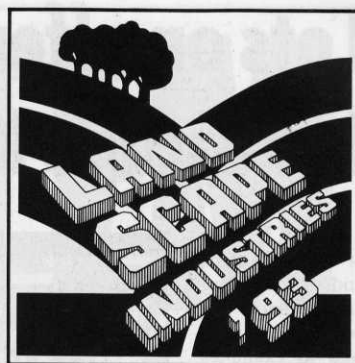


Landscape Industries



JUNE 9/10

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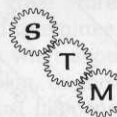
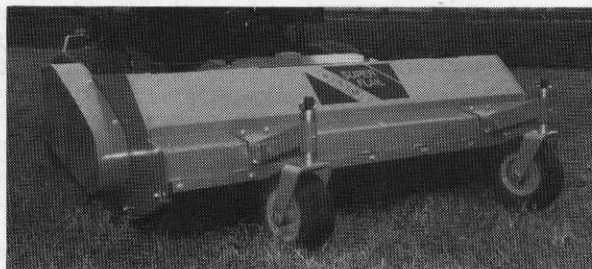
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Lots on offer at Landscape Industries

41 ➔ A number of sample signs and fixing arrangements will be on display as well as examples of signs supplied to industry, local authorities and wildlife reserves.

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- ET Breakwell Ltd, Ransomes dealer for Hereford, Worcester, the West Midlands and Warwickshire, will be exhibiting at this year's Landscape Industries show.

ET Breakwell, who this year will have a stand within the outside demonstration area, will be exhibiting a wide range of machinery for the local authority, landscape contractor and specifier market, including a comprehensive selection of machines from Ransomes. Two machines which will generate a large amount of interest will be the T-51D and Parkway 225 which were launched onto the UK market at last year's IoG show.

BEATING

Golf clubs today are the haunts of many a varied character, transcending social barriers and attracting both working class and aristocracy alike. In fact, regardless of your social history and given the right connections, just about anybody has a good chance of being accepted into an established golf club. The only qualifications required are a small knowledge of the game, a friend who is already a member, a willingness to part with a few readies and the patience to endure many years of waiting.

It has always amazed me how in this day and age of turbulent economies, business strategies and cut-throat competition that the golf club sees fit to maintain a never-ending waiting list. Surely the number one rule of business is to ensure the price fits demand. If demand is high then so should be the price. True, a golf club is not strictly a business, but it does provide a service to paying customers and the quality of that service is dependent on financial input. If people are not prepared to pay the necessary money for that standard of service, then they do not get in the club.

Assuming a golf club is efficiently run then the member pays the money and he or she has no right to complain: "Why is that society booked in today just when I want to play?". Because we must subsidise your annual dues. "Why then is the rough not cut on the fourth?". Because you are not prepared to pay for enough greenkeepers or equipment to have this done on a regular basis. "Why does it take me five hours for a round of golf?". Because the course is saturated with golf in an effort to keep down the subs. It's a bit like someone buying a Metro and then complaining to the manufacturers that it will not do 180 mph. Well, of course it won't, you've bought a Metro and not a Ferrari.

No doubt many club mem-

bers reading this will at this point be somewhere between slightly irritated and extremely angry. "But I pay a bloody fortune!" they will explode, as if that gives them the right to complain. Well, I will concede that in some circumstances that is the case, but in those cases standards are very high and there is therefore little to complain about. Generally speaking though, this fortune theory is somewhat debatable.

For example, if I want to play snooker it will cost me £4 an hour even though I am a club member. Let's call it £2 because I will split the cost with my playing partner. If I then play for as long as it takes me to play a fairly quick round of golf it will cost me $3 \times 2 = £6$. Quite cheap when you think about it. But if, like a typical club golfer, I play twice a week then my annual budget for snooker is £600, or more than the vast majority of golf clubs' annual subs. Six hundred quid just for the hire of a snooker table. But what if, like many a club member, I play four times a week. Twelve hundred pounds! I'd be better off buying my own table, which is a lot easier than buying my own golf course.

