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Official publication of the British & International Golf Greenkeepers Association
OCTOBER 1992



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Greenkeeper International is the official magazine of the British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association and is published monthly at BIGGA Headquarters, Aldwark Manor, Aldwark, Ane, York YO6 2NF. Tel: 03473 581/2 • Fax: 03473 8864

Please address all advertising, subscriptions and address changes to BIGGA.

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Circulation is by subscription. Subscription rate: UK £34 per year, Europe and Eire £44. The magazine is also distributed to BIGGA members, golf clubs, local authorities, the turf industry, libraries and central government.

Editorial Offices

All magazine contributions should be sent to: The Editor, Greenkeeper International, 13 Firls Close, Seaford, East Sussex, BN25 2HL. Tel: 0323 891291. Fax: 0323 895593. Although every care will be taken, no responsibility is accepted for loss of manuscripts, photographs or artwork. Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Association and no responsibility is accepted by the Association for such content, advertising or product information that may appear.

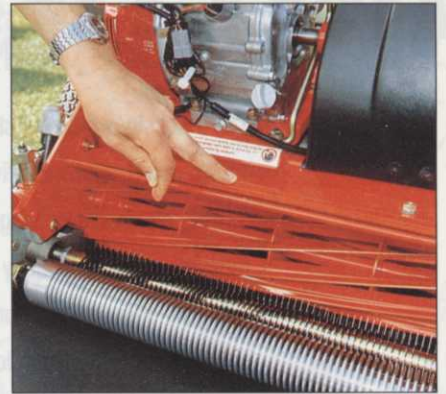
ISSN 0961-6977
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GREENKEEPER International

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COVER PICTURE:

Jim Byrne, overall winner in another exciting Iseki Championship. Details and pictures, inside



The BIGGA Turf Management Exhibition and Seminar Programme is now recognised as the industry's most significant indoor event. Contact Debbie Savage on 03473 581 for a BTME 1993 Information Pack and find out how your company can take part.

Greenkeeper Education and Development Fund

Launched by Viscount Whitelaw at BTME 1992, the Fund provides the key to the future for greenkeeper, golf club and game. Individuals and companies can join the Golden Key Circle and Silver Key Circle. For details, contact BIGGA on 03473 581.

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■ Ransomes has announced a key appointment within their sales and marketing department. Christopher McGowan will join the company as divisional sales and marketing director this month. McGowan joins Ransomes from Benford Ltd (BMC Group plc), where he has been the sales and marketing

director for three years.

■ Kubota (UK) Ltd, engines has appointed Glasgow based Duncan Rogers (Engineering) Ltd - DRE Ltd - as its new engine dealer for Central Scotland and Northern England. Diesel engine specialists for 17 years, DRE Ltd will service Central Scotland from their Glasgow depot. The company will be responsible for the sales, service and parts support for Kubota's extensive range of diesel and petrol engines - power output from 3hp - 100hp. In addition, Kubota has appointed Sutton based SES Engine Services Ltd as a replacement engine dealer for the South Eastern region, covering Kent, Sussex and Surrey.

■ De Vere Hotels, owners of The Belfry, have invested £500,000 in remodelling the world-famous Brabazon Course, venue for next year's premier golf event, the Johnnie Walker Ryder Cup.

The development improves spectator viewing and will offer the players a fresh challenge as 10 of the course's holes have also been transformed by the introduction of new tee positions or remodelled fairway and green bunkering.

Dave Thomas, one of the course's original designers and the man responsible for the alterations, said: 'It is very exciting when you can go back and do some of the things you would have liked to have done originally and I think the results of the latest work are absolutely marvellous.'

■ Greenkeeper International joins with the many friends of Bill McIntire in wishing him a healthy and happy retirement after 41 years of service at Whitefield GC.



