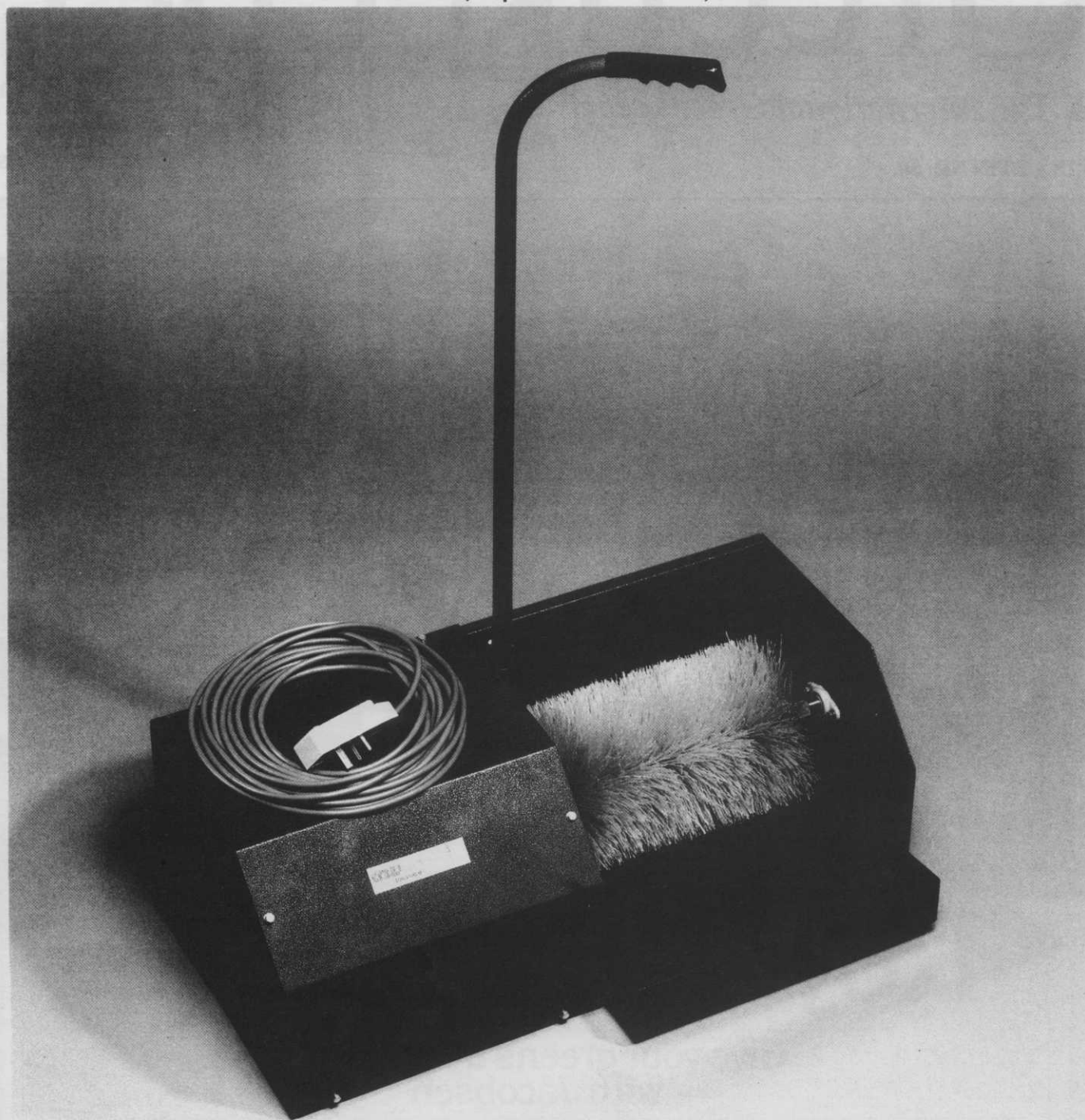


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OCTOBER 1986

Front Cover:

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Where Do We Go From Here...

