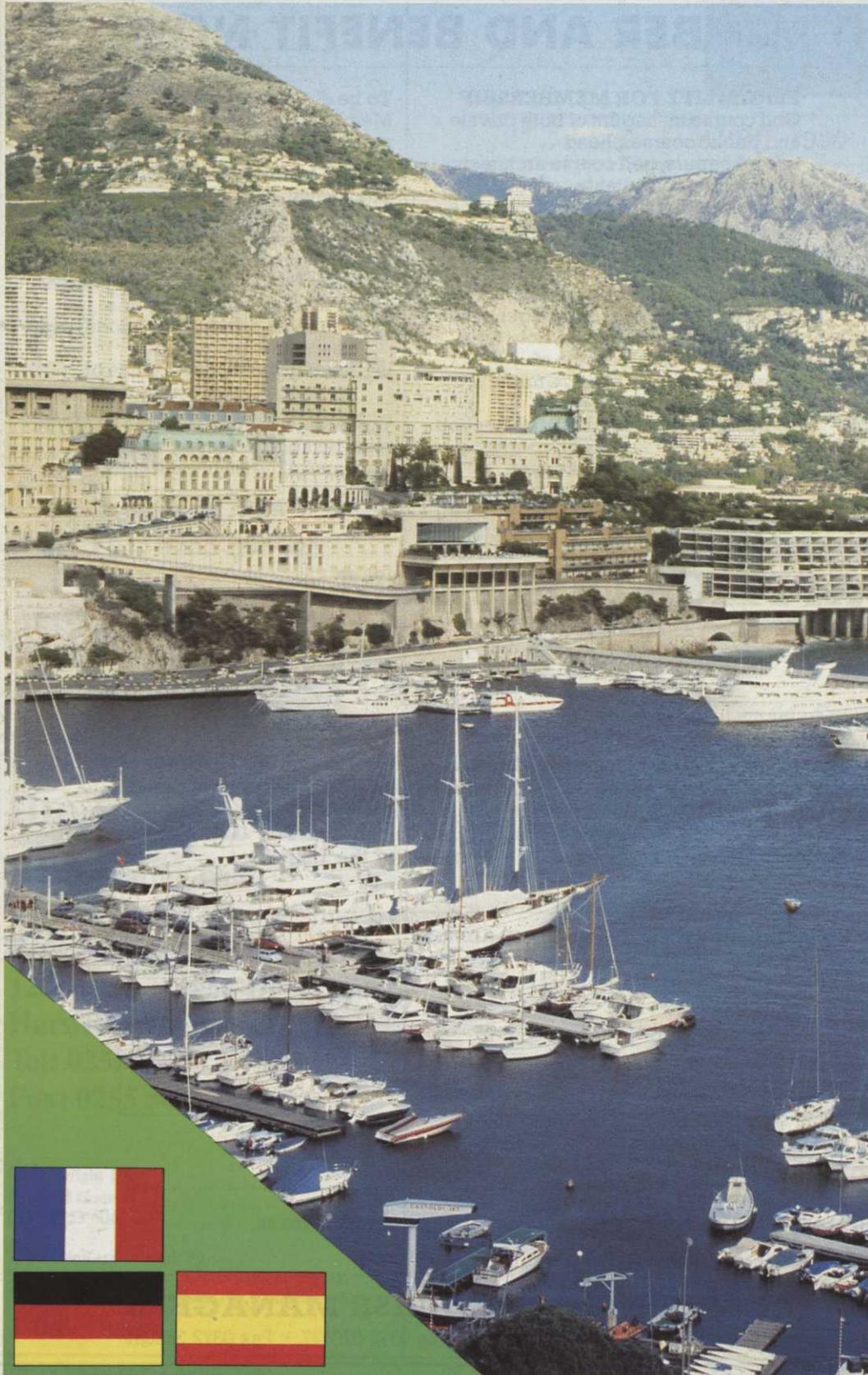


# the Golf Course

APRIL 1990



## Development

Keith Brain reports on the construction of the first of two courses at a deluxe complex in Cheshire

## European

Mike Merrick in charge of Monte Carlo a course on top of the world

## Maintenance

Canvey Island a course under pressure - can sand greens take the strain

## European Tour

A full rundown of all tournament venues with course managers for the 1990 season

**INSTITUTE OF  
EUROPEAN  
GOLF COURSE  
MANAGERS**



# INSTITUTE OF EUROPEAN GOLF COURSE MANAGERS



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### Aims of the Institute

- To provide an effective voice to represent the interests of its members and to bring the experience of the golf course manager to bear on the conduct of affairs for the improvement of golf courses throughout Europe.
- To encourage and help its members to improve their professional competence as managers of golf courses.

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- have been a golf course manager or head greenkeeper for a minimum period (or periods) of 5 years, and
- have 10 years' experience of working on golf courses.

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*APRIL 1990*

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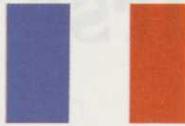
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# RÉSUMÉ



## FRENCH

La politique agricole de la CEE, responsable de la création d'énormes excédents de produits laitiers dans l'ensemble de la Communauté, a probablement plus affecté les exploitants britanniques que ceux du reste des pays de la Communauté.

L'abondance d'une herbe de bonne qualité, une main d'oeuvre bon marché et une mécanisation totale ont triplé le rendement jusqu'à ce que les quantités de lait, de beurre et de fromage aient, de loin, surpassé la demande. Maintenant qu'il est fait appel au fermier pour qu'il réduise sa production et que des subventions lui sont offertes pour qu'il utilise sa terre à d'autres fins, l'un des moyens pour lui d'éviter la ruine est de construire un terrain de golf.

Beaucoup de fermiers ont la terre qui convient à cet usage: peu nombreux sont ceux qui disposent de fonds suffisants pour exploiter le site et, presque sans exception, aucun d'eux ne sait comment dessiner et construire un terrain de golf.

Dans ce numéro, 'New Developments' présente le terrain Portal au nord-ouest de l'Angleterre où un fermier, qui est aussi à la tête d'une grande entreprise de construction, est en train de transformer sa ferme laitière en l'un des plus beaux nouveaux complexes de golf de Grande-Bretagne. Le premier parcours ne sera pas prêt à jouer avant douze mois et les travaux sur le second parcours et sur l'hôtel de 100 chambres commenceront au printemps.

Presque tous les grands développements de Grande-Bretagne sont financés soit par des compagnies hôtelières soit par des entreprises de construction, plus souvent par une association des deux.

L'organisation Country Club Hotels, une division du géant de la bière, Whitbread Brewery Group, possède actuellement dix terrains de golf, chacun avec un hôtel de luxe. Sa politique est d'acheter des terrains existants et de les améliorer et de les agrandir, en équipant chaque terrain d'installations hôtelières de grand confort.

Il est prévu d'ajouter 20 terrains au cours des dix prochaines années et, en même temps, de développer une chaîne européenne, la première à se construire en dehors de Hambourg.

Pour les fermiers qui ont de la terre mais peu de soutien financier, les architectes internationaux, Hawtree & Son, ont élaboré un plan d'association pour qu'il soit possible de construire un terrain de golf d'une qualité acceptable fonctionnant sur une base de paiement à la partie. C'est dans ce secteur qu'il existe la plus grande demande: celui du joueur qui ne peut pas obtenir de devenir membre d'un club.



## SPANISH.

La Política Agrícola de la Comunidad Económica Europea, causante de la creación de enormes excedentes de productos lácteos por toda la Comunidad, probablemente ha afectado al granjero de la industria lechera británica más que a la mayoría en Europa.

Extensa hierba de calidad, bajos costes de mano de obra y la completa mecanización han triplicado la producción, hasta que las cantidades de leche, mantequilla y queso se han hecho mucho mayores que la demanda. Ahora se ha pedido a los granjeros reducir la producción y se les ha ofrecido dinero para dedicar sus tierras a otros fines. Ellos ven la salida de la ruina financiera en la construcción de un campo de golf.

Muchos tienen terrenos apropiados, pocos tienen el dinero para explotar el sitio y casi sin excepción, no tienen los conocimientos sobre diseño y construcción de campos de golf.

En el número de este mes, "Nuevas construcciones", figura el campo Portal en el nor-oeste de Inglaterra, en el cual un granjero, que también es el jefe de una importante firma constructora, está convirtiendo su granja lechera en uno de los mejores nuevos complejos de golf en Gran Bretaña. El primer campo no estará listo para el juego hasta dentro de otros 12 meses; el trabajo en el segundo campo y en el hotel de 100 habitaciones se inicia en la primavera.

Casi todas las construcciones importantes en Gran Bretaña están financiadas, ya sea por grupos hoteleros o por firmas constructoras, y en la mayoría de los casos, por ambos en sociedad.

En la actualidad, los Country Club Hotels, una división del gigantesco grupo Whitbread Brewery Group, son propietarios de diez campos de golf, cada uno con un hotel de lujo. Su política ha sido la de comprar campos de golf existentes, mejorarlos y extenderlos para que cada campo ofrezca las mejores prestaciones hoteleras posibles.

Hay planes para añadir 20 campos más dentro de los próximos diez años, y al mismo tiempo desarrollar una cadena continental, la primera a construirse fuera de Hamburgo.

Para aquellos granjeros con tierras, pero con poco respaldo financiero, los arquitectos internacionales, Hawtree & Son, han diseñado un esquema de sociedad, de tal manera que es posible construir un campo de golf a un standard aceptable en base a una política de jugar y pagar. Aquí es donde existe la mayor demanda para campos de golf: atendiendo al jugador que no puede obtener la tarjeta de miembro de un club.



## GERMAN

Die Landwirtschaftspolitik der EWG, die überall in der Gemeinschaft für riesige Überschüsse an Milchprodukten verantwortlich ist, hat wahrscheinlich in Großbritannien einen größeren Einfluß auf die Meiereien gehabt als in den meisten europäischen Ländern.

Reichliches Qualitätsgras, niedrige Lohnkosten und volle Automatisierung haben die Produktion verdreifacht, bis die Milch-, Butter und Käsemengen den Bedarf weit übertrafen. Nun werden die Bauern aufgefordert, ihre Produktion zu reduzieren, und es wird ihnen Geld angeboten, wenn sie das Land anderweitig benutzen, und viele sehen den Ausweg aus ihrem finanziellen Untergang darin, einen Golfplatz anzulegen.

Viele Landwirte haben geeignetes Land, aber nur wenige haben das Geld das Gelände zu entwickeln, und sie besitzen fast ausnahmslos keine Kenntnisse in Golfplatzdesign und Konstruktion.

In der Ausgabe dieses Monats "Neuentwicklungen", wird der Portal Golfplatz in Nordwestengland beschreiben, wo ein Landwirt, der gleichzeitig Leiter einer größeren Baufirma ist, dabei ist, seine Meierei in einen der besten neuen Golfkomplexe in Großbritannien zu verwandeln. Der erste Golfplatz wird erst in 12 Monaten beispielbar sein, die Arbeiten für den zweiten Golfplatz und ein Hotel mit 100 Zimmern werden im Frühjahr beginnen.

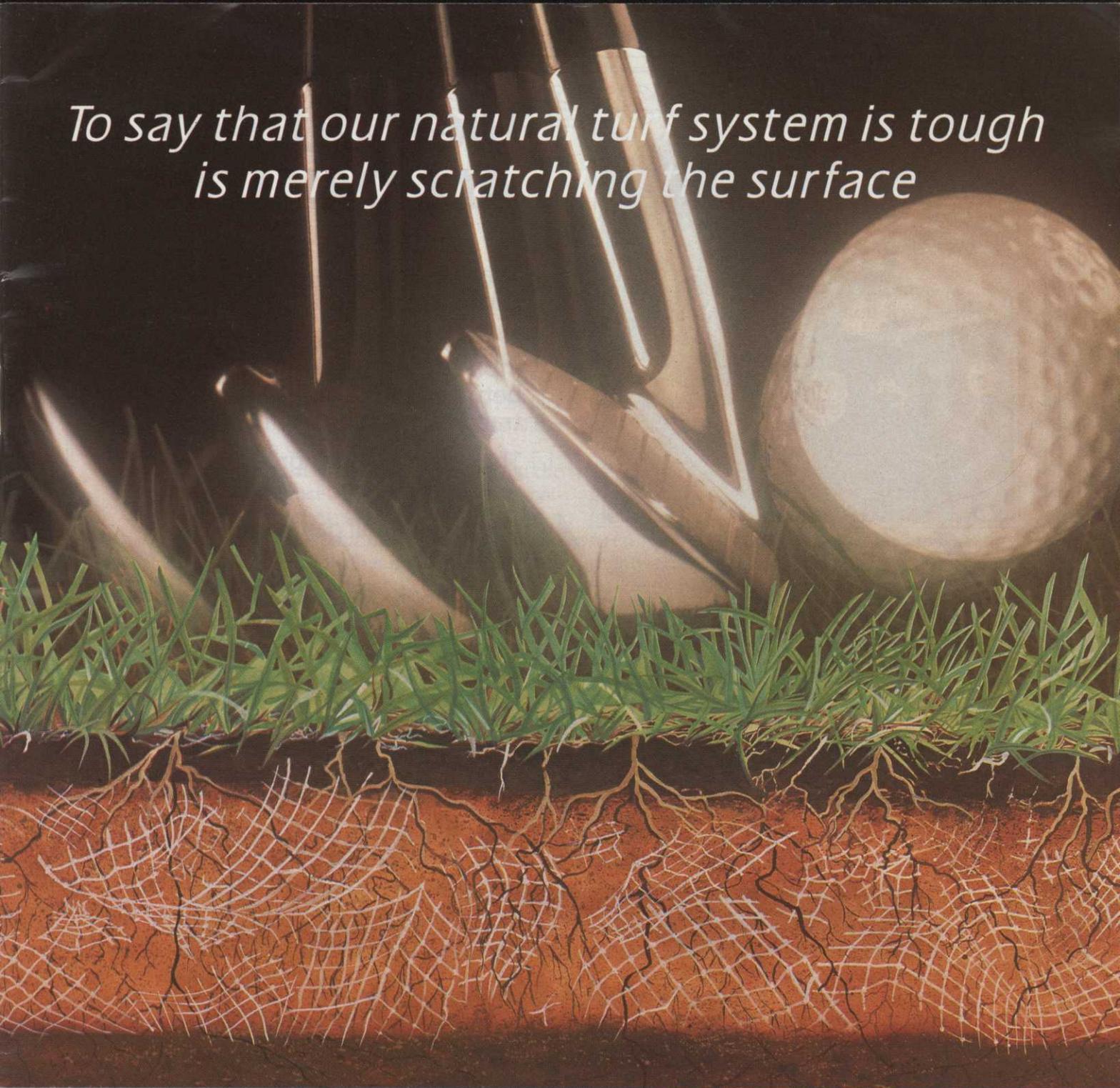
Fast alle größeren Entwicklungsprojekte in Großbritannien werden entweder von Hotelgruppen oder Hausbauunternehmen finanziert, in den meisten Fällen von Partnerschaften zwischen den beiden Bereichen.

