Compaction is a major problem on heavily trafficked turf, causing lack of grass vigour and waterlogging. How prone any area to compaction depends largely upon soil type, with the fine particles found in clay and silt soils more readily aggregated or compacted than sand. Nevertheless, it is possible to get high levels of organic matter which can block even sands. Several methods of alleviation are available to the greenkeeper, from long term remedies such as incorporating sand into the rootzone through less radical mechanical operations like tining, slitting and scarifying, or operations such as subsoiling or moleing. How radical an operation is needed will depend upon many factors such as soil type and condition, and the depth of the compacted layer. Operations such as sand slitting or gravel banding will also have an effect on compaction.

Compaction problems on a golf course tend to be relatively shallow, which means that alleviation can be undertaken with minimum disruption and effort. Although slitters and tiners were designed to ‘aerate’ and scarifiers to ‘de-thatch’ (and these are slightly different objectives from compaction alleviation) such tools can be expected to have an effect on breaking up compaction – to a greater or lesser extent according to design, operation and timing. Some manufacturers claim their scarifiers are able to penetrate into the root zone to 50mm thus (perhaps) removing surface smearing and providing some aeration of the rootzone. The displaced fibrous material requires to be collected and several machines are able to do this at the same time. Slitting also has the effect of root pruning and fine turf slitters with narrow blades minimise surface disturbance, especially when there is a strong and healthy root system. However, minimising disturbance means that they do little to open up the rootzone. Likewise the principle of the tiner is to open up the turf for aeration and drainage rather than to cause disturbance of the soil, nevertheless the core tiner, by providing pathways for topdressing, fertiliser and roots to penetrate actively, assists opening up the soil. While most tiners are carefully designed to stab the soil without tearing it, the core tiner, by providing paths for topdressing, fertiliser and roots to penetrate actively, assists opening up the soil. While most tiners are carefully designed to stab the soil without tearing it, the core tiner, by providing paths for topdressing, fertiliser and roots to penetrate actively, assists opening up the soil. Most tiners are carefully designed to stab the soil without tearing it, several, including spoon tiners, can produce some loosening of the soil, – how severe and effective this will be is controlled by the intensity of the operation in terms of tine size and spacing. The removal of cores allows surrounding soil to spread into the vacant space, that is if not immediately replaced by sand or topdressing.

Perhaps the most revolutionary method of aeration to reach the golf scene in recent years is the Toro HydroJect, which uses jets of water at high pressure to puncture the turf and rootzone with minimal surface disruption and no cores, and while it does not break-up compaction directly, simply punching holes through, it will answer the needs for easing compaction. The machine is self-propelled using an 18kW engine which is used (mainly) to drive a high pressure pump, with water being supplied through a hose from a hydrant or tanker. Penetration is normally to about 150mm although by using repeated shots it is possible to penetrate several times deeper. A number of firms are now offering a contract service using the machine.

Arguably the best known and most widely used machine for relieving compaction is the Verti-Drain, a machine able to operate down to depths of 400mm, depending on model and site conditions. The principle of its action is a levering of the tip of the tine, rather in the way the greenkeeper might operate manually with a fork. Both pedestrian operated and tractor mounted/pto driven models are available, but one constraint may be owning and putting a suitable tractor on greens or tees, as this must have sufficient weight and power and a low enough bottom gear to operate.
You make it - we'll break it!

Turf Aeration all year round
- get the New Hydroject working for you!
For competitive hire charges etc. contact:

**PBM PROFESSIONAL TURF CARE**
26 Peterfield Road, Whitwick, Coalville, Leicestershire LE67 5PR
Tel: 0530 836882

Don't delay - call right away!

---

E&S SPORTSGROUND CONTRACTORS
(We've got it off to a tee)

**GOLF COURSE CONSTRUCTION AND RENOVATION**
- Tee Extensions
- Bunker refurbishments
- Green reconstruction/alterations
- Verti-Drain
- Overseeding
- Top-Dressing
- Drainage

Contact: Richard Veitch
39 Knox Green, Binfield, Bracknell, Berks
0344 860690

---

COMPACCIÓN

You make it - we'll break it!

Turf Aeration all year round
- get the New Hydroject working for you!
For competitive hire charges etc. contact:

**PBM PROFESSIONAL TURF CARE**
26 Peterfield Road, Whitwick, Coalville, Leicestershire LE67 5PR
Tel: 0530 836882

Don't delay - call right away!

