

Greenkeeper



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





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EIGGA goes to Royal St George's

THE English And International Golf Greenkeepers' Association will have its own hospitality marquee at the Open Championship next month, continuing the R & A's courtesy SIGGA initiated so successfully at St Andrews last year. EIGGA's marquee, in the tented village at Royal St George's, will be opposite the R & A members' pavilion and will be open from Monday July 15 to Sunday July 21. The marquee itself, sponsored by Greenkeeper, will be open to all greenkeepers and those connected with the golf course maintenance industry. It will offer a bar, light refreshments and closed-circuit television. The main feature will be a display of EIGGA activities, covering educational opportunities, the annual conference and other aspects of association membership. Two members of the EIGGA board of management will be in attendance to answer visitors' questions and act as hosts to guests.



• The Open tented village at Sandwich during the 1981 championship.

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JUNE 1985

Front cover: The SISIS Hydromain System is a complete system with about 30 attachments for the maintenance of turf and hard porous surfaces. Two tractor units are available: The Hydromain Fourteen has a 14hp engine and a unique patented weight transfer system to apply pressure to the implements when necessary, increasing their effect without the addition of weights. Extra wide tyres reduce marking on fine turf. One man can change the various attachments in minutes, without tools. The Hydromain Seventeen has a 17hp petrol engine or can be supplied with a diesel engine. The Seventeen retains all the features of the Fourteen, but also offers a safety cab, conventional steering wheel with powered steering and full braking system. Lights enable it to be taxed for use on public roads. Among the attachments are an aerator with interchangeable tines, deep slitter, rakes, brushes, rollers, sprayer, mole plough, turf cutter, scarifier, grass cutter, top dresser, tipping trailer, drag mat, sweeper and seeder, making the Hydromain System the most versatile on the market.



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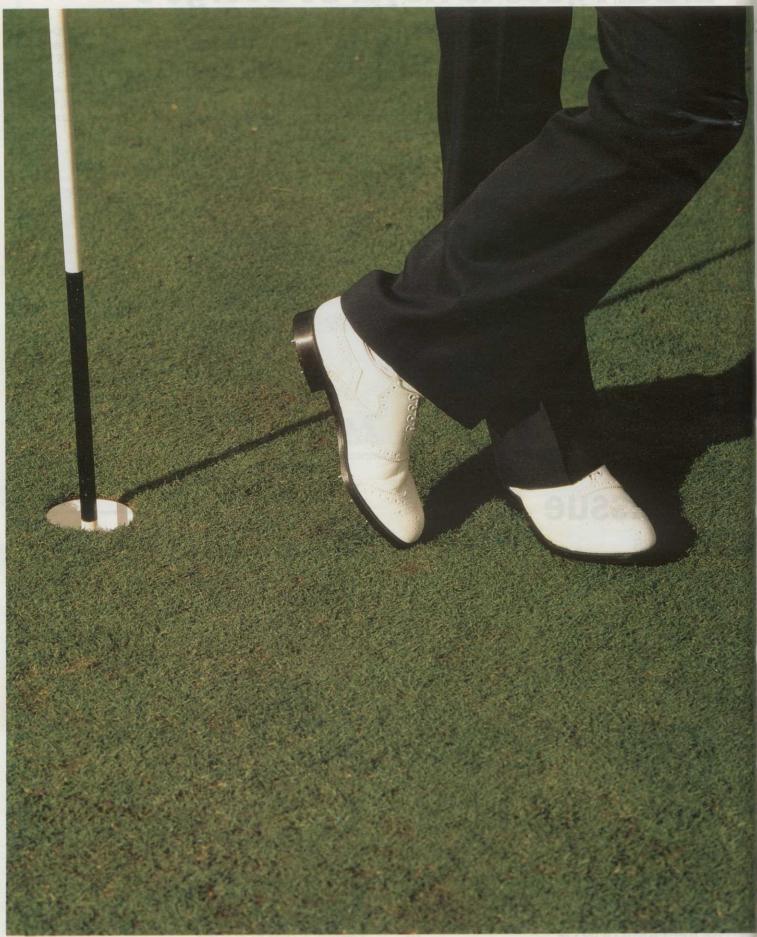
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EIGGA goes to Royal St George's



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My patience is exhausted—

says Jim Arthur

THE silly season is upon us! It always seems to coincide with the US Masters at Augusta and with adverse comments by club members at the end of a very long winter on the state of their greens, upon which they have played almost continuously (barring times when snow closed the course), making invidious comparisons with neighbouring clubs where the greens have been out of play continuously all winter and where members played to temporaries until Easter.

It is an example of the old greenkeeper's comment: "If we could only keep the dratted golfers off the course altogether, we could always have it in perfect condition!"

"Why can't we have the greens as good as Augusta's?" I was asked by one man who had just returned from Georgia. But you can, I replied, if your winter temperatures rarely fall below 50°, the course is shut for far more than half the year and, in the words of a regular visitor to Augusta, "It is probably the most underplayed major course in the world—a rich man's plaything."

Oh, of course, in addition you need money. Maintenance budgets well in excess of a million dollars a year are not exceptional.

We cannot even get many of our clubs to pay modest fees for their greenkeepers to attend seminars, such as the excellent EIGGA one at Warwick recently—culprits, please note that the weekend is to be repeated next year, so no excuses then. Many of these same clubs also begrudge the cost of residential courses at £80 for three weeks, including board, for greenkeepertraining courses. Words fail me! All other industries gladly pay vastly greater sums to keep executives up to date.

Attacks

I am getting increasingly tired of the thinly veiled attacks in talks and articles by Mr Jones on my advice. I have refrained from criticising him because the job has been done for me so much better by experienced greenkeepers.

I must, however, specifically refute some of the contentions made recently in a magazine in which he decries traditional greenkeeping and basic principles, dismissing them as: "Mere theories by extreme protagonists."

We are asked to consider how many of the practices, claimed as traditional, have been continuously practised for 30 years. Such comments are particularly unhelpful at the very time when the majority of advisory work is becoming more and more unanimous. It is confusing to less-informed greenkeepers and even less well-informed committees and secretaries to listen to a minority view, however plausibly expounded. when it criticises basics that should be above argument. No one disagrees with the fact that details and even methods are a matter for personal choice and debate.

Let us look at these basics, which he decries as individual theories. I have preached and practised them for nigh on 40 years, as can be proved from my reports to golf clubs in the 1940s. I was taught them by, among others, old greenkeepers as well as botanists who had, in their turn, been taught them by their elders. There was, therefore, nothing new about them then and they were established practice by the better greenkeepers.

