

GC has recently gone into hospital for an operation. Best wishes, Bob, for a complete recovery.

In future, would members send any monies concerned with the North West branch to the treasurer Guy Cannings at 12 Victoria Road, West Kirby, Wirral, Merseyside.

The committee would like to thank our hard working administrator Terry Adamson for the effort he has put into the job. Terry is probably the best thing to come out of Wales since Ian Rush.

Well, gentlemen, we are at the end of another eventful year, as far as the profession is concerned. Please give us your support in '86 and, hopefully, we can strive on to improve the status of golf course management employees.

The chairman has asked me to pass on his and the committee's best wishes to members and their families for a happy and enjoyable Xmas and a successful and productive New Year.

Raymond Hunt

Surrey

After the frightful summer weather, it seems incredible to report that the Surrey members enjoyed another marvellous day when contesting the MacGillivray Shield at Richmond Golf Club.

The winners were: 1st - C. McMillan, 44 points; 2nd - A. Davie, 39 points; 3rd - J. Cuff, 38 points and 4th - P. Pearse 37 points.

Surrey members express their great appreciation to Richmond

GC and, in particular, to the secretary Commander Peter Woolings for extending the courtesy of the course. Also, our sincere thanks go to Alex Armitage and his assistants who have worked so hard to make Richmond the magnificent course it now is.

The branch's final meeting this year is a turkey trot on Monday December 9 at Worplesden Golf Club.

M. Hale.

East Anglia

The annual greenkeepers versus captains match at Purdis Heath resulted in a runaway victory for the greenies by seven matches to six. The day also proved a victory for greenkeeping with the results of Dave's hard slog there for all to see.

The top greenkeeper, on a countback, was P. Howard (Aldeburgh) with 37 points. He received the Ransomes watch. Second place went to Richard Mitchell (Eaton). Third place was taken by G. Barton (Haverhill) on 36 points, while Brian Lemmon (Barnham Broom), with 34 points, was fourth.

Top captain was D. Freeman on 41 points, followed by David Chapman (Eaton) with 38 points.

The prizes were presented by *Greenkeeper* publisher Michael Coffey.

Our thanks go to the club captain T. Morfitt and members for the courtesy of the course and subsidising a terrific meal with wine; to the trade representatives, especially Ransomes for the shield and watch and last, but

not least, to Dave and the lads for a fine course.

Our last tournament of the season was at the Maylands Golf and Country Club, which proved to be very memorable - not only was I going 'home', but everyone seemed to marvel at a clubhouse I had taken for granted for so long. The course was in superb condition, thanks to Phil Staines and his team. There was no evidence of the continual battering the course takes from the large number of visitors it attracts and the meal was second to none.

The victors of the day were: 1st - Martin Jones, 39 points and the King's Cup; 2nd - Mark Forrester, 37 points and the Victa Cup and 3rd - Phil Staines, 34 points.

The first guest with 40 points was G. Jackson, while the second guest was Mark Spooner (Eaton) on 38 points.

Our thanks go to Maylands for a great day - back to the grind for another six months!

M. Lathorpe.

Berks, Bucks And Oxon

The branch held its Jacobsen competition at Burnham Beeches Golf Club recently and it was a most successful event. Thanks go to the club for the hospitality and to Mark from Risbora Turf Supplies and Jacobsen for their sponsorship.

It seemed that whenever branch members gathered for a day's golf, the sun shone - not bad when you consider last season! This was certainly the case when the branch staged an invitation meeting at Sonning GC

Continued on page 12...

APPLICATION FOR THE MEMBERSHIP OF E.I.G.G.A.

To be returned to the General Administrator, E.I.G.G.A., 2, Golf Cottage, Bucklesham Road, Ipswich, Suffolk.

I wish to enrol as a Full Member @ £20 p.a.
 Apprenticed Member @ £12 p.a. Delete as applicable
 Trade Member @ £25 p.a.

Name of Applicant
 Home Address
 Tel. No. Club or Company
 Address
 Preferred Mailing Address: Club Home
 Title
 Registered Greenkeeper or otherwise
 Certificates Signature
 Further number of Membership Forms required

Summit talks

THE establishment of one autonomous body has been the aim of meetings held recently between SIGGA, EIGGA, the BGGGA and other interested organisations in golf. Here, we detail the latest situation as it is known.

Greenkeeper understands that considerable progress has been achieved at the talks.