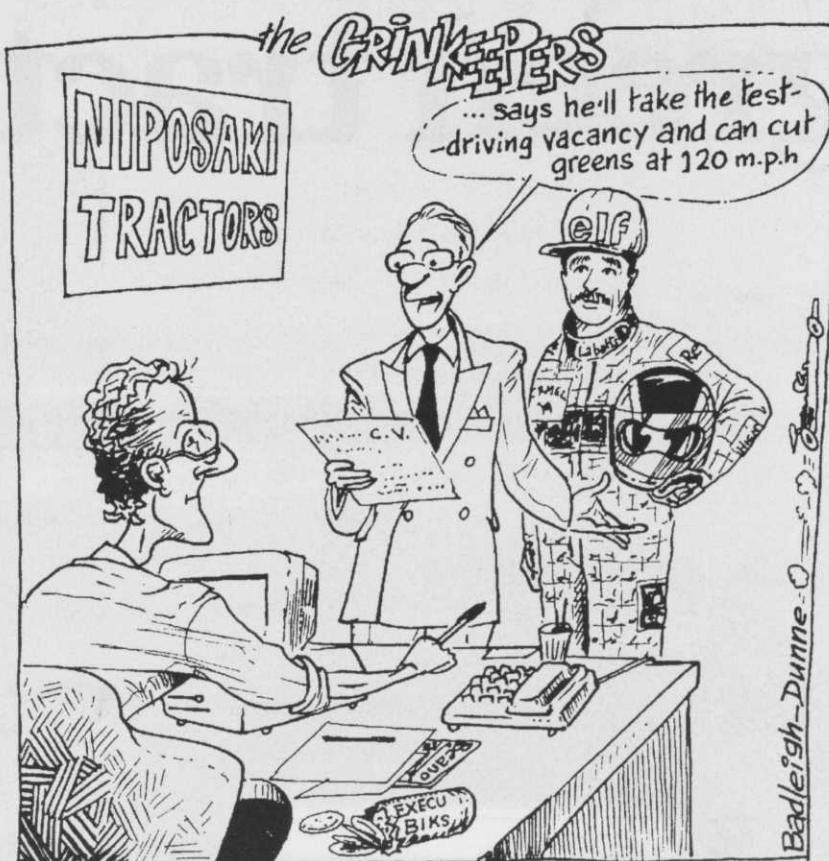
■ West Country Groundcare of Axbridge have appointed Steve Sheppard to set up their new workshops at Backwell, near Bristol. Steve has spent 21 years as service manager with Garden and Lawn Equipment of Bristol and has specialised in Toro and Wheelhorse equipment.

■ Course Care, the leisure division of Highspeed, have appointed David Smith as their new agent for East Cornwall, Devon and Somerset. David will provide advice on the maintenance and operation of turf machinery. Course Care provide a range of consumables which include high quality lubricants and greases, hydraulic oils and wetting agents; as well as a diesel fuel treatment to prevent black smoke from exhausts and to protect equipment whilst not in use. Free phone: 0800 590069.

■ Having started their partnership in July, McMillan-Shiels have succeeded in bringing their first course to the point of opening. The Wildwood in Surrey has 13 holes ready for play ahead of schedule and the remaining holes will be open in spring 1993. Jack McMillan and George Shiels have overseen the construction and growing-in and will continue to monitor its maintenance in the years ahead.

A second major project at Leek Wootton for the Golf Fund, a 45 hole complex, is almost complete and is scheduled to open in 1993, developed under their watchful eye.

As one course opens the partnership has begun to plan its next major project. Working with Tommy Horton and Bob Dalton, McMillan-Shiels are involved in the specification and project management of an 18 hole complex at Windlesham in Surrey. Work is scheduled to commence in the spring of 1993.



■ Readers should be suitably impressed by the splendid performances of George Brown (Turnberry) and David Whiffen (Dumfries & County) when representing Scotland in the Ford National Team Championships, held recently at The Belfry. Not only did these players perform with great skill in winning for Scotland, but they are two greenkeepers who won through to the finals from an original field that was whittled down from over 35,000 entrants! How many other professions, I wonder, could produce such a galaxy of golfing talent - well done Scotland, well done greenkeepers.

■ Jon Allbutt has indicated that plans are afoot for the staging of a refresher course - to be held in Surrey - aimed specifically at head greenkeepers, secretaries and green chairmen. The course will cover PA1 and PA2 training and testing for spraying. Interested parties should call Jon on 0959 575575 for details.

■ The recent highly successful GA European Open, staged at a gorgeously prepared Sunningdale, was overshadowed by sadness following the accidental death of Zarka Smith in a mysterious motorcycling tragedy, no other vehicle being involved.

Zarka, a young lady student member of the GCSAA, was on placement at Sunningdale under the watchful eye of course manager Lawson Bingham and was a hugely popular member of Lawson's crew. Our deepest sympathy is extended to Zarka's family in their tragic loss.

■ Five of the country's leading suppliers of turf care equipment and chemicals have joined forces to present a working demonstration designed to show visitors the latest developments in the maintenance of turf. The event, which has been organised by Lloyds of Letchworth in conjunction with Hardi Sprayers, Kubota (UK), Sisis Equipment and Vitax, will be staged at the ICL (North Herts) Sportsground, Letchworth on 21 October from 10.30am until 3pm.



