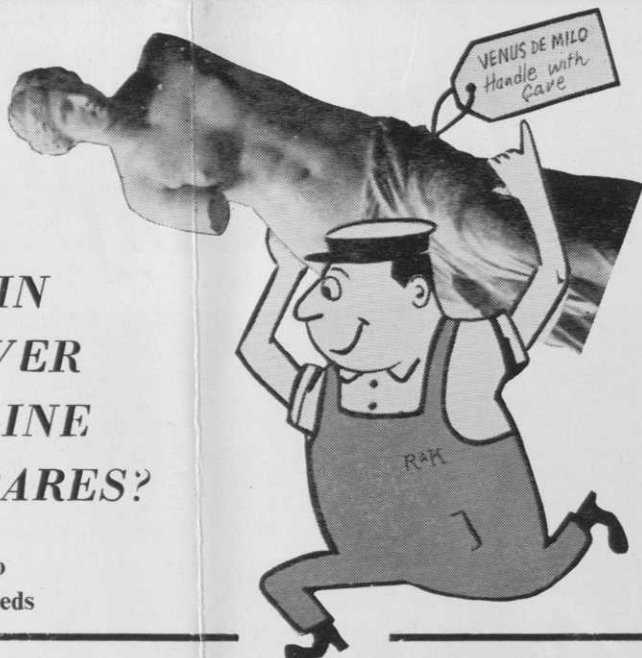


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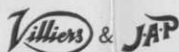
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THE BRITISH GOLF

# GREENKEEPER

HON. EDITOR: F. W. HAWTREE.



FOUNDED 1912.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY FOR THE  
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GREENKEEPING AND THE GAME  
OF GOLF BY THE BRITISH GOLF  
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No. 224 New Series

NOVEMBER 1963

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And to prove it I have put  
All my irons in the fire!*

GILES H. RUNYON.

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# TEE SHOTS



by the Editor

We wrote earlier this year about the site we looked at in France where the Belgian frontier would form a very definite "out of bounds". Last month we were on a site in Belgium where just the reverse was true. The ground lies alongside a new canal and about 150 acres have been used to dump the material excavated. Unfortunately, somebody seemed to have forgotten about the top soil.

\* \* \*

Widnes Golf Club has bought itself another six acres alongside the 13th hole and hopes to extend next year. Six acres is not much, but Widnes is so compact that it will bring proportionately big advantages.

\* \* \*

Charlie Moore at Stanmore has stripped 10,000 turves plus at his 7th hole and is re-modelling the green contours. This will give him more space to cut holes. A noted turf specialist, who saw it earlier this year, said that the best thing to do was to put a bomb under it. Mr. Moore is carrying out the alterations equally drastically but more efficiently.

\* \* \*

We walked round Burnham Beeches the other day and met Mr. J. C. Burnham, the Professional and Mr. R. Cox, the Head Greenkeeper for many years. Like most others, he was complaining about the excessive worm activity this autumn, but it was still a joy to play round this lovely Buckinghamshire course. The cottage where Arthur Lacey, one of the original members of this Association, once lived still stands amongst its trees by the 6th green and apart from changes in numbering, the course is still much the same.

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## SIX HUNDREDTHS DO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

says John Stobbs in the fifth of his current series of articles.

THE Ryder Cup result, of 20 points to the United States professionals against only 6 to ours, over the six rounds of foursomes, fourballs and singles, has raised again what seems to be becoming a permanent bogey about the condition of British golf.

The one constant factor in all the reports and opinions, from Press and players alike—as indeed it has been after our last two open championships—was conjecture whether the larger American ball might not be the root cause of the difference in competitive ability between the two teams.

Cynics and statistics-wise men dissent, of course, on the simple suspicion that even if the Americans played all their golf with our ball, and we played all our golf with the American ball, they would still win. This, of course, can be neither proved nor disproved. But every argument of mechanics and play stands against it, and in favour of the theory that we could play that 2% more reliable golf which would match them if all our players were forged, in method and temperament alike, upon the 1.68 in. ball instead of the 1.62 in.

The advocates of a British swing to the larger ball cannot prove their point decisively either. But both analysis and opinion seem to be moving their way all the time.

### Masses against?

The whys and wherefores of the argument do not concern us here. But since the vast mass of British ordinary golfers and clubs are still assumed to be against any change, on the simple theory that the British ball goes farther for them than the U.S.A. one, this might be a good moment to take a look at the issue from the greenkeeper's point of view.

