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# The British Golf Greenkeeper

HON. EDITOR: F. W. HAWTREE

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### Front Cover Picture:

John Dolwin (right) of forestry consultants, Dolwin and Gray, of Crowborough, Sussex, admires one of the trees - an 18-inch high Western Hemlock. With him is Selsdon Park Hotel Golf Professional, Bill Mitchell. See item on page 16.

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## Tee Shots

The Kanto Region Greenkeepers Association of Japan has sent a magnificent 'Kabuto' to our Association as a memento of our 60th Anniversary. The 'Kabuto' is a traditional head-dress elaborately wrought and decorated. There are now five Greenkeeper Associations in Japan and the Kanto region surrounds Tokyo. We shall all wish to express our grateful thanks for this gift from such distant colleagues.

The Motspur Park Exhibition was as successful as ever and a great place for reunions. Professor Troll and John Zak from Massachusetts University met several old friends especially on the Fison's stand. Professor Troll spent six months sabbatical leave at Fisons in 1969. He tells me that he has recently invested \$70,000 in equipment for his courses in turf management at Stockbridge Hall, Department of Plant and Soil Sciences.

Attendance at the 1st British Turf-grass Symposium at Ransomes' Ipswich works on 4th October, was over 200. British Greenkeepers, Secretaries and Green Committee Chairmen sat down with contingents from Canada, United States of America and European Superintendents' Associations. The Chairman was Geo, McPartlin, O.B.E., of the Golf Development Council and the Golf Foundation.

The theme was 'Drainage and Irrigation'. Dr. Ede and Gordon Fisher from Cambridge opened the series of six papers, each of which was followed by a panel discussion and question time.

W. D. Hawthorn spoke on Automatic Watering and H. Swan on Water Hazard Construction. Tom Mascaro (Hahn Co. U.S.A.), described mechanical means of maintaining surface drainage and J. R. Escritt, Director of the Sports Turf Research Institute, outlined Progress, Limits and Research.

On the morning panel were Robt. W. Mitchell, President Emeritus of the Golf Course Superintendents of America and David Gourlay, this year's President of the Canadian Association. L. Millar (Burnham & Berrow), Geo. Wilson (Le Prieuré, Paris), two Scots in the British Golf Greenkeepers' Association, which organised the event, were in support.

After lunch the panel changed to Ivor Scoones, Chairman of the B.G.G.A., J. K. Glass, Thorpe Hall Golf Club, John Campbell, St. Andrews, and F. W. Hawtree whose father founded the Association 60 years ago. The Session concluded with Ransomes' film 'The Royal and Ancient Game'.

On display were the gold plated Hole Cup, mounted as a trophy and presented to the British Greenkeepers by the American Association and a Kabuto, a 60th Anniversary gift from the greenkeepers of the Kanto region of Japan.

An International Tournament with four teams from the British Isles, Eire, Canada, U.S.A., and Europe was held the day before. The Scottish



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## Tee Shots

team had been victorious after having piped themselves out to the Tee in the afternoon.

The Canadian Association presented a desk set to Len Arbon, Head Greenkeeper of the Woodbridge Golf Club where the match had been played.

The Symposium was organised by the B.G.G.A., in the interest of good greenkeeping and golf at large.

The New Zealand Golf Greenkeepers' Association now has 127 financial members. Recently they held a field day at the MANUKAU GOLF CLUB. Over 70 greenkeepers were conducted over the course by Head Greenkeeper, Jack Showler. He explained the drainage problems which had arisen since installation of the automatic irrigation system, and how these problems were being rectified. The Wimpaway semi-hydraulic fairway mower proved its versatility on the wet practice fairway. Though on rubber tyres the units gave a clean cut without clogging, and with no wheel tear marks. Also on show was Power Equipment Ltd.'s Power Pony fitted with the extended rotor cutter, and triple mini gangs. The R.O.H. Verticut mower showed its potential as did the farm bikes displayed by Honda and Suzuki agents. A private contractor's stump remover, hydraulic-mounted, made a quick tidy job obliterating a macaracarpa stump. It also made quite a 'hit' with one of Whitford Parks' senior committee men, standing by chance on the lethal side. How's the head Morri?

