

Greenkeepers' opinions sought to shape policy

Greenkeepers are being called up to assist with a survey of pesticide usage on golf courses to be undertaken by the Central Science Laboratory, an executive agency of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.

The information collected from the survey will be used to make estimates of the quantities of pesticides used nationally. This in turn will allow the Advisory Committee on Pesticides to answer questions on its usage and make recommendations to the Government upon which official policy can be based.

The survey group contacted and obtained approval to conduct the survey from the R&A, BIGGA, the golf unions of England, Scotland and Wales, Royal Holloway

College and the European Golf Association.

"A number of courses throughout Britain have been contacted and some replies have already been received," explained David Garthwaite of Central Science Laboratory. "The quality of the completed questionnaires has been outstanding with extremely useful and detailed data being provided," he added.

However the survey group still require more returns in order to make the final report statistically valid and useful both to CSL and to the golfing bodies which have lent their support.

The group is interested in the total quantities of pesticides applied to fairway, green, tee and other areas of the golf course.

"Pesticides" includes insecticides, fungicides, herbicides, molluscicides, growth regulators, worm and mammal control (moles and rabbits) and repellents applied to young trees etc to prevent browsing.

It is intended that a full report on the usage of pesticides on golf courses will be produced and that a copy of the report will be sent to everyone who participated. All information collected is strictly confidential and data relating to individual courses will not be disclosed.

If you have recently received a questionnaire and have any queries on it or would like to take part in the survey please contact Joanne Hartley or David Garthwaite on 01582 715241.

Duke of York to open The Duke's Course

The new 18 hole course at St Andrews is to be known as The Duke's Course and Royal golf addict The Duke of York will attend the inaugural opening of the par-72 7,200 yard course on July 16, just before The Open Championship is played over the town's more famous course.

The course, designed by five times Open Champion Peter Thomson, is two miles inland from the Old Course at Craigtoun Park with panoramic views over the town and the coastline. It is St Andrews' first inland course and will add to the existing 99 holes of links golf the home of the game has to offer.

The course will be open only by invitation or prior arrange-



ment until April next year when it will be available to the local community, general visitors and residents of the Old Course

Hotel, the local community and visitors to the area.

● Pictured is the 4th hole at The Duke's Course.

Outcome of Dunfermline's special meeting

The special meeting into the condition of Dunfermline Golf Club and the performance of the greenkeeping staff (see page 5 of last month's magazine) resulted in an agreement to put a course

policy document in place.

"We had a very constructive meeting. It lasted an hour and a half and many views were aired," explained Secretary, Bob De Rose.

"The positive element of it was that it was decided to produce a course policy document and this is being prepared with Head Greenkeeper Ronnie Cunningham's agreement. We are now in a position to build for the future," he added.

Mr De Rose said that recently he had made a point of asking visiting parties what they had thought of the course. Their

views, and those of the members, were that the course had improved over May and June and that it was now extremely tidy.

"It is fair to say there has been improvement on the course since the matter was first raised," said Mr De Rose.

Ronnie Cunningham agreed that the weather had improved since the end of May and that as a result the course had benefited.

"I'm pleased we are producing the course document and hope we will now be able to get on with our job of looking after the course to the best of our ability," he said.

Irrigation association swings into action

The European Irrigation Association has been launched with a view to defending the industry's interests before the European Community authorities and develop action plans in the following areas:

● Further the development, proper use, and standards of irrigation installations in all applications.

● Communicate information about the most recent technical advances as widely as possible.

● Carry out training programmes on irrigation techniques for specifiers, distributors, end-users, students or apprentices.

● Monitor the proper use of soil and water resources and promote research aimed at improving crop yields through proper irrigation practices.

● Promote the professional irrigation industry, residential and consumer products and explain its role in a country's economy and development.

● Defend the interests of the European irrigation industry.

These actions will be carried out within the context of a firm commitment to promote techniques which conserve water and environmental resources.

The Association membership is open to all professionals - manufacturers, dealers, installers or consultants.

More details from: European Irrigation Association, c/o Multiburo, 58 rue Pottier, 78150 Le Chesnay, France.

Ransomes on the up

Ransomes has reported a substantial improvement in its trading position and a reduction in the Group's nett borrowings.

For the six months to April 1 operating profits more than doubled to £11.9 million with pre-tax profits standing at £5 million compared to a loss of £5.3 million for the same period last year.

Nett borrowings have also fallen by £20.7 million from £88 million in April '94 to £67.3 million this year.

Sunny Southturf

Summer at last arrived at Motspur Park on June 21 when the sun blazed down on Southturf. On behalf of BIGGA members, many thanks to David Wood and Geoff Hills for a well organised show.