

GOLF COURSE

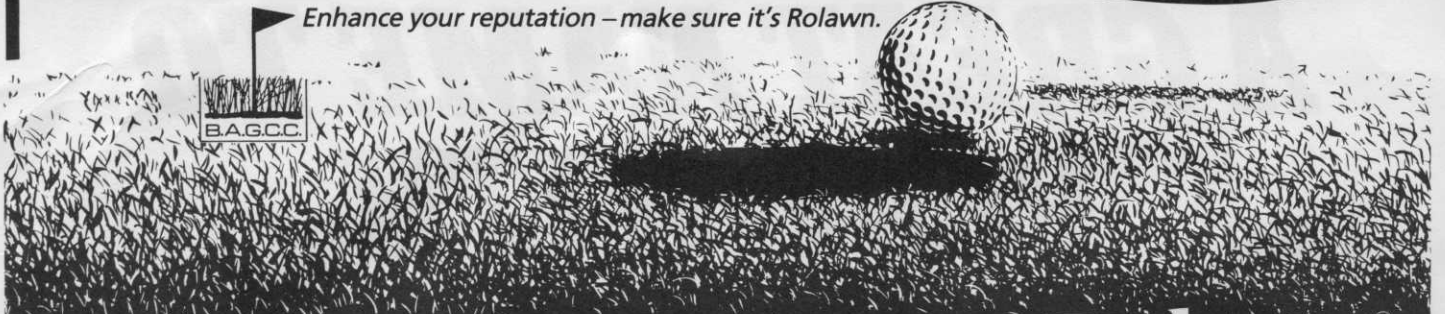
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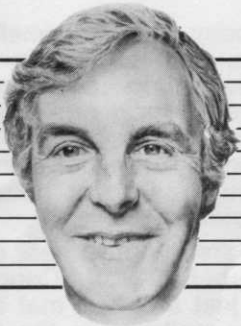
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Greenside Comment...



John Lelean

Bouquets and Brickbats

European golf received a massive injection of adrenalin as a result of the retention of the Ryder Cup at Muirfield Village in Columbus, Ohio. Greenkeepers on this side of the Atlantic should raise their glasses in a toast to Tony Jacklin and his team who by their tenacity and determination have created such an interest in the game, there must be an ultimate spin-off for those long neglected individuals, the stage setters, the men who prepare and maintain our golf courses.

Sports journalists, commentators and the specialist golf writers, are now beginning to appreciate the skills of the greenkeeping staff, as well as those of the participants. At last their contribution is receiving recognition, so long overdue.

At Muirfield, forty seven greenkeepers and additional ground staff worked throughout the night to have the course in pristine condition for the final day's play, a far cry from the staffing levels of four or five whose job it is to keep our members clubs playable, throughout the year in Britain.

Let us hope the significance of these figures will be recognised by the average weekend golfer when he is tempted to complain of petty imperfections in the presentation of his club course after losing the Saturday morning four ball.

For those avid viewers of television golf who often take the BBC presentation for granted, the coverage by American cameras could be best described as pathetic. At least they now appreciate their failings in the higher echelons, as those who heard the comments of the distinguished commentator, Jack Whittaker.

On the final day he bemoaned the fact, the finest golf he had ever seen was denied to the sports fans in the United States while addicts in Europe, Australia, Japan and most other countries were treated to the most exciting sporting contest ever witnessed. It seems hard to believe, but the transmissions of the Ryder Cup were only seen by local viewers around Columbus.

While handing out bouquets there is just time as this issue goes to press to present the best that Interflora can provide to Kevin Munt and his staff at Wentworth. To have made the course playable at all after the disasters of that horrendous Thursday night is a near miracle, but to have it playable the next day defies comprehension.

Kevin moved from Royal Dornoch earlier this year to what he probably thought was the tranquility of the Surrey stock-

broker belt. The Suntory World Match Play, was his first major championship and we know he looked upon this event as the opportunity to present his course to the world's viewing public through the medium of television. It is tragic, the elements decided otherwise, but as we, who know the dedication of the greenkeeping staff would expect, they rose to the occasion magnificently and the show went on.

