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GREENKEEPER

HON. EDITOR: F. W. HAWTREE.



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Woman is a necessary evil which no home should be without.

Old Russian Proverb.

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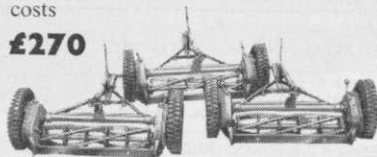


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TEE SHOTS



by the Editor

THE American Golf Club Superintendents' 35th International Turf Grass Conference was held in Philadelphia between 9th and 14th February. Upwards of 2,000 superintendents were expected to attend (record attendance was at Miami in 1962—2,250). The conference featured four days of study with thirty-three different speakers and included a public course clinic and business meetings held midway. An exhibition showing virtually every type of machine and material used on golf courses ran throughout the week.

* * *

A motel with every room carpeted with artificial turf so that guests may practise putting in privacy, and a hole in the corner of each bedroom is in a £687,000 project for a leisure centre at Southport. The centre will offer a 24-hour golf driving range, swimming, archery, ten-pin bowls, artificial ski-runs, a hiliport, and sauna baths.

* * *

Cardiff will have a second miniature golf course by the summer. Work has already started on the five-acre site and the city's parks department hope to open the course at the beginning of the summer.

The parks department will open a third miniature golf course in Heath Park next year.

* * *

Burnley Parks Committee have turned down a proposal for a golf centre in the town.

The Parks Committee rejected the proposal because there was no land available which could be used as a suitable site. The golf course at Townley is being extended to 18 holes.

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IN

COMMITTEE

by

CECIL N. GEORGE,
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

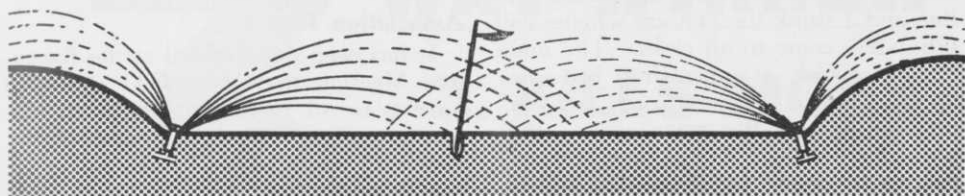
members taking part in the golf tournament but only a handful of them were willing to come into the A.G.M. to hear how their Section was being run or to nominate new members on to the committee. I am sure they all enjoyed their day but how much more successful it could have been if everyone had filed 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,

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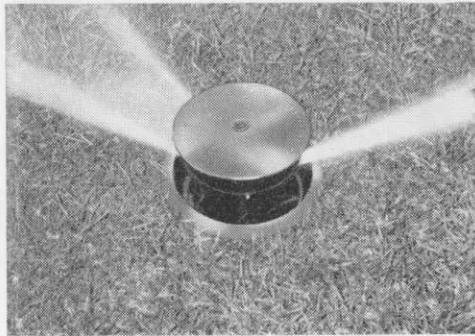
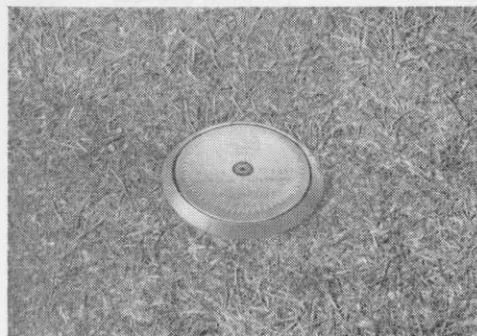
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but more and more clubs are falling into line and I think the pension scheme will ultimately come to all clubs. The main scheme which is operating just now appears to be a good one and will certainly benefit the greenkeeper. It is interchangeable in 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



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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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LAST

MONTH

by

The Editor

WIDOW'S MITE

February's first light crept through my bedroom shutters in Brittany in a house on the cliffs above Trébeurden. Mr. Jacques Ferronnière, Managing Director of one of France's two biggest banks, built it a few years back for holidays with his fifteen grandchildren. Our weekend, however, was to be devoted to a new golf course. Over the past few years he has been collecting together small parcels of land from Breton families. This is no simple matter, involving long "parlottes" in farm kitchens with people mystified by the very word "golf". Now most of these discussions have enabled him to unite enough ground to make a start. One widow is still unconvinced but as she only holds the key to the practice ground she can be allowed to reflect for another year.