One basic principle, which I have consistently advised. is elimination of phosphates (and. generally, potash) from fertiliser The between link mixtures. phosphates and annual meadow grass invasion and dominance was first published as a research paper by Dr C.M. Murray in 1903. Surely, this makes it traditional? Even Mr Jones must approve, I hope, of that, especially as the research was confirmed in America by Washington State University trials of 1966-74.

We can discuss how to aerate greens, etc, forever—specific problems demanding specific methods. But the need for aeration, while never greater than it is today, was still urgent 40 years ago. I have reports from that same period stressing that: 'Aeration is the most important routine treatment for all golf greens and it must be intensified. Once a year is not enough!'

SISIS, the pioneers of turf aeration machinery, with which I have worked in harmony and without personal reward, for 40 years, started in the slump of the 1930s and would never

have succeeded if the company had not been filling a need to replace a man with a fork by a machine to enable more aeration to be carried out. SISIS was criticised before the war for not making a machine that would go as deep as a man could pierce (thus stressing that depth was even then regarded as vital), but the fault again lay with parsimonious committees refusing to pay the cost of heavier motorised machines which, today, we all take for granted.

Even the Verti-Drain—in danger of becoming the latest fad, invaluable in the right conditions, but capable of causing problems in the wrong ones—is nothing new. It merely mechanises the old-fashioned traditional break forking, commonly practised long before the war.

Of course, we need to aerate more, since we play much more golf and especially on wet soils in winter with consequently greater resultant compaction problems.

I read in more than one article or report that, according to Mr Jones, soils should never be aerated unless they are absolutely dry as this damages them. Even fairway spiking is advised for the summer months only. When, in the name of heaven, are soils under British greens dry? Even in the worst drought we are irrigating them. In fact, we stop slitting greens in the early spring when slits may open in dry weather, but it is too soon to start watering—when, no doubt, Mr Jones would regard conditions as being ideal.

A moment's thought will show the fallacy of such theories. In summer, soils on fairways are often far too hard to penetrate; tractors and staff are tied-up with gang mowing, etc; disturbance and slits opening will inevitably be greater than in winter and healing is at a minimum just when play is at its greatest. If this were done, members would be in instant revolt against all aeration.

It has long been a fundamental basis of greenkeeping that we cannot live with casting earthworms. This dates back to the early 1920s. Yet, Mr Jones professes to love some earthworms, as if we can distinguish between casting and non-casting species. In his article, he condemns the use of mowrah meal as it

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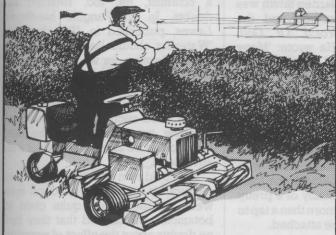


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The reclamation of indigenous turf

Eddie Park turns his attention to the vexed subject of how and when our golf courses are watered.

I SUPPOSE that for most people of my age scientific instruction began with a broad bean. This had to be put in wet blotting paper for a few days to sprout, then we had to draw it and label the different parts. Indeed, botany was a bit of a bore but, already, some were seeing a much more interesting side to the plant world. Simple and interesting text books explained the environmental factors that determined which plants would come to dominate any particular habitat.

Unhappily, the knowledge and theories have almost become too extensive and many recent text books have lost sight of the basic principles and become bogged down in detail. As the subject distanced itself from everyday problems, practical men tended to lose interest. But now, because several groups have found that they must understand these principles if they are to dig themselves out of the pits they have got into, there has been a resurgence of interest. Those interested in conservation were among the first. The neglect of woodland, wasteland. verges, hedgerows, etc, needs a very clear knowledge of, for instance, natural succession if any recovery is to be made.

Forty years, in which any and every method of increasing agricultural productivity has been used, have given farmers enormous problems, which can only be solved with basic knowledge.

And what of golf courses?

If we think back to the primary environmental factors—climatic, edaphic (soil) and biotic (other organisms and man himself)—we know perfectly well that we have tried to bend conditions to suit our whims. The downhill slide in standards, especially to Poa annua domination and thatch, should tell us we have gone up some blind alleys.

I am going to take a close look at just one factor we have chosen to tinker with—moisture—not that I will pretend to know all the answers, but simply to point out what has happened. It may seem strange, in view of the enormous expenditure by clubs on irrigation equipment, that the requirements for watering golf courses in the British climate have never been scientifically established.

Water has been applied to golf greens for well over a century now, but for most of that time many have expressed doubts. Garden Smith was editor of Golf Illustrated and the author of The World Of Golf, published in 1898. He wrote: 'Many greens are now well supplied with water, which has been done by the sinking of artesian wells. This is a very costly arrangement and the results of artificial watering are doubtful.'

In fact, doubts were frequently expressed for the next 60 years, during which time many clubs with sufficient money installed some form of watering. It was usually of a pretty primitive nature, not more than a tap to which a hose could be attached.

Liming disasters

The considerable drought of 1921 gave events a push forward and the liming disasters of the 1920s, which converted many courses to Poa annua (this died off in a short drought), produced an even bigger incentive. But still many of the older and skilful greenkeepers remained doubtful.

A.J. McSelf in Lawns And Sports Greens, first published in 1930, said: 'Avoid watering—some warnings will be disregarded, no matter how frequently they are reiterated. Two such are: don't water and don't roll.'

By 1930, Bingley had been established and its prime aim was to undo the havoc of the previous decade by frequent top-dressing with sulphates of iron and ammonia. Excellent stuff, but dangerous, especially on links courses when a drought supervened. In fact, that is just what happened and, in his first book published in 1938, R.B. Dawson was recommending as much as four gallons per square yard two or three times a week.

The other great guru of that era Martin A.F. Sutton concurred, saying: 'Where intensive fertiliser treatment is practised, watering in dry weather is an absolute necessity.' Yet, I can remember in the early 1950s a greenkeeper/pro, who was over 70 and had marvellous fescue greens cut by hand-propelled mowers, telling me that it was necessary to dry out his greens every summer to kill off shallow-rooting meadow grass. The greens turned slick and brown, but

came quickly back to colour with the first rains of autumn.

To be fair to R.B. Dawson, who was a scientist, he, too, retained his doubts. In his Penguin handbook Lawns, published in 1960, he said: 'Watering should be regarded as a mixed blessing, for while it may keep the lawn green and flourishing in dry weather, it is apt to encourage certain types of weed and it undoubtedly keeps alive such grasses as annual meadow grass, which on the best lawns could be allowed to die out with advantage.'

We could sum up the first half of this century by saying that practical men were, on the whole, quite good at botanical analysis and that they had no doubts about the effect of watering on the composition of vegetation. Most of them recognised that festuca/agrostis turf was the only option for golf greens and after the fiasco of the '20s they were keen not to destroy it again.

