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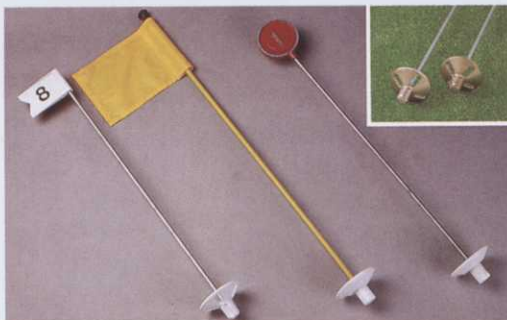
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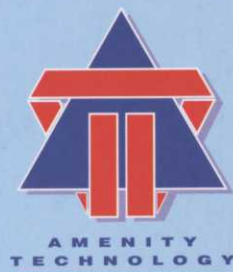
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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Greenkeeper

INTERNATIONAL

The official monthly magazine of the British & International Golf Greenkeepers Association

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June 1999

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Reader Reply Card

Use our post-paid reader reply card to obtain further information on the products and services advertised in this issue. Just state the company's Ad Ref numbers, post the card to us, and we'll arrange for further information to be sent direct to you.

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Greenkeeper Education and Development Fund

The Fund provides the key to the future for greenkeeper, golf club and game. Individuals and companies can join the Golden Key Circle and Silver Key Circle. For details, please contact BIGGA on 01347 833800



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Avoncrop Amenity Products, Ernest Doe & Sons, Lambert/Fenchurch UK Group Ltd, Sisis Equipment Ltd, Weed Free



Call Jenny now, on 01347 833800 to reserve your stand at BTME2000



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Do I hear...? Sshhhh!

How would Marcel Marceau fair 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

Greenkeeper

INTERNATIONAL



Y2K SPECIAL

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MILLENNIUM BUG SPECIAL

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Graeme Francis looks at ways of avoiding the Millennium Bug infiltrating your irrigation system

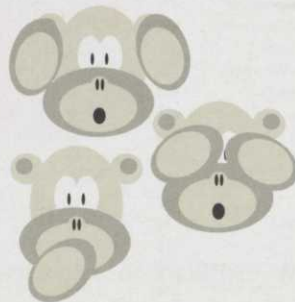


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BIGGA Golden Key Supporter, Scotts, has been particularly busy in the last couple of years. Not only purchasing other companies but coming up with exciting new products



21 Sleeping Beauty



43 Senses Working Overtime



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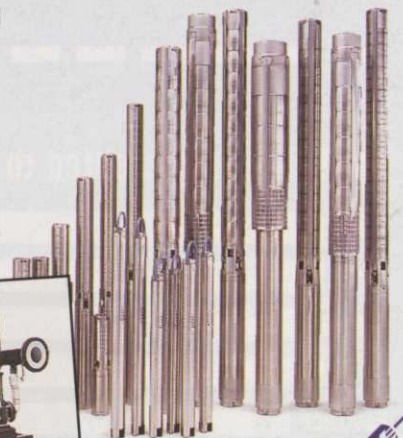


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Sportsturf Conference for Millennium

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.

Stephen Noye

It is with great sadness that I report the death of Stephen Noye, Head Greenkeeper of Purdis Heath Golf Club, at Ipswich. He will be greatly missed by his family, friends, members of BIGGA and the members of Purdis Heath.

Ian Willett
East Anglia Section Secretary

An eventful life

News of the death of one of the greenkeeping's elder statesmen has reached BIGGA HOUSE.

Pat Kirkpatrick, Head Greenkeeper at Dulwich and Sydenham Hill GC, for almost 30 years, and father of John Kirkpatrick who succeeded him for a further 20 years, was 94.

In an eventful life he was a professional golfer and worked in the professional shop beside another assistant by the name of Henry Cotton.

In 1926 he became Professional/Greenkeeper at Lake Garda in Italy and played in the first Italian Open in 1926 finishing third.

In 1939 he moved to Pallanza where he took over from JH Taylor who had laid out the course. From there he moved to Lugano where among others he gave lessons to the Aga Khan and Baron von Thyssen, who warned him of the forthcoming Second World War and advised him to return home.

At Dulwich he also helped serve behind the bar and was universally popular, and he even after his retirement in 1975, he continued to work part time.

A workaholic, the lady of a house which backed onto a green asked Pat that as it was 6.30am could he not leave the green in front of her house until last.

"Madam, this is the last," he said.

Derek Hargreaves



It is with great sadness that Sisis report the death of their retired Chairman, Derek Hargreaves, at the age of 86.

Derek Hargreaves was the son of the founder of Sisis and father of Roger and William, the current Joint Managing Directors. He received the Institute of Groundsmanship Lifetime Achievement Award in 1998.

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.

Eamonn Wall & Co has a team of ten, seven in Scotland and three in England.

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."

Pictured are Steve Johnstone, John Salter, Andrew Morrison, Jonathan Smith, John Quinn, Irene Jones and Stuart MacDonald.

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. A special guest at the meeting was golf legend Arnold Palmer, who participated in the presentation.

Ernest Doe & Sons Sales Manager Andy Turbin accepted the award from Palmer (centre left). Also pictured (left to right) are Textron Golf, Turf Care and Specialty Products Group CEO Carl Burtner; Textron Turf Care And Specialty Products Marketing Director Peter Bell and Sales Manager Andrew Sunaway.

From Arnie to Ernie



St Andrews contract won by E-Z-GO



Ian Forbes shakes hands with Harold Pinto, with Eddie Adams and Andrew Sunaway looking on

Textron 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 McInroy, Managing Director of Scottish Grass Machinery, distributors of the Textron 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 Textron turf car products."

The eight golf cars will be available to hire on the New and Strathtyrum 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 seats 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, Textron 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.

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 Elm-



wood 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 represen-

tatives 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.

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 TQP.

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.



Contact us

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

Post: BIGGA HOUSE,
Aldwark, Alne, York,
YO61 1UF

Tel: 01347 833800

Fax: 01347 833801

E-mail: reception@bigga.co.uk

Internet: www.bigga.org.uk

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 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.

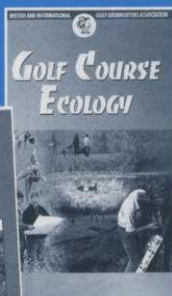
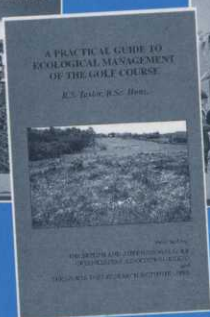
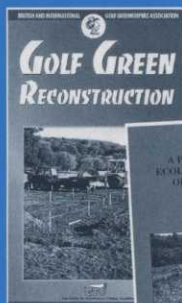
The Roots range of products, imported from the United States, have four formulations. Roots 2 concentrate is a bio stimulant with humic acid kelp seaweed and complex carbohydrates which encourages better root development increasing the root to shoot ratio, improving the plant's ability to cope with stress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

Donnington Valley Golf Club: 1998 Project



Oxfordshire Golf Club: 1991 Project



London Golf Club: New Lake Liner



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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

Millennium status for Doggy bins



Glasdon Retriever Dog Waste Bins have been granted Millennium Product status by the Design Council.