The land is not dear by today's standards, but it grows only gorse, stone walls intersect the whole area, and rock is never far from the surface (above as well as below). But when it is cleared, plenty of fine, black soil (pH 4.4) comes to light and the prickly planning stage is mercifully over.

SEA FOOD

The day before this trip, I spent an evening with Toro at Toro. The first Toro was represented by the Vice-President of Toro mowers in the U.S.A., Mr. Robert Gibson, and Mr. John Norton, the Sales Manager; the second, a Paris restaurant of the same name to which Mr. Jack Desrues, Toro's agent in France, with a nice sense of the fitness of things, escorted his party of nine representatives of five nationalities. We drove off with oysters, clams, and sea urchins (prickles again) before we got down to serious eating. The flavour of sea urchins reminded strongly of that area of beach at certain coastal towns where a long iron pipe reaches not far enough out to sea and where cautious mothers advise their children not to bathe. But then so many great eating experiences approach the limit of edibility.

Back to England on the 3rd via Domont, a site conveniently near Le Bourget, where clearing has just started on a new 18-hole layout. Being in a protected zone of forest so close to Paris, the owner had to go as high as the Minister before he could get approval. Now three fairways are under way and the teams are moving forward, one cutting, one burning, one clearing, one rooting, and soon the constructional team will be able to bring up the rear. It all sounds so easy in writing.

LENNOX HOUSE

Next, to Lisbon, for a couple of quick nine holes—planning not playing. The best evening here was dinner with Mr. Brodie Lennox, followed by an early film from Shell's "Wonderful World of Golf" series. Lennox House is a golfer's home for golfers. The guests sleep in St. Andrews, Muirfield, or Gullane, on the first floor (Birkdale, Lytham and others are up another flight but are slightly less luxurious). The bar has one wall of trophies, golf balls festoon its ceiling and guests help themselves—all part of the Lennox way of life which is golf, golfers and golfing with a hotel of special charm and character. It is no accident that booking in advance is indispensable, but a new annexe in the garden with more rooms for more golfers is just on the point of completion.

Dinner was for three with Mr. John Escritt, who was out there advising Estoril and the Lisbon Sports Club. We were delighted when our host was handed a note sent by his wife. Mrs. Lennox, as you should by now expect, was Portuguese Ladies' Champion but a little of Scotland must have brushed off on to her. The note read: "Dinna hae the sweet. There's no' enough for you".

Sea food in Portugal was even more varied than at El Toro. Goose Barnacles and Dog Whelks, however, must be classified with Sea Urchins as just over the limit of what the ocean should reasonably be expected to offer.

Two days later the scenery changed to Buckinghamshire where I admired the nearly completed results of Phase I of Ernest Folkes' four new holes at Flackwell Heath. Ernest reckons 9,000 turves went down round one hole alone. Like many others he is blessing the weather which has helped him to do twice as much as could be expected since the autumn—three holes out of his four.

TWO LOOPS

Next door at Burnham Beeches five sets of new tees and the foundation of one new green were already under way and two areas of new fairway cut out. These changes were all that were needed to put the 10th tee in front of the club house. With pressure on first tees growing everywhere, the second starting point is doubly important, especially at Burnham, where new firms setting up on the Slough Industrial Estate nearby are lengthening the waiting list.

BACK TO BRUSSELS

Just before we go to print I shall be back in Brussels on a housing development site in which golf and sailing are to be provided. The lake is being made artificially and is over a mile long. The method is new to me. A barge with the necessary machinery was built on the site and top soil was removed from the golf course and lake area. Pumping started and the sand and water mixture was piped on to the golf course. The water flows back into the lake and the sand builds up the course to the required contours. Replace top soil. Prepare to sow. Easy, isn't it?

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