Notcutts believe that the best way of buying nursery stock is by inspection, and welcome visitors to their extensive nurseries by appointment. Visitors should fix an appointment with Mr. Dyter. If necessary, Notcutts will arrange overnight accommodation as well as meeting visitors at a railway station or airport.

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The Autumn Council Meetings have been busy looking ahead to 1974 and 1975's new golf courses. Both commercial and municipal ventures into multi-sports developments, with golf very much in the centre, are now finding favour.

The Parks and Sports Committee of Maidstone are going ahead with a scheme to build a golf course on the Cobtree Estate, near Maidstone. The site of 110 acres is on undulating farmland and a large proportion of mature woodland will be preserved. Work is expected to start on construction in 1975.

The Borough of Hemel Hempstead, just before transformation with the new Dacorum Local Authority District, are making plans for an 18-hole championship public course, together with other recreational activities, on a magnificent farmland site overlooking the village of Bourne End. The project is exciting considerable local interest. Work is expected to start next year.

Outline planning permission has now been granted to the Trustees of the Earl of Bathurst to build a Country Club and Sports Centre in Cirencester Park. The complex will include an 18-hole championship length golf course.



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# Andrews 'Pro' Day

Robert H. Andrews Ltd., held their annual exhibition of grass maintenance equipment at Windsor Racecourse on October 10th, a valuable opportunity to compare the products of all well-known companies displayed within the same paddock.

Richmond Gibson Ltd., introduced the Driftmaster TD100 to their range of smaller selective weedkiller and liquid fertiliser applicators. This model is able to provide a spray width of up to 105 in. while being towed by any power unit using their Driftmaster principle whereby the active material is applied directly to rollers which in turn apply it to the ground with no risk of drifting on to adjacent borders, shrubs or ponds. Up to 1 acre can be covered by the 22-gallon tank.

Husqvarna were showing their established 160 and 260 models, all round saws for professional use and suitable for cutting medium-size timber. Powerful enough for felling and cutting while sufficiently light and convenient to be effective for limbing work. The saw has been awarded a design prize for styling but it is not just a pretty face. Silencing and minimum vibration as well as making daily maintenance easy, provide the operator with as many safety factors as possible. Also introduced was the 140S model, a new light-weight version suitable for thinning work and limbing.

Stihl were providing opposition with their chain saws providing a wider variety of petrol and electrically driven models. Strange how they both claim to have the worlds' newest light-weight model with built-in vibration elimination. But all equally impressive in their demonstrations.

Ropers displayed their range of Ride-on garden and lawn tractors

with all the operator comforts thrown in. All the models are provided with easy gear change and speed control. The RT-10 is described as being styled with sports car flair; it may not match sports car performance but it does have the agility and manoeuvrability around the flower beds. Attachments are available for all models from an organic shredder and cultivators to snow blowers. Roper also have electric and gas powered rider-mowers with rotary action mowers similar to the petrol driven models.

Andrews exhibited the smaller range of products from Cylone spreaders to domestic aerifiers (needing the weight of household bricks for better turf penetration) and Tarpen hedgecutters.

Of the larger machinery Leyland were showing their powerful tractors and Buckingham's showing the size of trailer that you would need a tractor to pull.

Hayter and Atco both exhibited their extensive range of mowers for domestic and professional use of both the rotary and cylinder mower varieties.

The largest exhibitor was Ransomes who perhaps provided the greatest variety of machinery from their already well-established cylinder mowers such as the Auto-Certes to their Hydraulic power 5/7 Gangs cutting up to 10 acres per hour at 7 m.p.h. and the smaller version of this, the Motor 5/3. Both have hydraulic power for continuous fast cutting and provide the ability to cut with any number of the units at any one time. This hydraulic lifting enables the cutting width of 15 ft. to be reduced to a transport width of only 8 ft. 2 in. in the 5/7 model.

The Ransomes-Hahn Tournament Triplex, the one-man machine greens' management system, was also on show with all its accessories for spiking and verti-cutting. Individual aerifier and verti-cut units were also

Continued on page 24

# And now Verderers?

Patrick Smartt

A Head Greenkeeper is a man of the soil. There is, in the term for a working farmer, 'mud on his boots'.

He knows the grass, on his fairways and its reactions to the vagaries of our climate. The same applies to his greens. He has an affinity with his course, though he would probably reject, gruffly, any such high falutin' idea. Nevertheless he regards it as *his* course. He is unlikely to lend an ear to suggestions offered by someone coming from a links – if he is inland. Or from someone belonging to a course several hundred feet higher, or lower than his own.