The bins are purpose-designed dog foul containers with a secure metal chute ensuring hygienic operation, a pivot action for fast and effective emptying and a completely removable door.

For further information Tel: 01253 600400

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 222750.

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.

Synchronesh 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 han-

dling 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 5/7 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 65 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 bogey hole cup with anti mud features, while a new and improved hole club is available 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.



Another example of
perfect spacing

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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 green, 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,



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 the green which is starting to shine, or conversely one which looks too wet - but all set at the same control time.

Look also 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. "Over-watering is the cardinal sin of greenkeeping" is a remark made, believe it or not, by revered American Al Radko, late National Director of the USGA Green Section.

There are of course other aspects of irrigation such as syringing to cool greens in day time in summer heat, and watering in dressings. To do this effi-

ciently, 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 snags 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 where budgets are more straitened.

It is all linked to this mistaken chase after colour. If fairways do go 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 siting 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 'mains 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 sodic 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 green-keeping is simple common-sense and

If fairways do go brown in a long summer drought, does it really matter, when a few days rain will soon turn them green again?

those who strive to make mysteries where none exist, do neither the game nor themselves a service.

Defenders of mystiques try to explain that it is all the extra traffic that makes it necessary to apply magic mixtures or apply everything to the level of several decimal points.

They do not fool well trained greenkeepers, brought up on the need to keep courses of the poor side; use water sensibly; aerate like mad (never mind the golfers, they will forgive you when the courses are open when others are shut in winter) and generally follow tried and tested methods proven by a century of research and practice.

Much is talked of thatch and black layer! Water less and make sure it goes deep by aeration and both will disappear - especially if you cut out phosphatic fertilisers!

But that's another story...



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 23% 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 legiti-

mate 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)

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Check out July's edition for May's new members!

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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

Ad Ref 299

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

Continuing PROFESSIONAL development

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:

- You did not understand the question; or
- 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 N/SVQ 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.

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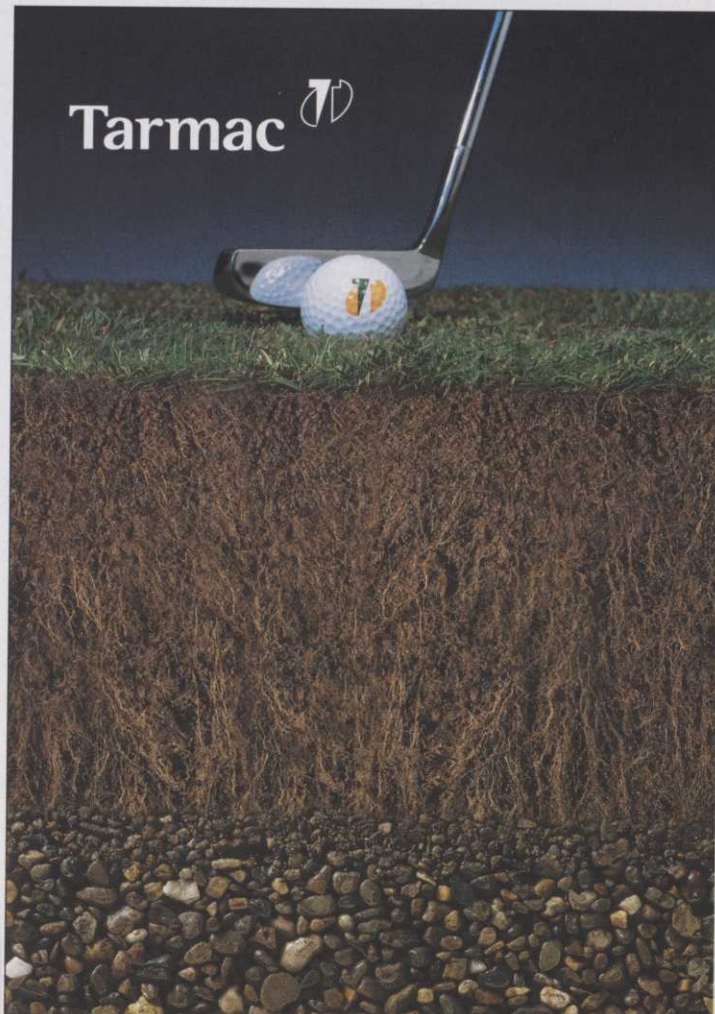
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Ad Ref 576



**What has BIGGA
got to shout about?**

Find out in next month's magazine

Scott MacCallum ventured to the outer limits of East Anglia and found a golf club being woken from its slumbers...

Sleeping Beauty



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.

Sleeping Beauty



Above: The 10th hole with Sizewell Power Station in the background

Below: The Thorpeness team with pro, Frank Hill third left, and Ian Willett, third right

Far right: The 18th hole with the unique House in the Clouds



"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.

On the advice of David Stansfield they are aiming for 50-50 Poa/Bent greens as David feels it would suit the course and the amount of play it gets.

"It's an acceptable target but I know I can get better than that. I can get it down to 60-40 possibly 70-30

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 Competiton, 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."

One job that he always does himself is the application of fertiliser and the spraying.

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

Sleeping Beauty

Equipment Inventory

Ransomes 160D Triple
John Deere 2653 Triple
Toro 3000D
Greensmaster
Two Ransomes 20 inch Super Certes
Ransomes 728D Rotary Front Deck
John Deere 26532 Tees and Banks Mower
Tri-King
Cushman Truck
Cushman Topdresser
Ryan GA30 Aerator
Sisis 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

sorry'. 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 holers 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-5, 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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TGK1

Bug eyed?

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 world wide impact is that almost all organisations and individuals use or are dependent on micro processors (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 ie 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 ie. 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



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 have an automated irrigation system, 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. Some estimates show that between 30 and 40 billion chips have been sold during the last few years with 7 billion chips sold in 1998.

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



Y2K SPECIAL

Bug eyed?



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.solace.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

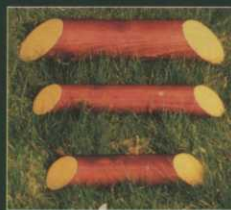
Information on Computer Software compliance can be obtained from the manufacture/supplier. Microsoft has massive site on the Internet at www.microsoft.com/year2000. All TRIMS for Windows and TRIMS for DOS Systems (including Tree Inventory) which are at Version level 3.1W or 3.3 are compliant. All TRIMS 97 Systems are compliant as

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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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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."

Ad Ref 583

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



Charterhouse: Greenkeeping 2010...

When we look to the future we often find our thinking is restrained by the past which prevents us from imagining 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. Pork pies 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 proficient we could end up with all implements being electrically powered, 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 Jenkins, 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 throughout the 1990s. Up to 30% 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 greenkeeper."



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 Kubota's operations are regulated by ISO 9002 - an international quality control accreditation under which systems and procedures are con-

stantly checked and monitored to maintain a consistently high standard.

