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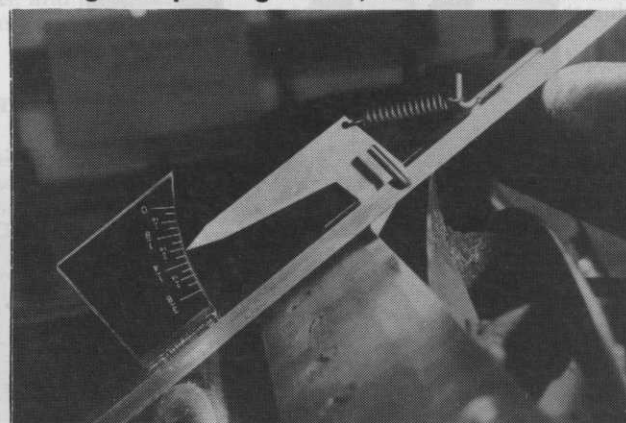
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This is a precision instrument and care should be taken when locating, and disengaging, the indicator, from the cutting blade. The indicator should be pushed up so that it clears the blade and then slid and lowered so that the MOWER CUTTING BLADE LOCATION (1) locates on the front cutting edge of the cutting blade as shown in the diagram.

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John P. Shildrick

“Standard” is a familiar word that most of us hear and use frequently without worrying too much about its exact meaning in every situation.

Players expect a golf course, its greens and fairways, to be prepared “to a high standard”, but would probably find it difficult to explain what they mean by high standards. Most likely a combination of attractive appearance and consistency from green to green, coloured by whether or not successful personal scores are being achieved. These perceptions are not really standards: more, just personal preferences, their own or others.

Many greenkeepers think of “standards” in terms of different heights of cut for ordinary weekends and for tournaments, or the gradation of different heights and mowing frequencies for fairways, semi-rough and rough. In other words, standards are what is done, when, how often, at what height of cut, or with what scarifier setting. These are still not really standards; but descriptions, or specifications, of workmanship.

Green Speed

Most greenkeepers also have their own ways of assessing the results of workmanship, by personal tests they learnt as apprentices or have developed over the years: rolling or dropping a ball, pressing their heels on the turf, even just playing a round on the course from time to time. Some will make use of more objective tests; measuring the thatch when the hole is changed, or using the Stimpmeter — that simple grooved stick down which the ball rolls when a certain angle is reached, so that distance rolled is a measure of “green speed”. Here at last one can really begin to talk of standards: from these various tests of playing quality, subjective or objective, standards can be decided and checked.

Subjective tests are fine while the same man applies them, trusted in his judgement and able to decide from year to year whether or not the greens are fit for the big event. But what happens when he leaves, or is ill, or has

“Playing Quality Standards” What do we mean?

by John P. Shildrick

an argument with the Green Committee or the visiting adviser? That is when the objective test — the regularly measured thatch thicknesses, the Stimpmeter readings, have their value. They must not be used blindly, or to the exclusion of other criteria.

There is no substitute for methodically recorded measurements and the wise greenkeeper has some record of the test results: he has recorded his own standards of playing quality and — better still — made notes of what he did to achieve them.

Guidelines?

Other people concerned with golf courses mean something different again by “standards”. The constructors and installers of equipment may have their own personal “standards” to work to, or may work to Association ones. These may be general rules of good working practice; or points of procedure such as providing the client with clear maps of work done. Some confusion might be avoided if, in this context, the term “standards” could be replaced by something like “codes of good practice” or “guidelines.”

In a slightly different sense again, these contractors or installers may be using equipment or parts which conform to BS this or that: in other words, a “British Standard” defines, perhaps in considerable detail, the quality and dimensions and fitness for purpose of specific materials.

Finally, the British Standards Institution is now about to publish British Standard Recommendations for Grounds Maintenance which cover many of the different aspects of the definition and assessment of quality already reviewed; but the numerical criteria that most of us would call “standards of turf quality” have to be called “maintenance objectives” to avoid confusion with the word “standard” as in “British Standard”! Confirmation indeed that the word has been overworked!

Nevertheless, there is much talk of standards nowadays in all kinds of amenity turf situations, and progress really does require everyone to mean the same thing when any particular word is used.