We would also like to pay tribute to Jerry Coley, Course Manager at Wentworth until his retirement in February this year. Jerry died from a heart attack at the end of July, just at the time when he was beginning to pick up the threads of a new challenge as a golf course consultant.

There were few people who had such a depth of greenkeeping knowledge acquired through practical experience and an unquenchable thirst to seek out information on any subject relating to his passion for perfection.

It is sad, so many people will not now be able to benefit from the advice he was so competent to give. The world of golf and greenkeeping need people like Jerry Coley and there are all too few about.

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NEXT MONTH:

Disease control in fine turf.
Jacobsen's National Golf Tournament at Hunstanton.
Fred Hawtree looks at the trends from the new 'breed of architects' - the tournament professionals and he does not approve of the results.



Corinthian Club's revolution against the traditions of golf



One of the two tier artificial greens set into the tree lined fairway at the Corinthian Club at Fawkham, Kent. This nine holer is Europe's first synthetic surface to be recognised as an accepted golf course with a measured standard scratch.

Standby with the smelling salts, rush in the cardiac resuscitation equipment, some of our greenkeepers, elderly golfers and a few green chairmen are about to suffer a severe bout of apoplexy!

You are about to hear of a 'Synthetic Golf Course'. Not just a plastic mat or a nylon walkway to the first tee, but a full nine holes of artificial turf in the place where it matters - the tees and greens.

The perpetrators of this dastardly act are the owners of the Corinthian Sports Club, a private enterprise business at Fawkham, set amid the tranquility of the Kent countryside, some ten miles or so from the Dartford Tunnel.

The Billings family, who developed the sporting complex in the 1970's, already have a football team in the semi-professional Southern League. Their training facilities include a fine indoor pitch and outside the club-house, there is an all grass ground plus a full size synthetic training pitch.



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Twenty-five year old Andrew Billings, not only holds his place in the football team, but as a golfer his handicap will be single figures once the course has been approved and given a standard scratch by the Kent Union. Indications are that this will be official within weeks.

The Billings are renowned for their enterprise, enthusiasm and independence, so perhaps it was natural for them to step outside the bounds of convention and develop a golf course on the rolling, woodlined pastures, by being the first to build in synthetics. Why did you do it? Andrew was asked. "We already had a good synthetic football pitch", he replied, "and it seemed like a good idea!" "No one else had done it, the maintenance appeared minimal and the cost at £15,000 a green was not much more than building conventional sand greens".

The company they chose to install the polypropylene putting surfaces, was Saker Leisure of Wickhamford, Evesham, Worcester, whose director Tony Talbot, is deeply involved in the running of Worcester County Cricket Club. He is regarded as an expert with artificial wickets.

For those ornithologists who might wonder why a Saker, a bird of prey, was chosen as the name and mast-head of the company, prompts the retelling of an interesting story. The firm was approached by a falconer who asked if they could supply a piece of artificial grass plyable enough to wrap round a perching post. Why? His bird, a Saker falcon had taken a fancy to either the feel of turf or the colour green, hence the name, and another satisfied customer. It also cured the bird's distress caused by talon rot, when it perched on the bare wood.

Before discussing the construction and merits of artificial surfaces it should be firmly established this is no 'Mickey Mouse' golf course, though a number of those invited to the official opening had their suspicions when they heard the ceremony was to be conducted by Mickey Walker, twice the British Women's Amateur Champion, a member of the WPGA tour and now the professional at the Warren Club, near Maldon in Essex.

Although only nine holes, there are two par fives, five fours and two threes. The fairways and rough are all as natural as God intended and so are the scrub, brambles and pine trees, as many who played the course found to their cost.

From an opening dog-leg to a plateau green, guarded by sunken bunkers, the course becomes progressively more difficult. The second and ninth have the green at the end of a long narrow avenue of pine trees, needing a six or seven iron to find the putting surface. Both suitable candidates for a picture on that nightmare golf calendar with greens in canyons, up mountains or on tiny islands in the midst of a vast lake.

After the official opening when Miss Walker cut the mandatory tape, ably assisted by Kent and England wicketkeeper Alan Knott, those who wished formed into teams to play the course. Well - having driven 220 miles and just by chance having a bag of clubs and a pair of shoes in the boot of my car - why not?

