

MARCH 1984

Greenkeeper



The Official Magazine of S.I.G.G.A. & E.I.G.G.A.



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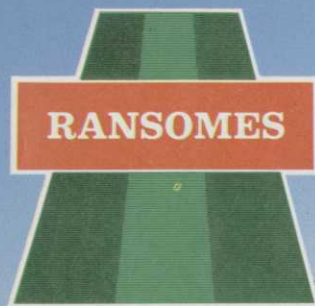
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The full weekend's programme

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Publisher: A. Quick & Co Ltd
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All advertising matter, editorial copy and correspondence should be sent to:
Greenkeeper, 121-123 High Street, Dovercourt, Harwich, Essex CO12 3AP
Tel: 025 55 7526

Subscription rates:
UK—£12 Continent and USA—£20
Eire—IR£17.50

Greenkeeper is published ten times a year.
Printed in England by J.B. Offset, Marks Tey, Colchester, Essex.
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Golf Course '84



Trinity Hall
Cambridge

The full *Golf Course '84* programme is detailed on pages four and five and shows the intensive and varied programme that has been put together by the participating associations. Education classes in Irrigation, Cost Saving In Machinery Maintenance and Disease In Turf run concurrently with the respective general sessions.

All delegates will have received conference details. However, please ensure forms are returned to register for any or all of the classes.

Golf Course '84 is a striking example of how the entire fine turf industry is coming together—literally under one roof.

It is good to report that the long-awaited meeting between SIGGA, EIGGA and the BGGGA took place last month at Hags Castle Golf Club, near Glasgow, having been previously postponed due to bad weather.

At the end of what appeared a very amicable meeting called to discuss matters of common interest between the associations, delegations went home to report to their ruling committees. Hopefully, each association will now wish to see this dialogue continue and look towards a more unified future.

Finally, this month's *Greenkeeper* presents a larger-than-ever issue of the magazine. Not only does it include contributions by regular writers, but articles from two distinguished members of the greenkeeping profession—Walter Woods of SIGGA and links supervisor at St Andrews and Jack McMillan, EIGGA president and course manager at Sunningdale. They also comment in *Notebook* (page 29) on the Verti-Drain, which is pictured on this month's front cover working the 18th fairway of the Old Course at St Andrews.



Walter Woods



Jack McMillan

Golf Course '84

From April 12-15 at Trinity Hall, Cambridge

THURSDAY, APRIL 12

British Association Golf Course Architects

- 2.00-2.45 Donald Steel
2.45-3.30 Donald Harradine
The Architect's Relationship With Other Aspects Of The Game
- 3.30-4.00 Tea
4.00-5.00 Geoffrey Cornish
The History Of The Golf Course Architect
Get Acquainted Party
Dinner

FRIDAY, APRIL 13

British Turf Irrigation Association

- 9.00-9.15 Vivian Auer—BTIA Chairman
Introduction To The BTIA
- 9.15-9.50 Martyn Jones—Agronomist
Management Of Irrigation Systems
- 9.50-10.10 Andrew Lawrence—Weir Pumps
Pumping Systems For Irrigation
- 10.10-10.30 Graham Carson—Wavin Plastics
Pipework—Fittings For Irrigation Systems
- 10.30-11.00 Coffee
11.00-11.30 Jim Webb—Severn Trent Water Authority
Golf Course Irrigation Systems—The Water Authorities' View
- 11.30-12.15 Dr Jim Watson—USGA Greens Section
The Past, Present And Future Of Turfgrass Irrigation
- 12.15-12.30 Open Discussion Forum With All Speakers
12.30-2.00 Lunch

British Association Of Golf Course Constructors

- 2.00-2.45 Dr W. Adams—University of Aberystwyth
Sand Technology In Golf
- 2.45-3.30 Peter Jenkins—Scapa Leisure Surfaces
Synthetics In Golf
- 3.30-3.45 Tea
3.45-4.30 Dennis Turner—Parks Manager, Maidstone Borough Council
Enduring The Constructor On Your Golf Course

- 4.30-5.15 Cabell Robinson—Robert Trent Jones S.A.
Construction Management In Europe
After Dinner: Film Show

SATURDAY, APRIL 14

Scottish And International Golf Greenkeepers' Association

- 9.00-10.30 SIGGA Programme Delivered By Chris Kennedy—SIGGA Chairman; Jimmy Kidd—Course Manager, Gleneagles Hotel; Walter Woods—Links Supervisor, St Andrews
- 10.30-11.00 Coffee

PGA European Tour

- 11.00-12.30 George O'Grady or Tony Gray
What The PGA Expects From A Tournament Venue
- 12.30-2.00 Lunch

Golf Course Superintendents' Association Of America

- 2.00-2.45 James Prusa—Director Of Education GCSAA
GCSAA In Action
- 2.45-3.30 Stanley J. Zontek—Regional Director USGA
USGA Greens Section
- 3.30-3.45 Tea
3.45-4.30 Bruce Williams—Superintendent, Bob O'Link Golf Club, Illinois
The American Golf Course Superintendent
- 4.30-5.15 Dr James Watson—TORO
The Turfgrass Industry, Past, Present And Future
Formal Dinner With Guest Speaker Bruce Critchley—BBC TV Golf Commentator And Former International

SUNDAY, APRIL 15

English And International Golf Greenkeepers' Association

- 10.30-11.00 Dr Peter Hayes—Director Of The Sports Turf Research Institute
The Maintenance Problems Found On Advisory Visits

- 11.00-11.30 Jim Arthur B.Sc (Agric)—Agronomist To The R & A
Open Championship Course Preparation
- 11.30-12.00 Lawrence Pithie—Course Manager, Minchinhampton Golf Club
Management Of Different Types Of Course
- 12.00-12.30 Peter Wisbey—Course Manager, North Foreland Golf Club
Safety At Work
- 12.30-12.45 Jack McMillan—EIGGA President
12.45-2.00 Lunch
2.00 AGMs Of The British Association Of Golf Course Architects, British Association Of Golf Course Constructors, English And International Golf Greenkeepers' Association
After Dinner: Film Show And Live TV Coverage Of The US Masters

MONDAY, APRIL 16

Golf At The Gog Magog Golf Club

- 10.00 Nominated Teams Of Three From Each Association Competing For The *Greenkeeper Trophy*—(Total Stableford Score) In An Inter-Association Competition. Associations Can Advise *Greenkeeper* Of Players' Names At *Golf Course '84*

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Cost To Greenkeeper Association Members... £8.50 Meals

Education Classes

THURSDAY, APRIL 12

Irrigation

- 10.00-10.30 George Shiels—Senior Lecturer In Horticulture, Writtle Agricultural College
Calculation Of Irrigation Requirement
- 10.30-11.00 Robin Hume—E.A. Yates And Sons, Sandbach
Water Supply And Storage
- 11.00-11.45 Dirk Lenie—Rain Bird International
The Concept And Design Requirement Of A Pop-Up Sprinkler
- 11.45-12.15 Robin Hume, E.A. Yates And Bill Hawthorn—Watermation
Pumping Systems And Pipework
- 12.15-13.00 Peter Roberts—TORO And Bill Hawthorn—Watermation
Control Systems

- 11.00-12.00 Brian Mitchell Of Ransomes, Sims & Jefferies
Hydraulic Systems—Their Use, Operation And Maintenance And Fault Finding
- 12.00-12.30 David Halford Of Lancashire College Of Agriculture And Horticulture, Myerscough Hall
Back Lapping—An Aid To Keeping A Good Edge

SATURDAY, APRIL 14

Disease In Turf

- 9.00-9.30 Roy Woolhouse—Sports Turf Research Institute
Fusarium Patch Disease
- 9.30-9.45 Questions
- 9.45-10.15 *Red Thread And Take-All*
- 10.15-10.30 Questions
- 10.30-11.00 Coffee
- 11.00-11.45 Graham Paul Of May & Baker
Fairy Rings
- 11.45-12.15 *Colletotrichum, Drechslera Leaf Spot And Seedling Diseases*
- 12.15-12.30 Questions

FRIDAY, APRIL 13

Cost Saving In Machinery Maintenance

- 9.00-9.45 James Dawson And Sons, Lincoln
Types, Selection, Fitting And Maintenance Of Belts For The Transmission Of Power
- 9.45-10.30 Chris Prevost Of Autocar
Electrical Equipment, Barking
Petrol Versus L.P.G. Versus Diesel
- 10.30-11.00 Coffee

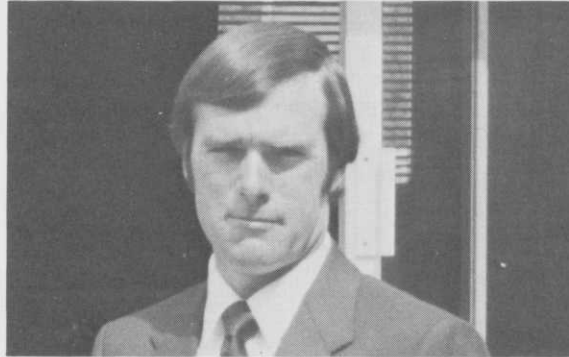
SUNDAY, APRIL 15

- 8.30-10.00 Self Assessment Test In Class
Subjects By Lecturers Concerned

Golf Course '84

In·My·Opinion

Chris Kennedy



Chris Kennedy is course manager at Hags Castle Golf Club, Glasgow and chairman of the Scottish And International Golf Greenkeepers' Association

In Scotland, we pride ourselves on our education programme, which follows the SCOTEC syllabus. In my opinion, however, there is a missing link in the 'Fine Turf' part of this education programme. Students are being well advised on the technical side but, in the field, head greenkeepers and course managers do not have enough time to spend with apprentices.

In most cases, this is not through choice, but thrust upon them by golf club committees, boards of management or whoever is holding the purse strings.

When I started in golf course management 22 years ago, I was lucky enough to come into it at a time when mechanisation meant that the cutting cylinder was propelled, but you still had to push the mower. If you were an apprentice, it could be six months before you were allowed near a green with a Push Certes. You then had to learn to cut in a straight line and set the machine properly.