Originally, the BGGGA was approached by the Professional Golfers' Association, which produced a detailed proposal on how greenkeeping should be structured in the future - as a division of the PGA.

Later, the PGA, after discussions at the Open Championship, put the same proposition to SIGGA and EIGGA. Meetings took place between each of the associations and the PGA at its national headquarters at The Belfry.

The associations seem to have reservations about the advisability of such a takeover and there appears to be insufficient support within SIGGA and the BGGGA, while the EIGGA board of management has already advised the PGA that it is holding talks elsewhere.

During the SIGGA educational conference at the Younger Hall, St Andrews recently, Michael Bonallack, secretary of the Royal & Ancient Golf Club, introducing the afternoon session, strongly recommended that greenkeepers retain their independence and strive for an improvement in status through a unified approach to the profession's future. He felt sure that the R & A would look favourably upon any request for assistance in pursuing this aim.

Since the SIGGA conference, two meetings have taken place, with representatives of the three associations taking part under the chairmanship of the English Golf Union and with a member of the R & A in attendance.

Although nothing has been finalised as yet and another meeting is arranged for early December, *Greenkeeper*

believes that a general administrative centre with a full-time executive officer will be based at Bingley to coordinate events and conferences and to deal with the associations, which will operate on a regional or branch level.

The administrative organisation will be known as the Golf Greenkeepers' Federation with the aim of supporting in a practical form the Greenkeeper Training Committee by getting clubs to train their staff and have an all-qualified greenkeeping profession.

All apprentices will have to qualify and the eventual aim would be to have a system of continuous education, so that even course managers will be required to maintain their qualifications and knowledge by attending seminars. This system should have the support of the golf unions, which will assist with its implementation.

Should the federation come into being - and all the signs are positive - it will give the PGA European Tour, among others, the ideal vehicle for its intended support of 'greenkeeper training and course preparation research' and a worthwhile home for the money the tour received from ICI's Professional Products Division (see page 24 of last month's *Greenkeeper*). Likewise, the federation could act as a focal point for all trade involvement in greenkeeper training.

It is essential that the executive officer, when appointed, should not be a former greenkeeper, but someone with administrative skills and without bias. The committee should be small and of similar composition to the Greenkeeper Training Committee.

While there are, no doubt, many hurdles to clear and personal differences to overcome, it is hoped that all greenkeepers will shortly be brought together under one independent umbrella federation.

EIGGA NEWS & VIEWS CONTINUED...

and some 30 members and guests attended.

The course received a good deal of praise - Alan and staff are to be commended. We were well looked after in the clubhouse and, once again, members of the trade gave us good support. I make special mention of Maxwell Hart, Parkers, TMS and May & Baker.

There is a lot of work involved in putting on such a day, so thanks go to Ed, Brian and Sevi for all their hard work. (Brian wishes to thank M. Warner and M. Strange for handling the raffle).

Finally, a turkey trot is scheduled by Badgemore Park on December 11, starting at 11am.

Billy McMillan.

Eastern

This, the branch's first report, is to let members know that greenkeepers do exist in the east!

Although not a heavily supported branch, the membership is drawn from a large area - from Kettering, Worksop and Lincoln to Skegness and Cambridge, to name but a few. We meet mainly around Grantham, as this is central, and are a friendly group always willing to meet new members. Anyone interested in joining should ring Colin Swingler on Grantham (0476) 68656.

Our autumn golf meeting for the Rigby Taylor Trophy was held at Stoke Rochford Golf Club by courtesy of the captain Peter Bloodworth. The course, in a superb setting, was in excellent condition, thanks to Gilbert Ogden and his staff. It proved a hard test on a windy day.

The trophy and prizes were presented by Steve Dickinson of Rigby Taylor. The cup was won by Steve McCrossan of Burghley Park with Roy Harrison of the home club losing out on the last nine holes. The non-greenkeeper prize was won by Brian Booth.

We are hoping to arrange a further golf day sometime in March, when members will be invited to bring along a committee member to play.