■ GB Irrigation Ltd has moved into new offices at 20 Market Place, Ringwood, Hants BH24 1AW (Tel: 0425 473329). They are also expanding, and Roger Sunderland, (pictured), has joined the company. With over 24 years in the irrigation business, Roger brings a wide range of design, service, technical and administrative skills to add to that of the rest of the team.

The company, set up by Gordon Bennington in 1991, has already completed a number of projects. Those completed or in progress include Galashiels, Saltburn, Hawkstone Park, Winchester, Bristol, Oxford, Heathrow, Bournemouth, Work-sop, Manchester and Dorchester.

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by DAVID WHITE

The new STRI publication, *The Care of the Golf Course*, is a compilation of many of the articles written by members of the STRI advisory staff, the vast majority published over the last five years in bulletins and leaflets issued by the Institute.

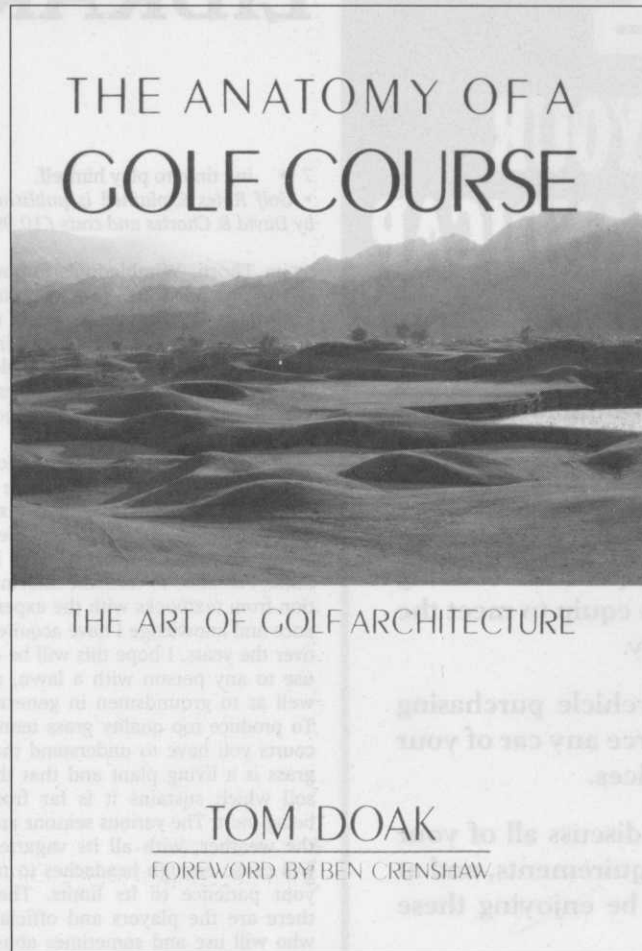
Thus it must be understood that there is nothing entirely new within its pages, though as a source of reference it will certainly find new and appreciative readers, including college students, those of mature understanding and those seeking to grasp the intricacies of greenkeeping.

In truth, the need for such a book is well overdue, for it contains all that the student, greenkeeper or green chairman will need to ensure that practical husbandry is conducted according to accepted and proven practice, leaving nothing to chance.

To quote from the introduction, "Much has appeared in print, but scattered through various books, greenkeeping magazines, scientific journals and conference proceedings. The greenkeeper or chairman of green seeking a comprehensive source of background information on golf course management has therefore so far been deprived of an obvious single publication. This present volume seeks to correct that deficiency and provide a ready reference which can hopefully be relied upon to provide answers to the innumerable questions which arise during the day to day care of the golf course.

"The above should not be taken as implying that no useful book on modern greenkeeping currently exists. A number of invaluable works have indeed been published and to give a comprehensive picture of available literature, an extensive bibliography has been included at the end of the present volume. As an outstanding work on the subject, one might cite as an example Professor James B. Beard's "Turf Management for Golf Courses", published by the USGA in 1982. From a British point of view however, the value of this definitive textbook is limited by the climatic, environmental and managerial differences which exist between the US and UK golf course scenarios, and a specifically British contribution to the literature is therefore an obvious requirement...

"The editors of the current work, however, feel that a general (and not too technical) book giving reasonably detailed information on the range of greenkeeping problems which arise in British golf course management will be of value to all individuals involved in this exacting



and demanding task".