Training in the 1960s might not have been so technical, but I certainly feel that the courses were not so heavily played and the head greenkeeper or course manager had more time to spend with younger members of staff.

Because we are in the leisure industry, courses are generally very busy. The biggest outlay is wages, so if staff at least understand or preferably play the game of golf, then this is not only to the head greenkeeper's advantage, but also to the benefit of the apprentice. Greenkeeping, like golf itself, is a constant challenge.

You will never be completely satisfied with your course, nor will the players, as some like firm fast greens and some like slow, soft surfaces.

It is for this reason that I ask you, no matter what association you are a member of—be it SIGGA, EIGGA or the BGGA—and if you are taking on an apprentice to consider:

1. When did you last take an hour or two to explain the proper way to change and site new holes, taking into account wind and ground conditions, etc?
2. When did you look at the bunkers from a player's point of view—ie shape, contour and quality of raking—and ask yourself are there large hollows just where the ball normally lands?
3. Are your greens cut often enough?

When you are taking on an apprentice, is it because you have decided to increase your staff ratio or replace another apprentice who has finished his five years? Or is it because, a few years ago, you actually had a qualified man but, because of cut-backs or the need to purchase equipment, you were told to trim back your wage bill and the only members of staff who would make any decrease in monetary terms were journeymen?

Nowadays, do you find that the apprentice has to take on jobs from his first few days of service that he would not normally be tackling for quite a few months and, even then, under your supervision? Because you are under pressure from the greens

management committee, general members of the club, consultant agronomists or keeping your hi-work equipment in a good state of repair, you just do not have the time to spend with him.

If this situation is true and you also trained the chap that the apprentice is working with, then you end up with a 'blind leading the blind' situation. Unfortunately, this is exactly what is happening at some clubs and then the head greenkeeper leaves and to save even more cash, the club appoints the first assistant to head greenkeeper and maybe he is not ready to take on the post.


Head greenkeepers and course managers should take a good look at their staffing requirements and if they are inadequate tell their clubs so.

You might get no reaction, but put your case properly and tell them that not only are they not getting the best out of their staff, but from you also. Prove to them that they are on the road to financial disaster because when a golf course gets to a low standard nobody wants to play it and it takes a lot of time, effort and extra money to bring it back again.

Finally, I would like to wish you all a successful season, especially Walter Woods and his staff at St Andrews for a great Open.

Naturally, I hope that SIGGA meetings with EIGGA and the BGGA are fruitful and of benefit to all greenkeepers. It is far better that we are united in matters such as training, staffing and matters of common interest to the game of golf.

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Out·On·The·Course

Tyrrells Wood

John Campbell meets the man in charge—Bert Watson

SURREY boasts some of the finest golf courses in the south and Tyrrells Wood near Leatherhead ranks among the best of them. It is laid out on the rolling terrain of the North Downs with majestic tree-lined fairways adding to the character, strategy and beauty of the golfing landscape. The architectural style of bunkering and contoured slopes around built-up greens bear many hallmarks of the original course designer—James Braid.

The fine old red brick clubhouse occupies a commanding position and can be viewed from various parts of the course through the trees. In the early days, many well-known people were members of the club. Lord Beaverbrook and Lord Rothermere were often met at the end of their round by a chauffeured Rolls or a groom with horses. Professional Eddie Ward gave lessons to the racing driver Malcolm Campbell. Before the war, when the clubhouse had dormy accommodation, Rex Harrison and his first wife Lilli Palmer stopped there.

One man who has trodden the paths of the famous and learned to appreciate the attraction and challenge of maintaining the course over the past 27 years is course manager Bert Watson. His long spell



Bert Watson in his temporary office.

of service is ample testimony to the dedication and loyal esteem he has for the club. Bert and his charming wife Lesley have a daughter Dawn, 18, and son James, 10, who has already decided he is going to follow in his father's footsteps.

Although Bert worked for a short period in a garage after leaving school, he recalled: "I always wanted to work on a golf course and when I was offered a job at Tyrrells Wood, I jumped at it." His mentor and boss then was Andrew Corstorphine, formerly head greenkeeper to the

Royal & Ancient Golf Club, St Andrews. "I learned a lot from Andrew, who was very knowledgeable in all aspects of greenkeeping and taught me much about selective weedkillers when they first came into vogue."

Bert Watson is a genial chap and a first-class greenkeeper who likes to keep his course in good shape seven days a week. He runs the course himself with three men. "We are all long-service employees—Ian Huggett has 25 years, Keith Harris and Jack Street have both been with me for over 12 years. Staff relations are excellent—it's a matter of give and take and I'm proud of the fact that we are always top of the league in the wages scale.

"The club takes a genuine interest in the welfare of all staff. We have an excellent pension scheme and bonus arrangements that are appreciated by everyone."

The course seems to cope extremely well with all kinds of weather and even after a heavy snowfall at the time of my visit, conditions were reasonably dry underfoot.

The surfaces of the above average size greens had a nice firm resilience and there was little sogginess, even after the high precipitation of January. Bert remarked that the chalky nature of the soil and regular aeration made for good drainage. "I'm a great advocate of slit tining to keep the turf in good condition all year round," he said.

The natural springy turf of the Downs makes ideal fairways—the ball sits up well, inspiring golfers' confidence, and the generous width of fairways allows ample leeway for error. Bert, like many other greenkeepers, finds that uphill fairways tend to be more prone to divot marks in critical areas. On the 17th fairway alone they repaired over 4,000 divot holes recently.

With the advantage of an abundance of trees, many of the holes are secluded, a feature golfers



The putting surface falls away at the rear of the 7th.

Continued on page 12...



Large sand traps involve lots of work to keep them trim and tidy...

appreciate. The disadvantages of trees are coping with leaves and other debris in the autumn. "We have a Sisis Litamisa for dealing with large areas of leaves and it does a good job," Bert said, "but I would like to see a machine combining the job of sweeping up leaves and pulverising them at the same time. This would speed up the composting process and make leaves easier and less time consuming to deal with."

Manufacturers please note!

As we were walking through the rough I spotted several snares set to catch rabbits. "They're mine," Bert pointed out. "If I don't keep them down, they can be troublesome and I'm partial to a bit of rabbit pie now and again!"

The rabbits invade from surrounding estates, where control measures are lax or non-existent. A few years ago, the rabbit population was decimated by myxomatosis, but now they are on the increase again. Rabbits are unwelcome on golf courses, where their burrowing and scraping activities do not endear them to greenkeepers or golfers.

Tyrrells Wood has over 70 sand traps, which entail a lot of work during the playing season. Grooming sand is always expensive in terms of time, labour and money. "I would like to see a standard type of sand recommended for all golf courses. It would be easier to order, could be used for bunkers and top dressing and much fairer to golfers, who would be acclimatised to its texture and consistency for playing recovery shots," he explained.

With today's ever-increasing play adding to the compaction rate, Bert believes that the latest ranges of aeration equipment have been a big

boon to greenkeeping. He maintains that triplex greensmowers are a necessity nowadays to get the work done ahead of play, but still prefers to see the finished effect of a good handmower on the putting surface. "I like to cut my greens just under 3/16in. This produces the kind of pace my members like for putting," he said.

Bert has never found it necessary to bring in a consultant to help him deal with problems. He is the kind of man with the ability and expertise borne of long experience to run his course smoothly and successfully to the satisfaction of his membership.

He admits there is a need for more education among young greenkeepers in the theory and science of turf culture to cope with the many situations that arise, but added, "there is no substitute for experience and having the confidence in your ability to make decisions and handle the complexities of dealing with staff,

club officials and the day-to-day running of the course.

"My long term objective for the course is to strive constantly to improve the facilities, achieve more economical maintenance and make a round of golf more enjoyable and interesting for all. This may mean altering bunkers, enlarging or making new tees, planting trees, reshaping fairway contours and a host of other jobs approved by the committee.

"I like to listen to constructive comments from my members. Sometimes they come up with good ideas," he said.

"I look forward to the winter. It is a welcome change of pace after the busy hustle and bustle of the growing season. Greenkeepers don't have time to hibernate, although some golfers might think they do.

"On the contrary, there are always a lot of jobs to be done that can't be tackled at any other time of the year. There is always drainage work, overhauling machinery and satisfyingly creative construction work, which allows the inexperienced to learn and gives the experienced man an opportunity to demonstrate his skills and ability in the art of landscaping for golf.

"We have a lot of trees at Tyrrells Wood and they often involve quite a lot of work in the autumn and winter. To keep trees in good shape, they may have to be pruned. When done properly, pruning can improve the health, beauty and function of a tree.

"It is also an important safety factor. All dead branches have to be removed, since a slight wind can bring them down with the risk of damaging property or causing injury. Low branches along pathways may need

Continued on page 14...



Empty drinks cans, filled with cement and painted, make useful tee markers.



removing, particularly if they are broken or have jagged ends.”

Greenkeepers who have to deal with tree-lined courses realise that maintenance of and around trees should dictate the choice of species. Autumn leaves are an annual irritation to golfers and a source of extra work to the greenkeeping staff.

Small twigs that break easily and litter the turf are common to some trees such as birch and beech. Leaves can cover a great deal of the playing area and make it rather difficult to spot golf balls. Trees should never be taken for granted—they must have proper consideration, just like turf, with individual characteristics and specified life spans.

“Some golf societies can cause a lot

of havoc and extra work on a golf course,” Bert said. “Often, they have little respect for the facilities and even less for the rules and etiquette of the game. They neglect to repair pitchmarks on greens, never smooth over footmarks in bunkers and leave a trail of empty drink cans behind them.

“Every greenkeeper should carry a pocket tape recorder. I am never without one and find it indispensable for making quick notes on the course as I travel around. Keeping accurate records and a diary of daily operations, weather conditions, etc, can be a great help when attending green committee meetings.

“Extracts from your diary can be used to form the basis of a regular report to keep the committee

informed on all aspects of the work programme or can be included in a club newsletter. Efficient business methods create a favourable impression and can help justify additional expenditure when the time comes for new equipment or the replacement of old machinery.”

Although Bert has been in greenkeeping a long time and declares that we can learn a lot from the past, he has a refreshingly modern outlook and strong views about many aspects of his profession.