Clear terms

In February the NTC held a Workshop dealing mainly with standards for football pitches, this is slightly different from the situation on the golf course but Peter Dury, one of the speakers, emphasized the importance of using terms clearly. He described his own authority’s three-part documentation:

1. Standards.
2. Specification.

3. Code of practice.

First, standards. These, principally standards of playing quality, identify what is wanted by players or users. In football these can be measured, and figures specified to define the required standard. For golf there is not yet quite the same framework of measured data, but there are for instance guideline figures for the Stimpmeter. In addition, research work at STRI is now giving a picture of what values to expect for ball bounce or surface hardness on a golf green.

Second, specification. This indicates what the client requires the contractor to achieve, and define the standards required on any particular turf area.

Third, “code of practice”. In Peter Dury’s case this means a document setting out good practices for certain operations (with chemicals or equipment, for example). In working with these the contractor would be expected to follow the code — although in more routine operations he could use his own judgement on how to achieve the specified standards.

The yardstick

This is just one example of how standards for the greenkeeper are not abstractions, but the yardsticks by which the success of daily work is measured and by which decisions on repeat treatments or change of treatment are made.

Likewise, these standards of playing quality will be the ultimate test of whether construction, drainage or irrigation installation has been successfully undertaken. The contractor or installer will have a code of good practice, or whatever it is called, making clear the depth of pipes, the acceptable uniformity of rootzone mixtures, the type and BS number of pipe to be used, and so on. He will work according to the specification, in the customary sense of the prescription laid down by the architect, consultant or other specialist. But in the last resort, the specification itself and the workmanship that went into achieving it, will be judged against standards of playing quality.

Standards cannot be developed until suitable test methods have been worked out. And standards cannot be achieved consistently until the relevant operations and their frequencies have been identified — in mowing, irrigating, fertilizing, aerating, and so on. Draining a football pitch for instance is not easy, but it is simpler in theory and practice than adjusting the ball characteristics of 18 different greens by the right combination of fertilizer, irrigation, thatch control and mowing. But even this will come.

“A Change of Headgear”

BY FRED HAWTREE

It may have escaped your notice, locked up as you are in your ecological struggle with Nature, machines and the members; that three months have elapsed since Cardinal Joseph Malula passed on to higher things from amongst his flock in Zaire.

His chief legacy was an adaptation of the rites of the Mass to African circumstances. Certainly Pope John Paul II will not forget his 1980 visit to Kinshasha in a hurry, when twenty Zairian priests danced to the Gloria dressed in gold robes, rocking rhythmically from side to side in front of the Peoples Palace; nor the crescendo of tom-toms as they thundered across the square on the cue: “Let us pray!”. Eight more years were nevertheless needed before the Vatican gave approval to the Cardinals localised liturgy, and then with a firm proviso — leopard skins will not be worn!

By contrast The Holy Diocese of St. Andrews has never laid down rules appropriate to the rig appropriate to golfing or its designers. Restrictions are unnecessary, for set apart as they

are from the profane world in sadness and loneliness, golf architects dress soberly, although when the American Society of Golf Course Architects adopted Dornoch’s son, Donald Ross, builder of several hundred US courses, as their patron saint they uniformed themselves in blazers from the red and black Ross tartan woven in Scotland. A hundred of these at their annual banquet can be trying on unshaded eyes, though easily distinguishing members from visitors.

In this country, after 1900, a sartorial watershed also divided early professional golfer/designers from those amateurs quietly infiltrating the brotherhood. ALL wore caps upon the links and the professionals continued to do so while architecting golf courses. But the amateurs — turned — designers changed their style to match. They donned the felt Homburg hat of commerce. There was obviously money in it.

The 1913 photograph shown of their leader, Harry S. Colt, planning St. Cloud near Paris illustrates this change. Holding a plan unfurled (photographers *still* require this) his tall figure dominates the group still more

strongly through his heavenward extension by a Homburg of majestic proportions.

Across the Atlantic, A.W. Tillinghast, who designed most of the USA’s favourite championship courses, often penetrated the jungle wearing just the same headgear.