Likely differences between play with the 1.62 in. and the 1.68 in ball come under three headings. *First:* the

amount of wear and tear on the courses. *Second:* the possible effect upon the putting-surface problem. *Third:* the possible effect upon course value.

The wear and tear factor might prove to be very telling. Any man can try this for himself. Procure ten American-size balls (of any age), line them up on any well-worn patch of turf (just about where the majority play their shots to the green from would do well, but the practice ground might be wiser!) First, taking all the time in the world, and playing each stroke as if it was one in a normal game, hit each British-sized ball to a green or target. Take a rest for a bit: then think anew about the shot in terms of the American-sized ball; and then strike all of them to the green as well (taking one club more, if the wind is against, perhaps).

### Not so deep

Experiments already tried suggest that for nearly every ordinary golfer this comparison tells its own story. On examination, the line of divot-marks left where the ten American-size balls were struck will be less deep and damaging to the fairway than the line of ten left where the British balls were struck. This: despite the fact that the player will still have been striking them all with the habits he has devised for coping with the smaller ball.

Once a player gets accustomed to the larger ball, and adjusts his striking method to it, he tends to take out far less turf than he does with the British ball, because the American ball sits a little higher on the turf than the British. Even in a tight lie, there is not the same incentive to "dig" for it. The American ball, moreover, rises up into the air much more readily from the face of the club than the British one: so that—quite irrespective of the height at which it sits on the grass—it demands far less of a digging blow to get it up in the air. On long shots, certainly, it needs much more driving forward, and much less squeezing up.

This may seem to conflict with the fact that so many top American players dig out big divots on short wedge shots. But that, when true, is merely because

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they are playing a particular kind of low-flying push shot which calls for squeezing the ball. For the vast majority of strokes hit by the ordinary middle and long-handicap week-end golfer, the likelihood is that far less turf would be taken, and fairway wear and tear substantially reduced.

The second factor which might come into the greenkeeper's life where the change to be made in this country might be a sudden relief from complaints about the trueness or otherwise of the greens. This would not be because trueness of surface would be in itself any less important to golf. It would remain absolutely paramount. But greens would at once seem truer than before—simply because the larger-sized ball runs more easily over minor irregularities which badly affect the smaller one. The difference in size between a 1.62 in. ball and a 1.68 in. looks small in figures, but in actual effect is quite substantial.

### **Less Bunkers**

The third and perhaps most important effect might prove to be that upon course value: although a really well hit drive will go just about as far with the American ball as with the British ball, a shot hit at only 75% accuracy will go markedly less far with the big ball than the small. So that a thin, cut drive which will still clear an out-of-date bunker on the right and land beyond it on the fairway with the 1.62 in. ball, with a 1.68 in. ball will lose length and drop right into it. The use of the bigger ball by all golfers would cut down the modern demand for extra bunkers to cope with the longer hitters, who carry the ones originally designed for the course.

Anything which lessens the need for extra bunkers—and may even lessen the need for some of the existing ones—is a natural ally to the greenkeeper.

The same factor would operate in course length. There are numbers of courses which today either have already been lengthened to match the modern British ball, or which are on the list for lengthening. With the 1.68 in. ball, the need at once lessens; simply because only the really well-hit shot will go the

sort of length which causes the trouble—and really well-hit shots amongst ordinary golfers are in the minority.

### **Floater?**

This line of thought can be, and has been, taken further: to suggest that part of the answer to the greenkeeping problem is to reduce radically the length the ball will travel, so that 380 yards becomes a full-length two-shotter, and 450 yards a genuine par-5. Henry Longhurst has many times suggested that the simple answer to all question of regulating the performance of golf balls (cutting out all elaborate resilience tests, etc.,) is simply to say that: "A golf ball shall float".

That simple fact would introduce a constant relationship between weight and surface area; giving balls constant ballistic characteristics irrespective of size. Trial and error would produce the best optimum size for play; there might even be room for three or four sizes for current strengths and temperaments of players.

What such a rule would certainly do is to end for good the stretching-out of courses which has been going on for the last forty years; bring back into play bunkering and hazards long left behind, enable clubs to revert to older tees closer to previous greens; and even—perhaps—enable week-end golfers to get round in 2½ hours again instead of 3.

### **Early Riser**

It would also give the greenkeeper a shorter, simpler course to maintain; with considerably less wear and tear on fairways, since the floater would rise for the ordinary golfer even more easily than the present American-size ball. Nor would the ball be difficult to make. In fact most manufacturers could probably turn it out merely by substituting a light fluid in the core-sac of each ball instead of a heavy one—put in at present simply to bring the ball up to 1.62 oz. weight.

