It's not easy being a pioneer. But since their arrival in 1996, the John Deere line of Aercore Aerators, with their revolutionary belt-driven system and superior Flexi-Link design, have quickly become the number one aerators in the golf equipment industry. Now, with the addition of our tractor mounted Aercore 2000, the bar for productivity has been raised even higher. Like the tractor mounted 1500 and 1000 and the walk behind 800, the Aercore 2000 produces a consistent, round hole. This is due to the Flexi-Link, which is attached to the rear of the tine leg and absorbs the forward motion of the aerator, allowing the tines to stay perpendicular while they are in the ground. As the tines come out of the ground, the Flexi-Link pushes the tine leg forward into position for the next stroke. What you end up with are quality cored holes up to 10 cm (4 in) deep, with productivity up to 9.295 m\(^2\)/h (100,066 sq ft/hr). To see why the Aercore 2000 and the rest of the Aercore line have outpunched the competition, call your local John Deere dealer or John Deere Limited, Langar, Tel. 01949 860491.
A guide to who's who at BIGGA

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John Pemberton

Email: john@bigga.co.uk

Editorial/Media
Scott MacCallum
Email: scott@bigga.co.uk

Education & Training Manager
Ken Richardson
Email: ken@bigga.co.uk

Membership Services Officer
Rachael Palmer
Email: rachael_pal@bigga.co.uk

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

Tel: 01347 833800
Fax: 01347 833801

Email: reception@bigga.co.uk

Internet: www.bigga.org.uk

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Features

COSHH Assessments
Neil Gibbons looks at the COSHH Assessments and how best to go about carrying them out.

The Florida Experience
David Winterton MG reports back on the second Bernhard Scholarship Trip. This time to the GCSAA Conference and Show in Orlando.

Blueprint for a successful club
Scott MacCallum visits Heyrose GC, in Cheshire, where the run before you walk philosophy has led to a successful golf club.

Changing the Nature of Your Greens
Henry Bechelet argues that the vegetation that develops in a place at a particular time is governed by environmental pressure.

Enviro Policies
Ronnie Bunting, of Kilmacolm, describes the work he has done at Kilmacolm Golf Club and gives some thoughts on environmental management.

Testings Times
Peter Jefford and Mick Higgins talk about the benefits of top dressings and the importance of testing in order to establish compatibility with the existing rootzone.

Poa Annua - Friend or Foe?
Richard Clarke, of Royal Eastbourne Golf Club, won the Assistants’ Over 25 Category in the 2001 BIGGA Essay Competition with this fine composition.

April 2002

Your next issue of Greenkeeper International will be with you by May 9, 2002

Regulars

News
Pages 4, 5, and 6

Letters

Education
BIGGA’s Education and Training Manager, Ken Richardson makes a plea for more feedback, advises on Regional Training and continues his Key Skills Corner.

Membership

Talking Heads
Six Head men explain their feeding regimes.

New Products
Showcasing some of the great new products recently released onto the market.

Around the Green

Features Listing
Helping you track down some of Greenkeeper International’s past articles.

As I see it...
BIGGA National Chairman, Richard Barker, welcomes in the new golf season and reports on his recent trip to Canada.

WIN

A superb ‘duck down’ waterproof jacket

This is your chance to win a great, quilted jacket worth over £50 in our exciting new Buyer’s Guide competition in association with GreenLink International & Green-Releaf.

‘The Turftime Teaser’

TURDISTREASER

Details on page 48

COSHH: Don’t worry

Maintenance facilities

Do stress your greens

Exercising top dressing and rootzones
As I write, it is now two months on from Harrogate and memories are still fresh in the mind of a truly wonderful week. My particular highlights include a wonderful education programme running throughout the week; the bizarrely funny Brahmans and Lizzi at the Banquet, and an inspirational talk by Roger Black, whom, I note, has obviously used BTME as a springboard to a presenter’s role on BBC TV’s Tomorrow’s World. Even the very best can enjoy professional advancement, if only they come to Harrogate!

Mulling over the attendance figures it is great to see a vindication for the decision to extend Black, whom, I note, has obviously used BTME following extensive consultation with the industry. Four consistently packed halls, featuring all the familiar industry names and faces - both on the stands and in the aisles, as well as new The Golf Club Show, which enjoyed a very successful debut in the King’s Suite. More than ever Harrogate is a not-to-be-missed Showcase for everything to do with golf... except, of course, the playing of the game.

A total of 2,312 visitors went through the doors on Wednesday (day 1) and 2,159 made the same journey yesterday (day 2). Last night, on your behalf a team of BIGGA mathematicians poured over calculators to come up with a figure of 42.9% - the increase on Thursday of 4.471, yes 4.471, a massive 25.2% figure of 42.9% - the increase on Thursday of 10.1% up on the 7,833 who attended BTME 2001, and reveals a relatively even split for the three days - an absolute bummer sandwiched between two very solid days.

As everyone who exhibits, or visits, a Show will know it is the final day where you expect to find the lowest number, so that the 2,144 Thursday figure is one of which we at BIGGA are particularly proud.

To put it into perspective, here’s what I wrote in a press release at my first BTME back in 1986. I must be in line for a gold watch or something by now.

Making his mark at Milford Haven

Milford Haven Golf Club has recently appointed their first course manager. Kevin Rawlins took up this key role in the autumn. Already the 33 year-old, is making his mark on the rolling 18 hole parkland course, set on the edge of the UK’s only coastal national park.

As a result of his appointment, the Pembroke club is also embarking on an ambitious five-year programme.

Kevin’s climb up the greenkeeping career ladder began as an assistant at Camberley Heath Golf Club, followed by a six year stint at Wentworth as Deputy Head Greenkeeper.

He believes in leading by example, and enjoys being hands on out on the course. He is full of praise for the hard-working team he inherited - First Assistant, David Smart, and greenkeeper Charlie Young. The club are currently recruiting a trainee to complete the ground staff team, which Kevin foresees as going from strength to strength.

“Kevin has proved to be huge asset to the club in the time he’s been with us. The results he’s already achieved on the course speak for themselves.” said Club Captain Andrew Smith.

According to Kevin, there is loads of potential at the club, with the luxury of plenty of space for expansion, two acres of nursery turf, and a large store of topsoil that can be exploited in a

Top man in Sussex

Steve Phillips, Course Manager at Cowdery Park GC, won the coveted award of Sussex Greenkeeper of the Year 2001. This award is presented by The Sussex Professional Golfer’s Union for Excellence in consistently preparing a Golf Course to the Highest Standards for all Professional events. Steve commented that his head Greenkeeper Jonathan Smith and his Team played a key part in winning the award.

Scottish Education Conference a success

The BIGGA Scottish Region Conference was again held at the Business Learning Centre, Lauder College, Dunfermline in March. An excellent venue with first class facilities and easy access from the motorway.

The speakers were covering a variety of subjects all relevant to the industry today.

God Cumber, Technical Sales Manager at Barenia, opened the Conference with a paper on Biological Solutions for any fine turf area. This was a most interesting and informative subject.

Next was Philip Langdon, of Wardle Consulting Engineers Ltd, on Irrigation Systems Assessment.

Philip provided an insight into irrigation systems. A topical subject and well presented by Phil. Despite the weather this winter, and the amount of rainfall we have had, his talk was of benefit to everyone who has a watering system or indeed anyone who was considering installing one.

After the break the double act of David Withers, from Textron, and Brian Goudie, of Scottish Grass Machinery, spoke on ‘A Salesman’s Role’. This was something different from previous years and was presented very well. The talk covered all aspects of the salesman’s role, having a good salesman/customer relationship and the benefits that can be gained from this partnership.

Final round of the morning session, was Ruth Mann of the STRI, who presented her paper on Pest and Disease Survey. Ruth explained the reasoning behind the survey and the research being carried out. This topic was of great interest to the members and generated a great deal of discussion.

After lunch, John Caven, Director of Golf at Meldrum House, Aberdeen, spoke about his role in the ‘Creation & Marketing of a 5 Star Golf Facility’. John provided a most valuable insight into marketing and presentation involved in promoting this kind of facility.

During the Conference the Chairman had the pleasure of announcing the first ever winner of the Harry Diamond Memorial Quaich. This award is presented in memory of one of the stalwarts of greenkeeping. Harry had served the Association in many capacities and was particularly involved in the education of greenkeepers and it was only fitting that this award be presented to the Student of the Year. The winner of the award for 2001 was Mark Cunningham, of Buchanan Castle Golf Club.

The Scottish Board would like to thank the Patrons for their continued support and the members who attended this year’s Conference. The numbers were once again over the 160 mark and it is thanks to you that the Conference is the success it is.

Peter J. Boyd, Scottish Regional Administrator

Scott MacCallum
Editor

Strategic programme of course improvements, including rebuilding the bunkers in reverted style - unusual on a parkland course.
BIGGA forges closer links with international associations

Right: At the GCSAA Banquet during the Orlando Show a memorable speech by Walter Woods was followed by presentations, including this portrait, to the Old Tom Morris Award winner by outgoing GCSAA President, Tommy Witt.

Below: Association chiefs get together in Quebec City. Pictured are Steve Mona, GCSAA; Ken Cousineau, CGSA; Neil Thomas, BIGGA with Maria Thorn, Senior Turf Specialist with Syngenta.

Below right: Pictured at the recent CGSA Conference and Show in Quebec City are Vince Gillis, recently retired Executive Director of the CGSA with CGSA Past President, Doug Meyer.

Gleneagles Excellence in Golf Award winner

Lee Relf, 21, from Colchester, a final year HND Sports Turf and Golf Course Management student at Writtle College, is the 2001 winner of the Gleneagles Excellence in Golf Award Scheme.

To win the award, Lee submitted two 5,000 word dissertations, which he then followed up with 20 minute presentations to a panel of judges.

The GEGAS initiative is supported by FEGGA and sponsored by Textron, and is a 12 month educational and practical training programme for young greenkeepers from around the globe, based at The Gleneagles Hotel.

It is open to students who are looking beyond a basic greenkeeping career and wish to develop their skills to become golf Course Managers of the future. The scheme can accommodate a maximum of eight students, who are selected from colleges and educational facilities in the UK and now, with FEGGA as a partner, from across Europe. Textron's sponsorship includes an expenses paid visit for the winning student to visit the GCSAA Show in the USA.

The scheme was established in 1994 and has grown year on year providing students with all the necessary greenkeeping skills, together with a unique opportunity for personal development during their year-long work placement.

"Lee is the first winner of the award since FEGGA added their support for the scheme. His dissertations and subsequent presentations were of the highest order and worthy of the accolade," said Jimmy Kidd, Golf Courses and Estate Director at The Gleneagles Hotel.

"During his 12 month placement he, and the other students, have had the opportunity to experience the alternative styles of maintenance required for soil and sand based greens. They have been able to work on the championship courses at Gleneagles and develop their greenkeeping talents. This is a wonderful opportunity to bring together students from all over Europe to train and gain experience and we are extremely grateful for the sponsorship from Textron that makes it happen."

Ernie Hart

It is with great regret that I report the death of Ernie Hart. Ernie was born in 1923 and apart from the War years spent most of his working life connected with our industry.

He was the East Anglia Section President and one of the biggest supporters of BIGGA I have ever had the honour to have known. After his retirement some 14 years ago Ernie would spend some of his time visiting golf clubs around East Anglia encouraging greenkeepers to join the Association. Last year Ernie was put forward for and granted Life Membership of the Association for all the work he had done for the East Anglia Section.

Ernie was a friend to everyone and always there to help, he will be greatly missed. May he rest in peace.

Ian Willett
East Anglia Section Secretary
The Grand Tour Scholarship 2002

The Grand Tour Scholarship invites golf course design and turfgrass management students for the third time in August and are organised by the TORA Company and offers a unique learning experience for future leaders in our industry. The trips are going to take place in the United States, and are designated as SSSI, the gently undulating courses - The Torrance, which opened in September, and The Devlin, opening next summer - have been kept as natural as possible with the replanting of native flowers and gorse. Toro has been awarded an exclusive five-year lease agreement at St Andrews Bay.

I was asked what I wanted on the course and said "Toro," said Course Superintendent, Neil Ballingall, who was Course Manager at Moray Golf Club before joining St Andrews Bay. The picture shows, front, Neil Ballingall, third from left, with the left Scott McNeil, of dealers Henderson Grass Machinery, Lely's General Manager and Henderson's Gaeme Millar, with the St Andrews Bay greenkeepers.

Training numbers are on the increase

THE number of golf greenkeepers undergoing training has leapt 20% in the past 12 months, according to new figures from the GTC. There are 2,817 greenkeepers in formal training in the current year, an increase of 445 on the previous year.

The news has been welcomed by the GTC and bodes well for the quality of future greenkeepers. N/SVQ Levels 2 and 3 continue to be the qualifications most in demand, but Higher National Certificate and Higher National Diplomas have also shown healthy growth.

The online Internet learning option is also proving popular, especially at Level 4. One establishment where online learning is taking off is Boston GC in Lincolnshire, where greenkeeper John Osborne has just completed NVQ Level 2 Sports turf. "Although this type of learning does not suit everyone, in John's case it has really paid off," said Secretary Stephen Shaw.

Toro for St Andrews Bay

Toro has supplied a complete range of turf equipment to maintain the two new chicl top championship golf courses at the £50 million St Andrews Bay Golf Resort & Spa.

The spectacular complex, which includes a 209 bedroom luxury hotel, enjoys breathtaking views over the Firth of Tay, and is the only golf club in the world with views of two Open Championship venues - Carnoustie and St Andrews!

Set among 503 acres, 55 of which are designated as SSSI, the gently undulating courses - The Torrance, which opened in September, and The Devlin, opening next summer - have been kept as natural as possible with the replanting of native flowers and gorse. Toro has been awarded an exclusive five-year lease agreement at St Andrews Bay.

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The scholarship offers four students the opportunity to visit a variety of famous historic and modern golf courses on the east coast and west coast of the United States. Students will have the opportunity to walk each golf course, split the task or driving across the country. Students will have the opportunity to walk each golf course, split the task or driving across the country.

Applications shall be at least 21 years old and have demonstrated significant efforts and results in their educational career.

Applications must be in possession of a valid passport and drivers license.

Application forms and further information, please contact Bettina Schrickel by e-mail: lionsgolf@aol.com or telephone: (+1) 564-3435.

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Thanks to Sierrablen I needn’t feed my turf again for the season.

No wonder Sierrablen® is the leading controlled release fertilizer. It puts you in control and keeps you there, because it feeds your turf with the specific nutrients it needs, for up to nine months. The result is hard wearing, durable turf with a consistent colour.

There’s great product choice and flexibility with just one application lasting 2 to 3, 5 to 6 or 8 to 9 months – a complete growing season. This saves you both time and money and avoids potentially damaging wastage.

So, when life’s as busy as yours, it’s good to know you can relax and rely on Scotts, the company that brought you the original CRF and still gives you the best results, whatever your turf needs.

Why not give us a call on 01473 830492. We promise that we’ll keep your turf well fed.
A right to reply from Denmark

Having just read the February issue of Greenkeeper International I feel I need to reply to three of the letters written in the magazine.

I would first of all like to thank Alex McCombie for his kind words regarding the article that I wrote in the January issue of Greenkeeper International and also the positive reaction I received from colleagues at Harrogate. It appears that it has made people realise that the future is not about green is beautiful but the grasses that are trying to grow and our goal must be to achieve greens that can survive with limited fertiliser, water and no chemical control. This will become the reality in the UK in the near future and if you have 100% Poa greens you should start worrying now and make that change.

Alex is right in that Education is the key if golf members are to understand what needs to be done to ensure quality greens in the future when you have no chemical control.

Imagine the scenario. You have poa greens, no fungicide and it is October. It has been raining for two weeks and is 14 degrees. You have a serious outbreak of fusarium. What can you do? The answer is nothing except watch as 30% of your green is taken out by the disease. Now who will be blamed for the poor state of the greens? You of course and your job is on the line as your greenkeeping abilities are questioned.

