Awards for US distributors

American distributors were presented with awards from Bernhard and Company while enjoying a night-time cruise on the Thames through London. Top north American distributors were presented with the awards for their exceptional sales efforts. "It has been a great experience visiting the UK," said Pat Duggins, of Florida-based Wesco Turf. "This is my first trip and the weather here is certainly very different from Florida," he said. "Sights such as the Houses of Parliament and Tower of London are just great and I had a wonderful time."

Busman's holiday for Irish GKs

A group of Irish greenkeepers made a trip to White Hart Lane, home of Tottenham Hotspur FC to tour the ground and stadium. The trip was sponsored by Advanta Seeds and Lindsay's Turfcare. The picture shows the group with Darren Baldwin, Head Groundsman at White Hart Lane, in the middle of the back row.

Committed to Green recognition

Following a meeting of its International Advisory Commission on 21 November 2000 in Brussels, the Committed to Green Foundation is pleased to announce the first ever awards of Committed to Green Recognition. Fifteen pioneer golf clubs from five European countries will receive the Recognition, which is valid for three years. They are:

Scottland: Kilnacross GC; Linlithgow GC; Glenegles (3 courses); Elmwood College

England: Kemnay Park GC; The Bellry (3 courses)

Denmark: Falshorg GC

Finland: Kirk Golf Club; Rentasalmi GC; Honnas GC; Tarina GC; Sarvik GC (2 courses)

Portugal: Belas Clube de Campo; Vilamoura (4 courses); Carvoeiro Golf (2 courses)

"All these clubs have shown a commendable effort to prove their concern and care for the environment. Many of these are 'typical' small golf clubs, simply wishing to be seen to be responsible managers. But whatever their situation, large and small clubs alike have devoted time and effort to achieving worthwhile environmental improvements," said David Stubbs, Executive Director of the Committed to Green Foundation. "It is still an early stage in our programme and we are delighted to have such committed pioneers to help us in our mission."

The Recognition process involves clubs submitting an Environmental Statement reporting on their policies, achievements and future targets across eight environmental management categories. To ensure the credibility of the programme, each Statement is subject to on-site verification by appropriately qualified, independent specialists. A network of National Ecology Officers is helping the Committed to Green Foundation to deliver the programme throughout Europe.

The Environmental Statements of each Committed to Green club will be published on the Committed to Green Foundation web site over the coming months: see www.committedtogreen.org.

Several more clubs across Europe are in the final stages of preparing their Committed to Green Statements. Further awards of Recognition will be announced during 2001, and it is hoped that the example set by these first clubs will be an inspiration for the rest of the golf community to come forward and demonstrate its commitment to responsible environmental management.

Mountfield joins Europe's largest

Mountfield, the UK's largest petrol engine rotary lawnmower manufacturer, has been acquired by Stiga UK Limited, which is part of an international garden machinery group currently being formed that includes Stiga of Sweden and Castelgarden and Alpina of Italy.

Mountfield currently manufactures over 100,000 lawnmowers a year, retailing through a UK wide servicing dealer network and DIY chains. Duncan Martin, Mountfield Managing Director, describes this exciting development as, "the most obvious step forward for our dealers, our products and our brand."

This new addition to the Group, retaining all the sales, service, marketing and financial personnel. The new company will have its headquarters in Plymouth and trade as Stiga UK Limited with Duncan Martin as MD.

A move for British Seed Houses

British Seed Houses is moving its Warrington-based amenity seed business to improved facilities at its Swinderby site in Lincolnshire following the purchase of adjacent land and buildings.

The move will bring all British Seed Houses amenity seed processing, packing and distribution under one roof, improving logistics and efficiency and reducing dependency on third party storage.

The Warrington site is being retained by British Seed Houses' parent company for rental to a third party.

Communication is the key

I don't know if you followed the US Presidential election and all the amazing problems it produced. As I write it hasn't yet been resolved but hopefully, just hopefully, by the time you read this the most powerful man in the world will be known.

You may call me a cynic but I'm sure through all the legal toings and froings the two men, who traded on the strength of their convictions and the clarity of their policy declarations, would have had no qualms in arguing the opposite case in the courts, if that was what was needed to be done, just to get elected.

"Pregnant chads to be included in the ballot," against, "If people can't complete a simple ballot paper properly their vote shouldn't count,"... or "If overseas ballots arrive without postmarks they should be omitted." against, "If people can't complete a simple ballot..."... or "If ballots from American servicemen arrive on time..."

because of the rights and

Cases were built around the desires of the person making the case and not the merits of the case itself.

It got me thinking about how it works in normal life, the way people approach situations and argue for their personal circumstances and not the merits of the case.

There is usually more than one way to look at the situation and it may be that a side is taken because, as in the US election, it suits someone to argue a particular case, or alternatively that not enough information is available to come to another conclusion.