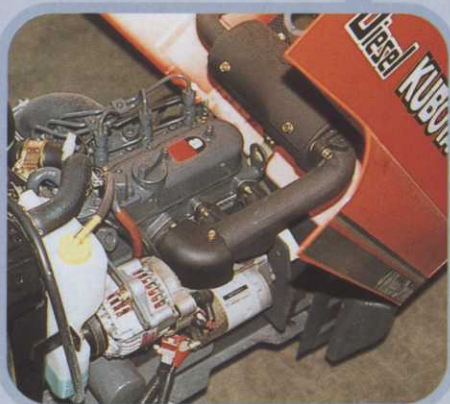
The most recent evidence of Kubota's total commitment to its customers is a £300,000 upgrading of its Thame, Oxfordshire headquarters, with the emphasis on extending and enhancing the parts storage and distribution operation.

To complement these steps, Kubota UK technicians and the company's appointed dealer staff throughout the UK and Ireland receive regular training from factory personnel so they remain right up to date with the latest technologies and developments.

Feedback from end-users in the golf course industry has always been a top priority for Kubota. To this end, the recently launched Kubota Owner's Club is now providing a closer link with customers via the club's quarterly magazine and national and local events supported by Kubota. Membership is automatically given to all new Kubota owners.

It is impossible to list all of Kubota's efforts and achievements aimed at meeting the needs of the modern greenkeeper. So here are just six to consider:

- The introduction of the first true four-wheel drive compact tractor.
- The introduction of the first four-wheel drive front rotary mower.
- The introduction of hydrostatic transmission systems on compact tractors and diesel ride-on mowers.
- The introduction of power steering as standard on 19hp - 45hp tractors and ride-on mowers.
- The introduction of Bi-Speed Turn, a system which automatically speeds up the tractor's front wheels when the turning angle exceeds 35 degrees, resulting in faster, tighter turns with less scuffing.
- The continuing introduction of approved matching implements to extend the year-round working range and versatility of Kubota compact tractors.



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SISIS

SISIS has 13 salesmen and four demonstrators in daily contact with our customers, giving unrivalled opportunities to discuss problems, needs and current trends. This valuable information is reported back to Head Office at Macclesfield and used to formulate design and development policy for future projects.

SISIS 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 early 1930s, it was watching greenkeepers laboriously forking and hand raking 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 SISIS had 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.



SISIS also enlists the help of greenkeepers to test new machinery. This ensures that controls are conveniently placed, tines are easily fitted, machines are well balanced and easy to handle. Pre production prototypes are often to be found on the SISIS 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 SISIS 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 groomer; Rotorakes with eight interchangeable reels for powered scarification, shallow spiking and brushing; powered aerators

which will also operate brush, rake and spiker slitter. On smaller courses with limited budgets, deep aerators, hollow corers and top dressers only used once a year are hired. SISIS has risen to this challenge with SISIS Hire operating from three regional depots and now, with the acquisition of Huxley's Grass Machinery business, are able to offer an even larger range of equipment; including the Technicore vertical action corer; the Soil Reliever for really deep treatment; top dressers; seeders and just about anything else a greenkeeper could need.

To sum up, SISIS 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 of service dealers.

Above all SISIS acknowledges that today's greenkeepers are to be listened to. And by listening SISIS 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, Iseki and E-Z-GO, found 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 acts 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 its measured ease of maintenance, and we're sure that's a new 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 now have a 60% increase in hydraulic oil replacement life and in some the first five hour oil 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 under the spotlight and this year Textron have launched Parts Xpress - an overnight parts delivery service which guarantees delivery of Textron genuine parts to the Textron dealer by 7 am the next day.

Marketing Director, Peter Bell, explained, "We realise that when our customers need parts they generally need them yesterday rather than the day after tomorrow." The company has made a massive investment in a new computerised parts warehouse at Ipswich which now allows us to offer a parts service which we believe is second to none."

"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 this century.

For the simple but significant fact that Carnoustie 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 the American pacesetter.

The Toro Company, from Minneapolis, in Minnesota, sees itself today as a provider of 'total solutions for outdoor landscapes' - and looks on its customers as 'caretakers of the environment'.

And so it is when it comes to meeting the needs of the modern greenkeeper. Commercial Products is the division responsible for all Toro professional turf machinery; although a key part of its market-leader strategy is that Toro also has irrigation systems too. Indeed, it's the only provider of both. But on the machinery side, providing today's Course Managers and greenkeepers with the products and back-up support they need to meet the heavy demands placed on them, is a continuous process that begins with listening to their needs and experiences and ends by

providing their staff with operator and service training. Along the way comes the development of innovative state-of-the-art products and the maintenance of a highly-professional national distribution and dealer network for complementary standards of sales and after-sales support.

The specifics of this scenario see The Toro Company itself, with its 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 for us to listen to what our UK customers have to say about the products and key turfcare 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 prod-

uct meets similar quality standards. Classic examples include the Recycler mowing deck and the HydroJect water-injection aerator. While the latest innovatory coup is Toro's remarkable Reelmaster 3100-D Sidewinder - 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 parts service.

New computer systems are embraced continually, such as the introduction later this season of the new Toro Recommended Parts Programme (TRPP). And of course Toro is at the root of one of the greenkeeping 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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Annual Match v Secretaries' Association

This year's annual match against the Secretaries' Association took place at Lanark Golf Course at the beginning of April. After last year's defeat at Glasgow Gailes we were looking for revenge.

The secretaries had certainly picked a very challenging course in Lanark GC one of the oldest golf courses established in 1851.

This year's BIGGA team had a mixture of youth and experience thus hopefully providing a winning blend and indeed this proved the case with us winning by 6 matches to 4.

Notable wins were by Duncan Gray & Andy O'Hara winning 7&5, Archie Dunn & Stephen Dunn by 5&4. Barry Gray & Colin McFarlane also recorded a fine victory by 7&5 wins for Alasdair McLaren & Chalmers Stillie, Colin Noble & Steve Sullivan and halved matches by Ian Bell & Sandy Bulloch plus Peter Boyd & Derek Scott completed our victory.

Our thanks go to the Captain and Committee of Lanark GC for the courtesy on the day. Unfortunately Course Manager, Jim Lyon, who was defeated along with his playing partner Stuart Greenwood could not put his local knowledge to good use but is to be congratulated along with his staff for providing an excellent course so early in the season.

After this victory we eagerly await next year's return match.

Peter J Boyd
Regional Administrator.

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 at Comrie Golf Club when in fact he is at St. Fillans GC and lives in Comrie.

Sorry Alistair! Never mind you got mentioned twice in the magazine. I hope it is right this time as Alistair's wife, Helen, is a lawyer.

Also in a previous issue, I reported the death of Jock Armstrong a former committee member of the Section. Along with Past Section Chairman Bobby Fleming and Elliott Small, I attended his funeral at Falkirk Crematorium when tributes were paid to a great friend of numerous greenkeepers, young and not so young.

The first golf tournament of the season was held in brilliant sunshine at Lundin Golf Club, in April, when 62 members and guests enjoyed playing over a course presented in excellent condition by Head Greenkeeper, Willie Swan, and his staff. Our sincere thanks go to everyone at Lundin GC for the courtesy and hospitality which was extended to us on the day, especially Secretary, Mr Thomson, and Club Steward, John Rae, for making sure everyone was well fed and "watered" throughout the day. Also the patrons of the Scottish Region for all their continued support.

