Brian Woodhouse, Head Greenkeeper of Chalford Golf Club, in Buckinghamshire, endured a terrifying ordeal late last year when, early one morning, when he was first to arrive at the club, he was attacked, handcuffed, beaten up and asked if he wanted to die by robbers armed with a shotgun.

Speaking in his local paper, the Bucks Examiner News and Advertising, Brian, 54, said that at first he resisted but they had started hitting him around the face.

"One of the guys threatened to shoot me in the leg and asked if I wanted to die. They got the handcuffs on me and kicked me in the stomach," he said.

Since the attack new security measures have been put in place at the golf club and Brian has shifted his hours so that he arrives at the club during daylight.

"Many golf clubs are isolated so I would caution any greenkeepers who tend to be first to arrive at the club to take care," said Brian, who has yet to recover fully from the trauma.

GTC article gets Chairman of Green thinking right 'On Course'

An article in the new issue of the GTC newsletter "On Course" has set at least one Chairman of Green thinking. Management consultant Frank Newberry had argued that better management skills were allowing Course Managers, Head Greenkeepers and their Deputies to cope with the ever-increasing demands put upon them and Brian Jackson, Chairman of Green at Bishop Auckland GC, read the piece and immediately contacted David Golding, the GTC's Education Director, to say how much he enjoyed the article.

"My time in industry has taught me that training is very worthwhile. Anything which motivates people and inspires self-confidence has to be good," said Brian.

"Frank's article rang bells with me and reinforced in my mind that training is the way forward for the industry."

A second series of training courses planned by TGA

Following a successful launch last year the Turf Grass Growers Association (TGA) will be holding a second series of half-day training courses at venues in the West Midlands, Yorkshire, Berkshire and Surrey between March and June.

Targeted primarily at professionals who supply, specify or install quality sports, amenity or ornamental turf surfaces, the courses will be first held on March 23, at a venue near Reading, Berks; and on June 18 at a venue near Reigate, Surrey.

To register for or receive further details on the TGA conference or the TGA's 2002 training courses, contact TGA headquarters, telephone 01728 729672 or e-mail: david.clarks@turfgrass.co.uk

Police took 'too long' to get to scene of gun-raid

MANAGERS have criticised police after it took them nearly 20 minutes to travel two miles to a golf club to tackle a violent armed raid, in Little Halesowen, West Midlands.

Greenkeeper Brian Woodhouse, 54, was handcuffed, beaten up, and asked: "Do you want to die?" by the would-be robbers armed with a shotgun.

The incident at Chalford Golf Club, called three times before police officers from Amersham arrived.

"It's disgraceful," said owner of the club Mike Dunne, who chased the intruders after discovering the bootloader and bound Mr Woodhouse, Manager, of the club in Lodge Lane, Flashback to the chilling headline in Brian's local newspaper

A spate of violent armed raids, in Little Halesowen, West Midlands, read the piece and asked if he

Managing Director Frank Golding, the GTC's Education Director, to say how much he enjoyed the article.

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**Illegal chemical use: Are you breaking the law?**

Simon Barnaby, Technical Manager for The Scotts Company, has experienced an increase in the number of enquiries received relating to the potential use of pesticides not approved for use on turf areas. Scotts took the opportunity at BTME to bring the facts relating to the issue to the attention of their customers, and to warn them of the possible consequences.

Pesticide manufacture, storage, supply and application are regulated by law. There are a number of Acts of Parliament and Regulations that cover the above points. These include Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH), Food and Environment Protection Act 1985 (FEPA) and Control of Pesticide Regulations 1986 (COPR).

The legislation requires that no product may be used unless it has government approval on the grounds of safety and efficacy. Everyone must comply with conditions of approval. Only chemicals with a recommendation on the label for use on Managed Amenity Turf can be legally advertised, supplied, stored and applied to Managed Amenity Turf Situations. It is illegal to use any other chemical that does not have approval.

Why are there different products for different situations?

Chemicals used on Managed Amenity Turf situations are specifically formulated and designed for use on turf. Each product has to undergo extensive research on turf in order to ascertain product efficacy e.g. does it work. Stringent research is also carried out to ascertain human, animal and environmental safety - this work can take a number of years to complete.

Once above criteria is met PSD (Pesticide Safety Directorate) will register the chemical with a specific Approval e.g. For Use On Managed Amenity Turf.

What if a non approved chemical is used?