The above scenario is the reality now in Denmark except through educating and communicating with our members they accept that the greens will have problems until we eliminate the poa. Are your members ready to accept the same?

I should also like to thank Richard Penley-Martin, Secretary, Stoneham Golf Club for his comments and making me aware that the Secretary is responsible for running the whole company and not just one part of it. This is not the case at many clubs today.

I am however happy to say that outside of the UK European clubs are run differently and that Course Managers are allowed to solely manage the golf course which is the reason they are employed in the first place and at our club the Club Secretary has absolutely nothing to do with the running of the golf course and I answer directly to the Board of Management.

I would like to make Richard Penley-Martin aware that after years of ex RAF employees taking on the Secretary's role at golf clubs it would appear that at forward thinking clubs experienced Course Managers who have also gained management skills through education courses put on by BIGGA are now taking over the running of golf clubs as General Managers which can only be good for the future of any golf club having an expert in golf course management communicating to members on a daily basis.

Finally, I have to thank the Happy Head Greenkeeper, Leslie Howkins of Cleethorpes Golf Club, for his letter where all his skill, knowledge and experience is used and then tells us that he accepts that the course is not aesthetically pleasing or that he is not producing a good golf course and we are accused of bringing problems on ourselves!

Here is the perfect example of one man being led and not leading.

Ian C Tomlinson, Course Manager, Rungsted Golf Club, Denmark

Playing with others' lives

I read with interest the letter by Barney Wright in the March issue re “Respect”. Greenkeepers have always had to put up with membersknowing better than them, but I have found over the last decade or so that it has become worse.

Our profession must be one of the few which is criticised by everybody. You can go into any clubhouse and there will be a set of members who know just how the course should be run. These members hold court and people tend to listen to them.

Greenstaff take more flack than others. It is hard enough running a golf course and I cannot believe that they are back holding court. These people are playing with others' lives. If they want slow, bumpy greens then they can stop the ball on with a driver and don't aerate them as it makes them miss so many putts who are we to argue.

Leslie goes on to tell us that this is where all his skill, knowledge and experience is used and then tells us that he accepts that the course is not aesthetically pleasing or that he is not producing a good golf course and we are accused of bringing problems on ourselves!

Here is the perfect example of one man being led and not leading.

Ian C Tomlinson, Course Manager, Rungsted Golf Club, Denmark

lang gives thanks for Stateside trip

I would like to thank Bernhard & Company and BIGGA for allowing me to be part of the team of delegates that visited Orlando this February. The trip was a great success, it was an experience not to be missed and very educational, it was fascinating to compare golf course in America with those in Britain. I had the pleasure of speaking to many Golf Superintendents from all over the US and it was nice to hear that they hold such high regard for the courses in Great Britain. I have already spoken to a lot of greenkeepers throughout my section telling them of the visit and how beneficial it was.

I have planned some talks at our golf meetings this year and I will be talking to various Course Managers from all over the US and it was nice to hear that they hold such high regard for the courses in Great Britain. I have already spoken to a lot of greenkeepers throughout my section telling them of the visit and how beneficial it was.

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Legislation is the key

Re Richard Penley-Martin's letter in February's issue. Just a few observations. You are a manager and you understand past, and this is tongue in cheek, a Secretary had to have the right accent, seen a dozen Secretary-Managers come in magazine 'In defence of Mr T. A. Smith in this month's mag-
tation from the club members on how indicating for those greenkeepers to get these comments and attitudes are out of comment 'if they don't ask then don't share knowledge surely can only be get them in, get them out that the HNC student may not be done that now' are van-
ishing. The feed back we have received is remarkable and very positive. The age old impressions of the greenkeeper as an old Tom can climb a ladder to clean the gutters of the clubhouse and golf clubs now need tru-
ly professional people to run them affairs both on the course and in clubhouse who should be paid accordingly. Which brings me back to my origi-
nal letter. It will be legislation that forces the way the average members club is run, this is why I feel there aren’t as many volunteers as before, they are starting to realise where there’s blame there’s a claim and who in their right mind wants to take up a position with out pay that could end up with them on the wrong side of a court case. PS My dad was in the RAF.

Dave Goodridge, Denbigh Golf Club

Huge thanks to well wishers

At 9am on the 22nd January this year I had two appointments, one with a surgeon's secretary, and the other with the secretary of the BTME. It seemed ironic that both should be exactly the same day and the same time as each other. I had always said that I would never miss a BTME, but on that oc-
casion I had little choice. However, as days went by I became very much aware of another aspect of BIGGA membership, that of camaraderie, and the bond that runs through green-
keeping and our Association. I received so many cards, letters and phone calls from members and staff wishing me well, that I lost count, but I can assure you that every one was very much appreciated, as was the run from Devon and Cornwall Section, and the box of fruit from the South West & South Wales Region. I won-
der how they knew what to send. I would like to thank every one of you for the kindness shown, you will never know how much it meant to me and Marion to know how many of you took the time and money to send your best wishes. I am getting fitter by the day and will soon be back among you all. Thanks again.

Gordon Child, Churston, South Devon

Textron thanks

On behalf of myself and all the other

who attended the OCSAA Show in Orlando Florida this year, I would like to extend a big thank you to Textron. The show was very enlight-
ening especially for those of us who have never had this opportunity in the past. The hospitality, accommodation and indeed everything else during our stay was second to none. The group focus meetings were interesting and helpful to both Textron and their cus-
tomers and I am sure will go a long way to ensuring more improvements and innovations in the future.

Ross Wilson, Course Manager, Persopamia Golf & Country Club

Address your letters to: The Editor, Greenkeeper International, BIGGA HOUSE, Aldwark, Alne, York YO61 1UF, or email them to: scott@bigga.co.uk

Sharing the knowledge

I have been reading the letter from Mr T. A. Smith in this month's mag-
zine 'In defence of NVQs' and I feel it deserves some sort of response. I could not believe the comments Mr Smith made about keeping information from the club members on how we maintain the golf course and mock-
ing record keeping and report writing, indicating for those greenkeepers to get out on the course and do some work, then finishing the statement with the comment 'if they don't ask then don't tell them'.

Is this the year 2002 or is it 1802? These comments and attitudes are out dated, untrue and have to change or greenkeeping as a professional industry will never be taken seriously. Science and industries can only progress with the sharing and under-
standing of knowledge. I feel it is our duty to share the knowledge we have with not just people in our industry but also the public who keep our industry alive - the paying customer. It is our responsibility to educate the golfers and Aeration - what it is and explains in layman's terms the rea-
sons for the operation; this is why you do it. This sharing of knowledge has given the members and guests an insight into the skilled profession of greenkeeping and the comments such as 'why do you always have to do that now' are van-
ishing. The feed back we have received is remarkable and very positive. The age old impressions of the greenkeeper as the man who just cuts the grass is dis-
appearing and we are being looked upon as qualified professional people who surely can only benefit this pro-
fession.

Knowledge and education is the key for any type of progression in this indu-

try and very important that we all understand that the NVQs are not the only way forward. It is clear by reading the magazine month after month that the NVQs are the flavour of the month where further education is concerned. It was quite disheartening to read the comments on the very next page stating that the Higher National Diplomas and Higher National Certificates can be good for people who know how to do the job on paper but maybe not be able to do it in reality.

This may be true to some extent, but I have worked with people with NVQs who also can't do the job very well. This may be down to poor training and just getting bums on seats at colleges, get them in, get their money, and pass them. I have worked with people in the past who's NVQ level 2 training never know how much it meant to me and Marion to know how many of you took the time and money to send your best wishes. I am getting fitter by the day and will soon be back among you all. Thanks again.

I have completed NVQ training and I have also completed the HNC and found both of them to be extremely worthwhile while courses. At this moment in time I am one year into my MSc in Sports Surface Technology at Cranfield University. I decided to go for the MSc, all of which have their own mer-
its. This is also unfair to the student who has undoubtedly studied hard for the course.

I would like to thank every one of you for the kindness shown, you will never know how much it meant to me and Marion to know how many of you took the time and money to send your best wishes. I am getting fitter by the day and will soon be back among you all. Thanks again.

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Ross Wilson, Course Manager, Persopamia Golf & Country Club

YOU'VE GOT M@IL!

If you've got an email account, and want to keep up to date with the latest news and events from the turfcare industry, drop us an email, and we'll add you to our ever increasing list of online subscribers. We'll then inform you of any forthcoming events and updates.

Simply send an email to: updates@bigga.co.uk

quoting your name and Membership number, and we'll do the rest!
Education and Training Feedback

There have been a number of comments posted on the BIGGA website referring to the National Education Conference. Workshops and Seminars held at Harrogate in January, some positive and others negative. Sami and I try to meet the education and training needs of all greenkeepers by arranging a variety of education and training opportunities at Harrogate and around the Regions. We regularly ask greenkeepers what subjects and presenters they would like to see for example; we issued 300 feedback sheets at Harrogate in January, but we get very little feedback. We interpret this to mean that the vast majority of BIGGA members are happy to let us do the work of selecting speakers and topics and are happy with the results. One suggestion that we do get is "more greenkeeper presenters". Who are they? Are they willing to speak? Are they worth listening to? Let us know your ideas by writing, phoning, sending an e-mail to ken@bigga.co.uk, using the bulletin board, speaking to us direct, speaking to your Regional Administrator or Section Secretary.

Regional Training

The Spring series of BIGGA Regional Training Courses is drawing to a close with greenkeepers attending courses as diverse as Basic Computing, Soil Science, Essential Management Skills, Budgets and Finance, Presentation Skills, Chainsaw Use and Health and Safety. We can afford to present such a wide range of courses at very heavily subsidised prices thanks to our Education and Development Fund. You could cover the cost of several years membership by attending just one course. For example each day one course costs BIGGA approximately £1500. Each delegate pays £30 and we average six delegates per course therefore the total subsidy is £1320 and dividing this by six gives a subsidy per delegate of £220. Who says it is not worth becoming a BIGGA member?

The Connexions Card

The Government is keen to encourage 16-19 year olds, in England, to stay in learning and acquire the skills they need to flourish in adult life and has introduced a scheme called the Connexions Card. The card is available free of charge to over 2 million young people and it works by awarding points for regular attendance at school, college, at work based learning and for voluntary work. From 2002 onwards, active cardholders will be able to exchange their points for branded goods or services, interesting opportunities and exciting experiences. There is also a loyalty scheme whereby cardholders can receive discounts and special offers from a range of retailers including computer games, fast food, clothes, leisure activities, travel and CDs.

To get more information, telephone 0808172 3333 or look at the Connexions Card website: www.connexionscard.com

If you’ve got an email account why not send an email to the education department, where we can place you into our exclusive education email address book. We can then keep you up-to-date with education news and events as they happen.

Send an email to either: education@bigga.co.uk ken@bigga.co.uk sami@bigga.co.uk

EDUCATION KEY SKILLS CORNER

Regular readers will have seen the first Key Skills Corner in last months Greenkeeper International, where I left you with a poser about Full Stops. Check to see if you found all the errors.

Welcome to BIGGA HOUSE. Today is Tuesday, the 3rd of March. The next Public Holiday, in England, will be Easter.

This month’s subject is full stops and alternative ways to end a sentence.

For example, closing a sentence.

The Staff of BIGGA Headquarters support the Jeans for Genes Charity.

With abbreviations.

Note that full stops could be placed in the acronym BIGGA (B.I.G.G.A.) but modern writing tends not to use them. Abbreviations such as Mr, Mon, Apr could have full stops but modern writing tends not to use them.

As a decimal point.

The Golf Club Budget showed a deficit of £67.30.
Neil Gibbons looks at the COSHH Assessments and how best to go about carrying them out

Introduction
The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1999 (COSHH for short) have been in existence for a long time but there is still a serious lack of appreciation of what a so called COSHH assessment really means. This article is intended to give you the information to be able to carry out assessments correctly.

Not long ago I went into a company and, when I asked to see their COSHH Assessments, was proudly given a large file. However, when I examined it, it simply contained all the Safety Data Sheets. These are not assessments.

Making an Inventory
So how do you start to comply with COSHH? Well, you cannot do anything until you know what substances you have. Therefore, an inventory of all the substances within the organisation is key. It is best to consider individual areas to ensure you are thorough i.e. Greenkeepers, Clubhouse (including bar), Pro-shop. You may be surprised to find how long the list is, but do try to make sure it is complete. All substances in use by your organisation should have been supplied with a Material Safety Data Sheet. If you do not have one for each of the substances you use, contact your supplier (found by looking at the packaging), who is obliged to supply one.

Doing the Assessment
As I have said above merely having a list of substances you use and a file containing all the Material Safety Data Sheets does not constitute an assessment. The stages involved in an assessment are:

1. Establish if the substances you use are hazardous and what is the type of hazard. The CHIP (Chemical Hazard Information and Packaging for Supply) Regulations define classifications of hazardous substances. The main classifications are harmful, irritant, corrosive, toxic, flammable, oxidising. The container for the substance will be labelled accordingly.

2. Establish the approximate usage of the substance (e.g. kg or litres per week) along with the frequency (how often) and duration of use (minutes or hours?).

3. Record how contact with the substance occurs and brief details on how and where it is used. For example with small quantities of paint it could be 'used externally for general painting' or when mixing chemicals for spraying 'mixed with water and then poured into spray unit tank. Process carried out on concrete area outside (or in well ventilated area).

4. Record what control measures are used to avoid exposure to the substance. This could be an extraction system, the use of a pump to avoid contact, or most commonly the use of Personal Protective Equipment (e.g. safety spectacles or goggles, gloves, overalls, chemical suit, wellingtons).

5. It is only after recording all this information that an assessment can then be made, and I hope it is evident that you cannot make one without it, because the conclusion has to be the answer to the following question:

Is the exposure to this substance which is hazardous to health suitably controlled to avoid it being harmful to the employee (or anyone else likely to be exposed to it)?

If your assessment concludes that exposure is not likely to be harmful then that is as far as you need go. A record of this assessment needs to be kept along with a copy of the Material Safety Data Sheet.

Further Control Measures
If the assessment concludes that exposure is still potentially harmful you must consider additional control measures. The COSHH Regulations, as with other risk assessment processes, lays down a hierarchy of control measures you must consider:

1. Do you really need to use it or can it be replaced by something less hazardous?

2. Can you reduce the usage of it by changing the process?

3. Can exposure be reduced by introducing some form of mechanical exposure control or handling device (e.g. a pump)?

4. Can ventilation be improved?

5. Can you reduce the exposure by changing the process or how the substance is used (operating procedure)?

6. Is additional or better Personal Protective Equipment required?

Monitoring
In my opinion one of the biggest problems in reaching a conclusion as to whether exposure is adequately controlled is that it is impossible to know the levels of the substance in the atmosphere without measuring it. Where exposure duration is short and infrequent it is unlikely exposure levels will be exceeded. However there is obviously a need to consider if monitoring is required. This needs to be carried out by a suitably qualified person and can involve monitoring of the workplace or personal monitoring.

It should also be noted that in certain cases involving the use of particularly hazardous substances (for example carcinogens) health surveillance of employees will be required.

Conclusion
I hope I have demonstrated that there is far more to a COSHH Assessment than simply obtaining the Material Safety Data Sheet. However the main point is that you are conducting an assessment i.e. that you must reach a conclusion as to whether the control measures you have in place are suitable to control the risk of exposure.

For more information on COSHH or assistance with COSHH Assessments or indeed any Health and Safety problem please contact:

Safety Measures Ltd, Innovation House, Daleside Road, Nottingham, NG2 4 DH
Tel: 0115 911 0595 Fax: 0115 911 0590 e-mail: safetymeas@aol.com

April 2002 Greenkeeper International

11
This has to be the hardest Membership Update column I’ve ever had to write, because I know that as you read this issue I will be but a distant memory in the BIGGA staff room! After a very enjoyable four years with BIGGA, fate has stepped in and indicated it is time to move on to something else. Not only are they great friends, but from a professional point of view I have learnt much from each of them, their skills, abilities, knowledge and enthusiasm for each of their areas of expertise is to be admired. Your Association is in good hands.