Country Club Hotels, eine Abteilung der riesigen Whitbread Brewery Group, besitzt zur Zeit zehn Golfplätze, alle mit Luxushotels. Die Taktik der Gruppe liegt darin, bestehende Golfplätze aufzukaufen, zu verbessern und erweitern und jeden Golfplatz mit den bestmöglichen Hoteleinrichtungen auszustatten.

Es bestehen Pläne, in den nächsten zehn Jahren noch weitere 20 Golfplätze hinzuzufügen und gleichzeitig eine europäische Kette zu entwickeln, von denen der erste Platz außerhalb von Hamburg angelegt werden soll.

Für Landwirte mit Land, aber geringer finanzieller Unterstützung, haben die internationalen Architekten Hawtree & Son einen Partnerschaftsplan entwickelt, so daß es möglich ist, einen Golfplatz akzeptabler Qualität auf einer "Pay and Play" Basis anzulegen. In diesem Sektor besteht der größte Bedarf für Golfplätze, die für Golfspieler offen sind, die nicht Mitglied eines Clubs werden können.

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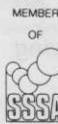
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# GREENSIDE COMMENT

Last month we commented on the lack of discussion, the R & A's document - The Way Forward has received among the intended recipients, the Club Committees.

Nothing has changed that view, in fact it has been confirmed by officials of the English Golf Union.

However, it is pleasing to report that the EGU themselves have taken very positive action and this has resulted in a number of seminars around the country aimed specifically at Chairman of Green Committees.

The response has been overwhelming, so much so that over a hundred club members representing their course committees, met at the Askham Bryan College near York to listen to presentations by officials from the STRI, the Greenkeepers Association, turf grass educationalists and the Secretary of the EGU, Keith Wright.

When one considers most of these men, (there was not a Lady Green Chairman in sight) had taken a day off from their business activities, no doubt at considerable expense, it emphasised the degree of enthusiasm that these often maligned club officials, put into their appointment.

Not only had they come to listen to the expertise of the speakers, most had pertinent questions to put, which if nothing else, demonstrated a more than intelligent grasp of the responsibility of course management and a desperate need to understand more about the techniques of turf maintenance.

EGU official, Peter Wilson, who chaired the conference, was hard pressed to find sufficient time for the question sessions and although it must be said he failed to satisfy all among a waving sea of hands, it was a brave attempt to spread the debate through the clubs from Cleveland to the Nottinghamshire borders.

A subject, recently aired in the national press, Greenkeeper Training, received

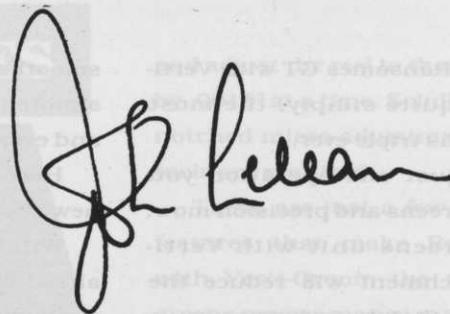
a very sympathetic response. Controversy spreads like wildfire and few in the golf course profession will not have had their attention drawn to a letter published in the Sunday Telegraph, from a Ken Rumsey, signing in as president of Darlington Golf Club.

Mr Rumsey takes grave exception to an article by Michael Williams supporting greenkeeper training and suggests in jaundiced terms, greenkeepers do not need university degrees to become highly-qualified tractor drivers. He goes on to say that his club have paid to send their greenstaff on courses in the past, but the main result is that they regard themselves as 'qualified experts'.

There is some satisfaction that Darlington Golf Club have since stated that Mr Rumsey was representing his own convictions and not that of the club, but nevertheless it is sad that a man with such bigoted views is in a position to scuttle the personal development opportunities of the club employees.

A point perhaps for future comment was a suggestion from the Secretary of Ganton Golf Club that clubs had previously followed the recommendations of the Agricultural Wages Board. These have been superseded by the wage scales published by the greenkeepers themselves, though they had no backing from either the EGU, the R & A or any other organisation in golf.

He proposed that discussions between the various bodies might consider these scales, a suggestion overwhelmingly approved and agreed by the EGU.



EDITOR

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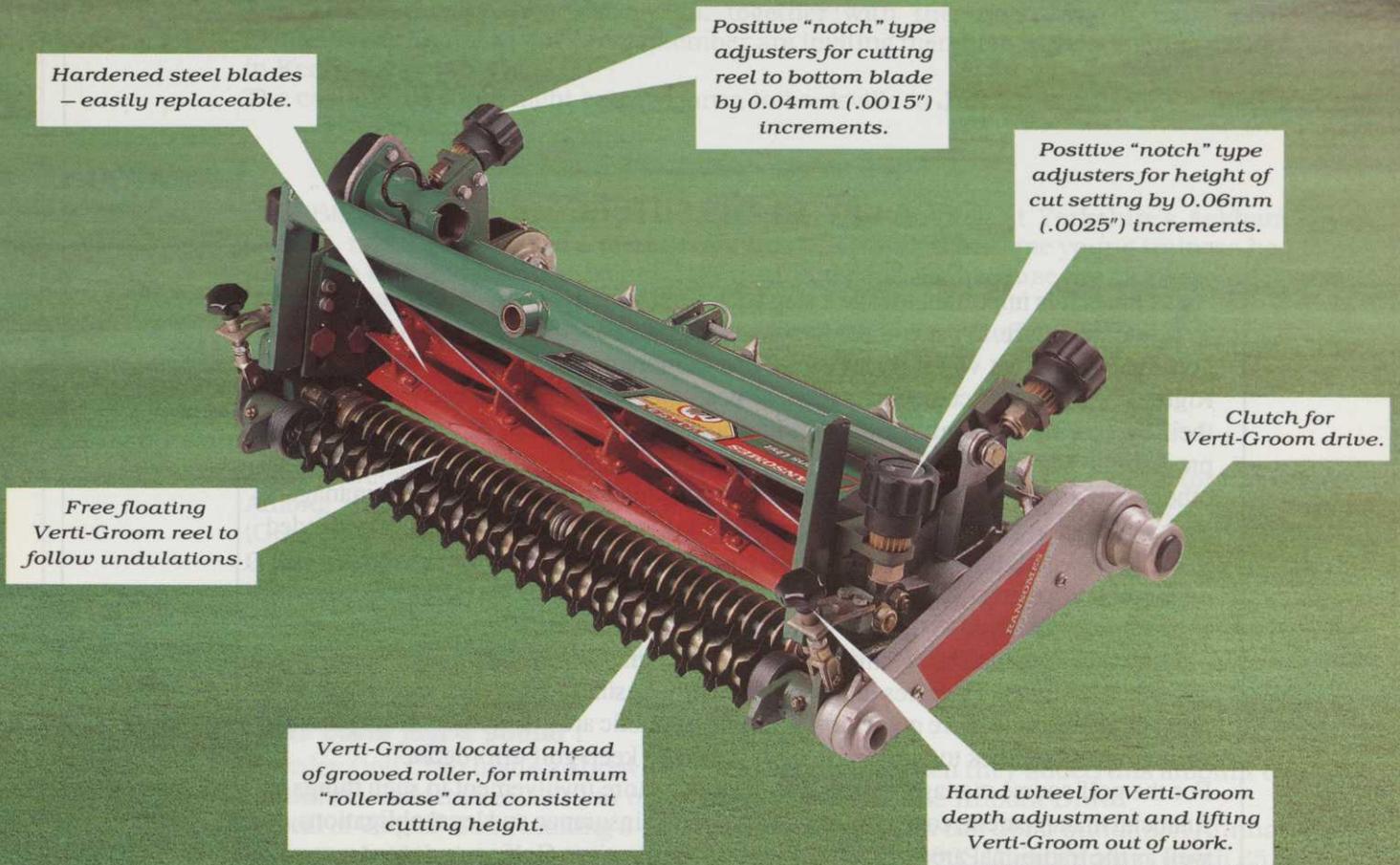
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## A KEY TO THE FUTURE

**A**t times it is important to take a step back from your everyday job and take a look into the future. What will the future be for our profession? What will it be for the golf industry? What will it be for each of us as individuals?

Right now most golf course managers or head greenkeepers have been prepared for their careers by a combination of education and experience. A formal education programme has most likely included technical and scientific studies in agronomy and other related subjects. These have proved successful for many golf course managers over a number of years. However, now is the time to take a look at what could be needed in the future - will this path of education combined with practical experience of work on a golf course meet the demands of the profession in the 1990s?

Businessmen involved in the golf industry whether in private clubs, public operations or some other type of facility are keen to see economic factors are brought in just as in any other business. The rules and guidelines of a business operation will be put into practice at more and more golf clubs. The golfing public are going to put more pressure on their golf facilities to hold the line on costs and keep golf affordable.

For the golf course manager this will mean much more involvement in such things as financial management, cost accounting, marketing, insurance and legal obligations, as well as the traditional areas of employment and budgeting. Golf course managers will be held more accountable in the future for the bottom line of their part of the golf facility operation.

We cannot close our eyes to the world as it is developing. Golf course managers will need to increase their skills in many new areas plus broadening their base of information and learning process.

The message to the golf course manager who wants to prepare for the future is - take time to get involved - enrol now in the Institute. We will keep you informed on all the latest developments taking place in your industry. Its not only the future of our profession that is at stake, it's your own personal future too!

# CLIPPINGS

## By The Mower

### **Jolly Jaunt to Louisville**

The Garden Machinery Association, together with the organisers of their forthcoming exhibition at Kempton Park in September are inviting members to visit an international Expo in Kentucky.

The cost of this three night extravaganza to Louisville in July - just a few quid short of £900!

### **P-I-Y Training**

Nick Bisset, the principal lecturer for greenkeeper training at Yorkshire's Askham Bryan College, told a gathering of Green Committee Chairman that some young trainees had to pay their own fees and use annual holidays to attend courses, because the clubs would not cover the costs or give time off.

Golf Club Committees who adopt this attitude towards their staff should be thrown out of their county union.

### **"A rose by any other name . . ."**

French greenkeepers are being asked by their Association to vote on a title for themselves. Among the proposals are Gardien du Vert (Guardian of Green); Gardien de la Pelouse (Guardian of the Greensward); Capitains du Parcours (Captain of the Course); Marguillier du Golf (Warden of Golf); Intendant de Parcours (Steward of the Course); Intendant de Golf (Steward of Golf); GK, or just plain Greenkeeper.

Whilst we are still battling over the decision to elevate our head greenkeeper to the status of course manager, the French, with such a descriptive language, will be able to debate this issue for months to come.

### **New Kubota Mower costs just a pound !**

Burnley Golf Club made a shrewd investment of a £1 when they added this amount to top the minimum donation of £200 in order to be eligible for the Kubota Draw.

A total of 79 golf clubs making a donation of £200 plus to the Golf Foundation Annual Appeal last year, had their names into a hat to win a Kubota G1900S Diesel Mower, worth £5,000 and the Burnley Club's name was drawn out by Peter McEvoy after they raised £201 on Captain's Day.

As a result of the annual appeal and the Kubota prize, £56,436 was given to the Golf Foundation, by clubs in Britain, to support junior golf.

### **Illegal use of the wedge**

John Huston a professional on the US tour circuit was made to change his shoes, before competing in the Florida Honda Classic, because they were built up on the right side so that his weight would be thrown on the front foot when playing the shot.

The shoe was deemed to be in contravention of Rule 14-3b by the US Golf Association, under the heading of Artificial Devices and Unusual Equipment, which might assist him in making a stroke.

The sequel to the ruling, resulted in Huston winning the event by two shots, wearing conventional shoes, over Mark Calcavecchia, but that is far from the end of the affair.