Strangely, the same thing applies directly to golf. If I find the cheapest 'pay and play' in the area, queue up for an hour and then take five hours to hack around a course filled with divots, novices, unraked bunkers and greens that would do Twickenham an injustice, it would still cost me ten pounds. If I then decided to endure that 200 times a year I would be paying £2000, or roughly three times the annual subscription of the Royal what-do-you-call-it just down the road. No wonder it's got a waiting list that goes into the next millenium.

Now having explained my argument that the average member of the average club has got a proverbial 'right result', I will admit that some members



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G THE SYSTEM

have indeed got cause to complain e.g. the member who plays infrequently and who perhaps joins the club as a status symbol, or a means of entertaining clients. He or she may only play ten or twenty times a year, but still pays the same as our old friend who whinges his way through 200 rounds a year.

Now surely, looking at this system rationally, something has gone drastically wrong. Why on earth don't golf clubs charge green fees to members? Not necessarily the full amount but perhaps five or even ten pounds should suffice. New golf clubs giving the golf business a fresh outlook often adopt this system, after all it makes sound business sense. To the best of my knowledge, no established members' club has yet adopted this system and are surely therefore sentenced to a life of catering for the daily fourball, where shoes are changed in the car park and where a half pint of shandy is only invested in on the rare occasion of a hole in one.

I am not advocating driving the avid golfer off the course, but surely golf is an expensive game. It involves the upkeep of a vast expanse of sports turf and if someone wishes to spend their life on it they should pay the appropriate dues. Besides, by charging a green fee to members, annual subscriptions could even be reduced and some members will actually pay less for their golf.

Now how did this peculiar state of affairs ever come about? Well, I have a theory. As we are all aware, golf in those far off days of the twenties was a game for the proverbial toff. Back in the days of P G Woodhouse and before, plus fours and hunting tweeds were the order of the day. I will strongly contend that at that time when so many of our golf clubs were being established, the subscriptions were actually higher than they are now. They may only have been four or five guineas but that would equate to

an average man's monthly salary or the equivalent of something in excess of one thousand pounds in today's money. Rural golf clubs and clubs in Scotland had annual subscriptions that were within range of the working class, but at these clubs overheads were extremely low. One greenkeeper, who may also have been the professional, together with a flock of sheep for mowing duties and fertiliser application, was quite sufficient for the upkeep of the course.

'Golf doesn't have to be prohibitively expensive, in fact for many it should be even cheaper than it is now...'

A steward, his wife and a part-time secretary took care of catering and administration in the clubhouse. The golf courses received considerably less play than they do now and it was common practice to close the course for the winter months. Courses were thus well able to cope with the odd obsessive golfer and so such individuals were not considered a problem. Annual subscriptions were therefore the simplest and most practical means of financing the club. They would have been fixed, as they are now, by the committee and it is there that the problem lies. Although the courses, traditions and the game's popularity have changed immensely the system of financing the operation has not for two reasons:

1: The committees are loath to change for fear of public opinion, amongst other things.
2: In the main, committee members are the very people who

would lose out if a members' green fee system were brought in.

After all, committees are elected because they are respected members of the club and that respect is gained by regular attendance. Their faces are seen all the time. If you don't believe me think of your own club committee, are they not regular golfers, Saturday and Sunday and perhaps the odd afternoon and evening during the week? Not only that, but are they not in regular contact with the more frequently visiting member? The result is that the members who play less frequently are the ones who have less say. The whole system encourages more and more golf from every quarter and the inevitable consequences are more and more problems. Golfing traditions have changed drastically over the years and I believe the subscription system will have to do likewise.

Now before I am tarred, feathered and expelled from society as some sort of militant revolutionary, let me speculate on the consequences of this fairer means of paying for one's golf. In my opinion, one of two things will happen. Either the regular golfer will not play so frequently or he will accept the additional cost and pay more for his or her golf.

In the first case, the course will be significantly less busy. This will result in improved course conditions, reduced maintenance costs and quicker, more enjoyable rounds. Alternatively, the powers that be may decide to make up for this shortfall in golf by introducing more members, thereby eating into the waiting list and increasing revenue.

In the second case, where the member continues to get his daily shot of golf but at a higher price, the club's revenue will be increased - to be spent no doubt with great foresight by the elected committee.