“We have got to do much more for the education and training of young greenkeepers,” Bert said. “Our jobs are becoming more complex, equipment more sophisticated and the responsibilities more demanding. I think we have a long way to go with the provision of proper educational facilities for young men who want a good training in all aspects of golf course management.

“EIGGA has started the ball rolling, but a lot remains to be done for the men of the future. They deserve our united support and we should help them—now!”

Dinner-Dance Date

The Surrey branch annual dinner and dance will be held at The Drift Golf and Country Club, East Horsley on Saturday, April 28 (7.30pm for 8). Tickets cost £8.50 and are available from Kenny MacNiven, 5 Warren Farm Cottages, Warren Farm Lane, Guildford Road, Effingham, Surrey or Bert Watson, 27 Oakridge, Dorking, Surrey RH4 2NY (Tel: Dorking 881646).



Looking towards the 13th and 15th greens.



Bert points out the ten large bunkers on 18.

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Heather as a feature of the golf course

A feature of many heathland golf courses is the abundance of heather, presenting an impressive background to the golfing landscape. The view from the tee of a heather-lined fairway can be an intimidating sight to most golfers who have learned to respect its penal effects. Many good scores have been ruined by the heavy punishment meted out by this wild shrub when attempting to play recovery shots from a tangled mass of wiry stems.

Heather can be controlled in a number of ways and one of the most popular methods with greenkeepers nowadays is to trim it in the spring or autumn with a tractor mounted rotary mower. Another and much older method is judicial burning, which helps perpetuate the heathland habitat and keeps in check the unwanted growth of saplings. Unfortunately, the burning operation is not always acceptable, or possible, on golf courses, which means that the heather has to be cut and any unwanted invasion of trees dealt with by pulling them out. Many courses have started out as open heathland and have become more and more woodland due to the uncontrolled encroachment of birch and other common species of tree.

When the heather gets too long and dense, it can be frustrating and time consuming for golfers searching for balls. At Sunningdale, I prefer to control the heather with the use of a tractor mounted rotary mower. It does quite a good job of topping the shrub to a reasonable height. This work is usually done in the spring or autumn after the plant has flowered without any evident detrimental effects to its growth or vigour.

On the natural heathland courses in Surrey, heather is a more resilient plant than it would seem to be. While it

**By Jack McMillan of Sunningdale GC
and president of EIGGA**

does not cope well with the effects of concentrated traffic, it usually has the ability to recover well if traffic can be stopped or diverted. It is also shallow rooted and I have found that this characteristic allows it to be transplanted successfully to feature the steep slopes of bunker faces, tees and other suitable spots on the course, adding a touch of colour to the scene.

I have found that transplanting heather is a relatively simple operation during the winter months and it is the same kind of job as lifting and relaying turf. When the sods are cut at a reasonable thickness, they handle well in transport and laying.

The stages of this work are as follows:

1. A suitable area well out of play should be chosen for transplanting.
2. Top it over with a rotary mower and rake up the debris.
3. Cut with a sod cutting machine around 1½in to 2in thick.
4. Lift and stack carefully for transport to the site.
5. When laying on steep slopes always work from the bottom upwards and butt each section firmly together.
6. On the steep slopes of bunker faces it is sometimes necessary to anchor transplant sods with wooden pegs or small wire hoops until they are firmly rooted.

In my experience, heather transplanted by this method generally takes root fairly quickly provided it is laid on a

soil bed similar to that from which it was lifted. Using the plant as a special feature on awkward background slopes helps to reduce time-consuming maintenance work, which is a prime consideration nowadays.

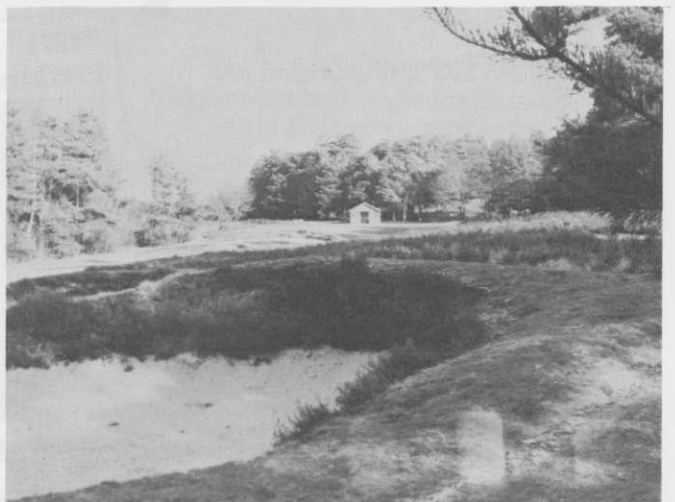
At my club, we jealously try to preserve as much as possible of the traditional heathland flora and fauna with which we are richly endowed. The heather is one of our precious assets. It adds a dash of colour and is a vital factor in the playing strategy of the courses and long may it continue to flourish!



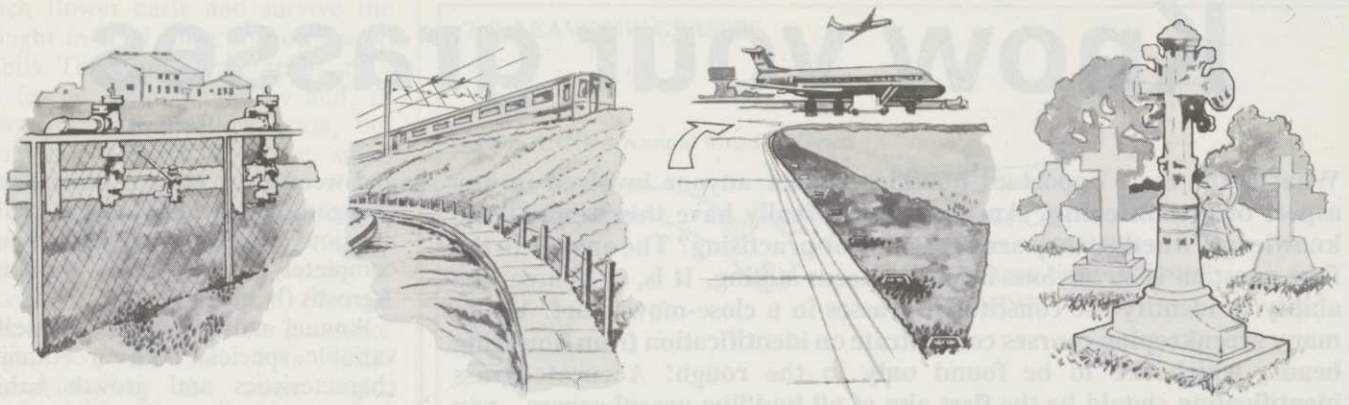
Heather planted on the steep slopes of a tee makes an attractive setting...



An area where heather is being transplanted.



Heather growing around the fringes of a Sunningdale bunker...



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Know your grasses

What is the most important qualification for anyone involved in any aspect of greenkeeping? And how many really have this simple basic knowledge, whether they are preaching or practising? The answer to the first question is so obvious it hardly needs stating. It is, of course, the ability to identify the constituent grasses in a close-mown turf. Yet so many greenkeeping courses concentrate on identification from flowering heads, which are to be found only in the rough! Accurate grass identification should be the first aim of all budding greenkeepers—you must always know your 'friends' and, even more, your 'enemies'.

Once a relatively few grasses can be identified accurately and with confidence, you immediately establish a considerable advantage over the vast majority of those involved at all levels in the management of fine turf! It is really surprising how many of those who should know one grass from another when it is mown at 3/16in do not.

I well remember an acrimonious discussion with one head greenkeeper, who swore that the large zones of pure fine fescues returning to his greens were annual meadow grass! What was even more surprising was to find an eminent professor of botany failing to recognise annual meadow grass in a close-mown turf, yet he was hot stuff on rare weeds and, incidentally, a fund of highly valuable ecological information.

I would be the first to admit that I have been corrected on more than one occasion, and by young greenkeepers at that, when I was rashly assuming that what I had seen on one green was the same grass on another and did not bother to use my spectacles!

Identification of grasses depends not so much on precise botanical characteristics, but more on what the Irish term 'the jizz of the thing'—in other words, its characteristic look and habit. Fine fescues can be picked up with fair accuracy at long range, partly because they often do not blend or mix with other grasses and so form zones and partly by their colour—a paler yellow to grey-green—as well as by their needle leaves.

Creeping bent often turns purple under frosty conditions, which bleach Yorkshire fog. All the *Agrostis* species—save, perhaps, the very fine-leaved velvet bent (*Agrostis canina*) and its distant relative Penncross (both thatch-formers)—are easy to pick out, since the markedly ribbed upper surfaces of their leaves do not reflect light and so they always look dull, as well as a darker grey-green.

Velvet bent is not only a very

different colour to fine fescues—a characteristic blue-green—but also grows under much wetter conditions. Annual meadow grass generally looks sickly and yellow, or even very thin, in winter.

Perennial ryegrass and crested dog's tail may be mistaken for each other, but for no other turf species, possessing fibrous, dark-green leaves, with shiny under-surfaces. One has a bright maroon base to the leaf sheath and the other a golden yellow—but what really makes both obvious at a distance is that only a very tight set, sharp-bladed mower will cut them cleanly, so the 'skinned' leaf blades and ragged cut tends to give it away.

The meadow grasses (*Poa* spp.) are among the most widespread of all grasses in temperate zones, being found throughout all the northern temperate climes in the old and new

By Jim Arthur

worlds. There are no less than seven distinct species, each generally with a specific habitat—for instance, *Poa nemoralis* in shaded situations; *Poa pratensis* on more fertile, moist soils; *Poa bulbosa* on thin, sandy soils.

The commonest of all is *Poa annua* and it is found everywhere it can gain a foothold and where it is able to exploit a gap in the competitive armour of other grasses.

A good, hard look where annual meadow grass dominates gives the clue as to what encourages it and what, by deduction, can be done to discourage it. It is the common grass of paths and compacted, worn areas, where soil consolidation inhibits deep-rooting species. It invades wherever fertility rises, so keeping soil 'poor' keeps it at bay.