Now that the votes are in and counted, overwhelming approval for a new unified greenkeepers association has been given by the members of SIGGA, EIGGA and the BGGGA, what will happen next?

Four members from each of the current associations will meet and plan the future. There are a number of items they will have to consider. First the new Associations name and image, surely the title should be the Golf Greenkeepers Association, as in the Golf Club Stewards Association, the Professional Golfers Association etc. The logo could be the same as the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America  modern, stylish and bringing greenkeepers on both sides of the Atlantic closer together.

The business plan for the new Association will be strongly biased in favour of education and communication, with the continuation of lectures, seminars and an annual conference with the Associations AGM taking place at the same time.

Perhaps the most difficult item on the new committee's agenda will be to define the role of the Association's Administrator. Will the post need to be full time initially? Apart from running the day to day finances, attend Board of Management meetings and generally promoting the greenkeepers role in the golf club, what will the job description encompass. He or she will have to organise the annual conference and AGM, assist members with wage and job negotiations, act as a clearing house for contributions to the Association magazine, attract new members and be ready with a good answer for the inevitable question of "What's in it for me?"

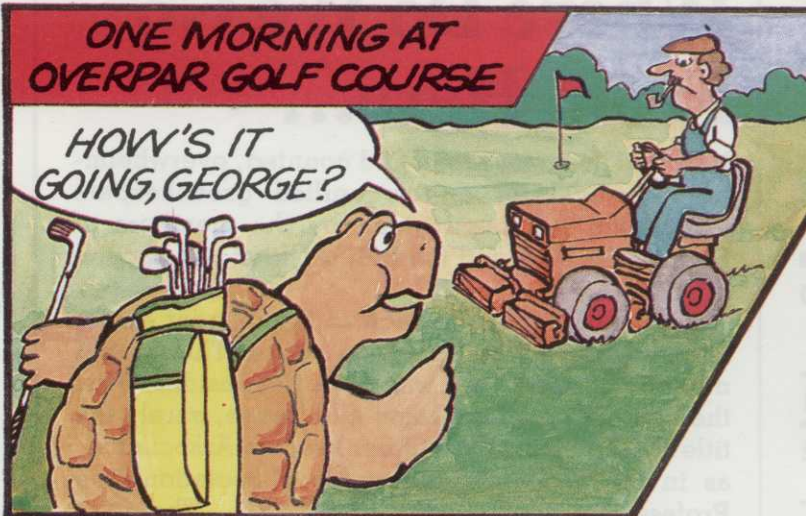
A great impression has been created over recent years by the "uniform", especially at such international gatherings as the Ransomes Tournament when the blazers and ties from both north and south of the border stole the show in the face of some smart opposition. Perhaps consideration could be given to a subsidy to aid the change from one uniform to another.

Will the new Association offer insurance cover to its members? Will it be possible for a wage scale or at least minimums for each category to be agreed with the golf unions? Could a standard form of employment be drawn up? The items for discussion will be many and it will take time and patience.

It has not been easy to come this far, there are many in the background who have played important, if unrecorded roles, in bringing all concerned together. The new Committee's task is a daunting one and theirs is an opportunity that will only come once. Everyone will wish them well in their deliberations not forgetting that twelve greenkeepers will attend in their own time and for no financial reward — dedication indeed.

