



damage is done," Peter said. "Another factor we have to contend with is the wind. Spraying, fertilising, etc, have to be done early in the day as calm periods are often few and far between.

"The free-draining land makes the course playable all the year round, which means more play when neighbouring courses are closed. I also find that grass growth tends to continue well into the end of the year.

"I have an excellent relationship with the members, club secretary and green committee, who have seen how the benefits of careful planning and investment in the course over the past few years have raised the standard of the maintenance programme.

"At one time, topdressing was done infrequently. Now it is carried out four times a year. Having modern trailers and a mechanical bucket for the tractor allows all construction work to be undertaken by the greenkeeping staff instead of relying on contractors who are often unskilled.

"We have provided the professional with a practice ground by re-routing the 18th fairway and construction of new tees and bunker improvements have been extensive, but there is still a lot to be done.

"Equipment sheds have been improved to provide a machinery maintenance workshop separate

from the storage area and greenkeepers' messroom and staff numbers have been increased from three to four.

"Our range of machinery consists of a Ford 3000 Tractor with mounted 5/7 gang units for fairways and semi-rough, which are mowed with this equipment between April and October after which we use a set of Ransomes trailer gangs to eliminate tractor wheel marks. We also have a Hayter Rotary for the semi-rough.

"We possess two Ransomes 171 hydraulic triplex mowers, both in excellent order and used mostly for tees, aprons and verticutting, and a spare set of ten-bladed greens units mow the greens about a dozen times a year.

Hand-mowers

"Most green cutting is done with hand-mowers daily with the Ransomes Auto Certes. Cutting the greens at weekends entails an early start, but it is well worth the effort to present a smooth, sleek putting surface. Since adopting the policy of using pedestrian mowers two years ago, I am convinced it has resulted in a much higher standard of greensward.

"We have a Kubota four-wheel drive 27hp tractor, which is indispensable for construction work and well able to cope with the terrain's hilly nature. A

Cushman with all the necessary attachments has helped revolutionise many routine jobs.

"Last winter, we decided to improve one of our deep bunkers by revetting, Scottish style, the face with turf. The major problem was calculating the amount of turf required. After enquiries, I could not find a company able to supply turf at the desired thickness of two inches. Our course is a very compact layout with virtually no spare ground to lift turf. Eventually, it was decided to use a certain area, the only one available, after which it could be reseeded with a bent/fescue mixture and maintained as a turf nursery.

"The first step was preparing the bunker face. Then we made a simple wooden frame to help us build the wall at the correct angle of 65°. The frame consisted of two 2 x 1in pieces of wood, one length 7ft, the other 4ft, fixed together with a strengthener at the correct angle. A right angle was made with the two pieces of wood and a spirit level was attached to the 4ft piece. When the 4ft length was level, the 7ft one was at the correct angle to lay against the face of the wall.

"A foundation trench was excavated along the base of the bunker face. Dealing with the chalk's uncertain friable nature, it was not easy to prepare a smooth, level surface to lay the turf against. Next, we systematically



Peter Negus.

began to lay the back end of each turf in firm contact with the chalk wall. Where this was not possible, soil was rammed down at the back of the turf to fill any voids. The turf was laid in brick fashion using a turf mallet.

"As the wall grew, we gradually came in from the sides to achieve the desired shape. After reaching the required height, the surrounding surface areas were blended to complement the bunker. A ramp was constructed at the base and sand added.

"This was our first attempt at bunker revetting with turf and we learned a lot in the process. For instance, the slope of the ramp up the face was not sufficient to allow a fair recovery shot from the bunker floor. We have since altered this and made the floor more concave. We also adjusted the angle to about 60° by trimming back the turf wall with a sharp spade.

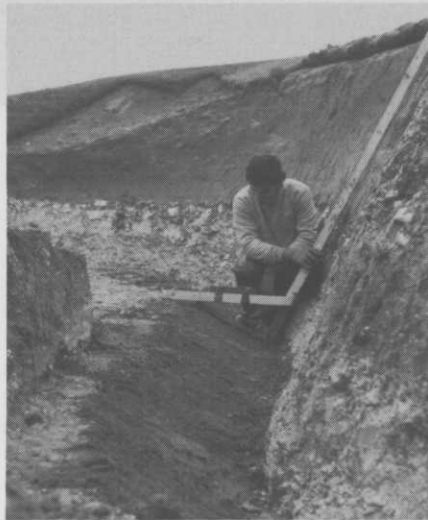
"After a few months, problems arose due to the turf wall being backed against the chalk. Soil used to fill the voids filtered through the chalk and gaps began to appear at the top of the bunker, but this has all been dealt with. The bunker is a great success, but whether we would build another would depend on availability of turf."