H.Q. NEWS

Dear E.I.G.G.A. member,
Well, once again we approach the end of a year, and it's time for me to give you an up-date on what's been happening in your Association throughout the past few months. 1985 has been a very busy year for E.I.G.G.A., and we are really starting to make some impact within the industry. A great deal of behind-the-scenes work has been done by various members of the Board of Management, who have travelled all over the country to attend meetings called by certain respective bodies in the golf world; the results of those meetings will become apparent in due course, and I am sure that our Chairman will cover the subject in his report, but I feel that 1985 will mark a turning point in E.I.G.G.A.'s history, and 1986 will bear witness to the efforts made on behalf of the membership. Particular mention must be made to Bill Lawson, who, since becoming National Chairman in March this year, has done a tremendous amount of work to benefit the Association, and much of what E.I.G.G.A. is set to achieve in the future will be due to Bill's commitment and determination. He also found time to act as E.I.G.G.A.'s Captain to the English team which played in the Ransomes International Tournament, at St. Andrews, in October. Our team made a gallant effort, but, as you know, the Canadians took the honours. E.I.G.G.A. was well represented on the English team by Kevin Munt, who is a member of the Board of Management, and Terry Adamson who is the administrator for the North-west branch of the Association. Kevin has been on the E.I.G.G.A. Board since the very first A.G.M., first as Chairman, and now as a Trustee; and Terry has done some sterling work in the North-west, and has been a great benefit to his branch, and to the Association in general. E.I.G.G.A. was also honoured to be invited to send a speaker to the S.I.G.G.A. Conference, which was held in conjunction with the tournament, and our Vice-President, David Jones attended in this capacity at S.I.G.G.A.'s request; thus, a team of four first-class ambassadors was sent to represent E.I.G.G.A. at this prestigious event.

Although our golfers were not successful at St. Andrews, it was a different story at The Belfry in October, when the Greenkeepers were the victorious team in the Kubota Challenge.

The team was made up of players from E.I.G.G.A., S.I.G.G.A. and the B.G.G.A., and they competed with the Golf Writers, Secretaries, and Stewards. E.I.G.G.A. was fortunate to have been represented by two excellent golfers, Brian Turner of Worplesdon Golf Club,

and Joao Teixeira of Hillingdon Golf Club, and our congratulations go to them, and their fellow team members.

As most of you know, E.I.G.G.A.'s 1985 Conference, whilst not being as well attended as had been hoped, was, nevertheless very successful in terms of content, and the quality of speakers. Details of the 1986 Conference are published in this magazine and it promises to be an even better event.

The conference will be held over three full days, on the weekend of 4th/5th/6th April 1986, at the University of Warwick, which, as those of you who attended this year's conference know, is an ideal venue with excellent facilities.

Registration will be from 9.00 a.m. on Friday 4th April, and the programme, featuring a wide range of speakers, will be publicised in "Greenkeeper" magazine. The time of the Annual General Meeting has been changed, so that it will now take place after the last lecture on the Saturday (5th April) afternoon, and before the formal banquet; this arrangement leaves the afternoon of Sunday 6th free for more lectures, and allows maximum use of the time available. The cost of attendance to the 1986 E.I.G.G.A. Educational Conference will be £112.00 to E.I.G.G.A. members, and £125.00 to non-members. This sum covers all meals and accommodation which are of a very good standard, and includes all lectures and the formal dinner on the Saturday evening. We have been very fortunate in obtaining the services of Sir Rex Hunt as our after-dinner speaker. As you know, Sir Rex was the Civil Commissioner on the Falkland Islands, and is in fact a member of the Association. Although I have not yet had the pleasure of meeting Sir Rex, I have corresponded with him on several occasions, and judging by the humorous tone of his letters, I would say that we are in for a most entertaining evening!

I would urge those of you who haven't been to an E.I.G.G.A. conference before, to try and make this one if you can; and, for any Golf Club Secretaries, or Greens Chairman who might read this, you too are most welcome to attend, and I am sure that you will appreciate the benefit of your Club sending it's Greenkeeper/s to what is a major conference on Greenkeeping. I can assure the few cynics out there that this is not merely a social event, but a comprehensive educational forum which gives everyone an opportunity to hear the experts speak on a variety of subjects. For anyone wishing to reserve a place, please complete the booking form, and send your remittance, or a deposit of £20.00 to National Headquarters.

Daily attendance is also available at a rate of £25.00 per person per day. This sum covers morning coffee, lunch and afternoon tea, and all lectures.

