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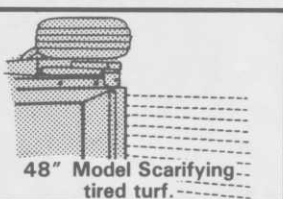
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This issue

OCTOBER 1984

Front Cover: Much interest was shown during last month's IOG exhibition at Windsor in the Rolawn Power 5, which has now successfully celebrated its first birthday. This PTO 5 gang mower maintains cylinder rotation, independent of towing speed, allowing efficient use in the wettest conditions. Good ground clearance and narrow transportation widths enable it to be moved between sites without a transporter. Each cutting head follows the ground contours and the wheel arrangement affords easy manoeuvrability in tight turning circles. Available with either manual or hydraulic lift, the Power 5 is of British design and manufacture and is serviced by a network of national agents operating a 'next day' parts supply service. The purchase price of the Rolawn Power 5 is substantially less than a comparable hydraulically powered machine and a low cost 3 gang model is also available with the facility for upgrading to a 5 gang at a future date if required. Full details are available from Rocraft Ltd, Brynhyfryd, Caerphilly, Mid-Glamorgan. ☎ 0222 885778.

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A formidable double act is established to put our courses to rights and keep them that way!

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Windsor is still The Place to be

"Windsor went well, didn't it?" So said the managing director of a well-known company when departing on the Thursday evening. It certainly summed up the views of many I spoke to, as well as my own. The first two days of the Institute Of Groundsmanship Exhibition at Windsor Racecourse broke all 'box office' records, but somehow the place did not seem crowded. The IOG's timbered pavilion made an impressive centre-piece from which to co-ordinate the whole show and, while emphasis seemed to be given to the Golden Jubilee aspect, I missed the annual presentation ceremony of stand and personal awards, which has been held on the first evening of the show in the past.

By Michael Coffey, Publisher of *Greenkeeper*

Without doubt, Windsor must be the greatest show on turf and, yet, several companies are thinking of pulling out in view of the cost. It must have pleased most exhibitors that the annual Windsor rainfall came in one morning. Although the ground itself and the emergency arrangements stood up well, Thursday morning was a wash-out.

Buses were much in evidence—the Steetley one was as smart as ever in the company's livery, Toro Irrigation's was well supported by the English Bowling Association, while Supaturf's must have been one of the busiest and with the best gimmick, green peppermint Supaturf rock (made in Blackpool, not Peterborough!). A great deal of thought went into stand presentation, although I would like to know how the stand competition judges made some of their choices.

Movement round the show is certainly much easier than in previous years and with avenues clearly marked by Rigby Taylor's striking Mascot signs, any stand was easy to find. *Greenkeeper* had a large number of readers visit its stand and the EIGGA caravan was nearly always full. It was particularly pleasing to see so many contributors to the magazine. Peter Wisbey was there in his capacity as EIGGA chairman. And there was John Campbell, who is known to everyone in the profession, as are Jim Arthur and Dr Peter Hayes, who provided the news story of the week (see page 6).

Eddie Park represented his son Nick, whose series of articles in *Golf Monthly* have done so much to interest the club member in the whys and wherefores of turf care. Nick's fee from *Golf Monthly* was presented by Eddie jointly to SIGGA and EIGGA representatives Joe McKean and Peter Wisbey to further greenkeeper education—a generous gesture which will be applauded by all greenkeepers.

So, a successful time for all, a meeting place for friends from far afield, for business transactions and even if you do need wellies, we are looking forward to next year!

Greenkeeper is delighted to announce another increase in circulation. After the successful first trial issue of the *International Greenkeeper*, published in French and German inside September's *Greenkeeper*, this excellent publication, edited by Mrs Babette Harradine, is to be combined with our magazine on a quarterly basis and sent to all members of the International Greenkeepers' Association throughout Europe.

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Bingley and Jim Arthur join forces

A three-year courtship between Sports Turf Research Institute old boy Jim Arthur and Dr Peter Hayes, Director of the STRI at Bingley, has resulted in the golf course advisory profession's two leading names forming a closer working liaison for the game's future good.

By the editor

Starting from the New Year, Jim will hand over a number of clubs he advises to the STRI. "I stress there's no financial gain for Jim in this move," Dr Hayes said. "We are not paying a fee or a premium for Jim's contact list. On the contrary, it is a very generous gesture on his part."