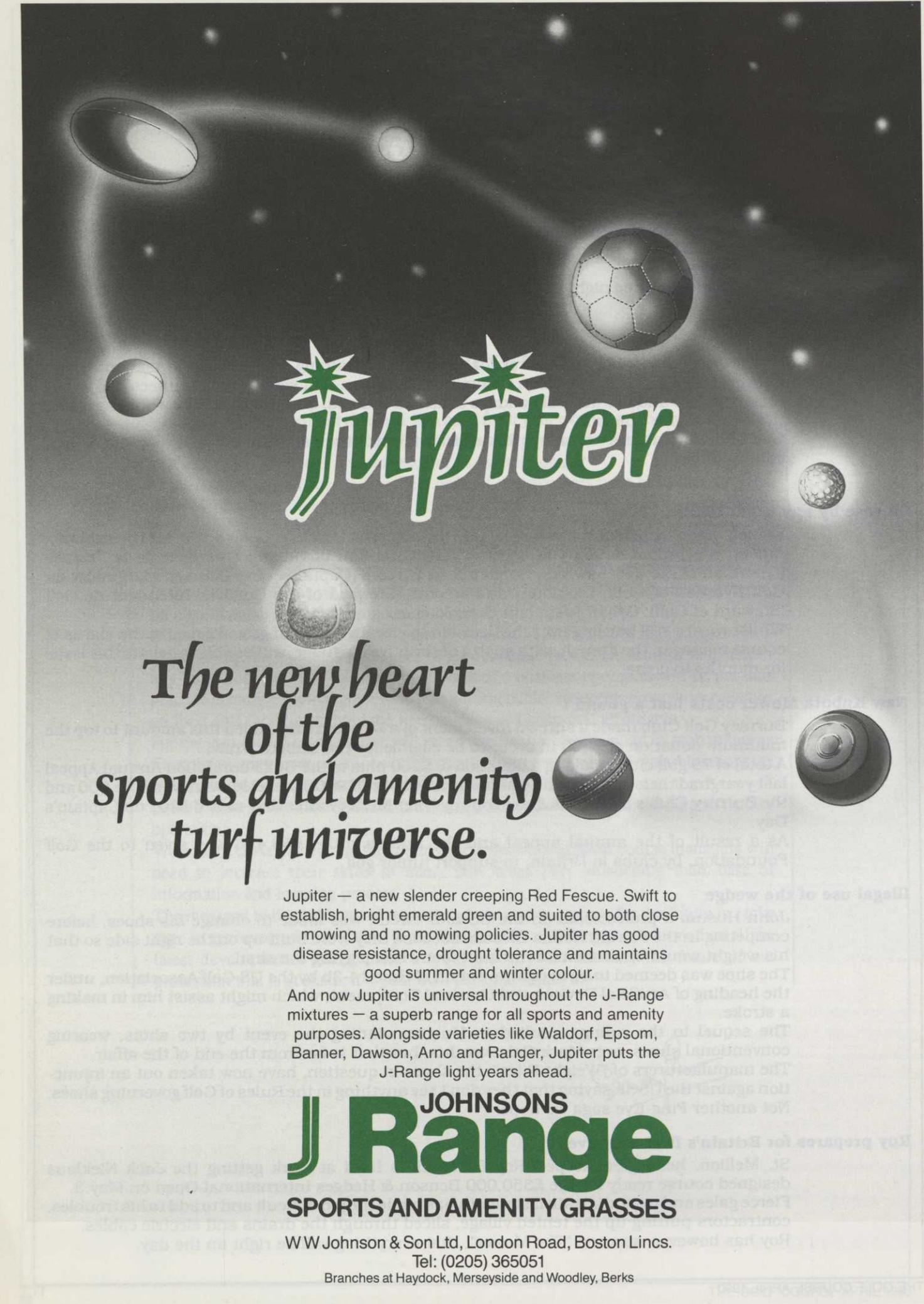
The manufacturers of "Weight Rites", the shoes in question, have now taken out an injunction against the USGA saying that they don't see anything in the Rules of Golf governing shoes. Not another Ping-Eye saga we hope!

### **Roy prepares for Britain's first tour event**

St. Mellion, head greenkeeper, Roy Battishill is hard at work getting the Jack Nicklaus designed course ready for the £350,000 Benson & Hedges International Open on May 3.

Fierce gales and torrential rain last month has made the job difficult and to add to his troubles, contractors putting up the tented village, sliced through the drains and electric cables.

Roy has however, assured "The Mower", that everything will be right on the day.



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## OUT AND ABOUT

### TURFLAND KEEP BROUWER DISTRIBUTION

Ransomes, who recently acquired the Canadian based Brouwer Company as part of the Cushman Ryan deal, has announced that there will be no change to Brouwer distribution in the UK.

Outside of North America, Ransomes Commercial Division, based at Ipswich, now have the responsibility for marketing Brouwer worldwide and intend re-appointing Turfland Professional Equipment Ltd Cheshire to continue selling and servicing the complete Brouwer range in the UK.

Ransomes Sales and Marketing Director, Keir Wyatt, said, "We are pleased that Chris and Janet Watmore will continue to handle the Brouwer line. They have a very experienced team, and we are confident they will develop further, this important sector of the market."

The Brouwer product range is principally comprised of turf harvesters, handling systems, vacuum trailers and gang mowers. Brouwer are the market leader in turf harvesting equipment throughout the world.

### TIS WIN WISLEY IRRIGATION CONTRACT

Probably one of the largest contracts ever awarded in this country, the 27-hole Wisley golf course irrigation system has been won by Toro Distributor Turf Irrigation (TIS) Sandbach.

Delighted by the news, Robin Hume, managing director, TIS, says that the £560,000 system - covering greens, tees and fairways calls for no less than 750 Toro '670' model pop-ups!

The Control System will comprise a Toro VT2 central controller and 49 VT4 satellites. This is the first time that this combination of Toro sprinklers and controllers have been specified in this country - or Europe. Construction work, by Southern Golf, (Warwicks) is already underway on the Robert Trent Jones II Wisley course which will include a hotel, country club and 18 and 9 hole courses. The developers are Marlin Estates.

Turf irrigation have scheduled installation of the 670 system for March and aim to

complete the job by the end of September. Weisley, a neighbour of the Royal Horticultural Gardens, will be the first syndicated members golf club in Britain, but at a cost.

A share and a debenture will cost £31,300, limited to ten units for each purchaser and these will be put on the market by the developers - Marlin Estates through the stock brokers, James Capel this month. Each unit will allow companies to nominate annually, only one member per unit and a ceiling on membership has been set at 750.

### IRRIGATION CONTROL - SOPHISTICATED BUT SIMPLE

A new irrigation controller for golf course watering systems is being produced exclusively by Irrigation & Slurry Services of Salisbury, the Toro Area Distributors for the South of England. The ISS 'Aquaflow' irrigation system controller is said to provide to a flexible, reliable method of golf course watering control, easy to use and requiring no computer knowledge.

Based on a computerised full colour monitor, keyboard and disk data storage principle, the 'Aquaflow's' printer provides a print-out of all data, so that a log of the system operation can be built up throughout the season. Full information is provided of total sprinkler/station operating times in hours/mins plus gallons used so there is an easy check on water use.

The system is menu driven from the full screen display (without LED/buttons). Stations are called up by hole number, such as green 7 or tee 6. The system allows for 4 automatic starts each day, on a separate daily programme, together with 2 automatic syringe cycles.

The system operates in up to 4 zones concurrently with a station timing from 1-30 minutes. An indefinite cancel feature suspends watering without de-programming at any time. When necessary the automatic programmes can be overridden to manual.

An additional feature is the ability to store specific programmes on independent disks so irrigation meets the exact requirements to suit the conditions.

As the system is computer based, coding is completed within the central unit so that all "slave" units installed in the field are identical and do not require any field setting up or coding to operate. Each slave unit controls up to 9 outputs and the unit can control up to 40 slave units giving a system capacity of 360 stations. This gives easy extension of the system at any time simply by adding required stations to the disk data.

The managing director of ISS, Gary Parker believes the 'Aquaflow' system is not only extremely flexible, but very simple to use. "Operators need know nothing about computers", he said.



## OUT AND ABOUT

### SEED FIRM LAUNCH CATALOGUE

Bentley's 1990 Amenity Catalogue issued this month with an attractive green cover and redesigned full colour pages.

The new style is designed to make product referencing and ordering much easier for the 'professional user'. Amenity Products are listed by product type - chemicals, composts, equipment, fertilisers, pots sundries, tools, tree planting and turf care. Product name, size of pack, net price and Bentley's computer code, plus full colour pictures of the products are featured in a new easy to identify layout.

The 138 page catalogue contains approximately 6500 products, all coded and indexed. In the front of the book is a message from Bentley's new managing director, Vaughan Foster and details of how to use the catalogue.

The new catalogue is the first to be issued since Joseph Bentley Ltd. came under the ownership of Good Life Holdings Ltd - a company with wide interests in Horticulture and Agriculture.

### LAW MAN HEADS POSSE ACROSS THE LAKES

Membership of Hellidon Lakes Golf Club, the championship course featured in our March issue is growing rapidly.

Heading the swiftly expanding list of new members is David Jarratt, a police superintendent with a passion for golf.

David, an 18 handicapper and one time captain of Staverton Golf Club, has joined Hellidon Lakes with his wife Joyce, a former lady captain. He is a detective superintendent of Northamptonshire Police 'B' Division based at Towcester.

"I consider myself very lucky and honoured to be the club's first member. The Hellidon Lakes course is going to be second to none in the area. The design is superb, and with 10 lakes coming into play it is going to be a testing golf challenge, but a very enjoyable one", said the number one member.

"While you may have to pay a little more for membership at Hellidon, in the long run we are going to benefit from a well developed and well manicured course where the members are the sole priority. A lot of people play golf these days, and the last thing you want is the hassle of a crowded course."

The multi million pound Hellidon complex developed by Daventry businessman Stuart Nicoll is based on a policy of providing exclusive golf for a restricted membership of 500. Already 650 enquiries have been received, reports Mr Nicoll, following the recent launch by former England soccer star Bobby Charlton. The course opens officially in January 1991.

### FRENCH "ACADEMY" FOR GREENKEEPERS AND CLUB DIRECTORS

A 27-hole golf course, just 10 kilometers from Montpellier, in the South of France has become the training centre for French Greenkeepers and Golf Club Directors. Established in 1987, the "International Academy of Golf Careers", runs 12 month courses starting in September each year, consisting of eight months of theory and four months of practical tuition at a chosen golf course.

Recruitment for the various courses commences in May and continues until July. Competition for a place is intense and candidates must have a university degree in either management, social sciences, commerce or in the case of the greenkeepers, the equivalent is agriculture or horticulture. A further qualification is what is described as "a good level at golf - at least a handicap of 24-28!"

Applicants must sit an entrance examination, followed by an in depth interview to assess their suitability for the course and level of motivation to succeed; highly necessary to reduce the annual 300 applications to the final 35 available places.

The training period is spread over 1,000 hours with tuition in accountancy, management skills, administration techniques, general commerce and turf culture specific to the golf course.

As well as the formal study sessions, the French Golf Federation, Golf Journalists, Golf Club Directors and other professionals related to the game of golf are brought in to run conference style lectures.

Weekends are not for time off. For two weekends out of three, the students are sent out to the Massane Golf complex for practical work on club administration, running competitions, or in the case of the greenkeepers, course maintenance and presentation.

The success rate for finding a job at the

end of the year of study is around 85%, but higher in the case of greenkeepers as there is a desperate shortage of trained greenstaff in France, growing week by week as more and more courses are developed.

France is now the European country leading the golf course development boom with a high concentration around Paris, Brittany and down the west coast towards the Spanish border.

### MORE SUCCESS FOR BAGCC MEMBERS

The constructor members of The British Association of Golf Course Constructors have landed a number of notable contracts already for 1990. Land Unit Construction have been awarded the construction of a 36 hole course designed by Hawtree and Son for Burhill Estates on a site near Nottingham. CDC Golf and Leisure Developments are working on course alterations at Dale Hill Golf Club East Sussex, Waldringfield Heath Farm Golf Club, Suffolk, Ely City Golf Club, Cambridgeshire as well as the construction of 18 hole courses at Deben Valley Golf and Country Club, Woodbridge Suffolk and Windmill Golf Club, Cleethorpes, Humberside. Another interesting project being undertaken by CDC is the installation of synthetic tee surfaces at Belhus Park Golf Club at Thurrock in Essex.

Brian D Pierson Contractors Ltd have been awarded the contracts to build the second 18 hole course at Portal, Tarporley, Cheshire, the original course being featured in this issue of 'the Golf Course'; An additional 18 holes for country club hotels at Breadsall Priory, Derbyshire. Piersons have also won a contract for an 18 hole course at Longham near Poole, Dorset as well as undertaking two 18 hole course constructions abroad one at Treuvelberg near Hamburg and the other at Chateau Des Vigiers near Bordeaux.

Whilst in Scotland Sportworks Ltd are working on the Inverurie Golf Course near Aberdeen with a view to a possible contract for additional tree planting as well as new greens and tees.

As reported previously Southern Golf have been awarded a multi-million pound contract to build the British Aerospace course at Wisley, the first course in the UK to be designed by Robert Trent Jones Jnr.

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## OUT AND ABOUT

### WETTING AGENT FROM FARMURA

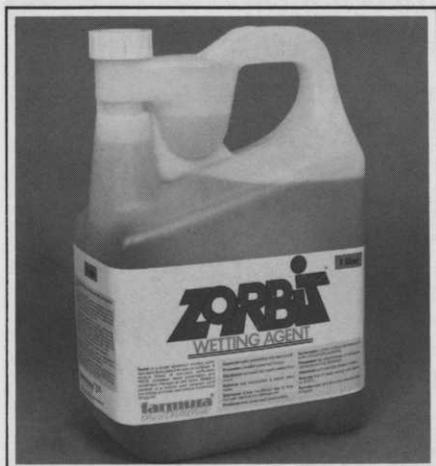
Specially formulated following ten years of research and development Farmura Ltd have entered the turf wetting agent market with their new product.

Zorbit is a broad spectrum wetting agent containing a unique blend of non-ionic surfactants designed to assist water penetration and movement through a wide range of soil types. Once a water related problem has been identified a programme of Zorbit wetting agent should be undertaken.

In addition to improving water penetration, eliminating dry spots and relieving the effects of soil compaction Zorbit will maximise the benefits of fertilizer and top dressing applications and will stimulate and maintain deeper root development.

Zorbit is supplied in a unique easy measure 6 litre pack which provides accurate, simple and economic dispensing of liquids.

For further information contact Farmura Ltd on 023 376 241/581.