Peter supports the formation of one new greenkeeping association. "The bigger we are, the better and the more united a front we present, the more our views will be respected by everyone in the game."

He is also a firm believer in greenkeeper training. "All our



Old turf stripped from original bunker face in preparation.



Bank shaped and base ready for first row of turf. A wooden frame was constructed to maintain the correct wall face angle.



Final rows of turf laid. Edges were stepped down to allow for shaping.



Several rows of turf laid in early stages of construction.




The completed job!

staff have attended educational courses at some stage. The younger ones obtained City and Guilds 1 and 2 in greenkeeping. I also attended college for a phase 3 certificate.

"In Sussex, we have Plumpton College and were lucky to have

Nick Rigden responsible for so much greenkeeper training. Sadly for us, he has moved on to pastures new. I think a good college training, combined with experienced practical background, helps produce first-class greenkeepers."

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Surrey

In January, the branch held a seminar at Sunningdale for young greenkeepers to present talks and gain confidence in public speaking.

The evening started with a short introduction by Kenny MacNiven on A Need For Public Relations, which was very well-received by the audience of 50 greenkeepers.

The next speaker was Cameron McMillan, whose presentation, Father To Son, included slides of Sunningdale and the work methods of his father's younger days and how they are done today.

Jack stood at the back listening and proud to think he has brought into greenkeeping another chip off the old block. Well done, father and son!

The next speaker was Bob Thompson, head greenkeeper at the Hoebridge Golf Centre. His theme, Pay As You Play, was extremely interesting, especially to those greenkeepers in private clubs hearing that people queue up at 5.30am to play!

It's a wonder Bob manages to get any work done. He also discussed the problem of not having a head greenkeeper on the staff while the course was being built.

The third speaker was branch secretary Paul Pearse, whose topic was Surrey Golf Courses. Paul showed many slides taken on golfing trips around the county, going from heathland to chalk downs, parkland and clay. It is nice to know Surrey golfers have such a wide choice.

Finally, Jack McMillan gave a



A typical Surrey scene -
Camberley Heath.

resume on the formation of BIGGA. It seems everything looks well for the future.

Our thanks go to Sunningdale artisans for granting us use of their bar and club rooms for the evening.

•

The annual Vitax tournament takes place at Ferndown GC, Dorset on Thursday May 21. Six teams of greenkeepers representing the Midlands, mid-Anglia, Wales, south-west, Devon and Cornwall and the south coast will compete.

Organised by Vitax's amenity manager Colin Murphy, it is being supported by Vitax Key distributor Roffey Bros of Bournemouth.

Dear Sir...

I always read Jim Arthur's articles in *Greenkeeper* with interest. They not only match our way of thinking about how to treat Poa annua on greens, but also because they are easy for us amateurs to understand.

In *Yobs and yuppies (Greenkeeper, November/ December 1986)*, Mr Arthur wrote: 'Education must also extend to club members.' He also mentioned: 'Seminars and club evenings.'

I would like to bring your attention to another line of communication between the greenkeeper, his green committee and club members.

In the Netherlands, clubs have their own journals, published six, nine or 12 times a year.

The Eindhovensche Golf Club - 55 years young, with 18 holes and 800 members - started to seriously attack Poa annua on the greens two years ago, hand-in-hand with Mr L. Kappen Ing, the Dutch Golf Federation's agronomist.

At the same time, the green committee started to contribute articles to the club journal about the 'bad guy' (Poa annua) and the 'good guy' (Agrostis-Festuca). Written in a lighthearted way and not too long, club members read the series with interest.

Members know exactly what we are doing with the greens and why we are doing it. We get a lot

London

The seminar at Aldenham Golf and Country Club was a great success and my thanks go to Mr Phillips for allowing us the use of the club and to speakers Derek, Chris, Norman, Graham and John. Thanks also to Allan Moffit and John Cockburn for their valued support.

