Grass seed shortage is on the cards, warns supplier

There could be a shortage of some types of amenity grass seed and a firmer price pattern during the next few months, warns Derek Whelbourn, wholesale director of Johnsons Seeds. The situation, he claims, has arisen through a combination of factors. "The weather has meant that this year's spring trade has been later, causing trading over a longer period," he says. "This has helped to clear what initially was an apparent surplus and now replacement stocks of seed are urgently needed for filling empty spaces in merchants' premises."

Additional factors which have contributed to the stock shortage are: considerable exports of seed from Europe to the USA; and lower seed production acreage in Europe and the UK than in previous years.

"The combination of factors has occurred at a time of the year when replacement stocks are not easily available," said Mr Whelbourn. "New crop seed will not be available until the autumn trading is well under way, meaning that the balance of the spring trade and the coming autumn trade will have to be supplied out of current stock. During the late spring and early summer it is almost certain there will be a shortage of certain types of grass seed, leading to an inevitable hardening of prices."

Castle Combe bought

Castle Combe Golf Club in Wiltshire has been bought by the son of a local hotelier. Danny Pecorelli, whose father Guiseppe owns the nearby Manor House Hotel, is believed to have paid £2.5 million for the course which cost £8 million to build in 1991. Pecorelli plans to run the Peter Alliss/Clive Clark-designed course in the same way as his other club - Mannings Heath in West Sussex where a second 18 holes is under construction.

New courses to open near Gatwick Airport

Two new golf courses are being built near Gatwick Airport. The 18-hole Duxhurst Estate course, on a mature parkland site south of Reigate, is to be laid out as a 6,250-yard par 71 course with comprehensive practice and teaching facilities.

Architect Howard Swan says it will feature modest remodelling of the natural terrain and have some water features on the lower parts of the land. Work began mid-May with full play scheduled for late spring '96.

The Horne Park Golf Academy at nearby Horley, also designed by Swan, is a 2,700-yard nine-hole par 34 course with range, chipping and bunker areas. Continental Landscapes are constructing the academy and ISS are supplying the Toro irrigation equipment. Horne Park is likely to open its doors later this year, with the course in play mid-'95.
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SOUTH WEST
"An excellent show." "The best yet." "Very worthwhile exhibiting."

Just some of the remarks made about Westurf from both visitors and the trade alike, who were there in even greater strength this year. I am sure those sentiments would be echoed by the majority who took time out to visit the exhibition at Long Ashton Golf Club on April 27. On a day spoilt only by the occasional shower, the range of machinery and accessories on display was extensive with what appeared to be record gate attendances, judging by the full car park.

Westurf's success is again largely down to the unrelenting enthusiasm and organisation of Gordon and Marion Child, whose planning for 95's event will no doubt now set the standard for our events. Our thanks to them, Long Ashton as hosts, the many section members who helped prior to the event and on the day, too numerous to mention all by name, but in particular Robin Greaves. Finally, thanks to the trade and yourselves for visiting.

A less than average attendance played at Chippenham GC on April 21 in what was the Spring Tournament and section's Hayter Qualifier. Those who played around a compact little venue were treated to a course in excellent condition, especially considering the earliness of the season and previous winter conditions. Course manager Chris Sealey and his staff take the credit for the conditions which made for an enjoyable round.

Thanks are extended to Hayter, the sponsors again this year, for their participation and prize funding, to Chippenham GC for hosting the event, to the stewards for a first-class meal and to greens chairman Andre Waring for his generosity in providing the wine and the "contiguity" joke that, hopefully, Chris took in good faith.

The next two fixtures for '94 are the section match v Eaglescliffe GC on June 28 and the summer tournament at Filton GC on July 27.

KEVIN GREEN

NORTH EAST
Firstly let me welcome more new members to the section: P Jackson and D Little of Backworth GC, K Hope and C Seedhouse of Gosforth GC, J Devlin of Wearside GC. C Foster of Ashton Moor GC.

The following new members prefer to be in the North East rather than the Cleveland section: Y Carmichael of Eaglescliffe GC, R Ord of Castle Eden GC, G Frater of Alston Moor GC.