---

**COMPACCIÓN**

You make it - we'll break it!

Turf Aeration all year round
- get the New Hydroject working for you!
For competitive hire charges etc. contact:

**PBM PROFESSIONAL TURF CARE**
26 Peterfield Road, Whitwick, Coalville, Leicestershire LE67 5PR
Tel: 0530 836882

Don't delay - call right away!
wheel damage as well as significantly improving the 'shatter' effect. The Shattermaster was first seen in the UK at IoG last year. Again such operations are soil condition dependent — dragging them through the soil when it is plastic is most likely to produce a mole channel with smeared sides. However in very wet conditions it may be valid to operate many of these machines to produce drainage channels, vertical or horizontal, just to get the water away and allow the rootzone soil to dry out so that a compaction relief operation can be carried out.

HUGH TILLEY

IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM BIGGA EDUCATION OFFICER

Certificate of Competence - PA1-2A. Application of Pesticides

I have received many verbal complaints from members regarding problems associated with the above examination techniques and procedures. If any member has experienced any problems I would appreciate a letter outlining just where this operation can be improved.

The National Proficiency Test Council has acknowledged my concern and before they can investigate individual complaints, documented evidence would be required. With this in mind, whatever your problem please write to me at BIGGA headquarters. The major complaints received are as follows:

- Examiners having scant knowledge regarding fine turf care.
- Equipment and machinery used in testing which is not familiar to course managers/greenkeepers.
- Chemical labels used in testing are not those which course managers/greenkeepers use in turf care.

For those who have not yet attempted the examination please either contact your nearest college or book for the next BIGGA course scheduled for 5th-9th October inclusive, which will be held at Aldwark Manor. Jon Allbutt will again undertake training and the North Yorkshire Testing Council will carry out examinations.

DAVID GOLDING

When your grass is feeling blue...

..add a touch of yellow for the perfect green.

F. W. McConnel Limited
Telephone: (0584) 873131, Telex 35313, Facsimile: (0584) 876463.
Whilst the merits of the Master Greenkeeper Certificate are beyond the dispute and are appreciated by many, as described by John Philp in his comments.

John Philp says:

Head greenkeepers and course managers are encouraged: 'Be a master of your profession' and register for the Master Greenkeeper Certificate Scheme, a seemingly worthy qualification on offer to all head greenkeepers and course managers who are BIGGA members.

I am concerned, however, about the adequacy of the criteria as described for this intended 'standard of excellence'. Although in agreement with the principles of both educational, self advancement and the elevation of the greenkeeping profession in general, I remain sceptical, as I have from its inception, of the ability of the formula per se to accomplish the desired goal: that of being a widely recognised professional status for golf course managers and greenkeeping in general.

One can imagine a large number of greenkeepers achieving the 200 credits applicable to Stage One sooner or later, and no doubt many will also possess the necessary capability to pass the examination - given the syllabus - required for Stage Three. The vital yardstick however, to my mind, has to be involved in the aspects of management constituting the 'guidelines', whereby the true potential of a given site is realised or is being manifested as professional skill with an end result to match!

I foresee a real danger of greenkeeping moving into the next millennium with the alarming situation of a succession of candidates in possession of a Master Greenkeeper Certificate yet actively managing, albeit well presented, *Poa annua* dominated turf, although perhaps 'going through the motions' of change to golfing turf but with no real commitment and purpose, probably fuelled by a lack of the required understanding to achieve the correct progression. What a hollow, totally meaningless qualification it would be if my fears materialise and indeed completely contrary to all publications and worthy professional advice from authorities in the game. I hope BIGGA sincerely wish to follow 'the professional way forward' and perhaps the executive director can allay my concern by confirming BIGGA policy with reference to Stage Two and publish at the same time the aspects of management constituting the 'guidelines', together with corresponding rating or 'scoring' and what safeguards, if any, are in place. I presume progression to Stage Three is not possible unless candidates are successful in Stage Two.

