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Do I hear...? Sshhhhh!

How would Marcel Marceau fare as an auctioneer? Yes I know it's a bit of a daft question but it's one I found myself asking when I first heard about BIGGA's new Silent Auction.

However, having had the concept explained to me fully I realised that the world's foremost mime artiste would not be in Harrogate next year but that, despite this, the Silent Auction would be a superb event and one in which everyone who takes part benefits.

Donors receive valuable publicity for their donated items; bidders get high quality items for considerably less than they would normally have to pay and BIGGA ends up with contributions towards its Building Fund.

Admittedly it's not an idea for which the Association can take full credit as it has been a successful element of the GCSAA Show in America for a number of years and was debuted at the Canadian Golf Course Superintendent's Show in Toronto earlier this year to great acclaim.

The idea works by companies and individuals donating items to the Auction. These are then grouped into categories. The top five items, valued at £10,000 and over, are classed as The Premier Club and receive maximum publicity in the Silent Auction Catalogue, in the magazine, on BIGGA's Website and at an official reception during Harrogate week. The second category, The Masters Club, for items between £5,000 and £10,000, also receives extensive publicity and the third is The Classic Club, for items ranging in value from £5,000 down to a minimum of £250.

Bids sent via post, fax, e-mail and telephone to BIGGA HOUSE and in person during BTME 2000 itself will be gathered and the highest bid for each item will secure the lot when they are announced on the final day of the show. The top items will be on display at a special Silent Auction stand in Hall Q where you will be able to see at close hand your intended prize and assess how little you might be able to bid and still come up smiling.

I must admit I was a little disappointed that we wouldn't be seeing the theatre of a real live auction, complete with fast talking professional, but while the drama of a conventional auction might have brought additional excitement to the occasion, removing the worry of waving to a friend and ending up with a £15,000 bill for a triple mower or scratching your ear and finding yourself with two tonnes of organic fertiliser is more than compensation.

Experience is a necessary quality for any conventional auction visitor so the "Silent" method gives even the total rookie a chance of securing a magnificent bargain and saving a golf club a considerable sum of money. There will also be many items of personal interest for which to bid.

I believe the Silent Auction will certainly add to what is already destined to be an unforgettable BTME 2000 and hopefully it will become an established element of all BTME's to come.

Editor: Scott MacCallum
The Golf Course Superintendents Association of Ireland biannual turf maintenance exhibition is being held in the main hall, RDS, Dublin on 3&4 November 1999.

Can you, as an exhibitor, afford to miss out?

This is an ideal opportunity to:

- Research the Irish market
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The first event of a new biennial European Scientific Sportsturf Conference - EuroTurf 2000 - is being planned for the first week in July, 2000, by Rhone Poulenc Amenity and the STRI.

"We have asked sportsturf researchers across Europe what length of conference they would like and the majority have requested a two day event," said Austin Davies, Business Manager at Rhone Poulenc.

"Creating a forum for the exchange of ground breaking research in European Sportsturf is seen by Rhone Poulenc as a great means of starting the new millennium with renewed drive and commitment."

Dr Mike Canaway, Chief Executive of the STRI, is planning to launch a European Turfgrass Association at the conference.

"I am currently discussing with colleagues in Europe the possibility of the formation of such an Association to improve the flow of information between EU Member States and between researchers, commercial companies and end users," explained Mike.

John makes award a 'Shaw thing'

Toro Commercial Product's dealer, John Shaw Machinery, has carried off the top prize in the latest annual dealer awards having been voted Best Overall Dealer for 1998. It comes at a particularly busy time for the company which last year added Surrey, South London and East Berkshire to its existing territory of Sussex and Kent while it is also opening a new service depot in Gomshall, Surrey.

Managing Director, John Shaw is pictured receiving a plaque to commemorate the win from Peter Mansfield, General Manager for Toro Commercial Products at Lely UK. Other members of the John Shaw team also pictured are David Cole, Marketing Director; Steve Vogels, Sales Director, and Miranda Meaden, After Sales Director.

Investors in People

But just how many people does it take to put up a plaque?

Following last month's announcement that BIGGA had achieved "Investors in People" status the Association now boasts a fine plaque for the wall of BIGGA HOUSE. A formal presentation will be made to the Association at a later date but Neil and the rest of the team are currently busy working out how to put this up.
Eamonn Wall introduces new Directors

Eamonn Wall & Co has appointed Alastair Seaman, (top) and John Nicholson, (above), as Company Directors, joining Managing Director, Eamonn Wall on the Board following the firm's recent incorporation.

Alastair, 30, joined the company in 1994 and is based at the firm's Dollar office. He graduated from Edinburgh University with a joint forestry/agricultural degree and has since obtained a MSc in Forestry from Oxford Forestry Institute.

John, 42, joined the firm in '95 having completed an HND in Arboriculture at Houghall College in Durham and is based in Durham. He is a keen golfer, lectures occasionally at Houghall College and is currently writing a book about Trees in the Golfing Landscape.

Ernest Doe & Sons Ltd has been named by Textron Turf Care and Specialty Products as United Kingdom Dealer of the Year for 1998. The Dealer of the Year award recognises outstanding sales growth and excellence in parts and service support for customers. The presentation was made at a dealer meeting during the recent Golf Show, held in Orlando, Florida, USA.

Two new faces at BIGGA HOUSE

Two new faces... and voices can be seen and heard at BIGGA HOUSE with the appointment of Diane Bray, left, as the latest member of the Sales and Marketing team, and Christine Thackrah, right, as Receptionist/Clerk.

Diane joins the Association from Plumb Centre where, based in the Head Office in Ripon, she worked in the marketing department working on sales and designing and producing the company's brochures.

She has a Business Studies Diploma and is currently studying for Charter Institute of Marketing qualifications at York College of Further Education alongside one of her new colleagues, Jenny Panton.

Diane, has a 12-year-old son, James, and has previously worked for the Ministry of Defence in Germany.

She enjoys travelling, having notched up an impressive array of passport stamps.

Christine actually began working at BIGGA HOUSE on the day it opened in a part-time capacity but she has recently taken up the newly-created full time position.

She previously worked for the Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust in York and before that was Secretary to the Marketing Director of Waddington Games, the company which produces Monopoly.

She is a season ticket holder for Leeds United, having been a fan since the age of 10, and enjoys walking her two King Charles spaniels, Becky and Cassie.

A double whammy for Elmwood College

Elmwood Golf Course has achieved a unique double award for its commitment to the Environment and Wildlife Conservation Initiatives.

Jonathan Smith, of the Scottish Golf Course Wildlife Group, presented the Golf Course with the international award for protecting the environment - ISO 14001 and The Scottish Wildlife Charter to John Quinn, Director of Elmwood Golf Developments, with Elmwood the only UK course and one of only two in Europe to achieve the former.

“The ISO14001 Award represents a major advance in integrating environmental management into all aspects of their operations. As the first college and golf facility in the UK to receive the award this is a milestone not only for the college itself but also for colleges and golf courses across the country,” said Jonathan.

“We look forward to assisting the college in their progress towards full certification in the Pan-European Committed to Green programme.”

From Arnie to Ernie
St Andrews contract won by E-Z-GO

Texton Turf Care and Specialty Products has signed an agreement with St Andrews for the exclusive supply contract with the club for the company's E-Z-GO golf cars.

St Andrews has taken delivery of eight E-Z-GO petrol golf cars for the rental market, ten E-Z-GO cars for use as ranger vehicles and five E-Z-GO Workhorse utility vehicles.

David McNarry, Managing Director of Scottish Grass Machinery, distributors of the Texton range of products in Scotland, said, "Obviously this is a very high profile contract to win so we are delighted to see E-Z-GO on the course at St Andrews. It was particularly pleasing to us as we already had an exclusive supply contract with St Andrews for Texton turf car products."

The eight golf cars will be available to hire on the New and Strathryn Courses for senior citizens and the disabled. The ten range vehicles are E-Z-GO golf cars specially fitted with Mauser cabs to protect the operators from the elements and have two seats with an additional flip-flop seat for increased flexibility. They will be used for the rangers to patrol the courses.

The five E-Z-GO Workhorse 1200s feature a 48-inch bed fitted with large cage attachments for litter collection and maintenance work.

As part of the four year contract, Texton will also be supplying additional E-Z-GO golf cars and Workhorse utility vehicles for the 2000 Open to be held at St Andrews next year.

Joint venture has mark of prestige

Hepworth Minerals and Chemicals and Tarmac Quarry Products have launched a joint venture company to be known as Prestige Sports Surfaces Ltd., which will specialise in the marketing and sale of sands, gravels, pre-blended root zones and top dressings for use in sports, leisure and horticultural applications.

The aim of the new company will be to satisfy the diverse demands of customers and the market by offering the broadest possible range of consistent quality products.

The range of products, unique to a single supplier, will be available throughout the UK by taking advantage of the extensive number of quarries operated by both companies and using the combined extensive distribution systems.

Day to day responsibility will rest with General Manager of Prestige Sports Surfaces, Cliff Ogden, who will report to the Board of Directors nominated by HMC and TOP.

There will be a dedicated, specialist sales team seconded to the new business, supported by a central sales office where all enquiries, deliveries and technical support will be co-ordinated.

The existing Pro-Sport and Topsport product range including sands, root zones, top dressing, drainage gravels and pathway gravels will continue to be available from the joint venture company along with a developing range of new products suitable for the construction of sports surfaces.

Chinese delegation in Fife

Elmwood College has hosted a delegation of top-level academics and business people from the People's Republic of China. Elmwood is developing the enormous potential of the Chinese market for training and consultancy in greenkeeping, golf course management and golf course maintenance.

During the week delegates from the Golf College Shenzhen University, China Agricultural University in Beijing and Purple Clouds Golf Country Club visited golf courses all over Fife, and played the Old Course at St Andrews.

Discussions took place with Elmwood representatives and culminated in the formal signing of letters of intent at a Reception on Thursday 15 April. There to witness the signing were Chinese Vice-consult Chen Wenbing, Sir Michael Bonallack and guests and representatives of companies who are supporting the project.

College Principal, Christina Potter, is pictured with Julia Minn, Golf College Shenzhen University, following the signing of letters of intent.

Contact us

You can contact The British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association in any number of ways:

Post: BIGGA HOUSE, Aldwark, Alne, York, Y061 1UF
Tel: 01347 833800
Fax: 01347 833801
E-mail: reception@bigga.co.uk
Internet: www.bigga.org.uk

June 1999 Greenkeeper International
Macfie for President

Kim Macfie, Sales and Marketing Director of Hayter Ltd, has been elected President of the Agricultural Engineers Association for 1999/2000. Kim has been Chairman of the AEA's Outdoor Power Equipment Council for the last two years and a member of the finance and general purposes committee since 1993.

Flowtronex help to pump up St Andrews

Flowtronex Europe has just completed the handover of what is probably the biggest ever irrigation pump set in the UK for St Andrews Links. The pump set can pump water at a rate of 540 m³/hour at 9 bar to all of the St Andrews courses. "It was a complex project and we are absolutely delighted with the progress made," said Links Manager Ian Forbes.

Attending the hand over ceremony, Flowtronex Europe Managing Director, Steve Hockley said: "It is an honour to be part of such a prestigious project."

Two new product ranges from Avoncrop

Avoncrop Amenity Products has launched two new product ranges. Surf to Turf is a range of seaweed products, imported from the Irish Republic, with five liquids all based on the the seaweed species Ascophillum Nodosum with added humic acid, chelated iron and various NPK levels.

The products contain naturally occurring bio stimulants and micro nutrients including calcium, helping to produce healthy turf with increased tolerance to stress.

The Roots range of products, imported from the United States, have four formulations. Roots 2 concentrate is a bio stimulant with humic acid kelp seaweed and complex carbohydrates which encourages better root development increasing the root to shoot ratio, improving the plant's ability to cope with stress as well as the uptake of applied fertilisers.

Fe 8% is a chelated product giving green up within 24 hours but with good longevity, leaving no residues in the soil.

Iron Roots is a combination of both Roots 2 and Fe 8% offering the advantages of both in one spray application while Roots 1-2-3 Premix is a three way product designed to prevent and alleviate stress in turf.

For further information Tel: 01934 820868.

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Donnington Valley Golf Club: 1998 Project
Eyhurst Golf Club: Reservoir Liner (exposed)
London Golf Club: New Lake Liner
Oxfordshire Golf Club: 1991 Project

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Rain Bird crack code

The new DC-200 central control for Rain Bird's Golf Division is designed to deliver flexibility and water savings for golf courses with decoder-based irrigation systems. A wall-mounted unit, DC-200 combines the reliability of two-wire technology with the proven in-field communication of buried field decoders. It is compatible with rain Bird FD-210 and FD-610 decoders which can operate from one to six valves without the use of a field satellite. In addition it can store five separate irrigation programmes, plus one test schedule, while the Water Budget button helps save water by increasing or decreasing the watering times of all decoders in a schedule.

For further information Tel: 00 1 800 984 2255

New products from Rigby Taylor

Amino-sorb is the latest addition to the Mascot Specialties range from Rigby Taylor. It is an amino acid based supplement that gives turf maximum protection and recovery from stress. The two products Amino-Sorb R (root acting) and Amino-Sorb F (foliar acting) are ideally applied as a programme through the year to enhance recovery from stress, increase photosynthesis and chlorophyll content as well as enhancing germination and increasing root growth or stressed turf.

With another product launch, Rigby Taylor has also introduced Integrate Soil Conditioner to the UK market. Applied to the turf as a conventional high volume spray the polymers in Integrate unwind and move down through the soil profile, penetrating layers and solid soil structures. The “fines” that are clogging the pore spaces are then solubilised by Integrate which draws together the clay and organic soil particles into soil aggregates with the same and the silt. Following a programme of treatments the turf manager will see the results in reduced soil compaction and lower bulk density.

Integrate is a product manufactured by Milliken Chemical, the supplier of Blazon Spray pattern indicator. It is totally non phytotoxic and has no potential for "burn". It is supplied in 10 litre packs and costs between £75 and £150 per hectare.

For further information Tel: 01245 222730.

Iseki launch new mid-size tractor

Iseki has launched a new addition to its tractor range with the introduction of the TR63. The TR63 is a mid-sized tractor offering power and versatility for a range of turf care and agricultural applications. Powered by a new 66hp Iseki designed Perkins, direct injection 4-cylinder diesel engine, it gives a cleaner 'burn' and low exhaust and noise emissions. The bonnet with quick lift-off side panels gives easy access for routine maintenance. Synchromesh transmission provides 25 forward and 25 reverse speeds with a maximum road speed of 24 mph (40 km/h). To keep the TR 63 moving the tractor has push button electro-hydraulically engaged 4-wheel drive and simultaneous locking of front and rear differentials. The hydraulic lift capacity is 2100kg making it capable of handling most mounted or trailed equipment with ease. Optional lift arms are also available to boost the capacity to a hefty 3400kg. The Iseki TR 63 is ideally suited to be fitted with the Ransomes Hydraulic S/T using a specially designed adaptor kit. Textron can now offer one-stop shopping for a high output mowing combination.

For further information Tel: 01473 270000.