Will all members please note that the invoices for their 1986 E.I.G.G.A. membership subscriptions is enclosed in this issue of "Greenkeeper". Full membership which applies to any greenkeeper other than an apprentice is £20.00, whilst the apprentice subscription remains at £12.00. Trade membership is £25.00 (individual) and Company membership is open to regional companies at £75.00 to cover membership for two representatives, and National companies at £125.00, to cover four representatives. If for some reason you do not receive your invoice, please forward the relevant sum to National H.Q., together with details of your name, membership number, preferred mailing address, and the name of your club; also, if applicable any change in your status during the past year; i.e. from 1st Assistant to Head Greenkeeper etc. At this point, may I ask everyone, please, to send their 1986 subs at the earliest opportunity in the new year, as I cannot accept any renewals after 31st March.

As before, if a golf club joins it's entire green-staff en bloc it can claim a 10% reduction, and if your club is paying your subscription, could you please give your invoice to your club's secretary for this purpose.

Finally, to all our members, thank you for supporting the Association during the past year; I know that progress in certain areas is a little slow, but, like British Rail, "We're getting there!" If you have any queries, or comments, please let me know; I occasionally hear of someone voicing their discontent over some matter which could so easily be rectified by a letter or a 'phone call. Further to this, for those of you who are awaiting Unit 6 of the E.I.G.G.A. Management Course, I have been assured by the Bournemouth & Poole Management Centre that the Unit will be sent out shortly.

I hope that you have a very Happy Christmas, and a healthy and prosperous 1986, and I look forward to seeing some of you at Warwick in April.

*Danielle Jones,
General Administrator,
National Headquarters,
2, Golf Cottage,
Bucklesham Road,
Ipswich,
Suffolk. IP3 8UG
Tel.: 0473 711810*



SIGGA's Success At St Andrews

The fifth Ransomes International Greenkeepers and Superintendents Tournament at St Andrews was a huge success and not just for the 13 countries taking part.

The programme of supporting events organised by the SIGGA committee proved to be equally outstanding, with the international conference as the main attraction. This was divided into a morning 'home' session introduced by Mr Louden, a distinguished R & A member and the 'away', or overseas, session opened by the R & A's secretary Michael Bonallack, who came out strongly for greenkeepers maintaining their independence and uniting to ensure that greenkeeping becomes a stronger profession with better qualifications and educational opportunities. To this end, he pledged the R & A's moral and financial support.

The home session was based on the different types of golf course and their management - heathland was tackled by David Jones of Purdis Heath, linksland by the late Russell Brown, Turnberry (see page 7) and parkland by Gordon Childs of Churchston G.C. The striking thing was the similarity of approach at all three environments, with variations on a theme (Arthurian) of minimal fertilising, watering and maximum elevation of compaction through intensive aeration. (The papers presented by Gordon Childs and David Jones will be published in *Greenkeeper*). The morning session closed with a slide show from Nicholas Park, formerly greens chairman at Lindrick, who rammed home the message that there are still pitifully few courses in the British Isles that have conquered the Poa problem.

In the afternoon, we were entertained by experiences from other countries and climes. Gene Baston from the GCSAA outlined what a powerful and impressive organisation has been created in the States. Stan Zontek of the USGA Greens Section, as ever



Michael Bonallack recommended the greenkeepers to stay independent.

North And Midlands

The section had a good turn-out for the autumn outing at Ballater Golf Club. The weather stayed fine and the course was in excellent condition. Our thanks go to the club for a very enjoyable day.

The section's AGM was held in the evening, at which G. Hampton and G. Webster were presented with medals to commemorate their inclusion in the Scottish team for St Andrews.

Star prize of the day, a magnificent Titleist golf bag, is on its way to Royal Dornoch and Ian Small can expect a putter the next time I see him.

The main prize winners were: scratch - R. Patterson; Meldrum Memorial Trophy - D. Dingwall; 1st class - G. Paterson; 2nd Class - R. Hardie; 3rd Class - W. Paterson; McLean Trophy - E. Skinner; Toro Trophy (veterans) - W. Currie; junior veteran - J. Flint and trade shield - M. Dennis.

Iain Hamilton

the polished performer, gave a revealing insight into agronomy US style. Bob Heron from the CGSA produced an 'ice spectacular' while Rolf Lowgren from the Swedish Golf Federation showed how golf should be organised. Can you imagine a greens chairman having to be educated in turf culture by the game's governing body before being allowed to take office? Jim Wyllie, also of CGSA, produced a different show. His slides illustrated how fairways can be changed almost like relaying carpet - from shag-pile to Wilton! The overriding impression was that the rest of the world is prepared to pay much more for its golf and, consequently, education than golfers in Britain.

In all, a day for SIGGA to be proud of, with a highly professional team of greenkeeper speakers.