In closing, it is my opinion that a British Golf Course Standards publication is overdue, by which courses can be classified and given a rating relative to what they offer the paying customer, and although this may not be a direct responsibility of the Association I do think they should have an active involvement in such a thrust of his concern relates to Stage Two and I will respond briefly on those stages. Knowledge, qualifications and experience are integral parts of the certification scheme and should not in any way be under-valued. The Association's efforts over the last five years have concentrated on improving the educational aspects of management constituting the MGC, and given a rating relative to what they offer the paying customer, and although this may not be a direct responsibility of the Association I do think they should have an active involvement in such a thrust of his concern relates to Stage Two and I will respond briefly on those stages. Knowledge, qualifications and experience are integral parts of the certification scheme and should not in any way be under-valued. The Association's efforts over the last five years have concentrated on improving the educational aspects of management constituting the MGC, and given a rating relative to what they offer the paying customer, and although this may not be a direct responsibility of the Association I do think they should have an active involvement in such a thrust of his concern relates to Stage Two and I will respond briefly on those stages. Knowledge, qualifications and experience are integral parts of the certification scheme and should not in any way be under-valued. The Association's efforts over the last five years have concentrated on improving the educational aspects of management constituting the MGC, and given a rating relative to what they offer the paying customer, and although this may not be a direct responsibility of the Association I do think they should have an active involvement in such a thrust of his concern relates to Stage Two and I will respond briefly on those stages. Knowledge, qualifications and experience are integral parts of the certification scheme and should not in any way be under-valued. The Association's efforts over the last five years have concentrated on improving the educational aspects of management constituting the MGC, and given a rating relative to what they offer the paying customer, and although this may not be a direct responsibility of the Association I do think they should have an active involvement in such a thrust of his concern relates to Stage Two and I will respond briefly on those stages. Knowledge, qualifications and experience are integral parts of the certification scheme and should not in any way be under-valued. The Association's efforts over the last five years have concentrated on improving the educational aspects of management constituting the MGC, and given a rating relative to what they offer the paying customer, and although this may not be a direct responsibility of the Association I do think they should have an active involvement in such a thrust of his concern relates to Stage Two and I will respond briefly on those stages. Knowledge, qualifications and experience are integral parts of the certification scheme and should not in any way be under-valued. The Association's efforts over the last five years have concentrated on improving the educational aspects of management constituting the MGC, and given a rating relative to what they offer the paying customer, and although this may not be a direct responsibility of the Association I do think they should have an active involvement in such a thrust of his concern relates to Stage Two and I will respond briefly on those stages. Knowledge, qualifications and experience are integral parts of the certification scheme and should not in any way be under-valued. The Association's efforts over the last five years have concentrated on improving the educational aspects of management constituting the MGC, and given a rating relative to what they offer the paying customer, and although this may not be a direct responsibility of the Association I do think they should have an active involvement in such a
John Philp voices concern how it works in practice. Today, there is much evidence of greater co-operation with the colleges and an improved standard of both theoretical and practical training. The certification scheme from the outset has emphasised the need for education to be ongoing and continuing. Continuing education was built into the scheme. Experience is another vital ingredient — many of our up and coming young greenkeepers need and will continue to need the wise counsel of these years.

Those points having been made I would agree that acquired knowledge and relevant qualifications do not guarantee professional skill. Certainly not every successful individual will put into practice in later years what he has learned. Clearly the certification scheme had to ensure that sound use was being made of the knowledge gained and this could only be done at the place of work. The golf course visit is a vital part of the MGC and therefore necessitated very careful planning about how best to carry this out in a fair and meaningful way. Three or four unannounced visits at different times of the year would have presented practical and financial difficulties of some consequence, before considering the Club's reaction to such visits. The Master Greenkeeper working party determined that a planned, well-structured visit would eliminate as far as possible the subjective judgements which are always likely to reduce fairness.

It needs to be understood that the golf course assessors have been trained and are sufficiently experienced to recognise the difference between good preparation and presentation and the fundamental composition of the turf. I would suggest to John that to make composition of the turf the sole method of assessment is to take a very narrow view. The visit is also to determine the ability of the candidate to organise, to plan and to assess progress in the implementation of an agreed programme. It looks at relationships at the place of work and also examines the candidate's abilities as an initiative. Would it not therefore be inherently unfair to mark down or fail a candidate who has Pou anno on his greens when it may well be that he inherited a problem and is in any event seeking to reduce it as part of a planned programme?