Safer surfaces pave the way at KSM

KSM Ltd has launched a selection of eco-friendly rubber slabs which are soft on steel and other rubber commonly used as spikes in golf shoes. The slabs are available in three standard sizes and three colours - charcoal, terracotta and emerald. The can easily be laid on concrete, hardcore, sand or wood using cement, epoxy resin or other bonding agents.

For further information Tel: 01376 515164.
Velvet Bent: Not the answer

I would like to take issue with the article in the April issue of Greenkeeper International in which we were told that velvet bent is the 'in' grass. In my view it makes extravagant claims and displays little knowledge of greenkeeping.

Can I also point out that A. capillaris is the old specific name for A. tenuis browntop (the new name was substituted in 1918 ref. Beard). A. canina is indeed a lover of (very) wet soils. It was rejected many years ago, before New Zealand and Oregon browntops formed a reliable seed source for a better grass. If you think this is an opinion and not a fact, let me quote Professor Vargas (not unknown to some of your readers) on the subject, relating to Kingstown velvet bent, of which Avalon is only an improved strain.

'Velvet bent (Kingstown) lacks the disease resistance and competitive ability necessary to make it a desirable turf grass species. It is even more susceptible to disease than Penncross; is not very tolerant of high temperatures and has a tendency to lie flat in summer time thus making an undesirable putting surface. It simply will not compete with Poa annua, which eventually will take over'.

Advice to feed velvet bent more and especially to LIME(!) greens will be regarded by all greenkeepers as very dubious.

In short velvet bent is emphatically not the answer. A. canina has been tried and found wanting for at least 63 years. A comparison could be made with Penncross which was considered to be the answer to all our prayers, more than a decade ago. It certainly is not now, nor indeed its successors.

J.H. Arthur, Budleigh, Salterton

Welsh Open at Celtic Manor

Celtic Manor, in Newport, South Wales is to host the Welsh Open for at least three years from next year, as the first step towards its new 7,450 yard Wentwood Hills course becoming a contender to host the 2009 Ryder Cup.

The new course was opened by Wales’ new First Minister Alun Michaels following an exhibition match between Ian Woosnam and this year’s Ryder Cup Captain Mark James.

Director of Golf at the Resort is Jim McKenzie who was recently promoted to the post having previously been Course Manager.

New features for Pattisson’s aluminium hole cup

H. Pattisson & Co, which has recently become a distributor for the Standard Golf range, has launched a new aluminium hole cup.

Sporting a new and improved design the new hole cup is a copy of the polymer bogy hole cup with anti mud features, while a new and improved hole club is available in plain and white lined.

For further information Tel: 01494 79 46 46.

Re-election for Howard Swan

Howard Swan has been re-elected as President of the British Institute of Golf Course Architects for the forthcoming year with Jeremy Pern as Vice President.

"I look forward to a second year as President and, with our Committee, the progress that we shall be striving to make to advance the profession and the Institute throughout Europe and elsewhere in the year to come," said Howard.

The most important issue facing the Institute in the year ahead is the possibility of a merger with the European Society and the French Architects’ Group and the debate will continue towards a coming together in the Millennium.

June 1999 Greenkeeper International 13
Strength, creative thinking and teamwork

When William Webb Ellis first picked up the ball and ran with it at Rugby School all those years ago, the game of rugby was created.

The game now relies on a careful blend of strength, creative thinking and teamwork, played on an international stage and followed by millions of informed individuals.

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Through the platform of the Learning Experience
Jim Arthur talks about the need to be sensible when it comes to watering...

It never rains...

As a life-time student of Homo Sapiens or even that aberrant strain, H. Viridis, or 'Greens', I am always fascinated by reading between the lines of articles or speeches and to identify the obvious breaches of the first law of logic, ie correct observation must be followed by correct deduction. When it is not, problems remain unsolved; vast sums of money are spent (or advised to be spent) quite ineffectively because the true cause has not been properly identified.

We are informed that rainwater is acid, so golf greens will naturally become more acidic. Quite apart from the fact that we would need to live in monsoon conditions for much of the year for there to be significant acidification, no account is taken of the fact that today's bought-in top dressings are mostly on the alkaline side (the best around pH 6.8) so very little top dressing would soon neutralise any acidification by rain.

In passing, the whole argument is academic because "the ideal pH is the one you have" - so don't try to waste time and money altering it - certainly never, ever lime fine turf; the result is not just lush grass and earthworms but Take-All Patch for which only time is a cure. Similarly with irrigation, quite unsustainable claims are made and an enormous pseudo-science has arisen to complicate an essentially simple operation.

I have been wrongly accused of saying that pop-ups have ruined more greens than any other single factor. It is the misuse of pop-ups which is the true problem - and the fact that they make it so easy to over-water at the turn of a dial.

The temptation is greater because too many of today's golfers equate quality simply on the basis of colour - "if it isn't green it must be dead". In truth "beautifully lush" is a contradiction in terms and anyone who prefers the viridian green so often seen on televised golf to the terre verte of natural courses (which are rarely uniformly green save when over watered, by rain as well as pop-ups) needs counselling.

All we are aiming at in irrigation is simplicity itself. We need water merely to keep the grass alive, not to make it grow and certainly never to make greens soft and holding.

There are a few simple rules which are so logical as to defy contradiction. The first law is to start late and finish early; April is a winter month and if one falls for the temptation to water in an early dry spell - the usual false spring - then sure enough the weather will deteriorate; as we saw in this and many other springs.

Cold wet greens take far longer to warm up when the weather improves than cold dry ones, so growth is delayed. Equally at the other end, it is sound practice to stop all irrigation after the end of August, whatever September brings.

The aim is to go into winter with dry greens and a weeks watering in early September absolutely guarantees the next weeks are torrential, just as cleaning one's car invites rain. Early May is not too late in most years, and only optimists go on watering after the end of August.

If you really feel that greens are being over-stressed in a very early spring, then water (sparingly) in the day, not at night when the effects of late frosts and irrigation can be very unhappy.

So much for timing - what about quantity. A huge industry has arisen,
It never rains...

All we are aiming at in irrigation is simplicity itself. We need water merely to keep the grass alive, not to make it green, not to make it grow and certainly never to make greens soft and holding.

based on computer science and nit-picking measurements, calculating the short-fall and reckoning precipitation rates to mini-seconds' duration. Many greens on the same course have different irrigation requirements, linked to exposed versus sheltered sites, the permeability of the root zone and related drainage.

Experienced course managers know these different requirements (and less experienced ones can learn) - and set the controls accordingly. However, 'scientific' systems may be, there is no better way of checking than going out and seeing for oneself. How many course managers actually check that five minutes on the dial equate with five minutes actual delivery? No one suggests spending all night with a stop watch. When I was helping with the presentation for Open Championships, I used to go out, alone or with the head man, at night randomly picking say four greens.

We both got considerable surprises at times - with old control systems failing to deliver or to stop! Look especially for missed areas indicating multifunction heads, remembering that each head waters the far side of the green, so a dry area relates to the head opposite.

I well remember going round a neglected Irish Championship links, where the pro was in charge, pointing out to him at a distance of 100 or more yards which heads were blocked. He didn't last long and the appointment of an experienced links man revolutionised not just the irrigation system but the presentation of the whole course.

Frankly - and do not dismiss my views as those of an old fogey - I have little time for such precision, even if it is really achieved in practice. What we are aiming at is the effect of a good shower once a night every night in drought, not a thunderstorm every three to six days. In practice a good guide is about 4-6 minutes with standard heads delivering 30-40gpm for a 600 m² green - but this is only a guide.

If in doubt, don't water, or use less water. "Overwatering is the cardinal sin of greenskeeping" is a remark made, believe it or not, by revered American Alf Radko, late National Director of the USGA Green Section.

There are of course other aspects of irrigation such as spraying to cool greens in day time in summer heat, and watering in dressings. To do this efficiently, it is highly desirable for the irrigation system to be so designed that all the heads come on simultaneously on one green.

To save money by falsely economising in pipe sizes, some systems are designed to use limited flow, by one head coming on at a time in say four different zones of the course. This makes visual control impossible - and many other things connected with weather and play mean such systems should be outlawed or modified.

Similarly all heads should be easily and quickly adjustable, to cover say surrounds periodically but not permanently - and if you have to wear a wet suit just to adjust a head with the system operating, it simply does not get done.

On this topic, the old idea of watering approaches with greens has long been condemned. Inherently poorer drainage on approaches and the need to retain firmness while maintaining grass cover means they need far less - usually only three times a week, even if other areas e.g. tees, demand attention.

This brings us to fairway watering - a vexed question. I suppose, where money is no object and proper controls ensured, wall-to-wall fairway watering is not such a criminal waste of money as it would be with budgets are more straitened.

It is all linked to this mis-taken chase after colour. If fairways do grow brown in a long summer drought, does it really matter, when a few days rain will soon turn them green again? Watering does not really improve wear resistance, but it may speed up recovery. Fairways which thin out badly in a normal dry summer are likely to be dominated by Poa annua - indicative of insufficient aeration and inadequate top-dressing with moisture retaining materials such as fen peat or green waste.

Fairway watering is not an absolute essential unless outside factors prevail e.g. the need to tart a course up for a televised tournament. If it is installed, clearly one must be sure of adequate water supplies. Water authorities in almost all areas, including those like the South West, with a chronic history of hose-pipe bans, have guaranteed their golf course customers supplies save only perhaps for restrictions over at almost 2 weeks of extreme drought in one year out of 5 or 6.

There are serious objections however to mid-seasonal extraction - most authorities allow water to be held back in storage reservoirs only during winter, the cost of constructing such features is very considerable, quite apart from sitting them.

Maintaining them is not cheap either. Do not be tempted into making them a feature of the course, as when they are partly exhausted at the end of a dry summer they have all the appeal of an African watering hole at the end of the dry season.

My advice is to thoroughly investigate and cost "rains" water, before wasting money on a reservoir. It always pays "to ask the expert" but do see he is truly independent and not a camouflaged representative of an irrigation company - who, however competent, is liable to offer biased advice.

Finally we come to water quality. In this country there are few causes for concern - all that water needs to be is wet. In some mining areas there may be toxicity problems - but a quick test for toxic and saline contamination is not expensive. In the states, it is often a different question.

Using water derived from what they call "odorous soils, one sees pH figures greater than 9, high salinity and nice little surprises such as high aluminium and copper.

Desalination plants are essential - but luckily we do not have this problem here. I never cease to stress that greenskeeping is simple common-sense and...
BIGGA welcomes...

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Gerard Bradley West
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Brian Higgin Central
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Alan Miller West
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David Sutherland Central
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ADAS are now offering more courses on pest control

At more locations nationwide

Training courses are certificated and attract BASIS points and satisfy the suppliers' requirements for users to buy and store Part I pesticides.

Courses offered include

Safety with Pesticides, Control of Moles, Control of Rabbits and Control of Rodents. Courses will be held at Leicester (June), Manchester (September), Gatwick (October), Exeter (December), Berkeley, Giouca (January), Wetherby (February) and Edinburgh (April).

Information on tailor-made courses at your own venue is available on request.

For further information or to register course attendance contact Jan Pullen 01626 892639 or Ed Allan 01303 863948

Over 100 new members joined BIGGA in April. Tracey Maddison, Membership Services Officer, welcomes them on behalf of the Association and highlights a money saving membership benefit...

Do you pay your own subscription fees?
Yes.
Then, would you like some money back?
Yes, but how?
If you pay for your own subscriptions, then you can apply to the tax office for a refund of 25% of the subscription amount. For example on a Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper fee of £73 that’s almost £17! And a potential saving of £11.50 for an Assistant Greenkeeper.

Really? What’s the reason?
Well, because BIGGA is recognised by the Inland Revenue as a legitimate professional body, and membership fees to such bodies are eligible for tax relief.

I haven’t got the time to complete lots of complicated forms ...
You don’t have to! All you have to do is to inform your local tax office that you are paying your own fees and, to make life even easier, BIGGA has a simple form you can complete and send to your local tax office. So go on do it now, after all the money is yours!

Start saving yourself money, telephone 01347 833800 and BIGGA will send you a form today.
(BIGGA regrets that the Association is unable to trace membership payments prior to 1996)
This month, Ken Richardson, BIGGA's Education & Training Manager, takes a look at the need for continual training, and outlines some of the training courses on offer.

Are you fully trained? Are you competent to do all of the tasks set by your management? If you can answer yes to one or both of these questions then either:

a. You did not understand the question; or
b. You think that you know more than you do.

In the rapidly changing, cost conscious, quality led business environment in which golf greenkeepers work, success and in some cases survival can be achieved only if the need for training, development and continuous learning are seen as essential.

BIGGA can help greenkeepers with their development through its Regional and BIGGA HOUSE Training Courses. These courses are designed to meet the needs of greenkeepers wanting to improve not only their supervisory and management skills but also their knowledge of computing, health and safety, turf science and golf course design.

Courses planned for 1999/2000 are:

**BIGGA HOUSE**

**Managing People Module 1**
11-15 October 1999
This course introduces a range of interpersonal skills needed in supervisory management and includes: time management - planning and prioritising - setting objectives - the importance of delegation - Gantt charts and time planners - overcoming procrastination - action planning. Team work - identifying strengths and weaknesses - ensuring effective teams - delegating - motivating - team briefings. Leadership skills - action centred leadership - leadership styles - practical leadership exercises. Computers in greenkeeping management - introduction to the use of digital computers.

**Managing People Module 2**
18-22 October 1999
This course builds on the knowledge gained in Module 1 and includes: guidance skills - listening - questioning - summarising - paraphrasing - giving information and advice. Appraisals - appraisal interviews - guidance strategies - constructive feedback. Grievance and discipline skills - employment protection - formal and informal warnings - assertive communication. The use of computers in management - written communication.

**Managing Operations and Resources**
25-29 October 1999
This course looks at financial planning, project management and the effective use of resources. It includes: basic financial management - estimating costs - budget forecasts - cash flow forecasts - managed delegated budgets - production and maintenance of financial records. Project management - objectives and specifications - estimating time - milestone plans - critical path analysis - network diagrams and Gantt charts - project reviews and evaluation. Planning and control of resources - maintaining services and operations - improving customer service. The use of computers in greenkeeping management - spreadsheets and project management.

**Managing Information**
1-5 November 1999
This course looks at methods of communicating information to others and includes: writing memos and letters - writing reports, storage and retrieval of information - electronic communication. Managing meetings - agendas and minutes - oral communication - audio visual aids - delivering presentation - coping with questions. The use of computers in communication.

**Managing Golf Course Development**
8-12 November 1999
This course is aimed mainly at those delegates who have completed Weeks 1 to 4 and looks at: Health and Safety Update - Developing Working Relationships - Soil and Plant Analysis - Defining Seed and Turf Quality - Computers in greenkeeping management.

The cost of each course including four nights' accommodation, meals and all tuition is as follows:

BIGGA Members £525 + VAT (£616.88)
Non Member £625 + VAT (£734.38)

All delegates will receive a certificate of attendance which can be used as part of an NVQ portfolio of evidence.

Further details and a booking form are included in the leaflet, distributed with this magazine.