Two photographs in my family album confirm the Distinction. The group at an exhibition match at Sundridge Park before 1914 shows J.H. Taylor (umbrella), James Braid, Alex Herd and Harry Vardon, ALL capped. The founder of **The Golf Greenkeepers Association** (on Taylors right) is also capped. But in 1920 in The Open Exhibition Tent at Deal, having embraced golf course architecture, he has also embraced the Homburg hat.

The Capped ones were not deterred. They counter attacked strongly, led by four Open Champions with one Sherwood Forester at the rear.

Willie Park Jnr., still on the active list, produced the first serious writing on golf architecture in **‘The Game of Golf’** (1896). Between 1900 and 1919 he built 50 courses in Britain and 5 in France. Another 40 in the USA included the Grove Park Inn Course at Asheville N.C., recently pared down because the Inn seems to be getting bigger than the golf course.

After James Braid’s first Open in 1901, he was designing as well as winning again in 1905/6/8/10. Henley, Northampton, Oswestry, St. Austell and West Hove belong to this period.

John Henry Taylor, five times Open Champion and six times runner-up, was not far behind with Clevedon, Eastbourne Downs, Heaton Park, Queens Park, Bournemouth & Seaford.

Harry Vardon won one U.S., and six Open titles. His earliest designs included Letchworth, Little Aston, Mendip, Sandy Lodge and Saffron Walden. He might have done much more, but his health slowed him down.

Lastly, in 1919, a circle within a 40 mile radius of Nottingham would contain only one course NOT designed by Tom Williamson, pro/greenkeeper at the Notts. Golf Club.

But the Homburgs were coming.



Harry S. Colt at St Cloud, France, circa 1913.

“They donned the felt Homburg hat of commerce”

They too put up a team of five, captained by Harry Colt, R. & A. Rules Committee, Cambridge Captain, Lawyer, Sunningdale Secretary, and finally No. 1 course architect of the amateurs. He scored 20 layouts in his first eight years, finally leaving Sunningdale in 1913 to go solo. His associates Dr. Alister MacKenzie, the Leeds medical practitioner, and Hugh Alison, Secretary of Stoke Poges followed his lead.

J.F. Abercromby was not a prolific designer, but was highly respected. His new course at Addington was a gem, stolen now by housing needs, though the Old Course is fortunately still there. He checked out the opposition by working with Park earlier at Coombe Hill.

Herbert Fowler, who had designed Walton Heath, co-operated with Abercromby at Cowdray Park and West Kent (now moved to Downe). All three were involved in the early days of Worpleton. Fowler started playing golf at the late age of 35 and planned Walton Heath because of a family connection. He then completed five British courses and one in Los Angeles before the 1914 war.

On quantity, The Caps halved one game and won the rest, even giving a stroke a hole. But if we assess quality in the results, I should say it was honourably halved.

The flood of new courses did not

Caps well to the fore at Sundridge Park, circa 1913.



stop completely between 1914 and 1918; it slowed to a trickle. Only MacKenzie and Alison were young enough to join the Army. But in 1920, both sides returned to the offensive.

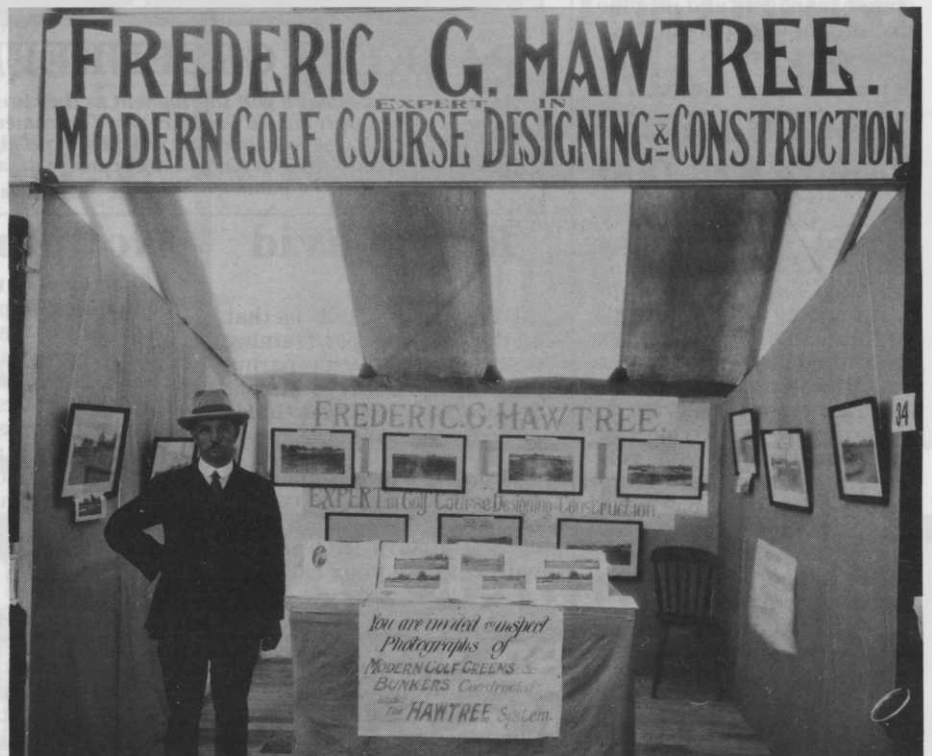
The amateurs struck first. Colt & Alison produced one book, ‘Some Essays on Golf Course Architecture’, and Alister MacKenzie produced another. He included in his book a list of the 13 features essential in an ideal golf course, this catching the readers imagination, as simple summings-up often do, despite what they leave out. Historians have mistakenly quoted from this book ever since, but I can now reveal for the first time that MacKenzie first outlined his