The spring competition at South Moor GC was well attended and our thanks go to the committee for granting us the courtesy of this fine moorland course and of course to Tommy Fenwick, the head greenkeeper, for the fine condition of the course.

Our thanks also go to Hamish McFie for presenting the prizes to the winners of each category in the Hayter Challenge and to the following companies for donations to the prize table: Ryton Gravel Co, TurfCare, Shorts of Whitburn, Supaturf, Swarland GC, Warkworth Village GC and South Moor GC.

Best gross was David Cuthbertson's 76 on home soil. Best nett was Brian Udyng of Tynemouth GC. Best assistant's nett score was Barry Wilson of Stockfield GC.

JIMMY RICHARDSON

CLEVELAND

Scratholme GC, Darlington, has opened a new driving range and we welcome their three staff, who maintain the course and range, as new members. They are Liam Appleby, Martin Corner and Terry Hepplestaff.

The course, which is reasonably new and has great potential, played long in gale-force winds but both teams mastered the wind and played good golf.

On the other hand I played what was supposed to be a friendly game with Andy Hardie from Gem Professionals who told me he had not played since last summer but hit the ball like a pro. I did manage eventually to wear him down and beat him 4 and 3, but the wind and the undulations certainly took its toll on both of us. An unlikely pairing of Bill Merritt and Jane Ryan played a great game with Bill sinking a 10ft putt on the 18th green to win, and his partner Jane on her hands and knees, with her head buried in a grass mound not daring to look.

An excellent meal followed the golf, paid for by Gem Professionals who sponsored the day. Many thanks to them and to Oaklands GCC for their hospitality and for allowing us the courtesy of their excellent course.

The next section golf is the summer meeting on Monday July 25 at Stockport GC. Soup and sandwiches between 12 and 1pm and tee off from 1.30pm. Applications in writing to Paul Pearse, 1 Swan Close, Poynton, Stockport SK12 1HX, enclosing a deposit of £10 by July 18.

I would like to welcome any new members to the NW

Eleegson GC is hoping to build a new greenkeepers' shed.

BIGGA's vice-chairman Barry Henney was among the guests who turned up at Eaglescliffe GC for my 30-year service. A trophy has been named in honour of long service, and Cleveland BIGGA presented four engraved wine glasses. I thank you all sincerely for your good wishes and I shall continue as your section chairman with pleasure. Thanks to Ian McNab, Steve Dass -1, Garry Westurf for hosting the event, to the catering staff for first-class fare.

The golf itself was of the mixed variety, the early season sclafs, thanks and missed putts being interspersed with the odd good (or lucky) shot, but overall the scores were fairly good, and the excellent turnout of over 40 members had a great time.

Results: scratch - Keith McCartney, Dumfries Gal-loway, 73; 1st class -1, William McMeikam, Turnberry, 75-9-66; 2, Ian McNab, Dumfries County, 75-4-71; 3, Bob McKay, Prestwick St Nicholas, 82-9-73; 2nd class - 1, Duncan Gray, Mitchell and Strathers 83-10-73; 2, Paul Rae, Brunston Castle, 91-17-74; 3, Jimmy Johnstone, Tullochmore, 91-17-74.

Best nett was Brian Udyng of Tyneemouth GC. Best assistant's nett score was Barry Wilson of Stockfield GC.

JIMMY RICHARDSON

CLEVELAND

Scratholme GC, Darlington, has opened a new driving range and we welcome their three staff, who maintain the course and range, as new members. They are Liam Appleby, Martin Corner and Terry Hepplestaff.
section and hope you will come along to the events arranged during the year and meet your fellow greenkeepers. A number of members of the NW section have made their mark on their section, and I am interested to know the reason why, is it too expensive? Has your golf club failed to pay your subscriptions? Or are you just too busy with other things? Your views may help your section and the Association better. Please write me to at Harthill Lodge, Harthill Road, Liverpool L18 3HU or phone me on 051 7245412.