The BIGGA 1999/2000 Regional Courses are being finalised and full details will be enclosed with the July copy of this magazine. Planned courses include:

- Budgeting and Finance
- Project Management
- Health and Safety
- Soil Science
- Golf Course Design
- Essential Management Skills
- Computing for Greenkeepers

Thanks to the contributors to the BIGGA Education and Development Fund the cost of Regional Courses is kept very low thanks to a massive subsidy. Make sure of your place by booking early.
The difference is Flowtronex

Whether you want to keep your green green or your pitch perfect, Flowtronex makes the difference.

Flowtronex variable speed pump sets are the heart of any irrigation system, boosting flow and pressure wherever it is needed to make the most of your landscape.

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What has BIGGA got to shout about?

Find out in next month's magazine
There is nothing more satisfying than to see something restored to its original splendour. It can be a classic car or perhaps a piece of period furniture but in the case of one little corner of East Anglia it’s a golf course. Thanks to the combined efforts of committed new owners, the Course Manager and his team and the club pro, Thorpeness Golf Course is being returned to the quality envisaged by the great James Braid when he designed it 75 years ago.

Although now known as the home of the Sizewell Nuclear Power Station - which offers a unique backdrop to the 10th hole - Thorpeness itself was built in the early part of the century as a holiday village for diplomats who had spent time out of the country but who, on their return, could enjoy some time in retreat taking advantage of the sailing, fishing, walking and golf offered by this little oasis on the eastern edge of East Anglia. It is still an ideal retreat for anyone wishing a quite, relaxing break.
"It's like going back in time" is a comment regularly heard by the locals and when you visit you can appreciate why because the pace of life is certainly a couple of notches down from the hustle and bustle of the rest of the country.

Thorpeness also boasts one of the strangest homes to be found anywhere in the world. "The House in the Clouds" is a perfectly normal looking building but for the fact that it is perched on the top of a water tower overlooking the 18th green.

The golf course is a little treasure. Described as a Maritime Heathland - not near enough the sea to qualify as a links but not far enough inland to qualify as heathland - the course offers up images of the great heathlands of Berkshire and Surrey while providing more than enough bracing sea air to fill lungs for the duration of a round.

"When I arrived in October '96 the Co-Owner and Managing Director, Tim Rowan-Robinson, gave me five years to get the course back to its best and we've made good progress, particularly in the last 18 months," said Course Manager, Ian Willett.

Ian's arrival at Thorpeness followed close on the heels of that of the new owners and heralded an end of a period when the course had suffered from a lack of investment and as a result become a little careworn.

One of Ian's first initiatives was to begin delegating duties to the rest of the staff who had previously been limited in their roles within the club.

"It was like watching flowers bloom and morale increased straight away," said Ian, recalling the time with a satisfied smile.

With none of the staff involved in formal education Ian then spoke with Tim Rowan-Robinson about putting that right.

"We decided that we'd aim to have all our greenkeepers trained to Level 2 while money was made available to further my own education which I extended by undertaking a Training Development Course.

"It was a bit daunting when I started as there was only me and some of Otley's own teaching staff. For the first couple of weeks I wondered whether I was doing the right thing but once I got an understanding of the course it was great.

"I'd previously got D32/D33 at Melton College and the assessor at Otley College asked me to do the D31 as well - writing the assessments for the assessors to use. I'm also just about to start piloting Otley's Level 4," said Ian, who admits that as he lives away from the family home in Thetford through the week it has allowed him to throw himself into his studies.

The team regularly come back to my bungalow after work so their diaries can be kept up to date. I take photographs of them carrying out the actual jobs then they write a report on what they do. We put these into their portfolios and Anne Twose, from Otley College, comes out and assesses the work and gives me an update on Ewan Hunter who is the one staff member who is on a Level 3 day release course.

"As well as organising the staff training, Ian gave initial priority to writing a course policy document as well as a health and safety policy document which was also taken up by the hotel itself."
Out on the course itself Ian and the team instigated a policy of regular hollow tining, top dressing and overseeding to improve on the 99% Poa infiltration on the greens.

"Root growth was only down to three quarters of an inch so it wasn't going anywhere. Last year we overseeded with 20 bags of seed and this year it's been 16.

"Some mornings, when there's just a tiny breeze, you can see a thin leaf of grass blowing in the hollow tine hole and you know it's taken. It's very satisfying," said Ian.

"But it is going to take a long time," said Ian, speaking with a conviction which says that any failure will not be from a lack of effort or know how.

"The entire course was awarded SSSI status last year as it is an excellent breeding ground for the Woodlark and the Nightjar. It also recently received a Countryside Stewardship Award and is entered in the BIGGA Golf Environment Competition, in association with Amazone and Grass Roots having been mentioned in dispatches last year."

"Being a "Maritime Heathland" does present Ian and the team with some problems.

"Some holes are only 400 yards from the sea and can be affected by salt spray in storms or if there is a north east wind whipping over the North Sea. The 10th is the nearest thing we've got to a links green."

"Another problem they are currently working to resolve is the infestation of Mountain Ash. It has been there a while but lower than the gorse but last year was a really good growing season and up it came. In the winter we didn't notice it but now it has come into leaf you think 'Good Grief' and we've put in place a programme of going round and thinning them out."

"Ian's CV includes some of the best known clubs in the country and he's worked under some of the finest Course Managers around."

"I started back at Swinley Forest before going to Wentworth where I spent 14 years, 10 of them as Deputy Head on the East Course," said Ian, who then moved to Thetford as Head Greenkeeper before beginning his time at Thorpeness.

"On the back of this experience he has developed a managerial style out of the relaxed, rather than dictatorial, book of how to do it."

"I'm a qualified trainer and I train my staff so I know that if I send someone out to do a job he is competent enough to do it without me standing over him," said Ian, who is always quick to pick up on any job which needs doing.

"I disagree with the philosophy that I'm Course Manager so I don't get my hands dirty. If there is flymowing to do I'll do it."

"If there was a problem I can turn round and say 'I did it wrong, I'm..."
Equipment Inventory

Ransomes 160D Triple
John Deere 2653 Triple
Toro 3000D Greensmaster
Two Ransomes 20 inch Super Cerces
Ransomes 728D Rotary Front Deck
John Deere 26532 Tens and Banks Mower
Tri-King
Cushman Truck
Cushman Topdresser
Ryan GA30 Aerator
Siax Fairway Slitter
John Deere 1140 Tractor
John Deere 855 Compact Tractor
Kubota B2400 with Front Bucket
Team Sprayer 250lt
Trailer

Right: The picturesque par-3, 6th

"I don't really want to put any of the staff through that at the moment." He's not the sort to get hung up on something if it isn't 100% right every time and he's happy for people to point out areas of concern on the course.

"I'm not Superman and as far as I'm concerned this job is a team effort. I can't be expected to know everything that's happening on the course all of the time. If someone sees something on the other side of the road and tells me I'll shoot out and have a look.

"I encourage my staff to have input. If we're doing a bunker or redesigning a tee we'll have tea breaks and sit down and discuss it."

He also has a close relationship with the pro, Frank Hill, with whom any course alteration is discussed fully.

"We bounce ideas off one another. He's been responsible for building a few nine holes and he's got a good eye for landscaping bunkers," explained Ian, who also finds time to be the East Anglia Section Secretary.

"Thorpeness is a great golf course, one of the best in East Anglia," said Frank.

"For that reason I don't think you would ever want to change Braid's design but what we are looking at is putting in half a dozen new tees to change the angle of some of the holes to take account of the club and ball technology which has improved so much from Braid's day," he explained.

"It will stretch it a little but not too long. For the new millennium we could turn one of the par-4s into a par-3, and that would balance the two nines and bring the par up to 70."

With the effort of Ian, his team and everyone at the club, Thorpeness is well on its way to regaining its place as one of James Braid's best little courses and an East Anglian gem.
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Many, if not all of you, will have heard about or read articles on the Millennium Bug, Year 2000 (Y2k) problem or the Millennium Time Bomb. Opinions vary about what its effect will be from nothing at all to the most cataclysmic event since the advent of automation.

What is the Millennium Bug?

The problem is very simple but what gives it a worldwide impact is that almost all organisations and individuals use or are dependent on microprocessors (chips). If all chips had been manufactured to today's standards there would probably be no problems. Unfortunately, there are many electronically controlled devices containing older chips that could cause problems.

The problem concerns the way that chips store dates. The normal date has three elements: day, month and year. Most chips, in the past, stored only the third and fourth digits of the year eg. 99 instead of 1999. This was for two reasons. First it saved computer storage space and second, manufacturers did not think ahead and foresee the problems that the year 2000 might bring i.e. if the computer adds 1 to 99 the year changes to 00, but is it 1900 or 2000 or even 3000.

Many people feel that the Y2k
Ken Richardson gives some valuable advice aimed at lessening the risks of the dreaded Millennium Bug

A Y2K SPECIAL

A problem has been exaggerated by the media, by consultants and by the manufacturers of computers and other systems. There is an element of truth in this, but until you assess the impact that the Y2k bug will have on you there is no way of knowing.

Will I be affected by the Y2k bug?

The answer to the above question is maybe. If you do not use a computer at home or at work, do not use a microwave oven, drive a car, fly off on holiday, use a cash point, rely on traffic lights, use the telephone nor use anything that contains an embedded chip or chips then the answer is no. If however, you use or operate any device that contains a chip or chips the answer, again, is maybe.

How do I find out?

In theory, the answer is simple. Identify all the systems, devices and programs which have date calculations and advance the date and see what happens. This sounds easy but when you start to assess how many chips are used in the home and at work, the problem becomes massive.

Action 2000 has been set up, by the Government, to help all businesses in the United Kingdom, to deal with the Y2k problem. The Action 2000 seven step plan was designed to help you to apply project management methods to assess if you have problems and how to fix them.

The seven steps are:

1. Understand
2. Prioritise
3. Assess
4. Plan
5. Implement
6. Test
7. Install

Step 1: Understand

If you are reading this article then you have started the process of understanding. Further information can be obtained from Action 2000, PO Box 1999, Stratford on Avon, CV37 9GS, telephone 0845 6012000.

Step 2: Prioritise

Create an inventory of all computer hardware, software and embedded chips in your organisation, which might be affected. This could contain:

- A list of software, both applications and operating systems.
- A list of computer hardware
- A list of devices containing embedded chips eg machinery, irrigation systems, telephones, fire and intruder alarms etc.
- A list of all suppliers, sub contractors or agencies whose failure, due to the Y2k problem, could adversely affect your business.

If you are in any doubt whether a device may be affected then add it to your list.

Step 3: Assess

Once you have completed your inventory then you need to assess if the system will have Y2k problems and what impact any failures may have.

Assessing operating systems and general software packages usually means contacting the provider. Information on software packages can be found on the Internet eg Microsoft have a site at www.microsoft.com/year2000.

Assessing computer hardware can be a simple process and more details will be given later.

Assessing embedded systems can be a problem but the manufacturer/dealer who supplied the system should be able to give you the answers. Alternatively, use the Internet eg www.mitre.org/research/cots is an A-Z list of companies and product information.

Step 4: Plan

By this point, you will have decided what equipment and which systems need fixing their priority and the cost implications. However, you may have decided that your systems are compliant and that you do not need to progress any further.

If you do need to take action then you can apply the 5R strategy to the problem. The 5 Rs are:

- Repair it
- Retire it
- Redeploy it
- Renew it
- Risk it

Some people say that there is a sixth R which is Run Away!

Once you have made the decisions on the way ahead, you need to formulate a plan of action. Remember that 1 January 2000 is just over 200 days away, which does not leave you much time. You may also want to look at contingency plans to be used as a safety back-up in the event of an unforeseen system failure.

Step 5: Implement

If you do have to buy new hardware...
or software then you should insist on a written guarantee of compliance with each purchase and ensure that the guarantee answers your organisations requirements for compliance.

**Step 6: Test**

You need to produce a test plan which not only details when testing will take place but what you are testing for and what test data will be used. For embedded chips, the first and easiest test for any piece of equipment is to contact the supplier or person who maintains the equipment and ask them if the equipment is Y2k compliant.

**Computer Hardware Problems**

First the good news. Macintosh computers are not affected by the millennium bug as their years are held as four digit numbers. The bad news, however, is that most PC type computers could be affected.

PCs hold the date in three distinct places ie. the Real Time Clock, the BIOS Clock and the Operating System Clock and a problem with any or all clocks could cause a problem. Another date problem could be caused by the fact that the year 2000 is a leap year. A leap year is any year that is divisible by four and not by 100 or is also divisible by 400 where the last two digits are zeros eg. 1996/4 = 499 but 1996/100 = 19.96 therefore it was a leap year but 1900/4 = 475 but 1900/100 = 19 and 1900/400 = 4.75 therefore it was not a leap year. However, 2000/4 = 500 and 2000/100 = 20 and 2000/400 = 5 therefore 2000 is a leap year. This could be a problem if you have a system that needs to calculate days in a year eg. if your computer does not recognise that 2000 is a leap year the number of days in 2000 will be calculated as 365 instead of 366.

Additionally, all dates after 28 February 2000 will be wrong but they can be reset. If you do not use the date function on your computer you may think that you are safe. However, some software uses the date function to check that your licence or password is still valid if the software sees the wrong date then it may not allow you access. If you use a networked system you have even greater problems as a date problem on one machine can transfer the problem to other machines on the network. If you have software that is licensed to a future date you should not advance your computer held date beyond the licence expiry date as you could be locked out permanently.

**Testing BIOS**

It is estimated that 50% of all PCs sold in the past four years have a non compliant BIOS. Tracing the BIOS used in a PC is not easy as two identical machines bought on the same day could have different BIOS. There are two ways to test your PC ie. Manual and Software.

**Manual Test**

The Real Time Clock can be checked by setting the system time and date, through DOS or Windows, to 23 58 on 31 December 1999. After leaving the computer for a few minutes, the date should read 1 January 2000. However, you should also check what happens if you set the date and time as above ie to 23 58 on 31 December 1999 and then turn off the computer, leave for three minutes and turn it on again. If the date is shown as 1 January 2000 then you are one of the lucky few. Remember to check that the time reads 00 01 as some computers roll over to 20 00. Unless your BIOS chip is year 2000 compliant then you may find that the date now reads 1 January 1980 or some other date. As I said above, if you do not need to use the date function within your applications then there may not be a problem. However, if you do use the date some programmes will obtain it from the BIOS clock which will probably return 1 January 1900 and others will obtain it from the Real Time Clock which will return 1 January 1980 ie the date when all computers were born. Check that BIOS recognises that 2000 is a leap year by changing the date and time to 23 58 on 28 February 2000. Shut down your computer, wait for a few minutes and then switch on. The computer should show the date as 29 February 2000.

**Software Test**

A variety of programmes are available that will test your computer automatically. However, some test packages are of dubious quality. Free downloads are available on the Internet and several sites review test and fix packages eg. www.solice.co.uk reviews fix software packages, www.span2000.com is a PC fix software site, www.gmt-2000.com contains Check 2000 software plus a host of other information.