Prize winners of the day are as follows:- Best Scratch K. Stirling, Kingsbarns, 73; Best Nett. S. McMillan, Dunnikier, 70 1st Class 1. H/Cap C. Pollock, St Andrews, 73. 1st Class 2. H/cap A. Dunn, Auchterarder, 74. 2nd Class 1. H/cap D. Scott, Scoonie, 72. 2nd Class 2. H/cap A. Torrance, Green Hotel, 79. 3rd Class 1st H/cap I. Donaldson, St. Andrews, 77. 3rd Class 2. H/cap A. Arnott, Dunnikier, 78;

Stewarts Quaich C. Pollock/C. Mitchell, St Andrews, 148. Patrons J. Darling, Aitkens, 74. Guests D. Walls, Grangemouth, 74

Congratulations go to Kenny Stirling, Best Low Gross, and Sean McMillan, Best Low Nett, on qualifying for the Charterhouse/Scotts National Championship at Carden Park in

October. Disappointment on the new member front this month! No one to welcome to the Section this time, so far this year we have gained 35 new mem-

bers and if we really worked at it we could maybe reach 52 which would make it one new member for each week. So come on you must know some greenkeeper who is just waiting for that bit of persuasion to join us!

There has been a lack of news from the Leven Links Sporting Club recently. I don't know if they have disbanded, retired, gone caravanning, interior decorating or what! Maybe their manager is taking time out to write his memoirs. It's highly unlikely that they will be working too hard to have time to continue with their "sporting" activities.

John Crawford

North

Once again I start the column welcoming new members to the Section. This month we greet Scott Aitchison, Royal Dornoch; Justin Lochrie, Alyth; Keith Law, Forfar; Scott Barclay, Balmoral, 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 I think.

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, how about this tale from one of my members just back from Switzerland. 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 £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-footie 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.

Iain Madeod

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 courtesy of 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, Drumpelieir GC 73-5(68). 2nd Place Peter Cowan, Clydebank GC 81-9(72)BIH. 3rd Place Scott Ballantyne, Cowglen GC 78-



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6(72)BIH. 2nd Class: 1st Place John Brown, Bearsden GC 80-13(67). 2nd Place Gary Semple, East Kilbride GC, 83-14(69). 3rd Place Alan Miller, Wishaw GC 83-13(70).

3rd Class: 1st Place Joe Bell, Kilmacolm GC, 94-20(74).

2nd Place Simon Murray, Douglas Park GC 98-21(77). 3rd Place Barry Brown Douglas Park GC, 104-25(79). The trade prize was won by none other than Derek Duthie 77-5(72). The visitors prize was won by Andy Pearce, Port Glasgow GC, 77-5(72). Nearest the pin was Peter Cowan winning a bottle of Vodka.

Thanks also to all the trade members for their help and support.

The 29th was also the first draw of the recently launched "100 club". "All 100 tickets sold successfully, weren't they Robert.

On such an occasion, I personally feel that a fanfare of trumpets or drum roll would have been in order, to build up to the moment that my ticket was drawn. Sadly though it was not to be, however the lucky number "21", the holder being Brian Bolland, well done Brian. Still, there's hope yet, two more chances one at the Autumn meeting and at one of the AGM. For the millennium Mike Dooner has kindly offered to sponsor the "100" club.

Please make a note in your diaries, Wednesday 22nd September, Autumn meeting at Windyhill GC

John Scott Jnr recently attended the Section Secretaries meeting, held at HQ and reported that the two day course was very good and most informative giving those who attended an insight into the workings of HQ. He also commented on the size of the new building and felt that it should be slightly larger, giving the number of people attending this particular event. Keep your eyes peeled for an article penned by Robert Hogarth. Robert has been asked to write an article for the magazine on the subject of, "The difficulties of an internal verifiers job". I must say I look forward to learning more about, what should be an interesting topic.

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 PC's, 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 its self 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.

M: 07050 173080 H: 0141 776-1532

Gavin Jarvis



Northern Region
Douglas Bell
Tel: 0151 431 0433

Cleveland

Well the Spring Tournament was held at Seaton Carew. Many thanks to the Head Greenkeeper and staff for an excellent turn out of the course. Also thanks to the steward and staff for the great meal, last but not least a thank

you to the Club Secretary and Captain for allowing us to play the Course. The results are:- Cat 1 A. Wood J. Egglestone. Cat 2 N. Cain A. Cheesbough. Cat 3 T. Burge S. Jacques.



The lads who got through to the National Finals are A. Wood Best Gross T. Burge Best Nett. Many thanks also to our sponsors for the prizes.

Other Section news. Bob Lawton has been doing some construction around the course. Bob is Course Manager at Billingham Golf Club.

I know people get fed up of me repeating myself asking for news in the Section, but it is not all that easy to put together when you have nothing to go on, in fact one gets right p xxx ed off thinking of things to write. Don't forget I am as busy as any other greenkeeper.

Kevin (Scoop) Heslop

Sheffield

On 27 April we held our first golf competition of the year. It was held at Doncaster GC, who I would like to thank for giving us the courtesy of their course. It was a glorious day compared with the weather we had recently. Doncaster was in excellent condition and our thanks go to Kevin Kelsall and his staff. Well done Kevin. Our thanks also to the catering staff for an excellent meal which I think was enjoyed by everyone.

There was some excellent golf played in some very tricky conditions. The eventual winner was Paul Neve who played some very good golf. Well done Paul.



Results were 1st P Neve; 2nd A Lomas; 3rd C Hopper. May I also thank all the trade members who provided prizes for the competition and raffle.

There was also two qualifiers for the Charterhouse/Scotts National Championship. They were: Best Gross, A Lomas, Well done Andy! Best nett: P Neve. Well done Paul and good luck to you both in the finals.

The qualifiers for the regional finals at

Macclesfield Golf Club are: 1 - 9 A Lomas, J Dorach. 10 - 18 C Hopper, M Knowles. 19 - 28 P Neve, T Simpson. Good Luck to you all.

Finally congratulations go to Paul Neve on his appointment as Deputy Head Greenkeeper at Brough Golf Club. Well done Paul.

John Lax.

North West

I am so glad that we chose Fairhaven Golf Club for the "Spring Tournament," because the weather was so bad that I think most other courses would have had to close.

The day started off dull with possible showers forecast for later in the day. Once again the weather men had it wrong. By 11. 30am the rain started and continued for the rest of the day, becoming heavier as the day progressed. The last game, including myself, started at 3pm and we played in continuous rain for 18 holes. My feelings were not for myself or the other competitors, we have learned to accept wet weather in the last 18 months or so, but for Peter Simpson, Head Greenkeeper, and his dedicated staff who I am sure would have liked some decent weather so that the competitors could have appreciated more the superb condition of this very prestigious course. Despite all the rain the course did stay open and the competition did take place. I would like to thank Fairhaven Golf Club for allowing us to play their course, Peter and his staff for all their hard work in producing a great course in such difficult conditions, and the caterers and bar staff for looking after the hungry and thirsty.