Anyone who has ever come into contact with Jim Arthur knows that he thrives on a phenomenal work-load and it's also no news that the man is fervent in his beliefs. So, what had prompted him to set up shop with Bingley?

"The main reason was, quite simply, that Bingley changed its attitude and policies. Therefore, I changed my views towards the Institute. Even before Peter was appointed Director, I had spoken to him and realised he was a kindred spirit," Jim said.

Plainly, any such partnership needs compatibility and it was refreshing to hear the two sides talking along similar lines throughout the interview. Too often, we hear the cry 'let's rally round and join forces', but so little ever seems to come of it.

The seeds of the idea were planted at a series of meetings between Jim Arthur and Dr Hayes. In the summer, Jim was invited to address the STRI board. "It was then, I feel, that he became convinced that our approach, our views on research and our testing facilities could enable us to become a strong, combined force," Dr Hayes said.

I fancy a glance at his diary for the rest of 1984 might have finally tipped the balance for Jim. Although it's physically possible, I suppose, nobody can enjoy working seven days a week constantly, getting up before *Breakfast Time* starts and rarely putting the pen down on report writing before *The Nine O'Clock News*, as well as visiting an average of eight to ten clubs a week.

In fact, Jim told me he totalled 340 visits in 1983 and by the time Windsor had come and gone this year, he was already way past the 200 mark. The STRI, on the other hand, is called in by some 400 clubs annually. Jointly, both Jim and the STRI have about 1,300 golf clubs on their books. Lately, the two have enjoyed some joint walks over such prestigious courses as Royal Birkdale (Jim's) and Ganton (the STRI's).

The Institute has 14 advisory officers, handling all sports, but now aims to form a specialist golf unit of four, including Dr Hayes. Additionally, the R&A has given a substantial sum to Bingley for research into golf, ensuring—along with Sports Council support—that the STRI will remain on a sound footing for the foreseeable future.

Certainly, such an injection of cash by the R&A is to be applauded and can only serve to stem the tide of

worsening conditions on our golf courses.

"Overall, there are more problems than praise for our golf courses and I don't have to tell the readership of *Greenkeeper* that this is due largely to increased wear and tear," Dr Hayes said. "It's no good having a course in superb condition from May until September and then closed from November to April. Golfers expect it to be in perfect condition for the day they want to play their match.

"A lot of what Jim says centres around the basic principles of golf greenkeeping. His beliefs are definitely not gimmicky—they're really what he was taught at Bingley when he worked there."

Did Jim, I wondered, sense the irony of linking up again with Bingley? "No, not really," the smile widened. "One of the reasons I left in 1952 was because they wouldn't set up a specialist golf unit. It has always been one of my ambitions to see the Institute running such a division.

"Indeed, nothing would give me greater pleasure than to have Bingley established as the centre of greenkeeper training," he added.

Dr Hayes confirmed that there will be three courses for greenkeeper training in the spring and three more in the autumn. In fact, Bingley first started educating greenkeepers in the art of fine turf management nearly 40 years ago. Today, the emphasis is switching to management techniques, as well as encouraging students to get to grips with the profession's technology.

Apart from the STRI enjoying the benefits of a far greater back up, both parties operate advisory visits in a similar way. The Institute plans 'tours' for its officers. That's to say if someone is going to London, they try to fit in as many courses as humanly possible in, say, a week. This is followed by report writing back at Bingley.

"Annual visits are preferred, unless a course has major problems necessitating a drastic maintenance procedure. We then like to go in more regularly. There is a place for monthly visits in really bad situations. Equally, when a course is on the right track, there's no need to call more than once every two years," Dr Hayes said.

But the 64,000 dollar question remained... How would it

Continued on page 9...



Dr Peter Hayes discusses a cross-section of a green with a head greenkeeper.