**Computer Software Problems**

Information on Computer Software compliance can be obtained from the manufacture/supplier. Microsoft has massive site on the Internet at www.microsoft.com/year2000. All TRIMS for Windows and TRIMS for DOS Systems (including Tree Inventory) which are at Version level 3.1W or 3.3 are compliant. All TRIMS 97 Systems are compliant as
is their new product TRIMS 2000 (available for release June 15, 1999). More information on TRIMS compatibility can be found on the Internet at www.trims.com

Step 7: Install
This can be the installation of new systems or the installation of fix programmes and/or new chips.

Fixing BIOS
There are several ways to fix the problem caused by BIOS. These are:

- Enter the date manually the first time that the computer is switched on in 2000
- Update your BIOS
- Install a software fix
- Install a new BIOS chip
- Install a new Real Time Clock chip
- Update your operating system
- Buy a new computer

None of the above are guaranteed to fix the problem and detailed knowledge of computer hardware may be needed to remove/insert new chips. Microsoft recommend manually resetting the BIOS the first time that the computer is used in the year 2000 and later versions of Windows NT include an automatic fix. Future 32 bit versions of Windows will also include an automatic fix.

Unfortunately, some computers with non compliant BIOS will need to be reset each time the computer is switched on.

What do I do next?
If you have not considered how the Y2k problem may affect your business then you should take immediate action to Assess all of your electronic equipment to see if the Y2k problem will affect you. If you are certain that none of your electronic systems are date reliant then you need not worry about the Millennium Bug. If, however, you find that you may have a problem then you will need to find out what can be done. Most Training and Enterprise Councils have been running Test and Fix and Assess and Manage Courses for some time so check with your local TEC/LEC.

Search the Internet, it contains a vast amount of information. Talk to others in the same situation. Finally, where necessary, employ a consultant.

Do not panic, as I said above, the Y2k problem may have no effect on your business or home life. However, if you do nothing now, you may have severe problems at the start of and during the Year 2000.
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ARRIVES TO CONQUER ALL TERRAINS...

**XRT 272**

The utility vehicle designed specially for Xtremely Rough Terrain.

- 11-horsepower, 351 cc engine
- Four-wheel hydraulic brakes
- Independent front suspension coupled with semi-independent rear suspension
- Aluminium I-beam construction and aluminium cargo box

**NEW CLUB CAR ALL-TERRAIN VEHICLE FEATURES DIFF-LOCK TRACTION**

Club Car has launched the new XRT 272 rough terrain vehicle for construction, greenkeeping and general maintenance applications on golf courses. Based on extensive input from golf industry customers, the versatile XRT 272 model features a strong, durable design combining excellent load-pulling and hill climbing power with superior stopping ability, enhanced stability and increased traction via a differential lock system.

The XRT 272 model is a multi-purpose utility vehicle - it can easily be transformed from construction to maintenance mode simply by replacing its heavy-duty, all-terrain, four-ply rated tyres with turf tyres for working on grass. The XRT 272 vehicle is also fun to drive, providing versatile and tangible proof that utility vehicles can be tough and attractive at the same time. Users can customise the XRT 272 with accessories such as a light bar with halogen worklights; a 680 kg (1500lb) rated, remotely-operated front or rear-mounted winch; a hydraulic dump or electric lift bed; side step bars; a heavy-duty brush guard; a bed liner; a canopy top and windshield and beverage holders.

While competitive products have been engineered for other applications and then adapted for golf course use, the CLUB CAR XRT 272 vehicle was designed specifically for golf course professionals. "During golf course construction, tough ground conditions are often encountered. We have engineered a smarter, stronger, more versatile machine - one with power, stability, traction and stopping power to conquer trackless terrain and work harder in the field, where it counts," said Jerry Hanss, Regional Manager for Club Car Europe. By combining these advanced features, Club Car has created a utility vehicle that is without doubt the best in its class."
How have you gone about meeting the needs of the modern day greenkeeper? Discuss...

We marvel, and rightly so, at the adaptability of modern greenkeepers and their ability to keep on top of the developments which have moved the amenity industry well and truly into the high tech age. But what about the companies which have had to meet the increasingly sophisticated demands of people who are striving to produce better and better playing conditions for golfers? We gave several of the biggest machinery manufacturers a platform to discuss how they have gone about meeting the demands of the modern day greenkeeper as we approach the 21st century.

INTO THE FUTURE

Hayter

It is December 31st, 1999. The dying embers of the 20th century are smouldering in the grate and the midwife is about to deliver the new year. A new millennium is about to be born. Actually, it's not. Mathematically, the third millennium does not start until 2000 years have elapsed and therefore we are all a year too early. And that presupposes that old Gregor, when he was devising the calendar we use today, managed to account accurately for the years after Christ's birth. There are some considerable doubts about this so maybe we are all worrying unnecessarily.

Maybe the year 2000 computer problems are all just an industry scare tactic. Maybe we have already passed the year 2000 without a problem. The trouble is, the computers still think we are where we think we are today. Confusing, isn't it?

Anyway, what are we doing to adapt to the needs of today and what are we doing to address modern greenkeeping needs? Today's greenkeeper is a very different animal to that portrayed by many of the "old brigade" of golf club members.

He or she is better trained and more professional than many of their forebears and their contribution to maintaining playing surfaces subjected to ever-increasing usage, is seldom fully appreciated. Similarly, the machinery at their disposal has adapted to these changing demands. The true surfaces wanted by members and professional golfers alike require precision machines capable of maintaining accuracy in almost all conditions.

The development of power-driven cylinders was a major contributor to grass cutting in all conditions but the introduction of computer controlled equipment to make machine components, has transformed the accuracy of machinery design and repeatability of spare parts. This has helped ensure that modern equipment used on golf courses gives longevity as well as consistent accuracy over its lifetime.

Computers now control the design, manufacture and finishing of modern machinery. From solid modelling and three dimensional computer aided design, through computer aided material turning, stamping, cutting, bending, joining, moulding etc. to computer controlled high class finishing, modern machinery helps produce the quality of equipment needed. And all that at a cost that, in real terms, is stunningly competitive with days of old.

Manufacturing investment has been massive. The investment in logistical support has been equally impressive encompassing satellite ordering for next day delivery of spare parts; electronic cataloguing for the easy and accurate identification of the required parts; internet updating of relevant health and safety considerations; training CD's; operational instructions etc. etc. These are some of the benefits that have been passed on to the user. It follows therefore that, as the reliance on the computer becomes all pervasive, we must ensure we have contributed adequately to Y2K compliance.

Even if the date is wrong, the computer could still bring all the greenkeepers hard work to a standstill and render useless all the gains that have been made. Failing that, how many greenkeepers can still use a scythe?

Kim Macfie.
Sales and Marketing Director of Hayter
INTO THE FUTURE

Charterhouse: Greenkeeping 2010...

When we look to the future we often find our thinking is restrained by the past which prevents us fromimagining the outrageous or the totally radical. Let me give you an example. It was only 20 years ago that we used to struggle to find a telephone box which hadn’t been vandalised. At the time it would have been impossible to imagine that almost everyone, including teenagers at school, would be carrying their own satellite linked mobile telephones.

Manufacturers have the problem of thinking the unthinkable to ensure that they do not miss future developments which could radically affect their industry. We all know about demographic changes which are already taking place. These include earlier retirement coupled with longer life expectancy and more affluence in retirement.

These changes are fast becoming matched with a ‘healthy living syndrome’ and if this movement continues, golf could become as much a part of the health care industry as the sporting one. Pizzas in the clubhouse being replaced by fruit and nut bars but on the course, environmental issues coming to the fore. We have already seen the movement getting underway with battery driven mowers. As the battery industry becomes more profitable, including tractors. Failing this, the movement to cleaner engines (avoiding pollution) and probably using GLP as the power source could well become the norm.

In today’s media we find enormous controversy raging around GM food but perhaps some of our problems with turf culture could be solved by GM turf seed. What would the properties of the seed be?

- Hard wearing
- Less cutting required
- More tolerant of lower cutting heights
- Moss and disease resistance
- Better root formation

If this were possible what cultivation techniques would be required? Fewer sprayers, better aeration and cultivation techniques to ensure an all year round playing surface.

In farming, modern satellite technology has given rise to GPS land mapping. The system identifies exactly whereabouts you are and what crop techniques are required to within a few yards in order to produce the maximum crop potential. Could the system in 10 years time identify to within 200mm areas which require moss treatment or specifically control the irrigation to only wet areas needing the extra moisture or even to tell the Head Greenkeeper which morning to mow the greens and which to avoid.

Many of these concepts feel uncomfortable but the industry will need to break free of its present paradigm in order to react to the vast changes that could happen. These will also include new buying patterns and use of the Internet at some stage with respect to equipment purchase and where to obtain the best service. Only time will tell in all these facets of the industry.

Dialogue and creativity among the market place is an absolute must, starting now!

David Jenkings, Charterhouse

John Deere

Last year, by industry accounts, John Deere captured over 20% of the worldwide golf course maintenance market. Over the same period Deere & Company invested more than a million dollars a day in research and development, with a significant proportion going towards golf & turf equipment design.

The golf & turf business has been the fastest growing part of the company’s commercial & consumer equipment division through-out the 1990s. Up to 20% of John Deere’s golf & turf sales are delivered outside North America, the majority in Western Europe. For each of the last seven years Deere & Company has been getting the views of thousands of greenkeepers through its annual feedback programme, which has now been held in the USA, Europe and Australia. A wide range of new and prototype machines are scrutinised, driven and commented on by the people whose opinions matter most to John Deere - the customers.

"Feedback is the company’s annual reality check," says John Deere Limited Managing Director Alec McKee. "We depend on these meetings, on pre-production demonstrations and on thousands of test hours on golf courses around the world to frame our product development and improvement programmes.

"We ask greenkeepers to be open, honest, and blunt - and they are. Greenkeepers are impressed not only because we are asking them for opinions, but because they can see that their suggestions are taken seriously. "We’ve learned a lot from each feedback we’ve held, and we still have a lot to learn. We want to be considered as business partners with our customers, and that means we look to greenkeepers for ideas and information."

"We had more prototype machines in the field last year than at any time since we entered this market more than 10 years ago. Many of the modifications and refinements on several new models in the last year or two are the direct result of what greenkeepers have asked us for."

"The basic design of any machine works worldwide, and greenkeepers’ concerns are similar - they want performance, reliability, quality of cut, serviceability. The feedback meetings help us to fine tune the equipment so each machine does the right job for each individual customer."

"The main difference between the European and American markets, for example, is in the number of people employed on the golf course. European greenkeepers tend to spend more time on their machines, as they are fewer in number compared to the USA, so they demand higher specification seats. Low noise levels are also driven by European requirements. "Deere & Company is genuinely committed to British and European greenkeepers. The worldwide Golf & Turf Division Business Manager, Ken Edwards, has regularly attended BTME and SALTEX, and he and his factory colleagues have visited many UK and Irish golf courses to learn more about European conditions and requirements. The company also employs a European golf & turf specialist, Howard Storey, who is based here in the UK, at Langar.

"Regular staff and dealer training courses, and investment in new products and manufacturing systems, ensure that the company will continue to provide the most advanced and reliable machines possible for the professional greenkeepers."

Redexim Charterhouse

David Jenkings, Charterhouse
Kubota

Kubota is recognised principally by Course Managers and greenkeepers for producing reliable, user-friendly compact tractors and ride-on front rotary mowers. However, lift the bonnet of many other makes and types of golf course machinery and there is a strong chance that you will find a Kubota engine providing the power.

Long established as the world’s number one producer of small water-cooled diesel engines, Kubota power units are the first choice of 80 other machinery manufacturers, many of them leaders in their field.

Recognising the long hours and varied workloads of greenkeepers, Kubota is constantly seeking to enhance the comfort and convenience of its compact tractors and ride-on mowers to reduce fatigue and improve operating efficiency.

Kubota was one of the world’s first manufacturers to introduce tilt steering columns and fully adjustable seats to suit different size drivers. Most Kubota tractors and mowers now come with rubber-mounted flat deck floors which combine low noise and minimal vibration with plenty of leg and foot room, providing easy access from either side of the machine.

If your Kubota tractor or mower is fitted with a cab, you can be certain that all-round visibility, sound levels, ventilation and comfort are of the highest standards to promote smooth, efficient and safe greenkeeping operations from dawn till dusk.

Kubota appreciates also that first class service and parts support is a must for golf course maintenance machinery. To ensure that performance is maintained at peak levels, all of its operations are regulated by ISO 9002 - an international quality control accreditation under which systems and procedures are consistently checked and monitored to maintain a consistently high standard.

The traction, durability and comfort of Softspike's® revolutionary new Black Widow™ cleat has established new performance standards for the industry. The Black Widow™ is simply in a different league from anything else. Its cantilevered 'legs' flex as you walk to provide maximum traction, and gives the same protection against green damage as our popular XP design. The Black Widow's™ innovative polyurethane material makes it easily the most durable plastic cleat available.

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You've never seen a green-friendly cleat like this. With eight independent flexible legs, the Black Widow™ gives you a cushioned feel you can't get with any other cleat. Its springy reflex action 'bites' the turf, to give you traction you can't get from an ordinary cleat. And its unique polyurethane plastic is both sturdy and pliable to give you the grip you need in heavy rough or awkward lies.
SSIS has 13 salaried and four recommendations in daily contact with our customers, giving an invaluable opportunity in discussion. The problems, needs and current trends. This valuable information is reported back to Head Office at Macklesfield and used to formulate design and development policy for future products. SSIS believes in listening to the customer, then setting out to meet his or her requirements, with well-engineered, long-lasting machinery. Going back to the Company's foundation in the 1930s, it was watching greenkeepers laboriously fork and hand rake their greens that led to the development of the first powered aerators and later scarifiers. In recent years, fairway maintenance has become more important and here also SSIS has answers: the Hydraulic Veemo to remove thatch quickly and efficiently, deep slitters and hollow corers for effective relief of compaction; the Quadraplay Fairway Groomer for fast, routine maintenance and improved presentation.

SSIS also enjoys the help of greenkeepers to test new machinery. This ensures that controls are conveniently placed, lines are easily fitted, machines are reliable and easy to handle. Proform prototypes are often to be found on the SSIS stand at BTME for the final seal of approval before production.

In recent years everyone has become more environmentally aware and good mechanical maintenance techniques can often mean a reduced need for chemicals. Nevertheless, when pesticides are essential, the SSIS Ecospray with fully shrouded spraying units, allows the responsible modern greenkeeper to apply them without risk to adjoining vegetation and water courses. The importance of the Ecospray's unique features was recognised with the award of Millennium Product status.

Another growing trend seen as we approach the year 2000, is more concern over cost effectiveness. Thus multi purpose machines grow in popularity, the Quadraplay one-pass mower; Rotorakes with eight interchangeable reels for powered scarification, shallow spiking and brushing; powered aerators which will also operate brush, rake and spiker slitters. On smaller courses with limited budgets, deep aeration, hollow corers and top dressers only used once a year are hired.

