

GOLF

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GREENKEEPING and Course Maintenance

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Tel. 0423 66777

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**Publisher and
Editor: JOHN LELEAN**
**Editorial
Panel:** A. Gamble
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FRONT PAGE:

*Martyn Jones concludes his series
on American Greenkeeping
techniques*

*Winter-dormant Bermuda grass at
Georgia, showing an overseeded
putting green*



John Lelean

GREENSIDE COMMENT

A FAIRWAY FOR GREENKEEPERS

This month we are printing in full the proposals made to the BGGA by the Professional Golfers Association outlining their suggestions for a joining of forces between the two principal bodies involved in the game of golf.

However, since the document was first presented to the Executive of the BGGA and the two other Associations representing Greenkeepers in England and Scotland a further approach has been made by golf's controlling body, the R & A, through their Secretary Michael Bonallack.

The first meeting of the three Associations, together with the English Golf Union and a representative of the R & A has already been held in York with a further meeting arranged on 4th November.

At the first York meeting it was agreed that a Steering Committee should be appointed to explore the financial and other problems associated with the creation of a joint Federation and to draft a Constitution for consideration by the three Greenkeeper Associations. Both the PGA and the R & A consider the appointment of a full time executive officer with secretarial assistance is essential if Greenkeepers are to be represented by an Association with sufficient authority to improve the status, development and interests of Greenkeepers throughout the UK. As members of the EEC one does not have to stretch the imagination too far to include European Greenkeepers as well.

We have constantly complained that Greenkeepers are not receiving a fair deal from the golf industry and now this fact has been publicly recognised by the most respected authority in golf. Not only recognised, but acknowledged it takes organisation and finance to put the matter right.

Specific sums have so far not been mentioned, but Mr. Roger Robinson at the October meeting told the Greenkeeper Associations, the R & A would give consideration to the additional financial burden which would otherwise fall upon the Greenkeepers in setting up a more professional organisation.

The time has come to grasp the nettle and for all Greenkeepers to give serious consideration to the approaches from the PGA and the R & A. A number of BGGA Sections have already formed opinions about the PGA proposals and have indicated their reservations over tying themselves to the Professional Golfers. Naturally, there are suspicions about the PGA motives in asking the Greenkeepers to join them. Is it entirely a wish to give a helping hand to a body of men without whom golf could not be played or might it strengthen still further a powerful and very financially secure organisation?

The role of the club golf professional is changing rapidly. They no longer have the exclusive control over the sale of golf equipment. The pattern now developing, is exactly the same as has happened in the United States with the mushrooming of golf equipment supermarkets, offering cut price clubs, balls, bags and trolleys. Can Greenkeepers be blamed for suspecting the PGA might be protecting their own members interests by looking at the possibilities of diversifying into overall golf course management.

There are now two firm offers on the table and Greenkeepers throughout the land must put aside personal prejudices and support whichever scheme is best for those young men already in our multi-million pound industry and those who will enter with expectations for the future.

NEXT MONTH:

**GREENKEEPERS WIN KUBOTA TOURNAMENT
FRED HAWTREE VISITS PAU
REACTION TO PGA PROPOSALS**

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