"But what about the potential champion, or the county captain who just happens to be a mem-

ber, they need somewhere to hone their skills?" Well, of course there is the practice ground, that is the place to hone any latent talents they may have. Hopefully they do not practise on the course anyway. At my own club we have an outstanding player but he is a relatively infrequent visitor to the course itself, preferring instead to obliterate the practice ground, which is quite acceptable under the circumstances.

"Ah! but what about the golfer who merely requires a bit of exercise in his retirement?" you may argue. "Surely it would be a sin to expect him to pay the additional fee?" Well, if the committee is worried about being labelled the slayers of the frail and needy, may I suggest a bit of diplomacy. A reduction for the odd minority group would be a tactful decision under certain circumstances. Personally, I am of the opinion that if exercise is all they require then voluntary work at a local SSSI or conservation area would supply their necessary work-out whilst at the same time being considerably more constructive.

I am not advocating a huge green fee for all members that would result in mass resignations, simply a change to a fairer system. I believe that all reasonably perceptive members will acknowledge that membership of a club that requires a five or ten pound course usage fee is infinitely preferable to the local pay and play, or to putting down a £2000 deposit for membership of a club that hasn't even been built yet.

Golf doesn't have to be prohibitively expensive, in fact for many it should be even cheaper than it is now. I do, however, believe that clubs ought to start recognising how popular the game has become and start changing to a fairer system of paying for the game.

■ The author, Marc Haring, is head greenkeeper at Camberley Heath Golf Club.

AROUND THE GREEN

Keeping in touch with news and comment from the regions

NORTHERN

Our lecture season has now finished and it was pleasing to see so many of our members attending. I trust you all found the presentations interesting and informative, whilst also enjoyed yourselves. Not many BIGGA members attended the quiz night, staged with our colleagues from the IoG, in fact it turned out to be a solo performance with Alan Gamble attending in isolation. I couldn't attend personally as I was at a secretaries meeting at Aldwark Manor, though Alan tells me he had a fine evening and did very well in the quiz. Thanks Alan, for waving the section flag.

Golf events are filling up quickly so don't delay in booking: £10.00 deposit to me at 49 Cornwall Road, Gilstead, Bingley, W. Yorkshire BD16 4RL. If you have not yet received information of our 1993 golf programme, please 'phone me on 0274 568128 and I shall endeavour to put it right.

Our friends in the trade are again being very generous, with Rocol Easyline Paints sponsoring our last mail-shot, Yorkshire Mowers again sponsoring our Invitation Day, Patissons the Roses Match and Chaplins our Autumn Tournament. Many thanks to you all, it is greatly appreciated.

The annual dinner took place at Shipley GC on Friday 19 March with some 70 members and friends attended, enjoying a first class meal and top rate entertainment. My thanks to those who helped make the night such a huge success.

As stated, our winter lecture series is over, the last being the Lloyds Workshop held at the STRI. I must thank Derrick Coad and his colleague Stan Duncan for presenting the workshop – very interesting with many pertinent questions answered. Thanks also to the STRI for the use of their premises at short notice.

Michael Lealman has become head greenkeeper at a new course being built near York, named the Forest of Galtres. We wish you well, Michael. It is with deep regret that I have to inform you that Ken Scruton, father of Gary Scruton of Greenkeeping Services, has passed away after a long illness. Condolences to his wife Mildred, and to Gary.



Are there any members who would like to attend a public speaking course and perhaps speak at BTME Harrogate, or even at the National Education Conference? Please contact me for further details.

PAT MURPHY

SURREY

'No news is good news' is a saying which often applies unless one is attempting to compile section notes with no golf events or lectures on which to report – together with zero information from within the section – then it becomes a 'no news is no news' situation!

By the time this appears our Spring Tournament

will have been played and the next section event, the Cresta Cup, will be looming. The Cresta is on Wednesday 8 June at West Surrey GC with entries closing on 25 May. Also please note that The Open is on our 'patch' this year and it would be good to see the Surrey section represented – either spectating or helping with the bunker raking etc.

Finally, would players in the Huxley Bowl try to play their matches promptly in order to keep the competition moving ahead throughout the summer.