SSIS has risen to this challenge with SSIS Hire operating from three regional depots and now, with the acquisition of Hustes' Grass Machinery business, are able to offer an even larger range of equipment; including the Tecnorace vertical action corer; the Soil Reliever for really deep treatment; top dressers; seeders and just about anything else a greenkeeper may need.

To sum up, SSIS policy is to offer the busy modern greenkeeper his or her own local Area Representative to give advice and after-sales support, backed up by a truly excellent spares service and national network.

Above all SSIS acknowledges that today's greenkeepers are to be listened to. And by listening SSIS will continue to offer a range of reliable, innovative, well designed machinery to enable modern turf professionals to give their golfers the very best surfaces on which to play, now and into the new Millennium.

Textron

What do military aircraft and mowers have in common? Not much, you may think. But Textron Turf Care and Specialty Products are adopting practices used by the defence aerospace industry to help ensure ease of maintenance on their new turf care products. Textron, whose products include Ransomes, Jacobsen, Cushman, Ryan, Lakeland and E-Z GO, founded through a series of user focus groups that turf care machinery maintenance downtime was a severe cost penalty to its customers.

"While we have always been aware that ease of maintenance was an important issue, we decided to introduce a Maintainability Assessment as part of the pre-production testing," explained Director of Engineering, Steve Chicken. "The assessment placed a numeric value on the visibility, need for tools, safety, manual reach and grip, and prior actions required for each maintenance action. This measurement technique is not only used on new machines under development but we also use it on existing machines and competitors' machines. This helps us highlight good design features and also adapt as a benchmark from which we improve new products," Steve added.

"As a result, our new municipal grass cutting machine, which is being launched later this year, has been designed with a 40% improvement in it's measured ease of maintenance, and we're sure that's a feature which every customer will appreciate," he said.

Other features are also being designed into new products to minimise the maintenance required. New machines being launched this year have a 60% increase in hydraulic oil replacement life and in some the first five hour of change has been eliminated completely. Textron have been working to introduce increased commonality of parts, such as filters and accessories such as cabs, and lighting kits.

This not only improves stock holding for the greenkeeper, it also makes training easier. The Parts service has also come into its own as a result. "The assessment placed a numeric value on the visibility, need for tools, safety, manual reach and grip, and prior actions required for each maintenance action. This measurement technique is not only used on new machines under development but we also use it on existing machines and competitors' machines. This helps us highlight good design features and also adapt as a benchmark from which we improve new products," Steve added.

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As far as we're concerned it is all part of our philosophy of understanding the needs of our customers. Of course they want reliable and effective machines which represent good value for money, but they also want to keep machinery maintenance downtime to an absolute minimum and we hope that by making our machines easier to maintain, backed up with a parts service which is quicker than ever, we can help them achieve that aim," added Peter.

Toro

It is perhaps fitting that, in the run-up to a new millennium, it's a Toro maintained world-renowned golf venue that is hosting the final Open to be fought out in Britain at the turn of the century. For the simple but significant fact that Camoustie Golf Links has teamed up with Toro for The Open in 1999, epitomises the unrivalled position at the top of world golf course maintenance that has been attained by Toro's Minneapolis headquarters with engineering, manufacturing and product-testing, as well as operational, sales support, in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland distributors, Lely UK and Lely Ireland, hosting regular customer feedback events at Toro facilities in the US. There are sessions on machinery products at Minneapolis headquarters with engineering, manufacturing and product-testing as well as visits to Toro's main Commercial Products' manufacturing facility in Tomah, Wisconsin, for discussion of product-related issues with senior production management. Toro European Sales Manager Bob Buckingham says: "Toro is committed to looking at customer needs on a worldwide basis, not just a US viewpoint. These occasions are far for us to hear UK customers feedback. We spend time listening to the products and key turf issues that affect their daily work, so Toro can ensure it meets all their current and future needs." On the product front, Toro excels in providing innovative solutions. As the proven industry leader in producing the highest quality cut, the company demands that every new product meets similar quality standards. Classic examples include the Recycler mowing deck and the HydroSelect water-injection airator. The latest innovation is Toro's remarkable Reelmaster 3100 D Siderower - the first mower with cutting units that move sideways to increase their overhang, which is a boon for cutting around bunkers, aprons and obstacles.

As the national distributor, staff at Lely UK, in St Neots, undergo extensive training and service education classes specific to golf customers' own applications. In turn, Lely provides its national network of local dealers with parts and service training as well as operator training. This includes provision of a large demonstration fleet for customers to try out kit in their own conditions, as well as an efficient service parts department. New computer systems are embraced confidently, such as the introduction later this season of the new Toro Recommended Parts Programme (TRPP). And of course Toro is at the cutting edge of technology in the groundskeeping industry's greatest on-going challenges, that of raising standards and the professional status of the greenkeeper. This has come from its support for education and training via schemes with BIGGA and others such as The Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Award and the Toro Excellence in Greenkeeping Award.

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Keeping in touch with news and comment from the Sections

**Central**

I must begin this month's news with an apology to Alistair Philp, St. Fillans Golf Club, in a previous issue I mistakenly said Alistair was Head Greenkeeper, in a previous issue I misunderstood Golf Q. An apology to Alistair Philp, St. Fillans, who along with his staff for the season.

**North**

Once again I start the column welcoming new members to the Section. This month we greet Scott Atchison, Royal Dornoch; Justin Lockie, Airth; Keith Law, Forfar; Scott Barclay, Balmore, and Neil Kidd, from Keith, the last three are rejoining us.

Judging by other Section reports, the Association is growing well this year. If we can retain last year's membership then there should be a significant rise throughout the country. Hopefully, at last, word is spreading just how good being in BIGGA is for greenkeepers everywhere and very reasonably priced too. I have just received my renewal for GCsaa dues and it is more than twice our fees, but that is still very reasonable.

This month we have the Scottish Greenkeeping Championship at East Kilbride. I hope we can have a big entry from the North and that we can come away with some silverware. I cannot make it myself as I have a meeting about then and my daughter's graduation the following week, so will be too busy but I intend to send some of my staff down.

If we think golf is expensive here, about this tale from one of my members just back from Singapore. He went to play golf with his son-in-law at a local club and had to show his passport and a letter from our club before he got a game. After six holes they then had to pay a further fee and again after twelve! His son-in-law lives there and would like to join the club but the entrance fee is S$18,000! Mind you, he says the views of the Alps from all parts of the course are breath-taking. Apparently the cost of living is so high in Switzerland that most people rent property rather than buy as prices are so expensive.

I read in last month's Central Section news that a football match is being arranged with our Section. I didn't know about this but I am sure we can rise to the challenge. All ex-folks pro's please step forward as we don't want to let the Southern Softies beat us - only joking boys!

Joking aside, this should be good fun if it can be organised and I look forward to reporting all about it in this column.

**West**

Thursday, 29th April. What was that day like? Spring has definitely sprung in all its glory. As the saying goes "The sun shines on the righteous".

Well, it was a good turnout and despite the delay caused by tee off times, I think it all went rather well. As for my game, well with the benefit of hindsight, I wish now that I had dusted my clubs off a couple of weeks prior to this event, as my partner Ian Smith & Alan Jack, I am sure, will no doubt concur! Thanks for the game anyway lads. We thank the Captain Mr Alan Winning of Bothwell Castle GC for hosting the course and facilities on the day.

Bothwell Castle was in great condition and our thanks go to Sam Morrison and all his staff for their hard work. Well done Sam. Thanks also go to the bar and catering staff, Terry Latby and his wife Sandra, thanks for an excellent meal. The sunshine brought out some good scores on the day, so without further ado here are the results - Scratch Prize Douglas McIntosh, Cathkin Braes GC, scratch 70, 1st Class 1st Place Ian Smith, Drumpelier GC 73-3(68), 2nd Place Peter Cowan, Clydebank GC 81-9(72)BH, 3rd Place Scott Ballantyne, Cowden GC 78-
BIGGA have recently offered Sections the opportunity to provide "learning workshops", on any subject with the provision that it is in relation to greenkeeping. Subjects might include: Irrigation, Course Design, Construction, Soil Science. Using PCs etc. The only requirement is that each course must have a minimum of thirteen bodies in attendance to justify the offer from HQ.

Anybody interested please write to, or contact S. Bulloch for further information. A date, to be finalised, in August has been arranged for a challenge match between Clubmaster V Greenkeepers. Numbers are restricted to 16, if you are interested and would like to take part contact S. Bulloch.

Finally congratulations to Steve Richardson, formerly Bothwell Castle GC. Steve’s new appointment is at Wentworth. Good luck Steve, hope you settle in well. Congratulations also to David Huton who moved recently to Bothwell Castle from Hamilton GC. Sam Morrison informs me that he and Ian Wilson are still good friends, despite employing one of Ian’s men. Sam reckons that it was because he had plied him with drink to soften the blow! (Which in itself is quite strange, you see I always thought Ian was teetotal?) Answers on a postcard please.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any news or anything you might think worthy of a mention.

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Our unique patented belt-driven articulating deck design gives you an unsurpassed quality and accuracy of cut.
patrons, Burrows (GM)/Cheshire Light Machinery, Acorn Equipment and Rigby Taylor Engineering for their support with the prize table, also White Moss Amenity, Gary Worrall, Greenkeeping Supply Co. Atkins, County Crops, Richard Campney, for help to swell the prize table.

The two members who qualified for free entry to the National Championship sponsored by Scotts/Charterhouse are: best gross, Richard Castle, Denton GC, best nett, Michael Nolan, Brampton GC.

The six qualifiers for the NW team to play in the Regional Final at Macclesfield Golf Club on Wednesday 25th August are: B-J Richard Castle, Denton GC, Tim Nolan, Denton GC, 03-18 Michael Nolan, Brampton GC, John Coar, Blackpool NS GC, 19-28 Mike Hogg, Childwell GC, Paul Eddelestone, Fishwick Hall GC. This competition is sponsored by R. J. Campney/Macclesfield.

The next meeting is the Summer Meeting at Longridge Golf Club on Thursday June 17. Lunch 12noon-1pm teeing time 1.30pm. If you have left it late to enter ring Bill Merritt on 0151 284 4416. Any problems or queries ring me on 0151 724 5412.

Bert Cross

Northern

The Annual Dinner dance was again held at Bradford Golf Club. Many thanks to Dave Thackray and Mel Gay for the hard work in organising the event. This year we tried a carvery style meal which went down very well with everybody and once again a good time was had by all.

This year's Spring Tournament and Charterhouse/Scotts National Qualifier was held at Hornsea Golf Club. The weather was splendid, which enhanced what was had by all.

Which brings me on to the next thing, Memorial Tournament qualifier Carden Park and the 12-15 July, costing £100 per pair.

Don Ravland, P Farzay G Fitzpatrick (6 balls), Mike Heaps 69, 3rd M. Jones 70, Longest Drive A. Court. Trade Prize A. Dyson, Parlux.

Thanks again go to the Trade for their support. Acorn, Walker Engineering, John Osman, ALS, Oakleys, Rigby Taylor, Greenkeeper Supply Co. Atkins, Charterhouse/Scotts. Regional qualifiers for Macclesfield will be notified Cat 0 - 9, 10-18, 19-28.

Our secretary Gary has told me that no one replied for the N. Wales. N. West split so he had to phone around to get a team. Come on lads, in future pick up the phone. Anyway, once again we won. As I've said before, the GEM Shield seems to be written in the wrong language as it spends all its time in Wales. Sorry Bert.

Last but not least, Autumn meeting is at Nefyn on 13 October. I'll buy you a drink Pat. The Christmas meet is at Royal St Davies, 2 December. Every man clubs will be coming out of retirement. See ya.

Dave Goodridge

THE NEW VERTI-DRAIN MUSTANG

YOU'LL QUICKLY SEE THE BENEFITS

Without doubt, the new Verti-Drain Mustang is the fastest, most effective aerator on the market today. Whilst it still features the unique, patented 'heave' action, there are many new improvements, including single point arm adjustment, a stronger frame support system and fewer working parts.
Berks, Bucks & Oxon

The opening golf day of the season was held at Beaconsfield GC on April 20. The day was a great success with around 40 entrants competing for two spaces in the national finals at Carden Park in October. The only problem was the continuous rain which I suppose was to be expected in April.

Our thanks go to Bill Patterson and his team who presented the course superbly; it was certainly a credit to all concerned. The meal was also very good, altogether a great venue and one I hope we will be able to return to. The prizes for the day were supplied by Gem Professional, thanks to Bernie for his continuous support for the Section. Last but not least thanks to Richard Fontmeuller and ETT, who supplied all the raffle prizes.

The results of the day were as follows: Best Gross R. Wilson 74. Best Nett T. French 76-7-69. 2. C. Taylor 87-16-71. 3. G. Wheeler 90-17-73.

Congratulations to all winners the weather made the scoring very difficult. Tony French and myself will do our best at Carden Park to represent the Section.

Lindsay Anderson has now passed over the writing of this article to me but continues as Secretary. Thanks for the tips, Lindsay.

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East Midlands

I have just had news from an old friend of our Section, one of our former secretaries, Gordon Mitchell. Gordon has returned to his native Scotland, working at Piperdam Golf & Country Club in Dundee. Gordon formerly worked at Melton Mowbray GC and Westwood GC in Staffordshire. If any member would like to contact Gordon he has passed on his address and telephone number to me and he would like to hear from his old friends within the Section. On behalf of the East Midlands section I would like to wish Gordon all the best at Piperdam Golf and Country Club.

Next year’s Autumn tournament will be held at Market Harborough GC on September 20 and will again be generously sponsored by Banks Amenity Products. Results from this year’s Spring Tournament will appear in next month’s newsletter.

Finally if anyone has any information they would like to see in this article please let me know.

Antony Bindley

Midland

The spring tournament was held at Walmley Golf Club on a fine, sunny April day. The day was a real success and was enjoyed by all those who attended. Many thanks on behalf of the Midland section to all the staff at Walmley Golf Club and especially to Andrew Greenaway and his staff for presenting the course in such good condition. A big thank you to all the sponsors for their support. They are, East Midland Turfcare, R Minton. Nearest the pin and Bathgates for the wine and the meal.

The Purdy’s Cup and Charterhouse/Scotts Championship qualifiers were held at Les Purdy’s home course at Retford. This course was in excellent condition thanks to John Shan and staff. Les, as usual, produced some prizes which would befit any members. The sponsor also thanked the other sponsors, Tower Chemicals and his wife have their second baby, this time a daughter named Beth. To Ron and Richard our warmest congratulations and also to Simon Bateman who has been appointed First Assistant at Puttenham. Ron Christie and his wife have their second baby, this time a daughter named Beth. Richard Evans, also of Aldington Place, it must be somebody in the air, is proud of the first time to a son named Evan. To a son named Evan.

Surrey

After all the rain thank goodness for the recent spell of sunshine that made the end of April and beginning of May so warm and a pleasure to be in the open air.

Alce: Bradshaw must have either sold his soul or spirit or spent all of the previous Sunday praying for fine weather for the Spring Tournament at Malden Golf Club. Well, whatever he did it worked. The sun shone and shone and made this first golf day an absolute pleasure to be part of.

The course was in excellent condition, beautifully presented and we thank Malden Golf Club for their courtesy and the catering staff for the superb meal.