I would also like to pass on my thanks to each of the Regional Administrators, Peter B, Doug, Peter L, Derek and Paula who work endlessly to administer each of the five regions. I have had the pleasure of accompanying each of the regional and section seminars and conferences and experiencing their kind hospitality! Also, to each of the Section Secretaries, who, in their spare time administer each of their sections, which is important in the processing of membership recruitment and retention.

There have been many people, mainly friends I know I can count on after the distant memory in the BIGGA staff room, who might find themselves encountering similar situations,” she explained.

They were three main reasons that persuaded Rachel and her husband, Stuart, to leave the Isle of Wight and move to Yorkshire - football, hills and beer!

They have a quite unfaithful love for Leeds United and moving to York has enabled them to become season ticket holders and expand on the 10, mainly away games a season, they had managed previously - among them last season the Champions League semi-final at Valencia.

They are also keen cyclists and can often been seen around their 1950s tandem which they restored themselves.

Finally they are both aged that northern breans are far superior to their southern counterparts and a move north would make them much more accessible.

We love it in Yorkshire and are delighted that we made the move. I am looking forward to my work with BIGGA and meeting as many members as I can,” she said.

April’s Membership Draw Winner

Just introduce one or more new greenkeeping members to BIGGA and your name will be placed into a draw to win a fantastic BIGGA Clock/calculator and calendar and alarm.

Our congratulations go to April’s winner, Michael West, of Rowhedge Golf Club.

Don’t Drift Away ...

If your membership expired on 31 December 2001, 31 January 2002 or 26 February 2002 and you haven’t yet renewed, don’t drift away from your Association, renew your membership this month. Providing you are working as a greenkeeper, we will still cover your details on our database and you can renew your membership with a new expiry date, you can even pay by direct debit if you wish. Don’t leave it any longer, if you need a renewal form or further information contact the Membership Services Team, on 01347 833800.

This month we take a look at ‘Around the Green’ ten years ago

Prophetic?

The Devon and Cornwall Section notes reported that golf and an excellent lunch had been followed by Kerran Daly presenting a paper on ‘Computers and Greenkeeping’.

It was suggested that Kerran must have thought he was on the couch from Hamptone when water started to drip onto his overhead projector, but to his credit he waded on in fine style and brought home the point that greenkeepers do not need to be afraid of computers as these available are ‘user friendly’. Kerran further suggested that all greenkeepers should be using them in the work place in the near future ...

A Right Dressing Down

A sortie to one Section’s notes advised that he was ending his report on a sour note. One thing that did not go unnoticed at the Section’s seminar was the number of greenkeepers who arrived wearing jeans, Everett shirts, training shoes and, worse, old fashioned red, white and blue football kit! This surely cannot go on any longer. If golf club members are expected to dress correctly at their own club, surely we owe it to ourselves and our customers to do the same.

It is pure luck that these individuals have not had the opportunity to play in other clubs and it is surely only a matter of time before such a refusal will face the cullers. Worse still, as a section we may not be extended the courtesy of many clubs, simply because of the few without pride, who cannot dress themselves properly. If individuals cannot take responsibility for their dress at such events, then their head greenkeepers must take it upon themselves, if only to save our interests. So come on, you head men, if you are sending staff to represent your club at any future section meetings or regional meetings - get them in order, or don’t send them at all.

Farmers do not make good Greenkeepers

This Section’s notes make interesting reading. One of the many folds with 18 regulations that have taken place on themselves, if only to save our interests. So come on, you head men, if you are sending staff to represent your club at any future section meetings or regional meetings - get them in order, or don’t send them at all.

Scottish Region

Jonathan Campbell, East
Greene Flett, East
Fiona Cullen, North
Edward Hay, East
Robert Long, North
Kenneth MacKenzie, East
Brian McCann, Mid
Steven Ness, East
Richard Ralph, North
Northern Region

Gordon Butcher, Sheikhfield
Chris Cope, North
Sheen Chewler, Sheikhfield
David Cooper, North
Keith Duncombe, Sheikhfield
Ian Dunsmore, Cleveland
David Forrester, North
Thomas Ferner, East
Gary Gower, North
Peter Griffith, N Wales
Andrew Grundy, N Wales
Peter Hobbing, N West
Neville Hayden, East

Mr Bane, London Michael Gaisett, Essex
Keith Buckingham, London
Aimee Crichton, Surrey
Cyril Ellis, Surrey
Cassian Freeman, Essex
Keen Graham, London
Andrew Hemmings, Surrey
Matthew Lewis, Essex
Malcolm McDonald, Essex
Mack Richards, Essex
Dominic Rogers, Essex
Angela John Springer, Essex
Martin Trevor, Essex
Wendy Wheat, Kent

North Eastern Region

Robert Bailey
Richard Leonard

International Members

Chris Bagh, Bahamas
Michael Carlsson, USA
Eric de Wit, Sweden
Tobie Hartmann, Germany
Jay Nails N, USA
Edward Walsh, USA

Golden Sliver Key Members

Colin Hoard, E Midland
Sarah Mason, Mid Anglia
Justin Smith, Mid Anglia
Alistair Adam, Mid Anglia

Associate Members

Matthew Baytow, Australia
Malcolm Colesage, Dev & Chwilt
Simon Doyle, Japan

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This month, Tracey Maddison from BIGGA’s Membership Services Department, would like to welcome over 100 new members to the Association, and bids you all a fond farewell as she is venturing to pastures new.

Bidding a fond farewell...

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Mr E Adams, St. Andrews Links Trust

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Website: www.lloydsandco.com
Ten very lucky guys met one rain filled day at Gatwick, bound for Florida. Like Knights of the Round Table we took our places on the plane. Landing nine hours later I realised what a diverse group of greenkeepers we were, coming from areas so completely different from each other. The world’s greatest playground heaven welcomed us with its riches of concrete, tarmac and hotels, surrounded by amazing golf courses with wetlands galore.

Our first day was kissed by sunlight as we travelled out into the ‘boonies’, countryside to us, to visit Orange County National Golf Centre & Lodge. This proved to be awesome in comparison with the courses our group manages. There are 36 holes on 584 acres. The greens are an average size of 2000 square metres, set among bunkers with pampas grass or trees set inside and a backdrop of pine flatwoods, natural oak hammocks and wetlands. They have the largest driving range in the world at 42 acres; circular in design with eight driving ranges all firing into the centre. They average 85,000 rounds per annum at $135 each. The Superintendent, Carl Benedict, has a staff of 35 in winter and 45 for summer. The course is managed by a budget of $2 million but this does include leasehold machinery. Whenever a member of staff meets with a golfer they stop and switch the machine off. That relates to lots of downtime per day and a serious wear and tear factor for the machines.

What really struck the group was the use of labour to maintain these big courses. The normal set-up consists of the superintendent, two skilled assistants, two to three mechanics and one to two irrigation technicians. The rest of the staff consists of Hispanics, Latinos, Guatemalans and Mexicans. These live together in groups near the course and stay for two to three years before going back home to family. They are trained to do specific tasks only.

What a difference to us where we have a smaller team but want all team members fully trained to a high level.

Over the next few days we visited several other courses on our turfgrass field seminar. The most outstanding feature of the courses we visited like Magnolia Creek and Champions Gate is how they manage water. Summer temps are high with incredible evapotranspiration rates so the superintendents use lots of water. Orange County often applies one million gallons per day through 40,000 sprinklers. This seems extreme but the way they manage this usage is the key. Effluent water is pumped from Orlando and surrounding places like Disney’s Celebration Village to large rectangular percolation basins called RIBS (Rapid Infiltration Basins). These are created on the natural soil that is very sandy. This soil allows 2.5m of rain to drain through in one
hour. The effluent water goes back into the artesian water basin for use again but the golf courses can draw off this water for irrigation.

Another new build site at Magnolia Creek will cover 2100 acres with three 18 holes designed by Watson, Nicklaus & Palmer respectively. The irrigation requirements are awesome and will be supplied by a horizontal well that extracts water from the water table and stores the water in a holding lake. When the course is irrigated the excess water will drain back into the water table to be reused, thereby creating a self-sufficient water supply.

Serious ecological mistakes were made years ago when the everglades were drained. Now in more enlightened times Florida is trying to do a U-turn and make sure the wetlands are protected from developers. We visited the Nature Conservancy Disney Wilderness Preserve. This is 12,000 acres of natural wetlands that have remained free of any development. It holds one of only two lakes in Florida that does not have any property built on the edge. When big companies like Disney build in Florida they have to agree to protect an area of land similar in size, to balance out the loss of land. This is how Disney Wilderness Preserve came into being. It was great for us to wander through such wilderness, spotting tortoise burrows and armadillos but luckily no snap happy drivers.

Florida is now in the process of opening up old watercourses to recreate the original wetlands and improve the bio-diversity in those areas.

Some of us were lucky enough to visit a course at Titusville, near Cape Canaveral where a British greenkeeper, Geoff Coggan MG, CGCS resides. This course is set in the middle of wetlands with the 18-hole course weaving its way through several hundred road vehicle parks. It was great to get an escape from the surreal world of Orlando and visit authentic Florida. All in a day's work could be getting rid of nuisance alligators. These are ones that have become overly friendly due to people feeding them. Big holes need to be filled, made by Armadillos who can go some distance due to the sandy soil. The irrigation pumping system has to be checked regularly as this system is used by the fire department. It has a back-up generator in case of powercuts. Many thanks to Geoff for his personal guide around the course.

Another seminar we attended covered professional presentations. Any dialogue coming from Ronnie, at Kilmacolm, Jim, at West Kilbride or Patrick, from Nefyn, was greeted with "Pardon?" or "Sorry?" as Mimi, our delectable instructor, deciphered the language. This is only Tuesday and already someone, no names mentioned, had the audacity to fall asleep! This caused ripples of comment for the ongoing activities. As this person, quite rightly, had to give a 10-minute presentation, the nine crew members fell asleep in the back row. If any man can continue his presentation after this, he's a star.
President's Dinner started with a long list of thanks from the outgoing President, Tommy Witt, and the new President being introduced. Several speeches later it ended with an emotional Tommy gathering his family together on stage, a moving and fitting tribute to those who had supported this man through the year. It was good to see Tommy's employer get up to give support and high praise of the man in charge of his business even though he had been off-site for a great part of the year. Naturally we were all moved when Walter was presented with his Old Tom Morris Award. His speech was impeccable and did not need translating! It showed high regard for Walter that so many Scottish greenkeepers had travelled out to be with him for his special moment in their tartan cloth of the clan with sporrans gleaming. You could visibly see the strain of receiving this award drain away as he enjoyed the company of fellow greenkeepers throughout the evening. He must now be the most photographed greenkeeper on this planet, excepting Richard Barker of course, but Walter stands tall and proud as one of our greatest ambassadors, living proof that hard work and a keen interest in golf and greenkeeping can give you a good life.

In discussion with many superintendents they were interested how we managed to get such great results on our courses with such small budgets. It goes to show we have very skilled greenkeepers in the UK who can produce first rate surfaces and a great course to match.

Ronnie Bunting has recently seen his course achieve the Award of Recognition for Environmental Achievements through the Committed to Green programme. Ronnie has a fascinating story to tell, backed up by a document on how his course went about improving their environmental standing. Should anyone be interested to know more I know that Ronnie would be most helpful in your requests.

Thursday and Friday were a mixture of visits to the show or short seminars. It made me proud to realise just how well BIGGA organises the Harrogate show. For the first time I was able to compare it with a similar show and I feel we give our international visitors something worthwhile. The GCSAA were celebrating their 75 years in fine style with a special showcase of historical artefacts and articles that took me quite some time to get through. The GCSAA have had a long way from humble beginnings but today they have an Association that is very big business. Harrogate had 8000 attend this year while the Orlando show had 20,000. Our group made good use of the Internet Cybercafe. This consisted of 10 consoles, set up by the GCSAA for use by members or visitors, free of charge. It was a great service and could be used to find out details of the show or seminars or simply to hassle the wife!

I became aware just how much money the GCSAA puts towards further education of their members. They have several programs that greenkeepers can apply for such as the Watson fellowships, the GCSAA Scholars competition or the Legacy awards. They produce several documents, free to members, that help give detailed information on a particular subject. Two that I found interesting that perhaps reflect present times are Managing Unemployment and How To Help Your Course Weather An Economic Downturn. Another sign of the times was the fact that many superintendents are now employed through a contract of employment that terminates after three to five years. The views on this among superintendents varies but the main emphasis seemed to be that the contract does give good security in your position and if you are doing a good job then the contract will be renewed.

A highlight of the trip was our Friday evening's activities. The President's Dinner started with a long list of thanks from the outgoing President, Tommy Witt, and the new President being introduced. Several speeches later it ended with an emotional Tommy gathering his family together on stage, a moving and fitting tribute to those who had supported this man through the year. It was good to see Tommy's employer get up to give support and high praise of the man in charge of his business even though he had been off-site for a great part of the year.

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It gave me great pride to see the BIGGA delegation in their blazers standing out in the crowd.

Later on in the evening we had the honour of a special invite to a private party given by Tommy Witt in the Peabody Hotel, a rather luxurious building indeed. This was the time to undo the collars and his superintendents would no doubt find that they were not needed. This was the time to relax and enjoy the great moments of Tommy's year showed just how much he cares for
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April 2002 Greenkeeper International 17

his profession and the effort and support from other board members to make a difference.

Stephen Bernhard and Sam McLean were wonderful hosts, making sure they spent some time with each of the group at the various functions we attended. Their enthusiasm for helping greenkeepers expand their horizons is a great example to all who meet them. Whatever steps Bernhard & Co make in the future to co-host visits abroad or introduce Internships for young greenkeepers, I would urge members of BIGGA to apply for these places. You have so much to gain from such experiences and along the way promote the advantages of working within this industry. My short presentation ended with me making the point that our group of greenkeepers deserved to be on this trip because we had goals and were willing to strive for them.

You only get out of life what you put into it, so let's see more BIGGA members apply for educational visits and courses.

They should have no qualms about what level of new contacts or friendships are formed between our visiting party and the superintendents we met. I have already had several contacts through email from some of those I have met. It is true what they say about the UK having a special relationship with the Americans. They were openly friendly and one could strike up conversation at any moment and find a warmth of friendship evident.

During my precious social time I treated myself to a visit to Islands of Adventure on my last day that came highly recommended by Sami, our authentic American ambassador, and found myself at one point in a line to travel the Hulk rollercoaster. As I trembled with fear for 30 minutes I struck up conversation with a huge fellow from New Orleans. We talked golf among other things but he helped me get on that ride and survive it. Afterwards we laughed at the photo showing sheer fear on my face as he had gladly waved his arms in the air. Outside he introduced me to his wife and children who had been patiently waiting for him. Such contacts confirm that life is for living and I know the group I travelled with heartily thank Bernhard & Co for their sponsorship and BIGGA for their support in making this happen.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our intrepid greenkeeper travellers for their part in making this a memorable trip and especially Tony Dunstan who very quickly became the honorary Lord Lichfield in the group. I learned a lot about greenkeeping in our part of the world that would have been difficult any other way; such was the fine meeting of minds.
Roland Taylor looks at the improvements made in the modern day machinery workshop and looks at the whole issue of machinery maintenance

MAINTENANCE FACILITY

The workshop area turned out to be a corner of the machinery store. The floor was earth, which had dried out to a dust and the only light was from one fluorescent tube so a great deal of the area was in shadow. A small bench was set against the wall, so obviously, a lot of the work had to be carried out on the floor. There was a heater, but judging by its size, the heat it emitted would barely take the chill off on a cold winters day. Old half-dismantled machines, that had clearly seen better days, were littered around the perimeter. What little space there was, would be almost completely taken up if a machine were brought in for repair. Containers full of black sludge and fuel were heaped in one corner. The air was rancid with the smell of burnt oil and earthiness and the overall appearance was a place where you would not want to linger in, or worse carry out any service work.