BERT CROSS

SURREY

Our Spring Tournament/Hayter Qualifier took place at Malden GC. Thanks go to A Bradshaw and his staff for turning out the course in such good condition and thanks also to the home of Anne Boleyn, which accounts for us playing like headless ducks.

The course itself was in good condition thanks to 'HE' and his staff, a great walk to the 8th green. The pot hunters are elsewhere, but the longest drive went to Mike Verley - 2ft 6in, one only on the fairway. The nearest the pin was won by Stuart McGeer - 300 yards, only one on the green.

Our next tournament is the summer half-day event at Roehampton GC on June 8. All members will be receiving the new fixture card which includes dates for tournaments, lectures and social events. Our thanks go to Steven Dixon for this excellent piece of work. Our only hope is that the events positively bowl us over.

Our annual quiz night was held at the Black Bull on April 27. A very good attendance was recorded. An attendant such as this makes the organisation worth while. Forty people sat down to do battle for the quiz trophy, and the eventual winners were Stewart & Co for the second year running. The runners-up were Three Ladies and a Tramp. Medals will be presented at the annual dance. We hope to see the same crowd and more at the Skittles night on May 13.

Congratulations to Billy Hudson who has moved from Liberton GC to Newbattle as first assistant and to Paul Bowden who has moved from Newbattle to work with Sports Turf Services.

WILLIE BLAIR

LONDON

I would like to thank Porters Park GC, for allowing us to hold our Spring Tournament and Hayter Qualifier at their course. We were made most welcome and the club and the staff have done a great job. I would also like to thank Peter Phillips and the catering manager for allowing us to use the clubhouse.

The overall winner was John Jackson from Westwood GC and his score of 34 points proved how tough Porters Park is off the back tees. The qualifiers are listed below and the other winners were: nearest the pin - Pat Swinyard and Colin Forde; longest drive - Andrew Toomey.

I would also like to thank the trade for supporting the event and helping out on the day.

Another popular event was once again organised by Jamie Bennett. The venue was the Brickell indoor circuit on Saturday, March 1. As soon as this is allown, it will be enjoying a 36-hole medal. Our thanks go to Harpenden Herts. The weather was kind and the 46 members who recorded some fine scores in an attempt to qualify for the Hayter finals. The course was in very good condition. Our thanks also to all the section committee members for their valuable work on the day. Hope to see you all at Wellington GC on September 28. I would also like to take this opportunity of wishing all the section's qualifiers the best of luck in the Hayter regional final.

This month we welcome the following new members to our section: Stephen James, Brian Hill and Mark Longmate, all from Grassmoor Golf Centre and Gordon Smith of Breadsall Priory Golf and Country Club.

TONY DUNSTAN

EAST ANGLIA

Our first outing of the year was the Hayter Tournament at Rochford Hundred GC in Essex. The clubhouse is perhaps the oldest in the country and was once the home of Anne Boleyn, which accounts for us playing like headless ducks.

The course itself was in good condition thanks to W Fellows and his staff. The pot hunters are elsewhere, but the longest drive went to Mike Verley - 2ft 6in, one only on the fairway. The nearest the pin was won by Stuart McGeer - 300 yards, only one on the green.

Our Spring Tournament at Monifieth Links was another successful event with over 70 members and guests enjoying a day turning out the course in such good condition. One of his men, his son Mark Longmate, gave us a full tour of the stadium and an insight into the problems of having to produce a pitch for Premier League football in just six weeks from date of sowing, not an easy task. Thanks to everyone at Ibrox for the hospitality and a round of applause for the magnificent job the staff have done.

Following the super attendance at Ibrox, the Spring Tournament at Monifieth Links was another successful event with Paul Jackson and his staff making a tour of the stadium. Mick Latham presented the prizes. A thank you should go to everyone at Monifieth for their hospitality which was extended to us. The amateur dramatic society strikes again.

MIC LATHROPS

CENTRAL SCOTLAND

Dorothy Hitchens, home of Glasgow Rangers, turned out to be a great success with over 60 members present (Fergus McCann and Co failed to appear although there was someone wearing a Celtic tie). I t was great to see so many friends. The champagne flowed freely and the atmosphere was electric with much colour in his face usual.

