

CLIPPINGS

By The Mower

'Allo 'allo

Headingley Head Greenkeeper, Peter Blacker has had headlights fitted to his Toro Greensmaster so that the greens can be cut before dawn ahead of the early morning golfing brigade. Night-time activity on the golf course however attracts considerable interest from the local constabulary and the greenstaff member finishing a sweep across the putting surface suddenly found two policemen framed in his headlights. They said they thought it was a couple of louts riding motor cycles around the course.

More clippings

American greenkeepers have created a problem for themselves which is proving a bit of a headache. What to do with their grass clippings? Because of the growing practice of using boxes on fairway mowers vast quantities of grass cuttings are generated and there is nowhere to put them. If dumped on the edge of the rough it is not long before the piles build up and there are complaints about the smell. It would seem that it is not the custom for American greenkeepers to make their own compost as there is no call for compost dressing on sand greens.

Expensive drinks

Fancy an exotic golfing break? Two brochures dropped on the desk this month, the first from Vodka producers - Smirnoff who are promoting a ten day trip to Zimbabwe in November, visiting five different golf clubs, sightseeing trips to game parks and the Victoria Falls for a mere £1,651! Looking through the itinerary it would seem the Smirnoff cocktails start at Heathrow and continue unabated throughout. There is even an after breakfast visit to a distillery on day three, before 18 holes at the Chapman Golf Club.

Whisky giant, Johnny Walker have also moved into the upmarket amateur golf scene in a big way with a ten day Pro-Am promotion at the 36 hole Dorado Beach Club in Puerto Rico. This little jaunt will set you back £3,750, but if you don't want to sit with the peasants in the economy part of the aircraft from Heathrow, for just another £1,200 a seat can be reserved in the first class section. If your golfing partner snores (do you know one who does'nt?) then the Hyatt Hotel will provide a room on your own for another £1,200. The professionals must be jostling for an invitation for this trip. For them it is - free of charge!

Ryder remembered

Visitors to the 'Open' at Troon may have spotted the shining gold Ryder Cup on display in the tented village, but how many know there is also another? A replica in silver was given to the Ladies section at Moortown Golf Club by Samuel Ryder in appreciation of their efforts in the organisation of the 1929 staging of the first match on British soil, when George Duncan lead the home side to victory. It is proudly played for annually by the Moortown Ladies.

America in the UK

Canadian Course Superintendent, Ken Siems invited 30 Secretaries and Greenkeepers from Sussex to see his new golf course at Horstead Place in East Sussex, but only seven took time out to turn up.

Surprising, considering he has produced a magnificent course sown with Pencross, Penneagle and Pennlinks for greens, tees and fairways and had the place open for play within only seven months of seeding.

The North American bent grasses are immaculate according to a colleague who visited recently. It is in such superb condition the British Team used the course for practice before setting off to Peachtree and regain the Walker Cup. To ensure they were familiar with American conditions.

Big bid

Ransomes are quietly celebrating their two hundred years in business though they did not become involved with grass cutting until 1832.

Initially a farm machinery manufacturer, Ransomes have now moved out of agriculture completely to concentrate on amenity turf machinery and they have just announced a major acquisition. (see page 14).

No education in Wales

The Welsh Golf Union have received a rebuff from their member clubs, having generously offered to pay half of the costs of sending greenkeeping staff on training courses at Mold, a college not as yet approved by the Greenkeeper Training Committee, only two clubs responded. No doubt the remainder thought that they could not afford the other half or that they can't spare their staff.