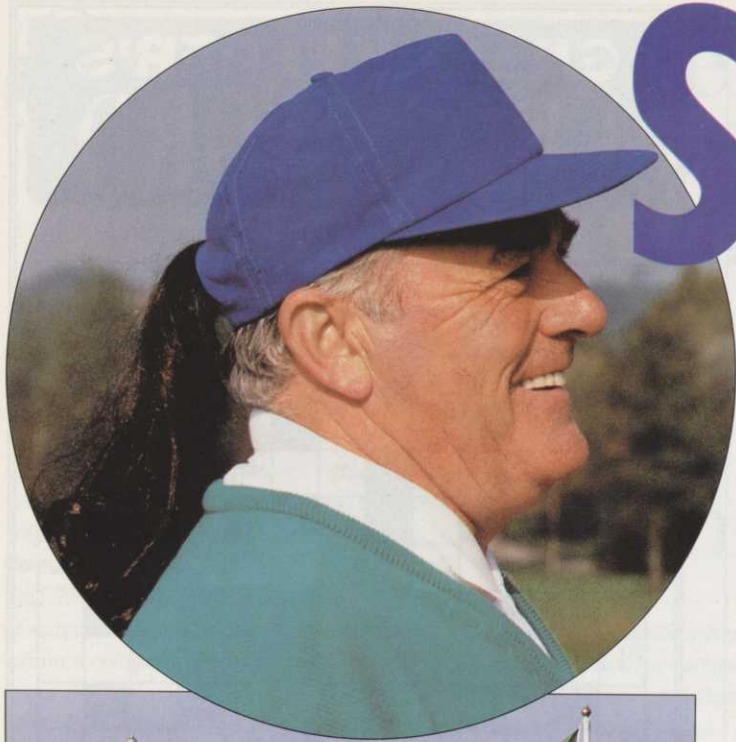


Second



The greenkeepers notched up a rare defeat in the Kubota Challenge Trophy. Chris Boiling reports from The Belfry

Drubbed. Trounced. Thrashed. Destroyed. Annihilated. Whipped. Licked. Walloped... There are some great words to describe defeats, and this was a great defeat.

Everyone expected the greenkeepers to retain the impressive Kubota Challenge Trophy. After all, they'd won it eight out of 11 times, and in the semi-final of this year's event at The Belfry they whipped the English Golf Union 6-2. But the Golf Foundation were also on form. They knocked out the Secretaries, the only other team to have won the Kubota Challenge, by the same margin.

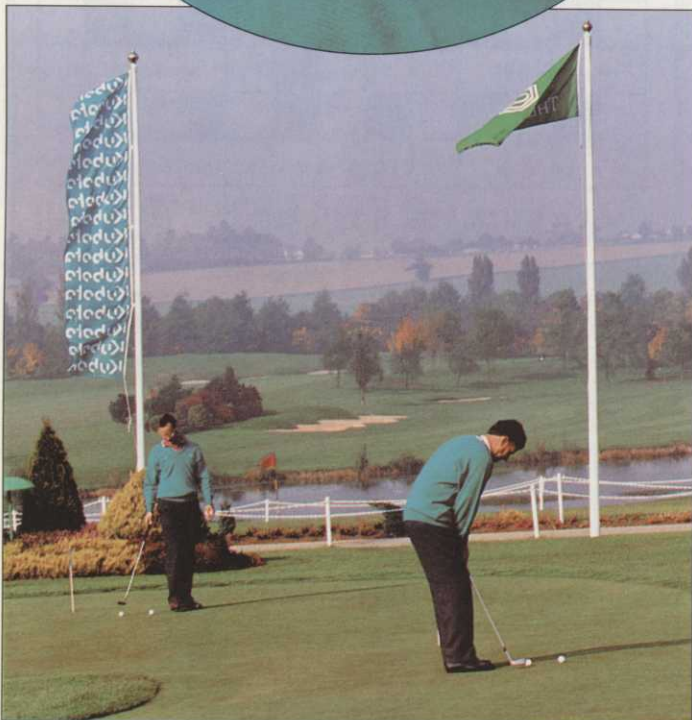
It was clear early on in the final that the Golf Foundation weren't going to be charitable to the greenkeepers. Paul Pearse came in after nine holes five down. Paul Loffman was three down. John York and Dean Cleaver were both four down. Only Duncan Gray and Bert Cross were up, by one hole. Malcolm Lathan and Roger Tydeman were all square.

Over the second nine, Paul Pearse staged a magnificent comeback and was standing on

the 18th tee all square. Then he drove into the water... Malcolm Lathan, in the match behind, offered the greenkeepers' supporters (well, me and BIGGA chairman John Millen) a glimmer of hope by posting a 3/1 victory. Then came defeat upon drubbing upon disaster. Duncan Gray squandered his lead and lost 2/1. Paul Loffman never recovered from his early mistakes and lost 3/2. Bert Cross lost by two holes. Roger Tydeman let things slip over the back nine and lost 4/2. John York never stood a chance against his opponent and did well to lose 4/3. Dean Cleaver was beaten 3/1.

This meant that in this competition's 12-year history, the greenkeepers had played 24 matches and now been beaten four times. Ah well, I suppose it's not a bad record.

While the boys were pondering this afterwards in Kubota's tent by the 10th tee, we were given a clue as to why the Golf Foundation won so convincingly. Organiser Peter McEvoy, twice British amateur champion, was challenged to drive across the water to the green on the short par 4



Pictures:

Top: hair we go - trend-setter Bert Cross

Above: Roger Tydeman and John York practising - obviously not hard enough!

Near right: Paul Loffman at the first hole

Right: Malcolm Lathan sinks a birdie putt on the 9th hole to square the match at the halfway stage. He was the only greenkeeper who went on to win



best



10th. During the competition only Paul Pearse had made it to the putting surface. Peter had two attempts and failed. Then Golf Foundation's 15-handicap teenager Phil Cotton, whose father is a pro, had a go – and promptly smacked his ball on the green with a 3-wood.

One consolation for the greenkeepers is that they won the Drive and Pitch competition. Mind you, losing that would have been an even bigger embarrassment than losing the Kubota Challenge since it involves driving a tractor through an obstacle course and pitching into a bucket. The greenkeepers were handicapped by having larger tractors and Duncan Gray, whose hobby appears to be collecting cones. But at least he didn't crash his tractor into a barrier – that was left to Kubota's Brian Hurtley.

In the other match the Secretaries beat the English Golf Union 4.5-3.5.



**Pictures: Top: Paul Pearse stages a magnificent comeback – until the 18th
Above: They think it's all over – it is now. Duncan Gray loses the 16th
Right: Paul Pearse – a study of concentration
Below: John York shows Phil Cotton how to take a divot**



KUBOTA CHALLENGE

- 1 Golf Foundation
- 2 Greenkeepers
- 3 Secretaries
- 4 English Golf Union