Central

Since the last executive meeting, things have been quite busy within the Central section.

The inter-club tournament, run throughout the summer, proved to be a great success and was eventually won by Dullatur Golf Club. It is intended to make this an annual competition.

An autumn outing was held at Balbirnie Park Golf Club, Markinch, when some 30 members and guests had a great day. Considering the atrocious weather on the previous days, we were fortunate to play at all.

Prize winners were: net aggregate (spring and autumn) - Ian Ritchie 137; best net - Walter Garland 73; best scratch - Brian Inglis 74; 1st class, first handicap - Graham Scougall 76; 1st class, second handicap Brian Lawrie 84; 2nd class, first handicap - Duncan Peddie 78; 2nd class, second handicap - William Whitfield 82; visitors' prize - Harry Archer 70 and the two-ball foursomes - Brian Inglis and William Whitfield 38½ points.

Our thanks go to Ian MacMillan and his staff for having the course in such good condition, despite the weather, and to Mr and Mrs Chalmers for the excellent meals

and service provided and to the council and members of the Club for the courtesy they extended.

The international conference at St Andrews was quite well attended by Central section members, who voted it a huge success and our congratulations go to the organising committee for all their hard work.

The section is indebted to Stewarts & Co for the presentation of a silver quaich, which will be played for at outings next year.

Further to a previous statement regarding the seminar organised in conjunction with the East section, the committee has decided that, due to the East section's failure to pay half the costs, to which two of its officials had agreed, the Central section does not wish to be involved in organising any future events with them. The amount in question is £32.45p.

At a recent committee meeting, the paper on the proposed amalgamation between SIGGA, EIGGA, the BGGGA and the PGA - a copy of which has been sent to every member of the section - was discussed at length. The feeling of the committee was that the best future for greenkeeping is through education and, to this end, SIGGA is at the forefront and, therefore, for the time being, we should continue to make our own way forward.

It was decided to invite Martyn Jones to speak to the members sometime early in the New Year and to organise a visit to Inverclyde Sports Complex at Largs in March.

Our congratulations go to the following members of the section

who have taken up new appointments lately: William Lyon, Crieff, on gaining his first appointment as head greenkeeper at Forfar Golf Club; Ian Ritchie, Dullatur, on being appointed assistant head greenkeeper at Ladybank Golf Club; John Philp, St Andrews, who becomes the first links supervisor to be appointed by the Carnoustie Links Trust and Brian Finlayson, Braehead, on his appointment as head greenkeeper at Ardeer Golf Club in Ayrshire.

At present, membership of the Central section stands at 75. New members: Ian MacMillan, Lilliedale, High Street, Freuchie, Fife; Craig Stafford, 357 Julian Road, Cadham, Glenrothes, Fife and David McOwat, 33 Duncan Road, Glenrothes, Fife. Change of address: Ian Ritchie, 10 Queen's Crescent, Ladybank, Fife.

John Crawford.

Ayrshire

The section ran a lottery in conjunction with the Open Championship. It was a great success with an outstanding £530 profit after deductions.

The first prize, a weekend for two at Gleneagles, was won by G. Featherstone of Largs. The second prize, two weekly tickets for next year's Open, went to A. Waite of Powfoot. D. McLean of Turnberry collected the third prize of £50.

There were four runners-up prizes of £15 each, which went to A. Marcurci, Kirkcudbright; A. Hitches, Warwick; D. Johnston,

Gourock and R. Aitken, Glasgow.

The autumn outing was to Glasgow Gailes, where the scoring was very good, due, in part, to the excellent condition of the greens provided by Bobby Bennett and staff.

Thanks go to the steward and stewardess and to the club for affording us the courtesy of the course and facilities.

The winners were: scratch - A. Forrest (Western Gailes), 1st class - R. Weir (Bogside), 2nd class - M. Power (Troon) and 3rd class - G. Sloan (St Cuthberts). The leading visitor was A. Leask (Glasgow Gailes).

The north lost to the south of the section in a match for the R. Aitken Trophy. M. Power, who is now in charge of the Troon courses, had the Darnley in excellent condition. After a super meal, R. Aitken Snr presented the trophy to Harry Diamond, who thanked him for sponsoring this event.

We send best wishes to A. Jamieson in his new position as head greenkeeper at Prestwick St Nicholas and to Colin Hamilton, who has moved south to take up an appointment as first assistant at Worthing.

J. Grainger.

Lost - And Found?