Look at the old marking-out lines of an abandoned tennis court or even the lines marked with lime used to keep trolleys at bay on approaches to greens. Quite apart from the worms

and weeds, the grass is dramatically changed, just on that line, to annual meadow grass, which has almost completely displaced the wiry, native *Agrostis* (bent) turf.

Annual meadow grass is itself a variable species, both in botanical characteristics and growth habits. Sometimes it is short-lived, ephemeral, vigorous, coarse-textured, free-seeding and with a ten-week life cycle. In other forms, it can be a biennial, relatively fine leaved and shy seeding, in extreme forms looking almost like pads of pearlwort, almost a different species.

A host of other grasses can be occasionally found in close-mown turf—perhaps more so on fairways than greens—in addition to those mentioned.

Some are obviously only just surviving, under the influence of mowing, but I have seen even cocksfoot, whose coarse, flattened, pale stems distinguish it at once from the equally pale but hairy Yorkshire fog.

Mat grass (*Nardus stricta*) is fairly common on acid moorland fairways. The couch grasses (*Agropyron*) will not stand mowing, but can usefully stabilise shifting sand—along with Marram and Sea Lyme grasses—those dune-building grasses that demand to be constantly smothered by building up wind-blown sand if they are to survive and not 'grow themselves out' of the sand.

I have quite often found wall barley (*Hordeum maritimum*) looking very yellow and an unattractive constituent of fine turf, perhaps more on heavier soils, despite its name. The timothys (*Phleum* spp.) are, quite wrongly, assumed to prefer wet conditions. Several do thrive on sand dunes, but they are neither necessary nor desirable as constituents of seeds mixtures and are difficult to establish and resent competition—hence their preference for environments that are either too wet or too dry for more aggressive species, which would otherwise compete with them.

There are lots of other grasses—foxtails, sweet vernal grass, *Sesleria*, Aira, even the bromes, which can be found in mown turf—but the beginner can safely dismiss the lot as weeds of no significance!

There are a number of annual grasses that are characteristic of drought-susceptible, sandy soils,

which flower early and survive the drought in seed form and others on bulbils. These are *Aira praecox*, rat's tail fescue, annual timothy and, of course, annual meadow grass, but also *Poa bulbosa* and the small timothys.

To trap the over-confident, however, there are some non-grass species, of which two are worthy of attention. Field woodrush (*Luzula campestris*) is an attractive grass-like sedge, so why call it a rush? Presumably by the same logic, *Polygonum aviculare* is called knot grass because it is less like a grass than anything!

This sedge occurs on many heathland and other courses, contributes to good, fine-textured fairways and even if it does put up attractive brown flowering heads early in the year, never warrants control.

Toadrush (*Juncus bufonis*) is a true rush and can be a nuisance on wet greens as its small 'tussocks', surviving quite happily under the blades of the mower, can ruin putting surfaces—but generally only where they have already been ruined by thatch and waterlogging. It is, however, a useful indicator of bad surface drainage and a warning to increase deep aeration and to break down thatch.

From this, we may deduce that there are only two or three grasses of value in greenkeeping—namely the bents (*Agrostis* spp.) and fine fescues and one *Poa*—*Poa pratensis* (smooth stalked meadow grass). There are a number of common weeds—chief of these being perennial ryegrass, for years unthinkingly included in fairway and tee mixtures to 'get a quick take', or to produce a hard-wearing turf.

It is arguable whether it is any quicker in establishing than the fine grasses, but it is certain that it never dies out, though it may be kept suppressed. It is coarse and strong, never really forms a turf with other grasses and produces impossible 'football pitches' of fairways and coarse, open tees, usually in conjunction with that worst of all contaminators, annual meadow grass.

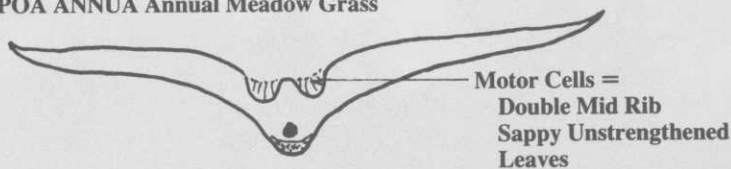
Dr Hayes' assurance that Bingley will no longer advise its inclusion in any seeds mixture, including tees, on any golf course—so-called dwarf strains notwithstanding—is welcome.

I spend too much time actually lifting and replacing ryegrass-contaminated turf around greens, originating perhaps 50 years ago, when patching traditionally worn

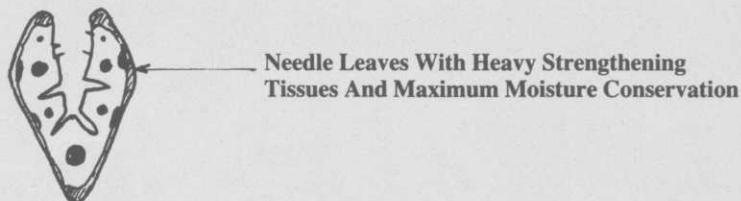
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T.S. LEAVES OF GRASSES

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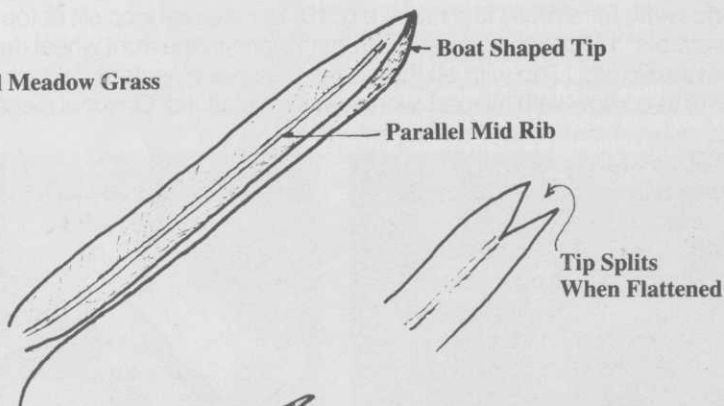


AGROSTIS TENUIS Bent Grass



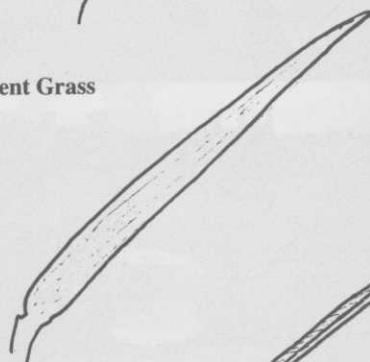
LEAVES OF GRASSES

Annual Meadow Grass



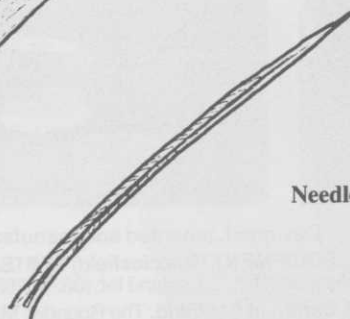
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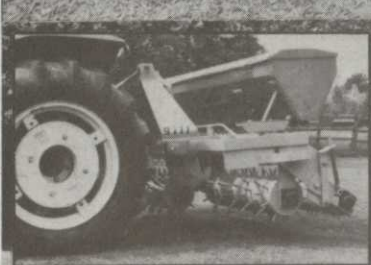
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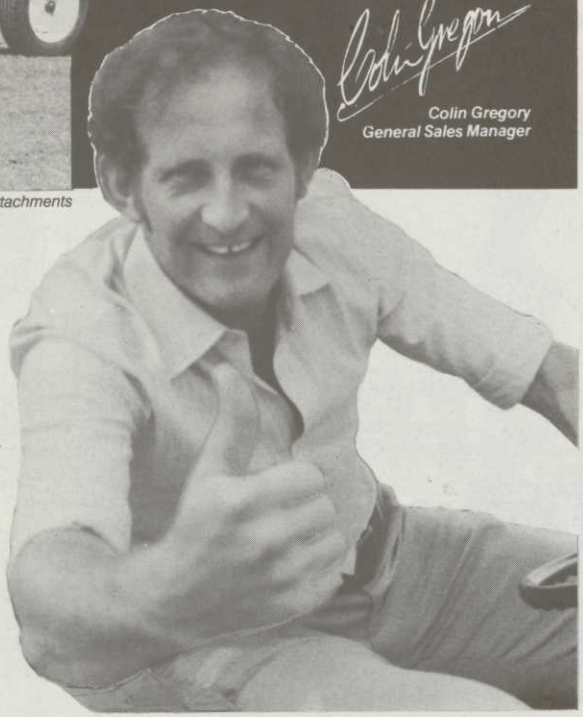
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Greenkeepers' Education And Training

Year by year, new machinery and more advanced techniques are being introduced specially for the maintenance of golf courses and the question arises what is being done to enable greenkeepers to keep pace with this technical progress? Automatic watering systems, the application of fungicides and fertilisers and health and safety regulations are some cases in point.

The craft of greenkeeping has evolved from being an odd job occupation to a highly technical business through many years of trial and error. In recent years, the expertise has increased by leaps and bounds with the assistance of technical colleges, the Sports Turf Research Institute, advice of commercial concerns and informed opinion of agronomists.

Today, many greenkeepers enjoy the respect and admiration of the golfing world but, in the absence of a uniform training system, standards throughout greenkeeping are so varied that the profession itself has not yet been accorded the status commensurate with its importance.

Elmwood College, located just a few miles from St Andrews, is regarded as one of the leaders in the field of greenkeeping education. During 1976, part-time courses were formulated and, since then, they have improved.

At the moment, there is a first-year SCOTEC course, which contains the

basic soil/grass chemistry relationship, basic horticulture and an introduction to greenkeeping.

The second and third year is a progression related entirely to greenkeeping.

Just recently, however, a new fourth year course has been established mainly to allow suitable candidates the opportunity to continue further in turf management at a supervisory level.

To assist the college and to provide guidelines, an advisory committee was formed—members of which were drawn from the trade and greenkeeping industry.

By Walter Woods Links Supervisor, St Andrews

Each year, a greenkeepers' conference is organised. This usually takes place during March. Top speakers are invited and special encouragement given to greenkeepers wishing to speak on a chosen subject. Conferences and lectures are considered necessary to highlight a chosen subject. Conferences and lectures are considered necessary to highlight and improve greenkeepers' knowledge.

