

[Hire from Page 9]

asset. If you lease, it is not shown as a contingent liability on the balance sheet. You can put the total expenses against tax. You can budget for future years knowing that the outlay will be fixed, and you can therefore avoid the ups and downs that sudden capital expenditure brings.

Cash flow is on everyone's lips these days. The reason is often because companies have tied up their money in fixed assets as opposed to funding them from income.

You treat a lease machine as if you owned it. You insure it yourself. You maintain it and repair it exactly as you look after your own machinery.

What happens at the end of a lease? Well, many items are valueless at the end of the period of, say, five years. Whether you own or lease them, they are only fit for scrap. Some items have many years' use left in them and then, for a nominal payment, the machine can be leased on an annual basis almost indefinitely.

Some items again such as, say, a tractor, have a relatively high value even at the end of a five year period. In this instance, the selling price of this item can be refunded to you as return of leasing payments or the money can be placed against a new unit, for example. (See chart on Page 7.)

As we have seen from the two examples, the difference between capital purchase and leasing is negligible in true net costs.

Although leasing is a long-term hire, it is a totally different beast to short-term hire, and the two, as you will see, should not be confused. Short-term hire probably gives greater scope for capital and financial saving than most people realise.

The hire facility is often used as a stop-gap measure to replace a machine which has broken down or to fill in until a new one is delivered. Although

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# **TEXTURF**

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### [Hire from Page 11]

this fulfils an important need at the time, it should not be regarded as the only purpose of hiring.

We have already analysed the true cost of keeping machinery, either through capital purchase or lease. If these costs are related to the actual hours or days that the machine will be used, only then can a real management decision on hire policy be made.

There are many reasons why hire can be justified. It is rarely possible for all units engaged in grass maintenance to have all the machines they need for all their jobs at the same time. Hire gives them the ability to use the right machine at the right time at the right price without tying up that precious commodity, capital.

A Local Authority will accept that, if one department has, for example, a turf cutter, it makes economic sense to cross hire to other departments who have need of such a machine. Often, however, when it comes to an outside source, "it must be cheaper if we have our own" or "it must be more convenient" can be the guiding light.

Do you have a list of the machines that are available for hire on your files? Do your foremen have them? If not, why not?

If you are considering hiring a specialist machine, why not also a specialist operator? By hiring a machine with a man, you save that most expensive of all items, labour. Again, this comment "Our men only cost £1 an hour and if we hire them from outside, they could cost £3". But even your own labour costs are far higher than it initially seems—you have insurance contri-

butions, holidays, sickness, management costs, etc., to take into account.

Indeed, some machines cannot be hired without operator, but this is often for the benefit of both parties, as a sophisticated machine in the hands of an untrained man is a waste of both resources.

Don't be frightened of a price for the job when you hire machines with operators. It is this fear of paying too much that often leads to this very thing happening. Often people want day rates, hourly rates, time sheets and job cards to prove that they are paying for the actual hours they have been charged. If this is the method of hiring you are using, then obviously you do need these details as a safeguard. But if you have accepted the contractor's price for the job, then it is up to his management expertise and labour skills to make sure that the job is done to your satisfaction. It is to his advantage to complete the job in the shortest possible time but, as long as you are satisfied, it is immaterial how long it takes.

With hire, the running costs of the machine are often included, except for damage caused by negligence, and again it enables you to budget the costs of the job exactly and to pay out of income.

Hiring is not an excuse for bad management. People say "When we want to hire a machine, it is not available or we have been let down". With respect, the man who plans ahead and books his machine well in advance is seldom let down. It is the man who tries to obtain it on the day after he wants it and discovers it is all in use who feels let down.