Anybody wishing to put a team into the summer league should contact me as soon as possible. This year, the format has changed slightly and the two top teams of each league go through to the quarter-finals.

We are busy putting together a programme for the year, so watch this space!

Michael Peters.

of questions and Shakespearean remarks such as 'Much Ado About Nothing.' And we are accused of having a Poa annua complex - the green committee is the talk, not of the town, but the bar!

We need simple information on topics such as the link from Poa annua, via fertiliser and water, to thatch and why the colour of the green is of no importance to a good putting surface and most of my information comes from *Greenkeeper* and *Golf Monthly*.

Perhaps the idea of clubs producing magazines could spread to the UK. The potential readership is vast and it should be given this simple message: 'To hell with Poa annua. Long live your fine British grasses!'

But never promise them a rose garden...

Rob Keunen, Green Committee Member, Waalre, Holland

Ed: Communication is the watchword of most successful and happy golf clubs and I am very pleased that you find Greenkeeper so useful in spreading the 'gospel.'

You and your fellow countrymen are to be congratulated on such an innovative publishing scheme. I know of no UK club producing a regular magazine - although, no doubt, someone will correct me.



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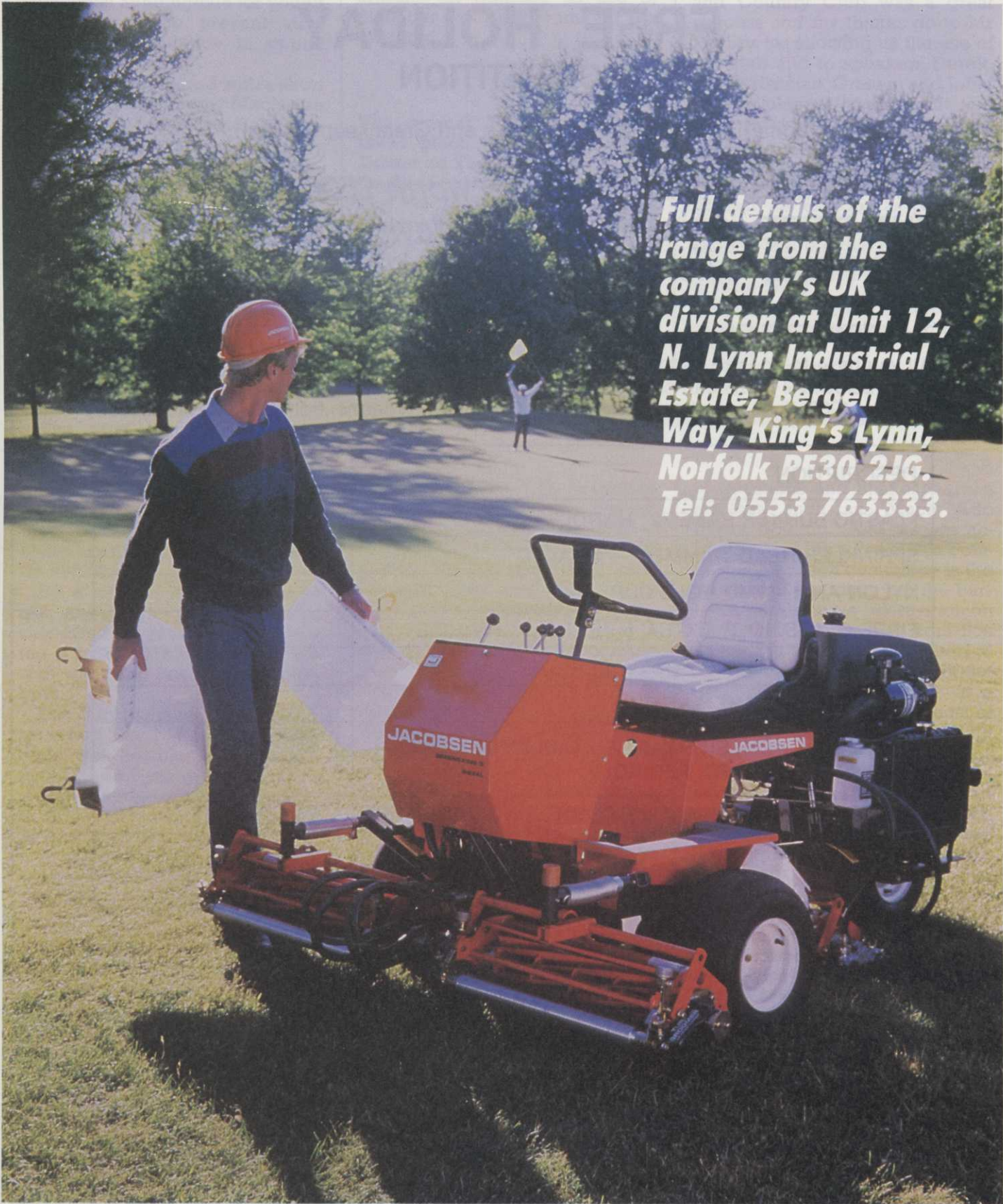
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3. Competition closes 14th April 1987.
4. All correct entries will be placed together and the winners drawn at the Greenkeeper magazine factory.
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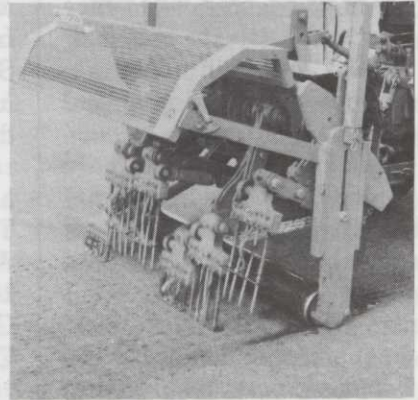
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Further Association News Round-Up From North of The Border