To assist head greenkeepers and first assistants who might have a wealth of experience, a week-long supervisory course was organised. This course contained advice on budgets, report writing and health and safety.

This area of education is of the

utmost importance, providing a balance of learning and giving a relationship between the head greenkeeper, apprentice and technical colleges.

SIGGA is aware of the benefits received from education. We do not want a situation like that in America where only rich, aspiring superintendents receive education.

Attempts are being made to provide learning at apprentice level, combining this with a sound grounding of practical experience. Our organisation consists of an education director and a sub-committee, who take part in college committee activities. The director co-ordinates all information and reports to the SIGGA executive committee.

The main and most important co-ordinator of education, however, is the greenkeeping training committee, which is in dire straits financially. This is a sad reflection on the golf industry.

The Scottish Golf Union and Scottish greenkeepers have representatives on this important committee, which meets twice a year.

Efforts are made to have similar educational studies adopted in England but, unfortunately, the position is far more complex and solutions more difficult to find. Serious problems arise because colleges, which can offer similar courses, are under the control of independent local authorities and, owing to the distances between colleges, it is extremely difficult for organisation to take place.

However, attempts are being made to organise a link between the appropriate golf unions, the greenkeeper associations and certain colleges that might be prepared to accept training in greenkeeping.

The greater part of a young apprentice's training takes place during his working hours on the golf course and the monitoring of his training will be by a log book which, when completed, will provide the second half of the basic qualification.

Unfortunately, this is the area where problems arise. Most golf clubs keep manpower to the lowest level, compelling the apprentice to continual manual labour. The head greenkeeper usually has no time to teach the apprentice some of the more important and skillful work. This is an insular method of achievement and does nothing to promote golf or golf courses. Little do they know that, having a well-maintained course,



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guarantees a well-filled clubhouse.

Although criticism is directed here at the golf club, a considerable amount should also be directed towards the head greenkeeper. He should allocate more time for the

apprentice to digest his training and by altering daily work programmes he instantly creates more interest in the work.

It's a good feeling to see a young man mature and develop into a good

greenkeeper. Sound individual and practical education, coupled with the theory received at college, gives a solid foundation and a stepping stone from which he can progress with confidence.

Perhaps if we adopt the motto of Elmwood College—Growth through Knowledge—the whole greenkeeping industry will benefit.

Forthcoming Events

- National AGM—27th March in Edinburgh
- SIGGA versus the club secretaries for the Gillies & Henderson Trophy at Gullane Golf Club on 2nd April
- East Section—outing to Glencorse GC on 10th April
- Central Section—outing to Elie GC on 18th April
- Ayrshire Section—Outing to Ayr Belleisle on 23rd April
- West Section—outing to Bellshill GC on 8th May
- North Section—outing to Carnoustie on 24th May
- The national outing will probably be in early August

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North-West

Lectures by G. Wright (November) and Chris Watmore (January) proved enjoyable occasions and certainly provoked much thought and discussion. However, I hope in future we can improve on the numbers attending.

On a happier note, may I say how pleasing it is to see so many of you wearing EIGGA blazers and ties—it all helps in our image building.

The AGM will be held at the Anchor Hotel, Saltrey on March 21 at 7.30pm.

The spring tournament has been arranged for Monday, April 9 at Heswell Golf Club—tee-off times from 8.30am. The cost includes a buffet and an evening meal and will be £7 to members and £8 to non-members. In order to assist with starting times and catering, entries with fees should be sent to the golf administrator by March 21.

Once again, any ideas or criticisms you may have will be given immediate attention. In order to keep members fully informed, the branch committee has decided to produce a quarterly bulletin in addition to the notes appearing in *Greenkeeper*.

A. Campbell.

Eastern

The new Eastern branch of EIGGA started with a lecture at Stoke Rochford Golf Club by Jim Arthur on the basics of good greenkeeping.

This was followed early in the New Year by Jonathan Harmer's talk at Belton Park GC on liquid organic fertilisers.

Dates for 1984 include M. Walker of Sports Ground Irrigation discussing maintenance and the updating of irrigation systems—7pm, Monday, March 19, Stoke Rochford GC; a visit to Lindrick, which will be hosted by *Greenkeeper* contributor Eddie Park—starting 2pm, Monday, May 14; an 18-hole tournament (please phone for an entry form)—Monday, September 24, Burghley Park GC and, finally, a film and talk on the SISIS System—Monday, November 12, Stoke Rochford GC.

Enquiries regarding the Eastern branch to Peter Bloodworth, Cornbecks Farm, Irnham, Grantham. Tel: Corby Glen (047 684) 266.



Members of the North-West branch with EIGGA trustee David Jones and Mrs Danielle Jones, the association's general administrator.

EIGGA AGM

The second annual general meeting of EIGGA will be held at Trinity Hall, Cambridge on Sunday April 15 at 3pm.

Kent

The first of several EIGGA one-day seminars planned for the year has been organised by the enterprising Kent branch in conjunction with the Sports Turf Research Institute.

To be held at Broome Park Golf and Country Club on Tuesday, March 6, the cost of attending is just £7, which includes coffee, lunch and afternoon tea.

The day is open to anyone (including non-members of EIGGA) interested in golf-course care. Information and ticket details can be obtained from EIGGA general administrator Danielle Jones (Tel: Ipswich 711810), branch secretary John Atkins or Peter Wisbey (Tel: 0843 28512).

Programme: 9.55—Assemble And Chairman's Introduction; 10.00-11.00—Principles Of Golf Course Drainage (by Gordon Macadam); 11.00-11.45—Construction Of A Golf Green (Jeff Perris); 11.45-12 noon—Discussion; 12.00-12.30—Grasses With Special Reference To Poa Annua (Dr Peter Hayes); 12.30-1.30—Lunch; 1.30-2.15—Turf Diseases (Roy Woolhouse); 2.15-3.15—Problems Of Maintenance (David Stansfield); 3.15-3.45—Discussion; 3.45—Disperse.

Peter Wisbey.

London

Several all-day functions have been organised by the London branch, including golf tournaments and mini-seminars and, although preliminary dates have been fixed, it wouldn't be prudent to announce details until they have been finalised.

A recent dinner-dance at the Post House Hotel was a great success and many thanks go to the 90 greenkeepers, trade representatives and friends who contributed to a very successful evening.

Special thanks to Anne and Tom McDonald for all their hard work, which was much appreciated.

Dinner Date

The 1984 Annual Golf Greenkeepers' Dinner will be held at Walton Heath on Friday, March 23.

This successful event in the greenkeeping calendar has a slight variation from previous years with PGA professional John Stirling as guest speaker. As before, the evening will be preceded by a golf tournament.

The event is open to all parties concerned with turf culture and the related trades.

Further information can be obtained from David Wall on Leatherhead 377197 or Hugh MacGillivray on Worthing 691832.

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People, Places, Products

David Jenkins' Charterhouse Turf Machinery has moved to larger premises at Pink's Yard, Church Road, Milford, Surrey. Tel: Godalming (04868) 24411. The move has been brought about by increased demand for products handled by the company, which include Rolawn Power 5 gang mowers, Vertidrain, Vredo overseeders, Team sprayers and Gates belts. The new building incorporates a reception, offices, spare parts stores and workshops.

Anyone seeking special-purpose tyres should see the Carlisle range from Axleline Eastern, Station Road, Hubberts Bridge, Boston, Lincs. Tel: 0205 67005/65080.

A new catalogue details Turf Handlers, suitable for ride-on mowers, mini tractors and golf carts; Gripping Performers for hand carts, snowblowers, lawn and garden equipment; Smooth Operators, to fit vehicles needing a light tread; Big

Biters, also for mini tractors, ground tillers and snowblowers; High Riders for fitting to all-terrain vehicles with either three, four or six wheels, and Sure Followers, for goods carried on car trailers.

The catalogue details sizes, ply ratings, mounted diameters and widths, rim widths, load capacities and maximum air pressures. The information is presented in easy-to-follow charts, supplemented with photographs.

Chain-saw safety was the main concern when over 30 senior representatives from the industry met at The Speech House, Forest of Dean recently. The workshop was organised by *Forestry And British Timber* and Hyett Adams, UK suppliers of Husqvarna chain saws.

The morning session included forest demonstrations outlining safe-working techniques, correct saw maintenance and protective clothing. During the afternoon, three papers were given on the importance of correct equipment, training and operators' attitudes.

The IOG's Young Groundsman Of The Year—1984 award is open to trainees and students aged between sixteen and nineteen and will be in three parts—a multiple-choice questionnaire, a series of research projects and, for semi-finalists, a personal interview.

The competition opens on April 1 and the winner will be announced at a special ceremony in London on Monday, December 3.

Entry forms from the IOG. Copies of the initial questionnaire will be sent to colleges and institutes.

As part of the IOG's golden jubilee celebrations this year, the annual conference will have Fifty Years Of Groundsmanship as its main theme.

The conference, at Writtle Agricultural College, runs from April 2-5. Papers by guest speakers include: Earthworm Biology—the implications for turf management; Plant Breeding—a review of past achievements and a study of the latest developments; Land Drainage

Continued on facing page...

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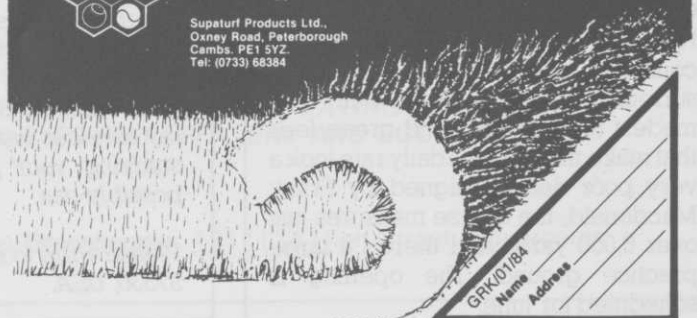
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Techniques—and their effects on different soils; Artificial Surfaces—a review of the latest developments, and Safety—developments in grass cutting machinery.

W.H. Bowles, president of the institute and head groundsman of Eton College for almost 50 years, will present his reminiscences in a lecture.

