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The British Golf Greenkeeper

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Front Cover Picture

This month's front cover depicts the Burford Bridge Hotel at Dorking, Surrey, site for this year's BGGGA Symposium to be held on Tuesday 7th October. Further details will be announced later but meanwhile make a note in your diary. This is *your* symposium and needs *your* support.

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A Trip to Luxembourg

R. TEMPEST
TREASURE, SOUTHERN SECTION
B.G.G.A.

MORRIS Owen is quite well known within the Southern Section, having served a few years as Head Greenkeeper at Roehampton Country Club.

Almost a year ago now, he and his family moved to the Luxembourg Golf and Country Club. At the time it probably seemed like a precarious venture, but I am sure Morris will be the first to admit it was a shrewd move.

Hence, this July, I had a kind invitation to go and play in the Luxembourg Open. I decided to take my car, therefore being more mobile and with a possible chance of doing some sight-seeing. In six short hours from Calais, I had drove the 320 miles. On arriving at the club, I was suitably impressed with the majestic Club House, but rather less impressed with the unofficial traffic warden who happened to be Morris stripped to the waist directing traffic into the club car park.

After a very hearty greeting, he slipped on his shirt and said "Let's get down to business". Seated in the bar I got a rather splendid view of the 18th hole. The whole of the course is magnificently lined with Pine trees and Silver Birch. Even though at the time the temperature was over 90 degrees, the fairways and greens looked very lush indeed.

The reception we received in the Club House can only be described as very warm. There were golfers of all nationalities but everybody seemed, I must say, extremely friendly.

Finishing up the meal we had just eaten. Morris said he would show us around the course and machine sheds. It was rather more than I bargained for. On opening up the shed door, there

stood two Renault cars, one of which seemed almost new. (For running about the course, Morris declared). It took about ¾ hour to get round.

Like most courses if you hit the ball straight you will be O.K., but if you went off line there was no way out of the trees. Discussing improvements which he had made on the course and those that were going to be made, left one with the impression that when it reaches its full potential it will be one of the best clubs in Europe.

The following day we had a practice round and made up a four ball and one of the chaps was a South African Seniors Champion, who had the cheek to keep apologising for hitting the ball 250 yards down the middle. He put together a very fine round to finish on a one under par seventy. Needless to say, if this is what I was going to be up against, I hoped the food was good.

So with this lesson in golf, we were now ready for the main event, Morris who at that time was moaning about knocking the ball round in level par (he doesn't change).

The draw in the first round turned out rather unfortunate, as I was going to play their new Club Champion. Morris also came up against a very good golfer, which he sorted out five and four. Nothing to report on my game (only the food was good). Now that I had time to relax I had a chance to see some of the lovely vineyards that divide Luxembourg from Germany.

Meanwhile, back on the ranch, Morris had come up against a German International who was about to relieve him of his pension three and two, but I must say he did the B.G.G.A. proud.

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I was also very impressed with the way he was treated within the club. They had a very high regard for the immense improvement the course had shown in the short while he had been there, and consequently they showed their appreciation in £. s. d. (Francs).

Morris had some photographs of the course on his arrival. The fairways couldn't be seen for worm casts and also the greens looked as if they had been cut with gang mowers because of a lack of any Greenkeeping knowledge. Needless to say these things were put right almost immediately by Morris.

In a very short while I was driving through France on my way home again, but hadn't come back completely empty handed, because along with the presents I was fetching back I also had an invitation to pass on to the B.G.G.A. that if enough people were interested the Club would be available for a tournament, to take the line of either an ordinary Greenkeeper's Tournament or of a match against the Luxembourg Club. Note: If anybody is interested in this venture, please contact me and we will see what can be done.

Back on the Greenkeeping side, to

give you some idea of the comprehensive list of equipment Morris has at his disposal.

1 Ransomes Hahn with attachments;
1 Cushman with spikes, top spreader, sprayer, drag mat; 1 Greensaire; 1 Turf cutter; 1 Ryan Greensweep; 1 Ryan Rakemaster; 6 20" Auto certes, 1 Cyclone spreader; 1 Ford 2000 tractor; 1 Ford 3000 tractor with hydraulic loader; 2 Tractors; 2 Sets Ransomes sports gang mowers; 1 Tractor mounted sprayer; 1 Ransomes-Hahn TM-140 Fairway Airiator; 1 Fairway Sweeper; 1 4 Ton trailer (tipping); 2 2 Ton trailers; 1 Parkerette handsweeper; 1 Ransomes Flailmower; 2 Jacobsens flailmower; 1 Junior motor triple; 1 Truckster; 2 Flymo's; 1 Ransomes Commando; 1 Jacobsens Apache; 1 Patterson Riddle; 5 Barrows; 1 Power Saw; 2 Power Hedge trimmers; 1 Fairway Harrow chain; 1 Snowplough. Budget for one year for machinery approx; £4,000.

Finally, I'd like to thank Morris's wife, Joan for looking after us so well and congratulate Morris on winning our annual tournament at Walsall



The party from the East Midlands section of the B.G.G.A. which recently toured Ransomes factory at Ipswich. Mr. Roy Bailey, sales director of Leicester Horticultural Engineering, distributors of Ransomes professional grass machinery, who is president of the Section is second from the right of the picture.

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Automatic Watering

by Walter Heeles

BACK in 1970 at Oakdale Golf Club we were having to come to terms with thorny problems of how to apply sufficient water to the Greens to maintain optimum condition without disrupting our summer work schedule, without disrupting play and without littering the picturesque course with portable sprinklers, hoses etc.

The obvious answer was to instal pop-up sprinklers, but, as with many clubs, the prospect of sudden heavy capital expenditure did not appeal, so it was decided to carry out the work in stages, on a 'do it yourself' basis where possible.

In this, the Club was fortunate in a number of respects—the existing pump and pipe work system could be readily converted for use with pop-ups—they had an enthusiastic and hard working green staff, and a long established firm of irrigation contractors was based in nearby Ripon. This company supplied both technical advice and all necessary materials to the golf club when we installed the manually-operated pop-up sprinklers on one trial green in 1971.

From then, over the next three years, the programme developed with the club purchasing equipment as finance and circumstances allowed, until every green was watered by manually operated pop-ups.

An arrangement was made with the irrigation contractors to hire a mole plough with operators on an hourly basis, which kept everybody happy, and was used to partially instal some of the greens, and to replace some of the existing mains pipe which was not considered suitable.

The final phase was completed, involving the automation of the complete system by installing low voltage cable, electric solenoid valves, control panel, and improving the pump installation a good deal of which was again done with the benefit of advice as needed from the Ripon.

The resulting automatic system has brought the club fully up to date in terms of greens watering, and has proved a useful exercise in co-operation between contractor and client, good relations having been happily maintained, despite occasional problems caused by such factors as rocky conditions on the course. I and my staff have learnt a considerable amount about the practicalities of watering installations and maintenance and (who Knows?) perhaps more of this type of venture will be seen in time to come.

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