The scientists had gone even further. In Leach's *Plant Ecology*, first published in 1933, it says: 'The experimental modification of existing edaphic conditions often produces striking corresponding changes in vegetation. For example, Farrow (1925) found that on grass heath with Festuca Ovina and Agrostis Tenuis as co-dominants, artificial increase in the soil water by irrigation caused the Agrostis to become completely dominant with the result that Festuca was crowded out.' Presumably, the converse happened if the soil was kept dry.

Let us break off from this historical survey and wonder how and why we have gone from the situation I have described to wall-to-wall green, lush, soft carpets.

Sandy Tatum is a highly respected ex-president of the United States Golf Association and in 1980 he said: "Maintenance, generally, deteriorating. The problem, simply put, is one of too much water! This has been endemic to this country for a long time. As the game here came more and more to be played in the air with bounce and roll negligible factors, heavily watered golf courses became easily justified. As a related factor, we seem to care more about how a golf course looks than about how it plays. The lush green look has

become more than the norm, it has become the standard. It is, moreover, much easier to maintain a lush green look."

I couldn't have put it better myself!

It was the combination of golfers demanding soft green greens and the fact that irrigation companies were in a position to meet that demand that pushed events along. Few realised there might be unfortunate side effects. Bobby Locke, an arch proponent of watering, wrote in 1953 of his ideal golf course: "that I would want facilities for the greens and some of the approaches to be well watered. I would also want British turf for all fairways and greens."

I am sure he would never have dreamed that the one might destroy the other. Again, to be fair, neither did anyone else or, at least, they didn't make themselves heard. We all plunged into an orgy of bigger and bigger sprinkler heads and, if possible, automatic watering systems.

I am not out to pursue a witch-hunt against the irrigation companies—they were good salesmen, but that isn't a crime. I am surprised they only sold the implements, fitting and maintenance and missed out on the much fuller service that was needed.

However, returning to the history of automatic watering, it derived from agricultural irrigation, which had been developed in the States during the '30s to combat the needs of hot, dry regions. At first, it was received with suspicion here but, sold with the main advantage of saving expensive labour, it appealed to the richer clubs and, eventually, the great majority.

It is surprising how quickly the whole saga has been enacted. The first proper rotary sprinklers appeared in the USA in 1935, but were not really in use until the 1950s. The first automatic pop-up sprinklers came to this country in 1961 at a cost of about £5,000.

By 1984, it was estimated that something like 70 per cent of clubs had automatic systems. Today, they are costing in the region of £40,000 to install. The machinery has increased in sophistication and convenience, but most of it still originates in California or Florida.

So the watering of greens has become accepted in this country as an absolute necessity in summer and golfers now demand it, not for the health of the grass, but to make the game easier in the drier months.

They justify these demands with some extraordinary reasoning. One man said to me last summer: "Eddie, let's go back to basics, you don't get grass in the Sahara." I won't bother to

explain the double fallacy contained in that gem. Instead, as always, let's go back to first principles—back to my broad bean in wet blotting paper, in fact.

Every plant requires water in every stage of its life cycle. Soil conditions and structures affect the availability of water. Water applied to the soil, either as rainfall or artificially, will either run off the surface, be retained in the pores, or be lost by evapotranspiration to the atmosphere or by percolation down through the soil.

If we want to know the amount of water available to the plant, we must study all these factors. I would suggest that present practice is to study none of them, but simply to concentrate on installing enough machinery to pump and spray out indeterminate (but considerable) amounts on the surface.

Indeed, with many installations there isn't even a suggestion that we measure the quantity we apply. Greenkeepers speak not of so many gallons per green, but of so many minutes per green. Can you imagine a doctor giving medicine and not saying: "drink two teaspoons every twelve hours," but saying: "have a good drink at the bottle for three minutes every twelve hours"?

Automatic watering

The next quotation appears in the leaflets of one company and also in an article about automatic watering. 'When installation is completed and the system is made operational, the soil is quickly brought to field capacity-i.e. moist from the surface down to sub-soil. Thereafter, the system is programmed to apply only enough water to make good daily moisture losses. This topping-up procedure only requires a short application of water at a slow rate every night. It is this type of irrigation which is of maximum benefit to growing turf.'

It sounds more like a car radiator than anything else and pretty crude at that.

Some agronomists—particularly our American friends—seem to be in a bit of a muddle about the situation as well. I recall a comment from the EIGGA conference at Cambridge last year: "At field capacity, plants will grow to their maximum." Which plants? Take the example of a sandy links green. The mind boggles at how much artificial water would be necessary to maintain this at field capacity (though, perhaps, many popup systems could manage it).

Even if that was achieved, I'll wager

the 'plant' growing there in the long term would be Poa annua, not festuca rubra. In fact, given sufficient fertility, doubtless you could grow crops of potatoes just as easily.

We know that water availability is a powerful management tool. Plant ecology tells us that different plants are adapted to exist on vastly different degrees of moisture and, by controlling these levels, we can greatly influence the botanical composition of the sward.

As I have said many times, botanical analysis is the only objective guide. If we are not getting at least agrostis turf (with, in many cases, fescue as well), our mix of the environmental factors is faulty. The commonest faults seem to be, first, too high fertility, second, poor soil structure from compaction and, finally, more moisture than is required by the grasses we want. The latter may be due to water retention by thatch or an impervious layer, but I suspect that the commonest cause is simply too much water being applied.

I am quite sure I will be accused of over simplification and I plead guilty. Of course, there is a multiplicity of other factors, but I want to focus attention on just this one that has not, I feel, received enough attention. I have listened to hours of theories about artificial watering, but I have yet to hear anyone tell me about the ecological effects. In the complete absence of definitive research in this field in British climatic conditions, I would offer a few simple observations from my own course.

For many years, we had to keep records of water abstracted from a bore hole and the monthly figures, set side by side with local monthly rainfall figures, make interesting reading.

If we actually know the amount of water used on the course, we can soon translate it into something meaningful. The equation is not difficult to work out. Take the figure for total gallonage used and divide it by total greens area (in sq yds) multiplied by a factor of 4.7—this gives the equivalent in inches of rain.

We do not possess pop-ups, but in the 1970s, to allow greens to be watered at night, we turned to large Perrott sprinklers with a time clock on the pump. We could then apply large quantities of water, almost without knowing it. From average figures of well over a million gallons per annum ten years ago, there has been a drop to less than 20 per cent of that figure under our present regime. We had been adding perhaps 25in to 30in of

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My patience is exhausted—

says Jim Arthur

continued...

encouraged the worms to return. Precisely! Bingley was making the point emphatically in the early 1930s, advocating instead the use of lead arsenate. Now we use chlordane and this proves that earthworm control has been continuous in one form or another for 60 and more years.