In providing such a splendid compendium of articles – features that prove not only invaluable but offer ammunition that can disprove the many 'crackpot' theories voiced by 'knowledgeable members' – the editors have succeeded in doing just that, and as such the book can be thoroughly recommended.

If I have one major criticism, it is the tiresome (and inconsistent) misapplication of capital letters to place unqualified self importance on certain unnamed persons, eg. Members; Editors; Ladies; Chairmen; Green Committees; Ecologists; Conservationists; Architects; Agronomists and the rest, though greenkeepers and assistants (notably not head greenkeepers) apparently warrant no such elevation. I am an editor, you are course managers; head greenkeepers; greenkeepers or assistants, no capital warranted, the use incorrect. This anti-capitalist demands the return of 'capital' punishment.

• *The Care of the Golf Course* (262pp) is available from the STRI, Bingley, W Yorkshire. BD16 1AU. Price £17 plus £2.50 p+p.

The Environmental Health Officer (writes Jon Allbutt) is the inspector for golf clubs whose job it is to enforce aspects of environmental health. He/she has been given the power to enforce the Health and Safety at Work Act and COSHH in

particular. From April this year he became responsible for enforcing the 'Pesticides Regulations'. This is a very new area of work and to help the inspector prepare for these new duties the Health and Safety Executive have prepared this excellent *Open Learning Course*.

The course is designed as a self learning package; set out in 17 sections of information with self assessment questions at the end of each section. It becomes a step by step guide to the Act and Regulations and would be ideal for the student, course manager, or indeed anyone who needs a good working knowledge of this important piece of Law.

The course manual contains flow charts, diagrams and charts that help with tricky areas – such as deciding which chemicals are subject to the Regulations; the routes for disposal of chemical waste and empty containers and the options available for the safe storage of pesticides.

The inspector will of course follow the detail of this course 'to the letter' – at least until he/she has enough experience to use judgement when conducting an inspection. This is potentially bad news for the club that is not conforming to the Regulations; has not completed staff training; does not have a sprayer that meets the requirements; no proper pesticides store that meets the criteria set out in guidance note CS19, and has not

completed Risk Assessments as required by the COSHH regulations.

This open learning package is not a substitute for the Code of Practice for the use of Approved Pesticides in Amenity Areas, rather it is a practical guide on how to comply with the Regulations.

• *The Open Learning Course* is available from HMSO bookshops and costs £16.

Many a 19th hole argument will be solved by searching the pages of the new edition of *Golf Rules Illustrated*, which is now updated to cover the new 1992 rules, revised in January.

An official publication of the R&A, this book presents the rules together with over 90 clear illustrations and is designed to provide an easier understanding of the rules. It concentrates in particular on those situations which cause most difficulty for the typical club golfer.

Obstructions, bunkers, out of bounds, lost balls, unplayable lies, water hazards, loose impediments, casual water – *Golf Rules Illustrated* will give a visual answer to these and many other problems. Quite simply, every golfer should be aware of the rules – why not carry a copy in your bag?

• *Golf Rules Illustrated* is published by Hamlyn at £7.99.

Golf Rules Explained, a highly acclaimed book now in its eighth edition, is widely acknowledged as the definitive work on the explanation and understanding of the rules of golf. This latest update includes commentary on the new 1992 rules.

'There are few games', wrote Country Life of the first edition, 'in which ignorance of the rules is so widespread as in golf. This is an observation on the game by one of its shrewdest observers and most gifted writers. He makes cogent comments and any golfer, however humble or eminent, could profit from reading it.'

The author enlivens his explanations (and warnings) with anecdotes from his long international experience, making 'Golf Rules Explained' an amusing and helpful aid to retain the rules in your memory. In his readable and enlightening clarification of the finer points of the rules of golf, Peter Dobereiner provides enough information to settle any dispute on the course.

Peter Dobereiner is one of our leading golf writers. He is equally well known in America as a correspondent of *Golf Digest*. In the UK he writes for *Golf World*. He travels the world reporting on major championship events, seldom hav- ➤ 8

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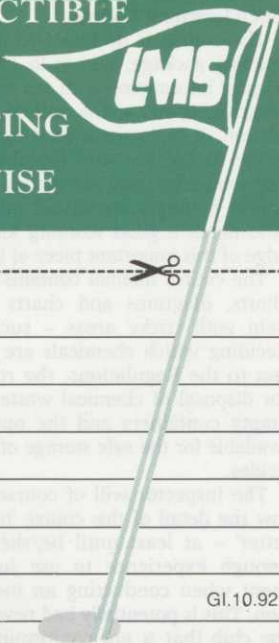
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7 → ing time to play himself.
• *Golf Rules Explained* is published by David & Charles and costs £10.99

Jim Thorn, Wimbledon's famous turf specialist, has over 40 years experience in the preparation of grass tennis courts. His interesting little book *The Lawns of Wimbledon* may well be of interest to head greenkeepers, for it contains much that complements golfing turf.

