

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1985

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Greenkeeper

United we'll stand!

Demonstrating that, ahead of the joint talks on forming a federation (see page 12), the three greenkeeping associations can cooperate to take on - and beat - the rest of the golfing world, our front cover shows the winning greenkeeping team in the 1985 Kubota Golf Challenge. From left to right: I. McLeod (Tain), I. Toon (Moor Hall), R. Hughes (Little Hay), J. Teixeira (Hillingdon), S. Melville (Murrayfield), A. Peel (Trafford), J. Donaldson (Cherwell Edge) and, sitting, B. Turner (Worplesdon).

This year's event at The Belfry was a four-way contest, with teams of eight also representing golf writers, stewards and secretaries, who were the defeated finalists.

In the semis, the greenkeepers almost whitewashed the stewards - the only reverse coming in the last match with a defeat for Donaldson. The secretaries beat the journalists 5½ to 2½ at this stage, but more than met their match in the final, only managing to take two matches off the greenkeepers - Hughes and Melville going down.

The attention later switched to St Andrews and the fifth Ransomes International Greenkeepers and Superintendents Tournament, where the Canadians were hot favourites to successfully defend the Ransomes Challenge Trophy. There was a record turnout with teams of four from 13 countries contesting a Stableford competition over 36 holes.

At the end of the morning round, only one point separated the leaders - Scotland stood on 45 and the Canadians had 44. A further point behind were the Dutch, Swedes and Northern Irish.

The wind proved difficult in the afternoon and it was the two teams from across the Atlantic that mastered the conditions - Canada returned a creditable 47 points and America 46. The Canadians retained the Ransomes Challenge Trophy with a total of 91 points. Scotland were second with 89 and the USA third a point behind. Only four points spanned the first four places - Northern Ireland came fourth - and, with three teams (Holland, West Germany and Spain) finishing on over 80 points, it was a close-run competition.

After the tournament, which is held every three years, the traditional Ransomes banquet was attended by 150 at the Rusack's Marine Hotel where Keith Mackenzie, former secretary of the R & A and president of the Golf Foundation, was the guest speaker.

The Ransomes Challenge Trophy, a silver salver, was presented to the Canadians by the chairman of the St Andrews Link Trust Sir John Carmichael, who also gave tankards to members of the first three teams.

Ransomes sales director Guy Catchpole thanked the Links Management Committee for making it possible to play the Old Course. "It's an appropriate venue because the tournament started as a result of Scottish greenkeepers, some 20 years ago, challenging their English counterparts," he said.

NOW TURN TO PAGE 16



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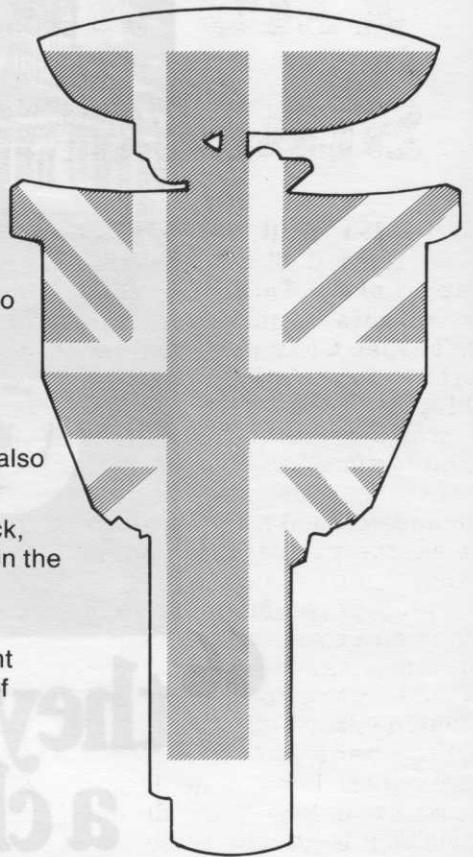
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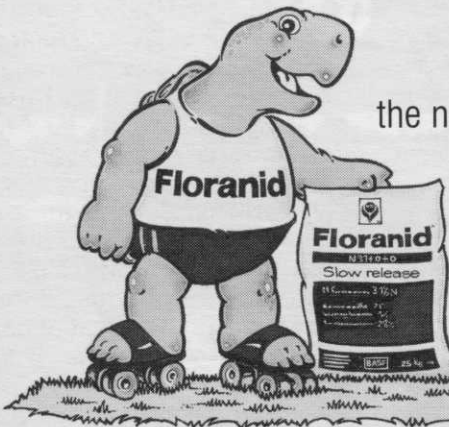
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The stress an Open success can bring...

THE sudden death recently, at 51, of Russell Brown, course manager of the Turnberry Hotel golf courses, venue for next year's Open Championship, emphasises the strains on those looking after the courses where the world's premier event is played, writes Jim Arthur..

It is usual for the press and TV commentators alike to fail to appreciate the problems in setting up the Open Championship. It takes years of careful preparation to stage and by no means all of it is pure greenkeeping, what with spectator paths, lorry-ways and the tented village, all of which fall on the back of the head greenkeeper. Even if he is not necessarily involved in all the decisions, it is he who has to implement them.

I recall after one Open, a BBC commentator deigned to talk to the head man. He asked when the course would be back in good order again. The reply was along the lines of, "I rather thought it was right now." Likewise, when the weather intervenes, greens like those at Muirfield in 1980, where there were six weeks of rain prior to the off, are criticised and the fairways come in for 'too much irrigation' comments. In that particular case, it was a rather ill-informed statement as there weren't even pop-ups around the greens! Sadly, I feel some of those responsible are presenting courses not so much for golfers as for TV viewers.

The Open is not going anywhere new in the foreseeable future, if ever, so it is largely a question of starting preparations for the next one on the following Monday, repairing the damage off the course, for the course in itself probably suffers less during the Open week than in normal play. There is little time to relax and all too little time before the Open is back again.

Today, of course, the head men of all the Open Championship courses have seen at least one, if not several Opens, and can afford to be a great deal more relaxed,

but it is still a worrying time and you always have to be prepared to give instant first aid in the event of accidents, such as hydraulic pipe bursts, or errant courting couples in Minis cavorting over greens just before the championship, which we suffered at Turnberry!

Turnberry was different - as, indeed, in a different way, was Royal St George's in 1981 where there had not been an Open Championship since 1938. In both cases, of course, the experts derided the R & A's choice - in fairness, not primarily on the basis of course quality and character, but over such aspects as accessibility, accommodation and car parks.

Turnberry was selected in 1974 as the venue for the Amateur Championship in 1976 and the Open in 1977. At once, the decision was attacked as mad by the Press and, looking at the state of the over-fertilised annual meadow grass greens and lush fairways, suffering from severe drought damage early that year, with only two years to get it right, you might have thought it was a bold decision.

It was my lot to be told by the championship committee to sort things out and much sorting had to be done. This included the removal of those who had become complacent, looking after courses that saw little play when the hotel shut in autumn. The management, too, was swayed, wanting a pretty course for television rather than the great test of golf, which many think is Mackenzie Ross' best links course and which it proved to be in 1977.

Monthly visits

I literally had to act as head greenkeeper with almost monthly visits until responsibility could be devolved on to Jim McCubbin. We had to correct the mistakes of decades of mismanagement designed to make the courses look nice and green. The first task

was to find some 500 tons of black, sandy, top spit soil for basic top dressing and the rebuilding of greens.

Nothing happened for three months. There were the usual excuses that it was not available until the man charged with the task was clearly given to understand that if he did not find it, someone else would and he would not be needed. It was found within a month.

Of course, you cannot reverse the mistakes of years overnight, but a good team convinced of the correctness of an agreed programme, well directed and encouraged by a skilled head man who developed new potential under the increased responsibility, generously provided with the tools (machines and materials) to do the job, was bound to show results.

In the event, the Open at Turnberry was hailed as a major success by the same Press that, only six months earlier, was prophesying doom and disaster. The Ailsa links were not, of course, perfect, but the course was eminently playable, with fast, firm greens, tight lies, good tees and especially good aprons and approaches. It provided one of the most exciting finishes of any recent Open - a two-horse race between Watson and Nicklaus, with the rest of the field nowhere. Only three players, including the two leading gladiators, broke par for the four rounds. So much for the Ailsa being criticised as too easy.

Virtually every aspect of greenkeeping had to be altered or reversed in 1974 and this included re-equipping both courses and updating the inefficient irrigation system. Because of the effects of the prolonged drought in 1975 and 1976 on the annual meadow grass-dominated fairways and the need to carry out intensive applications of fenpeat and over-seeding, the Amateur was moved, not so much because of the condition of the course, but because we needed to be able to carry out intensive remedial work



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RUSSELL BROWN CONTINUED

without suffering the restraints imposed by preparation for a major championship.

It is remarkable how short memories are. Within a space of two years, those same experts who derided the R & A's choice and who said the course would never be ready in time were claiming, equally exaggeratedly, that the links were perfection personified. What is irritating is that these critics never learn and even last autumn one commentator was pontificating on the hotel steps that the course was dead, it would take years to restore and would never be ready for the Open in 1986.

A month later, when I saw the course in October after a week or so of rain, everything was perfectly satisfactory. The problem was that the course water supply depended on what was left after the hotel had taken its share and it was a very dry summer with an abnormal demand. We now have an independent bore-hole supply - so that problem is solved.