### DRAINAGE EXHIBITION FOR BIRMINGHAM

A new two day exhibition designed exclusively to attract specifier, contractor and stockist visitors operating in the drainage industry has been announced. Draintech 90, which will take place at the Edgbaston Conference Centre, Birmingham on 16th and 17th October this year is the UK's only specialist show for

manufacturers and suppliers of drainage products and systems technology.

Up until now, say the organisers, this multi-million pound industry has not had its own showcase and has been an unrecognised and fractured part of large general building, civil engineering and public works exhibitions.

Draintech 90 will include products and systems from many diverse areas of the drainage industry including pipes and fittings; geotextiles; geomembrane drains, non-corrosive drainage systems, roof drainage systems, surface water channels, trenchless technology, land drainage, plant and machinery and software technology etc.

A series of drainage systems seminars will run during the course of the exhibition full details of which will be announced in the coming months.

### TOP HOTEL MANAGER FOR WENTWORTH GOLF CLUB

Wentworth club has announced the appointment of Mr Keith Williams as general manager. Mr Williams 39, currently Executive Director and General Manager of the luxury class Capital Hotel in Knightsbridge, joins Wentworth in March with overall responsibility for the daily running of the club.

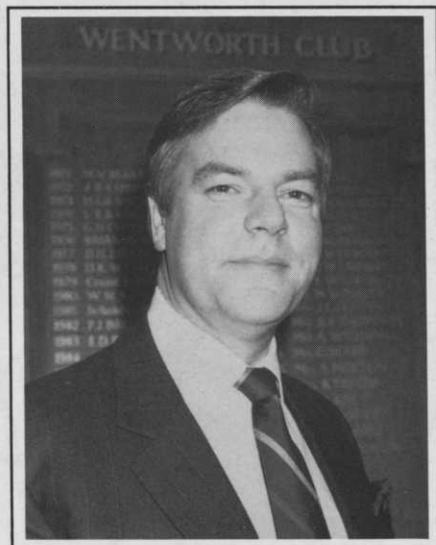
Mr Williams has first-hand experience in playing the championship course at Wentworth. In his 20 years in the game he has participated in many pro-am tournaments and has played at over 100 first class golf clubs around the world.

Commenting on his new role, Mr Williams said "I am delighted at the challenge offered by this appointment. The scope of working with Wentworth, one of the country's finest inland courses, is extremely exciting."

Willy Bauer, Chief Executive of Wentworth Group, said, "The club is most fortunate in securing Keith Williams for the appointment. His acknowledged managerial experience and his passion for golf makes him the perfect man for the job."

During Mr Williams' 15 year career at the Capital Hotel, the hotel gained many accolades for its quality of service and food, including a Michelin award, four red

stars from the AA and rosettes for food. Joining as House Manager in 1975 he became its General Manager in 1977. He entered the hotel industry as a management trainee at The Savoy.



Keith Williams

### 1990 GROUNDSMAN AWARDS

The Master Groundsman and Young Groundsman of the Year competition is now in its 10th year. The event is sponsored by three ICI Businesses - ICI Professional Products - ICI Seeds - ICI Advanced Turf Systems and organised by The Institute of Groundsmanship.

The competition is open to everyone involved directly in the management or maintenance of sports and leisure turf-culture facilities: groundsman, greenkeepers, parks officers, estate managers, trainees, apprentices and students.

Valuable prizes are to be awarded. Both the winners of the Master Groundsman and the Young Groundsman Awards will win a trip to the GCSAA Convention which is to be held in Las Vegas, Nevada in February 1991.

Other prizes include weekend trips to Europe, day trips within the UK, silver salvers, crystal decanters and much more. There is also a prize for the college with the highest student entry and for the employers of the winners of the top Awards.

## OUT AND ABOUT

### RANSOMES MONOPOLY SHOCK

Within days of Ransomes announcement that year end profits had increased by £1.1m to £14.4m, Trade Secretary Nicholas Ridley has decided to refer the company's Cushman acquisition of the Westwood Garden Tractor and Ride-on-Lawn mower company to the Commission.

It would appear that the Office of Fair Trading have some misgivings over the exclusive dealer system. Ransome dealers now carry the Cushman range and there is concern that local authority buying options might be restricted.

Ransomes Chief Executive, Bob Dodsworth, told 'the Golf Course' as this issue went to press that the company were very unhappy over the situation as this was the second referral in a month concerning Ransomes' expansion plans and is involving the staff in a great deal of work.

"As you know there is a lack of statistical information in the grass machinery industry, but we are doing our best to help."

"We are trying to build up the company to compete in Europe as well as the UK, with sights on a world market", said Bob Dodsworth, "but the Government seem to want us to work with our hands tied behind our back."

Countering the suggestion that dealerships are too exclusive, Bob Dodsworth pointed out that the previous ten Cushman dealers, with the exception of Huxleys as the main distributor all carried Ransome products. Outlets have now been expanded to 28.

### EAGLE PROMOTIONS LAUNCH NEW LASER MEASURING SERVICE

Eagle Promotions, who specialise in providing quality scorecards in the UK, are launching a new laser measuring service, using a laser measuring system, to complement their existing business.

The laser is portable and light-weight - weighing only two and a half pounds - and is powered by a 4 amp pocket sized battery. It is accurate to + or - 3mm over 1000 meters. The equipment has been commissioned and designed by Eagle Promotions, who have a client base of over 350 golf clubs and are rapidly expanding. "It's all part of the service we offer", says Eagle's partner, Philip McInley. "Primarily we provide our client clubs with a top quality scorecard. These clubs often carry out improvement programmes on their course and we are able to quickly remeasure, issue a new English Golf Union sanctioned certificate and make all the necessary amendments to their scorecard."

The advantage of using the laser system is that golf clubs can have their course measured accurately and efficiently, with no disruption to those playing. Philip McInley comments: "Many established courses have not been measured for years. The old traditional 100 meter chain, or the meter wheel, have been responsible for many inaccurate measurements, which can often make a difference when calculating standard scratch. Clubs can have a yardage chart and a full three-tee certified course measure, with the on-course survey taking only four hours and receipt of certificates within three days."

### ORLANDO TO PARIS FOR GCE '90

Ellen MacGillavry, project manager of the Golf Course Europe Exhibition which this year moves from the inaugural event in Wiesbaden to Paris, flew out to Orlando to see how the GCSSA run their annual event.

She found it to be a "swinging show", attracting hundreds of exhibitors, many taking massive stand space to show their full range of turf maintenance machinery.

Also impressive was the range of conference subjects, presented by the leading agronomists from five continents as well as the Golf Course Superintendents themselves.

Although there is still growth on the American Continent for golf, manufacturers and suppliers are aware of the even greater growth potential in Europe.

Continental golf ten years ago was simply a rich man's sport. The standards in the club houses proved the point though this was not always reflected in the presentation of the course. All this is changing with projections of 1000 to 2000 new courses, more if the political barriers are removed and Eastern Europe moves towards a western style economy.

The Paris Exhibition - GCE '90 is to take place at Le Parc des Expositions du Bourget from 28th to the 30th November.

After Ellen MacGillavry's trip to Florida it is expected that a large contingent of US manufacturers will want to test the European market as well.

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Illustrated: GM 415 finishing mower, pto sweeper collector, P18 rotary mower, LGU wood chipper.



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## NEW VERTI-GROOM CUTTING UNITS FOR RANSOMES GT GREENS TRIPLE

Introduced to maintain consistently good putting surfaces on golf greens more economically, (pictures) Ransomes new hydraulically driven Verti-Groom Cutting Units seen on their GT Greens Triple mower.

Compared with conventional greens cutting units, during trials both in Britain and overseas, the Verti-Groom units collected up to three times the amount of material after cutting a green. Besides grass cuttings, the boxes also contained thatch and moss.

Being mounted ahead of the front disc roll the Verti-Groom, which can be lifted out of work, does not throw top dressing into the cutting cylinder and as it floats independently of the cutting unit, Ransomes say it is not over aggressive.

Mounting the Verti-Groom in front of the unit keeps the distance between the front and rear rollers to the minimum which reduces the incidence of scalping on undulating greens.

The front disc roll helps to penetrate the thatch without marking the greens.

Adjustments for height of cut and cylinder to bottom blade are without the use of tools but the depth control of the verti-groom has been designed for setting and locking.



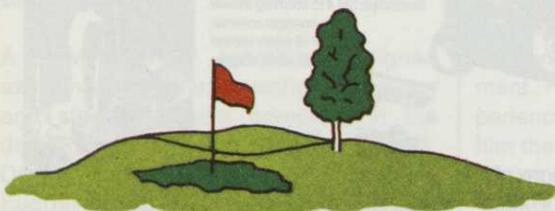
## NORTHERN REPRESENTATIVE FOR SISIS

SISIS Equipment (Macclesfield) Ltd are pleased to announce the appointment of Terry Dickinson (right) as Area Sales Representative for the North East of England. Terry is based in Hartlepool and will be responsible for all sales and service in the North East and North Yorkshire areas. He has particular experience in hydraulics.



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Aerial view of the 1st and 11th holes including lake and feed ditch at the recently completed Graveley Golf Course near Stevenage

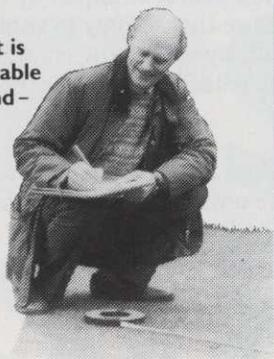
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GOLF COURSE OR LANDSCAPE

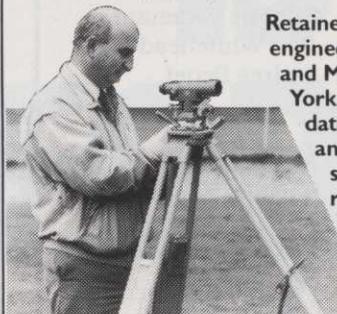
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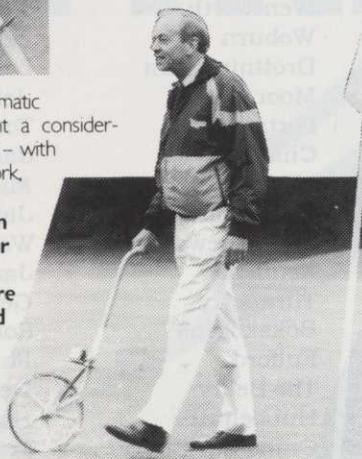


Retained as design consultant engineers by U.K., U.S.A., European and Middle Eastern customers, York, Parker & Martin have, to date, ensured that the feasibility and capital cost of purchasing such irrigation system has resulted in a wise investment – not an expensive mistake!



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LAWN GENIE 72" Fairway mower/scarifier	£1,650
LLOYDS 5 gang mowers on lifting frame	£4,750



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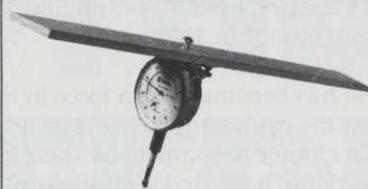


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# VOLVO PGA EUROPEAN TOUR

The Volvo Tour, sanctioned by the PGA European Tour, this year has on offer a record £13m in prize money. Starting in February, the first event was held in Portugal, moving on the United Emirates Golf Club in Dubai.

The decision by the USPGA to restrict European players to only five tournaments a year, apart from the majors, unless they are prepared to contract for 15 events has persuaded Faldo, Langer and Ballesteros to opt for the European circuit in 1990.

European golf has become such a force in the last few years, stamped by two wins and a retention of the Ryder Cup, that the rank and file US Tour pros are more than happy to vote the players on this side of the Atlantic out of a chance to compete for their prize fund. By restricting competition to five events for our Europeans, they no doubt hope that it will also put them at a disadvantage in preparation for the major titles. Time will tell.

Sandy Lyle has decided to compete in the USA and has the potential to give them more than a run for their money. It is a hard school, and his early results have not been promising, but he has the game to help reduce Britain's dollar deficit. His progress will be watched with interest.

DATE	EVENT	VENUE	COURSE MANAGER
March 29	AGF Open	La Grande Motte	Etienne Podenam
April 5-8	Jersey Open	La Moye	Ron Whitehead
April 12-15	Cannes Open	Cannes Mougins	Andres Peuet
April 19-21	Madrid Open	Puerta de Hierro	
April 26-29	Spanish Open	Club de Campo	
May 3-6	Benson & Hedges	St. Mellion	Roy Battishill
May 10-13	Belgium Open	Royal Waterloo	David Singleton
May 17-20	Italian Open	Milano	
May 25-28	PGA Championship	Wentworth	Chris Kennedy
May 31-June 3	Dunhill Masters	Woburn	Neil Whitaker
June 7-10	Scandinavian Open	Drottningholm	Lennart Nilsson
June 14-17	Wang Pro-Celebrity	Moor Park	John Edwards
June 21-24	Carrols Irish Open	Portmarnock	Tommy Clarke
June 28-July 1	French Open	Chantilly	Jacque Aossu
July 4-7	Monte Carlo Open	Mont Agel	Michael Merrick
July 11-14	Scottish Open	Gleneagles	Jimmy Kidd
July 19-22	OPEN CHAMPIONSHIP	St. Andrews	Walter Woods
July 26-29	KLM Dutch Open	Kennemer	Jaap Twisk
July 26-29	Seniors Brit. Open	Turnberry	George Brown
Aug 2-5	PLM Open	Bokskogens	Ronny Persson
Aug 9-12	Murphy's Cup	Fulford	Philip StirknAug
Aug 16-19	English Open	The Belfry	Derek Ganning
Aug 23-26	German Open	Hubbelrath	Harry Harrison
Aug 30-Sept 2	Swiss Open	Crans-sur-Sierre	Francois-Louis Rey
Sept 6-9	European Open	Sunningdale	Jack McMillan
Sept 13-16	Lancombe Trophy	St. Nom-la-Breteche	Pierre Dekeyser
Sept 20-23	World Match Play	Wentworth	Chris Kennedy
Sept 20-23	BMW Open	Golfplatz Munchen	Graeme MacNiven
Sept 27-30	Epson Grand Prix	St. Pierre	David Jones
Oct 4-7	German Masters	Stuttgart	Horst Nestle
Oct 11-14	Dunhill Cup	St. Andrews	Walter Woods
Oct 11-14	Austrian Open	Gut Altentann	
Oct 18-21	Portuguese Open	Quinto de Lago	Mario Barruncho
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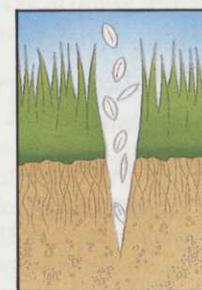
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# MONTE CARLO . . .