Misguided

Irrigation is another case of the advocacy of demonstrably misguided theories. Before the war, irrigation was limited by either the absence of any facilities or by restraints of men and time. Yet, I was advocating 40 years ago what was then old-fashioned, old-established practice—namely, that areas requiring water should be given individual treatment by hand-held open hose rather than leaving sprinklers on all night and flooding greens. This was long before pop-ups were being used, even in the States.

Mr Jones advocates, in my hearing, the use of pop-ups for long periods at widely spaced intervals, letting the greens dry out thoroughly before watering them again! Quite apart from the practical problem that if we apply once a week the total amount given in minimal daily irrigation then we shall be watering for 18 to 22 hours a day, when do we find time to play golf? Also, how do we get that amount of water to penetrate without flooding bunkers, how do we play a course with soggy bogs at the start of the week, drying out to rock-hard greens

at the end, and how do we get the water to penetrate such dry areas anyway?

All those who have given the matter thought will, I am sure, agree that we ought to aim at-even if we do not always succeed-producing finetextured, wiry Agrostis and fine fescue turf if we are to play our traditional pitch and run-up game as opposed to target golf. Most, including many American superintendents, would agree that annual meadow grass is our main for enemy, responsible greenkeeping problems. Mr Jones claims that, at one course he advises, while in response to gross sanding of greens, the grass is now 100 per cent annual meadow grass, which "does not matter."

I have never decried American greenkeeping—if it is kept to America. Equally, most of the traditional principles here would not transplant save for those few areas in the States where soil and climatic conditions are equivalent to those in Europe.

Pattern

There has always been a cyclic pattern, since greenkeeping began, of 'farmers', who know all about growing the wrong grass, destroying our courses and their being brought back, from the very brink, laboriously by 'greenkeepers', only to be thrown out by members who want to see more grass on the course and extolling the 'beautifully lush' turf of

other ruined courses. But remember that the initial impetus for the establishment of the Board of Greenkeeping Research (as Bingley was known) came from Norman Hackett, who was advising Yorkshire courses in the early 1920s on exactly the same basic lines as I do today!

With Bingley now preaching the same gospel, backed by the Royal and Ancient, we could be thinking seriously of the feasibility of establishing an advisory body based there, with the same power and influence as the USGA's Green Section wields in the States.

Naturally, course conditions were not perfect by today's standards 50 to 80 years ago. Neither was household plumbing! But, by the standard then accepted, conditions were as good as the equipment could make them and better golfers were turning in scores as low as any today, playing on fine perennial grasses, not annual meadow grass, and using less efficient clubs and golf balls.

Even that pioneer of agricultural grassland research, Professor W.B. Stapledon at Aberystwyth, said in the 1930s: "I would rather putt on poor fescue greens than on lush annual meadow grass ones."

No one pretends that every course was in good condition then, not that we would accept for one moment today what, by their standards, was good presentation, even for a championship, before the war.

Lindrick's detailed records show a cyclic repetition of traditionalists unseating the farmers—who were at the root of all their problems—only for the farmers, in turn, to win in response to ignorant golfers demanding more grass on the course.

The swings and roundabouts still operate, invariably triggered off by some half-thought-out theories on the grounds that to be noticed one has to be outrageously different!

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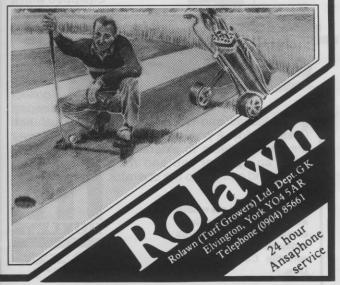
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MOWER WORLD

News & Views



President's Report

Since the last executive, I have visited Elmwood College to give a talk to 24 greenkeepers. I feel that we, as head greenkeepers, with the experience of management, should get more involved in the teaching of younger greenkeepers.

Mike Taylor, head of the horticultural department, welcomes comments from greenkeepers about alterations to the course's context and would be delighted to have more experienced head greenkeepers who are prepared to talk to students on these courses.

I recently attended the STRI seminar at Dunfermline Golf Club. The lecturers were of exceptional quality, the organisation was first-class and the wine one of my

favourites!

I went to a meeting of the International Golf Tournament and symposium committee at St Andrews and am pleased to report that good progress is being made. Walter Woods, as chairman of the committee, has to be congratulated, along with his committee members, for the way things are being organised.

This is a very important fixture in the SIGGA calendar this year. For the first time, it is to be held in Scotland and we, as an association, in conjunction with Ransomes, must make it a success.

Walter, my vice-chairman, will give a full report on the event's progress later on.

Jimmy Neilson, SIGGA President.

East

A total of 52 members, guests and trade entered the annual spring tournament at Peebles GC.

A circular has been prepared and given out to members. It asks for suggestions on how they would like to

see the section run and ideas on how to improve it. The committee would particularly like to know what kind of events and lectures are wanted.

The annual match against the North East of England, sponsored by Stewart & Co, will be played over Turnhouse GC in early October.

The committee has decided that the section AGM will revert back to the usual time and place—at the end of the autumn tournament, at Newbattle GC on Tuesday September 10.

George Dollichen, ex-head greenkeeper at Livingston, had a slight heart attack recently. He is now all right and back at work.

Central

The section held its fifth spring outing courtesy of the Crail Golfing Society at Balcomie when 50 members and guests had a most enjoyable day.

The weather was kind for a change, with sunshine and just a slight sea breeze. The course was in excellent condition, which reflected in the

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scores returned: best net-Ian Ritchie (75-10) 65: best scratch—Ron Christie 72: first-class. 1st handicap—Graeme Hampton (78-8) 70, on best inward half, 2nd handicap—Brian Inglis (75-5) 70; second-class, 1st handicap—Mike Hanlon (89-23) 66, 2nd handicap—Joe Oliver (84-14) 70; new members' prize-Craig Small (107-21) 86; visitors' prize-Joe Dalling (70-4) 66 and two-ball foursomes-W.Lyon and R.Taylor 30½ points net.

Our thanks go to Jim Donaldson and his staff for having the course in excellent condition, to the bar and catering staff for the service and meals provided and to the council and members of the Crail Golfing Society for their courtesy.

At present, we have 67 paid-up members as well as a number of enquiries about membership.

Ayrshire

The spring outing was held at Southerness Golf Club in dry, but windy, conditions. Because of the distance involved in travelling to the venue, the section hired a bus and 30 members took advantage of this

facility. A further ten members from the local area joined us.

Southerness is a great venue and a traditional links course, which everyone enjoyed thoroughly. Our thanks to Southerness GC, its clubhouse and greenstaff for their warm welcome.

The scoring was good on a difficult course and a special mention must be made of J. Robertson who, at the age of 81, had a net score of 69. He was pipped by S. Devlin for the best score of the day—a net 68. D. Gray (Lahinch) and J. Grainger (Largs) will compete in a play-off for the Scottish team place at St Andrews in October.