What we probably need is some rich man to start his own public course and club, and make using a floater a condition of playing, having designed the course accordingly. It would, at the very least, be an interesting experiment.

## IN BRIEF

*J. R. Escritt summarizes some impressions of his trip to the United States.*

*Places visited included:—United States Golf Association, New York Office; U.S.G.A. Greens Section, Eastern Region; Hercules Powder Co., Wilmington, Delaware; Hercules Country Club; Merion Cricket Club, Philadelphia; Pennsylvania State University (and its golf course and playing fields); Williams Country Club Weirton (near Pittsburg); Rhode Island University and Turf Experimental Station; Beltsville Experimental Station, Washington (U.S. Department of Agriculture); Pebble Beach Golf Club (south of San Francisco) and others.*

Some points of interest:—

1. There is a great variation of conditions over the United States and it is difficult to find any really comparable with ours.
2. The philosophy of turf management (and everything) is different. This is partly due to the fact that there seems to be plenty of money available.
3. Few playing fields were seen at all. There do not seem to be many playing fields as we know them and I even heard an appeal over the radio for education authorities to provide physical education instruction in the schools.
4. Discussions were held on a fashionable process (i.e. hydroseeding) for sowing grass seeds, particularly on road verges.
5. It is clear that in general much more nitrogen is used on turf than we use in this country. I am not clear as to whether this is necessary although the grasses they use (e.g. creeping bent) tend to be heavier feeders than the grasses we use.
6. Penncross creeping bent grass gives a very good performance particularly in areas with a climate similar to ours but having a very warm summer. (Available as seed though very expensive).
7. Piper bent, a selected strain of velvet bent is apparently not as good as some velvet bent obtained from Yorkshire in 1937.
8. The best known strain of fine fescue—"Pennlawn" is comparable only with "Chewings" fescue, i.e. no great improvement if any.
9. Penn State University. A new set of experiments on physical soil conditioners may prove useful. Like most of the experiments seen, it is sponsored.
10. Construction costs for golf courses are extremely high compared with ours.
11. Everything is geared to the motor car age including the siting of golf courses, driving ranges, etc.
12. I gather that the Americans have not a good answer for clover and knotweed control. They were interested to learn about C.M.P.P. Clover was found on every area of turf seen right across the States. Knotweed was also very common being seen not just in muddy areas as we find it on football fields, but also on tennis courts, golf greens, etc.
13. Tall fescue selections are being worked on as being possibly useful for rough, tough turf such as racecourses.

---

## Your Questions Answered

The Association of British Manufacturers of Agricultural Chemicals (ABMAC) has appointed a full-time Information Officer to answer questions and give you news about agricultural chemicals.

She is: Mrs. Kathleen Holbrook.  
Address: Room W.4, 3 Buckingham Gate, London, S.W.1.

Telephone: Tate Gallery 2707 or Covent Garden 2363.

ABMAC now has 33 members and represents virtually all British producers of agricultural chemicals. The chief concern of ABMAC—a non trading organisation—is maintaining high standards of efficiency and safety.

It works closely with the Government on legal and other measures governing safe use of agricultural chemicals.

£70,000 municipal golf course is planned at Basildon New Town, Essex.

Last week more than 100 women at Barnsley, Yorkshire, Golf Club had signed a petition in protest against a ruling that women must not wear slacks in the club bar. Mr. John Hirst, 59, the Club Secretary said: "I have no objection to women wearing well-tailored slacks, but these tight trews are a bit much".

The Club Captain, Mr. Robert Robson, said: "This summer we had two women playing with bare midriffs. This is a golf club, not a Riviera beach. We must keep certain standards.

Mr. James Leonard left £100 to the Burnham Beeches Golf Club in his will to make a new bunker at the 440 yard 18th hole. Two bunkers on the left were not enough for Mr. Leonard. He wanted one on the right.



# THE N.A.G. HURLINGHAM EXHIBITION

## 1963 Show Success

## 90 Exhibitors

WE visited the N.A.G. Hurlingham Exhibition on the afternoon of the first day. By that time a car could only go in when another came out and the catalogues for the second day were already being sold. Inside there were more visitors and exhibition tents than ever—the grandest pavilion by far being that of the N.A.G. itself with a considerable staff in proportion to the importance of the occasion.

