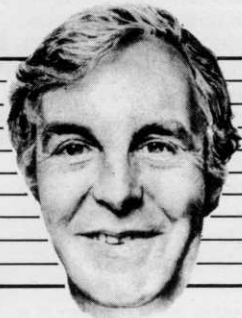


Greenside Comment...



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A BOLD MOVE FOR BRITAIN'S MAJOR TURFGRASS SHOW

One of the year's premier events for those involved in turf management is undoubtedly the Institute of Groundsmanship's annual exhibition in September. It is the opportunity for the industry to present its products, announce innovations and demonstrate equipment to an audience that has grown not only in numbers but knowledge of the subject, over the years.

We announced last month that the organisers, who from small beginnings, at Hurlingham in 1938, then Motspur Park followed by Windsor Race Course have taken the decision to move once more, this time to the East of England Showground at Peterborough in two years time.

This would seem to be an ideal venue, certainly from the point of view of easy access. The showground is adjacent to the A1 trunk road, already subject to considerable improvements, with a further £62 million scheduled to be spent on the northern section during the next ten years.

Windsor has always been a difficult site, because of the entry and exit points for both visitors and trade exhibitors. Hours spent in traffic queues by visitors

travelling long distances for one of the three days has wasted much of the time that should have been usefully spent exploring the stands.

Manufacturers have also experienced grave problems setting up exhibits and a great deal more when the show ends and heavy equipment has to be moved out on the Thursday evening. Nothing is more frustrating for those who have put every effort into a concentrated three days than to be marooned in a car park for a further three hours because the road out of the site is jammed with articulated vehicles.

The race course has also a history of being a rain soaked event. This would be tolerable if the stands were along-side well made up roads, but attendees have learned that a pair of wellington boots is a pre-requisite for any trip to Windsor. Once the show is over the ground can become a quagmire as the HGV's move in to take the thousands of tons of machinery on to the next venue.

The Windsor Show has also been governed by the dates of the September race meeting, the reason why the event has to be

held in the back half of the month.

Moving to Peterborough has allowed the organisers to bring forward the show date to the 4th September, a period of usually more settled weather.

Not only is the site more central, it is twice as big as Windsor, has parking space for 30,000 cars and can also offer 60,000 sq. metres of demonstration areas in close proximity to the stands.

Although Peterborough cannot offer the same amount of hotel accommodation as the area around Windsor, within a few miles at places like Stamford, Huntingdon, Cambridge or Grantham it is readily available at not only improved quality, but at a more reasonable price.

The airport at Stansted has connections to the continent and Peterborough itself is on a fast direct rail link to central London, York, Leeds and Newcastle. A glance at the road map will show only those in the West of England, could be at a disadvantage, but most will welcome the IOG's bold decision and applaud their choice of the new site.

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