A Greenkeeper International tribute to supporters of the Greenkeeper Education and Development Fund.

Number 2: ROGER MOSSOP and DAVE SIDDON, ICI Professional Products

Mention ICI to the layman and he might be forgiven for thinking that this conglomerate, for that is what it is, with all that enormity and strength in the world of commerce and industry conjures up, is an unapproachable, remote superpower. Useful; yes, market leaders undoubtedly and innovators unquestionably. But that stated, the man in the street thinks of ICI in terms of BIG business, of the share market and of being more in keeping with the boardroom and of those who move in the mysterious corridors of power. Dare to put that same suggestion to a greenkeeper, however, and the likely come-back will be an entirely different, humanised story.

To the greenkeeper, ICI - or, more specifically, ICI Professional Products - represents a close and caring organisation with the turf manager and his interests very much at heart. Granted, the company is in business to make a profit, as indeed is every company save those few which are propped up by governments, but with this particular section of ICI's empire, the feeling one gets when talking to the team at Professional Products is of genuine involvement with the folk at grass roots level.

Of course, ICI means different things to different people. To the golfing greenkeeper it means the BIGGA National Tournament, now in its second year of sponsorship by ICI Professional Products and increasingly the most prestigious event in which to compete. To the thriving young academic greenkeeper it means a crack at becoming ICI Greenkeeper of the Year. Ask Anthony Davies and David Whitaker, the victors of '91 and '92, what this represents and they will tell you that being crowned ICI Greenkeeper of the Year has changed their lives. To every greenkeeper it represents professionalism and technical superiority in the fine turf care product market.

To find out more about ICI Professional Products, of its relatively short history within the parent company and of those who mastermind the operation, I met up with Roger Mossop, marketing manager, and David (Dave to his friends) Siddon, national sales manager, at Walton Heath Golf Club and prepared to quiz them.

Did I say that ICI was a giant? Our particular 'giant' comprises just ten people - managers, area sales managers and office personnel - based at Fernhurst in Surrey though blanketing the country through a network of distributors. Professional Products began life as a separate entity, launched at Windsor in '83, primarily as the recognition for sports amenity specialisation took hold. ICI had some wizard products which had hitherto been serviced to greenkeepers by ICI's agrochemical or garden product divisions. With nationwide acclaimation of ICI's then new growth retardant Paclobutrozol, the stage was set for a specialist group - ICI Professional Products - to market these and other products and provide the vitally important technical back-up so essential to the fine turf industry.

Dave Siddon was one of the earliest pioneers, joining Keith Clevery in bringing the new infant forward and increasing the total workforce by 100% - from one pioneer to two! Keith had moved from ICI Agricultural and Dave joined him from ICI Garden Products, both men hell-bent on making the world take notice of this new company - and succeeding! The pioneering over, Keith was soon to move to another division, presumably to wave his magic wand in a different direction, and his place was taken by Roger Mossop, again an ICI agricultural specialist, whose task was to be marketing manager. If there is one note of sadness to the success of Professional Products it came when Keith Clevery died shortly after, cut down in his prime by a brain tumour and cheated from seeing the triumph that was to come.

Roger Mossop had all the right credentials to take him to the top: college educated with an agriculture and forestry base, thence to Harper Adams in Shropshire to take a National Diploma in Agriculture and finally to University College, Bangor, to gain a BSc Honours degree in Agriculture with Agricultural Economics. Straight from university to ICI, he joined ICI Agrochemicals in '72, following the technical sales path from trainee to senior rep. (in East Yorkshire) before becoming an area sales manager in '84, training others in the art of professional selling and achieving all that was set before him. Above all, Roger possesses that impish sense of humour so essential in any marketing operation, coupled with an encyclopaedic knowledge of his chosen industry - the perfect passport. He's a keen sportsman, having captained his rugby team at Harper Adams and been capped for University College. He plays an aggressive game of squash, works out regularly in the company gymnasium, plays golf (claiming to be at an embryonic stage, though as Dave pointedly remarked, he's a real mean performer when battling against him!) and has a deep interest in motor cycle racing. He carries this latter interest full circle by spending time in restoring a favourite: 1950s classic - a BSA Bantam De Luxe!

Dave Siddon was quick to point out that Roger is the perfect 'sounding board', the essential deep thinker who can and does evaluate the brilliant ideas from the impracti-

GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL April 1992 17
The formation of BIGGA was music to our ears...it was the best thing that could have happened

Pattisson
Manufacturers & Suppliers of
Golf Course and Driving Range Equipment.

Aluminium posts and inset panels have made these colourful new tee plates an attractive addition to the wide range already available, and were well received by the visitors to the Harrogate Exhibition.

BIGGA's Education and Development Fund continues to be boosted by new donations.

Hambro Legal Protection Ltd, who provide legal protection services for the Association and its members, are the latest company to support the Fund with a donation of £250. In expressing BIGGA's appreciation for their donation, Neil Thomas, Executive Director, said: "I am particularly pleased to record that Jim has given an impetus to the new Fund and I hope many more companies, groups and individuals will add their financial support and so enhance the educational and training opportunities which can be made available for greenkeepers."

Readers of Greenkeeper International will be aware that Colin Gregory has recently moved from Iseki Ltd to become Managing Director of Hardi Ltd. The company has now joined the Golden Key Circle and in a ceremony which saw the presentation of a cheque - as pictured on this month's front cover - Colin Gregory expressed his enthusiasm for the new Fund: "Hardi Ltd is fully supportive of all that BIGGA is doing to advance greenkeeper education and training," he said. I am sure the Education and Development Fund will have a major impact in channelling the resources of the game and the industry into a central fund which will enable training resources to be provided, courses to be established and scholarship awards funded. Membership of the Golden and Silver Key Circles is an excellent way for companies to support greenkeeper education."

A real friend and supporter of greenkeepers and all things greenkeeping is Jim Fry, pictured, President of the South Coast Section. Jim seems to be present at all major BIGGA events and was recently spotted at the GCSSA Conference and Show as a member of the BIGGA party. Over the years his contribution to his section has been both substantial and much appreciated. Jim has an infectious sense of humour and is always ready to give unobtrusive advice and guidance when requested. Neil Thomas comments: "I am particularly pleased to record that Jim has become the first individual Member of the Golden Key Circle and on behalf of the Association I would wish to express our great appreciation to him for his generous support of the new Fund."