13 points not in book form, but when lecturing to the Northern Section of the Golf Greenkeepers Association. **Greenkeepers First — The World Second!** He obviously got his priorities right.

In case you have forgotten what he said up there, we shall start in the next issue where we leave off — with those 13 points, and a few extra for good measure. Incidentally, his book, ‘Golf Architecture’, costs about £350 now, so you might as well wait and get his points for nothing.

FRED HAWTREE

A Homburg behatted forebear of The Author.



Two new courses

Two new educational courses are announced, one a full time course in Horticultural & Greenkeeping Engineering at Reaseheath, beginning in September. The other, at Cannington and also beginning in September, is an HND Amenity Horticulture with option allowing specialist studies in the Management of Fine Turf Facilities. Both will increase the career status of potential course managers and provide exciting new opportunities.

GCSAA donate \$25,000

The GCSAA recently donated \$25,000 to the USGA/GCSAA Turfgrass Research Committee to support ongoing scientific work on new turfgrass varieties that would require less water and be more disease resistant. At the presentation, made during the US Open by President Dennis Lyon, golf writers learned that more than \$2.8 million has been distributed by the committee since 1983 and that the committee support no less than 25 research projects.

OBITUARY

Greenkeepers in the Midlands will be saddened to learn of the recent death of Joe Carrick, for many years head greenkeeper at The Northamptonshire County Golf Club. Joe joined the club in 1954 from Portmarnock, remaining with them until his retirement in 1981 and then continuing to work part-time until his untimely death. An ex-President of the East-Midlands Greenkeepers Association and an active member of the local Irish Golfers Association he was, as voiced by current Northamptonshire greenkeeping staff, "a super guy and a real gentleman". His passing leaves a void that will be impossible to fill.



PARKERS GREENKEEPERS TOURNAMENT

As adept at organising a golf tournament as they are at providing Total Turf Care Services, T. Parker & Sons Ltd held their annual Greenkeepers Tournament recently at the delightful Worcester Park course, with representatives from over sixty clubs competing for the Parkers Rose Bowl. Victory to Andy Arthur, head greenkeeper at Knole Park, came with a total of 40 Stableford points, with Mike Smith, of Thorpe Hall, as the runner-up.

Ring David

David Golding tells us that all the Greenkeeper Training Colleges are busy preparing for the fresh influx of student registrations for City & Guilds or Scotvec courses.

Deciding which course may be most appropriate can be made easier by talking to him at H.Q. (03473-581) and he will welcome your calls.

No 'perhaps'

Sharp eyed readers have been quick to point out that there is no 'perhaps' about Willie Park Junior having planned, designed and built the Old course at Sunningdale. (July issue). We offer apologies to author Fred Hawtree and to our readers for the missing final line, which should have read "Perhaps the first completed package-deal".