I am happy to detail criteria applying for Stage Two within the nine relevant sections. Each area of assessment within a section is marked on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being poor and 5 excellent. Each section has a set pass mark. Within each section any area of assessment marked 3 or less is the subject of further consideration to ensure overall fairness to the candidate. The nine sections are as follows:

SECTION 1 — PRESENTATION OF THE COURSE: Presentation involves accuracy and tidiness of maintenance, setting, condition and playability of the whole area. It covers greens, tees, fairways, semi-rough, rough, bunkers, surrounds, pathways, furniture, hazards and clubhouse area.

SECTION 2 — STAFF ORGANISATION: In staff organisation the assessors should be looking for general attitude to work: from the golfers viewpoint, dress, welfare, accommodation and training programmes on and off site. This will require questions relevant to the adequacy of accommodation for working, dining and the general attitude to safety at work.

SECTION 3 — ORGANISATION OF SHEDS: Assessors should be concerned with general tidiness (not daily dirt), compliance with appropriate safety regulations regarding storage of tools and equipment, also the current state of repairs of buildings.

SECTION 4 — BUDGET MANAGEMENT: The wide range of variation and responsibility should be recognised in this section, but the least to be expected is that the budget has been prepared by the course manager as the basis for management discussion. The important elements are therefore responsibility for the budget within members (committee) limits. Lack of direct involvement with setting or servicing a budget by whatever means should be regarded as a disqualification.

SECTION 5 — RECORD AND STOCK CONTROL: In this area it is expected that all records required as a result of legislation are covered adequately. However, other records are necessary for achieving an adequate level of management. Accessibility of records to other staff should be taken into account where appropriate and therefore relevant questions should be asked. Diary, machine maintenance, stock inventory and chemical log are all important elements.

SECTION 6 — MANAGEMENT PARTICIPATION: In this area a course manager should play a major role in the decision making process of the club with regards the golf course. It is essential therefore that the relationship to management, the role within the committee and the ability/opportunity to submit reports and support them, are considered. Questions regarding the exact role of the course manager are therefore appropriate.

SECTION 7 — COURSE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME: In this area the candidate is expected to have recognised potential problems and to have drawn up a programme to correct or rectify them. This may involve a long term maintenance programme or a construction programme. Assessors will be expected to determine the relationship between the course manager's programme and the plans of the Club management committee, as well as the methods used in drawing it up. It is assumed that contractors providing relevant assistance would be brought in as required.

SECTION 8 — MACHINE AND IRRIGATION: Assessors should be looking for a planned replacement and maintenance programme. The course manager's influence in this is important. Also the operative condition of equipment should be considered, coupled with questions directed to seeking explanations for what is found.

SECTION 9 — GOLF: An ability to play golf is desirable, including a detailed knowledge of the requirements of golfers of varying standards. Questions should be directed towards relevant rules and surface requirements where playing abilities are irrelevant.

As a final comment, may I say how much I welcome John's thought-provoking observations, which remind all concerned of the importance of an ongoing assessment of the Master Greenkeeper Certificate Scheme. As I have said on many occasions, this is not an easy award to obtain — were it to be so the Scheme would be fundamentally flawed and devalued. It is designed to find the 'master' rather than a good course manager. Members can rest assured that BIGGA and the working party will continue to ensure that the Scheme is equitable for its members and the industry as a whole. It remains my belief that the education and training programmes now in place and those being planned, particularly the introduction of HND courses in golf greenkeeping this coming September, coupled with the Master Greenkeeper Certificate Scheme, will accomplish full professional recognition for greenkeeping and a real status for golf course managers in the years ahead.

Neil Thomas, Executive Director, BIGGA.
Living the American dream

Nothing could quite prepare me for my journey from Silloth on Solway to the far side of the Atlantic Ocean and my visit to the University of Massachusetts, this as part of my organised Toro tour. After a 21 hour journey which culminated at the Spruce Motel, I was in trepidation for what might be waiting in the weeks ahead but need not have worried, for within minutes of my arrival the telephone rang and I was offered a ride to the university, a touch of hospitality that I discovered was by no means unique - Americans are so very friendly.

The motel room assigned to me was so huge I gladly shared it with Phillip Miller, a superintendent from Indian Lake Hills in Michigan, and I was soon to discover he was something of a film star, having played a 'bit' part in the film Lethal Weapon II. Once at the university we were joined by other students for a half-hour induction period, immediately followed by a plunge in at the deep-end as we began the intensive 11 subject course, involving a full range of golf course management skills. These included entomology; diseases; irrigation; machinery maintenance; soils and fertilisers; turf management; trees and shrubs; personnel management; golf course design; physiology and turfgrass calculations.