Scratch—J. Results: Grainger (Largs); 1st Class-D. Gray (Lahinch), runner-up R.Burke (Irvine, Bogside); 2nd Class-S.Devlin (St Cuthberts), runner-up J. Robertson (Troon); 3rd Class-G. Heron (Turnberry), runnerup T. Parker (West Kilbride) and Twoball foursomes-D.Graham and I. Douglas (Kilmalcolm).

The section is now in a healthy position financially and with an everincreasing membership. This year, we have gained 14 new members and the committee is working hard to see that this trend continues.

J. Grainger, Secretary.

West

Since the last report, the West section has held a committee meeting and formed new sub-committees. The chairman has asked the convenor of the committees to be more actively involved in the running of the section this year.

The SISIS pairs trophy for greenkeepers and convenors was held courtesy of West Kilbride GC. The golf was played in cold, but dry, conditions that seemed to help the general low scoring but, mostly, this must be put down to the excellent condition of the course, for which the West section thanked Jim Paton and staff.

Prize-winners were: lst-A.Hastie and A.Meechan (Bellshill) 65: 2nd-D.Fleming and I.Ferguson (Hilton Park) 67 and 3rd—J.Paton and B.Gossman (West Kilbride) 69.

Fifteen teams from different clubs took part in the competition. This, added to the excellent attendance at the AGM, has given the West section an encouraging start to the year's activities which, hopefully, will continue throughout the season.



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News & Views



North West

The branch recently held a one-day seminar at Helsby Golf Club-the speaker for the day was Archie Pattison, contracts manager of Watermation. Mr Pattison brought with him an impressive array of some of the latest irrigation equipment which, combined with his vast knowledge and experience, gave us all a rewarding day.

Our thanks to him and Helsby GC for the use of its clubhouse and

catering facilities.

Following the seminar, the AGM was held. Bill Lawson was elected branch chairman; Terry Adamson, administrator and Guy Cannings, treasurer.

The spring meeting was held at Caldy GC on the Wirral. Our thanks go to sponsors J. Mealor (Grass Cutting Machinery) and Eurotec and also to the captain and secretary of the club for the use of its superb facilities. Ricky Fletcher and his staff are magnificent the praised for presentation of the golf course.

Terry Adamson received the Mealor's Shield for the best gross score. Cliff Lunt had the best nett score and Allun Roberts the best

visitor's score.

We welcome Derek Green to the North West branch and wish him every success in his new post of links manager at The Royal Liverpool Golf Club.

As one of the North West members who attended the EIGGA conference at Warwick, I would like to congratulate the board of management and Danielle Iones in particular for an excellent educational

Finally, congratulations go to North West chairman Bill Lawson who, as members are now probably aware, appointed national been chairman of EIGGA. I am sure members would agree this is an honour not only for Bill, but also for the North West.

Raymond Hunt.

Surrey

The branch held its annual dinnerdance recently at the Drift Golf Club, East Horsley and although everyone had an enjoyable evening, it was noted with regret that the majority of those present were representing organisations or EIGGA members from other areas.

The spring meeting of the society was held at Home Park Golf Club. The results were: best am score-J.Jennings 66; best pm score-G.McNiven 67; best overall score-J.Jennings 134; second best overall score—A. Cale 140: third best overall score-G.McNiven 141: fourth best overall score—S.Gudge 141; best scratch (to 12 handicap) score-B. Pearse 147 and best scratch score— B. Turner 154.

The branch would like to express its thanks to the event's sponsors Dimex and to Home Park GC for its generosity in granting courtesy of the course.

M. Hale, Branch Administrator.

The 1985 Kubota Golf Challenge

This year's Kubota event takes place at The Belfry on October 17-18. It is now a four-cornered match with a team from The Association of Golf Writers entering the fray. Each association is responsible for selecting eight players. The timetable is:

Thursday October 17

Arrive at midday; practice round, 1pm; team photos, 5.30pm; cocktails, 7pm and dinner at 7.30pm.

Friday October 18

Breakfast at 7pm; semi-finals, 8am-9am; buffet lunch, midday-2pm; final and third-place play-off; lpm-2pm; cocktails, 7pm and dinner/prizegiving at 7.30pm.

Departure is after breakfast on Saturday.

Now We Know

Members may be aware that, at a meeting towards the end of last year, certain matters, including EIGGA's membership and education at some colleges, were discussed by the Greenkeepers' Training Committee.

In order that the exact current position be known, Greenkeeper contacted Mr W.N.S. Bisset, administrator and secretary of the

GTC. He replied:

Thank you for your recent letter regarding the work of the Greenkeepers' Training Committee. At that meeting, EIGGA was admitted to full membership of the GTC.

Just before the meeting, the committee organised a conference to which all colleges offering greenkeeping courses invited. The purpose of the conference was to discuss the problems that exist in England and Wales with the college/City and Guilds part of the training scheme. The colleges were made aware of the worries that exist, the mechanics of the training scheme and the situation in Scotland, where the college part of the scheme has been less troublesome.

Although the conference reached firm conclusions (not unexpectedly), the committee reaffirmed its aim to reduce the number of colleges offering courses to those with suitable resources. How this is to be achieved is currently being examined and further discussion is to take place with the City and Guilds.

Financially, the GTC is now much sounder with donations of substantial sums having been given by the four home golf unions, the LCU and the R&A. A great deal of progress has been made with the training of greenkeepers over the past few years, despite a lack of support and the apparently inevitable apathy. Progress will continue to be made in an evolutionary, rather than a revolutionary sense, because the general feeling is that a sound foundation has been established on which to build.'

EIGGA AT WARWICK— PHOTOS OVERLEAF...

EIGGA'S WARWICK WEEKEND REVISITED...



Peter Wisbey (right) made a presentation to outgoing EIGGA president Jack McMillan.



The University of Warwick and its campus grounds provided excellent and modern facilities.



A relaxing atmosphere for the educational sessions was created in the lecture theatre.

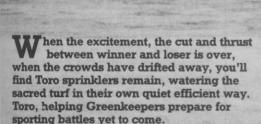


Association chairman Bill Lawson makes a point to colleagues from the North West and London board member David Lowe.



Effingham GC course manager Kenny McNiven (right) received a gold diploma from outgoing EIGGA chairman Peter Wisbey.

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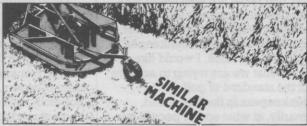
P.S. In addition to 'The Open', Toro sprinklers watered the turf at Wimbledon, in the FA Cup, Royal Ascot and in the UEFA Cup.