No, this is not the first chapter of a Dickensian novel, it is a slightly over the top description of the type of machinery storage cum workshop, that could be found not so many years ago. Thank goodness those days have passed and today the picture is generally completely different, although having said that, there maybe some elements of the scenario still about.

Over the last two decades considerable changes have taken place in both the golf course and outdoor power equipment industries. In the former, we have seen considerable growth and with it a higher profile that has placed greater demands on all those involved in course management. Part of this has been in the machinery sector, where their upkeep is critical to a smooth operation. This has led to more courses now carrying out all their service work with dedicated staff and workshops.

On the manufacturers’ front some of the big names have been merged, while other companies are becoming well established. The dealerships have also changed with quite a number of previously well-known names falling by the wayside. Others have grown larger.

There are now fewer firms around specialising in the professional equipment sector. This has led to some suppliers having to sell direct and find service outlets to cover warranty plus service work.

What is even more of a concern, is that fewer people are coming into the business to be trained as service technicians.

What are the benefits of a good service programme?

Obviously, it is necessary to keep equipment running and producing an optimum performance with minimal downtime, but there are other reasons.

Safety is a very important one, especially as television advertising encourages the public to make claims for any injury. Badly maintained machinery is dangerous. The Health & Safety Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations under Section 6 maintenance states:-

1. Every employer shall ensure that work equipment is maintained in an efficient state of working order and good repair.
2. Every employer shall ensure that where any machine has a maintenance log it is kept up to date.

The regulations also cover routine and planned preventive maintenance.

Another Section, which applies to a workshop, is lighting. The guidance here is that any place where work equipment is issued should be suit-
ably and sufficiently lit. Lighting should be adequate for the needs of the task.

Electrical safety also requires careful monitoring. Earth leakage circuit breakers (ELCB) or residual control devices (RCD) should be fitted to all hand-held electrical equipment. All portable electrical equipment must be PAT tested and carry a certificate. The equipment should also be marked stating the date and signature of the tester. A competent person who has been trained in this field should test the equipment. Electricians should be members of the Electrical Contractor Association ECA and or NIC, EIC. These units require regular checks to ensure they are still operational. Charging batteries needs to be done in a well-ventilated area, away from any possible source ignition. Cleaning solvents and petrol should be stored in the correct containers and in a cool environment. Make sure any protective clothing, gloves and eye protectors are readily available.

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Two other areas of benefit are better management of costings and greater control of day to day course management.

For those considering carrying out all their own servicing what is involved? A starting point is to carry out an analysis of the total maintenance costs the previous two years. It is also a good idea to try and identify the amount of down time and the reasons for it.

The big question is, would there be enough work to keep a dedicated service technician fully employed? This is an important factor, bearing in mind modern machines are becoming increasingly more sophisticated. The person will need an extensive knowledge and be able to work on a wide range of systems, including all types of engines, modern hydraulics and electronics. With his or her extensive knowledge and expertise they will not be happy if they are expected to carry out mundane work, outside their sphere, to fill in time.

Setting up a workshop will entail considerable investment, so every avenue needs exploring. The right working conditions are critical for both efficiency and harmony. The building should have plenty of both natural and artificial light and enough space to comfortably work on the largest unit is a must. Restricted access makes for all kinds of problems. Cleanliness is paramount when dealing with modern engines and precision components, such as fuel injectors and hydraulic systems. To clean these items to the high standard necessary will require a special washing unit.

A hard surfaced area outside with adequate drainage is needed. Here machines can be cleaned down using a pressure washer before going into the workshop. For those courses deciding to set up a full operation, there will be a large shopping list, including grinders, tools, drills, welders and electrical/electronic testing equipment.

At this point the question arises, is it worth it. If the answer is no, what are the alternatives?

Health and Safety reports show that back injuries is involved a high percentage of accidents. This is often due to incorrect handling of loads. In a workshop environment it could be due to lifting a heavy unit onto a workbench. The installation of hydraulic workbenches, suitable for lifting all the machines in the fleet to a comfortable working height, will reduce the possibilities of a strained back. This will also improve the working conditions considerably and speed up repair or servicing operations.

Another reason for regular maintenance is investment care - well looked after machinery can command a higher trade-in value. There is reputed to be a course, in the States, where the workshop resembles an operating theatre and the equipment is looked after to the highest of level. As a result when they replace machines there is a waiting list for the old ones - the prices they command justify the care and attention the workshop and operators lavish on their fleet.

Exhaust pollution is very much under the spotlight and engine manufacturers have to comply with stringent legislation regarding the levels emitted by new power units leaving their factories. Once out in the field it is up to users to ensure that their equipment is correctly serviced if low levels are to be maintained.
where this can be carried out. This will require facilities for making draining and replenishing oil fast and easy. An air compressor would be ideal for blowing dust and dirt from around cooling fins of engines and hydrostatic drives, or inflating tyres. Other items should include, a comprehensive set of tools, spanners, grease guns, fast moving replacement parts, instruction manuals and fuel storage facilities.

As far as breakdowns, major servicing, overhauling or regrinding are concerned, a local specialist can be sought, who has the qualified staff to carry out this type of work. This could work well if a service contract is drawn up between both parties, so everyone knows exactly what is expected of them. When deciding on a suitable partner, in this venture, an assessment should be made of their service facilities and staff, as to whether they are adequate for carrying out the work you are likely to require.

An important aspect in any arrangement is that both parties work well together, so that each understands the others requirements and needs. For instance, the climate has changed considerably over the last few years. As a result mowing is now carried out for virtually twelve months. This means that any time available for major overhauls is limited, so to avoid machinery being out of commission for too long, some plan needs to be put into place. By forming an alliance an acceptable solution can be found that satisfies both parties.

For clubs, service contracts can be a positive way forward. A major benefit is that they do not have to make a considerable investment in specialist workshop equipment and buildings. In addition, there is not the problem of having to find qualified staff from what amounts to a small pool of experts that is gradually disappearing.

Modern machinery requires less maintenance than in the past, but when things go wrong it is often far more complex to deal with. Keeping ahead of these developments is down to specialist technicians with the right testing equipment.

From the service outlet’s point of view, by being tied into a contract they can ensure there are trained staff, tools and equipment to cover every eventuality.

What worked a few years ago may not be ideal or adequate to meet today’s demands. For those clubs large enough there are distinct benefits having their own service departments. Smaller clubs can, by forming a close liaison with a local service outlet, also enjoy certain advantages. It is to everyone’s benefit to work together to keep machinery on the move.
The boom in golf course construction in the late 80s early 90s saw many developers finish up with charred digits and empty pockets. But it didn't have to be that way. Some course developers actually, and you may find this hard to believe, used the same business acumen in building their golf course as they did in the walk of life in which they had originally become successful. Remarkable I know.

Listed among those would be Eric Bridge and his son, Christopher, who founded and built Heyrose Golf Club in Knutsford, Cheshire, 12 years ago. Using the "Walk before you Run" philosophy the family started out with nine holes, began attracting members, then extended to 18 hole before building a clubhouse. Having then got as far as they could using their limited knowledge and skills to manage the course they appointed a Course Manager, who moved the course on to the next level. Now the club has just finished rebuilding the first nine greens to a much higher specification than the, sensibly pitched, original funding had allowed.

It all means that Heyrose Golf Club has grown at a sensible rate and injected the investment when the foundations for a successful club were in place thus protecting itself from the vagaries of a volatile leisure industry sector. The man who the Bridges installed to provide the greenkeeping know how is 40 year-old Steven Hartshorn, who has shown the benefits of having a specialist in post.

The great thing was that it was the owners themselves who had recognised the need for specialist help.
"I think they knew they'd gone as far as they could with the knowledge that they had and that they needed to employ a greenkeeper."

The first thing Steve did when he arrived was put work schedules in place including aeration programmes and good greenkeeping practices, work on the presentation of the course - the infamous landing strip style fairways were a feature - and put a programme in place to enlarge the tees.

"Prior to that work had been very intermittent. If they thought the greens were a bit long they'd cut them rather than having daily maintenance schedules while the bunkers were not really up to standard and the course furniture was a little careworn."

He was given every support when he joined and what he asked for was made available to him.

"Even before I'd taken up the position they'd gone out and bought a John Deere compact tractor so it was waiting for me in the sheds when I started."

The Bridge family - Christopher looks after the club finances while his wife, Elizabeth, is the Club's General Manager - are particularly go ahead, while it was father, Eric, whose concept Heyrose Golf Club was.

"He had played golf for about 35 years and been Chairman of Green at Knutsford Golf Club and was very much a supporter of the greens staff but then told them that he'd rather go off and build his own course. And that's exactly what he did," recalled Steve.

The limitations in the existing greens construction became apparent to Steve fairly early on.

"The fines within the rootzone had slowly been working their way down and as Heyrose, like many courses built in the 80s, didn't use an intermediate blinding layer but instead had a geotextile membrane and the fines had moved down and blocked it."

Having made the decision that the greens had to be reconstructed, what
would have been a medium term plan possibly involving one green a year became slightly more urgent with the recent wet winters.

"Two years ago we decided to do the 11th, which was the worst green on the course. We had dug some holes out of the rootzone and poured 25 litre drums of water into the stone underneath and it was going so it was pretty obvious nothing was wrong with the drainage but that it was the rootzone that was the problem. It was indigenous soil mixed with sand and sand and clay makes bricks it doesn't make quality golf greens," said Steve.

He did receive a bit of a shock when the subject of who was going to design the new greens was talked about. "They said 'You are.' So the many training courses he'd attended including Golf Course Design with Howard Swan and Simon Gidman at BTME became all the more valuable. "I'd also picked up experience of building greens at Lingfield Golf Club and Chichester where I was involved in the growing in and where Pearson's were on site. I enjoy getting to know people and picking up tips and information." The 11th was to be the only green to be done at that particular time so Steve restrained from producing any outlandish design features. "We didn't want to be too ambitious if it was going to be the only green we did so the design was relatively conservative," he explained.

The construction work was carried out to Steve's design specification by John Mallinson's, of Ormskirk, who were also involved in the construction work for Manchester's Commonwealth Games stadium.

"They were excellent, very professional, and the design specifications I laid down for them were followed exactly," said Steve.

It was decided that turfing would be the best option as it offered the opportunity to get the green back in play quicker and various samples were examined. "We brought in a Rufford rootzone and chose Inturf for our turf, and they've been super. We did consider washed turf but opted instead for a quality turf in a sandy medium. "We found the Edwards family to be brilliant. Whatever backup we've needed has been there and they are honest, in that they'd advise us to wait a couple of weeks if they felt the turf would be better then."

The new green was laid in January 2000 and opened for play at the beginning of June.
"The root development was incredible. It was throw-
ing roots down for fun and virtually overnight you could
see a huge improvement in
the quality of the green," he
revealed.

Having seen this success,
the decision was made to
build four more in the
autumn of the same year.

"But, as we know, that
winter was awful and we
couldn't get the machinery
onto the course so we did-
n't start until February
2001 with the next four
worst greens, the 10th, 12th, 13th
and 17th earmarked."

And on this occasion Steve was able
to give much fuller vent to his design
flair.

"The greens were enlarged and two
of them moved location with one of
them, the 13th, pushed behind a
pond which the owners had always
wanted to bring into play but which
had previously been 20 yards behind
the green.

"I ensured that there was an alter-
native route to the green avoiding the
pond and we had to clear the area
of trees, scraggy alders and willows and
haul out the pond but it turned a
par-4 into a par-5, 87 yards longer
than before."

"The 10th was also fundamentally
changed, the 12th green was on the
same site but the complex was com-
pletely changed while we introduced
McKenzie swails into the 17th green.
The work was completed in early
April and they opened for play at the
end of June.

"It was very ambitious but because
it was early spring we were again get-
ing phenomenal root development -
an inch per week, I've never seen turf
throw down root like it - and the turf
was coming in nice and thin with very
little thatch in it."

The final four holes of the back nine
- the first nine that was built - were
started last October and finished in
the final week of February.

"They are doing very well and it
means that we have done the entire
nine in two years which is great con-
sidering that we had envisaged doing
one a year. The front nine greens are
not as crucial as they do drain better.
There are limitations and given the
required finances they will be done
but that doesn't need to be straight
away.

Heyrose is a successful club - they
have also just appointed former
European Tour pro, Paul Affleck, to
be their Club Professional - and a
model for any new club wanting to
develop from modest beginnings. In
Steve Hartshorn and his five man
team they have the expertise to con-
tinue that development.
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TEES & FAIRWAYS **MM** 13
- Use when SSMG is difficult to establish
- Fine dense compact turf
- Good drought resistance
- Low fertiliser requirements
- High disease resistance

30% Chewings Fescue, 20% Slender Creeping Red Fescue, 35% Strong Creeping Red Fescue, 15% Brown Top Bent

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CHANGING THE NATURE
Henry Bechelet, Turfgrass Agronomist, STRI North East Region discusses the issues raised when changing the type of grasses in your greens

THE GREATER GOOD

Do you want to change the types of grasses contained within your greens? The objective of this article is to give a greater understanding of the survival strategies developed by the individual turfgrass species. By doing this, I hope to give you the ability to alter, improve or stabilise the quality of your golf greens. I mean to get you thinking about your greens differently.

This article is adapted from the work of Grime, Hodgson and Hunt in their study: "Comparative Plant Ecology - A functional approach to common British species" (1988). This work states that the vegetation that develops in a place at a particular time is governed by environmental pressures. These pressures may be categorised as stress, disturbance and competition and they can vary in their relative intensities. These pressure factors are described as the three main threats to existence. I make my own interpretations of this parallel work.

THREATS TO EXISTENCE

Stress
Stress is described as the environmental phenomena that restrict photosynthetic production. These are the environmental constraints to growth and regeneration. Stress may take a number of different forms, for instance shortages of light, water, mineral nutrients or sub-optimal temperatures. Stress factors may be inherent to an impoverished environment (low fertility, soil acidity) or may be induced (shading or deliberate drouthting). Here we are concerned with one or more stress factors that are operating throughout the year to constrain all species within the environment. Stress factors do not necessarily act in unison, different stresses exert different selection pressures. Greenkeepers have their hands on the reins of certain stress factors, such as fertiliser input, acidification or irrigation.

Disturbance
Disturbance involves the partial or total destruction of the plant biomass, i.e. the physical damage or removal of living tissue. This may be caused by the activities of pests, pathogens, wind damage, frosting, etc. The primary factors of disturbance within the golf green situation are mowing, scarification, verticutting, grooming, wear damage, disease outbreaks, pitch marks, divots and pests - not inconsiderable.

Disturbance places a high selection pressure upon the vegetation inhabiting an unsettled environment. Rapid recovery or regeneration is required to exploit regular disturbance.

Competition
Competition is the tendency of plants to try to monopolise the resources of an environment at the expense of their neighbours. Competition describes the battle for the same quantum of light, ion of mineral element, molecule of water or volume of space. It refers to the ability of the plant to capture resources and, by doing so, suppress the fitness of a neighbour by modifying the environment. This can occur above and below ground. Competition becomes characteristic of environments that contain an abundance of resources and experience a low intensity of disturbance (unsettled).

Evolution
Each environment exerts confining pressures on its inhabitants. These may be external factors such as stress and disturbance or internal such as the competitive ability of the plant itself (given a chance). Plant growth strategies have evolved over time to exploit specific environmental conditions forward the continuation of the species. Nature works in a direction.