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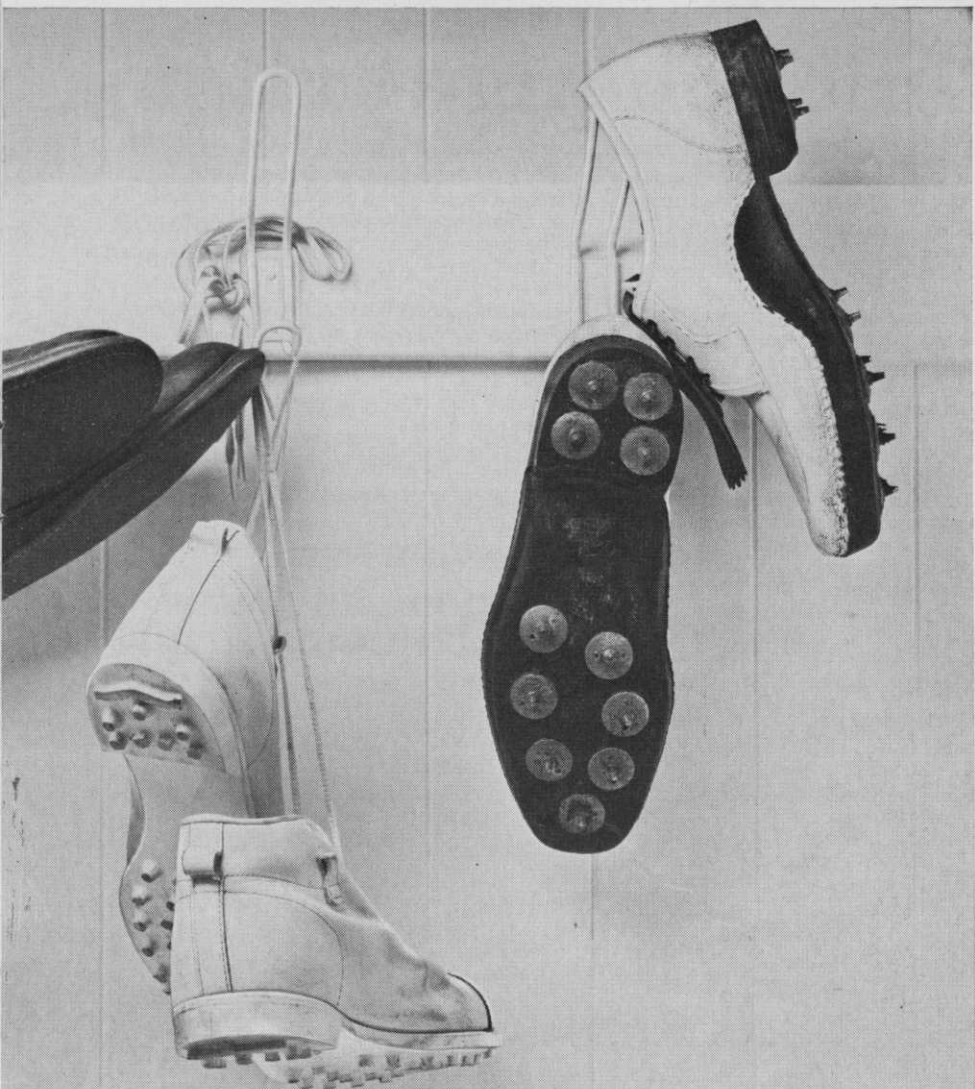
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**Vibra-Spiker** Now spiking takes even less time than greensmowing. High-frequency vibration penetrates to a depth of 1½" with a minimum of compaction. The combination of this unique quick-change unit feature, full 67" swath for every operation, variable-speed units and individual unit lifts make the Tournament Triplex an investment which no club can ignore. Your local Distributor is keen to impress you with a demonstration. Give him a call.

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**RANSOMES**



## Ransomes-Hahn Tournament Triplex



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FOR LEASING  
DETAILS**

# NEWS

MOMMERSTEEG International will have a number of new introductions at this year's Institute of Groundsmanship Exhibition (9th-11th September) including GERONIMO, a broad-leaved smooth stalked meadow grass which will retain its exceptional dark green colour throughout the Winter.

Geronimo will form a most attractive, compact and resilient turf with excellent resistance to rust and is being included in Mommersteeg mixture MM14 which has been designed for sowing down new golf tees, and for tennis courts. As well as containing 20% Geronimo, the mixtures contain 45% Koket chewings fescue, 25% Monopoly smooth stalked meadow grass and 10% Highland browntop.

Among the literature available at the Mommersteeg stand will be the current

sports and amenity turf catalogue which gives valuable advice on EEC seed regulations as well as useful information on turfgrass varieties.

CHIPMAN Limited, Horsham, Sussex, announce that Mr. Denis Thatcher, M.B.E., has been elected Chairman following his recent appointment to the Board of Directors.

PATISSONS have recently introduced P.V.C. moulded Litter Bins in place of the previous steel and fibreglass models, with great success, and are now producing the new Ball Cleaners in this material, and will follow shortly with the tee markers made in the same way. They claim that this is the ultimate answer for the composition of these products after much research and trials of different materials over the last two decades with timber, steel fibreglass and resin compounds, all of which had disadvantages in rusting, cracking, weight, brittleness, leaking and maintenance.

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# Selling your ideas

**THE following is the text of a paper by Gordon West, Head Greenkeeper, Auckland Golf Club, at a recent Greenkeepers' Seminar.**

I TRUST that this paper will provoke discussion because the subject I have chosen deals with an important phase of golf course management, the results of which can have a profound influence on the golf course in general and the welfare of the Head Greenkeeper in particular.