St Albans in

Making a recent visit to Oaklands College, St. Albans, Education Officer David Golding enthused over the standard of training facilities available at this most recent addition to the Greenkeeping Training Committee approved list. Coupled with their well proven record of success over the years, he is confident that more clubs and local authorities will give this college the student registration support it richly deserves.

Our Austrian Connection

Encouraging news from Austria, where Peter Baume is hard at work, is that although golf is still in its infancy, new course building is continuing at a great pace. With thirty courses in play and a further twenty being built (not planned, BUILT!) the forward thinking of this country is one that Greenkeeping Management totally applauds. Peter, who many will remember when he worked at Prestbury, is still a keen member of BIGGA and in writing suggests the establishment of an Austrian section with, as he jokingly implies, himself as President, Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and raffle ticket promoter!

Planning a return to England for the Christmas holidays, Peter will present himself in a new slimline style, having lost two stone in weight. This he says is due to working harder and under more difficult conditions than he's ever done before!

Latest NTC Publications

It's no secret that the NTC produce some of the most widely read and informative literature especially for the head greenkeeper and amenity turf manager and the announcement of two new additions to their range is one that we here at Greenkeeping Management are delighted to endorse and publicise.

By way of preview (we shall review them thoroughly in our September issue), for those impatient to add the titles to their working library we can reveal and recommend both "The Recreational Diversification of Farmland" (Report No. 13: £9.00) and "Turf Nutrition '88" (Report No. 15: £9.00) as being required reading by greenkeepers, farmers, advisors, consultants and all involved in the amenity turf industry. They may be obtained from N.T.C., 3 Ferrands Park Way, Harden, Bingley, West Yorkshire BD16 1HZ.

New programme

With many farmers seeking to diversify away from agriculture into recreation, it is indeed encouraging that two of the most prominent exponents in the golf industry, Howard Swan & Hawtree & Son, have joined forces in a new programme designed to assist and advise on this important issue. From site appraisal through to design, construction and management of the completed course, their programme sets out to answer the often asked questions of land requirements, building costs, grant availability, income and land suitability. Less potato fields and more golf courses is golf's most pressing need and we at Greenkeeping Management applaud their spirited enterprise.

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Photo: Courtesy of Windermere Golf Club

WATCH OUT FOR HEAVY TRAFFIC

BY BARRY WARD



Love 'em or hate 'em, but don't ignore 'em because, like death, and taxes, thatch and dollar spot, golf carts are not about to go away. They're a growing part of the multi-million pound golf equipment market and they're multiplying like toadstools in a damp wood.

It will be some years, one hopes, before they're as ubiquitous as in America, where in most instances their use is compulsory. On the ground of tradition alone, one suspects that not every British golf club committee would condone them, and most clubs would ban their wholesale use on two major points; wheel track damage and a paucity of garaging space. We'll come to the anti-social aspect later.

There can be no argument that in some instances they are a boon. Elderly or mildly infirm golfers who may otherwise be unable to play can now potter around 18 holes in comfort, and those British clubs which allow limited use of carts should rely upon this criteria as a stipulation. Ad hoc use should be approached warily.

This therapeutic aspect, indeed, is what began it all. In the United States they started a golf rush that became a gold rush. They transformed the face of Florida, socially, economically and even topographically, and in the course of the transformation came a land boom the likes of which hadn't been seen for a century or more.

Originally for arthritics

The cart was an idea that originated in Texas in 1952 and it was designed for arthritis sufferers, a battery driven, single seater with a rudimentary luggage rack behind. By modern standards it didn't look particularly prepossessing but it caught the imagination and set a few other wheels in motion.

For some years there had been a tradition among wealthy New Yorkers eager to escape the biting cold of the North American winter: come November and they would flee to Florida, to lie on the beach or beside the pool, to bend an elbow and to bask in the sunshine, there to remain until New York had thawed out.

They were not, by and large, athletic. And though the golf course held some aesthetic appeal, the prospect of walking five miles in pursuit of a small white ball held an attraction comparable to alligator wrestling or under-water ballroom dancing. That's when they were introduced to the golf cart.

They were hooked. Before you could say "What's the bet?" the word had spread and golf course home sites began selling like ten dollar Cadillacs.

Within a few years Florida had become Golf State USA. Palm Beach County, where it all began, now has 278 - at last count. There are 932 golf courses in the State and the building continues unabated (35 opened in 1988 and 45 more are currently under construction) making it number one in America.