In 1982, Jim McCubbin retired and Russell Brown, from Perth, was selected to take charge. Previously, he had been in command at Prince's which, while hosting Open Championship qualifying rounds, is a great track in its own right.

Even more investment in the courses was carried out by the new owners of Turnberry Hotel and Russell was in charge of implementing many quite major changes, advised by Donald Steel, to improve the Ailsa Course. One of the most significant was removing and recontouring a long length of dune top by the 6th green to provide greater space for pedestrian traffic, caught, in the past, between the 6th green and the 7th tee. Even a few months after massive cut and fill operations, the recontouring was so skilfully done (by Brian Pierson) that it looked as if it had been there for ever.

Even more spectacular were extensions to the 9th and 11th tees with massive retaining walls, built up, as Russell proudly told me last month, without so much as a trapped finger - a major engineering effort that we called Hadrian's Wall and which, perhaps, will be his 'memorial'.

The year 1985 was doubly worrying for anyone charged with preparing a course for an Open Championship in 1986. The

severe drought of 1984 had left some remedial work to be done, but the winter, though not as severe as further south, was snowy enough to stop work and then came one of the coldest and latest springs anyone can remember. After an all too brief spell of fine weather at Whit, the Ayrshire coast suffered, in common with most of Scotland, monsoon conditions with almost incessant rain from June to mid-October. Ten inches of rain fell in September alone, ceasing, in fact, only on the day I carried out my regular examination of the course in mid-October. I was happy to find everything in excellent and promising order and the effects of the wet weather and heavy play on the greens were about to be corrected by Verti-Draining for the second year running.

Luckily, the Ailsa course can, as a hotel course, be closed for three months, which makes the preparation for the Open much easier, but it has been exceptionally busy all summer despite the rain. The weather has the last word and we are dependent on it, but a good greenkeeper can make intelligent guesses once he knows his course and Russell was beginning to do this with accuracy. He said that if you could see Ailsa Craig, it was going to rain if you couldn't, it was raining! This was very true last summer.

To those who knew him well, Russell, although a quiet and rather withdrawn man, had an equally quiet sense of humour. His staff respected him and worked indefatigably for him. He was a first-class, skilled and caring greenkeeper and perhaps tended to keep his worries to himself too much.

Naturally, there was a vast amount of preparatory work still to do but, the very day before he died, Russell spent the whole day with his first assistant walking the course and detailing precisely the work programme for the coming months.

Greenkeeping has lost a most able, deep thinking and sincere man and as honest as the day to himself, his employers and his course. I have lost a good friend and an able ally who was interested in everything he observed. It is a great shame that he will not be there to take the credit for another great Open Championship at Turnberry for which he had made so many preparations.



Russell's beloved Turnberry, with the Ailsa Course in great shape.



Chairman's Message

As the end of 1985 approaches, I would like to take this opportunity to look back over the last eight months. I was elected EIGGA chairman by the board of management after the association's AGM at Warwick University during the national conference.

As chairman, you soon begin to realise how much effort and time is put in behind the scenes by the board of management and, in particular, the general administrator Danielle Jones.

Warwick was a joy and a disappointment to me. The joy was that we had people in our ranks who could stand up and deliver a paper good enough to hold the attention of the entire audience, as well as coping with lively question and answer sessions.

The disappointment was the poor attendance. Cost and time should not stop a keen EIGGA member from attending, so, please, let us see more of you at Warwick in 1986.

The marquee at the Open Championship was a great success. Board of management members worked very hard on your behalf and the visitors' book looked like a who's who of golf.

Greenkeeper training is moving along at great speed and I'm pleased to be joined by Peter Wisbey as EIGGA representatives on the Greenkeeper Training Committee. The phase three block-release has started in some colleges and will begin at most others in 1986.

EIGGA was well represented at St Andrews for the SIGGA conference and fifth Ransomes International Golf Tournament in October. David Jones gave an excellent paper on heathland management and there were other interesting sessions from all over the world, with a notable contribution from Nick Park.

In the Ransomes tournament, England was represented by a



EIGGA chairman Bill Lawson with the former R & A secretary Keith Mackenzie.

joint EIGGA/BGGA team of Kevin Munt and Terry Adamson from EIGGA combined with Jim Richardson and Gordon Payne. England finished sixth behind the winners Canada and runners-up Scotland. The Old Course proved very testing, but a great experience for all who played and watched.

Finally, we are holding talks with representatives from the R&A, EGU, SIGGA and the BGGA about a possible greenkeeping federation, which would operate from a central of-

fice. This idea was first discussed at St Andrews, where it received support from R&A secretary Michael Bonallack.

The discussions have only just started, but some progress has already been made and future developments will be published in *Greenkeeper*.

Meetings have also been held with the PGA about a possible joint organisation, but this development has been shelved for the time being.

Bill Lawson.

North West

The branch held its autumn seminar at the Reasheath College of Agriculture, Nantwich. The speaker for the morning session was Dennis Mottram, who is now senior lecturer at Reasheath. Dennis went into the technicalities of sportsground drainage in his usual articulate and professional manner.

To follow, Jack McMillan, who had travelled up from Sunningdale, chose the Verti-Drain as his subject for the afternoon lecture. Jack described the situation at Sunningdale, where he has found its implementation very successful. It was invigorating to hear an independent assessment of such a machine from an experienced and knowledgeable professional.

Jack was accompanied by his wife and we thank them both for making the trip north. We also thank Dennis Mottram and everyone at Reasheath for giving us all a rewarding day.

It was encouraging to see so many of the younger members sporting EIGGA blazers and ties and also to see some new faces from the Bolton and Manchester area. Members will have received a newsletter giving details of further lectures - please make every effort to attend.

The autumn golf tournament was held at the Abergele and Pensarn Golf Club in North Wales. Thanks go to the club captain for making us feel welcome. Thanks also go to John Richmond and his staff for their efforts on the day.

The tournament winner was Seve Lunt with a net 67 and the guest's prize went to Steve Stonehouse with a net 68.

Our thanks go to all the trade representatives who donated prizes - in particular, Ellesmere A.G. and Richard Jones for sponsoring the event and their continued support.

Bob Evans of Ruthin-Pwllglas

GC has recently gone into hospital for an operation. Best wishes, Bob, for a complete recovery.

In future, would members send any monies concerned with the North West branch to the treasurer Guy Cannings at 12 Victoria Road, West Kirby, Wirral, Merseyside.

The committee would like to thank our hard working administrator Terry Adamson for the effort he has put into the job. Terry is probably the best thing to come out of Wales since Ian Rush.

Well, gentlemen, we are at the end of another eventful year, as far as the profession is concerned. Please give us your support in '86 and, hopefully, we can strive on to improve the status of golf course management employees.

The chairman has asked me to pass on his and the committee's best wishes to members and their families for a happy and enjoyable Xmas and a successful and productive New Year.

Raymond Hunt

Surrey

After the frightful summer weather, it seems incredible to report that the Surrey members enjoyed another marvellous day when contesting the MacGillivray Shield at Richmond Golf Club.

The winners were: 1st - C. McMillan, 44 points; 2nd - A. Davie, 39 points; 3rd - J. Cuff, 38 points and 4th - P. Pearse 37 points.

Surrey members express their great appreciation to Richmond

GC and, in particular, to the secretary Commander Peter Woolings for extending the courtesy of the course. Also, our sincere thanks go to Alex Armitage and his assistants who have worked so hard to make Richmond the magnificent course it now is.

The branch's final meeting this year is a turkey trot on Monday December 9 at Worplesden Golf Club.

M. Hale.

East Anglia

The annual greenkeepers versus captains match at Purdis Heath resulted in a runaway victory for the greenies by seven matches to six. The day also proved a victory for greenkeeping with the results of Dave's hard slog there for all to see.

The top greenkeeper, on a countback, was P. Howard (Aldeburgh) with 37 points. He received the Ransomes watch. Second place went to Richard Mitchell (Eaton). Third place was taken by G. Barton (Haverhill) on 36 points, while Brian Lemmon (Barnham Broom), with 34 points, was fourth.

Top captain was D. Freeman on 41 points, followed by David Chapman (Eaton) with 38 points.

The prizes were presented by *Greenkeeper* publisher Michael Coffey.

Our thanks go to the club captain T. Morfitt and members for the courtesy of the course and subsidising a terrific meal with wine; to the trade representatives, especially Ransomes for the shield and watch and last, but

not least, to Dave and the lads for a fine course.

Our last tournament of the season was at the Maylands Golf and Country Club, which proved to be very memorable - not only was I going 'home', but everyone seemed to marvel at a clubhouse I had taken for granted for so long. The course was in superb condition, thanks to Phil Staines and his team. There was no evidence of the continual battering the course takes from the large number of visitors it attracts and the meal was second to none.

The victors of the day were: 1st - Martin Jones, 39 points and the King's Cup; 2nd - Mark Forrester, 37 points and the Victa Cup and 3rd - Phil Staines, 34 points.

The first guest with 40 points was G. Jackson, while the second guest was Mark Spooner (Eaton) on 38 points.

Our thanks go to Maylands for a great day - back to the grind for another six months!

M. Lathorpe.

Berks, Bucks And Oxon

The branch held its Jacobsen competition at Burnham Beeches Golf Club recently and it was a most successful event. Thanks go to the club for the hospitality and to Mark from Risbora Turf Supplies and Jacobsen for their sponsorship.