With interest increasing in section events, it is

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few more of last year's members have rejoined, but there is still some to go.

A big thank you must go to David Golding and his colleagues at the GHC who have given the section a grant for our one-day conference in Aberdeen this year. This will enable the section to reimburse the entrance fee by £2 per person to the benefit of all.

A North member currently making a name for himself in another sport is Kingussie's assistant Michael Clarke. He is captain of the all conquering Kingussie shinty team, who are yet again winning just about everything this year. Now we know how he hits the ball so true and straight at section outings.

Tain assistant John Urquhart is the latest member to join the North District golf team, albeit as a trialist, as he has performed well and if his early season scores and putting of the Tain practice ground are anything to go by he will soon get his debut proper. With so many members in various district teams, I am trying to fix up challenge matches against the North District to see from what club members could be forgiven for thinking we spend more time golfing than working, I just put it down to natural ability!

The north section will be well represented in the greenkeeper support team at this year's Open Championship at Turnberry. Gordon Mckie, Paul Murphy, Graham Grayham Harris the captain and owner for the courtesy of the course. Also to Andy Blackwell and his team for the presentation of the course is a par 72 championship course. Robert says that he performed well and if his early season scores and the weather couldn't have been better and the evening meal was excellent. What more could you ask for? A better attendance perhaps!

Robert, our Bowes of Hayter's presented each category winner (results below) with a superb set of cut-glass crystal brandy glasses. Winner of the Cartoff Cup was Andrew Jenkins, nett 70. Robert Johnstone took the Waycott Shield with a 73 gross and Ted Thompson won the John O'Gorman Cup with a nett 71. Trade winner with a nett 66 was Terry Adamson.

Our sincere thanks to the trade again for their wonderful support, namely Avoncroft, Farmura, Hayters, Gem Professional, Ted/Chriss Hopkins and Colin Murphy. Thanks also to the Aberdeen branch of BIGGA for putting him on the hot spot, to Grahame Harris the captain and to the staff and caterers of Newport GC who all ensured a magnificent day was had.

The 'Birds' annual golf and demonstration day was held at, Royal Porthcawl GC. The weather again was fine, albeit a little breezy, and the event was well attended. Thanks go to Roger and Jeff Bird for ensuring this long-standing event remains firmly attached to our fixture card each year. Was there more one can say? The show that goes from strength to strength. By 10.30am we'd run out ofcatalogues and by 11am we needed extra car parking space, so I said that numbers were definitely up on last year. It was good to see so many faces from the South Wales section supporting this regional event, something that has been lacking in the past - well done! It's this kind of backing that will allow the region to continue to subsidise our education programme both now and in the future. The section would like to thank Gordon and Marion Child for all their hard work and effort in ensuring such a truly enjoyable event.

Lastly, congratulations to Mr and Mrs Andrew Philips on the birth of their baby boy. Unfortunately, Andrew was away at Hayter's for processing of (unintimate) arrival of the youngster - better lucknext year!

NORTHERN

Our Spring Competition and Hayter Qualifier was played at Bingley St Ives GC, Bingley. The sun shone for us, the course was in excellent condition, the food was excellent, the greenkeeper support team at this year's Open Championship has never been so strong and the event was well attended. What more could you say? The show that goes to John Pemberton from Gregory Park Golf Club. After weeks of unsettled weather we had a superb set of cut-glass crystal brandy glasses. Winner of the Cartoff Cup was Andrew Jenkins, nett 70. Robert Johnstone took the Waycott Shield with a 73 gross and Ted Thompson won the John O'Gorman Cup with a nett 71. Trade winner with a nett 66 was Terry Adamson.

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NORTH WALES

110 members and guests played in our Spring Tournament over the new layout at Carden Park near Chester. The winners were as follows: Lesco Cup for best nett, donated by Richard Campey - Terry Adamson, 76; runners-up, decided by countdown - Pat Valentine, Ian Buckley, Chris Davies, Alan Gilles, all with nett 77x; guests 1, JC Harris, 76; 2, G Perks, 77; 3, D Posles, 78; High-speed Rose Bowl for best gross - Ian Farrall, 83; nearest the pin - Val Widdowson.