The best results of the day were: Best Gross. Richard Castle, Denton GC; Best Nett. Michael Nolan, Bampton GC; Over 55. Bert Cross. Dave Cowhigg had the longest drive on the 9th and Paul Daley had the nearest the pin on the 10th, both of these prizes donated by Rufford. Nearest the pin on the 17th was won by David Leach, this prize was a colour television donated by Turfcare. The nett prizes went down to 8th place. I would like to thank N/W

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patrons, Burrows (GM)Cheshire Light Machinery, Acorn Equipment and Rigby Taylor for their support with the prize table, also White Moss Amenity, Gary Worrall, Greenkeeping Supply Co, Aitkens, County Crops, Richard Campey, 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 N/W team to play in the Regional Final at Macclesfield Golf Club on Wednesday 25th August are 0-9 Richard Castle, Denton GC; Tim Nolan, Denton GC; 10-18 Michael Nolan, Bampton GC; John Coar, Blackpool NS GC; 19-28 Mike Hogg, Childwell GC, Paul Eddlestone, Fishwick Hall GC This competition is sponsored by R. J. Campey(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 Guy 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 the course presented to us.

Congratulations to Roger and his team for all the hard work in preparing the "track" to such a high standard so early in the year. The exceptionally warm welcome from the new lady Secretary, quality of catering and service from the bar staff made the day one to remember.

Many thanks to Adamsons for sponsoring the prize table, Turfcare for the donation of a colour TV for the nearest pin prize, Ritefeed for the picnic hamper for the longest drive and to the rest of the trade for their raffle prizes.

Division 1 D. Collins (best nett for national tournament), R. Bielby (best gross national tournament), R. Gee. Division 2 J. Platt, A. Baxter, A. Court. Division 3 J. Brown, D. Jordan, A. Gamble. Nearest Pin R. Bielby. Longest Drive A. Court. Trade Prize A. Dyson, Purdys.

Good luck to David and Roger when they compete in the Charterhouse/Scotts National Tournament at Carden Park later this year.

A couple of people have been moving within the Section. Jonny Platt has moved to Cookridge Hall G&CC as Deputy Head Greenkeeper from Crow Nest Park and Richard Blackburn has gone to Outlane as Deputy Head Greenkeeper also from Crow Nest Park.

Finally a little bird has informed me that Alan Lofthouse, of Huddersfield Golf Club, has got married. Congratulations Alan, you can buy the boys a beer later in the year to celebrate!

Anyone who has any news from within the Section, please contact me at 1 Cockley Meadows, Kirkheaton, Huddersfield, HD5 0LA or telephone 01484 317813 or 07788 442755. Don't forget to get your names & money to me in good time for any of the forthcoming golfing events.

Simon Heppenstall.

North Wales

May 4, weather brilliant! Shouldn't have said that, should I. May I offer my apologies to everyone, especially the committees that I sit on, well haven't sat on recently. If it seems I've been shirking my responsibilities, it's just that an awful lot has been going on in my private life which is not sorted, so I'm back on line, so to speak. I've been up to Aldwark with Howard McAddey to start the process of becoming I.V. for Wales, returned with half a rain forest neatly packaged in folders.

I also attended a course at the college on Basic H & S run by the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health. Very illuminating. I just hope I passed. Which brings me on to the next thing, first aid courses. Did you know that any work place employing more than five people MUST have a qualified first aider who has taken the 4-5 day course. Well you do now! The college is running four day courses on 21 - 24 June and the 12 - 15 July, costing £100 per person. Other refresher courses have been run, but by the time you read this it will be too late. I hope we can organise more later in the year. Remember, it is not only important, it is the law.

I believe a cracking day was had at the sprint meet at Llanymynech. Thanks go to Alan and his team and also the club for giving us the courtesy.

Results, Best Gross - Alan Lewis 74 (nett 69) say no more! Charterhouse/Scotts National Championship qualifier, Carden Park. Best nett John Humphreys 68,

Charterhouse/Scotts National Championship qualifier Carden Park and Lesco Trophy. 2nd Andy Comes 3rd Don Ravlando 69, 4th C. Rogers 72, 5th R. Lewis 73, Longest Drive R. Lewis, Nearest the Pin, Haydn Jones 3'5", Guests 1 G. Fitzpatrick 68, 2nd E. Heaps 69, 3rd M. Jones 70, Longest Drive Llanymynech Lady Captain (Ladies tee 168 yards forward of men's). Nearest pin R. Owens 15'11", 2's Haydn Jones, Adrian Ellis, Marc Brute, P Farzay G Fitzpatrick (6 balls each).

Thanks again go to the Trade for their support. Acorn, Walker Engineering, John Osman, ALS, Oakleys, Rigby Taylor, Greenkeeper Supply Co. Aitkens, 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 pitch 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, 7 December. Even my clubs will be coming out of retirement. See ya.

Dave Goodridge

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Midland Region
Peter Larter
Tel: 01480 437507

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 87-16-69. 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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Simon Austin who is Lindsay's apprentice at Badgemore had a hole-in-one last week at Badgemore Park on the par three 17th with an 8-iron. Hopefully the first of many Simon well done.

Finally I would like to welcome Colin Hutt into the section he has taken up the post as my Deputy at Donnington Grove. Any news for the article would be much appreciated and you can contact me on the number below.

Ross Wilson 01635-821333

East Midland

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 from 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 article.

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

Anthony 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 everyone 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 the day who were as follows, E T Breakwells for the prizes, Ruffords for longest drive and nearest the pin and Bathgates for the wine with the meal.

I have all the results and they are as follows: Best gross - G Wallace. Best nett - P Loffman. 2nd M Gash. 3rd M Jones. 4th D Fellows. 5th T Cheese. 6th K Weston. 1st Trade N Tyler. 2nd Trade R Minton. Nearest the pin P Loffman. Longest drive G Wallace.

On a more serious note, on behalf of the Midland section I would like to send our best wishes to Neil Horton and his family as Neil has recently had a major operation and has been very ill. So, get well soon Neil.

Finally I would like to introduce you to some more new members - Thomas Moulds, Craig Souter, Justin Roberts, Mark Roche, Douglas Macgregor, Colin McBeth, Steven Heath, Adrian Harris and James Wicks.

Jonathan Wood

East of England

The first competition of the year was held at Thorp Wood, Peterborough, where the small turn out played over a testing course set by David Walden. The course was in great condition and held up well to the atrocious weather conditions.

The sponsors Piboro Garden Machinery and Barenbrug seed pleaded for the golf day to be sponsored next year in a warmer month as they have been the April Competition for the last five years.

Thanks to Alisdair of PGM and Ben Petitjean of Barenbrug for their support in sponsoring the competition. They brought some great prizes and the raffle prizes which were donated by other trade members, were much appreciated by our members. The eventual winner was Graeme MacDonald of Newark G.C. 36 points. Second was David Welberry of Kirton Holme 31 points and Kevin Hodges of Ryston Park 30 points. Leigh Siddon of UAP took home the trade prize of 26 points.

On a much warmer day the Purdy's Cup and Charterhouse/Scotts Championship qualifier was played over 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 Captain's Day prize table. Thanks to Les, Annie and Andy for the sponsorship. Also thanks to the other sponsors, Tower Chemical (Gary you will hand out those hats/Cooper) Rigby Taylors, Aitkens, Greenpride and Roy's bottle of wine.