ROGER TYDEMAN

AYRSHIRE

The first draw for the 200 Club, drawn at the Spring Meeting, means that results are not yet to hand as I write this in late March. However, winners will be announced in the next issue.

The Ayrshire Autumn Meeting will be held on 28 September at Old Prestwick GC, which should prove an excellent outing over this tremendous course. Also confirmed is a trip to the Stewarts of Edinburgh Turf Farm, for which a bus will be provided. This also should prove well worth while, for only today (Mar 31), Alan Miller told me that the recent weather had caused some of their newest turf to be literally blown away. They experienced very strong winds and with the ground being so dry the surface just disintegrated.

On the course maintenance side we are all busy

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getting our courses into immaculate order and right now I am preparing for the Scottish Boys Championship at the beginning of April. Imagine, 256 boys in the first round – who'd be a greenkeeper? But we all get there, so good luck to you all during the year.



Duncan is busy working down in England, so if anyone has anything for the magazine – fact or hearsay – call me instead on 0294 823210. I can just imagine the stampeede to get to the 'phone!
JIM PATON

CLEVELAND

Guy Longshaw gave a talk to our section on natural growth activators based on bacteria and fungi, which it is claimed will break down thatch into nutrients, thus reducing the need for nitrate fertilisers – we will wait and see. Temperature, which I think is vital, was not discussed. Another product is said to restore the natural balance of smelly or stagnant pools. Rex Kimberley also spoke, discussing organic fertilisers. Our thanks to Norman Sheddon for organising the meeting, which was well received by our members. In particular, we were pleased to welcome Brian Hall from the new course at Huntly Hall, Bretton, which is due to open in June. Another new course soon to open is Romanby, Northallerton.

Our section member Anthony Mears gave a slide show presentation to delegates at the National Education Conference recently, his subject being the Wild Side of Golf.

After the recent wet winter my club is programming a drainage policy, with a view to incorporating it into next year's budget. On heavy land, weakness in drainage is now so obvious.



Stuart Vickers is now acting as trainee first assistant at Brass Castle, Middlesbrough GC, working under George Malcolm's skillful eye.
BRUCE BURNELL

DEVON & CORNWALL

The section's March meeting was held at Woodbury Park GC, with lunch and an afternoon talk taking place at the Kings Arms, Otterton. Both venues are owned by the Carter family. Jeff Mills and his staff had the course in splendid condition and it was a pleasure to play our golf tournament over such a well designed new course.

Our golf comprised three competitions: The Supaturf Trophy for head greenkeepers & trade, the May & Baker Trophy for assistants, and the section's qualifier for the new Hayter Challenge Tournament. The results were: Supaturf Trophy 1st A.Ramsden (Budock Vean) 35pts. 2nd L.Millar (Warren) 34pts. 3rd A.Woolnough (Teignmouth) 33pts. May & Baker Trophy 1st M Scott (East Devon) 35 pts (results decided on back nine) from J Mitchell (Perranporth) 35 pts second and A James (Budock Vean) 35 pts third.

Qualifiers for the regional final of the Hayter Challenge Tournament to be held at Clevedon GC, Bristol on Friday 11 June are: (0-9) J Mitchell, A Ramsden, L Millar, J Welsford and R Whyman. (10-18) A Woolnough, B Ridgeway, E Barber, B Lewer and W Potter. (19-28) M Scott, A James, D Parr, N Macintyre and C Browning. Congratulations and good luck to all who qualified.

The section offers thanks to John Palfrey of Avoncrop for presenting the Supaturf prizes and to Paul Clifton of Rhone Poulenc for donating and presenting the May & Baker prizes.

Following lunch our educational talk was presented by Herbie Aarons on 'Golf Rules and Etiquette', his talk being most informative and one from which I am sure many of our higher handicap members gained valuable tips. I'd like to thank members who attended meetings during winter – as usual, you turned out in large numbers.

Our next meeting will be the section Guest Day on Wednesday 7 July, with tee times from 12 noon and a course tour and inspection for non-golfers starting from the club house at 4pm. Our evening meal will commence around 7pm with the new GTC education director, David Golding, our after-dinner speaker.