Jonathan Harmer mislaid a Farmura file at Scotsturf recently. The file is brown with gold embossed lettering. Jonathan would very much appreciate its return and is offering a reward to the finder or borrower. Contact Jonathan on 023376 241.

APPLICATION FORM FOR MEMBERSHIP OF SIGGA

Name of Applicant Age

Full Postal Address

..... Postal Code

Golf Club or Company

Position at Club or Company

Registered Greenkeeper or not Certificated

I enclose my annual subscription of £15

Signed

Section Secretaries

AYRSHIRE - J. Grainger, 3 Castlepark Gardens, Fairlie, Ayrshire.

CENTRAL - E. R. Small, 2 Castle Park, Kincardine, By Alloa.

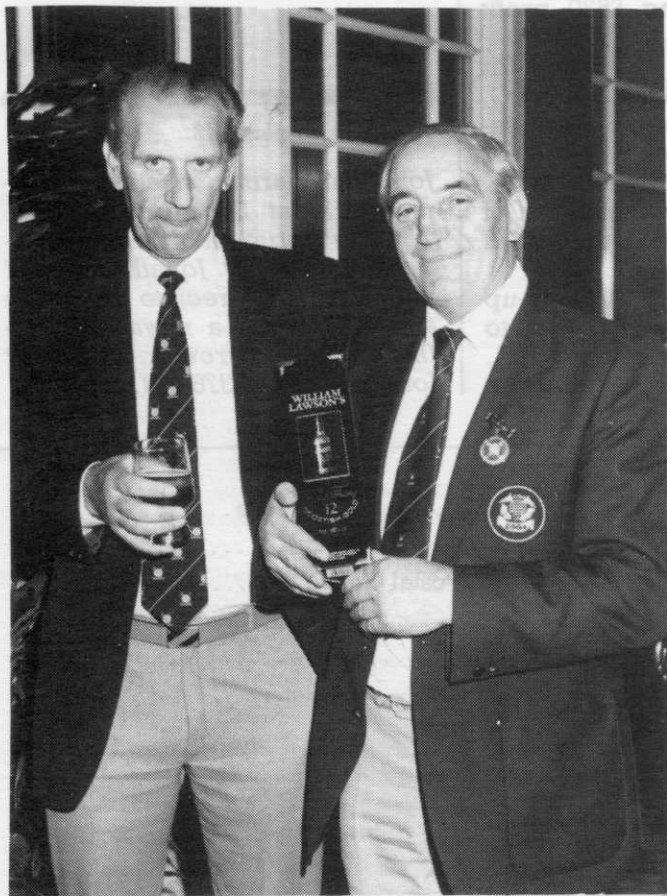
EAST - W. Blair, 13 Redhall Avenue, Edinburgh.

NORTH - I. Hamilton, 58 Whitecraig Road, Newburgh, Fife.

WEST - A. McDougall, 17 Poplar Avenue, Newton Mearns, Glasgow.



The winning Canadian team — Successful Defenders, with their trophies.



Bill Lawson, E.I.G.G.A.'s Chairman presents his own brew to S.I.G.G.A.'s General Secretary in recognition of the Scots hospitality.



Runners up Scotland with in the foreground Guy Catchpole, Sales Director of Ransomes.

RANSOMES ST ANDREWS



England go into action, Messrs Munt and Richardson.



Keith Mackenzie — main speaker at the Ransomes Banquet.



Some of S.I.G.G.A.'s organising committee left to right. Joe McKean, Walter Woods, Jimmy Kidd, Chris Kennedy, Jimmy Neilson.

Contrasting national attitudes

THE past three years have seen those responsible for the maintenance of British golf courses turn something of a corner. Some conferences are no longer simply an excuse for golfing days off, playing for trade-donated prizes. They are developing along the lines well-known to other professions and are increasingly run by the greenkeepers themselves. Those who attended *Golf Course '84* at Cambridge or this year's EIGGA and SIGGA conferences at Warwick and St Andrews know how well they are being organised. I feel sorry for those greenkeepers - and their clubs - who have not yet realised what they are missing.

One most instructive feature for many of us has been the realisation of the widely different attitudes to golf course maintenance in different countries. It is some time since we were told, in no uncertain terms, that we were light years behind the Americans. Of course, nobody mentioned the climatic differences that make many comparisons irrelevant, but the Americans certainly have a different industry. It's big, bouncy and booming, full of new ideas and high-pressure salesmanship that goes well with high customer 'cosmetic' expectations. Above

all, it is expensive. The budget for an American course can be five to ten times as big as for a British equivalent and the same goes for wages.