Indeed every stand appeared as well staffed as it was stocked. Messrs. Relf & Kendall, happily in their usual shaded corner, had at least six representatives

in white coats to conduct the visitor through the mysteries of mower repairs, and to show how far we have come in a generation, one corner of their large stand showed a Triumph horse-drawn mower. Two of these machines side by side could cut 18 fairways in five days and this particular machine was in service up to 1927. One wonders where.

Beyond this stand lies the "Bowling Green" area of the exhibition in its early days. Here were Fisons fertilisers, all Patisson's pleasant and practical equipment, with Greens' mowers next door but one. Sandwiched between, Mr. George of Messrs. Frank Keep Ltd. showed us lovingly the finest sample of Dried Blood he could remember and sniffed approvingly at a dish of Fish Meal. The Dried Blood, by the way, come from Aberdeen, but not the Fish Meal. One wonders why.

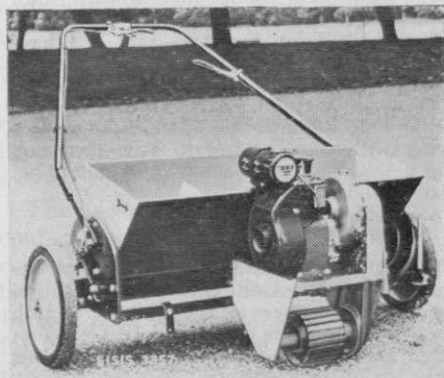
*Continued.*

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On the Cricket Ground, Messrs. T. Parker & Sons (Turf Management) Stand 3 occupied most of one side of the double ring. Even so, the wide range of this firm's exhibits could only just be crowded in. The resulting display was an exhibition in itself.

On the "Sisis" stand, Mr. G. H. Taylor showed us the power-driven Super Coultas and a giant size Trulute, which had been developed for running tracks, but which could also have strong-arm applications in preparing seed beds.

The new Auto Turfman with B.S.A. engine operates on three tines width only, but this ensures a four-square performance with the tines at 4 in. intervals and a full 4 in. penetration.

\* \* \*

Continuing the outer circle, we came to the Ransomes display and Mr. P. A. Marshall, well known to many greenkeepers, took us through the intricacies of the new powered quintuples. The cylinders are P.T.O. driven and this eliminates gears on the machines themselves. Back rollers are also absent and the height of cut from  $\frac{3}{8}$  in. to  $2\frac{3}{4}$  in. is adjusted by the angle of two small trailing rubber-tyred wheels. We like especially the layout of the machine with two units cutting just in front of the tractor wheels, thus avoiding tracks.

\* \* \*

Messrs. Gibbs were in the same area. Their display concentrated on Ransomes mowers, hand tools and tractors.

Messrs. R. C. Craig's tent was obviously a greenkeeper's rest centre and a strong contingent of the Southern Section was discussing affairs of state under the chairmanship of Ernest Folkes.

At a distance safe enough to permit their sprinklers to operate, Messrs. BOIL were demonstrating "pop-ups", spray lines and the several devices which ease the greenkeeper's worries in dry weather.

Messrs. Carters were showing grass seeds and fertilisers amongst their sports ground requisites and the boxes of seeds mixtures in growth were enviably velvety.

Charles H. Pugh Limited showed the full range of Atco mowers and their new leaf sweeper is an attractive buy.

Lastly to the S.T.R.I. tent, where there was much to learn either from the display itself or from the staff present, which included Mr. Bernard Clayton, the Senior Advisory Officer and Mr. Noel Jackson, the Chemist. Mr. Escritt, the Assistant Director, also looked in on the way between Palma and Paris via Bingley and Tandridge.

There was much more to the exhibition than we have been able to describe. Soil sterilisers, baby tractors, P.J.M. Sprayers. The best advice, if you missed it this year, is to take a day or two off in October, 1964 and make a full inspection in person. There is a great deal to learn there in these days of rising standards and smaller ground staffs.