The day was sponsored by TurfCare and the prizes were presented by John Hobbs.

The results were as follows:-


The Charterhouse/Scotts National Championship qualifiers are Gareth Rogers, best net and Brian Turner best gross.

There have been a few changes in Surrey and we congratulate Terry Huntley who as most members know is now Course Manager at West Hill Golf Club. James Andrews who has been appointed First Assistant at Puttenham. Ron Christie and his wife have their second baby, this time a daughter named Beth.

Richard Evans, also of Aldington Place, it must be somebody in the air, is proud of the first time to a son named Evan.

To Ron and Richard our warmest congratulations and also to Simon Haynes, from Purley Downs Golf Club, whose son, Thomas, arrived five weeks early at the beginning of the year.

Brian Willmott.

East Anglia

Wow what a start to spring! Sun, rain, snow, sun again and snow now, all coupled with winds from varying directions, has meant that soil temperatures have risen and then fallen, more often than a team of continental footballers in 90 minutes play!

Wishing for at least one settled day were 49 members of the Section who entered our first golf day of 1999 which was held at the Links Golf Club, Newmarket. Threatening skies through the competition was all the heavens offered but all around the neighbouring counties downpours were the order of the day. Wind though was certainly not in short supply, as it was strong, with swirling gusts enough to test any high approach shot.

The Charterhouse/Scotts National Championship qualifier was played over 18 holes medal play.

Results:-


Qualifiers for the Charterhouse/Scotts National Championship are N. Brewster and T. Morton. Before the link Club Captain Mr D. Orwell presented the prizes. He thanked the club’s Head Greenkeeper for his hard work on the course, and presenting it in such good condition. He then went to praise all Greenkeepers and Course Managers, on behalf of all the golfers around the world.

Ian Willett thanked the Captain and then thanked Rob Boyce and his team of greenkeepers for the excellent course. Also a big thank you to our trade sponsors for their support. They are, Atterton & Ellis, Barenburg, Colliers Turf Care, Consult Clarkson, CMW, Grass Roots Trading Company, Hardley Tools, Pattinsons, Rhone-Poulenc, Rigby Taylor, Rushbrooks, Sisis, Tomlinson Ground Care, Toro UK, Turfcare Ltd, UAP Ltd.

The collection that has now become part of all our meetings towards the Macmillan Nurses Fund raised £44.73.

Our next meeting will be on Wednesday 16th June at Ufford Park

Now for the important bit, results for the Charterhouse/Scotts National Championship, best gross score- Steve Cole/83, best nett score- G. Forsyth 72.

Good luck to you both.

See you all at Colchester on June 23.

Dove Wells

East Anglia

Well what a start to spring! Sun, rain, snow, sun again and snow now, all coupled with winds from varying directions, has meant that soil temperatures have risen and then fallen, more often than a team of continental footballers in 90 minutes play!
South Coast

I am sorry there was no report in last month’s magazine, I just didn’t have any news. If you have anything for the Section report, please give me a call.

All those I spoke to at Westurf thought the move to West Point was a good one.

The members of the trade seemed to be a lot happier this year. There were a lot more stands than previous years. A lot of the locals also attended the show. This included bowing greenkeepers, Course Managers from the local football and cricket clubs. This must be good news for Westurf, I noted a large increase in the numbers from the South Coast this time. Well done all of you who made the effort, Adam and his Aze Men was well worth the visit. Who needs a chainsaw when you have men like that around.

The aim seems to be a lot more activity at the trade stands this year. This can only be good for all concerned. Before moving on from Westurf we must thank Paula for all the hard work in organising the show. Also all the work involved in moving to the new venue. Thank you Paula and we look forward to Westurf 2000 (The Millennium).

Our summer tournament will be held at Rowlands Castle Golf Club on Thursday 22 July. It will consist of a four ball better ball played over 18 holes. Pairing is to consist of a greenkeeper and a member from his Golf Club Committee or a golfing member of his club. A greenkeeper member may play with a greenkeeper member from another club. The cost of the day will be £15.50 per head. All entries to include you and your partners names and addresses, Golf clubs, current courses, you should contact Noel Cunningham.

If you know where they are, please contact me on 01285-720112.

The region will donate one ticket for the BTME in January to the BTME, allowing visitors to catch up on the latest development within our industry. Congratulations must go to our Regional Administrator and the Regional Board for taking such a positive step in moving the show to Westpoint which turned out to be a great day.

Visitors also had the chance to sample the hospitality in the BIGGA stand and to meet our Chairman Gordon Child, Executive Director, Neil Thorne, and Education and Training Manager, Ken Richardson, who were on and to answer any questions. Educational seminars were run throughout the day with the highlight of the day being the Adam Axen demonstrating their skills.

With all the hard work Paula has put into Westurf and the Region over the last few months with the added pressures of moving house to sunny Bude, I hope she has time to read this article while listening to the waves gently lapping against the Cornish coast line. Richard Whyman.

South Wales

The new look Westurf, I must say was well worth the longer journey to Exeter for what was an excellent day. Congratulations must go to the organisers for the trade exhibition especially to Paula Humphries. From those who attended the show it was far better being indoors, I’m sure you would agree even though it was a dry day. Thanks must also go to the Axe man who gave us superb entertainment.

The day would not have been a success without the vital time that exhibitors gave. So on behalf of the South Wales Section thanks to all and the trade for an enjoyable day.

I’ll give you the update on the Spring Tournament and the golf match BIGGA versus Brocld College next month.

A note for your diary: BIGGA versus the PGA to take place at St. Mellons Golf Club Cardif on August 17.

Richard Hatcher 01656 742761

Devon and Cornwall

Westurf 99 took on a new look and a new venue which proved to be a great success as the show moved into the purpose built arena at Westpoint Exeter located just minutes off the M5 motorway. The indoor arena created a superb atmosphere very similar to BTME, allowing visitors to catch up on the latest development within our industry. Congratulations must go to our Regional Administrator and the Regional Board for taking such a positive step in moving the show to Westpoint which turned out to be a great day.

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With all the hard work Paula has put into Westurf and the Region over the last few months with the added pressures of moving house to sunny Bude, I hope she has time to read this article while listening to the waves gently lapping against the Cornish coast line. Richard Whyman.

Northern Ireland

Congratulations to the qualifiers so far in the Charterhouse/Scotts National Championship for the BIGGA Challenge Trophy.

Keep those results coming in, and we’ll highlight the qualifiers every month.

South East

At the end of March we had our section qualifier at Royal County Down GC, Newcastle. There was a great attendance at the day appreciating the sunny weather. The championship course itself is in magnificant condition and all praise to Alan Strachan, Course Manager and to Walter Beattie and the team for the presentation of the course.

Congratulations to our two qualifiers Noel Crawford and his brother Eamon Crawford, both greenkeepers at Royal County Down.

Also thanks to Scotts for the prizes of cut glass decanters to the winners. I would also like to thank Terry Crawford, our handicapper for overseeing the competition as well as chairman Graham Wylie and secretary Ken Henderson and especially to Royal County Down GC for allowing us to run the section qualifier on their course and for the courtesy they showed to BIGGA members.

I would like to welcome further new members to the section, David Lenthall, Head Greenkeeper at Milltown GC Dublin, also Michael King, Eamonn Crawford, Noel Crawford and Patrick Brady all from Royal County Down GC.

One more thing to mention is a summer golf competition which will be held in early June and members will be notified.

Jonathan McCabe
Paula Humphries, BIGGA's Regional Administrator for the South West & South Wales, reports back from Westurf99, and looks toward Westurf2000...

Going West

What a good job we decided to go under cover this year - Long Ashton was closed during the week, and experienced the heaviest rainfall of the year! It is doubtful whether we would have been able to use the venue at all. The Westpoint arena was superb and to those of you who commented that it was a little chilly, I would say that at least you were dry (on the outside if not on the inside)! Setting up on the Monday went fairly smoothly. The shell scheme was a little late being put up but eventually all was in place and the show kicked off with a cocktail party on Monday evening which was attended by the traders and helpers and we were delighted to welcome National Chairman, Gordon Child and his wife Marion and Neil Thomas, Executive Director.

Show day dawned (for me at 5.00 am!) bright and clear. New to Westurf this year was a programme of seminars on varying aspects of Water Management. The three speakers were Stephen Bernhard of Bernhard & Co., Helen Wakeley of Symbio and Len Dixon of Field Capacity Ltd. The first seminar held at 9.30 am was attended by over 40 delegates. The others had similarly good attendance so the experiment was a success. Our thanks to the three speakers who were excellent. Another innovation was the entertainment arena. The fabulous Adams Axe Men, a prize winning team from the New Forest, gave two fantastic demonstrations of wood cutting and tree felling which attracted huge audiences and was greatly enjoyed by all. It was a pity the PA system was so poor. The witty and informative commentary could not be fully appreciated.

The attendance at the show was excellent with personnel from all fields of the industry and this year we had a registration book so we have a record of visitors. Nobody got past Susie on the registration desk! so when I have time I will be able to compile a database for traders and anyone else who wants it. The showground looked great with its huge balloon decorations and thanks go to Avoncrop and Tacit for the loan of the posts and chains for the arena. Our grateful thanks also to Martin Petherick who made the bases for the posts. Hospitality drinks and nibbles were available in the BIGGA stand and it was nice to meet a lot of greenkeepers there. A golf simulator proved a great attraction and the competitions for the longest drive and nearest the pin raised over £70 for charity. The organisers told me that the longest drive was recorded by Peter Lawrence of East Devon at 323 yards - that's up there with Tiger Woods! The nearest the pin was Ian Chennery from Woodbury. Simon Jeffries golf pro from Okehampton gave advice and tips on swings etc.

Overall it was a great and hugely successful day for the Region and I would like to extend my very grateful thanks to all those who helped on the days of the show, especially my husband who did a great deal behind the scene - and a vacuum cleaner. It was great teamwork.


Westurf 2000 at Westpoint - Wednesday April 12th, 2000

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Unlike the famous monkeys who neither spoke, saw nor heard no evil, as Roland Taylor explains, using all your senses properly can be extremely beneficial...

In an age of high technology when computers play a major part in our lives it is easy to forget just how powerful our own human brain is. We can absorb data from a number of sources, analyse it, and make reasoned decisions in an instant. What has this got to do with golf course equipment you may ask? The answer is a great deal. By using our senses (sound, sight, feel, smell and taste) we can take on board information that our brains unscramble and come up with the best action, if any, that we need to take.

The grass-cutting season is now well under way and, for many, it means mowing from virtually dawn to dusk. In this situation it is easy to overlook a symptom on the mower that indicates something nasty is developing.

The engine fires first time, reels are spinning and drive is operational - no problems, let's go mowing. Hang on a minute, now is the time all the senses should be fully active and sending messages to the brain for analysis.
Senses
working overtime

SOUND
- as the song goes “listen to the rhythm of the beat”.
When one works with a piece of equipment every day one gets familiar with the noise it makes, so any changes should be taken as a warning signal. It is those subtle alterations in the noise that need to be listened out for.

The engine
A normal engine will have a steady rhythm regardless of whether it is ticking over or under full power. A change in this indicates that something is not quite right. It may be that the fuel mixture is incorrect and this could be due to a number of factors:
- Old petrol is being used. (Petroleum companies change the composition of fuel to suit the time of year to suit the season.)
- Dirty or polluted fuel is in the system
- The spark plugs are dirty or incorrectly set
- Clogged up air filters will change the air-to-fuel ratio and make an engine run richer and hotter.
- Cooling fins and radiator grilles may be blocked up with dried grass thus causing the engine to run hot.
- Low oil levels mean poor lubrication, so friction creates heat buildup.
Any or all of these faults will mean an increase in fuel consumption, more pollutant being emitted into the atmosphere and a reduction in the machine’s overall performance.

The machine
Two surfaces running at high speed with virtually no lubrication will make a different sound to when they are well oiled or greased. The changes in reel noise indicate they require resetting. A reel might be damaged or have come off cut. Alternatively, it could be set too hard - this will not only affect the cut, it also places an extra stress on the mower’s other components and excessive wear will take place.
Another noise to listen out for is rattling of guards. If securing clips or other fixings have become loose they will eventually break or come undone completely with the result that the guard eventually falls off. There is always the chance that it will finish up in the cutting system, where it could do considerable damage.

Chain drives are always hidden under covers. If they become slack they are likely to slap against the casing and this is a certain indication that some adjustment is needed.
Transmission whine is another sound to keep an ear out for. It may mean that a top-up of a lubricant is required, but if it still persists or increases in volume then something is wrong.

SIGHT
By being ever watchful, you can identify areas on the machine that require some attention.
Oil patches on areas where a machine has stood overnight are clues that need to be investigated. It may be coming from the engine, transmission box or drive system.
Keep an eye out for seepage around hydraulic couplings and hoses chaffing against metal.
Grease oozing from a bearing might mean a seal has gone.
Black deposits around the exhaust outlet area, are an indication that the engine is not running correctly.
Check for a build-up of dry grass and dirt anywhere on the machine, especially areas that are designed to
keep the unit running at the correct temperature. These include, cooling fins on the engine and hydraulic system, air filters on the carburettor and radiators grilles, if fitted.

Watch out for loose guards, wiring, clip nuts and bolts.

Observe the quality of cut from each mowing unit.

Make sure there are no slack belts or chains.

Clean dirt around oil fillers and fuel caps.

Watch for foreign bodies in the grass such as people, animals, stones, golf balls and tees.

**TOUCH**

Excessive vibration is a sure sign things are not right. On a rotary, a blade may have been badly damaged or come off - this will require immediate attention.

Any area that is not normally hot needs checking out.

With the engine switched off, spin the reels to find out if they need re adjusting.

Test belt and chain tensions.

**SMELL**

Burning rubber - indicates a belt is overheating.

Fuel - could be leaking from a carburettor or fuel pipe.

Bonfire - a build-up of dried grass has been or is about to ignite.

Oil - A gasket might be leaking or there is shortage of oil.

**TASTE**

As far as the machine is concerned there are no areas where this is likely to be used. If you have done the job properly you can sit back and enjoy your sandwiches or lunchtime meal which will very likely taste excellent.

All this seems like a lot to take in, but in reality one should not become paranoid - most is common sense and comes naturally. It is just a question of being observant, using your senses and responding to something that is not quite right, thus reducing the chances of hassle at a later date.
In irrigation, the programme scheduling including start times, active days etc uses date as one of the essential input factors. With a PC date running out of synchronisation with real dates this can cause some obvious operational problems.
There seem to be two things about the year 2000 that everybody hears about, the Millennium Dome and the Millennium Bug.

Both seem to bring out an opinion in most people, and whilst the Dome is of background interest, the Bug will potentially have a greater and more global impact.

We hear many stories about the failure of all kinds of systems and the forecasters of doom are having a great time predicting the chaos that will ensue when the clock rolls over from 31st December 1999 to 1st January 2000.

For us, the question that will arise is what will be the effect of entry into 2000 on the operation of equipment used for golf course management.