The primary growth strategies may be categorised as the intensity of stress and intensity of disturbance (external factors) within the environment. See table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intensity of disturbance</th>
<th>Intensity of stress</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
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- Low Competitors
- High Stress-tolerators
- (No viable strategy)

Table 1. The basis for the evolution of three strategies in plants. Grime (1977).
PLANT GROWTH STRATEGIES

Primary growth strategies
From the table above, depending on the intensities of the environmental pressures, we see that there are three main growth strategies for plants in their established phase - Competitors, Stress-tolerators and Ruderals.
(Note that there is no possible growth strategy for a highly stressed and highly disturbed environment - such an environment is untenable because the external pressures are too extreme to allow a plant time to survive.)

Stress-tolerators (S-strategists) have evolved to exploit high stress and low disturbance environments. They have the ability to retain resources in a continually hostile environment (deep roots or hardy vegetation for example). S-strategists (heather in the wider world, due to soil acidity) are slow growing with the conservation of resources all important. The vegetation is hardened, tough and often difficult to break down. These plants are adapted to clinging on in the face of adversity. Soil acidity is a stress factor that selects, not kills.

Ruderals (R-strategists) inhabit low stress, high disturbance environments. Quick reproduction is all-important. Ruderals (weeds) are characterised by fast growth and rapid seed production. There is no point in these plants investing in deep roots because the environment is so unsettled. Preservation and development of the species is the singular imperative for such volunteers.

Competitors (C-strategists) develop within low stress, low disturbance, settled environments. Allowed to flourish, competitors endeavour to monopolise resource capture (a thick canopy) or even a layer of thatch will limit the availability of resources to other species. They create an environment suitable for their own development at the expense of their neighbours.

Competitors delay seedhead production in favour of producing vegetation and this weakens their ability to withstand disturbance environments. These plants dominate if conditions are settled enough.

Secondary strategies
Most environments are not so extreme to simply favour the development of C, S and R strategists.

The following diagram describes the secondary strategies that plants may develop to exploit the various intermediate environments. 'Intermediate' environments are characterised by lesser intensities of stress, disturbance and competition.

Competitive ruderals (C-R) are adapted to moderate (or infrequent) disturbance (which limits the competition) and low levels of stress. This environment checks competitors but does not eliminate them. Stress-tolerant ruderals (S-R) occur in lightly disturbed, unproductive habitats. Here, the reproductive opportunities are restricted for relatively short periods. Stress-tolerant competitors (C-S) occur in undisturbed environments experiencing only moderate levels of stress to allow the development of some competitive advantage.

C-S-R strategists evolve where competition is restricted by only moderate intensities of stress and disturbance. C-S-R strategists are varied in their relative attributes.

Conclusion to growth strategies
- The environment is governed by the three types of pressure
- Plants have adapted to survive in specific environmental conditions
- The vegetation reflects the nature of the environment
- The grass species present within a green are a reflection of the environment you have helped create

So are we creating the correct environment? Does the greenkeeping favour the desired grass species? If not, can we change the environment to allow the finer grasses to predominate?

FEELING THE PRESSURE?
The sward composition of a golf green reflects the pressures being placed upon it. The Head Greenkeeper is in charge of a number of important sources of pressure. Beneficial pressures can be used to manipulate the environment in favour of the more desirable turfgrass species. Poa is favoured by disturbance and, to a large degree, this stems from the pressures of play, but do not underestimate the influence of your actions. The finer grasses need a more settled environment to take over.

Professor Grime's (and others) work is an educational tool and I hope it gives you a better starting point when formulating your maintenance strategy. Next stop regenerative strategies and successful overseeding.

THE GOLF GREEN ENVIRONMENT

The following table recounts the results of the STRI survey of golf greens carried out in 1995 by Baker, Binns et al. This clearly illustrates the kind of pressures that are being produced by modern day greenkeepers in the UK.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course type</th>
<th>No. of Cases</th>
<th>Ground Cover (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seaside</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parkland</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Links</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meadowland</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moorland</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heathland</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seaside</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Annual meadow-grass dominates in all the different types of golf course (even links). The predominance of Poa indicates that a highly disturbed low stress environment is being produced.

Management pressures
The environmental pressures affecting the golf green may be listed as follows:

- Disturbance (physical damage) - Mowing, grooming, verticutting, scarification, hollow coring, disease scars, pests, pitch marks, divots, WEAR.
- Stress (environmental limitations to growth) - Not a great deal, although soil acidification should not be forgotten. I also regard soil compaction as a stress factor. Irrigation practice and the regular application of healthy fertiliser programmes maintain a highly productive environment. More northerly courses suffer extended periods of low temperature.
- Competition does not exert itself in disturbed environments although thatch production may well mask the surface.

It is not surprising that Poa is dominating - disturbance abounds!
The fine turfgrasses

The golf green is the most important surface on the golf course - the place where the game is won and lost - and must be perfect! The modern golf green is an intensively maintained environment subjected to intensive play throughout the year. Still, the surface must remain consistently fine and true for putting yet receptive enough to receive and release approach and chip shots. The greens must also be able to tolerate the traffic of the golfer who insists on year-round play.

The sward species composition has a great bearing on both the playing quality and wear tolerance of any turf. With regard to golf green fescue (Festuca) produces hard and fast putting surfaces that bounce an approach shot forward - wear tolerance declines in the winter; bent (Agrostis) produces fairly fast and true putting surfaces that are also receptive to approach shots - the surface is fairly wear tolerant throughout the year; annual meadow-grass (Poa annua) tends to produce softer surfaces that can be made into "good summer greens" but suffer from thatch build up and disease susceptibility. As we will see, each turfgrass species is adapted to survive in markedly different conditions.

CHANGING THE NATURE OF YOUR GREENS

The sward species composition reflects the type of environment being produced. The relative intensities of the various environmental pressures determine the vegetation types present. The golf green environment is intensively disturbed by play, pathogens and pests, as well as by the action of refinement and it is kept stress-free to allow for the intensive maintenance. This situation has led to the predominance of Poa. If you wish to change the composition of a green, you must create the conditions that the finer grasses would prefer.

As we have already seen, greenkeeping is in charge of a number of significant sources of environmental pressure:

- Mowing - intensity and frequency
- Verticutting, etc - timing and severity
- Integrated pest and disease management
- Irrigation
- Fertiliser input
- Acidification
- Course/green closure

These actions should be undertaken considerably to manipulate the environmental pressures to suit the desired grass species.

Changing the sward composition of existing greens

To increase the bentgrass component of predominantly Poa greens, for the sake of argument, the received method of attempting this was to impose stress on the sward (by judicious feeding and watering) to pressurise the meadow-grass out. By this theory, such a method is misguided if you refer back to Table 1, which clearly states, "a highly stressed and disturbed environment is untenable".

To reduce the dominance of the meadow-grass and increase the bentgrass component we must firstly reduce the level of disturbance (limit the overall pressure). This may be achieved by reducing the intensity and frequency of mowing, toning down all forms of verticutting (use a brush to groom), limiting play during the winter months, etc. Once the disturbance pressure has been softened, we can then leverage some stress onto the sward by acidifying, or by limiting fertiliser applications and certainly regulating irrigation inputs. We must move the environment away from the area of Poa dominance, from total disturbance to settled stress. Thatch build up can be controlled with micro hollow tining and top dressing. Surface trueness can be retained using top dressings and low ground pressure rollers. Modern aeration equipment is quick, effective and non-disruptive.

When setting the environment, remember that the various bentgrass species prefer quite different conditions. Browntop bent can withstand moderate levels of stress and disturbance, creeping bent can withstand greater disturbance without stress, while velvet bent can withstand moderate stress but little disturbance. Choose your species carefully.

The growth strategies of the fine turfgrass species

This section will illustrate the specific environmental conditions that the various turfgrass species have evolved to exploit. Remember that the greenkeeper is in charge of a number of the external pressure factors.

- Integrated pest and disease management
- Fertiliser input
- Irrigation
- Mowing - intensity and frequency
- Verticutting, etc - timing and severity
- Course/green closure

In conclusion, each turfgrass species is adapted to survive in markedly different environments. To flourish and survive they therefore require specific management.

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Ronnie Bunting describes the work he has done at Kilmacolm Golf Club and gives some thoughts on environmental management

Over the span of 33 years in golf greenkeeping, 26 as Head Greenkeeper and Course Manager I have always attempted to be positively pro-active within the industry. The following topics are intended to kick start some constructive discussions. Like anyone who sticks his or her head over the parapet, that person becomes a target for praise or ridicule. Through such discussions, the outcome I believe can only be constructive.

The following is meant to be food for thought, and not, do as I do!

Like most Greenkeepers I have an active interest in environmental matters. To this end I have here at Kilmacolm been very successful in bringing attention to members and the general public that the term golf course does not always refer to an area of barren grassland, with wall-to-wall cutting and grass that looks like a Celtic football strip. It can be an area of outstanding beauty not only for quality turf on which to play golf and the scenery but the wildlife that dwells in the out-of-play areas. These we can also manage for the social union of nature and mankind not only by protecting the existing habitat but also by creating new areas of mutual interest with great benefit for all.

There are some golfers who do not appreciate the wonders of nature, as they are blind to all but their game. Only once this loveliness is pointed out to them do they appreciate the importance of their surroundings. I have found this among many of my members.

In my Environmental portfolio I have addressed a number of topics intended to reduce the amount of toxic chemicals I apply and would like to share some of my thoughts with you. Are we being fair to assume that applications of cure-all's are the correct way to go about our business? What will be the effect in the decades and centuries to come? Remember the after effects of the chemicals used to de-foliate the jungles in Vietnam. An extreme example but it did happen and the results we see today are the evidence to justify that we consider alternatives!

I ask the question. Do we need to use the amount of fertiliser and chemicals we budget for annually? Should we apply preventative sprayings? Do we need to apply nitrogen in such amounts that by doing so creates a flush of growth that disposing of the cuttings creates environmental problems, or applying copulas amounts of nitrate at a rate the plant cannot expect to use and in doing so we contaminate our waterways.

Then comes the after effects, Thatch, Fusarium, Poa Annua, and the biggest threat of all peoples acceptance of the poorer playing standards we ourselves have created. I believe that by using top dressing as a source of nutrition coupled with a little nitrogen and plenty of aeration should be used to produce a healthy and robust sward and produce a much easier kept playing surface.

Fusarium
We have all experienced this turf disease at some time on our greens, and if you received the same training as I did - blanket treatment must be done as soon as humanly possible. Or spray every six to eight weeks as a preventative. Both veins of thought very much the norm at some golf courses and both very expensive not only in financial terms and man-hours but also in terms of lasting damage to the useful micro organisms and beneficial fungi in the soil. Is there an alternative? I believe there is. If the outbreak is only in certain areas of greens there may be good reasoning to spot treat. If the outbreak is serious during the end of the season going into autumn and justifies blanket treatment so be it. Or it may be that in leaving it alone it will recover without anything being done at all. A strong healthy infertile bent dominated turf has great resolve. One other operation I feel helps when conditions are such that disease threatens is to scarify tees and greens aprons and verti-cutting greens, opening the base of the sward allowing air in and therefore keeping it drier I feel helps considerably. How often does it seem that attacks of Fusarium on the greens starts in the surrounds? I have never sprayed fungicide on tees or aprons.
Leather Jackets

My opinions on the damage done by these grubs may be probably singular but it is based on my observations over many years. Fact, I have never seen turf stress caused by this insect. The only damage I have seen is caused by birds in search of them. This I believe is a bit like the angler finding a beautiful loch and knowing there should be fish in it but only after six or eight hours of fruitless fishing asks the question I wonder if there are any trout in here! On the greens I don’t see the bird damage as a major problem as greens are either cut or rolled or switched every day, dispersing any debris. A similar approach I adopt to tees and surrounds and fairways. The semi rough tends to show some lasting damage but it is caused again by the birds searching for the grubs and not by the larvae. Even this damage recovers very soon when the soil temperature allows some growth. To back up the above statements, during the spring of 1999 I noticed there was more bird activity than usual.

At the spring outing of the Scottish West Section I started a discussion based on the above scenario with some of my colleagues and was left in no doubt they felt I should have sprayed with insecticide on a preventative basis as they had done.

Please bare in mind at no time was there any sign of stress this included a very dry August. I feel this begs the question, Does a Dope based on the above scenario with any chemicals, Time, Storage, Container disposal, etc I’m sure it would run into tens of thousands of pounds over the last five years. If it were possible to measure the feel good factor for achieving something which in the long run will benefit golfers and the general public’s opinion of the Golf Industry, and also the earth born companions that we share our golf courses with. The rating would certainly be very high.

To conclude may I take this opportunity to promote the good intentions of the Scottish Golf Course Wildlife Group, and the “Committed to Green” Organisation, from whom we haven’t heard much of lately.

The most imaginative of all the reasons behind the creation of BIGGA, was the in-house education delivered by people who have training down to an art form. BIGGA administers ongoing self-development programmes to enable golf Greenkeepers to become more professional and get more respect, with the end result being better conditioned golf courses.

I personally have used the regional training courses to the full and I have reaped the benefit in many ways. I am astonished that over the past few years we have had these courses reduced and many cancelled not because of the lack of creativity on the part of BIGGA or due to golf clubs not willing to pay, but due to lack of interest from Greenkeepers.

April 2002 Greenkeeper International 33
In the first of a two-part article, Peter Jefford and Mick Higgins of Rufford, talk about the benefits of top dressings and the importance of testing in order to establish compatibility with the existing rootzone.

TESTING TIMES

A frustratingly unpredictable climate, economic pressures and increasing numbers of players all demanding perfect playing conditions seven days a week, 32 weeks of the year. It’s all a far cry from the challenges faced by greenkeepers 30 years ago and leaves today's successors nursing some major headaches.

Establishing consistency and quality in such a fast changing industry is the key to creating successful greens - and that is all about testing.

Definition

Before we go any further, let’s stop and consider exactly what we mean by the term topdressings and why they play an essential role for greenkeepers today.

A farmer would interpret topdressing to mean the surface application of fertiliser (usually nitrogen) to a growing crop. However in the turfgrass industry the term topdressing is used almost exclusively to describe the surface application of sand, soil, organic material or any combination of these.

So why are topdressings necessary? We all know that long-term maintenance of high quality fine turf on golf and bowling greens is extremely difficult, especially given the factors mentioned in the opening paragraph. Greens only account for a very small percentage of the total surface area of a golf course – but every single player ultimately ends up there, resulting in a frightening rate of concentrated foot traffic.

However, frequent application of an appropriate topdressing will assist a greenkeeper greatly by providing the following benefits:

1. It helps maintain a smooth, true running surface which in turn improves mowing efficiency
2. In conjunction with scarification, it will avoid thatch build-up
3. Enables you to control organic matter content, water infiltration and aeration
4. It's essential in maintaining or increasing rootzone depth
5. Improves germination on overseeded areas
6. Improves or sustains appropriate soil texture

But you must remember that topdressings add to and become part of the rootzone. Over a period of years topdressings will either alter or sustain the physical (and to some extent biological) properties of rootzones. That’s why it’s essential to test and establish a green’s existing profile before you can select and apply an appropriate topdressing.

Compatibility

You can’t take a ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach when it comes to applying topdressings. Because they eventually become part of the rootzone they logically need to have similar composition and properties. For the majority of golf greens this means a particle size composition dominant in medium sand. But this is only a general guide – it’s still essential to use a topdressing that's compatible with your existing rootzone. If you don’t then you could be in trouble.

There’s no way that a topdressing supplier can claim that they have a good product for you without first of all testing your greens. That's because there’s no such thing as a universally good topdressing - what might be right for one course could be completely wrong for another because applying a mismatched topdressing can cause major layering problems to the rootzone profile. A major risk is the creation of layers of different pore size systems within shallow depths of the rootzone. If this happens then water retention and air/water balance will be affected and also rooting depth. The frightening fact is that this problem won’t become apparent for several years, by which time it may be impossible to rectify through cultivation techniques.

Guesswork

It’s so frustrating when people cut corners through either cost constraints or lack of awareness, because they end up undoing the years of work that have gone before them to create a great green. It doesn’t have to be guesswork when it comes to determining the compatibility of a topdressing and a rootzone – it’s not a blind date! The only answer is to test. And that’s what we’ve built the Rufford business on.