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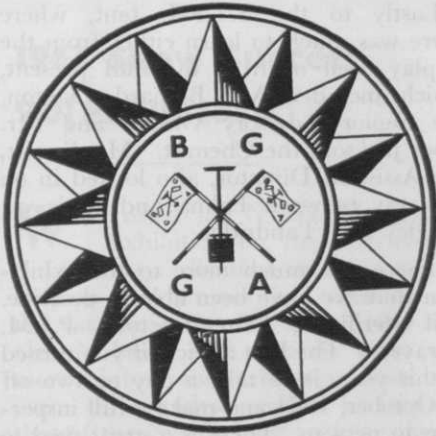
#### SUTTON'S GRASS ADVISORY SERVICE

##### Mr. Owen P. F. Sutton takes over

It has been announced by Sutton & Sons Ltd., Reading, that the valuable work in regard to the production and upkeep of turf for sport, so ably carried on for many years by the late Martin Sutton is to continue under the direction of his cousin, Owen P. F. Sutton. Owen Sutton is fifth in line of descent from the founder of the house of Sutton and has qualifications which admirably fit him to carry on this work. He has been a keen games player from his early days and has first class practical experience of most ball games played on grass—cricket, soccer, hockey, golf and tennis. He is also a well-known figure at the first class football grounds of this country. His keen participation in games has given him a very practical understanding of the problem of the Groundsman, Greenkeeper, and Parks Superintendent—whose job it is to prepare turf to give satisfaction to the players using it.

Mr. Owen Sutton has been a Director of Sutton & Sons Ltd., for 27 years. An Old Harrovian, he spent some years studying estate management before he entered the firm. In taking over the inspired work of his late cousin, he brings to his task both enthusiasm and experience. There is no doubt that under his guidance and with the assistance of the keen and well-trained staff, Sutton's Grass Advisory Service will continue to make steady progress in the interests of "Turf for Sport" and those connected with it.

# News



from the Sections

## NORTH-EAST

By T. Oliver

Chairman:  
J. SIMPSON  
(Ponteland G.C.)

Hon. Secretary:  
Heathery Cottage,  
Heathery Lane, Gosforth,  
Newcastle-on-Tyne 3.

### Annual Competition

ABOUT FORTY PEOPLE PLAYED IN our Annual Competition at the Tyneside Golf Club, Ryton, on Thursday, 19th September, and others like myself who did not play had a walk round. It is always a pleasure to meet old friends on these outings.

Results:—Scratch Prize: Joseph Miller Silver; D. Gray, Scratch: Unattached, 71—74=145. Ransomes, Sims & Jefferies Challenge Cup: 1st nett, J. Hayes (+1) Northumberland, 75—73=148; 2nd nett, T. Nutman (6), Tynemouth, 75—76=151; 3rd nett, J. Simpson (15), Ponteland, 78—74=152; 4th nett, R. Derham (7), South Shields, 80—73=153; 5th nett, T. Green (4), Ravensworth, 79—76=155; 6th nett, M. Gunn (+1), Chester-le-Street, 78—77=155; 7th nett, S. Pope (5), Tyneside, 74—82=156; 8th nett, D. McNeal (17), Chester-le-Street, 79—79=158; 9th nett, H. Somerville (8), Alnmouth, 79—79=158; 10th nett, T. Murphy (12), City, 81—82=163; 11th nett, W. Bleazard (16), Ravensworth, 82—81=163; 12th nett, D. Turpie (9), Whitley Bay, 81—84=165; 13th nett, J. Hudson (10), Tynemouth, 78—87=165; 14th nett, N. Frazer (19), Chester-le-Street, 81—84=165; 15th nett, P. Malia (18), Middlesbro', 84—83=167; 16th nett, D. Morgan (17), Alnmouth Village, 89—82=

171; 17th nett, M. Moat (15), Ponteland, 88—84=172; 18th nett, J. Wroath (18), Ravensworth, 86—86=172.

### Presentation of Prizes

The Chairman, Mr. Jack Simpson welcomed all present and hoped all had a good day. He introduced Mr. Jones, Mr. Baldwin, Captain of the Tyneside Golf Club, Mr. Storey, President, Northumberland Union of Golf Clubs; Mr. T. Jefferies, Captain, Ponteland Golf Club; Mr. Caughey, Secretary, Tyneside Golf Club, and on behalf of the British Golf Greenkeepers Association, congratulated Mr. Jones on his election as President of the English Golf Union. Mr. Jones replied thanking the Association and said he was very pleased with the membership of the North East Section but he was also concerned about the lack of interest shown by many other Greenkeepers throughout the Country, who were not members of the Association. He had mentioned to Golf Club officials the benefits to be had by joining the Association. The Chairman then called on Mr. Baldwin to present the prizes. On behalf of the Club the Captain hoped we had a good day, said they were very pleased to have us, and looked forward to a return visit. The Chairman then thanked the Captain and Committee for the courtesy of the course and congratulated Mr. Doherty and his staff for the grand condition of the course, the greens were ideal. He also thanked Mr. L. Lowery for looking after the cards, etc., and Mr. Vaughan of Ransomes' Sims & Jefferies.

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