It seemed that whenever branch members gathered for a day's golf, the sun shone - not bad when you consider last season! This was certainly the case when the branch staged an invitation meeting at Sonning GC

Continued on page 12...

APPLICATION FOR THE MEMBERSHIP OF E.I.G.G.A.

To be returned to the General Administrator, E.I.G.G.A., 2, Golf Cottage, Bucklesham Road, Ipswich, Suffolk.

I wish to enrol as a Full Member @ £20 p.a.
 Apprenticed Member @ £12 p.a. Delete as applicable
 Trade Member @ £25 p.a.

Name of Applicant
 Home Address
 Tel. No. Club or Company
 Address
 Preferred Mailing Address: Club Home
 Title
 Registered Greenkeeper or otherwise
 Certificates Signature
 Further number of Membership Forms required

Summit talks

THE establishment of one autonomous body has been the aim of meetings held recently between SIGGA, EIGGA, the BGGGA and other interested organisations in golf. Here, we detail the latest situation as it is known.

Greenkeeper understands that considerable progress has been achieved at the talks.

Originally, the BGGGA was approached by the Professional Golfers' Association, which produced a detailed proposal on how greenkeeping should be structured in the future - as a division of the PGA.

Later, the PGA, after discussions at the Open Championship, put the same proposition to SIGGA and EIGGA. Meetings took place between each of the associations and the PGA at its national headquarters at The Belfry.

The associations seem to have reservations about the advisability of such a takeover and there appears to be insufficient support within SIGGA and the BGGGA, while the EIGGA board of management has already advised the PGA that it is holding talks elsewhere.

During the SIGGA educational conference at the Younger Hall, St Andrews recently, Michael Bonallack, secretary of the Royal & Ancient Golf Club, introducing the afternoon session, strongly recommended that greenkeepers retain their independence and strive for an improvement in status through a unified approach to the profession's future. He felt sure that the R & A would look favourably upon any request for assistance in pursuing this aim.

Since the SIGGA conference, two meetings have taken place, with representatives of the three associations taking part under the chairmanship of the English Golf Union and with a member of the R & A in attendance.

Although nothing has been finalised as yet and another meeting is arranged for early December, *Greenkeeper*

believes that a general administrative centre with a full-time executive officer will be based at Bingley to coordinate events and conferences and to deal with the associations, which will operate on a regional or branch level.

The administrative organisation will be known as the Golf Greenkeepers' Federation with the aim of supporting in a practical form the Greenkeeper Training Committee by getting clubs to train their staff and have an all-qualified greenkeeping profession.

All apprentices will have to qualify and the eventual aim would be to have a system of continuous education, so that even course managers will be required to maintain their qualifications and knowledge by attending seminars. This system should have the support of the golf unions, which will assist with its implementation.

Should the federation come into being - and all the signs are positive - it will give the PGA European Tour, among others, the ideal vehicle for its intended support of 'greenkeeper training and course preparation research' and a worthwhile home for the money the tour received from ICI's Professional Products Division (see page 24 of last month's *Greenkeeper*). Likewise, the federation could act as a focal point for all trade involvement in greenkeeper training.

It is essential that the executive officer, when appointed, should not be a former greenkeeper, but someone with administrative skills and without bias. The committee should be small and of similar composition to the Greenkeeper Training Committee.

While there are, no doubt, many hurdles to clear and personal differences to overcome, it is hoped that all greenkeepers will shortly be brought together under one independent umbrella federation.

EIGGA NEWS & VIEWS CONTINUED...

and some 30 members and guests attended.

The course received a good deal of praise - Alan and staff are to be commended. We were well looked after in the clubhouse and, once again, members of the trade gave us good support. I make special mention of Maxwell Hart, Parkers, TMS and May & Baker.

There is a lot of work involved in putting on such a day, so thanks go to Ed, Brian and Sevi for all their hard work. (Brian wishes to thank M. Warner and M. Strange for handling the raffle).

Finally, a turkey trot is scheduled by Badgemore Park on December 11, starting at 11am.

Billy McMillan.

Eastern

This, the branch's first report, is to let members know that greenkeepers do exist in the east!

Although not a heavily supported branch, the membership is drawn from a large area - from Kettering, Worksop and Lincoln to Skegness and Cambridge, to name but a few. We meet mainly around Grantham, as this is central, and are a friendly group always willing to meet new members. Anyone interested in joining should ring Colin Swingler on Grantham (0476) 68656.

Our autumn golf meeting for the Rigby Taylor Trophy was held at Stoke Rochford Golf Club by courtesy of the captain Peter Bloodworth. The course, in a superb setting, was in excellent condition, thanks to Gilbert Ogden and his staff. It proved a hard test on a windy day.

The trophy and prizes were presented by Steve Dickinson of Rigby Taylor. The cup was won by Steve McCrossan of Burghley Park with Roy Harrison of the home club losing out on the last nine holes. The non-greenkeeper prize was won by Brian Booth.

We are hoping to arrange a further golf day sometime in March, when members will be invited to bring along a committee member to play.

H.Q. NEWS

Dear E.I.G.G.A. member,
Well, once again we approach the end of a year, and it's time for me to give you an up-date on what's been happening in your Association throughout the past few months. 1985 has been a very busy year for E.I.G.G.A., and we are really starting to make some impact within the industry. A great deal of behind-the-scenes work has been done by various members of the Board of Management, who have travelled all over the country to attend meetings called by certain respective bodies in the golf world; the results of those meetings will become apparent in due course, and I am sure that our Chairman will cover the subject in his report, but I feel that 1985 will mark a turning point in E.I.G.G.A.'s history, and 1986 will bear witness to the efforts made on behalf of the membership. Particular mention must be made to Bill Lawson, who, since becoming National Chairman in March this year, has done a tremendous amount of work to benefit the Association, and much of what E.I.G.G.A. is set to achieve in the future will be due to Bill's commitment and determination. He also found time to act as E.I.G.G.A.'s Captain to the English team which played in the Ransomes International Tournament, at St. Andrews, in October. Our team made a gallant effort, but, as you know, the Canadians took the honours. E.I.G.G.A. was well represented on the English team by Kevin Munt, who is a member of the Board of Management, and Terry Adamson who is the administrator for the North-west branch of the Association. Kevin has been on the E.I.G.G.A. Board since the very first A.G.M., first as Chairman, and now as a Trustee; and Terry has done some sterling work in the North-west, and has been a great benefit to his branch, and to the Association in general. E.I.G.G.A. was also honoured to be invited to send a speaker to the S.I.G.G.A. Conference, which was held in conjunction with the tournament, and our Vice-President, David Jones attended in this capacity at S.I.G.G.A.'s request; thus, a team of four first-class ambassadors was sent to represent E.I.G.G.A. at this prestigious event.

Although our golfers were not successful at St. Andrews, it was a different story at The Belfry in October, when the Greenkeepers were the victorious team in the Kubota Challenge.

The team was made up of players from E.I.G.G.A., S.I.G.G.A. and the B.G.G.A., and they competed with the Golf Writers, Secretaries, and Stewards. E.I.G.G.A. was fortunate to have been represented by two excellent golfers, Brian Turner of Worplesdon Golf Club,

and Joao Teixeira of Hillingdon Golf Club, and our congratulations go to them, and their fellow team members.

As most of you know, E.I.G.G.A.'s 1985 Conference, whilst not being as well attended as had been hoped, was, nevertheless very successful in terms of content, and the quality of speakers. Details of the 1986 Conference are published in this magazine and it promises to be an even better event.

The conference will be held over three full days, on the weekend of 4th/5th/6th April 1986, at the University of Warwick, which, as those of you who attended this year's conference know, is an ideal venue with excellent facilities.

Registration will be from 9.00 a.m. on Friday 4th April, and the programme, featuring a wide range of speakers, will be publicised in "Greenkeeper" magazine. The time of the Annual General Meeting has been changed, so that it will now take place after the last lecture on the Saturday (5th April) afternoon, and before the formal banquet; this arrangement leaves the afternoon of Sunday 6th free for more lectures, and allows maximum use of the time available. The cost of attendance to the 1986 E.I.G.G.A. Educational Conference will be £112.00 to E.I.G.G.A. members, and £125.00 to non-members. This sum covers all meals and accommodation which are of a very good standard, and includes all lectures and the formal dinner on the Saturday evening. We have been very fortunate in obtaining the services of Sir Rex Hunt as our after-dinner speaker. As you know, Sir Rex was the Civil Commissioner on the Falkland Islands, and is in fact a member of the Association. Although I have not yet had the pleasure of meeting Sir Rex, I have corresponded with him on several occasions, and judging by the humorous tone of his letters, I would say that we are in for a most entertaining evening!

I would urge those of you who haven't been to an E.I.G.G.A. conference before, to try and make this one if you can; and, for any Golf Club Secretaries, or Greens Chairman who might read this, you too are most welcome to attend, and I am sure that you will appreciate the benefit of your Club sending it's Greenkeeper/s to what is a major conference on Green-keeping. I can assure the few cynics out there that this is not merely a social event, but a comprehensive educational forum which gives everyone an opportunity to hear the experts speak on a variety of subjects. For anyone wishing to reserve a place, please complete the booking form, and send your remittance, or a deposit of £20.00 to National Headquarters.