The Charterhouse/Scotts National Championship qualifiers were G.A. MacDonald, Newark with 74 - 5 - 69 nett winner and Josh White, Belton Park taking the gross with an 84.

The Purdy's Cup went to G.A. MacDonald who has been cut again by Kevin Hodges with a score of 74 - 3 - 71.

Second was Nigel Marshall, Belton Park, 100 - 28 - 72. Third John Hewson 92 - 19 - 73 of Market Rasen. Trade prize went to Peter Fell 77 - 12 - 65. Any news or ideas from the section, do not hesitate to call me on 01636 626564.

G.A. MacDonald



South East
Derek Farrington
Tel: 01903 260956

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.

Alec 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:- 1. Gareth Rogers, nett 63; 2. Brian Turner nett 68 on countback; 3. Steve Holmes, nett 68; 4. Alan McDougall, nett 70. Trade prize Brian

Bowles nett 74.

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 and James Andrews who has been appointed First Assistant at Puttenham. Ron Christie and his wife have had their second baby, this time a daughter named Beth.

Richard Evans, also of Addington Place, it must be something in the air, is a proud father for the first time to a son named Evan.

To Ron and Rick 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.

Essex

On April 13, 40 souls ventured over to Burnham-on-Crouch Golf Club for the Spring meeting of the Essex Section. It was so cold and wet I'm surprised everyone finished. Thanks to Pattersons for sponsoring the event, the club for making us so welcome and Paul for having the course in such good condition, despite the wet winter. Raffle prizes were kindly donated by Rigby Taylor, UAP, Grass Roots, Avon Crop, CMW, Does, Tuckwells, Greenkeeping Supplies and Gem.

Onto the prize winners:-

1-9 Category: Jeff Robinson-78; Andy Sheehan-80; Carl Croucher-80. 10-18 Category John Winters-77, Richard Dunmow-78; Dave Wells-80. 19-28 Category Paul Copsy-74; Malcolm Smith-78; Martin Forrester-81: Guest Prize. Sandy Anderson. Trade Prize: Andy Church, Mark Day.

Greenkeepers Supply sponsored the Longest Drive, won by Andy Sheehan and Nearest the Pin, won by Richard Pride.

We would like to welcome the following new members to the Section, Daniel Harvey, Three Rivers Golf Club, Andrew Miller, The Warren Golf Club, Martin Howard and Nicholas Kikkades, of Theydon Bois Golf Club.

A special thanks goes to Graham Paul for all the hard work he does for the Section.



Now for the important bit, qualifiers for the Charterhouse/Scotts National Championship, best gross score- Steve Cox-83, best nett score- Chris Ward-72.

Good luck to you both.

See you all at Colchester on June 23.

Dave Wells

East Anglia

Well what a start to spring! Sun, rain, sleet, sun again and then snow, 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 heavy 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: 1-9 handicap. 1. N. Brewster, 78 nett 72; 2. T. Morton, 76 nett 72; 3. A. Carter, 78 nett 73. 10-18 handicap. 1. G. McHugh, 85 nett 73; 2. S. Sylvester, 88 nett 74; 3. S. Curtis, 88 nett 74. 19-28 handicap. 1. T. Russell, 91 nett 72; 2. E. Hart, 95 nett 74. 3. K. Titchell, 99 nett 80. Guests. 1. P. Carson 87 nett 74; 2. Mrs D. Kerchiss 99 nett 74. Nearest the pin on 9th. P. Carson, Longest drive on 18th. G. McHugh; Loo Seat. M. Day, for ditching his van on the way to the meeting.

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, Barenbrug, Colliers Turf Care, Consult Clarkson, CMW, Grass Roots Trading Company, Hardley Tools, Patissons, 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

Golf Club, sponsored by Bartram Mowers. The match against the Essex section on the 25th August will now be played at Thorpness Golf Club, not at RAF Lackenheath.

S. Millard



South West and South Wales
Paula Humphries
Tel: 01288 352194

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 bowling green greenkeepers and groundsman 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 Axe Men was well worth the visit. Who needs a chainsaw when you have men like that around.

There seemed 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 handicaps and cheques for £31 to be sent to:- Fred Deaman, Golf Club Bungalow, Alton Golf Club, Old Odiham Road, Alton, Hants. GU34 4BU. Tel: 01420 86679. All entries to be with Fred 10 days beforehand, that is Monday 12 July.

Kerran Daly has secured a new post at Gog Magog Golf Club at Cambridge as Course Manager. We will all be sorry to lose you Kerran, you have been a keen supporter of our Section for a number of year. I am sure the Section will want me to congratulate you on your new post and wish you all the best for the future.

Lastly, Fred is compiling a team of 12 to play the Secretaries. The date is the 8 July, the venue Parkstone Golf Club. Anyone wishing to play contact Fred. If my memory serves me correct the

Secretaries won last year! I am sure that Fred will be after the best team he can find to reverse last year's result.

Ken Lodge.

South West

A great day was had by all the members who attended the Spring Tournament, which took place at Wells GC on April 22. Torrential rain almost postponed the event, but the weather held back and some good scores were recorded. The results were as follows:-Mark Ford, 39 points; 2. Craig Fudge, 38 point; 3. A. Knight, 38 points.

The Trade prizes went to Phil Greenway with 38 points. The sponsors of the event were Ocmis who provided some excellent prizes which were greatly appreciated. Thanks were also given to Wells GC Head Greenkeeper, Maurice Pearce, and his staff for getting the course into great shape considering the adverse weather conditions and also Ray and Pauline and the rest of the catering staff for the superb meal afterwards.

The next meeting is the Summer Tournament, which will take place at Lilley Brook GC on July 22. This event is sure to attract a large amount of interest.

I have been asked to make some enquiries as to the whereabouts of the team strip. The six shirts seem to have gone missing and are needed this year. If you know where they are, please telephone the Team Captain, Dave Bougen, on 01285-720112.

The region will donate one ticket for the BTME in January 2000. The ticket will be raffled and sold at golfing events through the rest of the year, and will be picked at the AGM or the Christmas Tournament. The price will be £1. A ticket can be obtained by contacting Peter Baynton on 01275-855321.

Turning to Education and Training, I have arranged a number of courses for the Summer and Autumn. A one day First Aid course will take place on August 17th at Cumberwell Park GC, PA1 course will take place on September 22. PA6 will take place on October 13.

Other training courses for chainsaw and abrasive wheels have been provisionally booked for late October onwards, at Hartpury, Lackham and Canmington Colleges. If you have already put your name down on the waiting lists during the last year, there is no need to contact me as I still have your name. New applications for any of the courses shown above should contact me on 01249-783382.

If you would like to go on PA2 courses, you should contact Noel Stevens on 01452 526111 and he will arrange a convenient training date.

Westurf again was excellent, with very good attendance at the event which was held at Westpoint for the first time. Thanks to Paula for her organisation.

Paul Cunningham.

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 Pencoed College next month.

A date for your diary: BIGGA versus the PGA to take place at St. Mellons Golf Club Cardiff 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 success.