He writes: 'All the information required for success in turf culture is already available in excellent textbooks, but no book applies itself solely to tennis. Bearing this in mind, I decided to combine information from textbooks with the experience and knowledge I have acquired over the years. I hope this will be of use to any person with a lawn, as well as to groundsmen in general. To produce top quality grass tennis courts you have to understand that grass is a living plant and that the soil which sustains it is far from being inert. The various seasons and the weather, with all its vagaries, will cause enough headaches to try your patience to its limits. Then there are the players and officials who will use and sometimes abuse your efforts. At Wimbledon we don't pretend to know everything: but we are professionals who take great pride in producing and presenting grass tennis courts which, in the world at large, are second to none.'

• *The Lawns of Wimbledon* by Jim Thorne costs £5.75 including p+p and is available from the Wimbledon Lawn Tennis Museum, Church Rd., Wimbledon SW19 5AE.

Keeping the best until last, the new book *The Anatomy of a Golf Course* by Tom Doak deserves an honoured place amongst the classics of golf literature, alongside such architectural masterpieces as Hunter's 'The Links', Simpson and Wethered's 'The Architectural Side of Golf', Cornish and Whitton's 'The Golf Course' and Fred. W. Hawtree's 'The Golf Course'. All these are accepted classics in a sector of golf literature miserably lacking in quantity, though thankfully compensated for by works of the utmost quality.

Readers in this country may be forgiven for asking 'who is Tom Doak?', though we may be assured that he served his golf course design 'apprenticeship' under the watchful gaze of Pete Dye's legendary architectural staff and is now a high regarded architect in his own right, having designed and built courses throughout the United States.

What is more important, he won a scholarship from Cornell University to study 'the great golf courses

of the British Isles' and spent time as a caddie on the Old Course at St Andrews, the better to understand the thinking behind this great layout. Tom visited 172 different courses in Britain all told, photographing and notetaking as he went. To give but one example, a chance conversation with Walter Woods led Tom to visit Holinwell and Walter recalls that the end result, a private showing of Tom's slides, showed every nuance of this fine course. "It was", Walter told me, "a most enlightening demonstration of Tom's ability to see beyond the mere layout, for he had captured the whole strategy and spirit of the place in a single visit".

I will not spoil the reader's pleasure by giving too much away, but as an appetiser consider the following from a chapter titled Fair Play: 'The most common example of unfairness is the course designed under the assumption that there is some magic distance at which fairway bunkers should be placed, based on the average driving length of the Tour professional or the average golfer of the day. No matter the calibre of player involved, individuals at the same overall level of skill hit the ball different distances off the tee. It is absurd to place fairway bunkers to penalise one player more than the other. The only fair solution to the positioning of fairway bunkers is to avoid any repetition of distances. To illustrate the point, imagine a best-ball match in which the reader and Jack Nicklaus are pitted against Nancy Lopez and Lee Trevino. In theory, this ought to be a fairly even match; if it was played on a course which required 200-yard carries from every tee, the reader would be at a disadvantage, and if played on a course requiring 240-yard carries, it would be unfair because only Nicklaus could drive that far. Does not the same consideration apply to a course where all the fairway bunkers are 225 yards from the tee? And if our fictitious match were played on a Robert Trent Jones-designed course, with fairway bunkers pinching the landing areas 240-270 yards from every tee, would not the reader cry 'foul' because the course does not allow his partner to use the driver?'

Knowing why a golf course is laid out is critical to how the course should be played. Knowledgeable golfers, would-be architects, indeed anyone who ever sets foot on a golf course, will find the book fascinating - don't miss it!

• *The Anatomy of a Golf Course* by Tom Doak is available in Britain from Grant Books, Victoria Sq., Droitwich, Worcs. WR9 8DE, price £18 including p+p.

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The great water divide: the haves and the have-nots

Britain's greenkeepers are utterly divided. Not by accent; salary differentials; class; creed; religion; or the so called north-south divide; but by a quirk of geology that splits our great country into 'them that have and them that haven't' – abundant water resources, that is!