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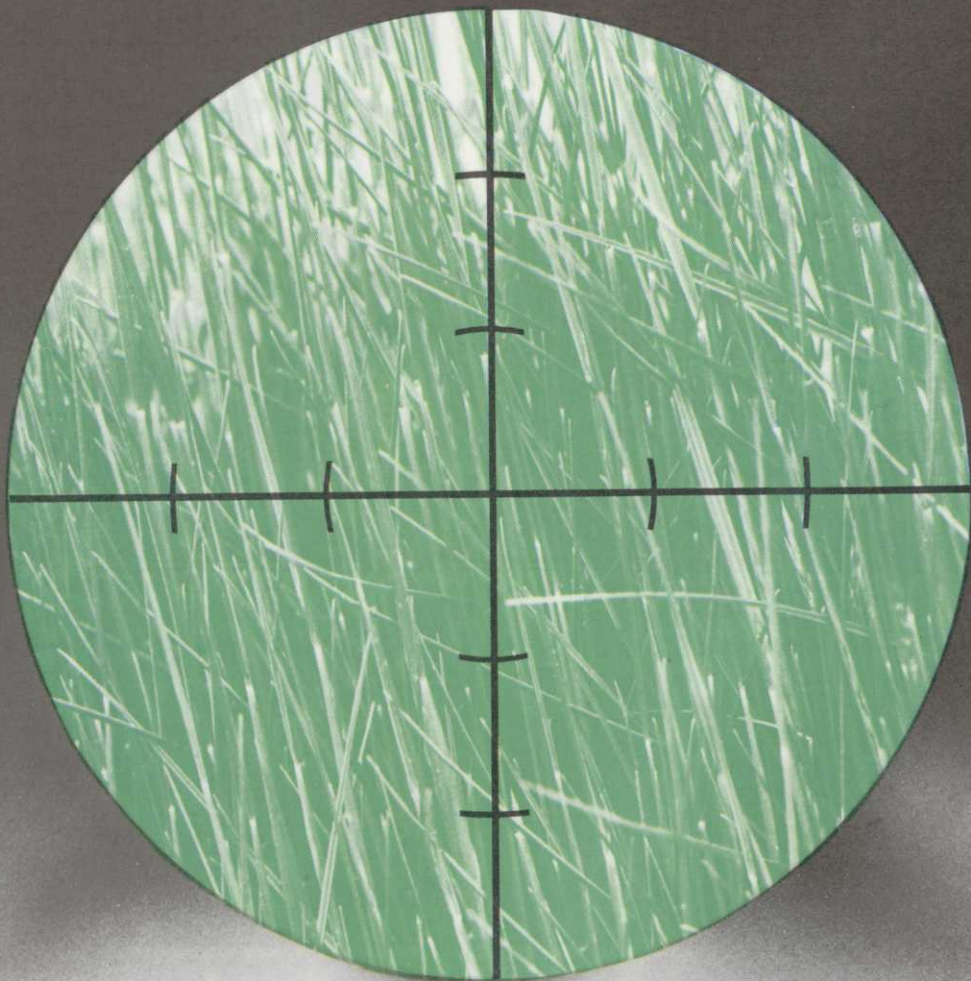
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Bingley and Jim Arthur join forces Continued...

be decided who would handle which clubs? Both Jim Arthur and Dr Hayes agreed that under the new regime there could be problems with golf clubs not wanting the STRI, insisting on Jim or, equally, vice versa.

"No club will be made to feel it's been sold down the river, but what I will have to do is place a premium on my services to discourage clubs from specifying that I go in when, in fact, it's not necessary for me to go to that particular club personally," Jim said.

"All clubs will have the facility and right to come back to me with problems. It is a joint venture. There will be joint visits, free access to my past records and, in some cases, joint consultation before reports are written.

"Obviously, if I am going to shed some of the work, there has to be an incentive for me to do so. I have to group my visits around the clubs on the R&A rosta. The Royal and Ancient's Championship Committee has agreed that I will continue to do its advisory visits for the next five years at least.

"But it's an interesting problem! Do you drop the clubs that deviate from the agreed policy or seek advice from second opinions without reference to me? Yes! Do you get rid of the clubs that need you, but have little money? No. Do you pass on the prestigious clubs? Probably not. Each will be viewed on its merit."

When pressed, both estimated that some 150 clubs could find themselves 'transferred', and apart from the obvious—such as Jim sticking to his R&A work—the most common determining factor will be the club's geographical location. There'd be little point in Jim hurtling up motorways to see a typical club in Lancashire or Yorkshire right on the doorstep of Bingley. Hopefully, with occasional forums leading to a common language being spoken and an increase in the number of joint visits, the need will be totally obviated in time.

I left the final words to Jim. "In no way am I retiring but, equally, I can't go on for ever. My main concern is that the moment I stop advising, all the things I've worked for over the years could be reversed. Continuity is the key—similar to setting up a constitution, it was necessary to have an institution as a partner rather than an individual."

Hopefully, more clubs will see the sense in responding willingly to the sound advice of this new 'institution' than to the conflicting words of the plethora of individuals now doing the advisory rounds.