Daily attendance is also available at a rate of £25.00 per person per day. This sum covers morning coffee, lunch and afternoon tea, and all lectures.

Will all members please note that the invoices for their 1986 E.I.G.G.A. membership subscriptions is enclosed in this issue of "Greenkeeper". Full membership which applies to any greenkeeper other than an apprentice is £20.00, whilst the apprentice subscription remains at £12.00. Trade membership is £25.00 (individual) and Company membership is open to regional companies at £75.00 to cover membership for two representatives, and National companies at £125.00, to cover four representatives. If for some reason you do not receive your invoice, please forward the relevant sum to National H.Q., together with details of your name, membership number, preferred mailing address, and the name of your club; also, if applicable any change in your status during the past year; i.e. from 1st Assistant to Head Greenkeeper etc. At this point, may I ask everyone, please, to send their 1986 subs at the earliest opportunity in the new year, as I cannot accept any renewals after 31st March.

As before, if a golf club joins it's entire green-staff en bloc it can claim a 10% reduction, and if your club is paying your subscription, could you please give your invoice to your club's secretary for this purpose.

Finally, to all our members, thank you for supporting the Association during the past year; I know that progress in certain areas is a little slow, but, like British Rail, "We're getting there!" If you have any queries, or comments, please let me know; I occasionally hear of someone voicing their discontent over some matter which could so easily be rectified by a letter or a 'phone call. Further to this, for those of you who are awaiting Unit 6 of the E.I.G.G.A. Management Course, I have been assured by the Bournemouth & Poole Management Centre that the Unit will be sent out shortly.

I hope that you have a very Happy Christmas, and a healthy and prosperous 1986, and I look forward to seeing some of you at Warwick in April.

*Danielle Jones,
General Administrator,
National Headquarters,
2, Golf Cottage,
Bucklesham Road,
Ipswich,
Suffolk. IP3 8UG
Tel.: 0473 711810*



SIGGA's Success At St Andrews

The fifth Ransomes International Greenkeepers and Superintendents Tournament at St Andrews was a huge success and not just for the 13 countries taking part.

The programme of supporting events organised by the SIGGA committee proved to be equally outstanding, with the international conference as the main attraction. This was divided into a morning 'home' session introduced by Mr Louden, a distinguished R & A member and the 'away', or overseas, session opened by the R & A's secretary Michael Bonallack, who came out strongly for greenkeepers maintaining their independence and uniting to ensure that greenkeeping becomes a stronger profession with better qualifications and educational opportunities. To this end, he pledged the R & A's moral and financial support.

The home session was based on the different types of golf course and their management - heathland was tackled by David Jones of Purdis Heath, linksland by the late Russell Brown, Turnberry (see page 7) and parkland by Gordon Childs of Churchston G.C. The striking thing was the similarity of approach at all three environments, with variations on a theme (Arthurian) of minimal fertilising, watering and maximum elevation of compaction through intensive aeration. (The papers presented by Gordon Childs and David Jones will be published in *Greenkeeper*). The morning session closed with a slide show from Nicholas Park, formerly greens chairman at Lindrick, who rammed home the message that there are still pitifully few courses in the British Isles that have conquered the Poa problem.

In the afternoon, we were entertained by experiences from other countries and climes. Gene Baston from the GCSAA outlined what a powerful and impressive organisation has been created in the States. Stan Zontek of the USGA Greens Section, as ever



Michael Bonallack recommended the greenkeepers to stay independent.

North And Midlands

The section had a good turn-out for the autumn outing at Ballater Golf Club. The weather stayed fine and the course was in excellent condition. Our thanks go to the club for a very enjoyable day.

The section's AGM was held in the evening, at which G. Hampton and G. Webster were presented with medals to commemorate their inclusion in the Scottish team for St Andrews.

Star prize of the day, a magnificent Titleist golf bag, is on its way to Royal Dornoch and Ian Small can expect a putter the next time I see him.

The main prize winners were: scratch - R. Patterson; Meldrum Memorial Trophy - D. Dingwall; 1st class - G. Paterson; 2nd Class - R. Hardie; 3rd Class - W. Paterson; McLean Trophy - E. Skinner; Toro Trophy (veterans) - W. Currie; junior veteran - J. Flint and trade shield - M. Dennis.

Iain Hamilton

the polished performer, gave a revealing insight into agronomy US style. Bob Heron from the CGSA produced an 'ice spectacular' while Rolf Lowgren from the Swedish Golf Federation showed how golf should be organised. Can you imagine a greens chairman having to be educated in turf culture by the game's governing body before being allowed to take office? Jim Wyllie, also of CGSA, produced a different show. His slides illustrated how fairways can be changed almost like relaying carpet - from shag-pile to Wilton! The overriding impression was that the rest of the world is prepared to pay much more for its golf and, consequently, education than golfers in Britain.

In all, a day for SIGGA to be proud of, with a highly professional team of greenkeeper speakers.

Central

Since the last executive meeting, things have been quite busy within the Central section.

The inter-club tournament, run throughout the summer, proved to be a great success and was eventually won by Dullatur Golf Club. It is intended to make this an annual competition.

An autumn outing was held at Balbirnie Park Golf Club, Markinch, when some 30 members and guests had a great day. Considering the atrocious weather on the previous days, we were fortunate to play at all.

Prize winners were: net aggregate (spring and autumn) - Ian Ritchie 137; best net - Walter Garland 73; best scratch - Brian Inglis 74; 1st class, first handicap - Graham Scougall 76; 1st class, second handicap Brian Lawrie 84; 2nd class, first handicap - Duncan Peddie 78; 2nd class, second handicap - William Whitfield 82; visitors' prize - Harry Archer 70 and the two-ball foursomes - Brian Inglis and William Whitfield 38½ points.

Our thanks go to Ian MacMillan and his staff for having the course in such good condition, despite the weather, and to Mr and Mrs Chalmers for the excellent meals

and service provided and to the council and members of the Club for the courtesy they extended.

The international conference at St Andrews was quite well attended by Central section members, who voted it a huge success and our congratulations go to the organising committee for all their hard work.

The section is indebted to Stewarts & Co for the presentation of a silver quaich, which will be played for at outings next year.

Further to a previous statement regarding the seminar organised in conjunction with the East section, the committee has decided that, due to the East section's failure to pay half the costs, to which two of its officials had agreed, the Central section does not wish to be involved in organising any future events with them. The amount in question is £32.45p.

At a recent committee meeting, the paper on the proposed amalgamation between SIGGA, EIGGA, the BGGGA and the PGA - a copy of which has been sent to every member of the section - was discussed at length. The feeling of the committee was that the best future for greenkeeping is through education and, to this end, SIGGA is at the forefront and, therefore, for the time being, we should continue to make our own way forward.

It was decided to invite Martyn Jones to speak to the members sometime early in the New Year and to organise a visit to Inverclyde Sports Complex at Largs in March.

Our congratulations go to the following members of the section

who have taken up new appointments lately: William Lyon, Crieff, on gaining his first appointment as head greenkeeper at Forfar Golf Club; Ian Ritchie, Dullatur, on being appointed assistant head greenkeeper at Ladybank Golf Club; John Philp, St Andrews, who becomes the first links supervisor to be appointed by the Carnoustie Links Trust and Brian Finlayson, Braehead, on his appointment as head greenkeeper at Ardeer Golf Club in Ayrshire.

At present, membership of the Central section stands at 75. New members: Ian MacMillan, Lilliedale, High Street, Freuchie, Fife; Craig Stafford, 357 Julian Road, Cadham, Glenrothes, Fife and David McOwat, 33 Duncan Road, Glenrothes, Fife. Change of address: Ian Ritchie, 10 Queen's Crescent, Ladybank, Fife.

John Crawford.

Ayrshire

The section ran a lottery in conjunction with the Open Championship. It was a great success with an outstanding £530 profit after deductions.

The first prize, a weekend for two at Gleneagles, was won by G. Featherstone of Largs. The second prize, two weekly tickets for next year's Open, went to A. Waite of Powfoot. D. McLean of Turnberry collected the third prize of £50.

There were four runners-up prizes of £15 each, which went to A. Marcurci, Kirkcudbright; A. Hitches, Warwick; D. Johnston,

Gourock and R. Aitken, Glasgow.

The autumn outing was to Glasgow Gailes, where the scoring was very good, due, in part, to the excellent condition of the greens provided by Bobby Bennett and staff.

Thanks go to the steward and stewardess and to the club for affording us the courtesy of the course and facilities.

The winners were: scratch - A. Forrest (Western Gailes), 1st class - R. Weir (Bogside), 2nd class - M. Power (Troon) and 3rd class - G. Sloan (St Cuthberts). The leading visitor was A. Leask (Glasgow Gailes).

The north lost to the south of the section in a match for the R. Aitken Trophy. M. Power, who is now in charge of the Troon courses, had the Darnley in excellent condition. After a super meal, R. Aitken Snr presented the trophy to Harry Diamond, who thanked him for sponsoring this event.

We send best wishes to A. Jamieson in his new position as head greenkeeper at Prestwick St Nicholas and to Colin Hamilton, who has moved south to take up an appointment as first assistant at Worthing.

J. Grainger.

Lost - And Found?