To illustrate this point, early in September I talked to a golf club secretary in Kent, who told me the problems that have bedevilled his part of the south-east throughout the growing season. In his case the club was forced (first by swingeing restrictions, then by a total ban) into a situation of having to purchase an additional tractor and a 1,200 gallon water bowser, at a cost exceeding £28,000, in order to transport final stage effluent (water one stage removed from domestic purity), bought at £5 per thousand gallons. He further explained that his club's location, just three miles from the Mid Kent Water sewage plant, made things somewhat easier in that he was able to employ just one member of the green staff to continually ferry back and forth and to distribute the effluent over the golf course. He pointed out that other clubs in Kent were less fortunate and were forced to rely upon contractors, often spending as much as £1,200 on effluent in a single week. As a result of such expenditure, some clubs have imposed an additional 'water levy' of a pound or two on all green fee paying visitors.

It comes as no consolation to those still banned clubs in the south-east to learn that the British trend is toward a wetter climate, with the 80s decade the wettest so far recorded.

The great water divide is, simply stated, one of distribution. From an imaginary line – say from Hartlepool to Weymouth – the north-west gets most rain, the south-east has more people, demands more water and has fewer suitable sites for reservoirs. It also gets less rain, even in winter.

Of even greater importance, the geological make-up of the north-west – high, hard and rocky ground sweeping down to deep valleys – provides ideal reservoir locations. The poor old south-east has softer rock – mostly chalk – which form the aquifers which absorb the lesser rainfall, storing it and eventually releasing it to rivers, boreholes and the like. About 17% of Britain's water comes from such aquifers, though our clubs in Kent, indeed much of the south and east, depend on aquifers as their only source.

To understand more fully the reasons behind continuing bans, we must set aside the fact that these are not causing problems *at the moment* just because rainfall has been abundant throughout August and September. Rainfall pattern records reveal that the east gets less rainfall in winter than in summer – period.

Grass and other plants need more moisture during the growing season (April-September) and any rainfall is voraciously absorbed, failing to recharge the aquifers. The drying out which occurs is known in scientific circles as a 'soil moisture deficit' (SMD), i.e. the amount of rain needed to soak the soil to a point where soil absorption is complete and aquifers can replenish.

Greenkeepers know that the SMD cannot increase indefinitely, for as the soil on golf courses dries out it becomes more difficult for turf to extract water and the playing surfaces begin to wither and die. There has been nothing typical in the recent south eastern pattern of SMDs, which in normal times begin to increase in spring, rising to something over 100mm in July, declining through autumn and (usually) ended by November to bring about a recharging of aquifers or reservoirs.

Rains from the Atlantic have of late tended to skip Britain



and the west-east shortfall has been added to by a lack of summer thunderstorms, resulting in SMDs that have lasted till early winter or even the following spring. In Kent and East Anglia, the SMDs of 1991 persisted throughout winter and the whole problem began again this spring.

The exceptional rainfall in early July and all of August has eased the problem – temporarily – and there are signs that reservoirs are being replenished.

There have been some unusual irregularities in past droughts, as witness those of 1975/6 and 1984. The first dealt a severe blow to southern England, with Devon, Cornwall and Somerset particularly hard hit as their reservoirs dried up. The latter affected the whole country for a few months, though the usually rain-blessed north and west experienced greater problems than the south and east. It was not until the heavy rains of early autumn that depleted reservoirs were able to replenish, having been down to as low as 30% capacity.

Talking to a National Rivers Authority official recently, I was told that despite the present drought there is more available water in the aquifers than in all of the reservoirs of England and Wales, though its use to supply golf courses and country gardens is decried as being a contributory factor in the decline of wetland areas.

Returning to those unfortunates from the south east, especially Kent and East Anglia, there can be but cold comfort in knowing the tendency for rainfall is to increase in winter, for very heavy autumn and winter rainfalls are vital in the next six months to lift the threat of water shortages next year. Clubs in the south east remain defenceless should the forecasters have their sums wrong and the meagre 1991/2 recharge rate is repeated.

If all this sounds unduly pessimistic, there may be a light at the end of the tunnel. One safe and sure solution, *always provided access to winter water is available*, is winter storage for summer use. This is not without additional cost and should not be undertaken without early consultation with the NRA, who are developing considerable expertise in this field. Coupled with the taking of expert advice on building lakes or other catchment devices, this may well represent the only rescue package available.

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