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TRAINEE RECRUITMENT

Raymond Hunt, 23, is a member of EIGGA's North-West branch. He is the assistant greenkeeper at Heswall GC, Merseyside.

NOW that plans are well under way to up-date and improve the education system for greenkeeper trainees through the Greenkeeper Training Committee, I would like to look at what we are trying to achieve with the standard of golf greenkeepers in the future and, primarily, at what sort of people we should now be looking to attract into the profession at trainee level in order to achieve our objectives.

Golf-course management is a highly skilled profession resulting in the need for a highly skilled greenkeeping staff, with a professional image and outlook from course management level down through the various grades of assistants.

In order to produce a golf-course manager, head greenkeeper, assistant greenkeeper, all highly skilled and with a professional image and manner at whatever level of responsibility, we need three basic ingredients.

First, we need a modern training scheme aimed specifically at golf greenkeeping and course management with a strong sense of continuity, adequately financed and incorporating fully competent lecturers with a sound and up-to-date knowledge of all aspects of golf-course management.

Second, we need a knowledgeable and enthusiastic course manager/head greenkeeper to motivate and encourage the young trainee and to supervise the implementation of all greenkeeping practices and policies actually on the golf course in a working environment. He should also point the young trainee in the right direction so far as public relations are concerned with golf club members and officials, placing great importance on tact and diplomacy.

Finally, and possibly most importantly, we need the raw material—the greenkeeper trainee himself, from which we will create the course managers and head greenkeepers of the future.

So, let's take ingredient number one. As I have said, plans are now moving in the right direction to achieve a first-class education system.

On to ingredient number two. I would say that about half the senior members of greenkeeping staffs in this country could be described as knowledgeable and enthusiastic course managers/head greenkeepers. This is a situation that, hopefully, will improve in years to come through natural wastage counteracted by the introduction of highly trained young men through a revitalised education system.

This leads me on to the third ingredient—the trainee himself. Now that all the hard work has been done to provide a suitable education system, I feel it is now up to course managers and head greenkeepers to do their bit when recruiting trainees and to look seriously at what sort of standard of intake they should be looking for in order to provide the colleges with suitable material.

The lack of interest some youngsters express towards their job is typified by the difficulty some regional committees of EIGGA have experienced when trying to encourage people to attend an educational lecture in their spare time. Surely, when such lectures are set up the room should be bursting at the seams with eager young men chewing at the bit to improve their knowledge and carve out a career for themselves?

Sadly, it seems that some course managers/head greenkeepers simply employ the first chap that comes along who looks as if he can wield a spade and spend a day on a ride-on mowing machine.

So, what should we be looking for when recruiting trainees? I would like to suggest some simple guidelines for the prospective employer.

Due to the present unemployment situation, as far as the employer is concerned, it's a buyer's market when recruiting staff, so they can afford to shop around. Before recruiting trainees, they should decide what sort of person they want to employ, what qualifications they should possess and what personal characteristics they should have. Then plans to attract suitable candidates can be drawn up.

Prospective candidates for trainee

positions should be as young as possible, hopefully straight from school, therefore enabling the employer to direct the young trainee in whatever direction he requires without having to get the new employee out of someone else's bad habits.

Candidates should have reached a good level of academic qualification at school. Standards in desired subjects, such as botany, chemistry and physics and also practical subjects such as metalwork and woodwork, should be no lower than CSE grade 3—students who have reached this standard are usually capable of better grades but, due to a lack of application through immaturity and other distractions, fail to fulfil their full potential at school.

Candidates should possess a natural ability to present themselves in a clean, tidy and smart manner. This is very important as we must present ourselves in a professional manner when representing our club or profession. Candidates should be alert, have a pleasant personality, possess a good level of intelligence and have the desire to build a career.

Having decided what you are looking for as an employer, the next step is to set about attracting suitable applicants. 'Attract' is the key word. The average man in the street would probably think that the job of a golf greenkeeper consisted solely of grass cutting but, obviously, this is not the case.

We are talking about a very rewarding career, both mentally and financially, so this should be reflected in job advertisements for trainees, together with what qualifications and characteristics will be needed and what training will be given. The job must be sold properly in order to attract suitable applicants.

So hopefully, if we couple a high standard of trainee with an adequate educational system, we can produce a high standard of greenkeeping staff, resulting in better playing conditions for the golfing public of Great Britain which, in turn, will lead to greater respect and appreciation from the golfing fraternity. Hopefully, this will result in higher financial rewards for greenkeepers.

Notebook

Wider Application For The Verti-Drain

Over the last three years, a new dimension has been added to turf culture by the introduction of the Verti-Drain, which not only aerates to the previously unheard depth of 16in, but also heaves the ground in the process, thus smashing any pan and relieving compaction.

The original mounted Verti-Drain requires a power unit of approximately 80hp, limiting its use to contractors, a few golf clubs and local authorities, many of which have purchased tractors specifically for use with the machine.

However, Charterhouse Machinery has announced a new towed Verti-Drain, which requires approximately half the previous hp without compromising on the standard or quality of job performed. This reduced hp requirement will enable the Verti-Drain to be used in conjunction with tractors in golf course and local authority fleets.

"Now, the benefits of Verti-Draining can be bought into the range of the average budget," David Jenkins,



Anyway you view it, the Verti-Drain is very effective...

managing director of Charterhouse Turf Machinery, said. David is pleased with sales to date and looks forward to increased awareness of the new towed machine, which costs about £10,500.

Greenkeeper contributing editor John Campbell said: "I think we will eventually find more and more golf courses having a Verti-Drain as part of their range of equipment for use on a recular basis."

Full details from Charterhouse Turf Machinery, Pink's Yard, Church Road. Milford, Surrey, GU8 5JD. Ø 048 68 24411 and 21040.

Show's Screen Success

The first showing of a video filmed at last year's IOG international exhibition at the Royal Windsor Racecourse took place at the British Academy of Film and Television Arts in Piccadilly, London recently. Such was the success of the presentation that it was screened 60 times.

Some 250 exhibitors have already booked stands for this year's exhibition (from September 17-19) and exhibition organiser Dai Rees warned: "Many regular exhibitors are extending their stand sizes. Those who have not yet booked, should do so quickly or they are going to be disappointed." So far, enquiries have been received from the Soviet Union. Malawi, France, Fiji and West Germany.

The video is available on payment of a returnable £10 deposit or it can be bought for £18.50 (plus VAT), including post and packing.

Write to the Exhibition Organiser, IOG, The Pavilion, Woughton-on-the-Green, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire MK6 3EA. Please state VHS or Beta.

Diesel Engine Option

Saxon Industries now offers a Robin 348cc direct injection diesel engine as an alternative to the Robin EY35B petrol engine.