To illustrate this in practical terms we’ll take a specific example of one of our customers. By testing we were able to establish that their greens contained a lot of fine material with around 40% or more in particles smaller than 250 mm.
At the time, the greenkeeper's topdressing was predominantly in the medium band but contained over 30% in the coarse band, three to six diameters greater than the dominant fine sand in the rootzone. Hence the fine sand in the soil was interpacking with the coarse sand in the top dressing, thereby reducing total porosity and thus the efficiency of its effect in improving the physical characteristics of the rootzone. 

This information enabled us to recommend a topdressing through which to reinforce the dominant useful sand grades in the rootzone (ie fine and medium sand) thereby arriving at a solution with a medium particle diameter of around 280mm, of uniform particle size (D90/D10 less than 3) and with virtually all particles in the fine and medium sand ranges.

The Testing Process Explained

Our whole testing process starts with a visit to the club. We usually take samples from three greens (a good one, poor and average) using a core sampler which takes a plug from the top 100mm of the profile. Other information is determined at the same time, for example the depth of the rootzone, any layering present and also the character of the soil or permeable material beneath the rootzone.

The samples are then sealed and sent over to our in-house Minerals Development Centre, at Oakamoor, in Staffordshire, for analysis. Tests are carried out here to determine particle size distribution, pH and organic matter content.

We then take these results and feed them into our computer software. This in turn produces a full analysis that includes, amongst other elements:

- Particle size distribution on full and half octave sieve sizes
- D values which can be used to calculate the gradation index (D90/D10) or used to ensure bridging characteristics with suitable gravels
- Effective particle size (D eff)

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Email: sales@allett.co.uk www.allett.co.uk
We can then use this information to identify a top-dressing from our range that either matches a good rootzone or improves a poor one.

The 70:30 myth
People who just ask for a 70:30 sand/soil mix in their topdressing (or any other ratio for that matter) don’t realise what lottery punters they are. This specification tells you nothing about the quality of the sand in terms of lime content, grading and conductivity, nor anything about the soil which could range from peat-based to a heavy clay content.

A purchaser should be able to request the precise analysis of the topdressing in terms of: particle size; amount of silt/clay; organic matter content and lime.

Feeling the Heat
Another important point to mention is that any topdressing you buy should be heat-treated. If it’s too wet or damp then it tends to clump together or simply lies on the surface making an even application impossible. Not to mention the fact that if your topdressing is wet then you’re effectively paying your supplier for water!

In terms of applying topdressing, frequent light applications are always advisable wherever practical. This enables fast integration, prevents layering and avoids smothering grass in spring or autumn when growth is slow. It’s become common practice to apply four to six topdressings of 0.5 - 1 kilogram/m² (1 - 2 lb/sq yd) during the growing season. Such amounts can be applied quickly and brushed in — you can therefore avoid significant disruption to play!

Confident
We can confidently say that our approach has produced positive results for golf and bowling clubs throughout the UK. In fact we’re so confident in the benefits of testing that we frequently give talks and lectures about it at colleges, universities, golf clubs and branch meetings of professional bodies including BIGGA and the IOG.

After all, you don’t get to establish long-term relationships with the likes of Wentworth, Sunningdale and Royal Birkdale on guesswork!

Peter Jefford is Rufford’s General Manager, while Mick Higgins is QA and Technical Manager. Rufford has been supplying topdressings, rootzones and a full range of complementary products to the sports turf industry since 1987. You can find more information and technical advice at www.rufford.com telephoning 01477 572462.

We will be featuring another article from Mick and Peter about rootzones later in the year.
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How to stop the grass growing from under your feet

Longhand account.

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Recently, in a greenkeeping article on grasses for greens, a caption on poa annua started with 'poa annua is a serious problem for many greenkeepers. Is this really the case? There have, I’m sure, been many heated discussions throughout the greenkeeping profession surrounding the subject, from messrooms to green committees not only up and down the country but also across the world.

What’s more, the question has been asked for many years; are we any nearer to knowing the real answer, if indeed there is a definitive one? This article aims to put forward an answer even if it is only my own personal opinion!

It is essential firstly to explain a little about 'poa annua' or 'annual meadow grass' as it is more commonly known. A tufted grass, which thrives in all soil types, poa annua has the ability to set seed nearly all year round. It is a common unknown grass species found on British golf courses and is found in two forms; the more common annual plant subspecies 'erecta' which is upright growing and secondly the sub-species 'reptans' which is either an annual, biennial or short-lived perennial creeping plant. The leaves of the plant are soft, often crinkled when young with long, smooth leaf sheaths. Generally, leaves tend to be of a light green appearance although the creeping perennials can be a much darker green. The leaves are short with visible tramlines and rather blunt at the boat shaped tips, soft and drooping. In mature plants the erect stem rises from six to ten inches with a triangular shaped panicle two or three inches long.

The spikelets are all stalked and loosely arranged on the spreading branches. The name is from the Greek 'poo', meaning fodder.

Let us consider now some of poa annua's advantages and disadvantages, as far as today's greenkeeper is concerned.

I am constantly reminded when attending college classes that 'poa annua' is an undersold grass, yet if we took away this grass overnight from our golf course, we would have significantly less coverage and I'm sure a lot more complaints from unimpressed golfers. In an ideal world we would, as professionals, like to work everyday with the very best; the finer bents and fescues.

However, this is not always possible. I don’t think that we should encourage the spread of poa but as professional greenkeepers would not be competent at our jobs if we were not always striving for better playing conditions and surfaces.

So, when does "poa annua" become our "friend"? As already mentioned, one of its main advantages is its ability to spread by seed nearly all year round thus thickening the sward density and aiding an all year round playing surface; this it does rapidly; another bonus to the greenkeeper. We can all relate to this year's late growth and this was certainly required this year; the average golf club fixture list does not normally cater for climatic conditions!

Although textbooks show that poa annua is a shallow rooted grass, giving the opportunity by using time honoured management practices it can generate a fairly deep root zone, unquestionably an essential requirement for a healthy sward. Wear and tear is an increasingly significant problem for today's greenkeeper and poa annua has this in its favour, with its ability to re-generate quickly throughout the year. It tolerates close mowing and again, if the correct management practices such as brushing and verticutting are carried out, can provide a satisfactory putting surface. It may also be argued that the average golfer is only interested in a firm, true, consistent putting surface and not always striving for better playing conditions and surfaces.

So, are we any closer to knowing the real answer, if indeed there is a definitive one?

Richard Clarke, of Royal Eastbourne Golf Club was the Assistant's Over 25 Category in the 2001 BIGGA Essay Competition with this fine composition.
expensive; if untreated, the large areas of playing surfaces can be disrupted, weakened or even, at worst, lost. Annual meadow grass inevitably results in a weakened sward which will also be prone to thatch build-up and compaction; two major problem areas for greenkeepers. This results in spongy, soggy winter surfaces as both water and air fight to enter the sub-soil of the surface. These adverse conditions usually arise because of ongoing inattention to basics such as frequent appropriate aeration and soil amelioration. This can result in a disruption to play, a problem in today’s environment as members’ expect to be able to play all year round.

Another disadvantage is that poa encourages a slower playing surface as well as an inconsistent one; poa peaks at certain times of the year. Because of its generally shallow-rooted structure drought resistance is low. This in turn results in more water having to be produced for the surface, which only encourages more poa; it can be a vicious cycle. It is such an opportunist grass that even if approved management practices are regularly carried out poa still finds a way into the sward. Its ability to seed nearly all year round results in an on-going battle to eliminate its establishment; moreover, it has been suggested that poa seeds can remain in the sub-soil for up to ten years!

In my opinion much of the answer to the underlying question of “Poa annua - friend or foe?” lies in what type of golf club one works at. How a greenkeeper views poa annua will surely relate to the mechanical and manual resources available to him. Sadly, like many things in this life, money comes into the equation! A golf course with a limited budget will find it much harder to eliminate poa than a top class establishment which has more machinery and staff; for example, as mentioned previously, hand-weeding poa annua from greens is generally not a task most greenkeeping teams would have time to carry out.

Perhaps it is a question of working with what nature gives us and making the best out of what we have available. I am certainly not encouraging the development of poa annua, it is I feel more realistic to take a long-term approach. All efforts to encourage the finer grasses should be carried out by approved management practices, resulting in an environment where they can compete against poa annua. This would involve regular aeration, grooming, verti-cutting, scarification, careful use of water and fertilisers (especially phosphates which tend to encourage poa). In the meantime, if swards are poa dominated then a good playing surface can be achieved through regular brushing and light top dressings, together with the above practices.

Resources can be used much more efficiently getting the most out of what surfaces one already has in place rather than constantly fighting against nature.

Many greenkeepers have experienced how plant breeding has seen the emergence of dwarf rye grasses and how their qualities differ to that of the rye grasses available 30 years ago, could it be that in the future the results of genetic engineering will see greenkeepers using poa strains resistant to disease and low drought tolerance?

To summarise, it looks as if poa annua is very much here to stay, for the meantime anyway; so why not work with it rather than against it? Surely a grass that has as many attributes as discussed cannot be dismissed so harshly? Golf courses throughout the country would certainly suffer aesthetically and from a payability point of view without poa annua. It can be in many ways our friend. However, it must always be treated as an undesirable grass and we as professionals should only be interested in encouraging the finer fescue and bent grasses, after all, we would not be very competent at our jobs if we didn’t!
Six of the country's top men give their views on feeding regimes

Feeding Regimes

Compiled by Malcolm Huntington MBE

1. Do you plan your feeding programme well in advance or wait to assess weather and ground conditions?

1. I always plan a couple of months in advance and then, of course, have to see what the weather and ground conditions bring along.

1. I plan a feeding programme two or three months before the growing season after consultation with our agronomist and then, of course, keep an eye on the weather and ground conditions.

1. I wait to assess weather and ground conditions before deciding on a feeding programme. We have very dry conditions and never come off the greens.

1. I plan three or four months ahead, but then it depends on the weather and time of the year. Last year's regime and soil analysis, which we do each year, is also taken into consideration.

1. I have a rough idea and then I always work according to the weather. Nothing is set in concrete.

1. I plan ahead and then take into account weather and ground conditions.

John Crawford
Stirling GC, Scotland
Parkland (18 holes)
Course Manager, plus four, one apprentice and two skill seekers

Richard Gamble
Aldwark Manor Hotel Golf and Country Club, Northern
Parkland (18 holes)
Course Manager, plus four, plus gardener

Ian Needham
Beedles Lakes, Leicester
Midland
Parkland (18 holes)
Course Manager, plus four

Lee Strutt MG
Richmond GC, Surrey
South East
Parkland (18 holes)
Course Manager, plus five, plus two part-time

Jeff Mills
Taunton and Pikeridge, Somerset
South West and South Wales
Hilltop (Limestone base)
Course Manager, plus four

Patrick Devine
Carrickfergus GC, Northern Ireland
Parkland (18 holes)
Head Greenkeeper plus four
2. I am a big believer in the "little and often" theory. We get a lot of rain so fertilisers leech through quickly at times and so we have to put a bit more on.

3. We need a different policy programme as we have one pure sand green, two USGA greens and 15 of the traditional soil base which were constructed nearly 150 years ago.

4. A more organic approach may be on the way though it depends on environmental issues. We haven't gone down that road so far, but I have tried seaweed and had encouraging results with it.

5. I can't foresee any major changes. I always keep an eye on new products coming on the market and many clubs have changed to liquid organic fertilisers. I have tried them but haven't been impressed to be frank and so stick to tried and tested methods.

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2. We feed as and when required. Our greens are very unusual in that they are built on probase (graded ash) which comes from power stations near Gainsborough. We cut at five mil throughout the year and the greens are never wet.

3. Acros the board, although soil analysis identifies weak areas and so we can re-adjust if needs be. We have a baseline and then touch up if necessary.

4. Not bothered if it is organic or inorganic because it makes little difference. We have used a product for the last two years and achieved good results. I have used both and am not biased one way or the other.

5. No. It is not necessary to change, but I don't see any major changes, apart from seasonal differences.

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2. We feed as and when required. Our greens are very unusual in that they are built on probase (graded ash) which comes from power stations near Gainsborough. We cut at five mil throughout the year and the greens are never wet.

3. All the greens get the same treatment. We feed fairways once a year with 20-10-10 and tees and surrounds twice a year.

4. We are not considering a more organic approach. I have tried organic fertilisers but they don't seem to work, although I don't know why. We stick to the traditional fertilisers.

5. No. We get the best response from granular fertilisers. I have tried liquids, but they don't work very well.

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2. Peaks and troughs sum it up. I like a good kick start at the beginning of the growing season and then basically follow a "little and often" theory. I like to tickle things up every five to six weeks.

3. Across the board, although soil analysis identifies weak areas and so we can re-adjust if needs be. We have a baseline and then touch up if necessary.

4. Not bothered if it is organic or inorganic because it makes little difference. We have used a product for the last two years and achieved good results. I have used both and am not biased one way or the other.

5. Not really. In the last five years I have reduced the feeding programme for the first three years considerably and then had a minimum feed for the last two. I don't see any major changes, apart from seasonal differences.

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2. As little as possible and just enough to keep the grass alive. It's a vast change compared with 30 years ago when we used to lash the fertiliser on.

3. I fertilise greens and tees perhaps three times in a growing season and once in winter. But I only fertilise the fairways once every three years. We have had four USGA sand based greens constructed and the other 14 will also be changed in due course so the regime will alter then.

4. Yes. I am concerned about artificial fertilisers and what they do to the environment. Products such as seaweed, hoof and horn and dried blood are very good in my view.

5. Yes. We will have extra staff in due course and that will give us the opportunity to use more organic materials as we will have more time to mix the materials by hand.
Safe storage from Empteezy

A new range of polyethylene can trays, provide a compact, convenient and safe storage solution for courses, the drums of liquids used in agricultural and horticultural environments, has been introduced by drum storage and waste handling specialist Empteezy Limited.

Made from tough, medium density polyethylene, the can trays have broad band chemical compatibility, and with three models in the range, providing a safe banded storage area for either one, two or four 25 litre drums, they are ideal in areas where space is limited.

Shibaura’s new Greens mower

Shibaura’s 560mm (22”) greens mower closely follows ground contours. Designed to give a championship finish on courses, the mower has a 127mm (5”) diameter, 11 blade cutting reel. To avoid compacting the grass, the front roller is grooved - giving a cleaner, sharper cut which helps to keep the sward healthy. The interlocking groomer, which rotates clockwise or anti-clockwise, can be disengaged completely if turf conditions require it.

The greens mower’s fixed head design allows a true cutting height between 3.2mm and 25mm to be achieved. An angled bottom blade is offset to reduce turf stress - and a minimum cutting height of 2.8mm can be attained if the optional tournament blade is fitted. Powered by a 4.0hp Robin single cylinder OHV air cooled engine, there is a 3.6 litres petrol fuel tank.

For further information
Tel: 01244 071166

Low vibrations from Tanaka

Farm & Garden Machinery has introduced the NEW Tanaka TBC4200DLY - with special Low-Vib handle system - is independently patented through its paces under full operating conditions.

Local authorities and professionals will appreciate the significant reduction that has been made to Hard Arm Vibration (HAMS) levels on this 40cc brush cutter, allowing safe and comfortable use for extended periods. Tanaka builds quality into its range of power equipment from the inside out. HSE Solutions applied the latest standards of ISO 5349 Part 2 when independently testing the cutter - they used three different operators to test the machine under three different sets of working conditions.

Results proved highly favourable, achieving an average of 2.1 m/s² when using the CH100 alloy head. An operator could use the machine for more than eleven hours without risk of exposure to HAMS.

Totally committed to supplying innovative products at very affordable prices, THE NEW TBC4200DLY costs just £499 incl VAT.

For further information
Tel: 0800 380 5057
Kawasaki unveil latest ATV development

The latest development in ATV technology from Kawasaki has just arrived in the UK.