The value in real estate sales is impossible to compute, to say nothing of hotel profits, green fees and cart rentals, equipment sales, and the contribution to the State's economy by way of the millions of visitors the game attracts. Not to mention the massive employment all this activity generates.

No speedier play

The incongruous aspects of golf carts is that they don't speed up play.

The subtle difference is that a walking golfer will travel in a straight line (give or take the odd slice) where a pair in a cart will zig zag like a hooker

playing a double dog leg in a cross wind. If they walked as far their legs would drop off.

To compound the problem, many US courses have what they call the 90 degree rule. This means that a cart must stay on the path provided up to a point level with the ball to be played, and only then is it permissible to drive across the fairway to the ball.

The reasons are obvious: just as cart paths are laid to obviate damage and compaction (though in truth they can create erosion problems through water run-off) so are fairways out of bounds.

A team of course marshalls is constantly on patrol to enforce the rule, and it's not unknown for offenders to be asked to head for the clubhouse.

The rationale is obvious: a top class resort course is an expensive beast to maintain. To attract resident golfing guests in the cut-throat world of US resorts your course has to be flawless in condition 365 days a year . . . or the punters will go elsewhere and heads will roll.

Each course will have its own maintenance team (one man per hole is the logistical rule of thumb), equipped with every mod con in terms of plant and machinery. The investment required in maintenance is in the realm of a king's ransom; they're not about to jeopardise that, and the daily fruits it brings, by giving golfers carte blanche with buggies.

This is a point that British golf club committees should ruminat upon when faced with demands for more cart facilities, as doubtless they will in this age of the moneyed yuppie, the infernal combustion engine and its ever-turning, constantly multiplying wheels.



Cart golf Texas style. Weekday rules at this club-permit twelve players to a group. The first tee starts resembles a Grand Prix, with a stampede that has to be seen to be believed.

Consider that at most British clubs wide-tired wheels are mandatory on even the humble pull trolley and, on the grounds of potential damage alone, it is difficult to condone the growth of cart use.

Not many British clubs are capable of financing the five or six miles of concrete pathway that would be necessary once numbers rose beyond the minimal minority, and without the paths and a strictly enforced 90 degree rule the average club course would quickly deteriorate: tracks would form on inclines, creating potential run-off problems and erosion: tee and green access points would become compacted and worn, as would fairway mounds already shaven by gang mowers.

A little introspection would reveal how par three holes would suffer particularly badly and it would be advisable to create a circular route, perhaps through adjacent rough or woods, to deny carts access to short fairways and diverting them to a point behind the green.

Stringent rules

Those clubs already committed to a growing number of carts should contemplate stringent rules before the rot sets in. The previous paragraph is a starting point, and on the matter of diversions and the 90 degree rule it would be advisable to insist upon carts creating their own pathways through the more accessible rough and wooded areas, where the damage they cause would be minimal.

One of the few beneficial side effects of the cart, though it's one which has encouraged it's proliferation, has been received warmly by course architects and constructors. The cart

creates space. More specifically, it allows all the land available to be utilised. A US resort of 2,000 acres plus which didn't have 250 acres or more to play with for a new course would be a rare one indeed. With this and the cart in mind, the architects don't stint on space when they settle down to doodle.

The frequent consequence is vast distances between the green and the next tee, often as much as a minute away by cart. Walking, plainly, would be out of the question in this scenario. Few, very few, British clubs are blessed with such expansive estates, in fact the reverse is often the case. There's often only a minimal amount of suitable land available for garaging them.

At my club, for instance, where about a dozen members have carts, one owner told me it had cost £6,000 to buy his vehicle and pay for the construction of a garage at the club. There's no space available for further garages, though there's no decline in demand. One can only ponder on the investment potential. My friend wouldn't put a figure on his likely selling price.

So anti-social

Certain other members of my club would give a silent cheer at the news that the fleet of carts has reached its optimum number. Not a few of us consider them a pain in the bumper at best, particularly the petrol driven version, which is both smelly and noisy.

More than that, they're anti-social. In a recent medal my two playing partners shared a cart while I walked. It was akin to playing alone. The others always seemed to be chuffing off ahead, nattering away as they searched for their balls and weighed up their shots, leaving me trudging along in the rear. I don't think we exchanged more than fifty words during the whole round.

