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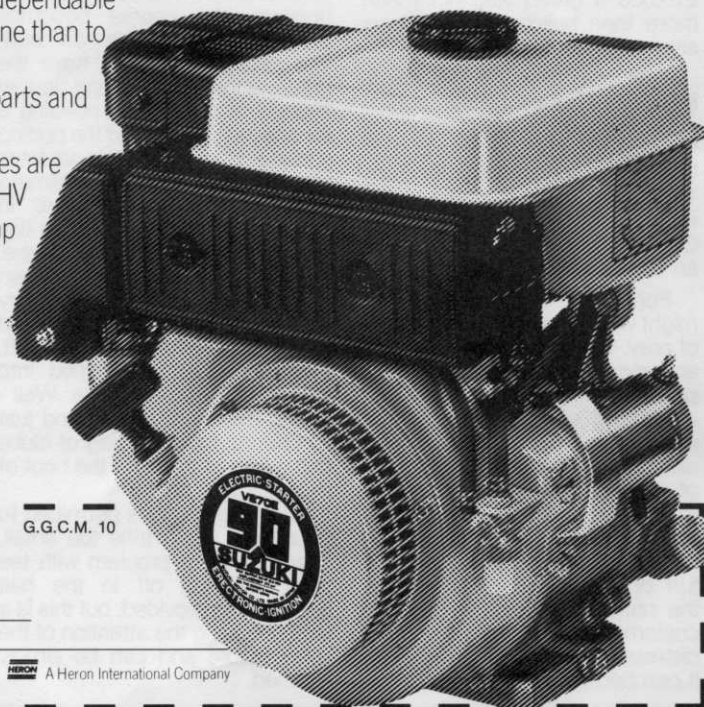
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Massive Fund Raising Promotion by the National Turf Council

The National Turfgrass Council headed by their Chairman, Howard Swan, Managing Director of Golf Landscapes used the Windsor event to launch a scheme to raise an initial £23,000 from manufacturers and suppliers within the industry to fund the appointment of a full-time secretariat and pursue a progressive development strategy aimed at the furtherance of research, education and communication.

The meeting attended by almost everyone of the leading lights of the industry was sponsored by ICI. Keith Clevely, ICI's Professional Products Marketing Manager said he saw this opportunity to bring together the most influential people in turf culture as a chance not to be missed. His company fully supported the present aims and objectives of the NTC.

The efforts of the NTC to promote a co-ordinated approach to the marketing of amenity turf, also has the support of Government. The Minister of Sport, Colin Moynihan, unable to be present, sent a message of thanks for the Council's previous efforts and wished them well in their endeavours.

In the early eighties, it became increasingly evident that the turfgrass industry, growing space was despairingly fragmented with each association or organisation 'doing their own thing', operating within very closed circles with much effort and expense being wasted. Little communication or cooperation existed between the various groups and industry had no forum for voicing its news.

So was founded in October 1980 The National Turfgrass Council, a body representing the differing parts of the industry, from research to leisure management, from local authorities to landscapers, from groundsmen to greenkeepers. Also represented is the Sports Council, Countryside Commission and colleges together with trade associations whose members supply the industry with seeds, irrigation systems, chemicals, fertilizers, lawn mowers and contracting services.

An extremely wide body of knowledge, skills and attitudes all coming together to form the umbrella organisation.

Essentially the objectives of the Council were five fold:

1. To provide a forum for discussion by all of matters relevant to turfgrass.
2. To represent the industry's views to government.
3. To encourage the exchange of ideas and information within the industry and to communicate through publications and meetings.
4. To develop education and training.
5. To encourage turfgrass research.

The Council with limited resources, both people and financial have been active in pursuing all the original objectives over the past six years, and have achieved some successes.

They have held biennial national conferences, well programmed, presented, and certainly well attended and by all accounts well received.

They have staged numerous regional workshops on a wide variety of subjects, from sand-based football pitches to grass growth retardants, from wild flower conservation to urban landscaping.

INDUSTRY STATISTICS

Reviews have been published on artificial surfaces, the current state of turf grass research and statistics on existing trends for the industry.

PEOPLE SKILLS

A BTEC Diploma in turf management has been developed with agricultural colleges. All this and more has been achieved through unpaid volunteers operating within modest budgets without any outside financial assistance.

The way forward can no longer be fragmented if standards are to be improved in education, training, status and the financial rewards for those whose responsibility it will be to provide and maintain the increased facilities.

NEWS 11

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