His programme for the day is dictated by the weather. A fact not always recognised by committees. Years ago, when a secretary, a Green Committee chairman asked me my plan for the week, I said that I should meet the Head Greenkeeper (with whom I worked hand in glove) at 8.50 each morning, as usual. As with the farmer, the day's work depends entirely on whether it is wet or dry.

In this era of 'progress', mechanisation may have taken some of the mud off his boots. At least one of his staff must be a mechanic, unless contractors are employed. That is a mistake. The firm, thinking of 'man hours', rush the job.

Reverting to 'mud on the boots', they say that tournament professionals can assess the pace of a green, by the feel through their shoes when walking on it. This I believe to be true, for I have experienced it. Not, let it be known, through any prowess as a golfer, but because as a secretary I used to inspect a certain number of greens every day.

That was before the club laid on water. A hilly course, the lowest

greens were 500 feet above sea level, the highest close to 700, and exposed to buffeting winds from all points of the compass. The underfoot feel of the sheltered putting surfaces was like treading on a pile carpet after a thin mat.

Away from greens, the present fashion appears to be to dispense with rough, and use trees instead. I am not one to favour the elimination of luck (raising the game to the bloomless heights of chess, as Bernard Darwin put it). But I do feel that trees are too big a gamble. Golfers grouse a lot about the kicks and lies you get from the 'umps and 'ollows on links. Surely the chances of a kind ricochet off a tree are slim indeed?

Solitary trees, here and there, add to the scenery. One, judiciously placed, can dictate the strategy of a hole. It is there for all to see, and avoid. Years of playing over bush-lined fairways in Africa have left their mark. There is no more disheartening sight than that of a ball curving deep into a wood. You are not faced with the matter of circumnavigating one trunk and its branches. Surrounded by trees, a way through, under or over, has to be found. There are times when there is not even the escape route of chipping out sideways.

There is the story of a fine amateur playing Pine Valley. It was not his day off the tee. Finally his caddie remarked: 'You don't have to watch them. You listen for them.'

Tree-lined holes even evoke a touch of claustrophobia. Which is why you will see world-class players driving with light spoons or the No. 1 iron – the most difficult club in the bag. In hickory days, unaccountably I formed a friendship with one.

If woodland leads to defensive golf by the expert, what then is the most important golfer, the club member – 'parent' or 'artisan' – to do? Defensive play seldom got anyone anywhere. Which does not mean that a

sensible 'appreciation of the situation' comes amiss. Between the expert and the handicap player, the appreciation will differ, perhaps the most important thing in golf.

Greenkeepers and their staff are hard to come by these days. Apart from the normal mowing the Greenkeeper of today has to be something of a chemist, in the mixing, or dilution, of the chemical dressings, now a must. He has, possibly to be a garage hand. The way things are going, it looks as if to his accomplishments must be added a verderer (forester). Trees, whatever the townsman may think, have to be watched.

The whole set up is steadily approaching that of an Area H.Q. in the army. G.O.C. the secretary. G.S.O. the Head Greenkeeper. Assuming that the latter is not a garage hand,

and that the club cannot afford a squad of R.E.M.E. attached to the club, there will be G.S.O.Q. (times change), in charge of 'Transport'. Then there is the question of the trees. If the Head Greenkeeper has to assume the responsibilities of verderer, one can only suggest that he recruit Macbeth, or whoever moved Birnam Wood.

I can never see troops, branches tucked into the netting over their 'battle bowlers', without becoming moved by mirth. Anyone seriously believing the countryside is moving towards him, either loses his stripes or resigns his Commission.

There is the story of two elderly golfers shouting: 'Fore' at two newly planted saplings. I do so hope that it is true. The good ones so seldom are.

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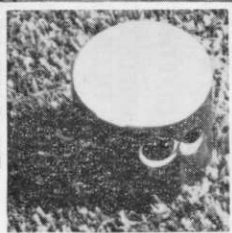




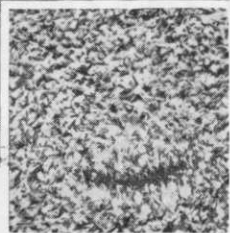
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