The friendly club in Europe's most exclusive resort, computer controls water saving

by Cedric Johns

**P**erched high on the rocky slopes of Mont. Agel, some eight hundred metres above the smooth Mediterranean and the sun drenched principality of Monaco, the Monte Carlo golf club provides a tranquil contrast to the hustle of the world famous resort from which the club takes its name.

At sea level, Monte Carlo presents a kaleidoscope of cosmopolitan interests. Its highly manicured parkland, colourful flowers and shrubs, vividly green lawns, sparkling fountains and palm trees provides a marked contrast to the historic Casino, the ultra-modern Lowes complex, some astonishing roof gardens, traditional French architecture, modern high rise office blocks, sophisticated underground shopping arcades and busy multi-level roadways - part of which forms the Formula I Grand Prix circuit.

At the City's hub, the Place du Casino bustles with life almost twenty four hours a day!

Viewed from a pavement table, at the internationally popular Cafe de Paris, you can sit, relax and literally watch the world saunter by, observe celebrities coming and going from the Hotel Paris one of Winston Churchill's retreats - or view the stream of shiny Mercedes, Porches, BMW's and Rolls Royces purring slowing around the central, palm shaded circular roadway.

On the nearby 'Rock', Prince Rainier's palace stands regal guard over the fine harbour, its calm blue waters reflecting the polished metal and gleaming white hulls of rows of luxurious yachts anchored within its walls.

Packed into a relatively small area of land, the principality is dominated by the mountain range which overlooks the coast-line from Menton to Nice. Towering upwards, the mountain's sun bleached rocky faces reach a high point where players, teeing off from the 14th, on the golf course can, peer over the edge and enjoy an eagles eye view of the city below . . .

But enough of the travelogue! Let me tell you about the Monte Carlo course and how an Englishman has helped to give the club a technological lead in the art of greenkeeping.

Just over three years ago Mike Mer-

rick was following a typically homespun career as a greenkeeper. Learning his trade on the Worthing and Beaconsfield courses, Mike was appointed head greenkeeper, at the Stratford-on-Avon club in 1986. Then fate stepped in.

George Shiels, who had been advising the Monte Carlo club on greenkeeping matters, offered Mike Merrick the chance to take over this particular role - on a part-time basis.

Ostensibly visiting Monte Carlo to discuss and agree this arrangement, Mike was suddenly confronted with a totally unexpected situation.

"The objective of my meeting was to finalise plans for a week's advisory stay on a quarterly basis. I was to advise the course foreman and his team of the finer points of golf course preparation and management", Mike



Mike Merrick "Le Boss" at Monte Carlo

told me.

Instead, the discussions took on a completely new dimension when Harry Rey, the Monte Club captain, suddenly looked up and offered Mike the position of head greenkeeper - permanently!

This to say the least, was something of a conversation stopper. Pausing for a few moments to collect his thoughts, Mike followed his convictions and agreed.

"Having committed myself, I later had the questionable pleasure of spending the whole of my 90 minutes flight back

to London considering the implications!", said Mike with a grin.

And what implications. Mike had not even had time to consult his wife, Mandy. He didn't speak French and he had never worked outside the UK, never mind look after a mountain-side course.

A five week evening crash course in French, a frantic rush to complete all the necessary arrangements plus a family Christmas gathering provided little time for second thoughts!

Following Henry Rey's advice to "bring nothing but yourselves", the Merricks arrived on the Cote d'Azur, in January 1987.

Looking back to that momentous day, Mike says that as far as he (and Mandy) was concerned it was the right decision. "I had found the challenge I was looking for."

Responsibility? "That was rather unnerving" says Mike. "I had no one to guide me, no greens committee chairman to talk to, (there isn't a greens committee) it was all down to me!" Absorbing himself totally, Mike's immediate task was to improve his French, educate his assistants to his way of doing things and set them work schedules.

**T**he first job Mike handed out was cutting and shaping all 18 holes so that, in his words, the combination of tees, greens, fairways and rough looked like a golf course.

That accomplished, they then set about improving the course generally, and in particular, preparing it for the June '87 'Johnny Walker' PGA tournament. Leading by example, "Le Boss", as Mike is known locally, established himself by demonstrating that he would and could tackle any job he asked his team to carry out.

At the end of his first year Mike's team had learned much, they had reacted to his enthusiasm, they could see the improvement in the course themselves. The second year of Mike Merrick's development plans for the Monte Carlo golf course majored on the provision of an up-to-date irrigation system.

Initial discussions had started halfway through Mike's first year on the course because, as he described it,



*Sylvan setting. The tree lined approaches to the par 3 14th hole at Monte Carlo*

"The existing system was nothing more than a hotch-potch of Rainbird Weathermatic, Perrott and Toro sprinklers and equipment - 1988 was to be the year of the irrigation system."

Water, or the lack of it at some 2,600 feet above sea level was (and still is) a big problem. Supplied by a local water company who have the right to switch off supplies at their discretion, conservation of resources was upper most in Mike's thoughts. "How, he asked, can we best utilise what initial water we have . . ."

The upshot of a series of deliberations between Mike, the brothers Rey and other members of the Monte Carlo club's management committee ended with invitations to Rainbird and Toro to submit designs, costings and recommendations.

"Give or take the odd embellishment, both submissions were identical" says Mike. "So we carried out a final analysis breaking down each related factor - good points and bad points, the pro's and the con's with an emphasis on ease of control."

"On a personal note, I voted for the Toro system because of the considerate, helpful and knowledgeable advice I had previously been given by both the Toro Irrigation and mower people that I had worked with back in England."

"The decision was taken, The new system specified was to be the Toro Network 8000 including a Weather Station. Designed to provide the latest forms of data electronically, the system also offered the benefits of sophisticated 'computer controlled' watering in direct proportion to the entire course's needs - measured every 24 hours.

It was the very first Toro system of its kind to be installed in Europe. Supplied by Sadimato, the Toro Sales distributor for France, installation of the Network 8000 system commenced in the September of '87.

**I**n the event, the installation of the high technological elements involved in the system provided a number of technical headaches. "I think we all learned something during the installation period - after all, we were pioneering electronics of the type not seen on a European golf course before" commented Mike.

"I learned a great deal about computerisation and automated electronic systems during the installation period - so did my assistants. As the 1988 PGA tournament drew ever closer, we mucked in to help complete much of the work. It was an invaluable experience."

"The high-tech. back up we received

from Toro - mainly through European Sales Director, Carlos Ochoa, and Technical Service Manager, Mark Gunter was tremendous.

"Mark helped commission the system shortly before the 'pro-tournament was due to begin and then, would you believe it, it rained so heavily we didn't need to use the system - at that moment in time."

What, I asked Mike Merrick, did he think of the Network 8000 system after a full season's use on the Monte Carlo course?

"It is a very fine management tool - to my way of thinking it is the way forward - yes, even for club's in Northern Europe including the UK," he told me. "The weather station really does a great job of measuring soil moisture. It eliminates for example, the risk of over watering which in turn substantially reduces the casual introduction of undesirable grasses on greens and equally important in my case, the close control of watering enables me to utilise very limited resources to better effect".

"Here on Mont Agel, I have some 220,000 gallons of water at my disposal. I really need twice that amount but Network 8000 does a great job of helping me use limited supplies to maximum effect."

"Before the system was installed I

estimated that my fairways required 15 minutes watering per night. Network 8000 tells me that 13 minutes will do the job - these two minutes gives me 3,000 extra gallons to play with. Over seven nights that's 21,000 gallons of water for use on other parts of the course!."

"Last year I printed out a full 12 months data provided by the weather station covering wind speed, wind direction, rainfall, humidity and solar radiation. Relating these factors to daily temperatures measured in the autumn and spring enabled me to work out a useful guide to temperature ranges affecting over-seeding or top-dressing."

"Having said that, it is my opinion that the most important factor which I, as a greenkeeper, should take notice of is solar radiation."

"In my experience, solar radiation has a critical influence on evapotranspiration and the need for watering - much more so than allowing for rainfall. You can hear, see and feel rain but solar radiation? At best one can hazard a guess on the basis of direct sunlight or cloudy bright or dull conditions. The Network 8000 weather station eliminates guesswork, it measures solar radiation accurately - and has often provided answers that I've not expected."

"I've learned for example, that a clear hot sunny day can produce a lower solar radiation/ET rate while low cloud plus high solar radiation can reverse the situation."

"In real terms and with some eighteen months experience of the Network 8000 under his belt, Mike claims that he is now able to use limited water resources to maximum effect. I calculate that I am saving 25% of water at my disposal yet getting 50% more effective coverage because of the system."



*Reaching for the sky. A Toro 690 in action against a rugged backdrop looking towards Chateauneuf*

**W**hen walking the Monte Carlo course I must say that I immediately felt at home. Perhaps it was the sight of so many fine evergreen oaks, silver birch and pine trees which fringe the sloping boundaries and fairways. Maybe it was the glint of autumnal leaves dancing across the green turf - a mixture of rye grass and fescues - or the surprise of finding late blooming roses, close by the club house.

Whatever the reasons, it came as no great surprise to learn that the origins of the club were influenced by the British.

Around 1911, a small group of Edwardian golfers got together and created a few holes on Mont Agel, mostly for their own amusement.

Developed piecemeal over subsequent years, today's par 71 championship course really took shape parallel to the advent of the post war travel boom, golfing holidays and the emergence of the PGA tournament circuit.

Taken under the wing of the Societe des Bains de Mer, the club consolidated throughout the sixties and seventies. Now under the guiding hand of club president, M. Jean-Charles Rey, a lawyer, the Monte Carlo club currently has over 400 members.

This figure is more than doubled by the constant stream of visitors of all nationalities who turn up to play each year.

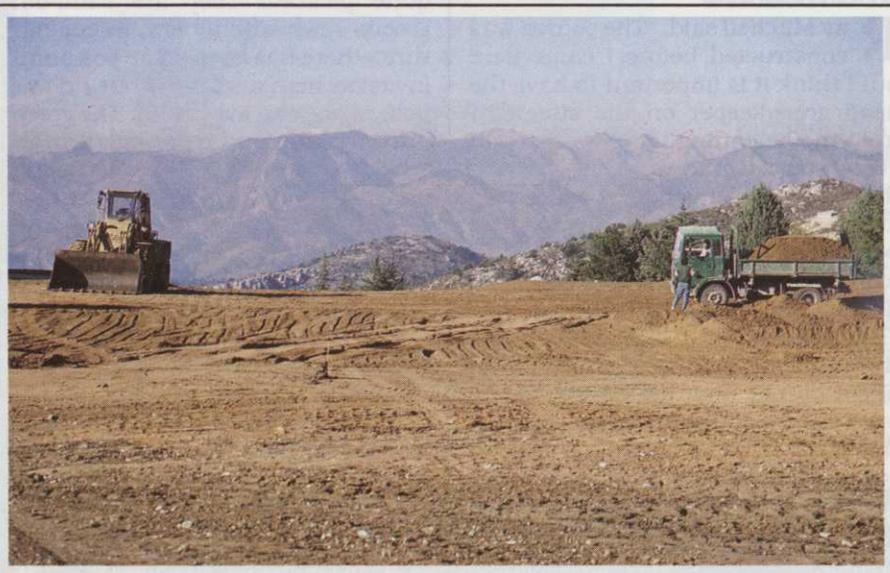
Competitions-including medals, stablefolds and inter play tournaments feature throughout a full and busy twelve months club programme. Events reach a climax each year when the Monte Carlo 'Open' draws the worlds top pros to the course.

During the winter months, the British influence in the shape of Bob Halsall is evident on the course. Now an active 74, Bob comes over from Royal Birkdale where he started his professional career as a caddie, to teach the finer points of the game to ardent admirers. He also teaches at the Monaco Golf School.

Bob, I am told, has been making this journey for over forty years. At the time, Henry Cotton used to add his experience to Bob's depth of knowledge! That was before Portugal lured Henry away.

Yes, I quickly felt at home when visiting Monte Carlo - it is that sort of club. Can you imagine sitting down to lunch in the clubhouse with the club's head greenkeeper and his wife for company? I did, and very enjoyable it was!

In contrast, the club does not take kindly to members who fail to replace divots. If spotted, an automatic three months suspension is imposed. Visitors? Their green fees are returned and they are gently shown the door.



*Danger, men at work! Because of surface rock, the 10th was remodelled under the direction of Mike Merrick to eliminate this problem . . .*

# Will the sand only greens at Canvey Island take 40,000 rounds a year . . . asks John Campbell

Essex's 18-hole public golf course built 3 years ago for Castle Point District Council is steadily maturing and proving to be a popular venue for local golf enthusiasts and visitors to that part of the Thames estuary. The course has been laid out on a flat expanse of open land on the edge of Benfleet Creek not far from Southend-on-Sea. The site chosen is reminiscent of an exposed links land course where the bracing atmosphere and ferocity of the elements can combine to play a major role in the golfing strategy. The course is managed on behalf of the local authority by Golf Landscapes Ltd., Brentwood, Essex, who designed and built the layout at Waterside Farm on the north fringe of Canvey Island. Golf Landscapes extensive experience in the recreation and golf course construction industry makes them specially qualified to cope with a growing demand to undertake course maintenance contract work as a follow up to their design and construction activities. They have their own contract maintenance division which seems to be kept fairly busy with a large volume of work.