The tees, if one is permitted to be critical are a trifle too small, There is also a problem with tee pegs breaking off in the half dozen holes provided, but this is a fault receiving the attention of the constructors and can be simply rectified.

The greens were without doubt as big as if not bigger than those at your average golf club. The carpet of tufted polypropylene of British manufacture is laid on a stone base. Small stones, rather like the gravel chippings used to tarmac a road but more symmetrical, are laid on the excavated and contoured green area, with a drainage system below.

Putting can be best described as 'interesting'. It is no billiard table top. The ball runs true, though a bit wobbly. Short putts are definitely down to the skill of the golfer, those over twenty feet are very difficult because of the subtle borrows and the problems of reading pace.

Mickey Walker, fine golfer that she is, found stopping a shot to the pin virtually impossible despite the degree of backspin the top professionals impart, but it was not long before she adapted her game to pitching the front edge and running up.

Is there a place for artificial greens in British golf? The answer must be - Yes. To be perfectly honest, I would not like to see them on my home course, but synthetic tees during the winter would be a distinct advantage to playing off a churned up mud surface, particularly on the short

holes. This is not the place to debate why mud patches seem to be part and parcel of winter golf, suffice it to say they are and this is one way they can be eliminated.

Phil Talbot a family director of Saker Leisure admits the developments in the technology of artificial surfaces is moving at such a pace improvements can almost be measured on a daily basis. The next course he constructs will be even better.

There is perhaps a misconception that once the green has been built nothing more needs to be done, but this is far from the truth. The incursion of moss requires treatment, the surface should be brushed, preferably with a mechanical sweeper to remove tufts of grass from the fairways, leaves and other debris and the surface would also benefit from a regular top dressing of sand.

Nevertheless the concept has proved, artificials are here to stay. There will be others who will look at the Corinthian project with interest and it will not be long before private enterprise and the local authorities will be seriously considering this method of golf course construction as a viable alternative to grass.

Blood pressure still rising?

FEATURE 1

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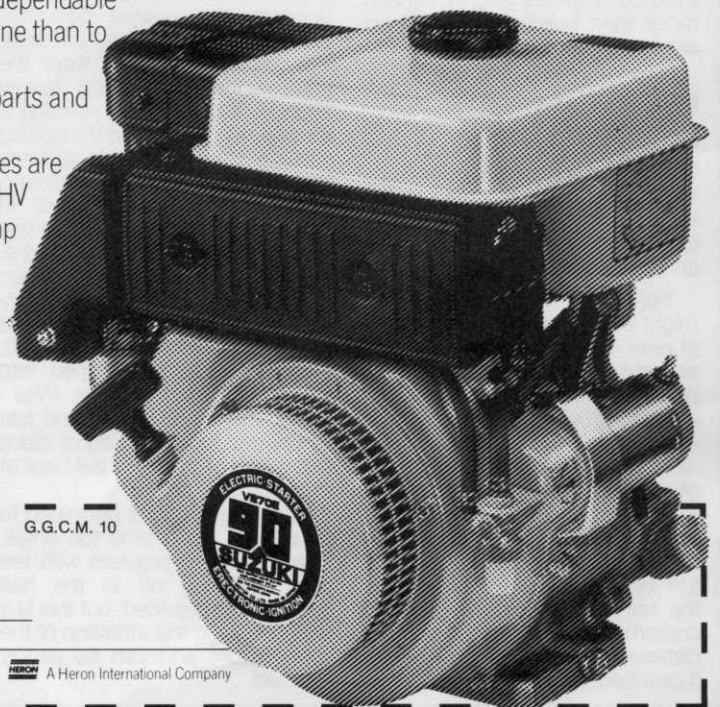
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Records again broken at Windsor Show

For the third successive year, the Institute of Groundsman's three day exhibition at Windsor was blessed by warm September sunshine and an attendance figure, up once again, on previous records.

According to the IOG's press officer, Richard Frost, counting visitors into the Race Course Show Ground stopped at 11.00 a.m. on the final day, because, despite a reprint of the catalogue overnight all copies sold out and it was decided to allow free entry.