ONE MORNING AT
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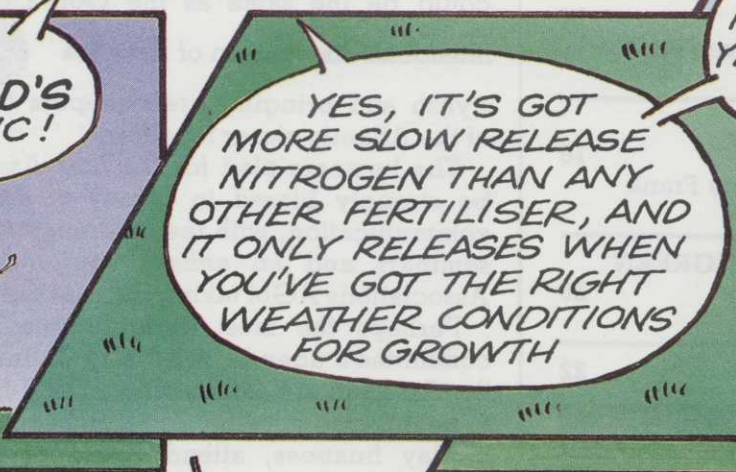
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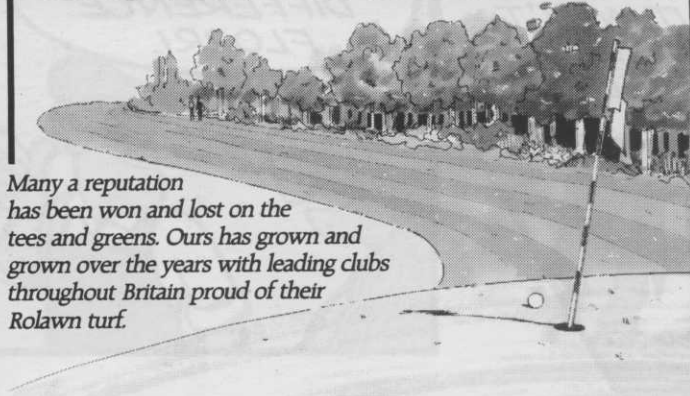
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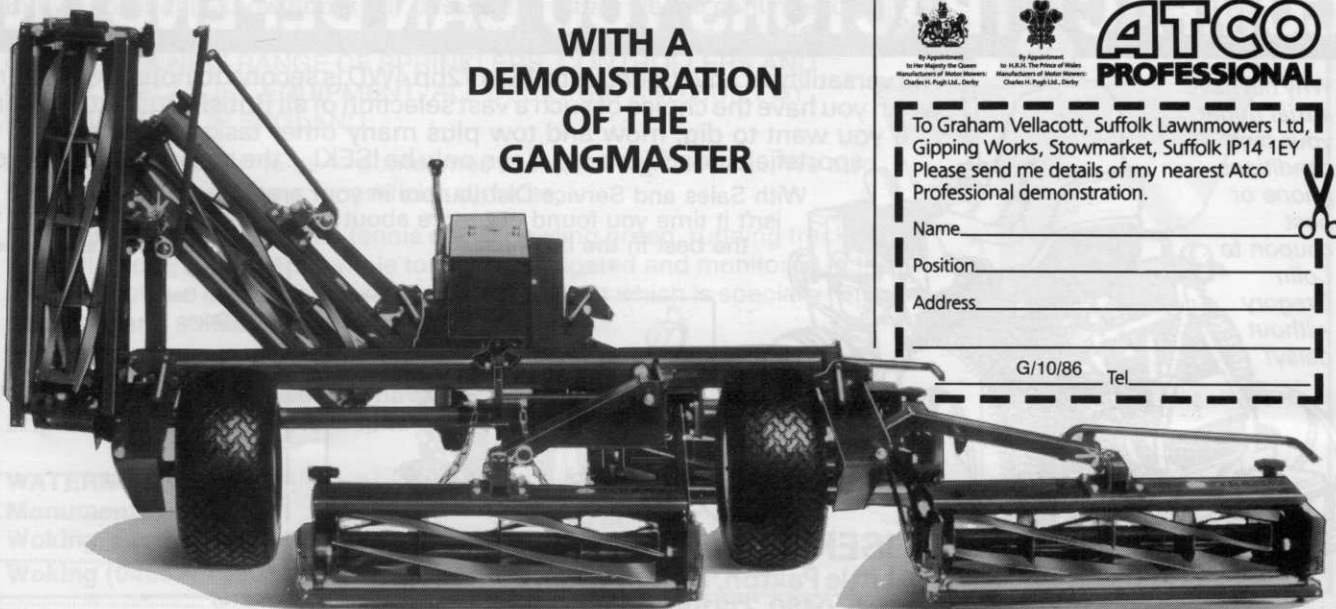
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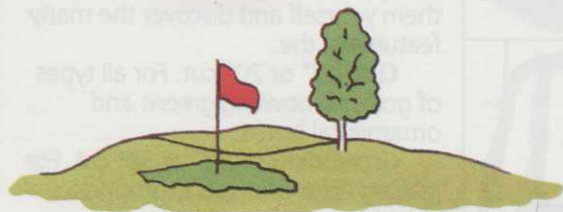