RICHARD WHYMAN



AROUND THE GREEN



LONDON

Congratulations are in order to all those who attended the recent pesticide course run by Jon Allbut Associates at Dyrham Park CC, for a 100% pass rate on PA1 and PA2a was achieved. Thanks to Dyrham Park for the friendly atmosphere and to Don Wilson for all his help.

Any members interested in training courses, especially tractor driving, chainsaw competence or COSHH, should contact me on 081 959 5629.

Finally, all those players who win our section golf events will go forward to represent the section versus Mid Anglia later in the year – thus giving everyone something extra to aim for – go for it!

TONY DUNSTAN

MID ANGLIA

The second winter lecture held on 2 February saw Jon Allbut presenting an update on recent developments relating to both Health and Safety and Pesticide regulations. Forty two members were entertained – the highest attendance figure for a meeting to date! Many thanks to Jon for a most informative talk and to all those who attended.

Our last lecture on 2 March was given by David Golding, the education officer of BIGGA. David gave an extensive talk on the topic of greenkeeper training in the past and gave some positive pointers as to its development in the future. Many thanks to David for his presentation, although it was disappointing to see only 19 members attending. Once again we must thank Beadlow Manor for the excellent facilities offered to us over the course of the lectures.

Section matches have been arranged against the London, Midlands and BB&O sections for later in the year, details to follow shortly. The final of the four ball knock-out competition will be played at Brocket Hall GC on 30 September and is once again being sponsored by Lodgeway Tractors.

Lectures for later this year and into 1994 are currently being arranged, as are other golfing fixtures. As soon as full details are available these will be published.

PAUL LOCKETT

NORTH WEST

Wednesday 24 March saw the last of our winter lectures staged at Bury GC, an interesting evening with David Furnival and Derek Hatton (No, not that Derek Hatton, the other one!), discussing lubricants. Some interesting information was divulged on how to get more miles out of your engine with lower maintenance costs. Unfortunately, the attendance figures were low, the reason being that Manchester United decided to play a home game just a few miles down the road on the same night – kicking off at the same time as our arranged start. I must write and ask them to liaise with me over next year's programme. That stated, I am sure Gary Worrell was delighted with the poor attendance as he managed to consume most of the sandwiches, prepared for thirty people!

May I remind those course managers and head greenkeepers who have received ICI Premier Greenkeeper Award application cards to complete and return them to me as soon as possible, our section nomination is required by 31 July.

The Spring Tournament will be played at Birchwood GC (Warrington) on Monday 10 May, this being a qualifier for the Hayter Challenge Trophy regional final to be played at Worksop on 9 June. The tee is available from 1.30 pm and tee times will be allocated on the day.

I will finish this report by thanking Bury GC for

allowing us the use of their facilities for our winter lectures, also head greenkeeper Dave Berry for organising the buffet on each occasion.

Have you any news to report? Why not contact me on 051 724 5412.

BERT CROSS



NORTH SCOTLAND

A welcome to Iain Bell who moves into the area as first assistant to Alan Dobbie at Boat of Garten. Iain has come up from Duddingston GC, Edinburgh. We also welcome new members William Morrison and Michael Nicol of Huntly and David Henderson of Bonar Bridge and Ardgay GC. David's club is currently a nine-hole layout midway between Tain and Dornoch on the old road. Last year they purchased some land adjacent to the course and I understand will soon begin constructing twelve new holes to go with six of those existing. It is an ambitious project as they are proposing to do much of the work themselves, raising funds through various ventures and obtaining grants from the region etc. We wish them every success and look forward to playing the new course in the future.

What with Bonar, the new course at Skibo and the upgrading of the Struie course at Dornoch we are certainly going to have plenty of variety for golf in the Dornoch Firth in the near future. Work has begun again on the Carnegie Course at Skibo. Over the winter Alex and his assistant Stuart Shaw have been putting in fairway bunkers and cutting back bushes for the contractors. I plan to go over sometime to see the progress being made. Perhaps I will report on it.