The user, the club or site manager, supplier and advisor are all liable; and may suffer any or all of the following:

- Heavy fines. Unlimited amount (a recent misuse case resulted in a £220,000 fine plus costs)
- Insurance void. All cover void
- Criminal proceedings, up to two years in prison for each case

**Reduce annual expenditure by joining Golf England**

Golf clubs throughout England will soon get a chance to join Golf England - and to save money on their annual club expenditure.

Invitation packs are being mailed at the beginning of February to 1,900 clubs, along with a preview of the first of many offers available through the group-buying scheme. Clubs are being offered 15% off the cost of a range of group treatment products; as well as catering equipment items at less than half price.

Clubs will also receive a reminder copy of the Golf England presentation made in November and December at roadshows around the country; promotional material to inform club and committee members and finally two copies of the contract together with explanatory notes.

"Clubs should receive two copies of the pack in early February, and we know from our telephone calls that many clubs are ready to join as soon as they have their contracts," said Dale Clements, Marketing Director for Golf England.

Once a club returns its application to join, it will receive a welcome pack. This will include a CD-ROM catalogue of all the current products and services available on the group purchasing scheme which will allow them to place their first orders.
Paul appointed Finance Director

Paul Bray has been appointed Rolawn's Financial Director when Rolawn's current Financial Director, Paul Hopewell stood down after ten years with the Company. Paul joined the company as Financial Director Designate last October. “I have enjoyed having the opportunity of getting to know the business and the people in it prior to formally taking over the role of Financial Director. I am very much looking forward to being involved in the exciting opportunities which lie ahead for Rolawn.”

Before joining Rolawn, Paul worked as Group Financial Controller for Higgins Agriculture Limited, the UK's largest independent potato merchant with growing, selling and distribution operations in the UK and mainland Europe, dealing with many European blue chip companies. Paul (39) is married with one daughter, and lives in Cawood, North Yorkshire.

Ken Dawson, Rolawn’s Chairman said, “we are extremely pleased that Paul has joined us. His expertise and experience will be important elements in supporting the future growth of our business.”

William joins Eammon Wall

William Garrett has recently joined consultants Eammon Wall & Co at their Dollar office in Scotland. William replaces Alastair Seaman who is now in Nepal and remains an e-mail consultant with the firm.

William, 33, brings useful experience to the company in the fields of arboriculture, woodland conservation and continuous cover silviculture. Previously he worked for Coillte (Irish Forestry Board) completing their inventory of native and historically significant woodlands before returning to the UK in December 2001. After graduating from the University of Wales, with an M.Sc. in Environmental Forestry, William spent some time working for the Mersey Forest and Warrington Borough Council. Prior to his M.Sc. he obtained an NCH in Arboriculture from Merrist Wood and a BA from University of London. He has travelled extensively living and working in Spain and Italy and enjoys rock climbing, snow boarding and mountain running.

EGU host successful Greenkeeping Masterclass

The EGU Greenkeeping Masterclass, held at Woodhall Spa, in early January gave over 60 greenkeepers the chance to hear papers from Rex Kimberley, Terrafit Ireland Ltd; Kate Entwistle, The Turf Disease Centre; John Nicholson, John Nicholson Associates; Graeme Francis, then of the Hydroscape Group, and Sue Ingram and David Watling, of the Environment Agency, who discussed Water Abstraction.

Organised by Neil Cockbill of the Golf Services Division and chaired by Colin Spurr, Chairman of the Golf Services Committee, the Conference also involved some team tasks with eight groups splitting up and preparing short presentations on four greenkeeper related subjects.

The sessions were split by a superb dinner in the EGU Headquarters and L-R: David Carvey, Rigby Taylor Rep: Daryl Bray, Herbie Probert, Steve Mills, Roy Barker, Rigby Taylor rep with Jamie Probert, kneeling.

Roland wins first Clive Edwin Smith trophy

At the Essex Section AGM held at Chasne's Golf Club the Section were able to add an impressive piece of silverware to their trophy cabinet. Clive Smith had been a Member at Frinton-on-Sea Golf Club until his premature death aged 52 earlier this year and had also been a Member at several other clubs during his working life.

Wherever he played his golf Clive had always had a kinship with the Greenkeepers and Clive, a modest 16 handicap had always appreciated that whenever he did have a good round it was generally attributed to the Greenkeepers and the condition that they had prepared the course. His widow Carol who often walked the course with him when he played knew of his appreciation of Greenkeepers and has donated to the Section a magnificent silver cup to be awarded to the Section’s “Golfer of the Year”. The first winner of the Trophy was Roland Hughes of Forrester Park Golf Club.

Right: Mrs Carol Smith presents the “Clive Edwin Smith” Trophy to Roland Hughes (Forrester Park GC)