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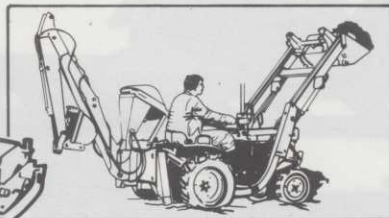
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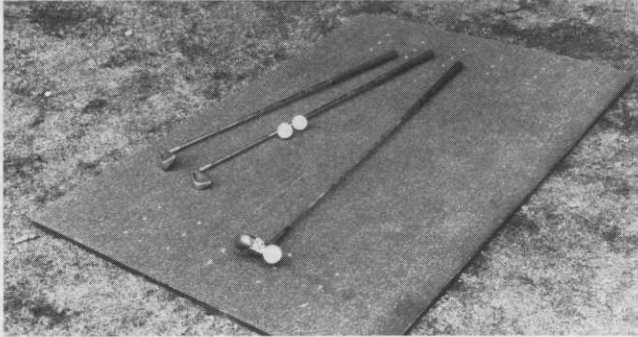
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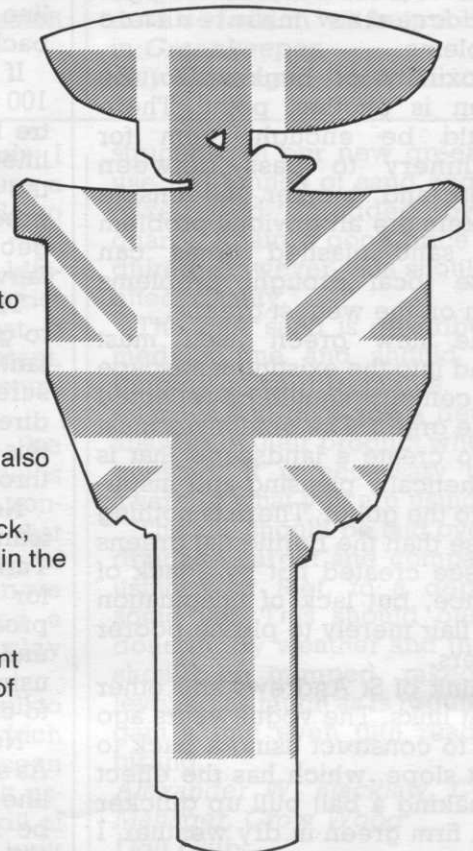
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Constructing A Golf Green