As one might expect, the course content was first rate, though highly intensive and with much to absorb in a short time. My favourite subject was Irrigation System Design, which proved an eye-opener - not only for the drive on the two sides of the Atlantic, with money no problem and superintendents commanding far greater respect than in the UK. The PGA course was fantastic, with views of the snow-capped Californian mountains and 70° of sunshine. I saw Bruce Forsyth outside the clubhouse and said to John Skidgle, 'Look - there's Bruce Forsyth!' His reply - 'Who is he?'

Next day I met Bob Symonds, who showed me around the Toro irrigation plant, followed by a trip with him to Orange County for the PGA West course at Palm Springs and we played with the superintendent - who informed me that he had 69 men employed on 36 holes! I am inclined to think that is the main difference in golf course management on the two sides of the Atlantic, with money no problem and superintendents commanding far greater respect than in the UK. The PGA course was fantastic, with views of the snow-capped Californian mountains and 70° of sunshine. I saw Bruce Forsyth outside the clubhouse and said to John Skidgle, 'Look - there's Bruce Forsyth!' His reply - 'Who is he?'

Now on to Toro headquarters at MInneapolis, marred by weather that was simply too bad to get us to the assembly plant, though we did enjoy a tour of the prototype/testing areas. I say we, because I was shown around by Barry Beckett, along with Dennis Schmidt, a superintendent at the Sun City Complex in South Africa. After a couple of days 'living it up' in the Embassy Suites Hotel it was onward again, this time for a week at Toro's Irrigation Division HQ at Riverside California. I was met at the airport by Veronica Smith, who showed me to my rental car, experience of which was an eye-opener - not only for the drive on the right problem but the lack of warning before junctions - tough stuff this bumper-to-bumper driving!

The weather was kind once again and I spent my first day sunbathing by the pool.

Further week before travelling to Bermuda to visit a friend, Tim Carr, who had gone there to become a policeman. It was a fun week-end, and he even managed to get me entered in a competition at the exclusive Mid-Ocean course. I also played at Castle Harbour, much impressed by the fantastic weather and temperatures of 65° in mid-February! Leaving Bermuda came as a body shock, as I returned to Massachusetts at -12° for the last week at college.

A grand dinner was a fitting end to our course, enriched by the receipt of our well-earned certificates. This was also time to say goodbye to many good friends and to enjoy two final days of reflection on all that had been achieved at the college - a tinge of sadness at its ending.

Now on to Toro headquarters at Minneapolis, marred by weather that was simply too bad to get us to the assembly plant, though we did enjoy a tour of the prototype/testing areas. I say we, because I was shown around by Barry Beckett, along with Dennis Schmidt, a superintendent at the Sun City Complex in South Africa. After a couple of days 'living it up' in the Embassy Suites Hotel it was onward again, this time for a week at Toro's Irrigation Division HQ at Riverside California. I was met at the airport by Veronica Smith, who showed me to my rental car, experience of which was an eye-opener - not only for the drive on the right problem but the lack of warning before junctions - tough stuff this bumper-to-bumper driving!

The weather was kind once again and I spent my first day sunbathing by the pool.

BRIAN STORY, Toro Student
Greenkeeper of the Year, reports on his experience of two months in America as part of his winner's award - from high-powered university lectures, to sharing a motel room with a film star...
Examples are the Hardi BL mounted sprayers and the PS de-mount model, which fits Cushman and similar power units. There are also the well known sprayers that are appropriate for the amenity market, wheelbarrow and power types for work around buildings, parks, etc., and machines designed for pick-up mounting and for use with ATVs.

- T. Parker & Sons and Roffey Brothers Ltd. have launched the new Parker liquid fertilisers and turf feeds. Parker Turfmaster is a foliar feed and stimulant based on fermented seaweed with high analysis nutrients for use on lighter soils where pressure of play precludes the application of traditional fertilisers. Available as liquids in N; NK or NPK, the fertilisers are easy to apply through standard spraying equipment.

- Jacobsen have appointed Henry H Sheach as their distributor for Scotland. Based at Kirkcaldy in Fife, the company is now responsible for the sales, service and parts support of the complete Jacobsen range of mowers, aeration equipment and turf utility vehicles. Henry Sheach has over 40 years experience in the turf industry, bringing with him the complete Jacobsen range of mowers, aeration equipment and turf utility vehicles.

