To the Editor
May I be permitted to use your excellent magazine to widen the search I am making for a now obsolete but still fine piece of turf machinery, namely the Ransome Certes Mk XII band mower. I am not a greenkeeper, but have an expanse of turf which is my pride and joy and which I try to maintain in a way that emulates the best of greenkeeping practices. The Certes Mk XII would complete the picture.

STUART CRANE
12 Sycamore Close, Tidworth. Hants. SP9 7PH

To the Editor
In response to Mr Carr (Jan issue) I would remind him that not all greenkeepers are as fortunate as himself. After 13 years of persuasion we have just managed to get our committee to install a flushing lavatory and we STILL wash our hands in cold water!

Many BIGGA members would really enjoy attending lectures, seminars and demonstrations but the three drawbacks we experience are: a) we can never get the time off because there is always a job that must be completed yesterday. b) nobody is prepared to help with travelling costs. c) many members live in remote areas. (On this point, thank heavens for the new magazine.) Mr Carr is fortunate in having a committee or local authority that has moved out of the dark ages and I wish that all others would follow suit. At my club there is always money available for house expenditure and machinery, but the welfare of the greenkeeper is last on any priority list.

I wonder how many players would cry ‘wolf’ if even basic facilities were unavailable following a round, or if the greens were too slow on any given day?

My plea to secretaries, green conveners and course managers is this: are you sure YOUR greenkeeper didn’t write this? We

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On the subject of Master Greenkeeper certification, I hope in time that all greenkeepers will seek to gain this qualification, thus enabling them to be on par with their American counterparts. One year ago I was quite content. I had 10 years experience as a head greenkeeper and some qualifications, but when MGC was introduced I soon realised that I was under qualified. Since then I have been to a National Conference, entered the ICI Premier Greenkeeper competition, attended workshops and seminars at Harrogate, spent nights at college sitting C. and G. Phase IV and am about to take the Pesticide Spraying Course.

In my case, education has clearly helped me to learn more about greenkeeping and management and to gain more qualifications. I will encourage fellow greenkeepers in Mid-Anglia to follow the M.G.C. route and hope that all greenkeepers throughout the land will follow suit. Perhaps this will eventually see an end to talk about what is due to the poor old greenkeeper, for we do so much NEED to be better qualified.

CHRISTOPHER BROWN
Head Greenkeeper, Tidworth Garrison G.C.

BIGGA flies the flag in the United States

Visit to the GCSSA conference, held this year in the desert city of Las Vegas, was taken by a group of some 40 greenkeepers and officials from BIGGA and the IOG and proved to be an enlightening experience for all concerned, being in the words of Kevin Munt "ten days of culture shock."

Reasons for making this long air flight are many and varied, with an official BIGGA stand engendering interest world-wide in our own BTME exhibition, creating an open market place for the promotion of our Association and the enrolment of many new members, together with the generation of valuable magazine advertising and affording an opportunity to learn from the style and intensity of American educational seminars. Others, such as Anthony Davies, were there as part of the winning ICI premier Greenkeeper Award and still more had elected to make this a holiday with a difference. What a difference it was. The desert city of Las Vegas was an experience of a lifetime, with the excitement of the lights and the buzz of the city. The conference was attended by many hundreds and was a great success, with the session on 'Can we co-exist with the environment?' rather a strange question to pose.