The best way to influence a person's thinking, other than to dangle the prospect of high office in front of them, is to give them enough information to come to a different conclusion to the one they originally came up with.

That can happen in a number of ways, formal and informal, but all boil down to the same thing - Communication. Get that right and more people will be on your side of the fence when it comes to differences of opinion. It might not win you a Presidency but it might make your job a little less stressful.

Happy New Year and may all your problems over the next 12 months be the type which make you look good when you solve them!
John Deere to supply 2001 Ryder Cup

John Deere has been appointed the official supplier of turf maintenance equipment for the 2001 Ryder Cup at The De Vere Belfry.

The De Vere Belfry - world-famous venue of the 1985, '89 and '93 Ryder Cup matches already uses a full range of John Deere machinery for course preparation and maintenance throughout the complex.

A staff of 40 operates a total fleet of more than 30 machines to maintain three 18-hole golf courses - the Belfry, Derby and PGA National - on 500 acres.

"We are delighted to be associated with De Vere Hotels and with the Ryder Cup, one of the world's greatest golf events at one of the world's greatest courses," said Alec McKee, Managing Director of John Deere Limited.

"This exciting partnership underlines the remarkable progress we have made as a business since entering the golf equipment market seriously in the mid 1990s." John Deere is the official golf course equipment supplier to the USA PGA Tour, providing a full range of machinery on an exclusive basis to the Tour's network of Tournament Players Club (TPC) courses around the world. The company is also the title sponsor of the John Deere Classic, a regular stop on the USA PGA Tour, which was played for the first time in 2000 on the new TPC at Deere Run course in Silvis, Illinois.

John Deere Limited will also be supplying equipment to The De Vere Belfry for the Benson & Hedges British Open International in May 2001.

Rigby Taylor are appointed exclusive Maxicrop distributor

Rigby Taylor has been appointed exclusive UK mainland distributor for the market-leading Maxicrop range of seaweed extract based bio-stimulants for amenity use.

The new partnership will help ensure that research and product development activity by Maxicrop is available to greenkeepers and groundsmen, through Rigby Taylor's nationwide sales and distribution coverage.

Maxicrop which was recently acquired by Algea, part of the giant Norsk Hydro group, has already taken the opportunity to introduce a new improved formulation of its flagship product, Maxicrop No.1 Triple Seaweed. This product now contains increased levels of trace elements, which Maxicrop claims will help ensure better season-long turf micronutrition, especially where clippings are regularly removed.

Shane Dearville, Maxicrop UK Sales and Marketing Director, said that the new partnership would ensure that what is a well researched and highly effective established brand reaches a wider audience.

"We believe we are seaweed extract experts and highly product focused; Rigby Taylor is the market leader in the golf and turf sectors. Thus it makes sense to forge a relationship with a commercial partner that is closer to the end-user and can deliver what he needs," said Shane.

"This appointment represents further recognition by leading multi-national companies that the best route for products into the UK amenity market is through a dedicated, nationwide organisation such as ours," said Rigby Taylor Chairman, Bernard Hedley.

"Algea and Maxicrop have invested heavily in an ongoing R&D programme into the benefits of seaweed extracts and this fits well with our strong science and research-based philosophy for product development."

Susannah is the latest BIGGA recruit

Membership Services Assistant, Susannah Sweeney, is the latest recruit to join the BIGGA HOUSE team.

Susannah joined the Membership Department in mid December, but had spent a month before that on the BIGGA exhibition desk.

Susannah, 32, lives on the RAF base at Linton on Ouse, just a short distance from BIGGA HOUSE, with her husband, Mark, who is a Chef on the base.

They have recently returned to the UK from a posting in Cyprus where Susannah worked with the Ministry of Defence. Previously they had been stationed at a number of RAF bases in England.

Their lover of watersports Susannah learned to water ski while surrounded by the warm waters of Cyprus and also enjoys snorkling and scuba diving.

Now back home they are looking forward to settling in the York area.

Royal Inverdivot GC... www.tonyhusband.co.uk

mr captain, it's about the new fairway mow mr mow... there's no problem is there... That cost is 14,000... It's not broken down has it!

Er... no. Peter drove it into the lake...

BIGGA AGM

The Bigga AGM will be held on Wednesday, 24th January 2001 at 5.45pm in the Majestic Hotel, Harrogate. Entry by BIGGA Members only. Details of the AGM can be obtained in advance of the meeting on request to BIGGA HOUSE, Regional Administrator or Section Secretary.

BTME 2001

Winners announced

The five lucky winners of a superb BIGGA Sports Watch from those who pre-registered for BTME 2001 are: Graham Hudson, Delamere Forest GC, Northwich, in Cheshire, Paul Robson, Head Greenkeeper, Burnham & Berrow GC, Somerset and Simon Osborne, Head Greenkeeper, Wildwood GC, Worthing.