The Institute's AGM will follow the conference on Thursday afternoon, April 5. This will be open only to members of the institute.

Further information and booking forms from The Conference Secretary, Institute of Groundsmanship, The Pavilion, Woughton-on-the-Green, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire MK6 3EA. Tel: Milton Keynes (0908) 663600.

SISIS has announced the death of Albert Howe, who was 75. Albert worked for the company from 1946 until retirement in 1975. He started his career as chauffeur to the late William Hargreaves, founder of SISIS, and later became a sales rep.



Albert Howe.

The latest STRI *Sports Turf Bulletin* contains articles on artificial surfaces, frost protection, turf nurseries and rollers and rolling. Tel: 0274 565131.

In 1866, the Prince of Wales and a party of 32 guests reputedly paid a staggering £10,000 a day to stay at Costessey Park Hall, five miles west of Norwich. Today, a new 18 hole golf course stands in parkland surrounding the historic hall with modest membership and green fees that make the prince's daily rate look a very poor deal! Designed by Frank Macdonald, the course measures just over 6,000 yards and there's a large practice ground. The opening is scheduled for June.

Nicholas Winterton, Macclesfield's MP, with his wife Anne (MP for neighbouring Congleton) opened a new research and development building at SISIS Equipment (Macclesfield) recently. Mr Winterton congratulated SISIS on the factory's 'family' atmosphere and described the company as "highly progressive and epitomizing all that is best about smaller firms in this country." Dr Peter Hayes of the Sports Turf Research Institute recalled the long and co-operative relationship going back to the 1930s between the institute's director Mr R.B. Dawson and William Hargreaves, founder of SISIS, which has continued with subsequent directors at Bingley and the present company chairman Derek Hargreaves. Eric Staniforth, managing director of SISIS, presented Mr Winterton with a pair of engraved SISIS tankards and a fountain pen to commemorate his visit.



In the foreground, Mr and Mrs Nicholas Winterton and Eric Staniforth of SISIS.

Help, Please

I am a second year turf management student at Oregon State University, Corvallis, Oregon and very much want to arrange an eight to ten week working visit to a linksland golf course somewhere in the British Isles.

I am 29 years old and married. I have been in the golf business for 14 years, working in a pro shop for five years and the rest of the time as a greenkeeper, construction crew member, assistant greens' superintendent and head greens' superintendent (for three years).

I am a member of the Golf Course Superintendents' Association of America and the Oregon Golf Course Superintendents' Association. I was a member of the Wyoming-Montana Golf Course Superintendents' Association for three years, where I was on the board of directors and chairman of the new membership committee.

I firmly believe that American golf courses are overpampered, overmaintained and overwatered and that maintenance costs are going to raise green fees to the point whereby only the affluent will be able to play. Americans must adopt many traditional practices and learn to take advantage, as you do, of our natural terrains.

Employment in Great Britain is hard to obtain—as in the United States—so my services would be offered very reasonably. My sole interest lies in studying 'your' practices and gaining as much fruitful knowledge as I possibly can.

Please write to me—John F. Didier—at 1105 NW 26th, Corvallis, Oregon, 97330, USA.

Two Of A Kind

During 1983, both the Links Management Committee of St Andrews and Sunningdale Golf Club decided to purchase the Verti-Drain aerating machine.

Given the degree of traffic the links of St Andrews and the courses at Sunningdale have to cope with in a year and the resulting compaction problems, *Greenkeeper* met the two men in charge. Walter Woods is links supervisor at St Andrews and a prominent member of SIGGA and Jack McMillan is course manager of Sunningdale and president of EIGGA.

"At St Andrews, we have every type of aeration equipment necessary to assist us in the elimination of turf compaction, which is an obvious problem at the home of golf," Walter said.

"Just about every greenkeeper knows that by failing to aerate you encourage shallow-rooted grass, which is expensive to keep and shortens the playing season.

"Over the last few years, manufacturers have improved aeration equipment tremendously. All types of equipment can be purchased to spike greens in days rather than weeks, which was common years ago. I am a believer in all types of aeration, such as slit-tining and solid-tining. Hollow-coring is something I do every third or fourth year when I take the opportunity to overseed my greens.

"Many things have been said recently about the types of spiking that can compact the side walls where the tine has penetrated. My opinion is that if spiking is done at the beginning of the winter, natural elements, such as frost, assist you and help achieve the necessary results. We are always on the look-out for better and more efficient aeration equipment and the



These pictures offer a persuasive argument for the Verti-Drain's capabilities.

Verti-Drain appeared to offer deeper aeration.

"After discussion and authorisation by my committee, Charterhouse Turf Machinery—the UK distributors of the Verti-Drain—were contacted and delivery dates to St Andrews organised. On arrival, and after instructions from the installing engineer, the Verti-Drain was immediately taken to aerate our worst greens, allowing time for any repairs to or recovery by the turf to take place. Due to the weight of the machine, our most powerful tractor, a Ford 3000, had to be serviced and overhauled and then a special creep gear was fitted into the gear box so the aerator could operate at walking speed.

"The speed of the tractor relates to the spacing between holes. The slower you move, the more holes you

make, but you also create more turf upheaval. It is important that you experiment first. Before starting on your greens, instructions to the operator are necessary and some practice in turning is essential.

"The machine fits at the rear of the tractor on a three-point linkage and can be lifted and lowered by hydraulics. The power, which operates the extended aerating tines, is through the pto shaft from the tractor. The tines are 12 inches in length and they are interchangeable to various thicknesses. We achieved penetration down to at least 11 inches. When these tines are fully extended they are tilted backwards, rather like pushing back on a garden fork handle after it has been driven into a lawn. This action lifts the soil, breaking any

Continued on page 36...

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Golf Course Consultant



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The Gentle Touch

A £60,000 investment in equipment from the Cushman Turf Care System is helping London's second largest borough keep on top of its workload all-year-round.

Over the last year, Hillingdon has purchased two Cushman Four-Wheel Turf Trucksters, two Three-Wheel Turf Trucksters and a full range of Huxley equipment and attachments. With almost 3,300 acres of public open space to maintain, Hillingdon has plenty of work for its Cushman and Huxley machinery complement.

The manager of Hillingdon's parks and woodlands Norman Leddy explained why Huxley's machinery was chosen.

"Our main tractor fleet, which had previously carried out all sportsfield, amenity area and open space work, was presenting a growing problem due to the increased size and weight of the machines," he said. "As most of our grass and fine turf lies over clay, water cannot escape readily and this hindered the movement of large tractors and equipment. When winter maintenance work became necessary, they sometimes caused unacceptable surface marking and rutting. It was often better to stay off the land and we knew an alternative had to be found."

Mr Leddy stressed that low ground pressure was an important factor when assessing replacement machinery. "We were looking for a prime mover with approximately 3psi tyre pressures," he said.

"Versatility, reliability and service back-up were also major considerations when it came to the final selection. The Cushman Turf Care System fitted the bill in all areas for all-round practicality and flexibility."



Norman Leddy, manager of parks and woodlands for the London borough of Hillingdon, stands beside a Cushman Three-Wheel Truckster at Harefield Place Golf Course, Uxbridge. Mounted on the rear hydraulic linkage is a variable-depth moleblade with turf-slicing disc coupler for relieving compaction and improving drainage on greens and surrounds.

The borough's three golf courses return a net profit of £100,000 and Mr Leddy obviously wanted this balance maintained.

"With the assistance of the Cushman System, we can now keep the courses open for more than 90 per cent of the year," he added. "I am a strong believer in regular aeration and slitting during the winter to keep the surface in peak condition. With the help of Cushman and Huxleys, this is now part of the planned winter maintenance programme. And with the excellent transport attachment, the bunkers can be topped up with sand, when before it was washed away and could not be replaced without producing excessive wheel marks."

Mr Leddy also commented on savings, direct and indirect, that had been apparent.

"As a result of the improved maintenance standards and playing conditions on the golf course, more people have used the facilities," he said. "Jobs around playing fields and stadiums have been speeded up as we can move materials and tools across green surfaces without damage and along public roads quickly and safely. I would estimate that time savings of up to 20 per cent are now being achieved."

Cushman and Huxley grass and turf care equipment is distributed in the UK and Ireland by Huxleys Grass Machinery centres at Hillside, Thorpe Lea Road, Egham, Surrey and The Dean, New Alresford, Hampshire. The company has a nationwide network of 24 dealers. Further information on the company and its products can be obtained from Paul Huxley on Alresford (096273) 3222.