Visitors also had the chance to sample the hospitality in the BIGGA stand and to meet our Chairman Gordon Child, Executive Director, Neil Thomas, 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 Axe men 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.



Northern Ireland

South East

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

Manager and to Walter Beattie and the team for the presentation of the course.



THE CHARTERHOUSE/SCOTT'S NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP FOR THE BIGGA CHALLENGE TROPHY

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 handicap secretary 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 Lenhan, Head Greenkeeper at Milltown GC Dublin, also Michael King, Eamon 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



See you all next month!

THE CHARTERHOUSE/SCOTT'S NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP FOR THE BIGGA CHALLENGE TROPHY

Redexim Charterhouse Scotts

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.

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

Going West



Above: Paula Humphries, Westurf organiser

Right: Just one of the many busy stands at this year's event

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 P.A. 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 Chenery from Woodbury. Simon Jefferies 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.

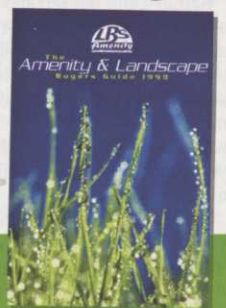
Prize winners: Best presented shell scheme stand - Andrew MacWilliam. Best presented open stand - Kyetec. Crossword - Terry Farkins. Pre-registration draw - J B Bullen.

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...

Senses working overtime



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.



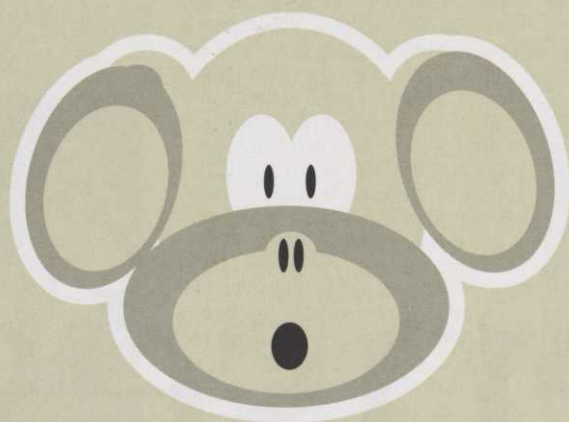
The grass-cutting season is now well under way and, for many, it means mowing from virtually dawn to dusk. In this situation it is easy to overlook a symptom on the mower that indicates something nasty is developing.



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.

Whilst cutting look out 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.



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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

Graeme Francis, Marketing Manager for The Hydroscape Group Limited and UK Distributors of Toro Irrigation Products, troubleshoots some potential problems which are facing greenkeepers and their computer-based irrigation systems

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 foretellers 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 will become 1st January 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. In many instances a PC is being used as the central component of the irrigation control system. 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. The

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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 continuity 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 expensive. 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 highly demonstrated in the personal banking sphere where computers were voiding transaction made on credit cards with expiry dates ending 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 transition 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 afterwards it doesn't mean that your

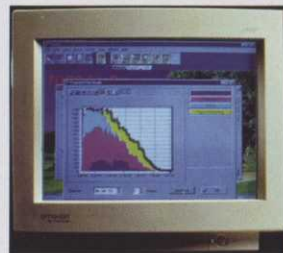
equipment can avoid being Year 2000 compliant.

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.

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 hardware components of the system which may be affected. Decoder interface units, field interface modules and radio communication elements could all encounter problems if the manufacturer has not had the foresight to build compliance into them.

In essence you need to have an



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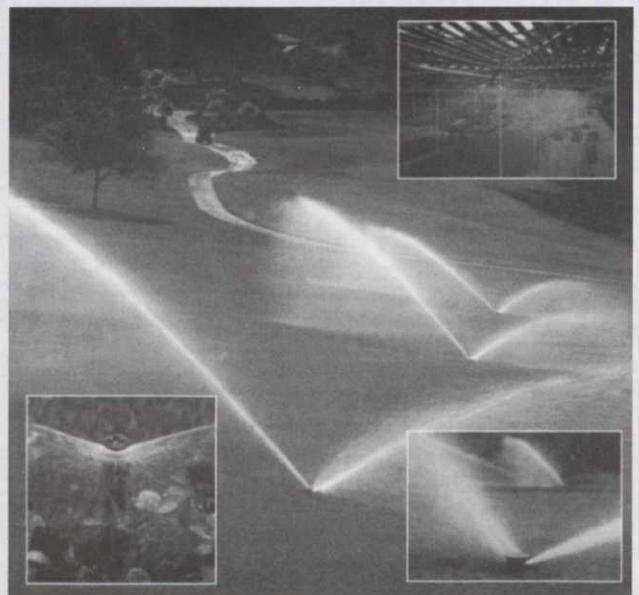
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irrigation system that is fully compliant. Most that have been installed in recent times will be, but it is worth confirming this with the supplier or installer. Any that are not will need to be upgraded to meet the compliance criteria and the sooner 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 installations 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 you 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.

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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 this giant major corporate entity.

And that was no easy task. Each of the three companies had a well defined and established brand image and great care and imagination had to be taken to fuse them all together, retaining the best elements of each company and ensuring that customer loyalty was retained.

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 formulations," 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 coarse 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"





company would be delivering at Harrogate earlier this year when they unveiled Shortcut and wetting agent, Aquanova, two brand new products.

"Shortcut is really rocket science in this industry," said Dave.

It is a growth retardant which has shown itself able to reduce the speed of growth and the amount of clippings produced by 50% while at the same time developing greater root strength and shoot density.

"Since BTME it has been so successful we have sold out what we estimated would be our annual sales in six weeks and we had to go back to America where the product was developed and ask for more," said Dave.

It is a sign of the international nature of the business that product can be developed anywhere in the world and not necessarily purely in or for the amenity sector. Scotts form relationships with the producers of active ingredient who operate in the much larger agrochemical industry and offer them a route into a niche market they wouldn't normally touch.

"Shortcut was developed by international giant, Novartis, a company in a position to spend \$86 million to produce an active ingredient for the agriculture industry and we can maximise the use of that ingredient by using it in a much smaller industry but globally," said Bob.

Bob is also in regular contact with colleagues in the parent company Head Office in the States and they regular hold research and development conferences so information can be pooled from all over the world.

It is vital for the industry that we can continue to do this work - to carry out the fundamental development trials needed to secure MAFF

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."

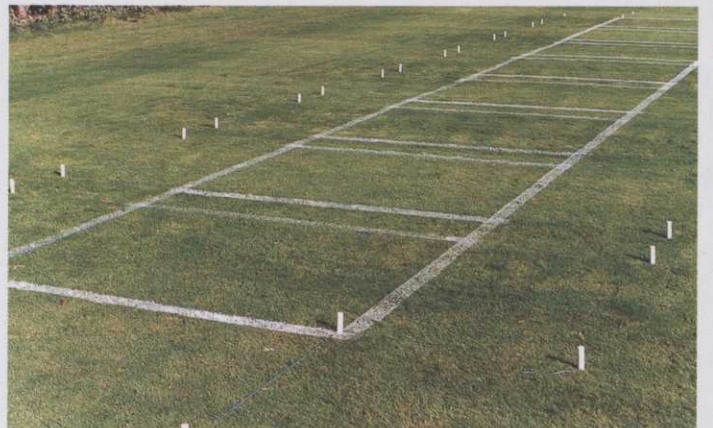
Looking to the future the company is well aware of the threat to many of its highly regarded products from the European bureaucrats who are currently reviewing all active ingredient.