Jonathan Harmer mislaid a Farmura file at Scotsturf recently. The file is brown with gold embossed lettering. Jonathan would very much appreciate its return and is offering a reward to the finder or borrower. Contact Jonathan on 023376 241.

APPLICATION FORM FOR MEMBERSHIP OF SIGGA

Name of Applicant Age

Full Postal Address

..... Postal Code

Golf Club or Company

Position at Club or Company

Registered Greenkeeper or not Certificated

I enclose my annual subscription of £15

Signed

Section Secretaries

AYRSHIRE - J. Grainger, 3 Castlepark Gardens, Fairlie, Ayrshire.

CENTRAL - E. R. Small, 2 Castle Park, Kincardine, By Alloa.

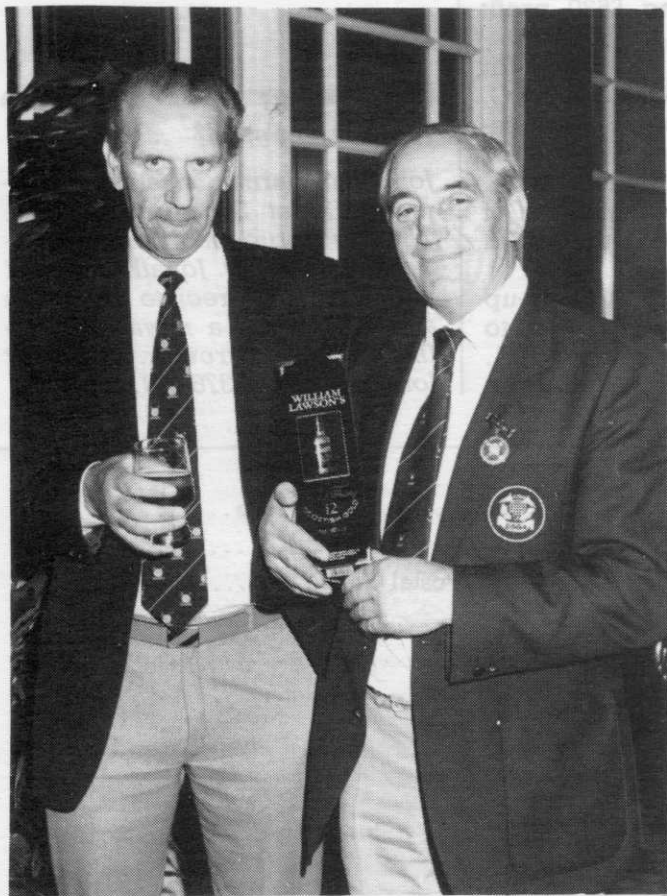
EAST - W. Blair, 13 Redhall Avenue, Edinburgh.

NORTH - I. Hamilton, 58 Whitecraig Road, Newburgh, Fife.

WEST - A. McDougall, 17 Poplar Avenue, Newton Mearns, Glasgow.



The winning Canadian team — Successful Defenders, with their trophies.



Bill Lawson, E.I.G.G.A.'s Chairman presents his own brew to S.I.G.G.A.'s General Secretary in recognition of the Scots hospitality.



Runners up Scotland with in the foreground Guy Catchpole, Sales Director of Ransomes.

RANSOMES ST ANDREWS



England go into action, Messrs Munt and Richardson.



Keith Mackenzie — main speaker at the Ransomes Banquet.



Some of S.I.G.G.A.'s organising committee left to right. Joe McKean, Walter Woods, Jimmy Kidd, Chris Kennedy, Jimmy Neilson.

Contrasting national attitudes

THE past three years have seen those responsible for the maintenance of British golf courses turn something of a corner. Some conferences are no longer simply an excuse for golfing days off, playing for trade-donated prizes. They are developing along the lines well-known to other professions and are increasingly run by the greenkeepers themselves. Those who attended *Golf Course '84* at Cambridge or this year's EIGGA and SIGGA conferences at Warwick and St Andrews know how well they are being organised. I feel sorry for those greenkeepers - and their clubs - who have not yet realised what they are missing.

One most instructive feature for many of us has been the realisation of the widely different attitudes to golf course maintenance in different countries. It is some time since we were told, in no uncertain terms, that we were light years behind the Americans. Of course, nobody mentioned the climatic differences that make many comparisons irrelevant, but the Americans certainly have a different industry. It's big, bouncy and booming, full of new ideas and high-pressure salesmanship that goes well with high customer 'cosmetic' expectations. Above

all, it is expensive. The budget for an American course can be five to ten times as big as for a British equivalent and the same goes for wages.

Listening to speakers from The New World, I am mainly impressed by their enthusiasm and courage. Methods are described with conviction but, here, some doubts begin to enter my mind. The dictionary defines the word empirical as 'based on observation or experiment' not on theory.' That word, for me, sums up American greenkeeping and, as we know from so many technical areas, including medicine, if you don't know why something works, your results will be unpredictable and prone to side-effects.

Perhaps I am being unfair. There are so many different climatic regions in America, whereas the whole of Great Britain (with some variation in rainfall from north west to south east) falls into one climatic region - the maritime temperate zone. So we cannot expect to be told the ecological justification for every procedure in every American locality. The trouble is we do not hear really scientific justification for anything at all. We do see the increasing obsession with presentation as opposed to quality. We see magazines crammed

with hard-selling advertisements, especially for chemicals. If everything is so good, why do they need all these corrective measures? Maybe they have a lot to teach us but, for the present, put me down as being not yet convinced.

The Swedes are another nation with a booming golf business and they certainly have something to teach us. We could all learn from their insistence on proper organisation, preparation and tuition. Everyone must attend courses before being let loose - even the chairman of the green committee! There were nearly 50 Swedes at SIGGA's conference - almost outnumbering the Scots. A trait they share with the Canadians is taking on the most difficult conditions. Golf courses are being built further and further north - with four inside the Arctic Circle. The winter damage may be so great that the repairs each year approach the size of a complete reconstruction. With shortened seasons, as well as these climatic factors, golf is an expensive game, but the customers are there.

Our friends from the Continent present a varying picture. High cost, high investment projects are balanced by quite modest layouts with modest standards. Greenkeepers are enthusiastic



The new Sports Turf Research Institute.

and seem to make the most of any opportunity to learn more.

There was one important conference in Europe this year about which we have heard very little. The International Turfgrass Society is for all the academic institutions - the colleges, research institutes and universities. The ITS conference is held every four years at different venues across the world. This year, the Fifth International Turfgrass Conference took place in Avignon near Paris and the research institutes at Bingley and Aberystwyth were both represented.

At its conclusion, we found several delegates making their way round Britain to view the current scene. It was no great surprise to me to find them in rather a grim mood. There was a general feeling that the methods in use in so many countries had clearly failed and led to *Poa annua* dominated swards. It was, therefore, no thrill to come here and tour round only to find that the same blight had descended on our courses.

I found considerable interest in talking to all these 'tourists,' but one in particular fired my imagination. Dr Yoskisuiki Maki, professor of agronomy at the Akita Prefectural College in Japan, was elected president of the International Turfgrass Society for the next four years. The next conference, in 1989, will be held in Tokyo.

Some weeks before his visit, I received a fascinating letter from Dr Maki explaining that, with the help of Dr Peter Hayes of the STRI, he had arranged a tour of Britain. The detailed itinerary was enclosed. He proposed to drive himself over 2,000 miles, visiting two research institutes and 15 golf courses. He expressed his mission thus: "I have long wanted the opportunity of learning more from you about the spiritual background of golf prototype, golf course layout and the traditional way of turfgrass maintenance." A refreshingly thorough approach, so I thought I had better do some homework!

Japan has already had one golf boom, which was cut short by the 1973 oil crisis. Now there is another spurt with 1,400 golf courses scheduled to rise rapidly to over 2,000. As a nation, the Japanese spent 70 million man-days last year playing golf. All this in a crowded country where the

only space available is on the mountainous central areas of the string of islands that comprise Japan. Australian and American architects and constructors have initiated the building of courses, often at enormous expense. Great imagination has been displayed in order to make enough level ground available and lifts between holes are fairly commonplace. Dr Maki duly appeared at the appointed time and I was deeply impressed with his dedication, cordiality and expertise.

Some 30 years ago, he was sent by his country to study agronomy at Wisconsin, USA and had subsequently taught plant feeding at Tokyo University. However, in recent years it became evident that there were greater problems with golf courses and he moved to Akita, the turfgrass centre. He speaks good English and, carrying a battery of cameras and tape recorders, made notes on everything he saw. In five hours of discussion, I found a man who really knows his sciences, grasses and greenkeeping methods. Actually, the Japanese sent a large delegation, led by Dr Maki to Europe with a clear brief.

The present orthodoxy of turfgrass maintenance that has spread from America to so many countries, including Japan, is felt to be just not good enough and perhaps a return to the early sites of golf would provide a better understanding of the game and its problems, going right back to first principles and then starting

building on basic sciences. Dr Maki said: 'it was his duty to his country' to undertake this work.

On his return to Japan, he wrote to me: 'Most of the grasses, particularly *Poa annua*, on the golf courses here are dying and most parts of fairways are turning brown. I was surprised and excited (in Britain) at seeing real links, inland and inland heather courses with delicate undulations and natural beauty.'

So, now might be the time to start placing your bets on which nation will end up light years ahead. But we should not entirely write off the dark horse - Britain, which invented the game and had, naturally, the finest golfing turf in the world. We could have it again if we stopped trying to copy, rather poorly, a game and turf that were always second best.