Looking over the course quite recently I thought it was in quite good condition and a credit to Ray Mitchell, head greenkeeper and his staff of 3 men. He was telling me how he graduated from looking after cricket wickets and bowling greens to his present job and he waxed enthusiastically and knowledgeably about many aspects of greenkeeping. He also seemed to have a good rapport with his boss, Peter Dunning, Golf Landscapes, director. To create a public golf course of sufficient interest for all kinds of golfers out of a dead flat piece of land is not a simple task unless unlimited financial resources are on hand for extensive earthmoving and landscaping operations. But it is surprising what can be done even on a modest budget when an experienced company like Golf Landscapes is engaged to undertake the work with all their know-how and expertise of building championship courses in this country and abroad.

There is always controversy as to whether a course should be designed for the low or high handicap player, or



*Ray points out clumps of gorse he has planted in the semi-rough to add a bit of colour and character to the course*

the short or long hitter. In actual fact a good public course should be designed for all to play and derive pleasure and that is exactly what has been done at Canvey Island. The golf course there provides a fair and enjoyable test without being too long - 6153 yards, par 71. The greens are of good average size with minimal surface contours. Tees, bunkers and other features have been subtly landscaped for ease of maintenance and economical upkeep. Large tees are a good feature at every hole to spread the wear and tear which every public course has to accept and take in its stride.

Ray Mitchell said, "The course was constructed before I came here but I think it is important to have the head greenkeeper on the site right from the beginning to follow through every stage of the work progress. If there are problems he will want to be aware of them for he knows that it will be his responsibility to bring the course to maturity so he will want to be satisfied that the work gets done properly." "The local authority has planted some trees gorse and broom on the course to add a bit of colour and break up the open aspect of the landscape. Most of this has been done in haphazard and regimented fashion without consideration for the strategic value this could add to play. However, due to a shortage of labour they could not complete this and we were asked to continue the planting programme, so

we have tried to do this with a little more imagination and careful forethought to create more interest for golfers at the same time facilitating easier maintenance. Trees in long rows look unnatural and too artificial on the golf scene - so we have strived to plant everything as nature would have it, in small copses and natural groupings to beautify the landscape and improve the character of the course". "As you can see all our greens are in healthy shape and they survived the long period of drought last summer in reasonable condition for which I am quite pleased. They are sand-only greens sown with a bent/fescue mixture - there has been some poa annua invasion here and there but I do not believe one can avoid that. The greens putt smoothly and are always firm and resilient through the winter period and being a public course we are never closed and are expected to take quite a lot of play - it probably works out in the region of 40,000 rounds a year and numbers are steadily increasing as the course becomes more popular." "Each green is treated on an individual basis due to the fact that the sand depth varies on some and occasionally fescue die-back occurs during the season. Verti-cutting is carried out with care particularly on those greens where the sand depth is shallow. Raising the blades slightly on certain ones helps to eliminate any unnecessary surface damage in thin, weak growth

areas. It is really quite remarkable how deep grass roots will go down in the sand, in some cases we have come across root penetration down to 7 inches depth. Variations in sand depth certainly show up on the surface by the density of growth - all this has an effect on the speed of the green."

"Another necessity with sand-only greens", said Ray, "is reliable irrigation equipment for you cannot afford to be without water too long when the weather begins to get hot. We have a computerised system of pop-ups which seems to function quite well. It was really put to the test during the drought last year, we had some minor hiccups but came through with flying colours. Make no mistake sand-only greens can dry out very rapidly and it requires constant vigilance through the summer to keep abreast of water requirements."

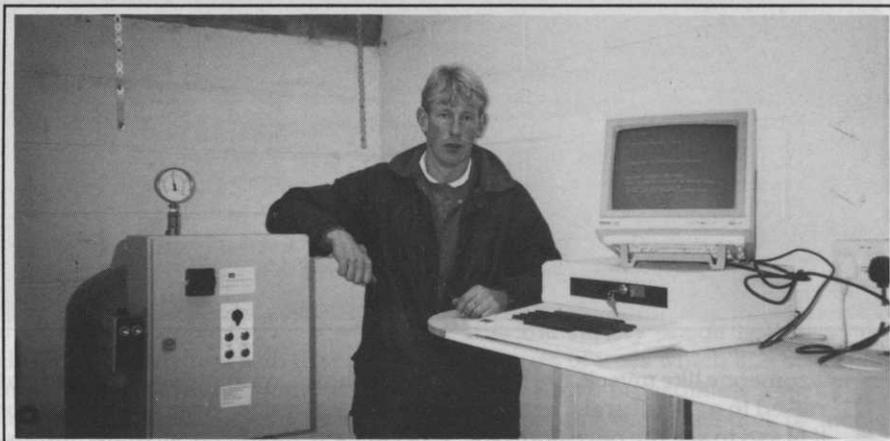
"My policy with nitrogen applications during the growing season has always been little and often to counteract the effects of rapid leaching in the sand. As a rule this means a light fertilizer dressing of iron sulphate every 3/4 weeks, to maintain a reasonable amount of colour and vigour through the summer. More frequent feeding called for by the needs of the hungry sand can be a source of encouragement to annual meadow grass so one has to be careful with the amount of

fertiliser used. Its all a matter of knowing your own greens and being able to discern when vigour is tailing off sufficiently to require more nitrogen".

**S**ome American superintendents I have talked to are very critical of sand-only greens and say they need more 'baby-sitting' or nursing, particularly during the summer months to ensure uniform water distribution for continued replenishment of the small water reserve held by the sand. Lower microbial activity - sand-only greens are likely to be less active microbiologically than mixtures containing soil and there is a much slower response to growth in the spring. A lack of moisture reservoir in sand-only greens is a serious concern. Irriga-

tion systems advanced as they are, still leave much to be desired. In a 3 to 5 mph breeze there is literally no margin for error. Excessive moisture infiltration rates emphasise the need for an efficient under-drainage system. Rapid nutrient leaching is another factor in sand-only greens that calls for higher nutrient levels. Is building greens that require more nitrogen and high volumes of water a move in the right direction?

There has been much discussion on the pros and cons of sand-only greens and I do not believe this method of green construction is likely to find much favour among discerning greenkeepers in this country - they are more suited to warmer climes of the USA.



The pop-up irrigation system has computerised controls



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# New jewel in Cheshire's golfing crown will be mounted at Portal . . . Keith Brain reports



*The short 13th*

**T**o someone like myself, born and raised in agricultural Cheshire, it is sad to see the once flourishing farming industry going through hard times. As a golfer, and someone who has made a living from the royal and ancient game for over two decades, the decline in farming in my native county is, however, now producing some startling and exciting prospects for our golfing future.

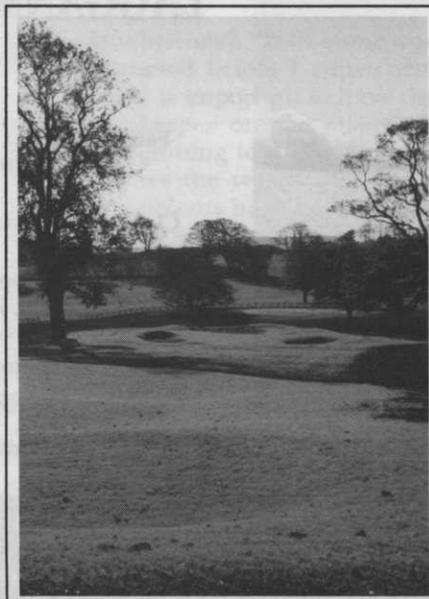
The last five years have produced some unforeseen changes for dairy farmers. To some degree they have become victims of their own success by producing a more efficient cow and creating tremendous surpluses around the world. E.E.C. regulations have been changed drastically to such an extent that it is now estimated that around half of Britain's dairy farmers are looking for alternative uses for their land. Many of them, particularly in Cheshire, are turning to golf, and creating new courses as a solution to their problem.

Take the ancient borough of Vale Royal, right in the Cheshire heartlands, for instance. The area boasts two fine championship courses at Delamere Forest and Sandiway, used as pre-qualifying tests the last time the Open Championship was held at Royal Liverpool, when Roberto de Vicenzo had that emotional victory over the Hoylake links.

In addition, there exists another private members club at Helsby and a

nine hole municipal complex at Knight's Grange, near Winsford. For decades it has been virtually impossible to obtain membership of any of the three private clubs. But all that seems set to change in the next couple of years. In the borough of Vale Royal alone there are currently plans for the establishment of no less than seven new golf courses, a new driving range has been built and opened, and others are planned to follow.

Maybe, in the ensuing years, the area, so close to the historic city of Chester and within easy reach of the connibations of Manchester, and Liverpool,



*View of the short 3rd*

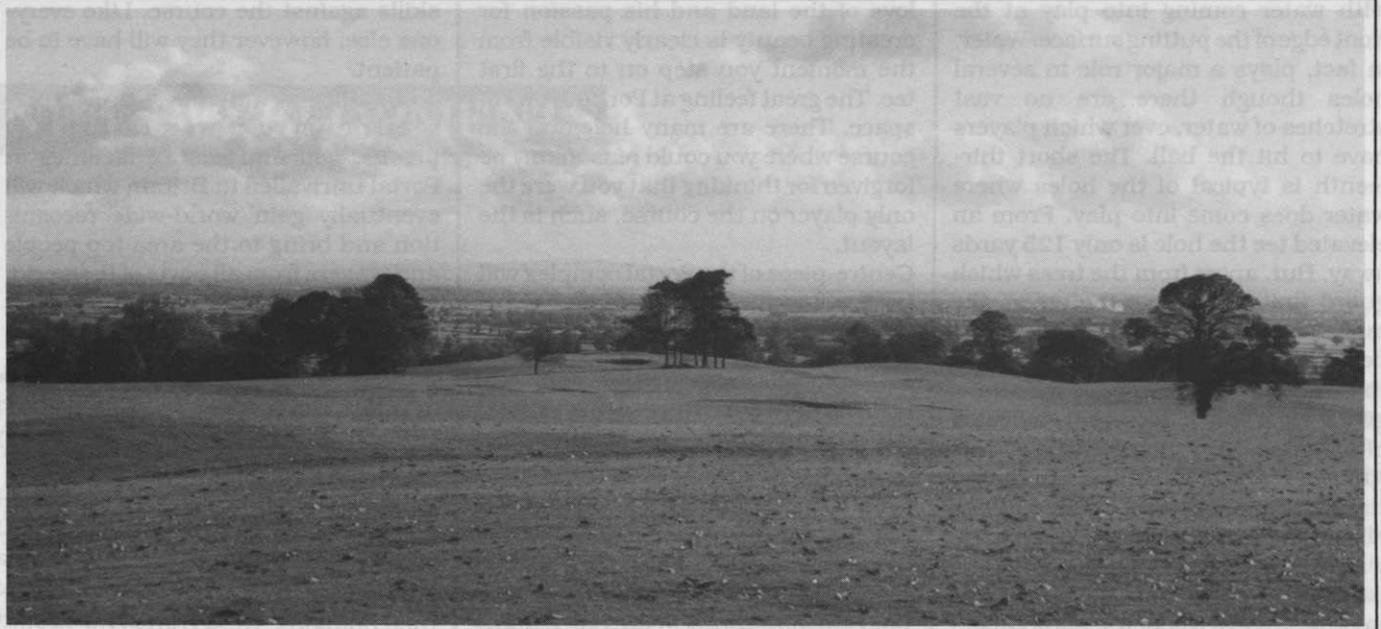
will become something of a golfing meccas, perhaps destined to rival some of the traditional Scottish haunts of English golfers who in a week would be in a position to play a different golf course every day and still have some to spare yet never travelling more than half-an-hour to any one venue.

Whether that actually happens or not, there will certainly be a great deal of golfing traffic heading for the village of Tarporley near Chester. For it is there, on the Portal estate, that the jewel in the Vale Royal Borough Council's golfing plans, is being created.

John Lilley moved to the area twenty years ago after a long and successful business career in which he built the giant Norwest Holst construction company into one of the biggest and most successful concerns in the land. At Portal, and on the adjoining Arderne estate, he created a thriving farming empire which became one of the biggest operations in Europe, with eventually the largest Freisan herd under one roof in the whole of Europe.

Like all his farming colleagues, however, he was forced to examine other possibilities when the new E.E.C. regulations were announced. There were many options but in the end he opted for the golfing syndrome.

"This is a beautiful part of the world and I want to retain the character of the area but at the same time create something really special. Meanwhile I hoped that the creation of new jobs



View from the 1st tee

would help to stop the decline of rural job prospects in the area", he said. What has already happened is that the first of two eighteen hole championship courses has been created. Work on the second course starts this spring as does the hotel project which will see the creation of a 100 bed hotel and a leisure complex which will incorporate the best of off-course facilities more readily associated with an American type country club than a European golfing complex.

The first course, designed by Donald Steel and constructed by Brian Pierson, has already been acclaimed by a number of golfing scribes. Covering over 200 acres of rolling countryside and with a huge number of mature trees on the site, it comes as no sur-

prise that Donald Steel said before starting the project: *"This is one of the best pieces of land I have ever seen. It is so full of variety and character that it has the potential of becoming as fine an inland course as we currently have in the United Kingdom"*.

He must be delighted with the creation of the course which, although now completed and virtually ready for play, will not be open until the middle of next year, because of the desire to allow the new course time to settle and mature. An unusual feature of the construction was that the entire course was seeded, not just tees and greens but rough and fairways. Hunters of Chester supplied Olympic Supreme for the greens, Olympic Sovereign for the rough and a special mixture of

Agram, Wintergreen, and Lustre Chewings Fescue together with Baron Poa Pratensis and Highland Browntop for fairways and tees. The result has been a superb cover and excellent uniformity in all the playing surfaces.