West Section: Lectures at Woodburn House are being well received both by Students and College Staff.

A Question Night was held at Cawder Golf Club in January and this was fairly well attended, a convivial evening was held by all.

Some internal problems have been encountered by the West Section Committee leaving us without a Secretary/Treasurer at the moment and this is being dealt with by myself and Committee as a matter of urgency.

Our Booklet advising all members of the West Section was to have been posted but this has been delayed at the moment.

A joint Seminar involving ourselves and Ayrshire takes place at Ayr Technical College on February 19th 1987.

A visit to S.A.I. in Edinburgh takes place in March and that completes the West Section's Winter Itinerary.

A. R. Connell

Ayrshire Section: The sections games night held just before Christmas was a great success, with 32 members in attendance, which I believe is the best attended games night yet. The Committee hopes this is a good guide to the future attendance wise.

The calendar for the year is taking shape with two meetings

later this month. The first is the joint Ayrshire/West Section Seminar at Ayr Technical College when the Sports Turf Research Institute will provide the Speakers on the 19th and the following week on the 26th is the sections A.G.M. at Prestwick.

The Spring Golf outing will be held at Stranraer Golf Club on Tuesday 7th April and the Autumn outing will be on Tuesday 15th September at West Kilbride Golf Club by courtesy of both Clubs Committees.

The Radix Students at Ayr Technical College are progressing through their modules successfully and they seem to be enjoying the enthusiasm shown by the Staff. Several Courses in Ayrshire have volunteered to assist with practical experience for the College until they can build up their own facilities. The Students in the second year have been taken on visits to the S.A.I. Seed facility at Ingliston and on the same day they also took in the Scotsturf Exhibition at Ingliston. They visited West Kilbride to see a Tee under construction and did some work on the visit. Future visits planned include Bunker construction at Ayr Belleisle Golf Course, Championship Course presentation at Turnberry Hotel Golf Course and Green construction at Glasgow Gables Golf Club. This exercise also lets the Students see other Golf Courses where they can compare types and layout with their own.

Finally, Mr G. Brown, Course Manager at Turnberry Hotel has

been co-opted onto the Section Committee, and we would like to welcome him to this position. The Committee feels sure that any contribution made by George will be both welcome and beneficial to the Section.

J. Paton

Central Section: A visit to Inverclyde Sports Complex at Largs, on Tuesday 20th January, was enjoyed by 17 members of the section and our sincere thanks go to Hugh Blair for giving us a very extensive and interesting tour of the whole complex and a full explanation of how it functions.