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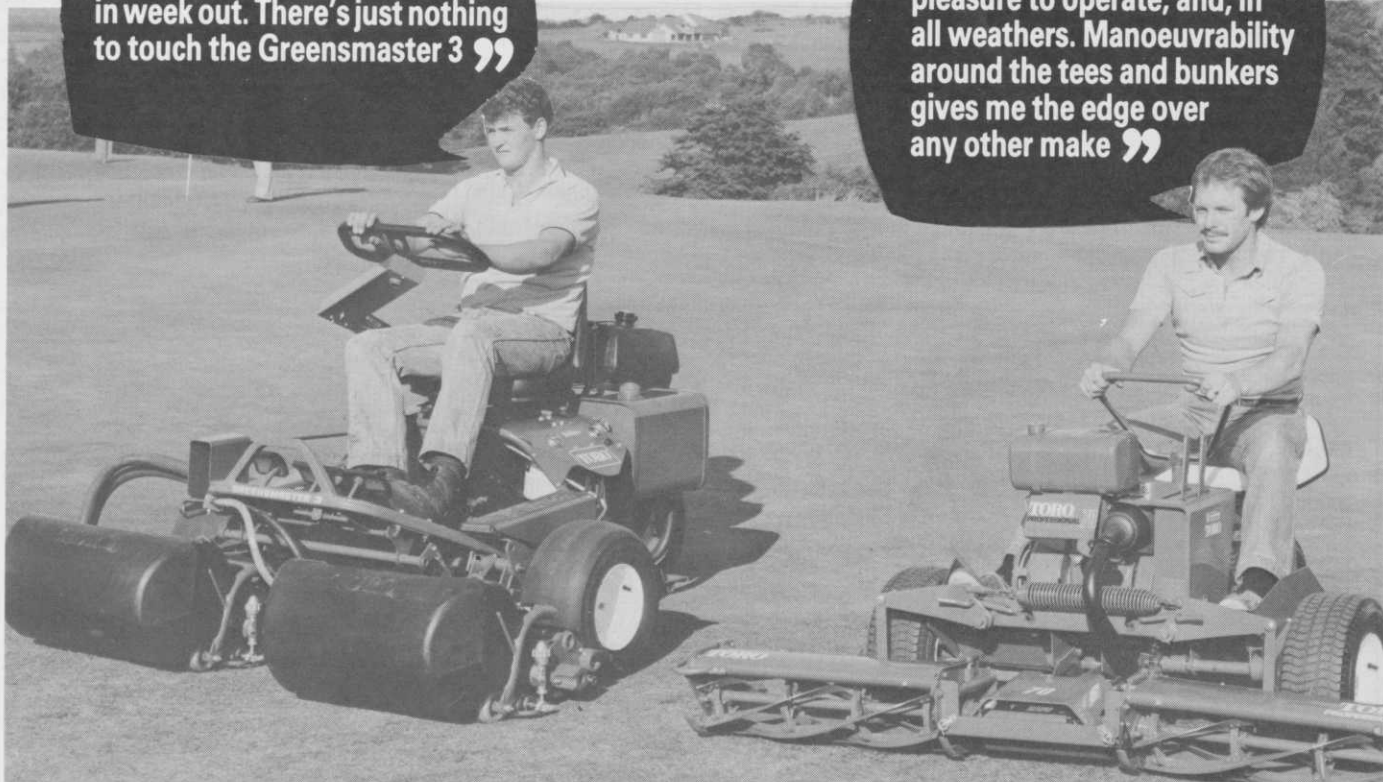
The 70" Professional combines light-weight construction with a reliable and economic power supply for optimum power-to-weight ratio which ensures consistent cutting of dense grass growth even on slopes. Extra low centres of gravity ensures positive traction and unequalled stability on slopes while rear-wheel steering gives outstanding manoeuvrability. Marking and compaction are avoided by the use of low pressure turf tyres.

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Grass Regulation Cuts Mowing Costs

Substantial savings in labour time and replacement of worn out grass-cutting machinery have been achieved by head greenkeeper of Glasgow's Eastwood Golf Club Alan McDougall using May & Baker's new grass growth regulator Mowchem.

After using the chemical for one season, Alan believes at least £100 and many hours of cutting can be saved through its application.

One of Scotland's youngest head greenkeepers, having been appointed headman at Eastwood in 1980 aged 22, Alan decided to use Mowchem on a trial basis last year. He was introduced to the product by local distributor Richard Aitken.

Alan—who is SIGGA West section secretary and treasurer—applied Mowchem in mid-May via a C.P. 3 sprayer with six nozzles on a four-foot boom to banks around the clubhouse and between a spinney of trees—areas that require extensive grass management by traditional mowing methods.

Following May & Baker's recommendations, it was found that Mowchem's persistence worked up to at least ten weeks with limited growth coming through after 13 weeks ended by late August rains.

No side-effects or scorch were noticed, even though the period of control saw a drought. The active ingredient of Mowchem—mefluidide—controlled the annual meadow grass, fescues and bents present in the sward, with a suppressant effect on Yorkshire Fog, although it had little effect on smooth stalked meadow grass (Kentucky Blue Grass).

Alan had his confidence in grass growth regulators restored after a



Alan McDougall examines Mowchem treated grass beside Eastwood's clubhouse.

disastrous earlier experiment with Maleic Hydrazide.

"Maleic Hydrazide is like playing Russian Roulette. While it can work reasonably well, it can so easily go against you. We once had a turf disaster area following application of the chemical with a weedkiller. Rain washed the chemical down a slope and caused scorched grass."

It is, however, the economics of using Mowchem that have convinced him. He reckons on burning out at least two hover mowers a season at a replacement cost of £400. Alan calculates that ten litres of Mowchem at £300, applied in the first week of

May and then ten weeks later, will regulate the grass right through the growing season. That's a saving of £100 without taking labour into account.

"This year we intend to spray Mowchem with a tank-mix of herbicide for clover and pearlwort control on banks round the clubhouse, on the tees and greens—in fact, anywhere that traditionally required mowing with a hover. The aim is to cut hover mower work to a minimum. They are not designed to work eight hours a day and the sooner we can get rid of them from the course the better."

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Be A Dab Hand At Spotting

A treatment rate of about 2,500 weeds an hour for safe and accurate application of a systemic herbicide, without damage to surrounding plants, is claimed for a new, 34in long, lightweight, hand-held tubular dispenser.

The Dab Hand Spot Weeder, from Tavislodge, Great Shelford, Cambridge, has a retractable sponge—spring-loaded and enclosed within a cylindrical guard—for application of minute doses of Tumbleweed, a glyphosate-based chemical. Slight hand pressure on the top of the one inch diameter shaft operates the sponge.

It takes the stooping, bending and uncontrollable drift spray out of traditional methods for control of perennial and annual weeds and grasses.

The 7fl oz herbicide reservoir within the handle will treat approximately 3,000 weeds. The rate of application depends on the density of the weed infestation.

Tests at Notcutt Nurseries, Woodbridge, where the Dab Hand Spot Weeder was developed as a prototype by technical manager Richard Cox, have covered millions of weed-killing operations.

The injection-moulded production model has three O-ring seals to ensure a leak-proof, corrosion-free reservoir for the weed-killing chemical and make it ready for instant use. The weeder is stored in an inverted position when not in use.

The Dab Hand Spot Weeder, including a cartridge of Tumbleweed, costs £14.95 (inc VAT). Full details from Tavislodge, Great Shelford, Cambridge CB2 5AN. Contact Tony Wheeler. Tel: (0223) 841995 /843236 (night).

Trio Get The Bird Treatment

Three new product lines have been added to the range of turf and grass-care equipment distributed and serviced by R.S. Bird—suppliers to the professional market in South Wales and the mid-west of England.

The equipment, from Lely Iseki, Sewol and Turner, is handled by R.S. Bird's centres at Crossways, near Cowbridge, South Glamorgan; Bancyfelin, near Carmarthen, Dyfed and Veals Lawnmower Services, Easton, Bristol.

Lely Iseki equipment includes the TE, TX and TS ranges of lightweight two and four-wheel drive tractors, comprising 29 models with power outputs from 14.5hp to 38hp. Attachments for the tractors include front-end loaders, dozer blades, flail

and rotary mowers, tillage equipment and a one-ton trailer.

Rugged 18in and 21in rotary mowers with a choice of two and four stroke engines comprise the Sewol product range.

Finally, the company has secured the distributorship of Turner pedestrian and tractor-mounted flail mowers, verge trimmers and snow throwers. Turner machines have established a reputation for reliability, performance and ease of operation and R.S. Bird will be looking to significantly increase the sales of the marque throughout its trading areas with the help of existing customers, demonstrations and a comprehensive workshop and spares back-up service.

For further information, contact Jeffrey Bird on Cowbridge (04463) 4744.



Roger Bird, joint managing director of R.S. Bird, signs the distributing agreement for Turner equipment. Also pictured is Graham Satchwell, sales director of Turner International.

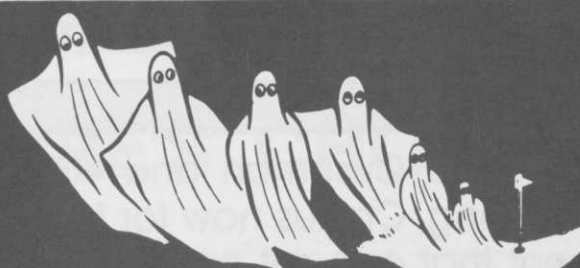
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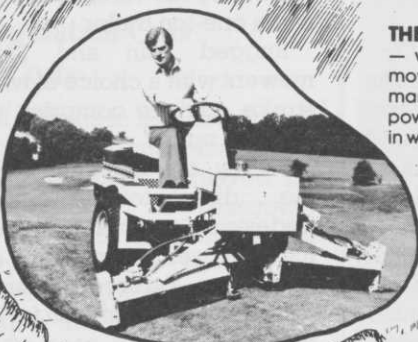
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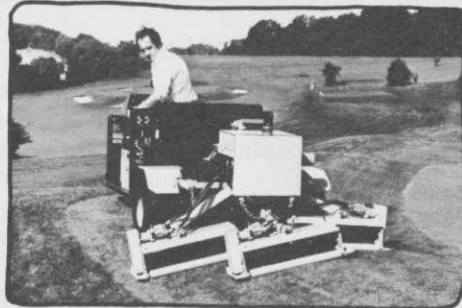
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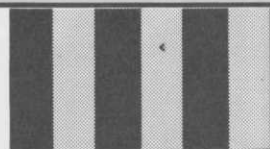
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Tows Company!

Hazlewood Trailers' range of multi-purpose exhibition sales trailers has become a regular fixture at shows around the country.

Features include a translucent roof, access door, large display doors (12ft

by 6ft) and corner levelling jacks—removable wheels can give a low flat floor. The standard size is 18ft x 7ft 6in x 7ft high and furniture, fittings and awnings are available as extras.

Full details from Hazlewood Engineering, Bishampton Road, Rous Lench, Evesham WR11 4UN. Tel: Evesham (0386) 792916.



Hazlewood's exhibition sales trailer at the recent North-West IOG exhibition at Ribby Hall Park.

The Magic Of Mascot

Rigby Taylor, of Bolton, Greater Manchester and Guildford, Surrey, has come up with a novel promotional idea for its Mascot range of chemicals.

When you pour a hot drink into one of the company's new china mugs, grass decorations stay while illustrations of weeds disappear!

Richard Lawrence, marketing manager of Rigby Taylor, said: "The effect of our Mascot range is the same as a hot drink in the mug—weeds disappear, while you relax, as if by magic."