"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 one 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.

"We don't play with the destiny of our customers. We can only succeed through the success of our customers so that ensures that we only produce products which work," said Dave.

"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.



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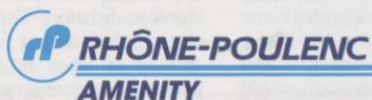
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Senior service

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 impossi-

ble without an immediate collapse of the left arm and a type of lurching 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 behavioural 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 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 on 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

CUT-PRICE GOLF



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 they selflessly permanently retire themselves to the clubhouse. If you ever manage to play Muirfield or St Andrews you can see these gentlemen seated just inside the bay windows complete with pink gin and a copy of *The Times*. In fact, seeing as one can play a complete round of golf and return to find them still in the exact same position and still apparently reading the same page of the *Times*, one could conclude they have been ceremonially stuffed upon their departure of this world and placed in a permanent position in their favourite chesterfield.

There is another sub species of senior that has always fascinated me. This is the one whose whole life is dedicated to the art of thrift. They are, as the French would say, as tight as the derriere de le canard, or words to that affect. Far from being few in number, these seniors can be found at every club throughout the country, provided that is, the annual sub is reasonably low.

They can be very easily identified at any club. 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. 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.

This compulsive frugality extends to every aspect of their golf. Their clubs are a mismatch of 1960's rejects with a sweet spot made up of a small cluster of atoms adjacent to the hosel and the woods are of laminated wood construction with the whipping stuck down with insulation tape.

The tee pegs are tied together with old garden string so as to prevent the loss of a penny investment and the golf balls come out of the vast collection they have built up over the years of scavenging through the

under-growth when the course is closed.

Even their golf swings, which are short and proddy, are designed to ensure that the ball never deviates from a straight line so as not to squander their golf ball hoard. What is really frightening about these guys, is how they insist on playing every day. This is a result of some elementary mathematics that they indulged in whereby they calculated that having parted with their annual sub, the more they play, the cheaper their golf becomes.

One such golfer recently imparted with me the information that he was only paying £1.30 per round.

Occasionally when they had had a particularly exhilarating round of golf (a score in the low 120's without

losing a ball) they would indulge in the only known nutritional input their frail bodies require; a pot of tea for two with four cups and a slice of toast.

But even these characters have their own particular charm about them, quietly filling every empty space on the course. All they want from life is to play golf 365 days a year or 366 in a leap year.

The senior golfers that are to be found throughout this country of ours have become a kind of living part of our heritage. Golf club life would be left with a huge void without them. I for one, hope that these fine old characters remain a permanent fixture at every club. Who knows, in years to come, maybe we will be the ones waiting to tee off in a freezing February gale.

Sandy McDivot.
Head Greenkeeper Sludgecombe
Pay and Play.

Feature listing from June '97

June '97: Drought Survival;
Cooden Beach; Monitoring the Weather;
Slitters

July '97: Royal Troon GC; Speed of
Putting Surfaces; Mowers

August '97: Maintenance Facilities;
Heather Management; Bunker Rakes;
Workshops; Architecture; Kedleston Park
GC

September '97: Accident Reporting;
Greens Mowers; Valderrama GC; Links
Courses

October '97: Environment;
Recruitment; Abbeydale GC;
Rough Mowers; Soil Analysis

November '97: Environment
Competition; Bank Cutting;
Risk Assessment; Pumps

December '97: Seed Development;
Longhirst Hall GC; Toro Awards; Fertiliser
Spreaders; Communication

January '98: FEGGA Conference;
Buying Power Equipment; Elmwood GC;
Mobile Phones; Traffic Management;
Spraying; Environment

February '98: BTME Review;
Overseeding; Royal Mid Surrey GC;
Drainage; Thatch

March '98: Trees, Golf Course
Accessories, News from GCSAA,
Leamington & County GC, Trevor
Smith's BTME Talk

April '98: Gleneagles Hotel, Compact
Tractors, Environment, Protective
clothing, Rain bird, Internet

May '98: Greens Mowers, Suspended
Water Table Greens, Seeds, Letham
Grange Resort, Charterhouse profile,
Security and BIGGA's Fund Raising
Campaign

June '98: Interview with Nick Park,
Earthworm special, ATVs, Royal
Porthcawl, Grinding

July '98: Aeration, Royal Birkdale pre-
view, The importance of research,
Architecture

August '98: Mill Ride, Fescue,
Blowers, Textron, Open Review,
Nematodes, Training

September '98: Nine holers –
Tolladine and Fingle Glen, Turf, Steve
Clement profile, Drainage, World
Scientific Congress report

October '98: Saltex Review, BIGGA
Retrospective, Stirling GC, Toro
Awards Preview, Tree grants

November '98: Royal Opening,
Ramside Hall GC, Gang Mowers,
Hayter International report,
Irrigation Systems

December '98: Toro Awards,
Environment Awards, The Appliance of
Science, Engines, Architects, BTME
Preview

January '99: Pesticide Usage, Life in
Colorado, Lyshott Heath GC, Worm
Research, Stylo Matchmaker profile,
Temporary Greens

February '99: Westerham GC;
R&A questionnaire results; Finland;
grass cutting; BTME99 Review;
Bernhard and Co

March '99: Loch Lomond, Worm
update, GrassRoots, Softspikes,
Maintenance facilities, Environment
review, Architecture

April '99: Carden Park,
Telecommunications, Water
Management, Rolawn, Seeds

May '99: Security; Bude and North
Cornwall GC; Spraying Regulations;
Jim Arthur; The Acid Theory;
Amenity Technology profile



GTC update



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

d) Representative from
the Sports Turf Research
Institute

e) 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 Aldwick 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 Purdis 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.

Gordon Child

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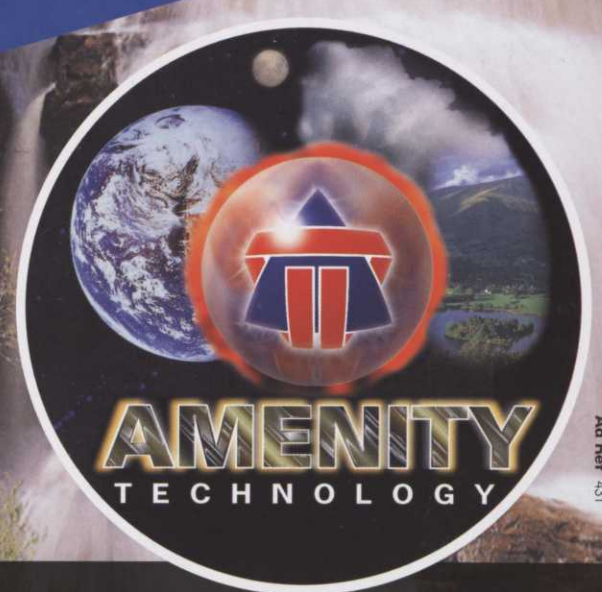
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