- Watermation have introduced a new tensiometer - the Hydrovisor - which is buried in the ground close to the sprinkler heads. It is designed to work along with the TW2 irrigation controller causing the irrigation to 'skip' an area should moisture retention be sufficient at root level. To draw water from the soil plants must use suction. The level of suction required is determined by how tightly the water is being held by the soil. As the plant pulls the water from the soil the remaining water adheres to the soil particles with increasing force. As a result, the suction required to remove it also increases. This force is called the soil matric potential and provides a direct measurement of water availability to the plant.

Hydromat reacts to these changes in the soil matric potential or soil tension, not the percentage of soil moisture. Different soils require different irrigation ranges so Watermation's Hydromat is available in three grades to suit various types of soil, i.e. sandy soils and containers, normal soil and clay soil. It is the first and only solid state, maintenance free, tensiometer and can to provide water energy savings levels of up to 60%.

- Barenbrug UK has produced leaflets to cover its BAR range of grass seed mixtures. The BAR range has been specifically formulated to meet the professional standards required for golf courses, parks, lawns and turf production, chosen from Barenbrug's own wide range of high performance grass varieties, many of which are recommended at, or near, the top of STRI turfgrass lists. A separate leaflet covers each of these areas, giving colourful pictures to identify the end use for the mixtures. The characteristics of each variety within the different BAR grass seed mixtures are clearly explained, showing how these will blend together to form a mixture that suits a particular amenity need. Leaflets are free. Tel: 0359 70766.


**VERTIDRAIN HIRE**

**CALL THE EXPERTS**

**Golf Course and Landscape Specialist**

**HOMESTEAD FARM, RINGWOOD ROAD, THREE LEGGED CROSS, WIMBOURNE, DORSET. BH21 6QY**

Tel: Verwood (0202) 823272, 824906 & 825979 Fax: (0202) 826447
GOLF CONSTRUCTION XXIV

In a world of constant change, it's refreshing to know that sometimes things are best left alone. Members of the British Association of Golf Course Constructors know just when to leave things unchanged, or when change is required or becomes inevitable, just how to go about it with an eye to detail and a truly professional approach.

After all, why change what has become a successful formula established over many years based on the unique and wide ranging experience of our XXIV member companies.

If you're in need of a company with a proven track record of building fine golf courses, contact the BAGCC:
Tim Banks, The Secretary,
2 Angel Court, Dairy Yard,
Market Harborough, Leicestershire LE16 7NL
Tel: (0858) 464346 and 433003. Fax: (0858) 434734
SOUTHERN IRELAND
Due to airline re-scheduling, my time at Hermitage Golf Club for the Southern Ireland Iseki competition was very short. However, in the time that I was there the sun shone over the magnificent picturesque course in beautiful condition under the care of head greenkeeper, Jim Byrne. My thanks to Chris Nolan for the taxi ride.

Twenty-nine greenkeepers took part in the competition and the results are as follows:
Category 1 - Handicap 0-9 inc
1st Tony Burke nett 73, 2nd Ian Richrie nett 74, 3rd Ollie English nett 74.
Category 2 - Handicap 10-18 inc
1st Joe Flaherty nett 70, 2nd Jim Byrne nett 70,3rd Tom Bagnal nett 73.
Category 3 - Handicap 19-28 inc

Like Debbie, I shall look forward to seeing the victors at Coventry GC, which I’m sure all will enjoy immensely.

DAVID WHITE

EAST OF ENGLAND

Our first tournament of the season was held in the ‘Soak of Peterborough’ and a ‘wee soak’ is what we experienced. However, the weather did not spoil the friendly welcome we received at this municipal course, the first our section has played.

Nineteen out of twenty played on the first day, which was the better of the two, and some of them travelled many miles to deliver the prizes – thank you, gentlemen!

Orton Meadows course is built in two very different halves. The long half, which played around a lake, was a real test in the wind and the back nine was one where tee shots had to be well placed to gain advantage. With tees well back – nearly on to the busy A1 – it was not surprising that a local man, Graeme MacDonald, won with a splendid 35 points to beat Gilbert Ogden of Stoke Rochford, with Michael Wood of Thorpe Wood in third place.

I should like to place on record my thanks to BIGGA for making sure the wives who attended the recent conference at Cirencester had a superb time. Three members from our section took their wives along and they are now all looking forward to next year’s meeting.