At a committee meeting held on Thursday 29th January, a very lengthy discussion took place on the new Greenkeeper's Association, with the Chairman and Secretary giving a full explanation of the set up so far.

K. Vertigan of SISIS wished to know what part of the Trade would be expected to play in the new Association and expressed the feeling that this should be clarified well in advance of any of the section's spring outings.

Section golf outings were proposed as follows, Spring 1988, Scotsraig, Autumn 1988, Schawpark.

A letter will be sent to all members of the section, encouraging them to give their full support to the new Association and to take a more active part in all the activities which are organised for everyone's benefit.

John Crawford

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Dear Sir

I was very interested to read John Campbell's article entitled 'Out on the Course' concerning course manager Laurence Pithie and Minchinhampton Golf Course in Gloucestershire, which appeared in the Jan/Feb issue of the Greenkeeper.

I myself work at Beverley and East Riding Golf Club in North Humberside, (which was also founded in 1889) as an assistant greenkeeper, where I have been for the last five years. What I found interesting about the article was that we at Beverley have a lot of similar problems as Mr Pithie. Our course is situated half a mile from Beverley on a patch of common land called the Beverley Westwood. Between the months of april and december we have cattle grazing on the common and course, sometimes as many as 500 but the last couple of years down to 160 due to new EEC

regulations on milk production. Usually we rely on cattle to graze down the rough but last year for the first time in club history we had to cut semi-rough. Our first job in the morning between april and december apart from routine switching etc. is to remove cow dung from fairways, greens, tees and bunkers with a shovel. Unlike Minchinhampton we are allowed to fence off our greens permanently which is a great help in protecting the putting surface. We have an automatic sprinkler system and are allowed to use certain weed-killers and fungicides usually when cattle are not present, as for fertilizer we use that too but not any organic fertilizer as the mess afterwards is horrific. We also have a full spiking and top dressing programme. Our greens are cut usually with our Toro GM3 or a 20" mower, our tees are cut by hand always and cutting around the wire

fences on the approaches is quite an art. Fairways are cut weekly with a Ransomes trail set of 5 gangs and we have just purchased a new set of 3 gangs for semi-rough.

Our most common and mounting problem is that of vandals, mainly at weekends, with flags being taken or destroyed. Also someone has an urge to go spinning around in a car on the fairways, nothing though to match the car in the picture shown in your article.

I was very pleased to see that we at Beverley are not the only club with these problems, I wonder how many other courses there are in the country with similar problems and hazzards as Minchinhampton and Beverley Golf Club. Thank you once again for an interesting and enjoyable article.

I.T. Collett

Assistant Greenkeeper

Beverley & East Riding Golf Club

Tridents Major Move

Richard Lawrence managing director of Trident Turf Supplies has announced the appointment of Roy Dagnall as amenity division sales director. Roy was previously with Rigby Taylor Ltd., and now joins Trident to take responsibility for the company's move into National Local Government Contracts. Commenting on the move Richard Lawrence said "Roy's vast experience and numerous contacts will be of great benefit to Trident. With an increased product range we are confident that we can satisfy all the needs of our growing list of customers."

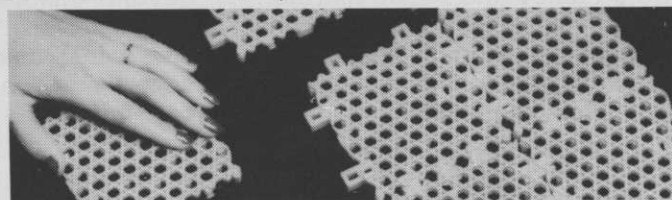
Deere on the course at Sunningdale...



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Deep in debt in the desert

GOLF in the Arizona desert is perhaps the ultimate in money gone mad. Land, clearly good for nothing, is converted at vast expense into golf courses so different from that which we know and understand that, in some instances, clubs have had to change the rules of the game. While in Phoenix for the GCSAA annual conference and trade show, I had the opportunity to visit two courses and play one of them, writes Michael Coffey

Both clubs, Desert Highlands and Troon, are surrounded by, and exist for, real estate development. Some of the statistics give a graphic account of how such clubs come into being - property at Desert Highlands, a development enclosed by a fence and with armed security guards on the gate, starts at half a million dollars and the price for a standard design home goes up to 1.8m dollars.