The whole scenario is encompassed by the term Year 2000 Compliant sometimes shortened to Y2K (no it doesn’t involve changing every Y in the dictionary to a K, or New Year’s Eve would become 1st Januark 2000!)

Year 2000 compliance is, however, not really to be seen as a joke, as it is important to greenkeepers. The reason for this is that any piece of equipment you use that has a microchip needs to be compliant. This is particularly relevant to the electronic technology used in irrigation control which probably represents the most sophisticated electronic equipment used in golf course management.

There are two types of irrigation systems that need Year 2000 compliance. The largest group is that of controllers utilising microchips with embedded software and a control panel inputting format. These range from small residential controllers which can operate up to, for example, twelve control valves through to the extensive wall mounted golf course decoder systems which may operate up to four hundred stations.

Some of the decoder controllers may now be fifteen years old and consideration of Year 2000 compliance was not a major issue in the mid 1980’s. Well it is now, and you should be checking with the supplier or contractor who installed or services the system as to whether the unit is affected and, if so, what can be done to overcome the matter. In many cases the corrective action will be an upgrade of the chip, however you will need to establish that this is possible and that the appropriate chip is available.

The second system type affected by the Year 2000 issue is that using PC based interfacing. More and more greenkeepers are using a PC as an aid to course management. In some cases the PC is being used for general administrative tasks including word processing, spreadsheet production, report generation etc.

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Some of the decoder controllers may now be fifteen years old and consideration of Year 2000 compliance was not a major issue in the mid 1980's.
benefits of such control are well
founded and make PC control a
very serious and viable option
when considering the specification
for a new system to water the
course.

With the increased use of PCs
comes the necessity to ensure that
all elements of their supply is
undertaken correctly and that con-
tinuity of technical service support
is provided. This support includes
the ability to fight off the infamous
Millennium Bug.

From a pure irrigation viewpoint
the key area of attention is in date
comprehension.

In the early days of computer
development information storage
space was both limited and expen-
sive. As a result it was decided that
a six digit date format would be
used, i.e. the 1st January 1999 is
shown as 01/01/99. This format
became the standard, and whilst we
are still in the 20th century it
serves the purpose perfectly well.

What has been created, however, is
a situation whereby a computer, or
any software embedded in a
microchip, has no understanding of
a change in century. The machine
will read any six digit date ending
in 00 to be in 1900, and not in
2000. This problem was most high-
demonstrated in the personal
banking sphere where computers
were voiding transactions made on
credit cards with expiry dates end-
ing in 00 because as far as the
computer was concerned the card
expired in 1900!

This is just one example of why
Year 2000 compliance is important
in computer systems. In addition,
there are a number of crucial tran-
sition dates after New Year’s Day
2000 which will cause date errors.
These include 28th February to
29th February and 29th February
to 1st March, which are significant
because the first year of the third
millennium is also a leap year.

Whilst it is almost certain that
you will not be running irrigation
on New Year’s Eve 1999 or indeed
for several months before or after-
wards it doesn’t mean that your
equipment can avoid being Year
2000 compliant.

In irrigation, the programme
scheduling including start times,
avtive days etc uses date as one of
the essential input factors. With a
PC date running out of synchroni-
sation with real dates this can cause
some obvious operational prob-
lems.

Year 2000 compliance applies to
both hardware and software. A PC
may be compliant, but some of the
software programmes it is using
may not. The opposite is also true,
and this hardware compatibility
can extend beyond the PC.

As has already been mentioned it
is not just the PC itself, but any
other peripherals or specialist hard-
ware components of the system
which may be affected. Decoder
interface units, field interface mod-
ules and radio communication
elements could all encounter prob-
lems if the manufacturer has not
had the foresight to build compli-
ance into them.

In essence you need to have an
In the UK today it is probable that as many as 75% of new irrigation systems use PC technology to allow the input, monitoring and adjustment of irrigation operations.
irrigation system that is fully compliant. Most that have been installed in recent times will be, but it is worth confirming this with the supplier or installer. Any that are not will need to be upgraded to meet the compliance criteria and the sooner this is done the better, as the pressure on manufacturers and installers will increase as the end of 1999 gets nearer.

The best action to take is to first establish exactly what equipment you have on the course. Get the details of the product type, model, serial numbers and installation dates and then contact the system installer or service company. Some companies such as Toro have worked to ensure that their products, such as Toro's SitePro, meet the demands of this once-in-a-thousand-years scenario. With its NSN Service it has an extensive PC irrigation support service in place, which operates at national, regional and global levels using dedicated staff, who will provide all the answers you require. Other major manufacturers have also been aware of Year 2000 compliance requirements and all products recently and currently sold, should be fully compliant.

Don’t forget, however, that any software that has been installed on the PC such as word processing, spreadsheet or database packages need to be evaluated as they may require individual fixes, “patches” or upgrades to bring them up to specification.

In summary if you have an electronic controller or a PC based system, gather the equipment information and contact the provider who will be able to confirm your particular status and provide any upgrade or replacement service you need. If the original supplier cannot help, there are several companies who can provide alternative and compatible equipment.

As with all irrigation purchasing decisions the reliability of the equipment, its suppliers, its installers and the long term support they provide are crucial if you are to get the best value for money. Their performance in dealing with Year 2000 compliance will be a measure of how good they really are.

Act now and get the process under way so you can be sure your millennium transition will be a smooth and trouble free one.

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BIGGA Golden Key Supporter Scotts has seen some remarkable changes over the last two years and what has emerged is an impressive new company ready to face the future.

There are very few companies in the fine turf industry whose name you would expect to be known by the public in general... but one of those is most certainly Scotts.

Go into any garden centre or DIY store and you will see the name of the world's largest horticultural company emblazoned on products designed to make your garden grow strong and healthy.

In our industry it is also a name which is becoming increasingly familiar thanks to a remarkable one-two, one which would have Prince Naseem nodding in approval.

Looking to strengthen their position in the industry just over two years ago Scotts purchased Miracle Professional, the number two company in the British market. Then, less than a year later, not content with that piece of handiwork, they went out and bought Levington Horticulture, the number one company in the market, thus creating a formidable new force in the industry. The deal was completed in December '97 and since then much work has been done to ensure best use is made of the best bits of each have been taken from each range to produce a better product.

Remarkably in the joining together of Miracle and Levington it meant a marriage of two of the big chemical heavyweights and rivals from recent history. A series of Dr Who-style metamorphoses started off with Miracle Professional as ICI and Levington's as Fisons. Incidentally, ICI and Fisons were both agrochemical/fertiliser companies while Scotts have always been a horticultural company.

The professional amenity side of the business has its headquarters in what was the Levington base in Ipswich which is ideally placed for the research station in the nearby village of Levington itself. The home and garden business has its headquarters in Godalming.

"When the three companies joined we discovered that we had 40 different fertilisers across the range, solely for the professional business," said Dave Steward, Product Manager for Turf and Amenity.

"When we analysed them we discovered that Levington had products which were virtually identical to Miracles and that both had products designed to take on the Scotts fertiliser range."

"What has been happening since is that the best bits of each have been taken from each range to produce a better product."

"One example was the Turf Tonic for which the Levington analysis was 7-0-0 and Miracle's was 8-0-0 so we took the Miracle analysis and used the Levington granule which was superior," explained Dave.

As a result the number of products in the fertiliser range is now in the 20s.

"At the end of the day you've got to give people the flexibility. Some people like to feed a little and often so you give them certain formulations while others prefer to feed once a year with slow release formulaions," explained Dr Bob Daniels, Technical Services Director.

Having mentioned the number of fertilisers Scotts acquired through the take-overs there was little product duplication elsewhere in the portfolio.

"Miracle's main strength was in the pesticide products and chemical range while Levington's were strong in the Greenmaster fertiliser range and liquid fertilisers with Scotts powerful in slow and controlled release fertilisers," said Dave.

The melding together of different corporate cultures also had to be achieved for the company to move forward.

"We had to re-invent ourselves as a company and are now all Scotts and while the important thing is always the brand we want Scotts to be seen as the company behind the brands," said Bob, who was previously a Levington man.

The task then was to get the message across to the greenkeepers.

"I do believe we are succeeding but the process is far from complete," said Dave.

"First we had to say 'This is your old Greenmaster packaging and this is what it is going to look like in the new Scotts packaging'. The new style incorporates a hand icon which displays whether it is fine, regular or course granules or slow or controlled release.

"We have used display boards at shows like BTME to push the message home while we also co-sponsor BIGGA's National Golf Championship with Charterhouse so that is another opportunity to meet with greenkeepers."

With the complicated, but very necessary, restructuring work edging towards completion Scotts were able to give a taste of what the "new"
Scotts approval for actives in turf. But the industry has to play its part too. “People can always go and get ‘black drum’ pesticides from someone else but if everyone does that we won’t do the research anymore. We are in a business and whatever we do must be profitable.”

Looking to the future the company is well aware of the threat to many of its highly regarded products from the European bureaucrats who are currently reviewing all active ingredient. “They look at the purity of the actual chemical then at the toxicity of it and then ensure that it can be used with minimal risk to human beings and the environment. You’ve also got to prove that the active ingredient works,” said Bob, who chairs the European Crop Protection Association’s Amenity Expert team which lobbies the forum directly in Brussels.

“There are over 700 active ingredient to go through the process and each on produces 55,000 pages of data. It is a huge process and it has to be repeated for each product which has the same active ingredient even if it only has 0.1% of it on a fertiliser granule. In the past you could do a lot of linking back to the active ingredient data but now all the studies on the actual formulation have to be done individually,” said Bob.

“The process has to be finished by 2003 so there is a lot to get on with. If we don’t get the products through they will just die. BIGGA has a role in lobbying the relevant people because a company like us can only go so far what really registers is when the end users themselves make a case,” said Bob.

Since rumours about the purge on the chemicals began circulating many companies have turned their attention to biological development but Scotts approach is to produce better chemistry which is acceptable to European standards while keeping a watching brief on the biological side of things. “We’ve looked at the biological products but our feeling is that if it’s got Scotts name on it it’s got to work. With many biological products you can get good results in high summer conditions but that’s not when the disease occurs,” said Bob.

That is a point which is reiterated by the methodology which goes into producing new product. “For any product to be truly viable for a business like Scotts it has to meet four criteria. 1. It’s got to be effective. 2. It’s got to be safe. 3. It’s got to be reliable and 4. It’s got to offer value for money. If it doesn’t meet all four of these criteria it is not a product that Scotts is prepared to launch,” he explained.
Welcome to the inaugural BIGGA workwear and casual clothing range. Late last year, BIGGA and Stylo joined forces to bring you this exciting range of clothing and footwear for 1999.

Included in the range is the first ever BIGGA approved golf shoe, the Duo - a technologically advanced shoe designed to provide the ultimate combination of on-course comfort and functionality. This shoe accommodates both softspikes or traditional spikes - both with the revolutionary quick-fit Q-Lok system.

All the clothing featured here is manufactured to the highest specifications in durable materials - offering working comfort as well as practicability. All items subtly feature the BIGGA logo.

While all the garments and footwear featured represent exceptional value for money - they have also been designed to be practical and stylish for general leisure as well as for work use.

**GENERAL WORK & LEISURE WEAR**

1. **Lister Knitshirt**
   A classical cotton interlock short sleeved shirt with a jacquard design on collar and cuffs.
   BKSH 961 NVY Navy £17.95
   BKSH 961 WHT White £17.95
   Sizes S, M, L, XL, XXL

2. **Thornproof Gloves**
   These offer a special covering that protects against thorns and brambles.
   BGT 101 GRN Green £2.25
   One size fits all

3. **Pimple Palm Gloves**
   These gloves are pimpled on the palm to provide extra grip.
   BGP 108 GRN Green £2.25
   One size fits all

4. **Sweatshirt**
   Plain, quality cotton sweatshirt with BIGGA logo.
   SWT 105 NVY Navy £13.49
   Sizes M, L, XL

5. **Basket Weave Slipover**
   A practical cotton and acrylic basket weave slipover.
   BSWS 550 BLK Black £22.95
   BSWS 550 NVY Navy £22.95
   BSWS 550 BTL Bottle £22.92
   Sizes M, L, XL

6. **Owen Knitshirt**
   This is a plain coloured polyester/cotton short sleeve shirt. It has a flat knit colour and features the BIGGA logo.
   BKSH 910 BTL Bottle £14.95
   BKSH 910 NVY Navy £14.95
   Sizes M, L, XL

7. **Trousers**
   Poly/cotton trousers with 2 side slant pockets and 2 rear pockets.
   TRS 104 NVY Navy £17.95 (reg leg)
   TRS 105 NVY Navy £17.95 (long leg)
   Sizes 32, 34, 36, 38, 40, 42

8. **Full Zip Fleece**
   This fleece top is made from Teflon material, which ensures that rain will run-off the garment, making it quick drying and very practical. It comes in navy with a contrasting collar.
   BFLC 500 NVY Navy £29.95
   Sizes M, L, XL
Duo Golf Shoe incorporating a technically designed hard-wearing rubber outersole which is suitable for both conventional and alternative spikes. Each pair of Duo comes with conventional spikes fitted and a separate pack of alternative spikes. The shoe utilizes an Iso-Thermal waterproof membrane system, developed especially for its waterproof and breathing qualities.

MGG 486 BBU Men's Black/Burgundy £41.95
MGG 487 WNY Men's White/Navy £41.95
LG 833 WSG Women's White/Beige £41.95
LG 834 WBU Women's White Burgundy £41.95

Men's sizes 6-11 including half sizes and 12
Women's sizes 3-8 including half sizes

Safemasta Steel Toe Capped Wellington Boot
Durable all-purpose Wellington with thick moulded sole and heel grip for easy removal.

SFT 01 BK Black £18.95
Sizes 5-11 plus half sizes 6 1/2 and 9 1/2

Fairfield III Stylo has produced its own Iso-thermal system sweaters to protect you from the worst elements. The membrane system is ultra thin yet provides full waterproof protection and is completely breathable. The Fairfield III is a transfer cable and argyle patterned sweater which is made from a wool/acrylic twist yarn.

BSWT 375 CRM Cream £49.95
BSWT 375 NVY Navy £49.95
Sizes X, M, L, XL, XXL

Waterproof Trousers Practical, extra strength, multi-use trousers.

WPT 102 GRN Green £10.95
Sizes M (34), L (36), XL (38)

To purchase merchandise from the 1999 BIGGA collection, simply indicate which products you require in what quantities and sizes, using the order form printed here. (You may photocopy this form to avoid cutting your Greenkeeper International)

All prices shown are inclusive of VAT. Orders under £200.00 will incur an additional £4.00 postage and packing supplement. After completing your order details, next complete your name and address details, and return this form with your VISA details or cheque (made payable to BIGGA) for the full amount (inc postage and packing)
Here's your chance to win £50!

Simply look through all the products and services in our guide and name the companies which the following telephone numbers refer to:

a. 01594 529191
b. 01252 844847
c. 0191 3842559

Write down your three answers on a postcard and send your entries to:

Know Your Numbers, Greenkeeper International, BIGGA HOUSE, Aldwark, Alne, York Y061 1UF

Entries to reach us no later than Thursday, June 10, 1999. The first correct entry drawn will receive a cheque for £50!