GOLF course construction is a topic of great interest to members of our profession and many regard it as the most satisfying aspect in the wide-ranging skills of a golf greenkeeper. Surely, the greatest challenge any greenkeeper can undertake is the successful construction of a golf green?

Before embarking on this task, there is much to be learned from the existing condition of greens and tees. Many times we see hard-packed, thin turf in these areas, caused by heavy traffic and a lack of alternative routes from a green to the next tee.

Proper design can iron out such problems before they arise. Bunkering around greens should also be considered and, in some cases, it is better not to clutter the tee side of your green with bunkers, as this again concentrates wear around bunker edges and creates maintenance problems.

Proximity of bunkers to the green is another point. There should be enough room for machinery to pass between green and bunker. Greenside bunkers are an obvious problem and sand-splashed areas can cause local drought problems even on the wettest greens.

The new green itself must blend into the existing landscape and contours should be reflected in the green. The objectives must be to create a landscape that is aesthetically pleasing and inspiring to the golfer. There is nothing worse than the boring flat greens we see created not by a lack of finance, but lack of imagination and flair merely to please poorer golfers.

Think of St Andrews and other great links. The vogue years ago was to construct using a back to front slope, which has the effect of making a ball pull up quicker on a firm green in dry weather. I would even suggest some greens when kept in a firm condition are

unsuitable for play because of initial design. Design is important and careful thought at this stage will influence the quality in years to come.

Construction of the green is best attempted by a system of pre-planned stages. First, a rough plan should be drawn up, detailing shape of green, hazards, drainage, potential problem areas, etc. This allows the committee to see your proposals and is necessary for reference throughout construction.

A cost estimate will also be required. This should include hire of a turfcutter, digger, trencher, sand, soil, drainage, time and labour and should be presented to the committee for approval.

It is very important that the greenkeeper keep a copy of all information given to the committee. This may help thwart members who would have you deviate from your plans.

The site I intend elaborating on has a slight slope facing the original fairway. The first step is to mark out the greensite. This is best accomplished by using an engineer's chain (100 feet in length) and measuring the new hole from the back of the tee (two club lengths) through the centre line of the new fairway to the back of the greensite.

If marker posts are placed at a 100 feet centres through the centre lines, it is obvious the centre line of the fairway is the same as the greensite. The shape of the green can then be outlined geometrically either side of the fairway centre line.

This may seem a lot of trouble to go to, but alignment is important and, if used, this method ensures the green is facing the right direction. If mistakes are made at this stage, they will be reflected throughout the construction.

Next step is to remove the existing vegetation from the site. Turf can be lifted and laid aside for turfing bankings and approaches, but if vegetation is undesirable, it is better to spray using a powerful, total weedkiller to clear the site.

Now to mark the green's shape. As stated earlier, using the centre line marker posts, the shape can be marked geometrically either side of the line using white marking compound. Some green-

keepers prefer to use a shallow trench.

Digging out the site involves using excavation equipment, which can either be hired in the form of a Hymac or JCB or, as in my case, a Back Acter digger.

In many situations, the excavated soil can be quite safely mixed with sand and used in the top mix for the green. In my case, where the soil has a very high clay content, this was unadvisable and we used the dug out soil to ring the green for banks and to outline bunkers.

When the greensite is dug out, the next step is to install drains to the green. Herringbone or grid patterns can be used, but I think the herringbone system is probably more versatile and can be used on most sites.

It is important that the whole green is covered by the drains. If a herringbone system is used, the main drain should follow through the centre of the greensite with laterals spaced at 4 to 5 yards alternately along its length.

The drains should be dug approximately six inches into the soil of the excavated site. This is best done manually. Perforated plastic pipe of 60mm to 80mm is best for the job and special plastic Y junctions should be used to connect laterals to the main. The drains should then be covered to soil level using gravel.

A couple of wet days usually helps to prove the system and any error can be corrected at this stage.

Now it is time to peg out the greens. The top of the pegs should indicate the intended surface contour of your green. Commercial contractors use a theodolite for this purpose. However, greenkeepers traditionally use a spirit level and board. The end result is the same.

When pegs are set to desired levels, it can be useful to paint the top nine inches representing the top mix. This, in turn, gives a good guide for sub-grade drainage carpet levels, which should reflect the intended green surface.

When hauling tons of gravel, it is essential to have a good road into the site. Some greenkeepers use old railway sleepers for this purpose and it is well worth spending a few days getting it right as