There are 27 greenstaff for 18 holes and the estate common areas, green fees are in the region of \$100 and you can only be introduced by a member. Members include US PGA Tour stars such as Dale Douglas, Tom Weiskopf and even the designer Jack Nicklaus, who recently competed in a members and guests day with his son. To be a member, you have to buy a plot, although you don't necessarily have to build - they start at \$350,000.

At Troon, the story is similar. you have to buy a plot then apply for membership, which costs an initial \$25,000 entrance fee, playing dues of \$175 per month and \$600 per annum for food and drink. The course, designed by Tom Weiskopf and Jay Morrish, recognises Weiskopf's win in the 1973 Open Championship and his winning mementos are in a trophy case in the spectacular clubhouse, which features English carpets, cherry wood from France and Italian marble.

The locker room has a gym, sauna, steam bath and plunge pool. So far, in the first year of operation, there are 62 members, but real estate sales were going well during my visit. The course, with its winter dormant Bermuda grass, is not nearly so inviting to play as Desert Highlands, although the two-tone effect certainly makes each hole stand out. Needless to say, there is a replica of the famous Postage Stamp short hole (Royal Troon's 8th) which somehow looks out of place with a backdrop of the Sonoran desert.

I played Desert Highlands thanks to Denver superintendent Dan Pierson, together with a friend of his and Howard Swan of Golf Landscapes. We all commented on Nicklaus's architecture, cost of construction, cacti, wildlife and the general opulence. STRI director Dr Peter Hayes was a passenger in our buggy.

Nicklaus designed this as his first desert course and it opened in 1983 with the first televised 'skins' game. The cultivated part of the course is probably only about 70 acres and is laid out among the real estate plots in such a fashion that every hole is separate. The practice ground is huge and, like the rest of the course, heavily contoured. There is also an amazing putting course, which features five par threes, an overall length of 1,087 feet and a par of 41!

Crushed marble

The golf course, as we played it from the back tees, is 7,099 yards, par 72. This month's front cover, taken from the 1st tee, illustrates the difficulties. The light brown, long 'bunker' down the left side is a feature found on most holes. It is finely crushed marble and forms a sort of semi-rough - you play the ball where it lies and it is known as the 'transitional area'.

A local rule, covering a ball hit beyond this area into the desert proper, reads: 'A ball hit beyond the transitional area into the desert may be played as a lost ball with the following option: drop ball in fairway at point where ball last crossed margin of fairway with penalty of one stroke.'

Going into the desert in golf clothing is not advised as the cacti literally come out and grab you, hence the warning that: 'this golf course can damage your health, (and pocket)! On one occasion when, having hit a shot straight right, I ventured into the brush,

picking my way very carefully, I found nine golf balls before I came across mine. I was evidently out of my depth as a golfer, as well as financially!

No one bothers to pick up the golf balls and when they strike large cacti near a tee, for example, they plug (again, no one bothers to prize them out). During the summer, when temperatures can rise to 120 degrees, the cacti cover up these holes to conserve moisture. The temperature inside the plant rises so high that the imbedded golf balls just melt.

Played from the back tees, the course was too tough for our party, not all the holes were well-designed and the examination of the golfer was not always fair or obvious. Much use has been made of little pimples and a succession of grass potholes, all of which penalise you heavily. None the less, the course was fun to play, although whether I could cope with being a playing member, I very much doubt.

Irrigation is obviously a major factor in maintaining such a course and the club is particularly proud of the fact that it only uses recycled waste water. I do not know the quantities, but they must be considerable as the local planning authorities have decreed that, in two years time, golf courses will only be able to use waste water and that it will have to be self-generating. In other words, to irrigate a golf course in the desert, you will need to have properties or an hotel producing enough for your needs. Water from the Phoenix area has to travel 900 miles with an average evaporation rate of some 40 per cent.

The uniformity of playing surfaces was excellent if totally 'artificial'. Greens were lightning quick and had many sweeps and considerable borrows. Landing areas, in the main, were quite wide, but there was a great premium on the correct line from the tee, making approach shots much easier.

With such a comprehensive irrigation system for fairway watering, each sprinkler head had the yardage to the middle of the green on it - a great help and, no doubt, a trend that will become commonplace over here in time.