It is the variety of golf holes and the avenues of trees which line some fairways which immediately appeal.

But among the collection of memorable holes are two in particular on this 6,955 yard course which may well be talked about more than any others. They are the 540 yard par five fifth which will be one of the longest in European golf. The drive, from an elevated tee through an avenue of trees must be perfect, followed by a wood or long iron, leaving a good position for the shot to a tightly bunkered green

The house



with water coming into play at the front edge of the putting surface. Water, in fact, plays a major role in several holes though there are no vast stretches of water, over which players have to hit the ball. The short thirteenth is typical of the holes where water does come into play. From an elevated tee the hole is only 125 yards away. But, apart from the trees which guard the entrance to the green, the major hazard is a pool, beautifully designed and sculptured right across the front of the green with waterfalls giving a cascade effect from each side of the green into the pool below.

Anyone looking for a safe route and thinking that by going up a couple of clubs and playing big would be rewarded, would be mistaken. At the back of the green is another pool making this virtually an island hole. But it would be wrong to give the impression that Portal is an artificially made golf course with water everywhere. Where pools have been introduced they have been done carefully and tastefully to enhance the hole and its surrounds. But beauty is in essence the keyword at this course and one of the major reasons for that is that John Lilley, surprisingly a non golfer himself, has a passion for the land and for gardens.

He readily admits that he sees Portal not simply as a golf course but as a huge extension to his gardens. His

love of the land and his passion for creating beauty is clearly visible from the moment you step on to the first tee. The great feeling at Portal is one of space. There are many holes on the course where you could reasonably be forgiven for thinking that you were the only player on the course, such is the layout.

Centre-piece of the Portal complex will be the fine timber-framed courtyard house which, although built in 1906 was copied from Tudor mansion times.

**Architect Donald Steel  
Constructors Brian D. Pierson  
(Contractors) Ltd, Head  
Greenkeeper Mark Proctor**

The house is now a listed building and externally will not be altered in any way although there will be extensive internal alterations to provide restaurants for golfers and hotel guests. From the great south facing bay windows guests will have a panoramic view over the extensive gardens and beyond, right through to the Peckforton hills. European Tour stars Derrick Cooper and Denis Durnian planted commemorative trees at the ceremonial opening of the new complex to signal the start of the development in the spring last year. Since then they have both been back to inspect the course. Like everyone else who is involved in golf and associated with the Portal complex they can't wait to tee up and test their

skills against the course. Like everyone else, however they will have to be patient.

John Lilley is watching his own personal dream come true. His aim is to provide golf and leisure facilities at Portal unrivalled in Britain which will eventually gain world-wide recognition and bring to the area top people and players from all parts of the world, who like everyone else, will have the chance to play either of the two courses on a pay-as-you-play basis rather than a membership type club.

"We have taken expert guidance from a number of people and we have had as our guests many influential and knowledgeable people from the world of golf. They all assure me that at Portal I have something which is really special and I am delighted to hear their opinions. We set out at the beginning of the operation to create something that was different and memorable and everyone tells us that we have succeeded. But we don't want to ruin everything that has been achieved by opening too early", he said.

Therefore everyone will have to wait another twelve months or so, before the Portal complex and its courses become generally available.

There can be little doubt, however, according to all experts, that this latest jewel in Cheshire's crown will be well worth waiting for.

I, for one, cannot disagree.



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## NEW DEVELOPMENTS

### RECONSTRUCTION AT EAST DORSET

Proposals for the construction of 9 additional holes and the reconstruction of the existing 18 holes have now been submitted by the club's course architect, Martin Hawtree of Hawtree & Sons.

Work on the new 9 holes should start in April and it is anticipated that they will come into play in 1992. Reconstruction of 10 of the holes on the existing course will start in May and by turfing the greens, it is hoped that they will come into play next year. Work on the remaining 8 holes of the existing course will start in 1991 and these should be back in play at the same time as the new 9 holes.

By that time the club will have an 18 hole course some 7000 yards in length from the back tees with an additional 9 hole course - all tees and greens having been relocated and reconstructed to modern standards.

Landscaping of the area in front of the clubhouse will include a new large putting green, and the clubhouse itself will be enlarged, with additional car parking space. Martin Hawtree is working closely with Eddie Hadgkiss the club's recently appointed course manager. It is interesting to note that Martin's father Fred was the Architect for the extensive improvements on the John O'Gaunt Golf Club when Eddie's father was the head greenkeeper there - like father, like son!

The East Dorset Club's General Manager, David Thomas, sees the overall construction programme as an exciting one although current members may suffer a little during the next couple of years. However, by 1992 they should have an excellent 27 golf holes with clubhouse facilities to match - not forgetting the recently opened floodlit driving range.

### DIY GOLF COURSE CONSTRUCTION SCHEME

Many farmers are deterred from converting their land into a golf course because of the high production costs involved. With 700 courses required by the year 2000 AD to meet demand, the irony is that these

landowners have ideal sites but feel limited by finance.

Now Hawtree & Son, the Oxford based international golf course architects, have come up with a revolutionary idea for what in essence are do-it-yourself golf courses, in which they submit a simple design and then allow the farmer and his workforce to build it in their own time, while maintaining a supervisory role.

By this method the Oxford-based practice, is making golf course ownership more attainable. The first example of this new concept is the Sandford Springs Golf Club near Kingsclere in Hampshire on the site of Sandford Farm owned by Raleigh Place. The complex was opened by Nick Faldo US Masters champion, earlier this year. Simon Gidman, Hawtree's on-site architect for the project designed the layout for the farmer and his partners to produce an 18 hole 6050 yard par 70 course. Throughout construction the architects were on hand to advise and check each stage of development.

The second example is an 18 hole golf course at Wrag Farm just north of Swindon. The construction work has now been completed and the course is scheduled to open in 1991.

Over the next few years it is hoped a form of joint venture between architect and farmer will lead to many new golf courses as no-frills development costs are kept to a minimum, but to a high specification.

### STAVERTON PARK HOTEL AND GOLFING COMPLEX OPENS FOR BUSINESS

Staverton Park, the established parkland course near Daventry and the course where Nick Faldo's coach David Leadbetter began his successful career, have opened its impressive hotel complex.

The initial phase of 30 bedrooms to luxury standards, complements the golf course, before, further 20 rooms featuring 6 luxury suites with jacuzzi spa baths and glorious panoramic views of the golf course will open in the spring. A health and fitness suite for hotel guests including a trimnasium, sauna, solarium and snooker room add to the facilities. The complex should appeal not only to lovers of golf but to anyone seeking a relaxing leisure break.

Hewn out of the natural Northamptonshire landscape, Staverton represented a significant change in direction in golf course construction when building started nearly 15 years ago.

The brief to architect John D Harris from proprietor David Green was simple, create a course of spectacular dimension that is enjoyable to play 12 months a year.

The late Commander Harris was the ideal man for the job, having established a reputation throughout the world in the field of golf course architecture, with projects as far afield as Runway Bay in Jamaica and Canberra, Australia. He also recognised the need for aesthetic features on courses with a particular penchant for sand and water, both of which feature significantly at Staverton Park plus the need to have clear vision of both features and hazards from tee.

Work started at Staverton Park in 1975 with the original course being designed around mighty elm trees, which provided the definition on a number of the holes, large sand traps, large sand greens with suspended water table construction and a number of constructed water features.

The original 150 acres of farm land on which the course was built required considerable "re-forming" in order to provide the necessary contour ideal for a golf course. This involved the movement of approximately 600,000 tons of earth and the laying of 10,000 yards of land drainage.

The sand construction of the greens on top of the suspended water table provide the ideal surface for maximum drainage and it is this facility above all other that makes Staverton such a popular course during the winter months.

The greens, sown with Pencross Bent combine all the elements that make them ideal for play throughout the year - snow or heavy frost excepting, winter greens are a rarity at Staverton.

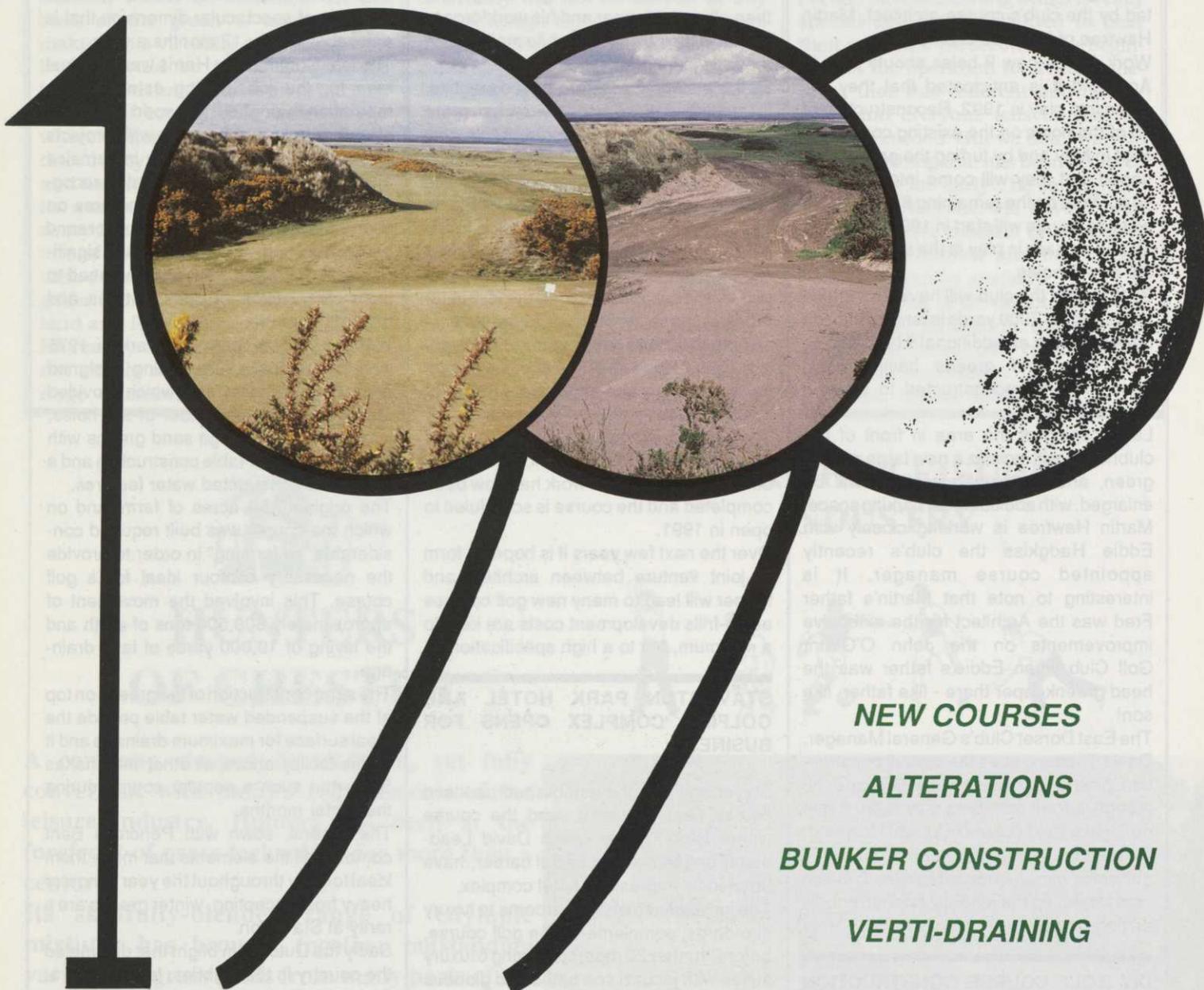
Sadly the Dutch Elm blight that decimated the country in the eighties, left its mark at Staverton Park and a major tree planting programme has been in operation for the last ten years.

Now open for nearly 13 years, Staverton Park is maturing into a very fine course, its open fairways encourage players to open their shoulders from the tee, but beware

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## NEW DEVELOPMENTS

## NEW DEVELOPMENTS

Dear Sir,  
Steven Marnoch summed up my sentiments perfectly in his article

standards must not be rushed, every course is unique and I can take between 18 months and two years from it's conception to the



Staverton Parks new luxury hotel

the careless 2nd shot, despite the deceptively large greens, each is surrounded by Commander Harris' hungry traps and if they don't get you, the cunning borrow on these huge greens (some nearly 1/2 acre in size) certainly will.

Each hole enjoys a character of its own at Staverton Park, none too hard, but none too simple, ensuring an enjoyable day out for golfers of handicaps both high and low. Greens and tees are irrigated by an automatic Watermation system installed at construction. Water is pumped from a main pond on the course to a reservoir pond by the 1st tee. From here water is circulated back around the course with tees, approaches and greens being irrigated. Because of the natural clay subsoil a number of springs feed the water throughout the year ensuring ample irrigation in even the driest of conditions.

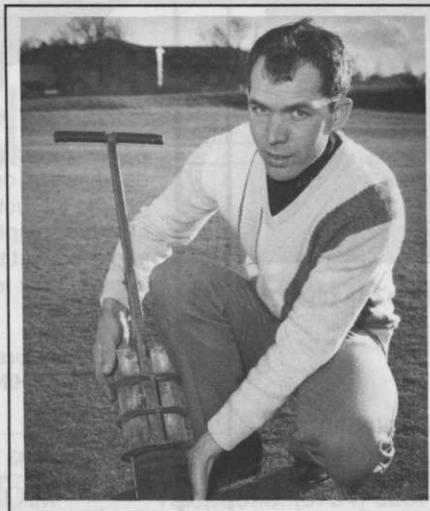
These ponds also play an important part in the aesthetics providing a natural habitat for both indigenous wild life such as, coots, moorhens, swans, ducks but also, the occasional foreign visitor such as Canada Geese.

Due to its rural location the course is a haven for other natural inhabitants, including foxes, rabbits, hares and even the odd mercurial badger.