If I were to ask what makes a good golf course I would receive a wide variety of answers depending largely to whom I directed the question. This question would be of interest to some Professional golfers who have been playing in New Zealand recently and seem to derive some pleasure in being quoted in the press as experts in course design and it appears also that agronomy is one of the attributes of a professional golfer, because they sometimes can recognise Poa Annua. Perhaps the Professionals could send our Head Greenkeepers overseas on a regular basis to places where all the right knowledge can be gained, and on return to this country go about the task of completely eliminating that grass which is always causing their nightmares. They then could be justly proud of what they had done for golf in this country. So much for the Professionals opinion, every golfer I think could offer you his ideas and some are always only too ready to do so, as most of us can vouch. But good golf courses need good Head Greenkeepers and there is one asset that a good Head Greenkeeper needs and that is the art of being a good salesman. The Head Greenkeeper who can master the art of salesmanship will discover that he can function more effectively in his job and I will presume for the purpose of

this paper that the greenkeeper has gained enough knowledge in turf culture that will enable him to be raised to the position of Head Greenkeeper. So he has to be able to sell his knowledge to both committees and individuals.

You may have great ideas for the betterment of your golf course but if you can't sell them they are virtually worthless. Salesmanship can be defined in many different ways. My favourite definition is that salesmanship is the art of persuasion. Whether a product, a service or an idea is involved, the same principles of selling apply. Head Greenkeepers essentially sell a service, that of administering and supervising Golf Courses. In order to perform his service of providing the members with the best possible playing conditions he needs tools, men, supplies and equipment and salesmanship is the key to obtaining these materials. The art of persuasion must be set in motion in order to win approval for expenditures that will enable the best playing conditions to be provided.

Many greenkeepers will admit that they are not very good at persuading. Many have chosen this work because they like outdoor work, communicating with nature which silently proceeds from cycles of growth to rest. Head Greenkeepers have become skilled in the art of growing turf and in all the technical aspects of grooming and maintaining a golf course. They have learnt through years of experience and study the many ramifications of their highly skilled art. Some will say that it is a profession, but with this I disagree because in New Zealand it is not neces-



sary even in the most discerning of clubs for the Head Greenkeeper to have a University degree, and until such time as this is deemed essential for the position of Head Greenkeeper it will in my opinion remain a highly skilled art. By and large very few have had any training in salesmanship and as a result many find it difficult to challenge a fast talker or a committee that is charged with the responsibility of managing the club's affairs. The unprepared is at a loss. He has little knowledge of assembling facts outlining the problem and persuading the committee of the course they should take to provide the club members with exactly what they want.

The art of persuasion is an extremely interesting topic. It can be challenging and fascinating. You become more alert to people's reactions when you speak to them. It is a subtle honest approach to win people over to your particular way of thinking.

If the Head Greenkeeper happens to have a club where the committee is small and the club captain is the chief executive officer and who is therefore in a position of making firm and binding decisions without having always to consult the entire committee, he has a decided advantage over the Head Greenkeeper who has to climb over layers of red tape to get a decision on some matter concerning the course. How often have we seen greenkeepers besides themselves with frustration because too many people have to make the final decision. You get large committees arguing the pros and cons regarding the matter of cost and sometimes shelving the Head Greenkeeper's proposal and spending the money on some unproductive unit of the club. It is here that the Head Greenkeeper must make himself aware of other demands being made on the committee and if there is a likelihood of a division of opinion you must be able to supply and press home all the facts of your case. In other words you have to sell it.

It is often in this area that the art of salesmanship comes into play in the true sense of the word. It is important to remember at this point that a good salesman never really sells anything. He finds out what people want and then helps them obtain it. A rewarding feeling is experienced by the person who succeeds in helping others to acquire what they want. To persuade the committee or a chairman of a committee to obtain something the first thing one must do is to find out if the membership needs or wants it, and if it stands to benefit from the new acquisition.

In presenting a proposal the Head Greenkeeper should be sure that he is in possession of all the facts and that they are presented in terms that can be readily understood.

What kind of approach should be used? Does he explain in detail all the technical information which often is only of passing interest to most committee members. They are not interested in the details. They often can't see what difference it would make if the roots are 2in. deep or 10in. deep. This type of presentation only emphasises the things that are of interest and importance to the greenkeeper. Committee men will be far more impressed if the Head Greenkeeper minimises his own day to day problems and makes a presentation based on the things that are of interest to him and the club members. Whatever you are trying to sell you must relate it to the effect it has on the game. Low Scores, Better Lies, Truer Surfaces are magic words. If what you propose directly or indirectly has an effect on the golfer's score you will find that your request will receive a great deal more attention. Likewise if tree planting is the subject and explaining that a particular planting will make the better golfer have to play better golf to score, but that it will not impose too great a penalty on the bulk of the membership who in the main

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