Not Jim about to garrotte a stray voice, but "dowsing with bent wire for irrigation pipes in Scotland."

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Out·On·The·Course

Peter Wisbey

GOLF has been played at North Foreland since 1903 when it was a nine-hole course called Kingsgate Golf Club. In 1909, Lord Northcliffe owned it. He extended it to 18 holes and also constructed an 18-hole pitch and putt course. The new holes were designed by Fowler and Simpson and the construction work was done by Frank Harris & Co. The name of the club was then changed to North Foreland Golf Club.

During the last world war, part of the course was taken over for defence purposes. When the club took over again, the course was reconstructed to the design of the late J.S.F. Morrison and the work was again carried out by Frank Harris & Co.

"I was born in Surrey and moved with my family at the age of 15 to Broadstairs in Kent," Peter, 37, said. "It was really sheer chance that brought me into greenkeeping. I was interested in farming at one time and then heard of a vacancy for a tractor driver at North Foreland. I applied for the job and that was the start of my career in greenkeeping. I have remained with this club for 19 happy years."

There are still two courses at North Foreland—the 18-hole pitch and putt layout is open to the public and an excellent test for beginners. Despite a high volume of play, the quality of turf on the greens is superb and, as Peter pointed out, is ample testimony to the benefits of a regime of minimum watering and fertilising.

The main course is situated on a commanding stretch of downs sweeping towards the sea and although it could not be termed a links, every hole on the course is within easy reach of the water. It has many characteristics of a good seaside course with an invigorating and astringent tang to the air. It is exposed to the elements and the chalky nature of the downland soil ensures good drainage and the establishment of a firm, resilient turf.

I was particularly impressed by the high standard of maintenance achieved by Peter and his staff and even after the long dry summer the greens were in good shape. The rest of the course seems to have withstood all the wear and tear of unremitting



Peter Wisbey—now a confirmed man of Kent—is head greenkeeper at North Foreland.

Interview by John Campbell.

play extremely well.

Peter has been married to Linda for 13 years. With their son Matthew, nine, they live in their own house near the golf course. Peter is articulate and intelligent with many interesting opinions on the future of the profession that are well worth listening to.

He does not have a golf handicap, but says, "I enjoy playing, although infrequently and not very well. My son is having lessons and hopefully we will play together more as time goes on. Being a family man, I spend a lot of time at home. I am not interested in any other sport—my main hobbies are my job and conservation of the countryside."

"A few years ago, I was on the wrong tack with my management programme, particularly regarding fertilisers and watering. At this point, I became interested in the philosophy of Jim Arthur, which is really traditional greenkeeping methods and the application of common sense. As our course is one of the R&A venues he visits, we now work together and I am delighted with the results."

Peter believes that having a keen and enthusiastic staff is half the battle,

helping to take a lot of the weight from his shoulders. "The strength of my team is six, which includes a full-time mechanic with a well-equipped workshop. They are all bright and conscientious young men who often contribute to the smooth running of the operation by coming up with good ideas on how to improve efficiency. Our mechanic Ron Farrington is invaluable and first assistant Robert Smith is an experienced and reliable man who works with the rest of the crew—David Paine, Stephen Hopper and Kevin Fuller—to maintain a high standard of upkeep."

Health and safety on the course is a subject Peter has strong views about.

"A golf course should provide its staff with all the safety clothing relevant to the job—that includes safety footwear, protective clothing, etc. In fact, anything that can save injury. I think all greenkeepers should wear protective headgear on the course as they do in the States. We provide helmets and my staff wear them if they want to. We have the understanding that, if they do get a crack on the head and they are not wearing the safety gear provided, the onus is on the individual.

"Clubs should look at all aspects of safety for staff—tractors should have either a roll cage or a safety cab fitted. I know from my dealings with safety officers that if an accident does occur due to lack of proper safety precautions, the golf club is liable, but it should not be necessary to wait until someone gets killed or badly injured.

"It is up to the head greenkeeper or course manager to put this case to the club committee and he should invite the safety officer to make an advisory visit, which is free, so that he can pinpoint areas of danger and submit a report.

"I think all head greenkeepers should do this, particularly when starting a new job. It's one of the first things they should look at because there are occasions when the head greenkeeper can be held responsible and, in fact, prosecuted for neglect."

As we toured the course on an electric golf buggy (incidentally, the only one in use), which had been offered to us by club professional Mike Lee, I realised the fine rapport