Car parking problems marred what must be one of the best turf exhibitions for the golf course and local authority markets. Visitors were well catered for, but the exhibitors, directed away from the main area were left with a half mile walk, many forced to carry items for their stands.

At the close, once again, the queues of heavy goods vehicles completely blocked the approach roads, because of the one way system over the single track narrow bridge entry and exit to the race course there were inevitable delays and frustrations.

This year it was made far worse because exhibitors could not get out of their park through the nose to tail trucks waiting to remove equipment from the stands. It was over two hours before someone at last made the decision to break the truck line and feed exhibitors cars through the main car park. For some, this was too late and they had the additional frustration of seeing their flight from Heathrow winging its way over Windsor Castle.

The organisation within the ground improves year by year, though it might be time to sectionalise the exhibitors and separate the pure turf and equipment stands from those involved with the children's play equipment. Many greenkeepers, travelling long distances, found they were only able to visit a fraction of the exhibitors in the time available. Part of this problem could be overcome if the distance between stands was reduced.

One of the more popular areas was the demonstration ground and many of the manufacturers and distributors, this year, opted to have their stand alongside.

There was so much intensive work carried out on these few acres it will be the best cultivated piece of ground in Britain.

Sisis, Ransomes, Huxleys, Brouwer, John Deere, Beaver, Toro and others aerated the soil and cut the grass to perfection. The drainage contractors dug holes to the water table in minutes, and Colin Pryce with the Terralift, hydraulically fired fertiliser and polystyrene balls four to five feet into the subsoil.

This is one of the few occasions in the year, when every type of turf machinery can be seen in action in one place and the merits of performance can be compared. Next year the IOG will have 24,000 square metres of demonstration area in four specialist sections including irrigation.

The 1988 Exhibition is expected to be 25% bigger, than even this year, if plans by the organising committee materialise. Exhibitions Chairman, Gerald Snook has said they intend increasing the open stands by 9,500 square metres, 500 square metres on part covered stands and the provision of a third under cover area.

If this is so the car parking problem will be even more acute. Something must be done to help those people who are paying substantial sums in stand fees to ease their access to the ground. It would not be an impossible task to provide a 'Bailey type' footbridge over the feeder stream at the western end of the site for exhibitors and their staff.

Rumours of the sale of the land fronting the main road for housing development have been dispelled and it would seem the site is secure for the IOG at least for the foreseeable future. **FEATURE 2**



Colin Pryce pours a dose of fertiliser in the Terralift's canister before releasing a compressed air charge which will simultaneously shatter the soil in this oak's root zone and carry the fertiliser to the roots.

For further details, contact: Colin Pryce, Piaqua, Crowcroft Road, Nedging Tye, Ipswich, Suffolk IP7 7HR, Tel: 0449 741012

HA 1391

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NEWS ROUND-UP

PEOPLE, PRODUCTS AND DEVELOPMENTS

IN THE GOLF COURSE INDUSTRY

STRI Statement on Slow Release Fertilizers

The Sports Turf Research Institute have issued a statement of their awareness of increasing concern among the turf managers that a number of slow release fertilizer products on the market do not indicate the proportion (percentage) of nitrogen which is in the slow release form. In IBDU containing products the IBDU-nitrogen may make up anything from about 20 to 90 per cent of the total. They say it is evident that the slow content IBDU products will have relatively poor slow release characteristics. These low percentages of slow release compounds in fertilizers create problems with bodies such as Local Authorities and Golf Clubs who invite tenders for their annual fertilizer needs.

Obviously, fertilizers with low percentages of IBDU present will be sold at lower prices and therefore competitive tenders go to the lowest bid price, and this could mean that the product has very little slow release compound present in the fertilizer.

Dr. Peter Hayes, Director of STRI, states that, "In order to both inform turf managers, groundsmen and greenkeepers and to ensure their confidence in the products, manufacturers should clearly show the percentage of total nitrogen which is of the slow release type".

Commenting on the STRI statement, John Hinton, the Amenity Products Manager for BASF based at Ipswich told **Golf Greenkeeping**.

"As manufacturers of high quality, high performance products with a sound technical base, we welcome the comments by Dr. Hayes.

