

Scots aiming at better practical training

From September Elmwood hopes to start one year full-time courses for greenkeepers

Since greenkeeper training started at Elmwood College of Agriculture at Cupar, Fife in 1973, facilities have steadily improved to give young trainee greenstaff every opportunity to develop their knowledge of golf course maintenance.

At present they have 180 students on the College role drawn from not only Scottish golf courses, but from Northern Ireland, Eire and even the South of England.

Four full size greens and a putting green have been built in the extensive grounds for students to develop practical skills, which dual as a four hole course for recreational golf.

The college which has residential facilities for 80 students runs its modular SCOTVEC course on a

modular programme basis, mainly on block release.

Basic practical tasks such as hole cutting, top dressing and turf lifting are taught in the first year, backed by the necessary theory, so not only do students understand how jobs are done, but why and when. This combination of outside activity on site combined with class learning continues throughout the three year course, so by the time students reach the third year stage, young greenstaff are tackling construction projects for greens and tees.

The merits of raft, carpet and sealed systems are examined and working in teams they are given the opportunity to put the theory to work.

Last year students were involved in a

raft green construction with a root zone layer consisting of 80% sand with 20% loam over a synthetic filtration membrane. Bunker construction is also included with practical exercises in building and renovating bunkers suitable for parkland, heathland and links courses.

Grass identification is an essential part of the Elmwood College syllabus. Knowing the correct cultivars to use and encourage on greens, tees and fairways and how each species reacts to various mowing regimes and soil conditions.

Further practical knowledge is obtained by visiting some of the best known golf courses in Scotland where the Head Greenkeepers at St. Andrews, Gleneagles, Carnoustie, Ladybank,



Rebuilding a greenside bunker the traditional way

EDUCATION



Carnoustie's head greenkeeper Mr J. Philips shows students the identification of grass species.



Workshop maintenance is part of Elmwood's syllabus.

Thornton and Balbirnie Park to name a few are extremely cooperative in passing on a lifetime's practical experience to help those setting off on a greenkeeping career.

Machine maintenance is also included in the syllabus.

Through inter-departmental cooperation with the engineering section,

students obtain workshop experience on a wide range of pedestrian and ride-on mowers, top dressers and aeration equipment.

A staged practical drainage project and the installation of an irrigation scheme is planned for one of the greens this year and in September 1989 the college hope to start a one year

fulltime course for greenkeepers. This will include a period of industrial training on local golf courses.

For further information contact:-
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Scientific Congress of Golf

The world's first congress organised on golf is to take place in Scotland next year.

A scientific congress of golf is planned to take place at St Andrews University next year from 9th - 14th July. The congress has the sponsorship of the Royal and Ancient Golf Club and is aimed at bringing together scientists from different disciplines whose research is related to golf.

Announcing the congress to THE GOLF COURSE'S sister magazine Turf Management, Dr Martin Farrally said that a meeting of golf researchers or a forum for an exchange of information between researchers and coaches, teachers and players.

It seemed to the Department of Physical Education where there are students studying sport and exercise science at undergraduate and postgraduate level, that 1990 offered a wonderful opportunity to initiate a world congress which it was hoped would become a regular feature since the 1990 Open Championship will be played there.

The congress will take place in the week prior to the Open, at the same time as the Bell's Scottish Open at Gleneagles. The initial response to circulating the preliminary announcement to the P.G.A.'s and N.G.A.'s worldwide is most encouraging, and indicates that the sorts of people attending will be a complete cross-section of golf - equipment, manufacturers, golf turf and green researchers, university academics, international team and individual coaches and so on from around the world.

The congress has already received support from professional and golfing academic bodies such as the British Association of Sports Sciences and the Professional Golfing Association. The Royal and Ancient Golf Club have provided a substantial grant, their views on the congress being expressed by Michael Bonallack: "Golf is now played in practically all the developed countries in the world and the forecast growth to the year 2000 indicates an expansion equal to or greater than that of any other sport.

It would now, therefore, seem an appropriate time to hold the First World Scientific Congress of Golf, and where could be a better venue than St Andrews where golf has been played for over 500 years and which will be hosting the Open Championship in 1990 for the twenty-fourth time.

The Royal and Ancient Golf Club are delighted to support this venture".

Further information on the First World Scientific Congress of Golf can be obtained from Dr M.R. Farrally, Department of Physical Education, University of St Andrews, The Sports Centre, St Leonards Road, St. Andrews, Fife, Scotland.