The IOG has included an academic advisory section to assist with the content and running of its 1984 examination programme. The members are: Nicholas Bissett—Askham Bryam College; John Byrom—Marlborough College; Barry Dickinson—Norwood Hall; Peter Gillard—Mid-Glamorgan College; Dr Peter Hayes—Sports Turf Research Institute and Norman Sayles—City and Guilds.

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Continued from page 29...

pan and relieving compaction. There is some surface disturbance, but with top dressing afterwards and light mowing, disturbance has been eradicated.

"We started on the Old Course greens in November. We then moved to the heavily compacted areas between the greens and tees and then to the tees themselves and on to the fairways."

Jack McMillan's experience is similar. "We bought the Verti-Drain direct from Charterhouse Turf Machinery in mid-1983 and mounted it initially on a DB 88S. However, the gearing was not satisfactory, so we purchased an Iseki unit with a gearing down to a quarter of a mile per hour forward speed, which marries up perfectly with the Verti-Drain.

"In the autumn of 1983, we managed to aerate the greens and approaches of both the New and the Old Course down to an average depth of eight inches. This was after some early problems when the soil was too dry and the machine created a rippling effect. However, after remedial treatment with the Sisis Autocrat, hollow-tining and a wetting agent, the soil was ideal for the Verti-Drain.

Although there was still some considerable surface disturbance after top dressing and mowing, all areas quickly returned to normal.

"The effect has been dramatic—I believe it's the lift and heave that gives the most benefit. It obviously promotes better drainage and a healthier root structure and we are

already getting more growth in the previously highly compacted areas.

"I am continuing to experiment with the Verti-Drain, but I am sure that it is a valuable aid to beating compaction and achieving a better medium for long-rooting grasses to prosper. It will certainly help us with our year round aeration programme."

Rigby Taylor Tie-Up With German Giant

BASF, one of the world's largest chemical producers, has not yet ventured into the amenity turf market despite a heavy involvement in UK agriculture. The company does, however, have a strong range of suitable products that are market leaders in Europe.

Brian Beech, pesticides manager of BASF UK, recently announced that: "Following an intensive study of the UK amenity market, BASF has decided to market Contact turf fungicide and Systemic turf fungicide through Rigby Taylor under the Mascot label. These products are for the control of fusarium, dollar spot, grey snow, mould, red thread and leaf spot.

"The choice of Rigby Taylor was

due to a number of factors highlighted in the market survey—in particular, Rigby Taylor's existing penetration of the amenity market and the company's ability to provide a complete service and range of products to users nationally."

Richard Lawrence, Rigby Taylor's marketing manager, said: "We are delighted BASF has demonstrated its confidence in Rigby Taylor, which we are sure will have tremendous benefits for all our customers. Since the introduction of the Mascot range in early 1983, my chairman Derek Phillips and the entire Rigby Taylor personnel have shown a commitment to the Mascot range, which has brought an excellent response.

"You can be sure that this exciting new development for the UK market will be followed by additional Mascot products in the near future."

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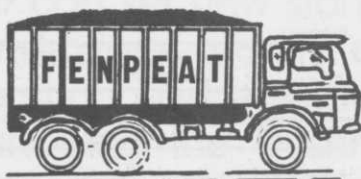
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Jim Arthur Continued...

walk-off areas or even reseeding entire fairways, to even speak civilly to anyone, including the odd golf course architect, who advises its use.

Since we want fine-textured turf and ryegrass is an unmitigated nuisance, why not start the way we want to end and use bent and fescue only? With a straight bent/fescue fairway mixture on one course that I was involved in they were playing on sown fairways 13 months from the start of construction, let alone seeding. I sometimes see crested dog's tail included and the result is a mass of 'whinnel straws' that no cylinder gang mower can cut.

How, then, can the grasses that make the best golfing turf be identified quickly? All the meadow grasses share one common characteristic—their leaves are folded, with a pronounced double mid rib and very obvious boat-shaped tip. Smooth-stalked meadow grass, with its deep rhizomes, is the Kentucky blue grass of the States (sometimes used on tees) and its colour gives it

away at once. Rough-stalked has no value, but usually forms a rough, 'plucked-up' looking turf, as its surface runners get roughed up—for instance, when mown.

The *Agrostis* family has less unique characteristics, but the rather fibrous, flat leaves (save for needle-leaved bent) have no mid rib, but markedly ribbed upper surfaces, so that the turf always looks dull, never shiny. If, in fact, you identify as *Agrostis* one of the similar rarer grasses, no-one will blame you and few will argue!

The fine fescues are easy to identify—they are very needle-leaved, especially in dry weather, but remember there are meadow fescues with luxuriant growth, flat, huge, shiny, lush green leaves and bright red bases to the stems, rather like Italian ryegrass, but you will not find these on golf courses, save by accident. I did once on an area of course extension sown to a mixture, supposedly bent/fescue and supplied by a local seed firm, but they supplied bent and meadow fescue. It still grows a silage crop every year.

Remember, not all fine fescues make good golfing turf—tussock-like sheep's fescue is really a weed and never forms a close-knit turf because of its whorled habit of growth.

In the weed group, look for shiny backs to leaves—ryegrass and dog's

tail and soft, hairy patches of Yorkshire fog, bleached by frost. I would rather have Yorkshire fog than ryegrass—at least in summer—as with regular mowing and verticutting it stays fine and does not interfere with putting and, in any case, it can be checked and often controlled by full strength selective weedkilling in flush periods of growth, whereas ryegrass never dies out.

Extensive exchanging of ryegrass-free areas between the huge double greens on the Old Course at St Andrews to replace ryegrass, introduced literally over the previous 60 years into main pin placement areas, has been necessary, since nothing could get rid of the ryegrass and fine-textured though it was, it still affected putting by Open Championship standards. Then some people defending the use of ryegrass 'as a nurse' say it will not survive close mowing!

In passing, we are perhaps too purist about grass and a botanical survey of these old greens, which I carried out some years ago, showed no less than 17 different species of grass! At least it is far better than having just one—solid annual meadow grass, all too characteristic of past decades of over-feeding and over-watering in search of that Great God Green!

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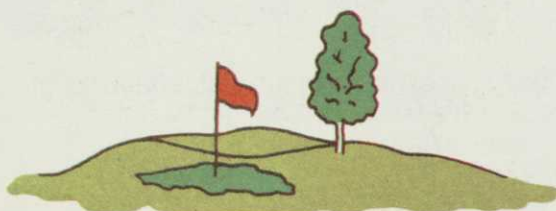
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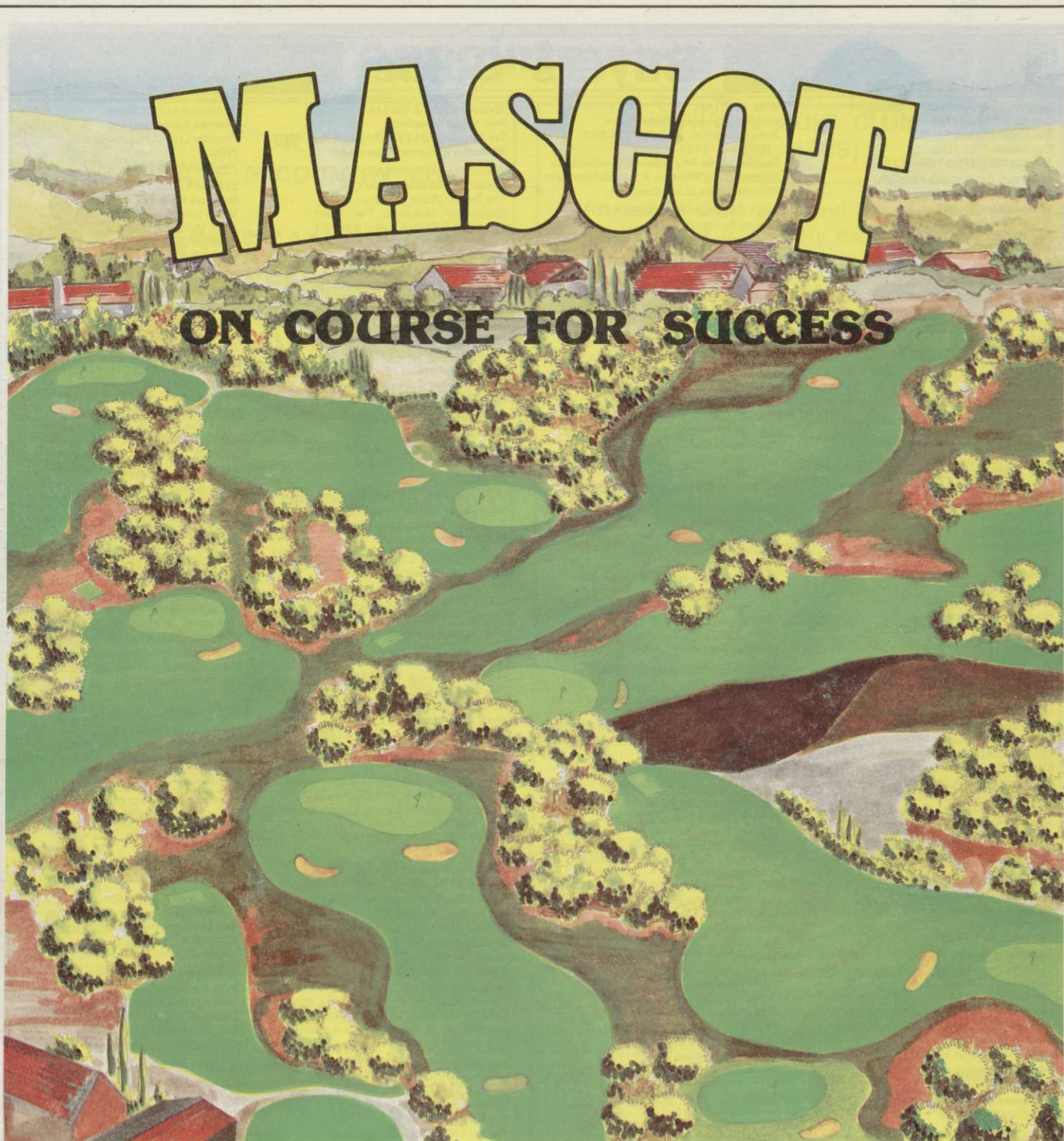
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