Thanks to other sports, there is now a bright new building in an old sunken rose garden just north of Bradford where British golf should be putting its money. Nearly 60 years ago, when the Board of Greenkeeping Research was established at Bingley, Norman Hackett wrote: 'Within a comparatively short time, their fellow scientists are able to confirm their hypothesis - it may be months or years, but the truth is finally established.' Things are, indeed, taking years, but the instrument is there at hand. All the things we guess at or assume can be put to the test. We might still come out on top!

EDDIE PARK



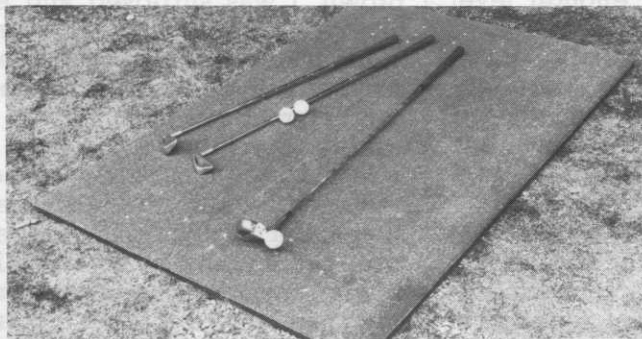
Dr Maki with the Lindrick course manager and staff.

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The reclamation of indigenous turf

Eddie Park looks at the problems of removing thatch and *Poa annua* from our golf greens.

I HAVE, on several occasions, been asked why I so frequently quote from old, indeed, antique, books on greenkeeping. Of course, they are interesting, but why not use up-to-date sources? This is an important point for those trying to recapture *Agrostis/Festuca* playing surfaces and needing help with the problems that occur.

I have to be quite frank and reply that, whereas up to about 1940 there was an understanding of the needs of *Agrostis/Festuca* turf, that position no longer obtains. Little has been written on the reclamation and subsequent maintenance of these grasses, while there has been plenty on the recognition and treatment of the problems of *Poa annua* and its ugly sister thatch.

I have listened to several excellent lectures about the problems on golf courses in this last two years, but hardly anything about the problems of maintaining *Agrostis/Festuca* turf. Probably for the good reason that, in my observation, there are few courses with such turf on the greens. I have seen hundreds of greens with *Poa annua/Agrostis* turf and so many of our problems in recent years in reality derived directly from turf of such botanical composition. Hence, we are continuously offered plenty of quick solutions, gimmicks, magic machinery, clever chemicals, etc, but we do seem to have lost the core of knowledge from the past. So, this article on problems will, perhaps, at least be different.

We have previously covered, in some detail, the fundamental problem of being allowed, by members and committees, to do the job required. I will not repeat it all here, but suffice to say that if you have not got a firm and full policy agreed by the majority of

members, you should not be starting.

Perhaps the first problem I should discuss is the cosmetic one. If we are to succeed in getting fine grass back, we cannot go on cheating. That means we cannot use fertiliser and water simply to cover things up. So we cannot any longer disguise the sins of the past and we cannot expect to achieve the appearance of a mono-culture that is so typical of *Poa annua* with a dash of remaining *Agrostis*.

Golfers have become used to this uniform overall green colour and do not want to do without it. They never did, of course. R.B. Dawson, in the first issue of the *Bingley Journal*, wrote: 'Many golfers are possessed of a keen aesthetic sense and the greens in particular should satisfy this. There should be no bands or blotches of darker colour; and grass should form one homogeneous whole'.

Unrealistic

That is almost certainly an unrealistic goal and a doubtful one anyway. We know that in many crops mono-cultures consisting of one species only are high risk plant associations. Diseases or extreme climate can easily decimate them. In the context of a golf green, the story just does not happen that way anyway.

We should be looking for a gradual succession as we improve the good husbandry of the site. Our succession seems to be *Poa annua* giving way to creeping bent (*Agrostis stolonifera*) changing to common bent (*Agrostis tenuis*). If stopped there, I would settle very happily for that but, in fact, on some drier areas, we then find colonies of fescues.

Now there are times, particularly in summer, when there is no way they will all look the same green colour and we have to spend time explaining this - 'never mind the colour, feel the quality!' Much the same argument applies to turf density. The use of plentiful fertiliser and water gives a *Poa annua* sward with a high productivity. So golfers have become used to a dense, lush sward which, unhappily, only lasts for three months of the year and even then with drawbacks that they may not appreciate.

Working up to *Agrostis* from small beginnings is a slow business and, in my experience, gimmicks are counter-productive. Everyone thinks of overseeding and it might be successful if we could close the green or leave all the grass long for some months. In the context of a busy club calendar, that just is not an option - we must mow regularly and this kills off the young seedlings.

Attempts to push the matter along with fertiliser and water take us straight back to the conditions that favour *Poa annua*. So we have to go at nature's speed aided only by our best efforts at aeration and other good husbandry practices, such as top-dressing.

One really valuable trick is to take out full depth hole plugs of good turf and swop them round with plugs from poor areas on the greens. This means having access to a source of good turf in a turf nursery and it is surprising how many patch plugs can be cut from a square yard of turf. It also calls for accurate craftsmanship in fitting the new plugs in the green.

Now we are beginning to see the real crux of our problems. Finance and training. Without a

Continued overleaf....

Eddie Park – Continued...



highly skilled and motivated staff (at least four on 18 holes), it is quite impossible to get all these individual tasks done. Far too many clubs expect high standards, but do not want to pay for them. I would have thought that most people would appreciate that subscriptions of less than £5 per week (and some are a lot lower) will not pay for all the work required.

If they reduce the hand work or take in more members to pay for it, they simply compound their problems. It is at this point that I, for one, hear the warning bells ringing. From many reports around the country, I hear disturbing tales of the shrinking waiting lists and members refusing to pay increased subscriptions or green fees.

Pay more

In many cases, I don't blame them. Why should they pay more for a course in a deplorable state? What I call 'alternative greenkeeping,' using large amounts of fertiliser, water and chemicals plus, only too often, poor craftsmanship (taking too many short cuts), has failed.

The year 1984-85 may just jolt a few more people out of their complacency. A drought followed by heavy autumn rainfall, an intense-

ly cold winter, a late spring and perhaps a wet summer shows us that Old Mother Nature has ceased to be as benevolent as the last few years. Golfers will not go on paying for waterlogged greens or Fusarium in July.

Problems such as weeds, worms and fungi should not be overemphasised. I work on the principle of *minimum* intervention. With a decrease in alkalinity and fertility, worms and weeds such as clover decrease dramatically. As for the other weeds, let us at least stop the practice of spraying overall (even the rough) with wide spectrum herbicides.

Nowadays, it is far too expensive and the great joy of discontinuing is to see the rapid return of all our wild flowers. Springtime with drifts of cowslips, bluebells, any local orchids, anemone, etc, delights even the most unobservant club member.

The position with fungi is rather different. At least the old mercurics were effective with diseases such as fusarium. Today, the requirements for safety regulation testing mean that agrochemical firms would probably find it too expensive to develop fungicides tailored exclusively for sports turf. So we end up with materials originally developed for much bigger markets, such as tomato and chrysanthemum growers.

Sometimes the price for the turf equivalent of the same chemical is set at a significantly higher level, yet the substances are certainly *not* as effective or persistent as our trusty old mercurics. It is not surprising that many course managers tell me that they prefer sulphate of iron.

The real point is that we should, if at all possible, be avoiding all these things anyway. The research to investigate the side effects on turf is yet to be done, but we know that anything that reduces bacterial or fungal activity also reduces the soil's ability to decompose unwanted organic matter – such as dead root material that will build up into thatch. Getting the soil into better health with good husbandry will be worth more than all the 'cures' in the world. And I need hardly add that diseases such as fusarium are far less of a worry to the man with an *Agrostis/Festuca* sward.

I have said that we can no

longer cover up all the sins of the past and that applies especially to old fairy rings, which were previously camouflaged with ample fertiliser and water. They left, sometimes for many years, soil into which it is difficult to force water in dry periods. These areas must be identified and given special treatment with hand hollow tining and wetting agents.

With the return of fine grasses, I have seen new problems. *Agrostis* (but not *Fescue* or even *Poa annua*) attacked in July. It may be due to local hydrophobic soil associated with dry patch, but this year in particular many of us have had above average rainfall, well spaced through the year. Closer inspection reveals apparent root damage, which may have originated months before. It is now being investigated as part of the new research project at the STRI sponsored by the R&A. I hope the much fuller research required to investigate the environmental requirements of the finer grasses will not be long delayed.

Poa annua

Of course, in the reduction of *Poa annua*, we must look closely at areas where it persists even when we have been doing the right thing for some years. In many cases, careful investigation proves the existence of less permeable soil forming a pan. This may or may not be due to compaction – it may equally be due to unsuitable imported soil. How it came about really doesn't matter. The important thing is to discover it and do something about it. The assessment of the potential of a site in terms of a return in *Agrostis/Festuca* turf is a skilled business.

Other things to take a note of (large topics in their own right) are poor golfing architecture, the presence of shade and the availability of finance if remedial measures are required. Also frequently encountered are ryegrass patches from the use of cheap seed for repair work – these leave a scar that is difficult to erase and the ideal solution is to re-turf.

