

economy-conscious ground staff.

As an example, with a full tank of three and a half gallons, and travelling and cutting in second gear at seven mph, the diesel-engined Turfmaster 84 will cover 38 miles and cut 32 acres. Using the same equation the petrol version will travel 20 miles in a straight line and cut only 17 acres.

'Naturally, the equation varies depending on conditions, but diesel engines are more efficient (and more consistent regardless of load) in metering fuel,' explained Graham Templeton, Nickerson Turfmaster's operational manager. 'With untaxed agricultural diesel fuel at around 78 pence a gallon and petrol at around £1.58 a gallon, the immense savings are obvious.'

Running costs per hour for the Turfmaster 84 diesel average 50 pence (the petrol version averages £1.94). Taking a low usage of 500 hours in a season, the saving with diesel is £720 compared with petrol (diesel at £250 and petrol at £970). Considering that the average season, particularly for a busy contractor, is 1,200 hours, the cost savings are even more attractive.

Apart from substantially reduced running costs, diesel engines offer many more advantages. Provided normal preventative maintenance is carried out, a diesel engine will operate for about twice as long (for 3,000 to 5,000 hours) as its petrol equivalent, before a major overhaul is necessary. It has a number of design advantages over the petrol engine and fewer moving parts, resulting in less maintenance and less expensive downtime.

The diesel engine has no troublesome electrics, although there is an efficient electric starter. There are none of the familiar problems of petrol engines, such as poor starting due to condensation on the leads in damp weather.

Although some diesel engines can be more noisy than petrol versions, the new generation 710 Lombardini engine now fitted to the Turfmaster 84 is said to have considerably reduced the difference.

Among its many features the 710 is accurately governed which makes it impossible to exceed 3,000 rpm and thereby cause engine damage. And, unusually for a diesel engine, its fuel injection system is entirely self-bleeding. Put simply, if the engine runs out of fuel all the operator has to do is fill it up—the same as a petrol engine. For conservation-conscious grounds staff, the 710 is ecological too! Exhaust fumes from the engine are completely non-toxic.

READER'S Letters

Comparisons against US costs

When comparisons are made of UK versus USA golfing standards, the financial implications appropriate to the two countries do not in my view receive sufficient emphasis.

The following statistics arising from a survey of 100 clubs in 1979 published in the January edition of 'Grounds Maintenance (USA)' are therefore enlightening:

Survey of 100 clubs (2097 holes)

	Annual cost (\$ per hole)
Payroll expenses	6,048
Payroll taxes and employees benefits	1,087
Course supplies and contracts	1,674
Repairs to equipment and buildings	1,140
Caddy, committee and golf shop expenses	1,901*
Miscellaneous expenses	1,163
	13,013
Medium cost of maintenance per hole excluding*	11,112 (£4,940)
18 hole course	200,020 (£88,900)

The survey was undertaken by Harris, Kerr, Forster and Co, Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

It would indeed be interesting to observe how these 1979 figures compare with a Budget 'sample' in the UK, or to learn the observations of those who complain about the rising cost of golf. I believe UK golfers (of which I am one) grossly underestimate the value they derive from their membership.

I imagine the comments of many greenkeepers would also be enlightening!

R C Jennings
Managing Director
Chipman Ltd, Horsham, Sussex.

Homes for US visitors

During the last few years, several of our members, including myself, have visited the United States and Canada. I know that without exception we all received fantastic hospitality, playing golf, visiting other courses and staying in the homes of our opposite numbers. This way, not only is the cost of a holiday cut dramatically, but you get to meet the real people and their families. You are also able to see behind the scenes at top golf clubs.

We will be hosts to the Americans and Canadians at our International Tournament and Symposium in September 1982, so wouldn't it be a nice gesture if we invited them to stay a few days, in our homes?

As most of them will be coming for about two weeks, there is little doubt that they will be looking forward to travelling around Great Britain after the Tournament and Symposium, to take a look at a few of our famous landmarks. So if we can compile a list of greenkeepers who would be willing to offer accommodation for a day or so, it will help our friends to plan their trip.

A few greenkeepers have already indicated that they would be pleased to help. If you are interested, will you please give me a ring, or better still write to me and give me the dates that you are available, around September 1982. These dates can then be passed on to our visitors.

Derek Gould
The Bungalow
Langley Park Golf Club
Beckenham
Kent
Tel: 01-658 4791

Change of address

The editorial and advertising offices of Golf Greenkeeping and Course Maintenance are now located at 3 Twelve Acre Close, Great Bookham, Surrey. Telephone: Bookham (0372) 54999.