COLIN SWINGLER

NORTHERN IRELAND

Unfortunately, (writes Debbie Savage) due to fog, Leeds/Bradford Airport was closed and my journey to Lurgan Golf Club was aborted. Luckily David White was also due at Lurgan as part of his recent trip to Eire and Northern Ireland so the reporting is up to him as follows:

Like Debbie, my flight was also delayed, though due more to the monster cur park known as the M25 than fog! I arrived in Lurgan some hours late and was dismayed on asking directions as the M25 than fog! I arrived in Lurgan some hours late!

Our first tournament of the season was held in the ‘Soak of Peterborough’ and a ‘wee soak’ is what we experienced. However, the weather did not spoil the friendly welcome we received at this municipal course, the first our section has played.

Nine was one where tee shots had to be well placed to gain advantage. With tees well back – nearly on to the busy A1 – it was not surprising that a local man, Graeme MacDonald, won with a splendid 35 points to beat Gilbert Ogden of Stoke Rochford, with Michael Wood of Thorpe Wood in third place.

I should like to place on record my thanks to BIGGA for making sure the wives who attended the recent conference at Cirencester had a superb time. Three members from our section took their wives along and they are now all looking forward to next year’s meeting.

COLIN SWINGLER

NORTH SCOTLAND

The section's Spring Outing to Montrose GC was a great success, despite the windy weather. The course was in first class order, which would have been reflected in the scores had it not been for the gale force wind blowing, warm though it was. Nevertheless we were well looked after, with 74 players along and they are now all looking forward to next year's meeting.

DAVID WHITE

Keeping in touch with news and comment from the regions

SOUTH WEST

Summer is here, the sun is shining, birds are singing, golfers are meaning, the greens mower is on the blink and the hosepipe ban is looming. Apart from that everything’s fine.

The historic Westonsbit School was the venue for the ever-popular John Ireland Greensomes Competition at the end of May. Urbanke thanks to the Westonsbit Bursar, John Watts, for yet again closing the course for the afternoon to allow us to play. All 52 competitors enjoyed the short course, the quality of which was reflected in the low scoring. Interestingly, the competition, which involves a greenkeeper paired with an amateur partner, was won for the second year running by brothers: Division 1 (0-18) Ist. J. & M. Leigh (Henbury G.C.) 75-18=93. 2nd. L. Johnson & R. Hodgson (Saltford G.C.) 81-18=63. 3rd. C. Tozer & D. Rendell (Bridport G.C.) 74-10= 64. Division 2 (19-28) 1st P Baynton & S Longworth (Somerset) 86-27=59. 2nd M Gray & P King (Clevenden) 80-19.5= 60.5. 3rd A Johnson & R Stubbs (Saltford) 87-23= 64. Best front nine - T Rees & E. Middleman. 3rd purpose - T. Rees & C. Middleton. 3rd place - Two's -J. Cooper & I May, J. M & Leigh.

Many thanks to all the staff at Westonsbit for preparing the course, the landlord and his wife at the Old Royal Ship for the excellent meal, and Avoncrop and Roffey Bros. for their donations to our prize table.

Congratulations to Laurence Pithie, our Master Greenkeeper, on his forthcoming move to Canovar Holdings, where he is to become the adviser/agronomist to their some ten projects in the South East. Laurie is to oversee the courses right from the pre-construction stage to the day-to-day maintenance when they are up & running – quite a challenge. We wish him all the best.

Section membership now stands at 150, a far cry from the 56 on the books when BIGGA started in 1987. There is still room for more however, so do make every effort to convince any greenkeeper

GEORGE TAYLOR - GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL July 1992 29
RANSOMES - no one offers you a wider range of turf care machinery. We manufacture machinery to match a precise application. That's why it does a better job, more efficiently and more cost effectively. For mowing a fine lawn or cutting a large park there's a RANSOMES machine to fit the task. If you're maintaining fine greens there are aerators, spikers and top dressers too. There's even a range of cylinder grinders to maintain a fine edge. Check out RANSOMES first - you will be amazed how we can meet your needs exactly.

Ransomes Sims & Jeffries Ltd, Ransomes Way, Ipswich IP3 9QG, England. Tel: (0473) 270000 Fax: (0473) 270032

RANSOMES
TOTAL TURF CARE
FOR THE PROFESSIONAL

30 GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL July 1992