Yet another problem from past neglect is the failure to remake bunkers when required. Players knock several pounds of sand on to the green when playing out. If this is allowed to accumulate, the maintenance of affected turf

becomes impossible. Layered sand produces a condition inimical to the production of deep rooted grasses.

With a mixture of different species of bents and fescues, we cannot expect precisely the same amount of growth at all seasons. This seems to be a particular problem in spring when bents take on a procumbent habit. Careful management with light verticutting and top dressing is indicated.

Undoubtedly, a season of drought gives the seeker of fine swards both the greatest opportunities and the greatest challenges. He with the steadiest nerves can dry out his greens and get rid of the most *Poa annua*. But if he cannot keep his members fully in the picture, he may also get rid of himself!

The effect of several weeks of drought is a matter of serious concern. Even the most careful balancing act with minimum water will not prevent some thinning of the sward and a degree of reinvasion the following winter and spring by an increase in annual meadowgrass. We can deal with that by a continuation of sensible policies, cutting the *Poa* down steadily in more 'normal' years. The alternative, pumping on more than sufficient water, may seem less worrying, but is far more disastrous.

Too many golfers have been brainwashed into believing that the lush green sward that results is desirable. Those who know better are aware that the combination of hot weather with irrigation will produce a massive

overproduction of meadowgrass and meadowgrass roots. Fine grasses are thus disadvantaged and crowded out and we have to go back to square one and start again. This problem of dry weather and the over-reaction of golfers to it has bedevilled green-keeping for at least a century.

Our worst problems are those of attitudes. Golfers are still being spoonfed with arrogant nonsense about what they can demand from their golf courses. The PGA European Tour, for instance, is still trying to achieve entirely artificial conditions on which to play their target golf - a form of showbusiness with highly paid entertainers.

Thrilling

Certainly, it was thrilling viewing to see Fulford raped on a Sunday afternoon this summer, but there was no mention that only the wet ground conditions and no wind, plus the usual high Fulford standard of presentation, had made the game so ridiculously easy. There was certainly no mention that the year-round pursuit of artificial target golf can lead to lasting damage.

This year, I have seen greens so damaged by bad management leading to thatch that they have abandoned them and constructed replacements. Visits from Japanese and Australian advisors and correspondence from other countries has convinced me that we are looking not at a rare local problem, but one that is worldwide and escalating.

Reconstruction - starting again

- is the word most used by those who come from places where the necessary finance is readily available. If we make our courses unplayable through unwise treatments, who will come to our aid?

Greenkeepers tell me of the need to 'play politics' with committees and individuals in their club structure. I become ever more convinced that the main danger comes from those who offer us easy solutions. We should recognise that nature - especially our climate and our soil - impose many rules that we do not have the ability or the strength to break. It has been our belief that modern chemicals, machinery and irrigation would allow us to impose our will that has led to the widespread loss of our marvellous British *Agrostis/Festuca* swards.

I am not suggesting that we throw away all these aids and go back to nature. We could not keep pace with modern traffic on our courses. I am suggesting that we must use our basic scientific knowledge to reassess all our working practices and be quite certain that we are working with our climate and soil, not against them.

At present, golfers are playing golf too frequently on courses that are, frankly, sub-standard. And watching televised golf from too many courses where top-class presentation does not really disguise bottom of the class husbandry. There are signs of a consumer revolt already and the golf course industry would do well to put its house in order.

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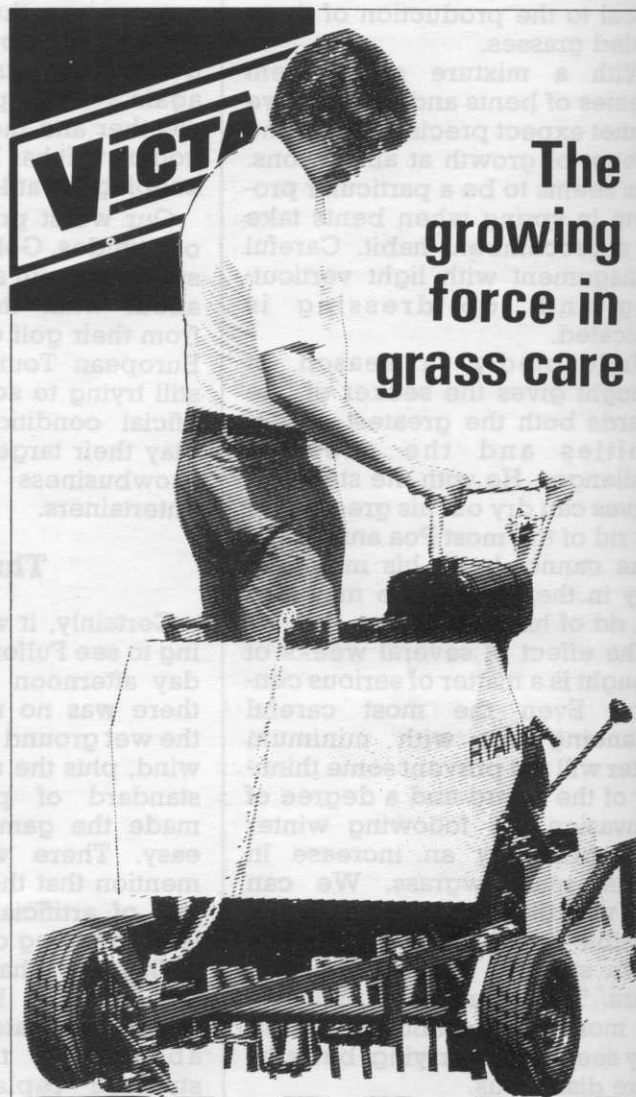
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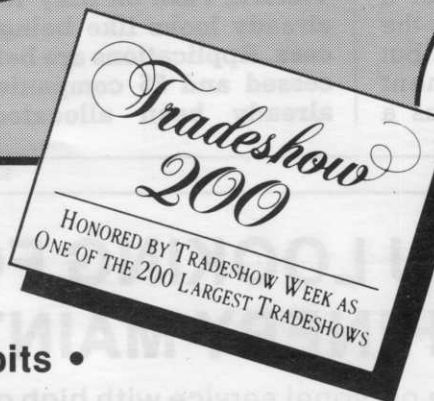
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News Of Nickersons

Price Waterhouse, the receiver of Nickerson Turfmaster, recently announced the sale of the business. Nickerson Turfmaster is part of the Gainsborough-based Marshall Tractor Group, to which Price Waterhouse was appointed receiver late in September, and is the first Marshall business to be sold.

The purchaser is Harlow Agricultural Merchants, a major grain and seed merchant in the south east with annual sales of over £20m. Mr Parker, the director of HAM responsible for the purchase, said: "This is part of our expansion programme and is a move into a new field for us. We have agreed with the receivers that we can operate from the existing Marshall's premises for a few weeks while we get the operation underway again, but we are seeking permanent premises in Gainsborough as a

matter of urgency. Clearly, the business expertise lies there and I am hoping to provide employment for 11 of the former employees of Nickerson Turfmaster, who were made redundant by the receiver in September and October."

Richard Rees, for the receiver, said: "Nickerson Turfmaster was a relatively small part of the Marshall's operation and can easily be extracted from the Gainsborough site. We have a number of interested parties in the sale of other parts of the Marshall group and a few parties have expressed an interest in the residue of the group as a whole."

The IOG's first-ever national spring exhibition at Southport's Victoria Park on May 13 and 14 already looks like being a success. Applications are being processed and 25 companies have already been allocated over

2,500sq m of exhibition stand space.

Maxwell Hart has announced the death of Robert MacIndoe Stewart. He joined the company in Glasgow during 1924 and three years later moved to London where he launched the company's English branch. In 1944, he bought that operation and moved it to the present base at Winnersh, Berkshire.

An accountant by profession, he served for over 20 years on the committee of the Royal Gardeners Orphan Fund and was treasurer of the organisation for some years. He relinquished his chairmanship of Maxwell Hart in 1975 and, more recently, he lived at Lymington, where he celebrated his golden wedding anniversary in July.

Mr Stewart leaves a wife, daughter and son Duncan, who is the current chairman and managing director of Maxwell Hart.

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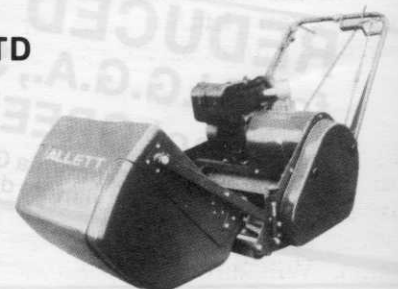
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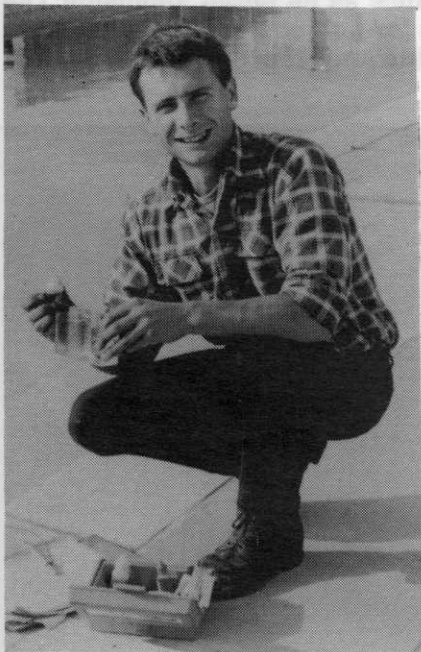
People, Places, Products

The winner of the 1985 Young Groundsman of the Year competition is 19-year-old Richard Snell, an assistant groundsman from Exmouth, Devon. The runner-up is 18-year-old Wayne Nash, an assistant groundsman in Ebbw Vale.