It is claimed the diesel engine is more economical on fuel, giving a 50

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People, Places, Products

Maxwell Hart has added Edward Hadgkiss to its sales team. He will cover the Hereford, Worcester and Lincolnshire area, handling the company's full product range.

Eddie, 30, was previously head greenkeeper at Stoke Poges and Wrekin Golf Clubs and is a member of EIGGA and the BGGA.

Married with two children, Eddie lives in Shipston-On-Stour, Warwickshire and he can be contacted on 0608 61300 or through Maxwell Hart's sales office in Wokingham on 0734 785655.

After moves initiated from Riverside, California and the recent resignation of Philip York, Toro has announced personnel changes within its sports turf irrigation division located at Ringwood, Hampshire.

Peter Roberts has been appointed manager of Toro Irrigation, the subsidiary company responsible for all irrigation product sales in the UK and Eire. He also becomes area manager for the Toro International sales company's interests in northern Europe.

Peter has been with Toro for nine years, operating mainly within the UK golf markets.

Based at Ringwood, Richard Parsons becomes specifier sales manager for Europe, the Middle East Africa with special responsibilities for Scandinavia. Mark Cunter has been appointed service manager for Europe, the Middle East and Africa. The revised operation is headed-up by Carlos managing director of sales, Europe, the Middle East and Africa.



Peter Roberts.



Pictured seated on a Ransomes triple greens mower is Donald Steel, who was elected chairman of the projected European Association of Golf Course Architects at the 13th AGM of the British Association of Golf Course Architects held at Ransomes recently. The past chairman of the BAGCA Don Harradine (third from right) was elected president and Dr Martin Hawtree (far left) secretary and treasurer.

George Palmer, the Peterborough-based fertiliser and feed-stuffs manufacturer, after a year in which demand for its organic-based fertilisers and protein feeds increased by over 30 per cent, has announced the first part of a three-phase capital investment programme of £300,000 for additional plant and storage.

Fisons Horticulture will be sponsoring two bowling leagues this summer the South West Bowls League in Bristol and the Birmingham Bowling Association League.

The South West Bowls League is one of the largest in the country, with 27 private and municipal clubs competing in the two divisions. The Birmingham Bowling Association comprises 13 clubs, again drawn from private and public authority greens.

A fundamental feature of sponsorship, which is being operated jointly with Fisons stockists Brown & Sons Seeds in Bristol and E.T. Breakwell in Solihull, is that the clubs involved will be able to benefit from Fisons professional advice on greens maintenance throughout the season.

Nigel Woodland, sales and marketing manager for Fisons Professional Horticulture, said: "We are delighted to give this support and feel that our association with these two leagues will make a positive contribution to the sport in terms of green maintenance and improvement."

• Fisons Horticulture has published five new product booklets—the first in a series the company aims to produce, ultimately covering the full professional horticultural range of composts, fertilisers and pesticides for the greenkeeper/groundsman, commercial grower and landscaper.

The titles are: Turf Chemicals (covering selective weed control. systemic disease control and effective worm cast control), TPMC tree and shrub planting compost formulated for the (specially improved establishment of newly planted trees and shrubs and a selected blend of peats with a complete range of nutrients), Grower Pesticides (fungicides, herbicides and insecticides). Cudgel (the new microencapsulated insecticide for the effective control of vine weevil, sciarid fly and cabbage root fly) and, finally, Levington And Fenmere Composts.

Copies are available from Fisons Horticulture, Horticulture Division, Paper Mill Lane, Bramford, Ipswich, Suffolk IP8 4BZ. Ø Ipswich (0473) 830492.

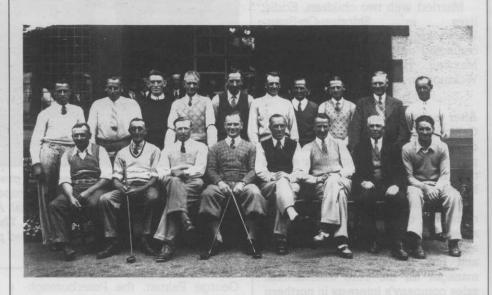
Continued overleaf...

Compo, a subsidiary of BASF and a leader in the continental amenity turf market, is bringing its range of slowrelease nitrogen products to the UK market. BASF United Kingdom has appointed George Palmer as its sole UK wholesale distributor and the range, which initially includes nitrogen, NPK and NK products sold under the Floranid name, will be handled by Palmer's horticultural and amenity division, which will be appointing retail distributors. Further details from John Hinton, BASF United Kingdom on 0473 822531 or Jim Green of George Palmer on 0733 61222.

Orag, the authorised European agency for the distribution of Ryan equipment, has appointed Victa (UK) as UK distributor. John Edmunds, managing director of Victa (UK), said: "The Ryan equipment is among the finest available for turf maintenance and, as such, requires a trade commitment and after-sales back-up in line with its quality. As these conditions are similar to those enjoyed by the Victa range, the Ryan programme will form a logical and exciting development for our UK operation." For further information, contact John Edmunds on 0256 50301.

Team Group Identified

On Greenkeeper's Notebook pages in March, this photo of greenkeepers, taken prior to an England-Scotland match at Barnton in the mid-1930s, was published. At the time, no details of the personnel were available. Well, now the picture is a little clearer, thanks to several readers contacting the editor. The known line-up, thus far, reads (back row, left to right): not known, Jack Glass (vice-chairman), Ben Ellis, not known, Charlie Prickett, not known, George Hart, Bert Dash, Alf Whitall (chairman) and Jimmy Ness. Front: Ted Dunn, Arthur Tydeman, Stan Morton, George Martin, Bill McKean, Jim Bridges, Charlie Saunders and not known.



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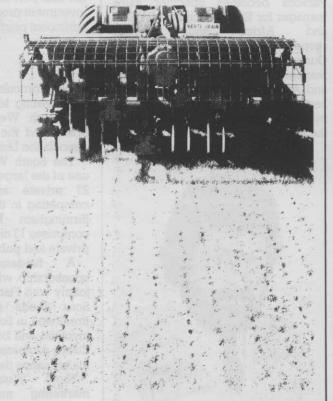
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New Pair From Nickerson

Nickerson Turfmaster has developed a new range of sophisticated grass cutting machinery to meet the requirements of professional users.

Nickerson Turfmaster's 375 has a full 7ft cut. hydrostatic transmission plus a host of other features. The triple mower is powered by a Kubota 21½hp, three-cylinder, water-cooled diesel engine, giving the 375 more than adequate power to maintain a high work rate and fast transport speed.

Forward/reverse motion controlled by a rocking foot pedal giving variable speed through hydrostatic transmission and the twospeed, front-wheel drive axle. When cutting, the machine is capable of operating at up to 71/2mph and in the transport gear speed is variable up to

14½mph.