The KVF360-A has it all for the working market and sits right in the middle of the Kawasaki model line-up. "This machine has everything the working market has been asking for and as far as we're concerned, it's another winner and a machine that's going to take some beating," enthused Jack Ford, European Sales and Marketing Manager for Kawasaki Commercial Products. "It's all-round specification has been improved and with the performance and reliability just getting better and better, the working agricultural, local authority, utility and equestrian markets are in for a very pleasant surprise," he added.

The 362 cc (hp), four-stroke, single cylinder automatic comes with engine braking as well as an internal rear braking system. This development is designed to enhance the braking capabilities and handling characteristics when riding on steep downhill gradients. Following the arrival on the UK ATV scene of Kawasaki's, KVF650-A last summer, the launch of the KVF360-A is regarded as a natural addition to the family with its bigger brother attracting the attention of the heavyweight ATV sectors. For further information Tel: 01285 654777

New rotary mower in line-up from Claymore

Included in the Claymore 2002 line up, is the Stella RD-56 Pro. This high performance and incredibly tough rotary mower sets new standards for the professional user where reliability and high productivity are paramount.

The RD-56 is a rear discharge 55cm (22in) cut machine powered by a Honda GXV270 3.5hp four stroke OHV industrial engine. Three forward and one reverse speeds are provided through a heavy gear shift transmission and differential axle. A unique feature is the third speed being a transport gear, so when select it automatically cuts out the blade drive and reduces the engine speed to tick over.

The high gear still allows the machine to travel quickly yet quietly to the next cutting area. Selecting a moving gear reverts the unit back to normal use. Height of cut is adjustable through four settings from 28-75mm. Big 7 litre fuel tank cuts refuelling time and adjustable ergonomic handlebars provide operator comfort. Large diameter 270x75mm rear wheels make child's play of rougher areas and the belt drive system ensures crankshaft protection in the event of sudden obstacles being encountered. A high degree of manoeuvrability is achieved through the fitting of front swirling 175 x 45mm castor wheels.

A large 95 litre capacity grass catcher is supplied as standard all for a RRP of £1695 plus VAT.

Local solution for Ganton

Ganton GC has recently taken delivery of their new 400 litre demount unit, which has been specifically designed for their Cushman Workman, by Vale Engineering (York) Limited.

Ganton was introduced to Vale Engineering by David Kerr, of Glen Sawyer Agricultural Machinery Ltd as its exclusive distributor and their dealer for northern England, southwest Scotland and the Borders, has moved its groundscare service centre from Dumfries to Castle Douglas, as part of its West Coast improvement initiative. The new site offers a broader range of workshop and service space, specifically for major repairs and winter overhauls. The relocation means that Rickerby Limited now have Services Centres based in Castle Douglas, Carlisle, Hexham and Alnwick.

"We selected Vale Engineering to supply our new sprayer as they were able to build to our specifications at a very competitive price. The fact that they are a local company was also important when placing our order. In effect, we bought a bespoke sprayer at an 'off the peg' price!" said Philip Baldock.

New Selby-based Managers for Textron

Textron Golf, Turf and Specialty Products have strengthened their new Selby branch operation with the introduction of two new Area Sales Managers, Glen Sawyer and Theo Wilson, who will be responsible for territories that encompass South, West and North Yorkshire.

Above: Glen (left) and Theo (right)

Glen Sawyer has 15 years experience in the groundscare industry and joins the company from machinery specialists K & M Mowers of Hull, where he was Area Sales Manager with responsibility for South and West Yorkshire. Theo Wilson joins the Textron team from Renault Agriculture where he worked in a similar area management role. He has been in the groundscare industry for many years, in fact, from the age of fifteen when he left school to join the family business. He then formed and ran his own company for eight years before joining Gibbsome Machinery Sales, where he was a colleague of Glen Sawyer.

If you've got an email account, and want to keep up to date with the latest news and events from the turfcare industry, drop us an email, and we'll help you to keep your increasing list of online subscribers. We'll then inform you of any forthcoming features and exclusive newsletter content. Simply send an email to:
updates@bigga.co.uk quoting your name and Membership number, and we'll do the rest - it's that easy.

New dealer appointed

Bomford has appointed IAM Agricultural Machinery Ltd as its exclusive distributor for the whole of Ireland.

Bomford's, market-leading range of 3 point linkage/axle bracket mounted equipment and the products will compliment its new distributor's existing agriculture machinery business. Extensive product, parts and service training will be provided to the distributor and their dealer network at Bomford's training centre at Salford Priors.

New base for Rickerby

Rickerby Limited, the Textron dealer for northern England, south west Scotland and the Borders, has moved its groundscare service centre from Dumfries to Castle Douglas, as part of its West Coast improvement initiative. The new facility, which is 18 miles west of the previous service centre, is now located in a more central position within the southern Scotland territory. The new site offers a broader range of services including a full grinding workshop and larger workshop space, specifically for major repairs and winter overhauls.

The relocation means that Rickerby Limited now have Services Centres based in Castle Douglas, Carlisle, Hexham and Alnwick.
West

Welcome to this month’s newsletter. We have completed your Winter programmes and have your courses in pristine condition for the start of the season. What with all this fine weather we have been enjoying since the middle of January? Hopefully we will all have a good season and be blessed with a fine Spring and Summer.

A few new members are to be welcomed to the Section these being David Eardley and Philip Barchy, Hillbank Park GC; Nichol Barry, Whitecraigs GC; Mark Cummine, Buchanan Castle GC; John Thorburn, Windyhill GC; Graeme Latto and Wilson Wallace, Milngavie GC, and Peter Robertson, Bothwell Castle GC. We hope to see you all at our up and coming social events.

Some dates for your calendar are 25th April when the stick will be held on a Tuesday night at Lenzie GC. This tournament was originally set up to give greenkeepers and their new convenors a chance to be on the same number. If you do wish to retain your number please send your £5 onto Sandy as soon as possible or your number will be allocated to someone else.

Well that’s all folks. Again, if you would like anything added to the column please do not hesitate to call me on 01355266682. Brian Bolland.

North

Hello! Section. Four new members to report to the Section, they are; Hal Paterson, from Scotscraig, and Neil Paterson, from Fortrose GC who seems to be well on the way to recovery from his annual Patron’s Awards. Congratulations go to Iain and keep up the good work.

The all important information to those of you who have still to do so. The fee has gone up to £7 from £6 previously. It is a very busy time for most greenkeepers and the amount of plant used in their spraying process used in developing Kelpie Grass is very high and you should have your renewals through the post by now.

The fee has gone up to £7 from £6 previously. It is a very busy time for most greenkeepers and the amount of plant used in their spraying process.
we go. Reading the local evening newspaper I came across an article you may find interesting, and I quote, “A new technology could mean an end to waterlogged cricket pitches, tennis courts and golf courses. Researchers at Newcastle University are developing an element system called EKG that uses electricity to draw water out of soil.”

Now this sounds interesting, and I am sure that if the University required some golf courses to practise on they would be inundated with volunteers. I personally feel this would be a damp squid, but I have heard greenkeepers suggesting the use of electricity on the course like wiring the flag poles, and buggies.

Back to reality, the Spring tournament will be held at Hurlston Hall Golf Club on Wednesday, May 15, and lunch served at 12.30pm, tee available from 1.30pm. Applications to Bill Merritt, 225 Utting Avenue, Chibnall, Liverpool, L4 9RB, Tel 0151 264 4416 no later than May 10 including a cheque for £20. The spring tournament is also a qualifier for the Regional final, which will be played at Whitehead Golf Club on Friday, August 9. The final will be paid for by the sponsor. The Maintenance Department at Royal Liverpool GC is now near to completion as Derek Green, and his team look forward to the hosting of the Open Championship back at Hoylake in a few years time. Can anyone tell me who won The Open when it was last played at Hoylake in 1967? Answers on a postcard please.

The Spring Tournament is taking place on the 10th. Good luck to all taking part and full results will appear in next month’s issue along with an insight from Richard Littler, the Ireland Greenkeepers. Again the evening was booked to a capacity and everyone had a great evening. The evening started well until half way through the races there was a power failure, and all the results were lost. So the racing had to start once more from scratch. After some hard fought qualifying races we were ready for the grand final, which was extended by more laps. The eventual winner was Steve Levers, of Ramsdale Park, with Lingdale’s, Gavin Robson, in second place.

There was unfortunately a nasty accident on the night, but the good news is that there was no serious injury to Nigel White and I’m sure he will be fit and ready for the Spring Tournament on May 2. I would like to thank our very generous sponsors Toro/Lely UK and ps Manders who subsidised the evening and brought along the prizes. Remember if you wish to race next year return your entry slip early. The Spring Tournament this year will be held at the Leicestershire GC, on Thursday, May 2. Tee-Off Times 1pm-3pm. If you wish to attend please return your entry slip and payment before the closing date.

Antony Bindley

Midland

Firstly, I would like to extend a big thank you to Bernhard & Co, for their considerable commitment to sponsoring ten fortunate members to visit the GCSAA in Orlando, of whom I was lucky enough to be one. The quality of the week was second to none with every day jam-packed full of events. Being part of the delegation also ensured more doors were opened that normal on a trip of this nature. My thanks also go to the nine other delegates and GCSAA who all contributed so much to make such a memorable week. Having been privileged enough to have experienced this opportunity first hand, I would encourage anybody who is contemplating entering for a place on a future tour to do so and support strongly such an excellent commitment executed so well by Bernhard & Co.

Back home now, and I have been explained to explain the £5 rise in golf day entrance fees. This has come about firstly to ensure the Section covers all costs of the day and, secondly, some clubs now are asking for a donation per head to the green gees. I trust you will still support what is still an excellent day’s golf and socialising in the future. The next tournament is May 22 at Gay Hill. Entrance fees as usual to Kim Blake please.

Interest has also been expressed as to organising a trip to Ireland or Scotland, which will be towards the end of the year. This May be in conjunction with the North Wales Section, playing golf against Greenkeepers of the opposing nation over a two-day period. Initially, numbers need to be gathered of those interested before contact and possible sponsorship is sought, if you have an interest please contact myself on 97876-546638.

Also you may have seen Andy Smith, of Shirley Golf Club, on Zoe Ball’s class of 1979 in March. Well done, Andy.

Phil Gates
East Anglia

Two Seminars this month given by Prime Irrigation went off very well. Eastern College near Norwich was the first held on February 6 and Otley were there we visited four courses and the electronics. I understand that 20 greenkeepers attended Eastern and 30 came to Otley, this did include 10 students, but still we must be proud of ourselves for such a large turnout. Our thanks go to Prime Irrigation for a great presentation.

On February 3 I flew out to Orlando with the delegation from Bernhards and BIGGA heading for the GCSAA Conference and Trade Show. While we were there we visited four courses and the Disney Wilderness Centre, 37,000 acres of habitat recreation area.

(Here's a tip if you visit Florida and there's a lake near by Do Not go for a paddle, you may end up an Alligator's breakfast) One of the first courses we visited was Orange County National, a 45 hole complex, two 18 hole championship courses, a 9 hole executive course and a 45 acre practice area, a staff of 39 during the Winter and 48 in Summer, enough Toro equipment to run six courses in the UK and a budget of $2,000,000 a year. The greens are a mix of bent grass which they use for the winter months and Bermuda grass which takes over during the Summer Season. 85,000 rounds a year at $12.55 per round totals $1,060,000 in green fees, Big course!

We attended two one day seminars and many presentations. It was an experience that I will long remember. It was a brilliant trip and I would like to express my thanks to Bernhard & Co and BIGGA for giving me the opportunity of being on the team.

Ian Willett

Surrey

All members by now should have received the Surrey programme for this year together with the application forms for the first golfing venue at Foxhills and the Biocoe bowl knockout competition. Please add the following dates, the McMillan Tournament at Sunningdale will be on August 8 and the England vs Scotland match at Hanley Common is on August 30.

This is all there is to report apart from a happy event that occurred on February 15. Lorna Tedder the wife of Peter, Head Greenkeeper at Sunningdale Ladies Golf Club, gave birth to a son, Daniel Alfie, 81lbs. We wish them both our warmest congratulations.

Please let me have your news so that next month's Surrey Around The Green is not read so quickly.

Brian Willmott

Essex

This, as you may know is the first report this month for Essex. That's not because the author has not written anything but more to do with a mix up with names. The reports I write for this magazine as you know from Rex Kimberley as the reports I write for my local newspapers go to a Mr. S. MacEennis, you can guess the rest I am sure. By the time I had found out it was too late to even get it in the February magazine.

New members this month are:
- Malcolm McGeoch, Ash Valley Golf Club, Michael Bassett, of Great Haldham Golf & Country Club; Martin Trower, of Burnham on Crouch GC; Paul Enfield, of Thorpe Hall GC, and Nigel Barnes, The Grove. Welcome to our Section.

Thanks must go to The Burstead Golf Club for staging two educational days, the first a First Aid and the second a COSHH and Risk Assessment day. Both days were well attended by members of our Section and we hope to have more in the future.

Our first golf day of the year is our Spring Trophy, which is to be held at the Essex Golf & Country Club on April 17. (Not April 15 as advertised on your fixture list). Which reminds me if you have not had a fixture list yet please contact Martin Forrester.

Congratulations are due to three greenkeepers who all had babies recently, Dominic Rodgers now has a son, Ciaran; Derek Blake also had a son, Joshua, and Daniel Walker completing a hat trick of boys with Ben. Let's hope they all grow up to be golfers as good as their respective fathers. Well done.

The Section needs support for this years Volvo PGA Championship at Wentworth. Anybody who would like to help should contact Derek Farrington ASAP.

That just leaves me to wish you all a successful and enjoyable year's golf with our Section and hope to see you all at each of them in turn.

Steve Crosdale

Kent

Congratulations to Gary Debenham who won £50 on the announcement of the fact he will become a father in August. Coincidentally Gary has announced his engagement as well and I'm sure everyone will wish them both a happy future.

News of any interest from the Gentleman's Dinner and what prize I won will be in next month's issue along with any funny stories of the day.

As you may know here at Kings Hill we don't like to blow our own trumpets but we have recently received an award from the Country Land and Business Association in recognition for our conservation and wildlife management work carried out on our course.

With works ranging from heather conservation and wildlife management work carried out on our course. With works ranging from heather management and establishment to bird boxes. We have been quite busy during the Autumn/Winter months with our self funded projects with the advice of the Kent Wildlife Trust. If any other clubs have done such work or would like any information on it, drop me a line and let me know which events you would like to attend and play in remember events are interesting and informative also there are great prizes.

Robin Graves

South Coast

Spring edges its way ever closer and most of us are finishing off our winter programmes. The Section has been quiet apart from our seminar, which was held at Salisbury & South Wiltshire Golf Club on February 13. The day started with an interesting talk from Rex Kimberley on soil nutrition. This was followed by an excellent presentation from Adi Archer and Terry Elbourne from Broadstone Golf Club. We were given an excellent insight into the Ecological work that earned them first prize in the BIGGA Environmental Award.

After an excellent lunch Kath Moore from the BBC, gave us a brief insight into the work that went into a new television programme and in particular the one, which focuses on tortoise management. Part of the programme was filmed at Fred Deamen's Alton Golf Club. Head Groundsman Dave Roberts from Southampton Football Club finished the day off with an excellent presentation giving us an enlightening insight into the maintenance of a Premiership pitch. He also spoke about the construction of the stadium and new pitch at the St Mary's stadium. The whole day
The powerful organiser keeping your golf course green!

OnCourse

Golf Club members and owners are continually demanding better quality playing conditions, which brings the role of Golf Course Managers into sharp focus. Not only are they expected to keep the course in excellent condition they also have to be skilled administrators and personnel managers. Additionally, Golf Club Managers need detailed and well-structured reports on golf course operations, which can be a time consuming task. OnCourse has been developed to meet all of these needs.