Other finalists were Antonio Badcock, 19, Ian Davie, 20, and Ian Ladbroke, 19, who was runner-up in last year's competition.

The winner and his sponsor will attend the Golf Course Superintendents' Association of America Convention in San Francisco from January 29 to February 5 as guests of the IOG.

This is the fifth year of the annual competition organised by the IOG.



Richard Snell.

Scottish Agricultural Industries has announced that Richard Aitken (Seedsman) of Glasgow will market SAI's quality turf seed range. The SAI 'T' range has proved itself over many years and the intention is to introduce even higher buying standards in the near future.

Changes in the Toro Irrigation UK dealer structure mean that Golf Landscapes of Brentwood and Irrigation & Slurry Services of Downton, Wiltshire have, since December 1, been responsible for all geographical areas



P. Brimwell and D. Wall (Parkers), D. Atkins (clerk of works), K. Reader (Wimbledon), R. Ambrose (club secretary) and A. Grier (championship director).

The All England Lawn Tennis Club now has a Lely Iseki TE4270 tractor complete with loader and backhoe. The official handing over involved Lely's distributor T. Parker & Sons of Worcester Park, Surrey, whose area rep D. Wall handed the keys to R. Ambrose, club secretary.

previously covered by British Overhead Irrigation, Shepperton, Middlesex.

"We have re-organised in the interests of greater efficiency, better communications and regular customer liaison," Peter Roberts, general sales manager of Toro Irrigation, said. "The move will provide improved installation standards, expedite after-sales back-up and give irrigation systems specifiers the benefits of modern installation techniques".

Golf Landscapes, which already represents Toro in most of the London area, East Anglia and the southern Midlands, will additionally cover the remainder of London, parts of Kent and East Sussex. Irrigation & Slurry Services takes on the southern Home Counties in addition to its existing dealerships covering the south of England and the West Country.

Howard Swan of Golf Landscapes said: "We are excited by the possibility of expanding the Toro operation." While an equally enthusiastic Gary Parker of ISS said: "We are no strangers to the London area. I look forward to providing even better service to existing and new Toro irrigation users."

Three years ago, Kubota UK moved lock, stock and barrel from Yorkshire to Thame, Oxfordshire. Then, the company's new premises afforded some 35,000sq ft, including office space. Now, Kubota UK has a new headquarters - just across the road in Thame. A four-acre site has 70,000sq ft of warehousing and assembly plus 13,800sq ft of office space. Kubota has taken over the 40-year lease to the building.

Brian Hurlley, marketing director, said: "Kubota compact tractors were first introduced to the UK in 1975. Then, there were no locally made attachments available, so European and American manufactured equipment was imported. Today, not only do we commission UK manufacturers such as McConnel to make equipment to fit our tractors, the market has grown sufficiently large for people such as Wessex, Turner and Twose to make a success of manufacturing equipment to fit all makes of compact tractor.

"Using 1981 as the base when we shipped 1,020 units, this year I am confident we will ship at least 1,200 tractor units to our dealers and about 400 mini-excavators.

Continued overleaf...

People, Places, Products
Continued...

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One of the highlights on the BASF stand at Windsor was a 'personal appearance' of a giant tortoise called Florrie. Florrie was promoting the new range of Floranid amenity fertilisers being marketed in the UK by BASF. She was also the star in a competition in which visitors were invited to guess her weight - the prize for the first correct answer being a trip to the manufacturing and research complex of BASF in West Germany. Remarkably, there were three correct entries - Florrie's weight is 120lb 8oz. The first correct entry drawn was from Ian Norman of Portislade, East Sussex.

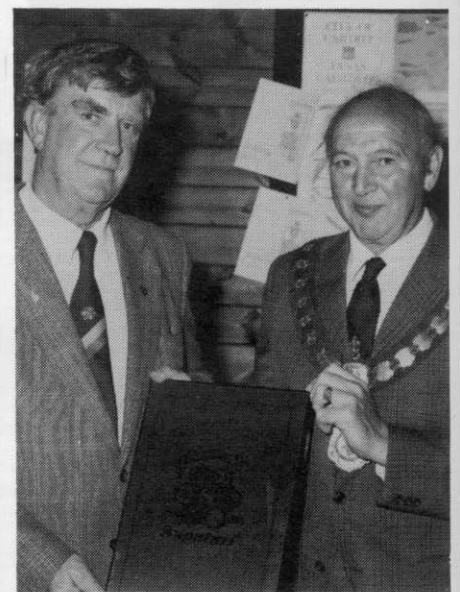
Equally striking at Windsor were the Rigby Taylor show signs. But there were no prizes for guessing the correct combined weight of (pictured, right) Richard Lawrence, Richard Williams (Monsanto) and Keith Dickenson!

David Palmer, managing director of Supaturf Products, received a plaque presented on behalf of the sports turf profession on the occasion of Supaturf's silver jubilee by the IOG's national chairman George Lane.



Howard Swan and the biggest golf ball of them all!

It's that man again! Howard Swan appeared to be more than willing to be the subject of a photo-caption contest as he posed alongside The Golf Ball - a new concept in shelters for golf courses - at the recent IOG international exhibition. Let's just say that Howard certainly played the bigger ball at Windsor...



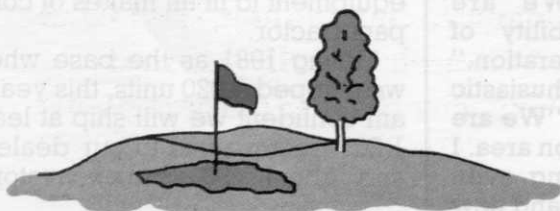
David Palmer and George Lane.

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Fife Regional Council — Educational Committee

**ELMWOOD COLLEGE
CUPAR SCOTLAND**

HEAD GREENKEEPERS SUPERVISORY COURSE

A one week course 3rd-7th February 1986

GREENKEEPING CONFERENCE

Technical and practical aspects will be covered by nationally known speakers. The conference should prove particularly valuable for Head Greenkeepers, First Assistants and all others interested in turf culture.

WEDNESDAY 12th MARCH 1986

9.30 a.m. - 4.00 p.m.

For further details phone 0334 52781

POSITION REQUIRED ABROAD

Course Manager, 32 years of age, married, would like a similar position abroad. 16 years experience. At present in charge of top London Golf Club. Any country considered.

Apply Box 112, Greenkeeper, 121-123 High Street,
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BALLATER GOLF CLUB

require a

HEAD GREENKEEPER

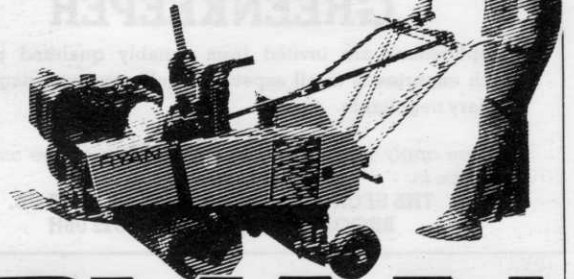
For this 18 Hole (6106 yards) golf course and bowling green situated in beautiful Royal Deeside. No accommodation. Salary negotiable.

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The Secretary, Ballater Golf Club,
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WEST HILL GOLF CLUB

requires an

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Applications are invited from suitably qualified persons with experience in all aspects of golf course management. Salary negotiable.

Please apply in writing giving full details of age and experience to:

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9 Hole Golf Course

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Applicants should be experienced in Golf Course management and machinery maintenance. Salary will be in accordance with experience and qualifications. Position is pensionable.

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Those interested should apply to:

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EXPERIENCED HEAD GREENKEEPER

required for expanding Golf Club

Applicants for the position of Head Greenkeeper for our 18 and 9 hole courses must possess a sound knowledge and experience of modern turf techniques. A thorough practical knowledge of machinery together with the ability to manage a young hardworking staff is required.

Salary negotiable. No accommodation.

Apply in writing stating age and experience to:

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CROUCH HOUSE ROAD, EDENBRIDGE
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CHELMSFORD GOLF CLUB, ESSEX

require a

HEAD GREENKEEPER

(from 7th April 1986)

Applicants must be experienced in golf course management, machinery maintenance and with proven ability to manage staff. Membership of a green-keeping Association an advantage.

3 Bedroom accommodation available if required.

Salary will be in accordance with experience and qualifications.

Apply in writing stating age, experience and qualifications to:

**The Manager
Chelmsford Golf Club
Widford Road, Chelmsford
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HEAD GREENKEEPER

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Remuneration includes modern accommodation.

Apply in writing to:

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BRADWAY,
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CRIEFF GOLF CLUB LTD.

(18 hole & 9 hole courses)

applicants are invited for

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Applicants must be experienced in Greenkeeping Techniques, the use of modern equipment, and automatic watering systems. No accommodation.

Written applications, with full details of qualifications etc. to:

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