The Floranid range has been formulated around our own IBDU production and we have always openly declared on every bag, the slow release nitrogen content.

The Floranid range represents value for money and customers should be able to see that, even before they use the product".

NEWS 1



Hampton Expansion

Roffey Bros. Ltd. have appointed Peter Hampton as their agent in the Wiltshire, Avon, Oxford, Gloucester and South Wales areas.

Peter has established his own business with golf clubs, public authorities and other professional users, providing a range of grass machinery and sundries, since going solo two years ago.

The marketing agreement with Roffey Bros. Ltd. will enable Peter to provide an expanded range of goods and services, particularly the range of R B L Sportsturf Dressing, including the unique R B L Xylorganic. He will also be supplying products from leading manufacturers, such as Vitax, May & Baker, Synchemicals and Johnsons Seeds.

NEWS 2

Horticultural Wages

Recent statistics from the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food give the average total weekly earnings for horticultural workers over the last year (June 1986 to June 1987) as £127.71 for a 43.6 hour week.

General farm workers average a similar rate per hour but a longer working week (over 46 hours) gives rise to higher total average earnings.

Comparing the April to June quarter for 1986 and 1987 shows a slight rise in the average hourly wage for horticultural workers, but as the length of the average working week has fallen by nearly three hours, so too has average weekly earnings.

NEWS 3

North Hants Golf Club buy four Jacobsen mowers

Head Greenkeeper Alan Shaw at the North Hants Golf Club at Fleet jumps for joy over the four Jacobsen pedestrian mowers delivered to his club this month.

Alan has decided to buy walk behind Jacobsen mowers, because he believes the nine blade reel with a height of cut adjustment from 7/16ths to 3/32nds will give a finer finish to the greens for tournament play.

The precision 22" mower is driven by a 4hp petrol engine and is the only 2 cycle engine available for a pedestrian mower.

Within the next month, the successful 'Turf Groomer' already available with the diesel Greens King, will arrive in Britain as an optional extra.

Other accessories that can be supplied for fitting on the pedestrian mower include a grooved roller and a spring tooth comb to give deeper grass penetration for fine cut, thatch removal and control of graining.

Two rollers are also available, a solid front roller for normal use or a three section roller to cope with moisture conditions. Two brushes, one a thick bristle can be attached to the front of the grass box to pick up matted growth and a fine bristle lifts runners and controls graining condition.

NEWS 5

New ICI Chemical Application Record Book

I.C.I. are continuing to help their customers understand and implement the various aspects of the Food and Environment Protection Act 1985 and the control of Pesticide Regulation 1986.

An important part of the legislation, which has been overlooked by many people, is the requirement to make records of all pesticide applications and to keep such records for a minimum of three years.

To help greenkeepers, groundsmen and contractors, I.C.I. have produced a superb Chemical Application Record Book. The use of this book will ensure that all aspects relating to the use of a pesticide will be recorded as prescribed in the Draft Code of Practice on the Agricultural and Horticultural Use of Pesticides.

Free copies of this book, which normally costs £1.25, may be obtained by sending a self-addressed envelope (min. size 10" x 7") to the address below:

Imperial Chemical Industries
Professional Products, Dept. CARB, P.O. Box 85,
Farnham, Surrey GU9 7UB

NEWS 4

Bill Fisher leaves Polymark Beaver

Bill Fisher, formerly the UK Sales Manager with Polymark Beaver has left the company to set up his own business in the distribution of turf care equipment.

Based at Woking, Surrey, the new firm named Golf and Turf Care Equipment Ltd, has obtained premises in Westfield Road. Joining Bill in the new venture are Gordon White, previously the Southern territory manager for Beaver, Bill Bocking and Graham Bex in the role of Service Manager. Graham held a similar position with Brown's of Chesham.

A number of major manufacturers have already tied up with this new enterprise including, John Deere, Turners Grass Machinery and Bill's old employer, Polymark, Beaver.

During the three day Windsor Show, Bill Fisher, who gained his trade experience with Paul Seward of York, Iseki Tractors and Polymark Beaver was seen talking to a number of leading firms and is certain to add to the list of manufacturers already in the fold.