Best wishes to Broderick Grass Machinery Ltd, who have taken over the Textron Dealership in Northern Ireland at the beginning of the year. Broderick commitments to the Textron brand has won them the award as European distributor of the year by Textron Golf Turf and Speciality Products at the BIGGA show in Harrogate. I would like to welcome the following new members to the section this month, Alistair McEwen, Head Greenkeeper at Spa Golf Club, Robert Patterson, Rockmount Golf Club, Brian McConway and Chris M’Ilroy, The Hilton Temple Patrick, and Steven Henry, Royal Portrush Golf Club.

Ken Henderson

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Entry could not be simpler! Listed below are a series of clues relating to ONE company featured in the ever popular Buyers’ Guide. Take care to look through all the products and services shown and write down the name of the company which you think the following clues refer to:

1. We specialise in controlling nuisances on the golf course
2. We can be reached on three different telephone numbers
3. We are based close to a large Scottish city

Write down your answer and jacket measurement on a postcard and send your entries to:
Turftime Teaser, Greenkeeper International, BIGGA HOUSE, Aldwark, Aire, York YO61 1UF

Entries to reach us no later than Friday 19th April 2002. The first correct entry drawn will receive an exclusive waterproof jacket.

This competition is not open to BIGGA Staff or non-members.

Last month, John Gubb from Bedforshire Golf Club, correctly answered the Turftime Teaser. Our congratulations and a fantastic squash jacket from Allen Power are on their way to you!
Recruitment

GOLF CLUB HECHINGEN-HOHENZOLLERN

ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

Requires an Assistant Greenkeeper for 2002. Golf Club Hechingen is a parkland course situated approximately 60 km south of Stuttgart in the S.W. of Germany. We are looking for an enthusiastic and hard working greenkeeper to join our existing team. NVQ 2 qualification required. Preference will be given to those who have a working knowledge of German.

Applications with full C.V. to:-
Mr Jurgen Blickle (Course Manager),
Golf Club Hechingen-Hohenzollern, Hagelwasen, 72379 Hechingen, Germany

Email: info@golfclub-hechingen.de

Recruitment - Job Shop

27 year old British greenkeeper seeks employment on Scandinavian golf course. Nine years experience on golf courses, educated to NVQ2 level. Any position except Head Greenkeeper considered. Good references available.

JS/133/02

37 year old Course Manager requires challenging new position. Conversed in all aspects of Modern Greenkeeping and reaching company objectives. Educated to N.V.O level 4 with I.T. qualification. All areas considered with preference for North West.

JS/136/02
Recruitment

TYRRELLS WOOD GOLF CLUB LTD

APPLICATIONS ARE INVITED FOR THE POSITION OF
DEPUTY COURSE MANAGER

The successful applicant must possess the appropriate qualifications and have experience in all golf course management. The applicant must also have at least 5 years relevant experience and will be expected to assist in the maintenance, man-management and continued improvement of this parkland course.

Salary and conditions negotiable, but above Standing Committee recommendations. No accommodation available.

Applications in writing with full C.V. to:
Mr A Watson, Course Manager, Tyrrells Wood Golf Club,
The Drive, Tyrrells Wood Estate, Leatherhead, Surrey, KT22 8QP

LITTLE ASTON GOLF CLUB

Invites applications for the position of
ASSISTANT HEAD GREENKEEPER

Candidates should be qualified to NVQ Level 3 and hold spraying certificates PA1, PA2 and PA6. They should be fit and enthusiastic and able to integrate into a small friendly team.

Please apply in writing with full CV to:
The Manager, Little Aston Golf Club,
Roman Road, Streetly, Sutton Coldfield. B74 3AN

GREETHAM VALLEY GOLF CLUB

REQUIRES A
DEPUTY HEAD GREENKEEPER

To work on our prestigious 36 hole Golf Complex.
The successful applicant should have appropriate qualifications, enthusiasm, motivation and communication skills.

Salary dependent on qualifications and experience.

Apply in writing with CV to:
Head Greenkeeper, Adrian Porter, Greetham Valley Golf Club Ltd,
Wood Lane, Greetham, Oakham, Rutland, LE15 7NP

Oxfordshire Golf Club

Require CASUAL SUMMER GREENKEEPERS

To start from April onwards. No experience necessary.

Please apply in writing to:
David Gower, Course Manager, The Oxfordshire Golf Club,
Rycote Lane, Milton Common, Thame OX9 2PU

WORLD OF GOLF

An excellent career development opportunity for a self motivated greenkeeper wishing to put into practice all greenkeeping skills on our range, fairways, course and practice areas. Supervising a small team of grounds staff this position is a natural stepping stone to a head greenkeeper role.

The ideal candidate will be qualified to a minimum of NVQ Level 2, with full clean driving license, and relevant experience in supervision, use and maintenance of modern machinery, turf, drainage/irrigation and USGA spec greens. You will also hold spraying certificates PA1, 2 and 6. The successful applicant will work a 40 hour week on a 5 days in any 7 rota.

In return we offer a competitive remuneration and benefits package.

Applications in writing with full CV to:
Liz Williams, World of Golf, Beverley Way, Mew Malden, KT3 4PH,
or by email to: lizwilliams@ashtour.freeserve.co.uk

HENDON GOLF CLUB

require a COURSE MANAGER

Hendon Golf Club is a private members North West London parkland golf course, designed by Harry Colt in 1925, and reaching its Centenary in 2003. A vacancy exists for a highly qualified Course Manager to have responsibility over the course management, maintenance, staff, and budget.

Candidates will require the following skills:-
- Experience in all aspects of course management.
- Have a practical knowledge of the latest equipment
- Be experienced in new Tee and Green construction techniques
- Have the ability to prepare and control a course budget
- Possess good management skills

Salary will be by negotiation. No accommodation available.

Applicants should send their CV's to:
Mr Clive Lansdell, Secretary, Hendon Golf Club,
Ashley Walk, Devonshire Road, Mill Hill, London NW7 1DG
Tel: 0208-346-6023 Email: gm.hendongolf@talk21.com
www.hendongolfclub.co.uk
Recruitment

GUILDFORD GOLF CLUB

Has a vacancy for an

ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

Must be experienced NVQ Level 2 or equivalent, preferably with PA1, PA2 and PA6 qualifications.

Please apply in writing with full CV to:

Mr B J Green, Secretary, Guildford Golf Club, High Path Road, Merrow, Guildford, Surrey GU1 2HL
(Telephone 01483 563941)

ADENDORF GOLF COURSE

HEAD GREENKEEPER

Required by a busy public golf course in North Germany.
9 hole Bunker Hill course (June further 9 holes)
9 hole par 3 course. 25 bay driving range

Please send covering letter and CV to:

Gary Birch, Golfanlage Adendorf, Scharnebecker Weg 25,
21365 Adendorf, Germany.
Fax: 00 49 4131 22 04 02 Email: adendorfgolf@hotmail.com

ALRESFORD GOLF CLUB

Invites applications for the position of

FIRST ASSISTANT

Candidates should have a minimum of 3 years experience, be qualified to NVQ Level 2 and hold spraying certificates PA1, PA2 and PA6. Knowledge of irrigation and machinery maintenance will be an advantage.

Applications in writing together will full CV to:-
Darren Hatcher, Head Greenkeeper, Alresford Golf Club, Cheriton Road, Tichborne Down, Alresford, Hants SO24 0PN.

FOREST OF GALTRES GOLF CLUB

Has a vacancy for an

ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

We are looking for an enthusiastic and hard working greenkeeper to join our existing team. NVQ Level 2 along with PA1 AND PA2 qualifications preferred. Salary negotiable according to experience.

Apply in writing with full C.V. to:

The Secretary, Forest of Galtres Golf Club, Skelton Lane, Wigginton, York Y032 2RF

ROYAL EASTBOURNE GOLF CLUB

Applications are invited for the position of

COURSE MANAGER

Founded in 1887, a well established Private Members Club, with 27 Holes and 800+ Playing members.

The successful applicant must possess the appropriate qualifications and have experience in all aspects of Golf Course Management, and must also possess proven man management skills necessary to lead and motivate an experienced team of Greenkeepers.

Applications, in writing only please, together with full CV to :

Peter White, Secretary, Royal Eastbourne Golf Club, Paradise Drive, Eastbourne, East Sussex, BN20 8BP

Closing date for applications: 16th April 2002.

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Having not long unpacked my short sleeve shirts from my trip to the States it was now time to pack my roll necks and winter woollies and head off to Canada in following an invitation to the Canadian Show.

Last year I received the invitation with just one downside – could I make a presentation to the Canadian delegates on some Greenkeeping topic, well after some thought on various topics and also learning that the Canadian Show ties in each year with a Provincial Show which would obviously be well supported by those in that Province, I decided on a general topic: Greenkeeping in the UK, bearing in mind that golf in this area of Canada would be non existent at this time of year.

How right I was, as temperatures plummeted and the wind chill made it ~23 to ~30 degrees with a covering of snow all over. Golf was far from anyone’s mind. Incidentally, I spoke to several Superintendents who were greenkeeping for eight months and winter machinery was being bid for. One item that caught my attention was an autographed Ice Hockey Shirt which fetched 1250 Canadian Dollars – about £500.

The Canadians certainly excelled with their social programme. I was made to feel most welcome at all their functions which included a night at the ‘Sugar Shack’ where we sampled maple syrup and also the closing Banquet which featured a 16 piece Brass Band to finish the week off nicely.

For those of you that have met the Canadians at Harrgate you will know they are good company and if you get the chance to visit them next year in Calgary I would thoroughly recommend it. I would just like to thank Jay Leach, their retiring President, and Vince Gillis, their Executive Director, who has retired after 12 years service, for their work in making the show a success, and also learning that the Canadians are suffering from the same frustrations as we do back home certainly from members and committees. Like the Americans, however, they seem to have the budgets and staffing levels - 14-22 people for 18 holes to put things right, when they can play. Well those of us in this country and on the same scale as BTME there was still plenty of interest and business being done – none more so at the Silent Auction where anything from travel bags to machinery was being bid for. One item that caught my attention was an autographed Ice Hockey Shirt which fetched 1250 Canadian Dollars – about £500.

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Having made my presentation, I was pleasantly surprised at the feedback I received with regard to the Canadians suffering from the same frustrations that we do back home certainly from members and committees. Like the Americans, however, they seem to have the budgets and staffing levels - 14-22 people for 18 holes to put things right, when they can play. Well those of us in this country and on the same scale as BTME there was still plenty of interest and business being done – none more so at the Silent Auction where anything from travel bags to machinery was being bid for. One item that caught my attention was an autographed Ice Hockey Shirt which fetched 1250 Canadian Dollars – about £500.
Textron's commitment towards providing a world-class service is unquestionable. Over the past 18 months significant investment has been made in the following areas:

- **Personnel**
- **Inventory**
- **Training**
- **Business Systems**

This investment has resulted in major improvements right across our Service Parts Organisation resulting in measurable benefits for our customers. With a greater range of stock items, competitive pricing, interactive CD ROM parts manuals and an improved Parts Xpress delivery service, we have achieved significant progress in this important area.

**Faster response**

Enquiries are dealt with faster, parts located quickly and dispatched to wherever they are needed with the minimum of delay.

The majority of customers have their enquiry fully satisfied during their first call. If immediate customer satisfaction cannot be achieved then we'll get back to you within an hour by phone, fax or e-mail. Even with a continuous stream of calls, virtually all enquiries are solved within 24 hours.

The Service Parts Organisation management team explains how significant improvement in customer service has been achieved.

**Phil Naunton,**
International Service Parts Manager, has 29 years of after sales experience with Ransomes and Textron and heads up the Service Parts Organisation. He has recently returned from a 25-year secondment to Textron in the USA where he worked on the introduction of a new Oracle business management system, which included the development of a specialist order entry system.

Phil says, "We have just introduced a new Internet-based parts ordering system called EMPART, which is accessed via our website www.textronsolutions.com. Our customers can access diagrams of all our equipment for easy identification of the relevant part number. Currently Textron Dealers can place orders via this system. Going forward we hope it will be rolled out to allow customers to place orders with their local dealer. Oracle has been a US$24 million investment and it also allows us to have a real-time view of stock availability across all our manufacturing plants, both in the USA and here in the UK. We now have the capability, in exceptional circumstances, to have urgent parts shipped directly from the USA to the end-user. That's better communication, more up-to-date information and a better service for our customers.

"We are also empowering our dealers with even more responsibility for their parts stock holdings. With higher levels held locally, they can react quicker to fulfill customer requirements. And, quite simply, that's our goal - an unequivocal commitment to outstanding customer service."

**Wendy Forsdyke,**
Customer Services Manager comments,

"One of the recent innovations that has contributed to the improvement in customer service has been the introduction of our new telephone system. We now have a large visual display board in the call centre that provides members of the team with an instant view of the number of incoming calls, the length of time they have been waiting and the nature of the call.

"Every call is logged with key regard to products.

"If we can't resolve the call immediately, then we aim to provide up-to-date information within an hour. We can get an immediate delivery date from the new Oracle system, but we go one step further and will make calls to see if there is any way that we can improve on that date. We have also employed additional staff in the customer services department, who are totally committed to customer service. They all appreciate the need for exemplary levels of customer support and I am delighted that their efforts are reaping benefits for our end users."

**Mark Poppleton,**
Inventory and Warehouse Manager, looks at the improvements under his remit, "From my point of view the major benefit to customers has been our multi-million pound investment in stock holding. We have increased the level of parts stock, focusing on our fast moving lines with the aim of providing 100% availability. We are consistently achieving 98% for our top 1000 parts and we have reviewed our shipping requirements, especially with respect to products manufactured in the USA.

"We have also improved our forecasting, using computer-generated 'demand solutions' that have a combination of 20 different formulae to obtain the best fit in order to predict future parts demand. I also monitor our supplier performance and am constantly working with them to reduce their lead times."

"In the warehouse operation we have improved some of the working practices to ensure a better workflow. Urgent orders that are received by 3.30pm are despatched the same day for delivery by 7am the following morning. However, beginning 1st April we are extending the cut-off deadline to 4.30pm with orders taken in that extra hour being delivered by noon on the following day."

"The introduction of a new bar coding system using radio frequency technology for parts enables our goods inwards to quickly replenish stock, allowing parts to be available for picking and despatch the same day. These improvements, together with a significant investment in new, computer-controlled storage and retrieval systems are a positive step in our commitment towards 100% customer satisfaction."

"We appreciate the importance of an efficient and effective after sales service and to this end we are constantly striving for continuous improvement."

Textron Golf, Turf and Specialty Products
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At last, here's a range of fairway mowers that can't be beaten, whatever the weather or the growth rate. For sheer versatility and high levels of productivity the Toro range of precision-engineered tools are designed to meet all your turf management needs.

So, if you need powerful performance and superb playability, choose from Toro's Fairway Range. Just call 01480 226800, you are bound to be impressed.

**Reelmaster 5200-D** Ideal for links or heathland courses with slower rates of growth, this lightweight, 24hp workhorse with small reels is competitively-priced and simply engineered for self-servicing.

**Reelmaster 5500-D** Fitted with a larger engine and bigger reel diameter for higher productivity, the 5500-D follows ground contours smoothly to give the finest of cuts. Options include 2 and 4 wheel drive, cab and grass boxes.

**Reelmaster 5400-D** Similar to its smaller stablemate, the 5400-D’s larger 32hp turbocharged engine gives greater pulling power for more severe cutting conditions or steeper inclines. Options include 2 and 4 wheel drive, cab and grass boxes.

**Reelmaster 5700-D** Up to 11 feet of exceptional productivity is promised from the 6700-D’s efficient 42hp engine, which comes with 4 wheel drive and is capable of cutting with 5, 6 or 7 units. Options include cab and grass boxes.

**Reelmaster 6500-D** A 38hp engine and larger reel diameter make this a highly productive and easy-to-operate fairway mower. Options include 2 and 4 wheel drive, cab and grass boxes.

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