This month sees our Spring Meeting staged at Murcar Golf Club, Aberdeen and I hope to see a large turn-out of members. Chris Pearson is in charge and I'm sure he'll have the course well prepared for us. A forward date for your diaries is November 23 when we will have our AGM at Nairn Dunbar. I am hoping to arrange a tour around the three new holes to see how they are coming along with (maybe) a talk by the constructors.

Finally, if anyone has news which they would like to see in Around The Green, please call me on 0862 894402.

IAIN MACLEOD



SOUTH WALES

The last talk in our winter lecture programme was held on 10 March, with Huw Morgan discussing 'Spring Preparation at Southerndown Golf Club', his last presentation as a member of the South Wales section. I trust he will now join the Kent section of BIGGA. Our 15 April Spring Competition incorporating the Hayter Challenge Tournament qualifier will have been held at Llanishen GC by the time this appears, but anticipated successes will (I hope) see a large attendance at Clevedon GC Bristol on 8 June for the regional finals. Our sincere good wishes go to Dennis Archer, who in the near future will be re-admitted to hospital for a series of operations – come back fighting, Dennis!

PETER LACEY



SOUTH WEST

Hotfoot back from the conference at Keele, I must again report on very high standards all round. A very professional show from the Association, its members, and especially its officials. Keele University turned out to be an excellent choice of venue, being accessible, clean and comfortable. The towels in my room were so fluffy I could hardly get my suitcase shut! The auditorium was likewise comfortable, with all the latest high-tech viewing equipment.

It would be very unfair to single out one speaker, but again, as last year, our American colleagues were superb. High-brow technical knowledge was liberally mixed with grass-roots greenkeeping with which we could all identify. I certainly look forward to next year, when at Warwick University I would hope to see more members of this section.

Please keep the replies for FEPA training coming in – this valuable qualification cannot be ➔ 55

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★ Lucky winner of the April competition is LES GRANTHAM, of Dyka (UK) Ltd, Ashford, Kent.

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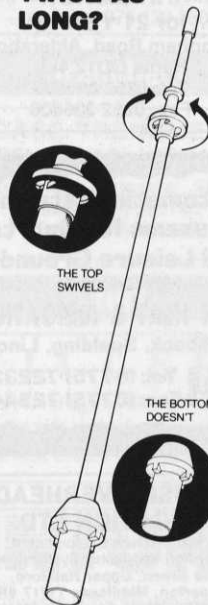
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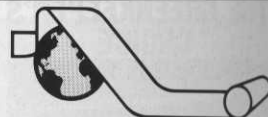
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Tenders



Maidstone Borough Council Local Government Act 1988 Grounds Maintenance Service

In accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1988 enquiries are invited from suitably qualified and experienced Contractors who wish to be included on lists of tenderers for the following contracts which commence on the 1st January 1994 for a period of 4 years.

(A) URBAN AREAS (3 SEPARATE CONTRACTS)

Cutting and Tending of grass, maintenance of sports pitches, bowling greens, planting and tending of trees, flowers, shrubs and other plants, the control of weeds and clearance of litter in Landscaped areas, Parks, Open Spaces, Highways and Housing areas.

(B) TOWN CENTRE AREA (1 CONTRACT)

All aspects of maintenance of prestigious area of Parks, Open Spaces and Highway Land.

(C) CEMETERY, CREMATORIUM (2 SEPARATE CONTRACTS)

Maintenance of grass areas and including specialist external operations.

(D) GOLF COURSE (18 HOLE) (1 CONTRACT)

Maintenance of fine turf areas, trees, shrubs, water feature.

(E) RURAL AREA (1 CONTRACT)

Grass cutting, litter collection, maintenance of shrubs, trees, flowers and other plants.

Detailed specifications of the work may be inspected free of charge by any person during normal office hours by prior arrangement with the Leisure Services Manager between 26th April and 21st May, 1993. Alternatively, copies of each Contract specification may be purchased at a cost of £50 each.

Contractors should indicate which of the eight contracts they are interested in, by writing to Brian Latimer, MSC DMS Leisure Services Manager, 13 Tonbridge Road, Maidstone, Kent ME16 8HG or by telephoning Maidstone (0622) 602704. An application form and questionnaire must be fully completed and returned no later than 12 noon on 21st May 1993.

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