

MOVEMENTS AND MURMURINGS



Ian Mathews.

IAN'S POST

TWENTY-six-year-old Ian Mathews, after nine years in greenkeeping, has taken a new position of sales executive with Purdy's Grass Machinery, Retford.

Purdy's have recently been appointed Jacobsen distributors for Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and South Yorkshire.

Ian will be responsible for opening new accounts in areas not previously covered due to territorial restrictions.

EAST DORSET GOLF CLUB CONSTRUCTION PLANS

PROPOSALS for the construction of the additional nine holes and the reconstruction of the existing 18 holes have now been submitted by the East Dorset Golf Club's course architect, Martin Hawtree of Hawtree & Sons.

Work on the additional nine holes should start in April and it is anticipated that they will come into play in 1992. Reconstruction of ten of the holes on the existing course will start in May, and by turfing (as opposed to seeding) the greens involved it is hoped that they will come into play in 1991.

Work on the remaining eight holes of the existing course will start in 1991 and these should be back in play at the same time as the new nine holes in 1992.

Whilst work is taking place 18 holes will be available to members and visitors. Landscaping of the area in front of the clubhouse will include a new large putting green (par 3!) and the clubhouse itself will be enlarged with additional car parking facilities.

The Club's General Manager, David Thomas, sees the overall construction programme as an exciting one although current members may suffer a little during the next couple of years.

EMPLOYEES BUY TURFMASTER

THE employees at grass machinery manufacturers Turfmaster,

Gainsborough, Lincolnshire, have bought their company from the previous owners, Harlow Agricultural Merchants (HAM).

Turfmaster is now an independent company with HAM retaining only a 20 per cent share. Funding arrangements are also in place.

HAM, of Bishops Stortford, Essex, was keen to reduce its stake in Turfmaster because the fit with HAM's, "corn, seed and feed" business was poor. Equally Turfmaster's managers and employees felt they were ideally placed to move the company forward into the 1990's.

John deGraff-Johnson, Turfmaster's chairman, says: "Product performance, quality and service are the key issues in the professional market. So employee commitment is paramount.

"In many companies these words are truisms without teeth. But in Turfmaster's case, the employees have backed their words with hard cash. The enthusiasm and dedication is therefore total."

END OF AN ERA

WHEN George Small, Greenkeeper/Professional at Galashiels Golf Club in the Borders of Scotland, retires on the 29th March 1990, it will bring to an end 62 years of unbroken service by the Small family at this club. In 1928 Bob Small moved to Galashiels from Lundin Links to take up the position as Greenkeeper/Professional. Those were the days of the horse drawn mowers and greenkeepers walked everywhere their tools over their shoulders or in a wheel barrow. Bob Small was a great believer in the Greenkeeper's Association and would attend the East of Scotland outings even though it meant leaving home at 6 a.m. travelling by train or bus, sometimes both and walking, as all the greenkeepers had to do from the local station to the golf course. Like the rest of that merry band he would never be home the same day by the time they made all their connections to get home again. In later years, though he could not play himself because of war wounds he encouraged his sons to play in the Greenkeeper's outings and he

was a proud man in 1953 when at the Scottish National Tournament at Glenbervie two of his sons George and Alec won both the Scratch prize and Handicap prize. Bob retired in 1960 after serving Galashiels Golf Club for 32 years. And his son George immediately took over. Although George was not a long term member of the Greenkeepers Association, being a Greenkeeper and Professional and raising a family of 6, after the untimely death of his wife, did not leave him time to be involved, however he was always interested in the Greenkeepers Association. George started as a greenkeeper at Galashiels, then moved to Buchanan Castle under the late well known Willie Bradford before moving to Dunbar as Greenkeeper/Professional and finally back to Galashiels. George will stay in Galashiels after his retirement, where most of his family live and no doubt still have a regular game on the hill and may be ponder over all the changes that have taken place in greenkeeping in the last 62 years. Even though the break has been made with Galashiels Golf Club the family connection with greenkeeping lives on in the shape of Bob's youngest son as a head greenkeeper and this son's son has also entered the greenkeeping profession.

ROUGH ON THE GRASS

IT has come to our notice that the Marquess of Salisbury has a major problem with the turf at Hatfield House and the damage perpetrated by the visiting hordes who pay handsomely to walk on the ancient sod.

In 1986 the Marquess decided gently to redirect people from the house by making more of the gardens maintained by a team of six gardeners. Last year over 60,000 people tramped round what was designed as a private pitch.

David Beaumont, the head gardener, explained that they have tried growing the grass through wire mesh, putting in four inches of easy draining sand and installing upturned cones with mesh tops at particularly susceptible points like gates and crossroads.

The current approach is to use a plastic variant on the concrete cone or simply putting in a few bricks to act as stepping stones. The topic is now standard at the quarterly meeting of the Professional Gardeners' Guild but it seems

no one has the answer. "There are some people," he says, "who swear by some fancy method or other but most just re-turf. And to be honest, I think that's all you can do."

Can those more inspired with their own answers please write to me. And if you go visiting, please step on the bricks!

TREES ON COURSE TO SAVE MONEY

WHEN Castle Point District Council, Benfleet, Essex, decided that the new club house on their municipal golf course could benefit from a little landscaping, it had all the hallmarks of becoming a costly exercise.

However, Peter Crowe, Arboriculture Officer came up with the idea of using assets already owned by the Council, namely the trees. To one side of the course was a small copse of Scots pine left to grow wild.

With the assistance of local contractors RUSKINS, who were the only company in the south east with the specialised Big John tree spade required for the job, a total of eight trees were up-rooted and re-planted around the club house, in a single day.

The Big John digs below the roots freeing them without damage ready for transporting to the new site. Specially formulated fertiliser lines the hole dug to receive the tree to ensure that all the ingredients for the trees survival are present.



Pictured during the 'dig-up' are Jamie Martin, above left from Ruskins and Peter Crowe of Castle Point District Council.