Listening to speakers from The New World, I am mainly impressed by their enthusiasm and courage. Methods are described with conviction but, here, some doubts begin to enter my mind. The dictionary defines the word empirical as 'based on observation or experiment' not on theory.' That word, for me, sums up American greenkeeping and, as we know from so many technical areas, including medicine, if you don't know why something works, your results will be unpredictable and prone to side-effects.

Perhaps I am being unfair. There are so many different climatic regions in America, whereas the whole of Great Britain (with some variation in rainfall from north west to south east) falls into one climatic region - the maritime temperate zone. So we cannot expect to be told the ecological justification for every procedure in every American locality. The trouble is we do not hear really scientific justification for anything at all. We do see the increasing obsession with presentation as opposed to quality. We see magazines crammed

with hard-selling advertisements, especially for chemicals. If everything is so good, why do they need all these corrective measures? Maybe they have a lot to teach us but, for the present, put me down as being not yet convinced.

The Swedes are another nation with a booming golf business and they certainly have something to teach us. We could all learn from their insistence on proper organisation, preparation and tuition. Everyone must attend courses before being let loose - even the chairman of the green committee! There were nearly 50 Swedes at SIGGA's conference - almost outnumbering the Scots. A trait they share with the Canadians is taking on the most difficult conditions. Golf courses are being built further and further north - with four inside the Arctic Circle. The winter damage may be so great that the repairs each year approach the size of a complete reconstruction. With shortened seasons, as well as these climatic factors, golf is an expensive game, but the customers are there.

Our friends from the Continent present a varying picture. High cost, high investment projects are balanced by quite modest layouts with modest standards. Greenkeepers are enthusiastic



The new Sports Turf Research Institute.

and seem to make the most of any opportunity to learn more.

There was one important conference in Europe this year about which we have heard very little. The International Turfgrass Society is for all the academic institutions - the colleges, research institutes and universities. The ITS conference is held every four years at different venues across the world. This year, the Fifth International Turfgrass Conference took place in Avignon near Paris and the research institutes at Bingley and Aberystwyth were both represented.

At its conclusion, we found several delegates making their way round Britain to view the current scene. It was no great surprise to me to find them in rather a grim mood. There was a general feeling that the methods in use in so many countries had clearly failed and led to *Poa annua* dominated swards. It was, therefore, no thrill to come here and tour round only to find that the same blight had descended on our courses.

I found considerable interest in talking to all these 'tourists,' but one in particular fired my imagination. Dr Yoskisuiki Maki, professor of agronomy at the Akita Prefectural College in Japan, was elected president of the International Turfgrass Society for the next four years. The next conference, in 1989, will be held in Tokyo.

Some weeks before his visit, I received a fascinating letter from Dr Maki explaining that, with the help of Dr Peter Hayes of the STRI, he had arranged a tour of Britain. The detailed itinerary was enclosed. He proposed to drive himself over 2,000 miles, visiting two research institutes and 15 golf courses. He expressed his mission thus: "I have long wanted the opportunity of learning more from you about the spiritual background of golf prototype, golf course layout and the traditional way of turfgrass maintenance." A refreshingly thorough approach, so I thought I had better do some homework!

Japan has already had one golf boom, which was cut short by the 1973 oil crisis. Now there is another spurt with 1,400 golf courses scheduled to rise rapidly to over 2,000. As a nation, the Japanese spent 70 million man-days last year playing golf. All this in a crowded country where the

only space available is on the mountainous central areas of the string of islands that comprise Japan. Australian and American architects and constructors have initiated the building of courses, often at enormous expense. Great imagination has been displayed in order to make enough level ground available and lifts between holes are fairly commonplace. Dr Maki duly appeared at the appointed time and I was deeply impressed with his dedication, cordiality and expertise.

Some 30 years ago, he was sent by his country to study agronomy at Wisconsin, USA and had subsequently taught plant feeding at Tokyo University. However, in recent years it became evident that there were greater problems with golf courses and he moved to Akita, the turfgrass centre. He speaks good English and, carrying a battery of cameras and tape recorders, made notes on everything he saw. In five hours of discussion, I found a man who really knows his sciences, grasses and greenkeeping methods. Actually, the Japanese sent a large delegation, led by Dr Maki to Europe with a clear brief.