During the day John Garner, the ex-Ryder Cup player, entertained visitors with his very humorous golf show. We extend our grateful thanks to John whose efforts helped raise £455 for the Fight Leukaemia in Chester Charity. On a personal note I would like to wish John and Melanie all the best in their new venture at St Mellons gc.

The event was also the section qualifier for the Hayter Challenge, with the top three in each handicap section going forward to the regional finals at Worsley GC on July 20.

Prizes were donated by the following companies and once again we would thank the trade for their continued support: Richard Campey, Highspeeds Gs, Gem professional, Mannesteregh, Bathgate silica sands, Walker brothers, Acorn, Carden Park and last but not least Hayters plc.

In closing I would like to thank all our greenstaff for yet another incredible effort - well done lads.

ANDY CAMPBELL

NORTH SCOTLAND

Another batch of new members as the recruitment drive continues. First up is Hugh Mclatchie's newly qualified Hayters pic.

NORTH WALES

We are hoping to organise an inter-club five-a-side football tournament later in the year, so if anyone has any budding stars on their staff, fill in the form when it arrives and get training for the big day. Fuller details will be circulated soon...

JOHN CRAWFORD

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The day started at 7:30 for breakfast in the club-house, and it seems strange how everybody turns up on time when there's food about! Being such a good turnout, two tees were utilised and the first pair of triples went off from the 1st and 10th at about 8.15am. We had to struggle for most of the morning with sea mist which kept rolling in from the Channel and then laying in the bowl from which the course was originally built. The sun finally shone at around midday, and what a superb venue of Willingdon GC down on the south coast at Eastbourne. Peter Negus and his staff as usual presented the course in superb condition.

Our '94 season started with the superb venue of Willingdon GC, which was built. The sun finally shone at around midday, and what a superb condition. The day started at 7.30 for breakfast in the club-house, and it seems strange how everybody turns up on time when there's food about! Being such a good turnout, two tees were utilised and the first pair of triples went off from the 1st and 10th at about 8.15am. We had to struggle for most of the morning with sea mist which kept rolling in from the Channel and then laying in the bowl from which the course was originally built. The sun finally shone at around midday, and what a superb venue of Willingdon GC down on the south coast at Eastbourne. Peter Negus and his staff as usual presented the course in superb condition.

The new lecture season starts in October but I look forward to seeing you all at our summer competitions.

Our Spring Tournament was held in glorious weather and playing conditions at Workop GC. We would like to thank Workop GC for allowing us courtesy of the course and making us all very welcome. Also our thanks go to the steward and his staff for an excellent meal and service, and to Barry Lax and his staff for providing a course in such excellent condition, even though I heard that some Workop ground staff members were four-putting on some greens. I'd also like to thank Barry Heaney for organising the whole day and to all the trade members who contributed to the prize table.

The winners were: 1, Barry Heaney, 38pts; 2, Matin Scothern, 38; 3, Steve Currie 37.

Finally, I would like to welcome back to our section Kevin Caples of Crookhill Park GC who has been working out of the area for the last few years.

IAN COLLETT

HAYTER QUALIFIERS


SURREY: 0-9 - R Christie, D Langheim, S Haynes, R Glaster; 10-18 - D Waldier, P Greenwell, J Riggs, A Locke; 19-24 - A Bradshaw, I Smith, M Roberts, P King

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Tudor Park GC, Kent
Tewkesbury Park GC, Gloucestershire
Westburn & the CC, Berks
Brunton Castle GC, Ashridge
Bramham Brook GC, Norfolk
Celtic Valley GC, Essex
Cerden Estates, Cheshire
Dartmouth GC, Devon
Eaton Park GC, Cheshuir
Hinfield Hall GC, Suffolk
Mepalndurham GC, Berks
M's Ride GC, Beds
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Portsmouth GC, Hampshire
Wald of Kent GC, Kent

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