The judges decision is final. No correspondence will be entered into. This competition is not open to BIGGA staff or non-members.

Last month, Ian Baudains of Hereford GC, certainly knew his numbers when he answered 'Know Your Numbers'? A full range of expertly operated turfcare services also available. We supply the full package nationwide.

A full range of expertly operated turfcare services also available. We supply the full package nationwide.

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For further information on display advertising contact Cheryl Broomhead on 01347 833800.
Just the job.

To place an advertisement in the Recruitment Section, call Cheryl or Diane now on 01347 833800.

Classified Information

Do you have a machine that is surplus to your requirements? Or are you wanting to buy that specific piece of equipment, but don’t quite know where to find it? Then why not advertise your Sales and/or Wants in Greenkeeper International’s Classified section?

For as little as £57, your boxed advert will be seen by over 10,000 readers of this award winning publication. Simply complete the order form on the right (in block capitals please), not forgetting to include your name, address and telephone or fax number.

Upon receipt, your order will be acknowledged by telephone or fax, along with details of the cost and publication date of the next edition. Remember, send no money now, an invoice will be raised after publication.

Name: ..................................................

Club/Company: ....................................

Address: ...............................................

Tel: .......................................................

Fax: ...................................................

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The deadline for inclusion in the July Classified section is Monday, June 14, 1999.

Send your completed order form to: Cheryl Broomhead, Greenkeeper International, BIGGA HOUSE, Aldwark, Alne, York Y061 1UF, or alternatively fax the form to us on 01347 833802.
Recruitment

**AVONCROP AMENITY PRODUCTS**

wish to appoint a

**Regional Technical Sales Manager/Sales Representative**

in the Wiltshire, Oxfordshire, East Glos and Warwickshire area, to advise, promote and sell a wide range of Turf Management products to Golf Clubs, Sports clubs and Local Authorities etc.

Technical backup is important and therefore it is beneficial for applicants to have a background in the skills of Turf Management, although due consideration will be given to those applicants with a proven sales record in other areas of horticulture/agriculture.

Salary commensurate to experience.

Company car, pension scheme etc.

Please apply in writing enclosing your full C.V. to:

Mr C J Briggs, Business Development and Marketing Manager, AVONCROP AMENITY PRODUCTS, Northfield, Station Road, Sandford, Winscombe, N Somerset BS25 5NX

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**Cannington College**

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**We are looking for the BEST!**

**Section Manager/Lecturer in Greenkeeping/Golf Course Management**

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You will manage the team and teach on a range of courses, from NVQ to HND level, covering greenkeeping and golf course management.

You must have substantial relevant experience of the industry and an appropriate qualification. Teaching experience, together with D32 and D33 would be desirable.

There may also be the opportunity to manage the Colleges commercial golf enterprises.

Contact the Personnel Department on 01278 655060 (20 hour answerphone) at Cannington College, Cannington, Bridgwater, Somerset TA5 2LS.

Fax: 01278 655055.

Closing date: 14th June 1999.

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**GOLFCCLUB HOF TRAGES, FRANKFURT requires**

**HEAD GREENKEEPER**

Golfclub HofTrages is an 18 hole, Par 71 Championship Golf Course of 6560 yards set in 200 acres of historic parkland.

The successful candidate will be suitably qualified to NVQ Level 3 or equivalent, PA1, PA2 and PA6 preferred and have a minimum of 5 years experience on a course with high standards.

The position requires a hands on working Head Greenkeeper and the successful candidate will lead by example, be hardworking and self motivated with a keen and positive attitude towards their work, show good staff management and supervisory skills leading a team of six whilst working within agreed budgets.

Excellent German language skills are essential as is management and practical knowledge of modern machinery and irrigation systems, and a sound knowledge of Health & Safety.

An attractive salary package for the right person.

Please apply in writing to Jane Barton, The Tytherington Club, Dorchester Way, Tytherington, Macclesfield, England SK10 2JP.
Recruitment

IPSWICH GOLF CLUB

Invite applications for the post of COURSE MANAGER

Ipswich Golf Club, established 1895, consists of 27 holes and practice areas set in 230 acres. The successful candidate will have had experience to Deputy Head Greenkeeper, preferably a Master Greenkeeper. Salary and Pension commensurate with position. Please apply in writing with a full CV to:-

The Secretary Manager, Ipswich Golf Club, Bucklesham Road, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP3 8UQ.

Closing Date: Friday 25 June 1999

WINDEMERE GOLF CLUB

Applications are invited for the position of 1ST ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

Applicants with appropriate qualifications and experience for the above position should forward a written application together with a curriculum vitae including references to:

The Secretary, Windermere Golf Club, Cleabarrow, Windermere, Cumbria LA23 3NB

Closing date for applications: June 21, 1999

HAMPSTEAD GOLF CLUB

Invite applications for the post of ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

To join the staff maintaining their pleasant 9-hole private golf course. Experience and qualification to NVQ level 2 would be an advantage but training to this level or further training may be provided. Salary negotiable, depending on experience. Please apply in writing, including full CV to:

The Course Manager, Hampstead Golf Club, Winnington Road, London N2 OTU

ASHFORD MANOR GOLF CLUB

requires a DEPUTY HEAD GREENKEEPER

Well experienced and qualified to NVQ/City & Guilds Level 3 including spraying. A practical knowledge of the maintenance of machinery and irrigation systems will be an advantage together with the ability to manage and motivate staff in the absence of the Head Greenkeeper. No accommodation available. Please apply in writing with C.V. to:

The Secretary/Manager, Ashford Manor Golf Club, Fordbridge Road, Ashford, Middlesex, TW15 3RT

Closing date for applications: 18 June 1999

BISHOPSWOOD GOLF CLUB

EST 1976, 9 HOLE, PAR 72

QUALIFIED GREENKEEPER

Enthusiastic and self motivated greenkeeper required for quality parkland course. The applicant must have a sound practical approach to all aspects of modern greenkeeping and machinery. Salary negotiable depending on experience. No accommodation.

APPLICATIONS IN WRITING WITH A FULL C.V. TO: The Manager, Bishopswood Golf Course Bishopswood Lane, Tadley, Hants RG26 4AT

DULWICH & SYDENHAM HILL GOLF CLUB LTD

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ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

Qualifications required are Greenkeeping Phase I and II. Experience in the use of modern machinery and a full driving licence are also required and some knowledge of maintenance of automatic irrigation systems would be useful. No accommodation is available. Applications in writing with a CV to:

The Secretary, Dulwich & Sydenham Golf Club Ltd, Grange Lane, College Road, Dulwich SE21 7LH

KINGS HILL GOLF CLUB

Has vacancies for ASSISTANT GREENKEEPERS

To join our expanding team at this unique development. A keen interest in golf and a desire to develop a greenkeeping career are essential attributes. Please apply in writing enclosing a full CV to:

Duncan Kelso, Course Manager, Kings Hill Golf Club, Discovery Drive, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent ME19 9AF
When turf disease strikes you have to get your foot down. And there's no faster way to react than with double action Vitesse.

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Senior Service

One of the joys of working as a greenkeeper is the fascination one gets from observing people. Golf clubs in particular seem to attract a strange group of individuals that are not to be found in other walks of life.

Take their clothes for instance. If you saw someone dressed in luminous green, tightly fitting trousers with a lurid yellow jumper and perhaps a totally unco-ordinated bright red shirt going to the local shops, you would find it difficult not to conclude that they were a sad example of care in the community. Yet at a golf club this sort of behaviour is considered completely normal.

Look at the seniors at a golf club. Within this seemingly small and innocuous little section of the golfing species lies a wealth of character and eccentricities not to be found in any other walk of life.

For starters, they change their shoes in the car park and shuffle off to the 1st tee without ever entering the pro shop.

There is no need to purchase a new glove as the emaciated relic that they wear has got years left in it, and besides, Henry Cotton endorsed it.

You may have concluded that all senior golfers are essentially the same but let me assure you, within this group there are many sub species all with differing habitats, markings and behaviour.

For example, many years ago I had the pleasure of working at one of those ancient and exclusive clubs to be found not far from the metropolis. Being a keen golfer, the club let me join the artisan section. This introduced me to a very rare but not quite extinct species of senior that still manage to survive to this day in the few remaining artisan outposts and occasionally the odd isolated municipal operation. These people were, to say the least, rough around the edges. Their language was incredibly crude; their clothes were used primarily for the rough trades with which they scraped a living at. Their golf was totally lacking in any subtleties, such as lining up or choosing the right club.

But despite this they were all an utter delight to play golf with. Indulging in pre golf whiskies at 10am, recalling an endless stream of filthy stories and breaking wind on a regular basis seemed to be the standard behaviour of these hilarious characters.

One could not imagine this sort of behaviour among another division of the senior section that is to be found at the other end of the social spectrum. This is the totally fascinating upper class senior, the ex-military types or the wealthy gentry, barristers and lawyers. At one time, this particular group of senior used to completely dominate golf club life throughout the length and breadth of the country. They are now sadly depleted in numbers but do however still manage to keep a stronghold at some of the better links and heathland tracks around the country.

They like the artisans can be identified by their plumage, which in this case consists of plus fours and a tweed jacket designed by the same person that invented the straight jacket. This particular article of clothing insures that any sort of body turn is impossible without an immediate collapse of the left arm and a type of twitching movement on the follow through. This ensures the ball is never allowed to climb more than about six foot off the ground, perfect for the links golf in which they are so adept.

There are several other behaviour patterns that enables the educated greenkeeper to identify this type of senior golfer. One is their strange perception of chronology whereby they see any one of their own sorts as being young, right up to the age of about 65. Before that they are referred to as "Young Parsons" or "Young Critchlow".

In fact I believe at places such as Muirfield or Little Aston where these marvellous gentlemen still dominate, you only come out of the junior section at about the age of 50. After an apprenticeship of 40 or so years they are drafted into one of the foursomes groups that meet on a regular basis.

These congregate in the clubhouse at about 7am complete with navy blazers old school ties etc. They then change into their straitjackets and tigers old school ties etc. They then change into their straitjackets and head for the 1st tee where they play foursomes golf at breakneck speed. They play it to an incredibly high standard given their age. They are round the course in two and half hours exactly, change back into their blazers and retire for lunch in the clubhouse. This will usually consist of roast mutton; potatoes that look like they have been cooked by laser beam and cabbage that cook put on to boil the evening before. This food reminds them of their days at Eton or Harrow or one of those other educational establishments that prided itself in preparing some of the most ghastly food known to man. This assault on the digestive system is then all washed down with a few pink gins.
and a bottle of claret. They then change back into their tweeds and head back out to the 1st tee for the afternoon round, which takes precisely two hours 35 minutes. The extra five minutes being allowed for relieving themselves of the lunchtime beverages. Actually, this type of senior can during their lifetime of golf be regarded as the best possible members. Their behaviour will always be impeccable, they play golf at such a pace that they hold no one up and they are regularly to be found investing money in the clubhouse services.

Then to cap it all, when they reach the age when they are in danger of slowing their partners down to above the permitted two and a half hours 45 minutes being allowed for reliefing themselves of the lunchtime beverages. Actually, this type of senior can during their lifetime of golf be regarded as the best possible members. Their behaviour will always be impeccable, they play golf at such a pace that they hold no one up and they are regularly to be found investing money in the clubhouse services. Then to cap it all, when they reach the age when they are in danger of slowing their partners down to above the permitted two and a half hours 45 minutes being allowed for reliefing themselves of the lunchtime beverages.

This compulsive frugality extends to every aspect of their golf. Their clubs are a mismatch of 1960's rejects and a sweet spot made up of a small clump of old garden string so as to prevent them from getting stuck in the furthest part of the woods. They wear has got years left in it, and besides, Henry Cotton endorsed it. I used to work at a club in the south of Devon where these seniors were rife. The club pro told me of how they once had a club Captain who fell right into this category of golfer. During the year it was customary for there to be a series of captain/pro matches. In the first one in January the pro told me how the Captain arrived at the club and changed into his familiar jumper and trousers that looked like they were purchased in a car boot sale some time in the 1950's. At the end of the round they were replaced back in the locker. This procedure was then repeated throughout the year without the clothes once being taken home to be washed. By November he was a walking health hazard but think of the money he saved in washing powder.

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The GTC held its overdue meeting on 15 April. The main topic for discussion was the Lantra Report which had been commissioned by the R&A and the EGU into the workings and running of the GTC. This all started by the withdrawal of funding by the EGU as from April 1999. At a subsequent meeting with the R&A it was agreed that the EGU would reconsider its position following an independent report being carried out.

The meeting itself was constructive with all parties trying to reach agreement for the good of all greenkeeper training. However, it was decided to rewrite the Constitution and at the same time introduce a Technical Committee, as advised by Lantra. The Technical Committee functions are to assist the Education Director of the GTC and to propose to the Management Committee of activities of the GTC in line with its objectives and to identify the priorities for greenkeeper training.

The make up of the Committee will be as follows:

- Greenkeeper Training Committee
- Internal Verifier
- Representative from the British & International Golf Greenkeepers Association
- Representative from the Golf Course Superintendents Association of Ireland
- Representative from the Sports Turf Research Institute
- One Educationalist, eg College Tutor

It was agreed that the new revised draft of the Constitution would be circulated to all member bodies for discussion within their organisations prior to the next GTC meeting which was due to be held on 27 May.

The BIGGA Board was called to a meeting on 13 May, when it was agreed to recommend alterations to the draft constitution which we considered to be in keeping with our position as the main body and representing the end user of greenkeeper training.

The BIGGA proposals will be put before the GTC Committee at their next meeting, along with any others received. Hopefully then the GTC can get on with the job it was first set up to do, that of raising the standards of greenkeeper training.

It was unanimously agreed that David Golding and his staff have worked hard and moved greenkeeper training to a much higher level than ever before. The Board felt genuinely concerned that they have had to suffer all this uncertainty when it could and should have been handled better.

On the 20 April I spent the day at Westurf at its new venue at Westpoint, Exeter. With all the wet weather it proved a wise decision to move the exhibition indoors. Had it remained at Long Ashton, Westurf may well have been cancelled. The attendance was good and most people seemed pleased. Marion and I had a nice time meeting many old friends, traders and greenkeepers alike. It was also a good PR exercise that the South West and South Wales members could meet with Neil, Ken, Tracey and Cheryl from headquarters staff. I would like to thank Paula and the Regional Board for inviting us along and I hope it was a successful day for the Region and its trade supporters to My next engagement should have been the Cumbria Cup at Penrith Golf Club, but it was unfortunately cancelled at the last minute due to heavy rain during the night before. The rain was so bad that many of the roads in the area were subjected to flooding and some even closed. It was no surprise that the course also had to be closed. I had already travelled to Aldwark on the Tuesday and was going to continue my journey first thing Wednesday morning, when we received the news of its cancellation. However, all was not lost. I was able to spend time with our staff in preparation for the Board meeting the following day.

I have just been given the sad news of the death of Stephen Noye. Stephen was head man at Pardis Heath Golf Club, Ipswich. He was well respected by all his peers and my sympathy and thoughts are with his family and friends at this sad time.
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