The present orthodoxy of turfgrass maintenance that has spread from America to so many countries, including Japan, is felt to be just not good enough and perhaps a return to the early sites of golf would provide a better understanding of the game and its problems, going right back to first principles and then starting

building on basic sciences. Dr Maki said: 'it was his duty to his country' to undertake this work.

On his return to Japan, he wrote to me: 'Most of the grasses, particularly *Poa annua*, on the golf courses here are dying and most parts of fairways are turning brown. I was surprised and excited (in Britain) at seeing real links, inland and inland heather courses with delicate undulations and natural beauty.'

So, now might be the time to start placing your bets on which nation will end up light years ahead. But we should not entirely write off the dark horse - Britain, which invented the game and had, naturally, the finest golfing turf in the world. We could have it again if we stopped trying to copy, rather poorly, a game and turf that were always second best.

Thanks to other sports, there is now a bright new building in an old sunken rose garden just north of Bradford where British golf should be putting its money. Nearly 60 years ago, when the Board of Greenkeeping Research was established at Bingley, Norman Hackett wrote: 'Within a comparatively short time, their fellow scientists are able to confirm their hypothesis - it may be months or years, but the truth is finally established.' Things are, indeed, taking years, but the instrument is there to hand. All the things we guess at or assume can be put to the test. We might still come out on top!

EDDIE PARK



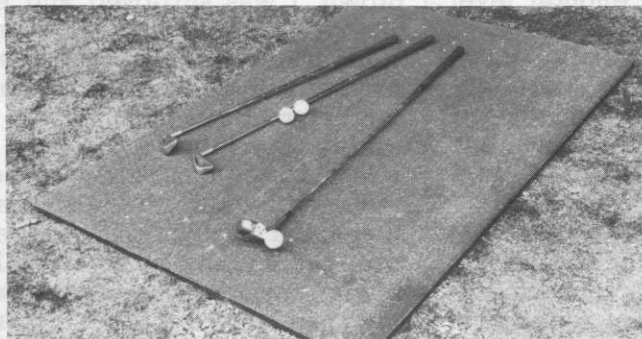
Dr Maki with the Lindrick course manager and staff.

CARPETITION

LTD.

THE 'TUFTURF' TEE MAT —
Like a piece of firm, well sprung fairway

FOR TEE SHOTS



AND FAIRWAY SHOTS



"A British made prous hardwearing all weather tee 1.5m x 1m. Synthetic grass, bonded to reconstituted rubber underlay shock pad with 30 tee inserts, combine to give a superb playing surface. Its use is highly beneficial as a WINTER TEE, or when re-turfing tees in the playing season. Also ideal for DRIVING RANGES and PRACTICE GROUNDS both indoor and outdoor.

Further details from:-

CARPETITION LTD.,
6 KAFFIR ROAD, EDGERTON,
HUDDERSFIELD. HD2 2AN.
Tel: 0484-28777"

EFFECTIVE MARKING

TRIG-A-CAP MARKING PAINT

- Choice of 6 colours.
- Marks any surface.
- Good stocks held.



ELTON SYSTEMS LTD.

2 Verulam Industrial Estate,
London Road, St. Albans, AL1 1JB.
Tel: (0727) 40266.

BEWARE of Imitations

"FENDRESS"[®]

High Quality Golf Green Top Dressing (FENDRESS) available in bulk loads of 10, 15, 20 and 25 tonnes delivered anywhere U.K. Mainland, N. Ireland.

A Superior Top Dressing, using soils with a low clay & silt content, carefully blended with Fenland Peat and Lime Free Free Silica Sand, shredded and sieved. Ready for immediate application to golf/bowling greens.

Save purchasing expensive equipment which stands idle for much of the year, also high labour costs and problems of finding suitable ingredients of constant quality.

PLEASE REMEMBER THERE IS ONLY ONE TRUE FENDRESS REGISTERED TRADEMARK

Pre-Packed supplies also available.

SPECIAL MIXES TO YOUR SPECIFICATION ALSO PREPARED

ALSO Sedge Peat ("FENPEAT") in bulk.

Lime Free Sands, White or Yellow. Screened Loam etc.

Please telephone T. I. Banks for quotations. You will be surprised by our competitive prices.

Please Contact:



Fen Turf Dressings Ltd., 36 High Street, Market Harborough, Leics. LE16 7NL. Tel.: Market Harborough (0858) 64346.