Bill said he had left Polymark Beaver on very amicable terms and they had been extremely supportive. "The best firm I have ever worked for and I have launched out on my own with their blessing", he added.

NEWS 6

Trevor Martin in 'Penguin Hand'

Fertiliser specialist Vitax Limited has just completed its second major export order to the Falkland Islands: the Manybranch Farm and Nurseries at Port Howard, West Falklands, has already purchased the full range of Vitax retail products, including Q4, Garden Lime, Claybreaker, Tomatoe Feed, Cucumber Feed, Conifer & Shrub fertiliser, Potting Base and Seed Base. The second order was for the company's professional Grower Range and included GR organic-based fertilisers, VN controlled-release fertilisers, and new Organics.

It is just over a year since Managing Director Trevor Martin led a management buy-out of Vitax from the giant Steetley organisation and in that time he has built-up profitable export markets in Europe, Israel and Australia.

NEWS 7

KEW-Hobby readership offer

Greenkeepers reacted quickly to the special offer of the high pressure electrically operated cleaning machine in last month's issue.

Priced at only £258.75 including VAT and delivery charges, this offer saves over £50.00 on the recommended retail price.

Supplies are limited, but it is not too late to order your machine. Essential for cleaning machinery, hard standing, outdoor furniture, trucks and trailers and will also blast away drain blockage.

Send cheques payable to Golf Greenkeeping, P.O. Box 12, Wetherby, West Yorks. LS22 4SR for the total price of £258.75. All orders immediately acknowledged. Allow 21 days for delivery.

The Safety Scene

The Health and Safety Commission has just published a consultative document concerning proposed changes to first aid guidance.

These recommend a stronger emphasis on linking the level of first aid provision to hazards at work rather than number of employees. Experience has shown that numbers of employees is often the only factor which employees consider.

These proposals have particular significance for those who work on golf courses. The increasing use of machinery, the isolation of the working environment, delay in calling for and the arrival of trained medical help to anyone involved with an accident, or struck down with a heart attack, makes the availability of a first aider even more important.

First aid can, and often does, save a life. Knowing the basics of mouth to mouth resuscitation, stopping the flow of blood or reacting immediately to a burn or electric shock can avoid unnecessary pain and suffering to the victim.

The draft guidance also recommends that first aiders take extra training which focusses on specific hazards instead of the routine occupational first aid training. Guidance has been expanded on the provision of first aid in small business, on the experience necessary for trainers and examiners in first aid work, on the selection of first aiders, and the training of lay instructors.

A revised leaflet on First Aid at Work has also been published. This gives general information on first aid priorities such as what to do for burns and scalds, eye injuries, electric shock and gassing. The leaflet is illustrated with photographs on methods of resuscitation. It has been issued for inclusion in first aid boxes.

Are any of your greenstaff trained in first aid? Do they have fully stocked first aid boxes at the sheds and in the cabs of the tractors? Is there a telephone or radio communication with the Secretary's office?

If the answer to any of these questions is - NO, then the time to do something about it is - NOW.

NEWS 8

Courses and Conferences

The Sports Turf Research Institute will hold three courses at Bingley in autumn 1987 on the theory and practice of turf construction and management. The courses last five days (Monday to Friday) and will cover soils, grasses, turf diseases and pests, drainage, watering, fertilisers and machinery.

The commencing dates are 19th and 26th October and 2nd November. The fee is £94 for members and £115 for non-members plus VAT (exclusive of accommodation and meals)

Further details from the Secretary, Sports Turf Research Institute, Bingley, West Yorkshire BD16 1UA. Telephone Bradford (0274) 565131.

NEWS 9

Golf Show moves to NEC

Robert Stevens, Chairman of Golf Shows Ltd., promoters of the International Golf Show, sees the move to the Midlands as a logical step in the show's development.

After two years at the Barbican Centre he said, this public golf show, is wanted by the industry and the public and it is here to stay. "By moving to the N.E.C. we have additional space for exhibitors and, in particular, greater scope to extend the visitor participation features which have proved so popular - golf clinics, driving and putting areas, displays and other attractions".

Sponsored by the 'Daily Mail', the show will again be staged in association with the PGA European Tour, from March 4-6, 1988.

NEWS 10

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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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