Head Greenkeeper, Howard Middlesbrook served his course manager apprenticeship at Tankersley Park Golf Course for seven and a half years, where he studied for the city and guilds greenkeeping certificate, and then passed with three distinctions and three credits at Broomfield Col-

lege, Derby, where he was top student. Howard, aged 29, held his first major position at Pinegrove Country Club where he was head greenkeeper for two years. During that time he built a large bowling green and a putting green from scratch. He then moved on to Pontefract Golf Club where he was head greenkeeper for three and a half years. He directed the reconstruction of all the bunkers, built new tees and developed the course. He also took control of a major tree planting operation.

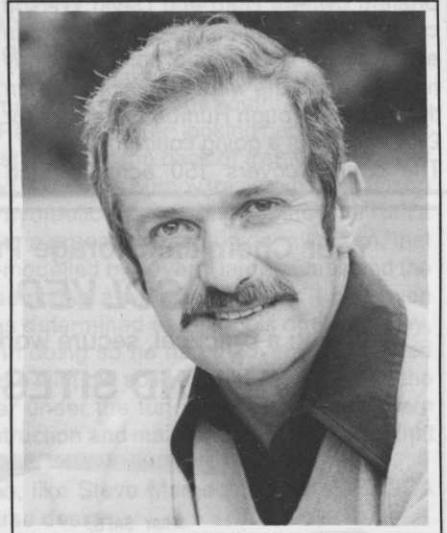
Howard (below) plays golf with the Green-keepers Association and is a section member of the Greenkeepers Committee. Married to Debbie, who he met while playing at Tankersley Park Golf Course some time after leaving there, they have two children, Gavin aged three and a



half and a toddler Francis at 20 months. They now live in Daventry and are starting to settle into the Northamptonshire way of life.

Howard has worked at Staverton for some months and plans to develop the course to its full potential. He describes the course as being well laid out with many attractive features, the large sand constructed greens giving all year round play ability.

Howard and his team of three greens staff have recently planted 1,000 trees, birch, oak, alder willow, lime, sycamore and scots pine to add to the beauty of the course in years to come.



### SEPTEMBER OPENING FOR PAXHILL PARK

The construction of the clubhouse of the new Paxhill Park Golf Club at Lindfield has just begun and is scheduled to be completed before the opening of the club this September.

The 6,128 yard course, which was designed by PGA professional Patrick Tallack (pictured above) and built by his construction company is creating tremendous interest in the area and the club have opened an application list for members. Patrick Tallack told us "We are all delighted with progress and the amount of interest shown already is very encouraging indeed. The golf club will soon establish itself as one of the finest in Sussex. The setting and views are superb".

## NEW DEVELOPMENTS

### CHAMPIONSHIP COURSE FOR EAST ANGLIA

A new 18 hole championship golf course is to open in East Anglia. Hintlesham Hall Golf Club, four miles west of Ipswich, will attract the world's leading golfers.

The 6835 yards Par 73 golf course, designed by Hawtree & Son the Oxford-based architects, responsible for over 300 courses worldwide is scheduled to open officially later this year was built by Land Unit Construction Ltd of Milton Keynes.

Nearing completion the golf course adjoins the 16th century country house previously owned by Robert Carrier, the internationally known restaurateur. The present owners Ruth and David Watson converted Hintlesham Hall in 1984 to an exquisite 33 bedroomed hotel and they have now put the whole development on the market through Humberts Leisure for £7.5 million as a going concern.

The course covers 150 acres of rich

Suffolk parkland, not far from Constable country and is only ten minutes from the main A12 London-Yarmouth road.

Eight greenkeepers will work under the direction of Charles Burke, formerly head greenkeeper with the Stowmarket Golf Club.

Membership has been restricted to 400 for the coming season. This number will consist of corporate members and those paying annual subscriptions. By restricting the use of the course initially, the intention is to allow it to mature at a natural pace.

The course architecture follows in the classic tradition of Augusta National, in that placement of shot on the fairways, rather than avoiding savage hazards, is the primary test.

In essence Hawtree & Son has steered clear of blind holes and random unfair penalties in favour of a more honest and open test that will challenge the best players as well as the club golfer.

This was the primary objective of the cur-

rent owner David Watson when he commissioned the international architects to design a course alongside his hotel.

Over the next three months 200 trees-a-day will be planted mainly saplings, in and around the perimeter of the 150 acre parkland course. Charles Burke currently leads the team undertaking this forward looking project and by the time the course opens it will benefit from 8,000 new trees. It is expected that the character of this picturesque course will change dramatically as the woodland matures and complements the famous 16th century country house.

Despite heavy rainfall in the Ipswich area in February, Hintlesham Hall remained relatively unaffected, after a week in which almost two inches of rain forced many courses to close. Through it all, Hintlesham remained unaffected.

All 18 greens at Hintlesham Hall have been constructed on three layers. A stone carpet, binding layer of coarse sand and finally a top mix of soil and sand.

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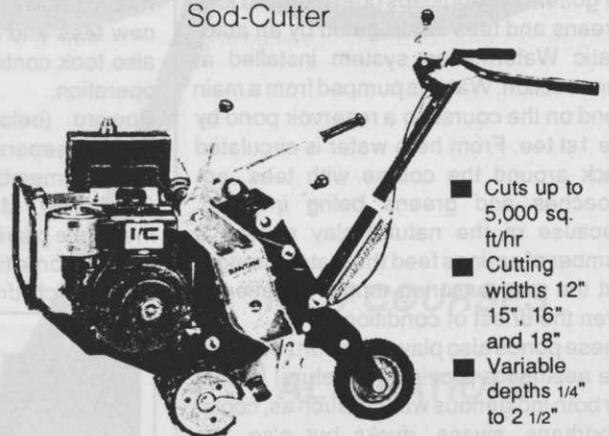
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## FROM THE FAIRWAY

Dear Sir,

Steven Marnoch summed up my sentiments perfectly in his article in your February 1990 issue. I can appreciate the problems he has had in getting into a career in Golf Course Architecture. I have received equally demoralising replies to job applications too.

I am now studying for the same Education Programme Steven mentioned in his article and only now do I feel that I am making some progress. Although the course set up by the BAGCA is the best thing that could have happened for someone like Steven or myself, I cannot emphasise enough, how important an understanding of the construction side of the industry is. Fortunately, Golf Landscapes Ltd, are providing me with this excellent grounding.

A comprehensive understanding of construction techniques will inevitably give the Golf Course Architect a much wider knowledge and ultimately, with the BAGCA Education Programme, a much more professional approach.

With regard to this professional approach, I was surprised to read a comment in a letter from Graham Hurst of Glebe Consultants. He stated that, "If we wait for the day when all courses will have been designed by qualified architects, may we not be overtaken by events."

Is he suggesting there is suddenly an insatiable need for golf developments!

The demand has been growing rapidly from the 70's, and no matter how quickly these courses are designed and built there will always be the demand for more, due to a greater availability of the sport to the individual, due to increased leisure time, the televising of all major golfing events and Europe's success in the Ryder Cup. Surely the last thing the golfer wants is the rushed building of new courses. Rapid development of a golfing facility can lead to short cuts taken in the construction stages, such as poor materials supply and specification, or the installation of insufficient drainage systems, or poorly specified irrigation systems, which will cause inevitable problems in the future.

The modern golfer is not looking for a barren turfed green space to hit a ball around, he/she is looking for something of quality, which has been designed with him/her in mind. A course that challenges all levels of golfer, which is sympathetic to the aesthetic quality of the surrounding landscape, a course that can be maintained by experienced greenkeeping staff with ease, and that entices the golfer back again even as he/she walks off the 18th green. Golf courses which provide a facility of such high

standards must not be rushed, every course is unique and it can take between 18 months and two years from it's conception to the opening day.

I am concerned that due to the present shortfalls in facilities, developers may begin to accept lower standards as a result of their urgency to satisfy the demand for new courses. Whereas, the BAGCA by setting up the Education Programme, are promoting an awareness of a higher standard approach. This may take a little longer to establish, but will benefit many more golfers in the long term. I can only hope the developers take the latter choice.

**Jonathan C. Gaunt**  
**Golf Landscapes Ltd**

Dear Sir,

I was interested to read Steve Marnoch's article regarding golf course Architects.

I too, way back in the days of the Beatles and mini skirts had the desire to become involved in the design of golf courses.

From an office bound job I moved to the "great outdoors!" In pursuit of my passion for golf I managed to get a job on a golf course. This was mainly due to an understanding head greenkeeper who was willing to give me a chance. The following two years I learnt the basics in the art of good greenkeeping. This period was one of the happiest in my career. I have fondest memories of incidents that happened at this time of my impetuous youth: e.g. wrapping the 6th green around a Patissson spiker; looking back and seeing the head greenkeeper standing in the back of a stationary tipper trailer, as I merrily roared off along a bumpy track with my Fordson devoid of coupling and hydraulic pipes flailing. Or the time I left a perforated hose to water a green, only to find on my return, that the green had been re-modelled by several large humps and the rest of the surface resembling a water bed! While I had been away, a golfer who was determined to make his double bogey, had moved the hose. In doing so he had inadvertently aligned several holes in the hose with old solid tine holes which had the effect of injecting water under the turf. Of course with modern methods of green construction and maintenance it is unlikely that this would happen today!

Some years later, I too, like Steve Marnoch, wrote to BAGCA enquiring into golf course design.

At that time I was working as a Grounds Maintenance Officer with Berkshire County Council designing and supervising the construction of playing field and sports facilities.

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## FROM THE FAIRWAY

My grounding for this work included experience in architectural draughting, my two years at Banstead Downs Golf Club; four years at Art College studying environmental design and several years as landscape assistant in Berkshire County Architects Department.

For the last thirteen years I have devoted my working experience to improving the standards of playing surfaces for sport in Berkshire's schools. Together with a colleague have lead Berkshire into the 21st century with artificial grass pitches on school sites. By the year 2000 these pitches will be some of the oldest in the country!

It was in May last year that the opportunity arose for myself and colleague to effect a management buyout with Berkshire County Council. We have set up a partnership Fountain and Shatford specialising in sports and recreational landscape design and consultancy service in both natural and artificial surfaces.

My partner (who incidentally was an advisor with STRI) and I, feel we make a worthwhile contribution in the advancement of sports surfaces especially in the area of synthetics. Synthetic surfaces in golf are usually confined to tee areas but with the ever increasing sophistication of these products a synthetic green could be on the horizon. Ughh! I hear you purists say but how about temporary winter greens? We are members of Institute of Leisure and Amenity Management a worthy forward thinking body, who are dedicated to promoting a modern sport technology and high standard leisure provision.

I do sincerely hope that BAGCA in its attempt to safeguard the design standards of golf courses does not fall into the same trap as a few elitist institutes who in their relentless pursuit of professionalism prelude the often wealth of talent that can be found but is excluded by academical insistence.

Good luck to the S.M. and the BAGCA course organisers. At least future designers and architects alike will be teeing off in the right direction. FORE!

**Mike Fountain**

**Fountain & Shatford**

Dear Sir,

It is most gratifying to read that the PGA European Tour is to introduce 'a two stroke penalty' rule as the ultimate deterrent against 'slow play'. This will surely encourage their members to have due respect for a reasonable pace of play.

Last season an experimental scheme to encourage an acceptable pace of play was introduced by the Committee of the Vauxhall Club Team Classic. The scheme met with widespread approval among the hundreds of players and club officials who were involved. This special rule was based in the establishment of a reasonable time for play and subject to consistent refereeing, carried the potential for a penalty of 'two strokes'. It worked.

On behalf of Vauxhall Motors, I shall be pleased to send copies of the rules and guidelines that were introduced last season, to anyone who is interested.

It is only necessary to call my office on 03727 28816 (Clarion Sports Management) and I will respond immediately.

**Stephen Russell**

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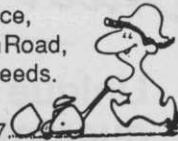
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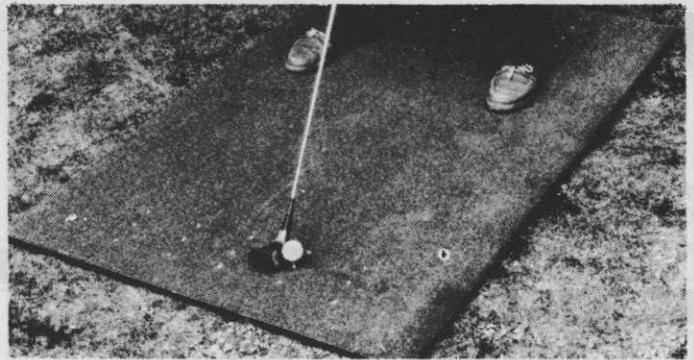
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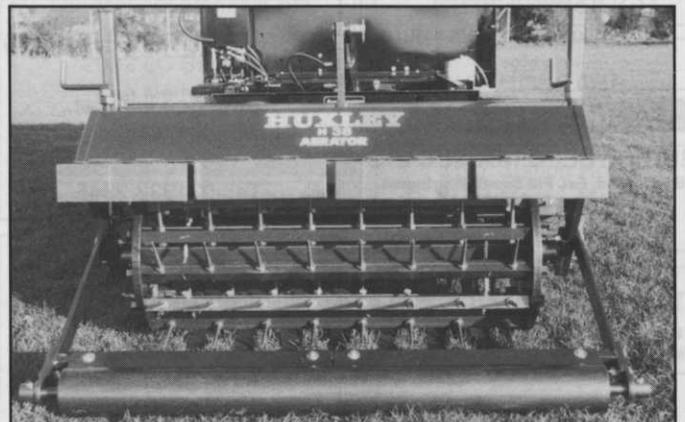
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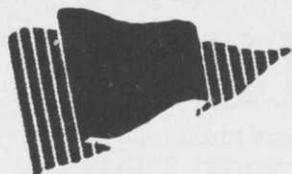
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*Toro turf products are backed by an international sales & service network.*