Simon joins Advanta

Simon Harrison has joined Advanta Seeds UK as regional sales manager for the North of England. Simon, who is 31, is based in Leeds and has a career background in the sports trade industry. He has previously worked for Puma sportswear, and latterly for the Asics Sports company.

A keen sportsman, Simon has played rugby for Yorkshire - at fly half and centre, and continues to play the game socially.

"We are delighted to welcome Simon to Advanta," said Dave Phillips, Amenity Sales and Marketing Manager.

"His sales experience and contacts within the sports sector is impressive, and he has already established himself as a valued member of our team."

Philip picks up first Toro Student GC Architect Award

PGA professional Philip Sparks beat off stiff competition to win the first Toro Student Golf Course Architect Award. While runners-up Jeff Young and Jamie Sharp each received the associated Barenbrug Award. The annual competition is open to students studying for a two-year post-graduate diploma course in golf course architecture at Merrist Wood College.

Philip is the first golf professional in the world to have gained this qualification. With six other finalists, Philip presented a verbal dissertation to judges on his diploma course thesis, as well as his design ideas, detailed drawings and costing's for the site of a new golf course near Bournemouth.

As his prize, Philip enjoyed an all-expenses-paid trip to The Toro Company's worldwide headquarters in Minneapolis and California.
New business venture for Kate

Kate Entwistle, still known to many in the turf industry as Kate York, has recently left the STRI where she had worked since 1990. She has now relocated to Hampshire where she will continue to work in turf pathology under the name of The Turf Disease Centre.

"Starting my own business allows me to really focus on providing a thorough and personalised turf disease management service," said Kate.

I studied plant pathology, plant physiology and microbiology at college and have developed a specialist knowledge of turfgrass pathogens over the last 10 years,"

As well as providing analysis of turf samples for disease identification, Kate will continue to offer lectures, take part in seminars and produce articles on turf diseases. In addition, one of the main areas that she is keen to develop is site visits, aimed specifically at discussing turf disease problems directly with the turf manager.

"Although many of our turf disease problems can be diagnosed from sample analysis, supported by general discussions with the turf manager or agronomist, there are an increasing number of persistent and unusual problems which would be better investigated through an on-site inspection", she says. "We are now seeing diseases which were not a problem only a few years ago and changes in grass types and cultivars used are likely to lead to further novel disease outbreaks. Disease development is heavily affected by local environmental conditions and these can not always be adequately appreciated by looking at a turf sample in the laboratory", explained Kate. "Seeing the problem at first hand can lead to a more rapid diagnosis of the disease and can assist in offering specific information on the best ways to control the disease on that particular site."

Contact Kate by telephoning 01256 800246, Fax 01256 880178, email kate@theturfdiseecentre.co.uk or visit her web site, www.theturfdiseecentre.co.uk.

Parts restructure at Textron

Textron has reorganised and restructured its Parts operation which will now be known as the Service Parts Organisation.

This restructuring follows the recent appointment of David Brown as International Parts Manager with a brief to achieve improved customer service in conjunction with a 95% pick rate for the parts operation.

To help achieve this, Wendy Forsdyke has been promoted to Customer Services Manager and a Customer Services Help Desk has been established and is the first point of contact for customer parts enquiries.

Mark Poppleton has been appointed Inventory Control Manager, heading a team responsible for all parts stocking levels with Jim Snell completing the management team in his role as Warehouse Operations Manager controlling the goods in, parts picking and dispatch functions.

Above: (L-R): David Brown, Mark Poppleton, Wendy Forsdyke, Jim Snell

Westurf 2001

Pre-registration tickets for Westurf 2000 were entered into a random draw for a fourball of golf at St. Mellion on the Jack Nicklaus course. The prize, which also included two buggies and a meal afterwards was won by Dave Everett of Lyme Regis Golf Club. Westurf 2001 is on March 14th - make sure you pre-register!

New Association aims to provide quality assurance

Britain's leading rootzone and top dressing manufacturers have formed an organisation to be known as the British Rootzone and Top Dressing Manufacturers Association.

The Association is a collaboration of experience and expertise in the manufacture of Rootzone materials to offer architects, contractors and agronomists a recognised focal point for the industry.

The aims of the Association are to appoint its own technical advisors to agree and standardise testing procedures; to develop a quality management scheme to be used by its members; to promote the use of appropriate materials and offer the best working practices in manufacture in order to offer a consistent and repeatable standard; to promote materials offered within a quality framework; to develop the use of environmentally friendly products; to promote research into effective UK rootzone specifications and to liaise with other organisations involved in the specification and purchase of rootzones and top dressings.

Members of the newly formed Association include Bailey's of Hevingham; Bathgate Silica Sand Ltd; John Bourne & Co Ltd; Rolley Ltd; Stewart & CO Seedsmen Ltd; Banks Amenity Products Ltd; Boughton Loam Ltd; Prestige Sports Surfaces Ltd; Ruford Soil Technology and White Moss Amenities Ltd.

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