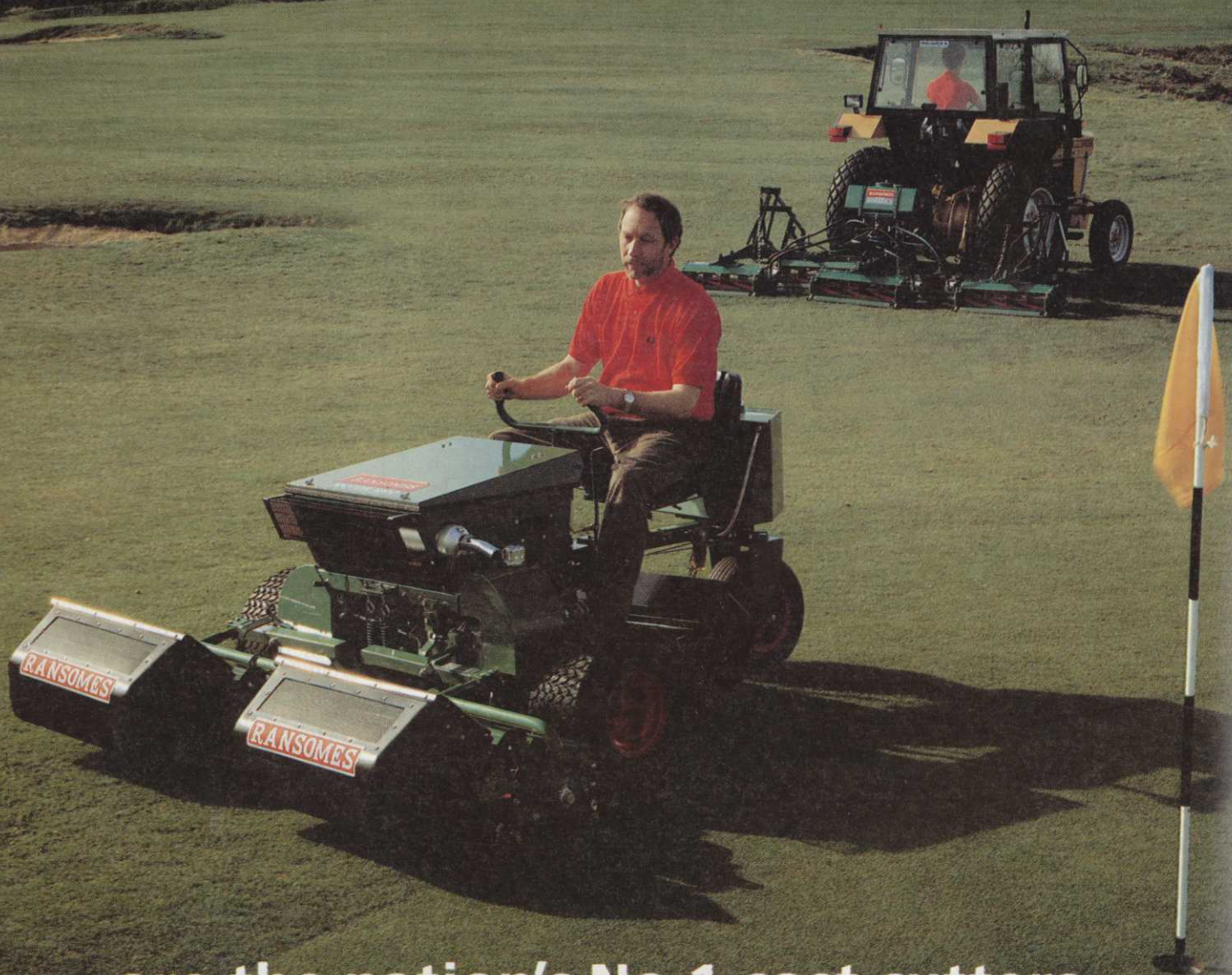
In truth, holidays apart there's little or nothing to be said in their favour, but in an age when declining standards are the norm and the yuppies are on the rampage such complaints will ring few bells. Traditions count for naught these days and I suspect mine is a lone voice.

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