The configuration of the 375, with its low centre of gravity and low pressure flotation tyres, means that slopes of up to 30° can be cut with ease. The machine is equipped with hydraulic power steering through the rear wheels which, together with the hydrostatic transmission, allows the 375 to be used in awkward areas, thus reducing hand-trimming time.

Each cutting unit is independently hydraulically operated and forward/ reverse drive allows for the clearing of blockages and back-lapping. The units can be raised in seconds and have automatic cylinder drive cutoff—they also have mechanical safety locks for transport. The 8in diameter cylinders are available with three or five blades and can deal with grass up to 8in high-height of cut is easily adjusted from a 1/2in to 21/2in.



The new Nickerson Turfmaster 375.

Braking is inherent within the hydrostatic transmission, but a hydraulically operated 8in diameter foot brake is also fitted together with a self-adjusting handbrake. operator comfort, there's adjustable seating, controls to hand, hydraulic power steering and warning dials on the facia.

The 375 is also available with a powerful 21½hp Kohler petrol twocylinder air-cooled engine.

And the Nickerson 390 triple mower is equipped with an efficient Kubota 28½hp, four-cylinder, watercooled diesel engine for fuel economy and trouble-free running over extended periods.

Incorporating all the features of the 375, including power steering and hydrostatic transmission, the 390's three mowing units have 10in diameter cutting cylinders, which are hydraulically powered. The specially designed robust cutting units will withstand constant hard work in the toughest of conditions for long periods and the 100in width of cut enables the 390 to cut up to 71/2 acres per hour. Like the 375, a heeloperated differential lock is fitted to give better traction should wheel slip

All Nickerson Turfmaster machines carry a two-year warranty. Ø 0427 4776.

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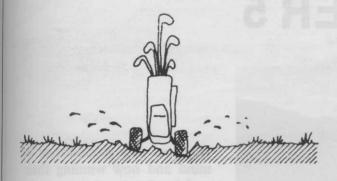
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Get On The Right Track

The problem of how to stabilise and keep clean muddy pathways in a cost-effective way has been tackled by Woodland Riding Surfaces, Warren Camp, Crowborough, East Sussex TN6 1UB. © 034282 4612. On test, what was previously a bog remained a clean and



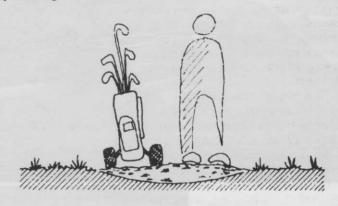
Muddy paths, dirty shoes, bogged wheels,' the members complain... Prepare a clean, hard sub-base by clearing the mud and draining puddles down to the firm subsoil.



walkable pathway throughout the winter thanks to a 3in-6in layer of the company's Woodland Pathway Surfacing. The only preparation required is the removal of excess mud and, as the material is delivered in bulk, it can be wheelbarrowed straight on to the path and takes spiked shoes and trolley wheels immediately. Decay resistant, the material will last for up to five years before topping up is necessary.



Delivery of the mixed hardwood chip/bark and twigs takes up to ten days. Rake until level a layer of Woodland Pathway Surfacing. The clean, light-coloured, natural, non-splashing, long-lasting and economical surface pleases golfers!



EDDIE PARK—CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11...

water to our natural rainfall. We now only add about 5in.

When you realise that the average rainfall for the area totals only 25in, you can see how easy it was to go over the top. We have now realised just what a skilful job watering should be. Hand watering, the use of small local sprinklers, wetting agents and moisture meters enable the skilled operative to apply just enough water to different areas of permeability at different rates and to achieve a positive effect in change of grasses. There are no more wet middles with lush meadow grass and no more dry peripheries or hard and bare slopes. As fescue and agrostis have reappeared, we can allow the top few inches to become drier and concentrate on the root growth, perhaps 6in down. Local weather forecasts and a rain gauge are other helpful aids.

I can illustrate the variations that exist in different parts of the green with some further simple observations.

Many greens on old courses were

constructed to retain water for periods of drought. An impervious layer was built in, sometimes in a saucer shape. Many of our greens had to be built up to clear the underlying rock and local clay was used. As most of the greens have returned to agrostis with fescue, we have seen two interesting features. One is the initial change back to agrostis followed by a further change in many areas to fescue. The second is the fact that we are left with a few small local areas that are different from the rest in that they have some Poa annua patches.

Fusarium

These are the only areas to be susceptible to fusarium. They are not really extensive enough to be significant, but they are irritating. There had to be some reason lying under the surface and so we tried the 'comparative cans' test. Tin cans minus tops and bottoms were inserted into a shallow slit in the turf and filled with water, with controls on the better areas. The soil should be generally

moist, but not saturated. The control cans emptied at a vastly greater rate than those in poor areas. Percolation in these difficult areas was clearly blocked. And, in fact, deep holes revealed a dense layer of impervious material.

I may have drawn the wrong conclusions from these observations. I hope someone is going to think it worth doing the research to prove me right or wrong. I would like to see irrigation companies thinking out what we require for our climate. It could be high volume, but well diffused, hand-watering devices, equipped with a flow meter so that if hand watering is required, it can be done in the shortest possible time. Quick coupling hoses are available.

There must be a commercial need for a full watering advisory service able to keep a check on our swards to tell us how much water is required, to test the permeability, compaction, moisture holding capacity and, no doubt, many other things. For some courses, its arrival cannot come soon enough.

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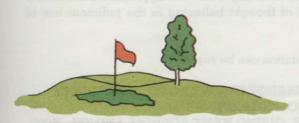
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The salary is negotiable.

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The successful applicant will require to be fully conversant with all aspects of golf course management, be capable of working on his own initiative and have the ability to control a small work force, leading by example.

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There is no accommodation.

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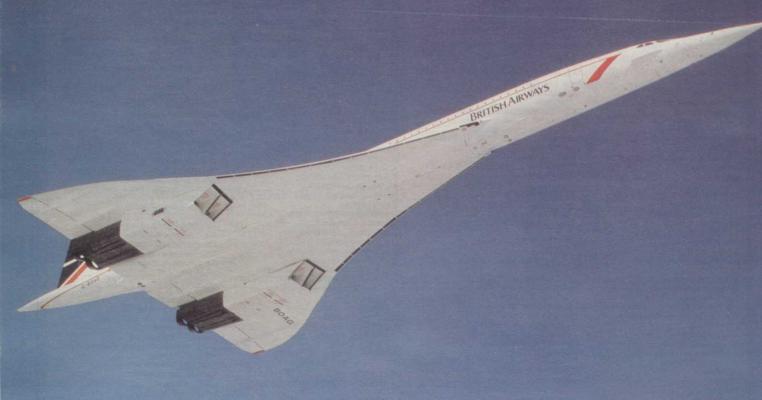
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