Miracle Professional
GREENKEEPER OF THE YEAR

which Mike has developed and the high degree of record keeping which he feels went a long way to getting him the award.

"The management want accountability so they are making me learn new skills on the management side. The club has a central administration department which comes up with a format for all the record keeping which is used throughout the club.

"We can account for every hour which is spent on the golf course. At first that's a little frightening – a bit like a time and motion study but it's not like that at all. There are a lot of benefits. For example this year I argued to get a new bunker raker but the club wasn't too keen. Through running the budget management we came up with a labour cost of 1114 hours of bunker raking by hand and that it accounted for 20% of our time. Once they heard that they realised the importance of it and we got our new bunker raker.

"Initially I felt that the time filling in forms would be better spent out on the course. I was a hands on person, 'let's get out and do it'. I've come to appreciate the benefits of good management.

"We have a weekly staff meeting which is very open and if it's felt I'm not doing something right they tell me. That goes right through the club, everyone is on first name terms, even the Managing Director, and it's a lovely atmosphere to work in.

"We've all got a wheel and there is no 'them and us' attitude which a lot of greenkeepers at big clubs suffer from."

If Mike's handicap had continued to fall he might have been rivalling Colin Montgomerie for the Gofer of the Year and not the Greenkeeper of the Year title.

"I started off at Macclesfield Golf Club but I was initially more concerned with trying to develop my golf game as it was my ambition to make it as a professional but it was not to be."

"I did get the opportunity to work on the course and I got more into the greenkeeping side and my golf fell away."

From Macclesfield Mike went as a trainee to Prestbury rising to First Assistant and worked under one of the old school greenkeepers John Leonard. "From a practical side I couldn't have had a better tutor."

"I left there at 21 and went to Henton Moors in Manchester as Head Greenkeeper. It was an ideal place to go because it was a step up for me and a place where I could learn from my mistakes."

In 1984 Mike went to Cavendish Golf Club in Buxton Derbyshire as Course Manager where he spent nine extremely enjoyable years.

"It was a very high golf course and the first winter I was there I didn't see a blade of grass from the first week in January to the last week in February."

That brought in the course's other use, that of ski centre.

"We had three ski tows on the course and a had a run known as the Cresta Run which is world famous in that part of Derbyshire. It ran over three fairways and finished in a stream. I developed my skiing skills while at Cavendish and it was a super club to work for, extremely friendly."

"It was a real wrench to leave but I was doing something good and the experience and I feel in ten years' time, probably less, they will be landing some pretty good jobs. You need the ability to think ahead and keep developing."

"As for the future I've got work to do at Tytherington. It's still got a long way to go to fulfil its sporting fame is that he holds the record for the Cheshire Cricket League with the high score of 177 not out in a limited 40 overs game for Bollington."

"It is a prestigious award and I'm very proud for Karen and our four children Leah (7), Holly (6), Grace (3) and Callum (2)," said Mike, whose other claim to sporting fame is that he holds the record for the Cheshire Cricket League with the high score of 177 not out in a limited 40 overs game for Bollington.

"For the future I've got work to do at Tytherington. It's still got a long way to go to fulfil its sporting fame and I want to be a part of that."

Roger Mossop, Business Manager for Miracle Professional, praised each of the five finalists and said that they were the closest matched in the history of the competition.

"Mike's course was excellent and his level or management and record keeping was second to none," said Roger as he made the presentation. "The stuff facilities and the presentation of the staff pointed to an excellent team spirit while I was impressed by the fact that Mike seems to be well read on greenkeeping matters."

Roger also highlighted the plus points of each of the other finalists. Chris Brook's course was immaculate and he had the ability to take advice but ultimately make his own decision; Don Wilson's course was in excellent condition and he interviewed very well; Ed McCabe's sheds and record keeping were first class while James Devlin's greens were said to be the best of any seen in the competition, a feat achieved on a restricted budget.

The competition was given a further boost when it was agreed that Miracle Professional is to continue support of the competition in 1996.

"We have a weekly staff meeting which is very open and if it's felt I'm not doing something right they tell me. That goes right through the club, everyone is on first name terms, even the Managing Director, and it's a lovely atmosphere to work in.

"We've all got a wheel and there is no 'them and us' attitude which a lot of greenkeepers at big clubs suffer from."

At the awards presentation, from left: Pat Murphy, Richard Minton, Chris Brook, Ed McCabe, James Devlin, Don Wilson, Mike Goodhind and Roger Mossop

"To satisfy all 600 members of the club for just one day in the year" Dave Wood, Littlehampton GC
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A refund from the VAT man meant that many clubs in the country were awash with funds. Wolstanton was one which put the money to good use. Scott MacCallum reports.

The news was greeted with an amazement not dulled by the falling of the Berlin Wall, the dismantling of apartheid or England reaching the semi finals of the 1990 World Cup finals all extraordinary events from around the same time. “Never in a month of Sundays…,” “I'll cut my hat…,” “I’ll freeze over before it happens…” were just some of the incredulous remarks coming out of golf clubs when rumours reached them that the VAT man might just be handing back money after an EC directive.

Well I'm sure we've had a month's worth of Sabbaths since the rumours began and that millionaires have done a roaring trade in smoky bacon flavoured booties. I can’t, however, vouch for the climatic conditions in Old Nick’s back yard but all the same it was true and golf clubs, at least members' golf clubs, have been given a wonderful windfall.

The reason it happened is irrelevant to the clubs which are basking in new found riches but came about because as members' clubs they were entitled to VAT exemption on membership fees but had been paying it since 1990. Anyone who comes into large sums of money has problems - or so I'm told. Bev Nicholson, that bloke who won £19 million on the lottery, Paul Gascoigne have all proved that money brought difficulties and golf clubs were no exception.

Who did it belong to? Or, to be grammatically correct, To whom did it belong? Was it the club’s or was it due to the individual members who had paid the VAT on the membership subscriptions in the first place?

The best legal minds in the country were divided and it was left to clubs themselves to decide how best to cope with the best and others joined midway through the time and only paid a portion of the recoverable VAT money.

The decision the Board took was a masterpiece and all members should be handed the task of conducting the Irish and Bosnian peace talks as quickly as possible. It was decided that the money should be refunded to the members and, at the same time, impose a levy on them for the amount of money required to improve the greenkeeping staff's facilities and the drainage work on the course.

“We held an extraordinary general meeting where proposal number one was to reimburse the members to the full extent of the refund and then we had a director who very capably explained the reasoning behind why we need to spend money on the golf course and the second proposal was that we levy the members a certain amount of the money in order to carry out the necessary improvements,” explained Mike.

“It was very cleverly done. We basically had a dilapidated 50 year-old ex-Ministry of Defence building and while we had a flushing toilet, hot and cold running water and central heating we didn't have any showers and the general condition of the building left a lot to be desired.”

It had always been intended that the facilities would be improved but that it would be as and when the money was raised by the club and Bob was told when he was appointed two and a half years ago that it was going to be done.

When it was discovered that money was due from the VAT man and the amount the club's directors sat down and wondered what was the best way to handle the windfall in fairness to the members.

Many of the members felt that the money was theirs and it should be returned to them but there was a view that the club, as the receiving body, was entitled to it.

“We were in a very fortunate situation as we had all the individual records of members going back to the time in question so if required we could work out how much each individual was entitled to,” explained Club Secretary, Mike Staniforth.

“It was a task that is more difficult than it would at first appear as the varying membership categories would have paid different amounts, some members were members at the beginning of the qualifying period but not the end and others joined midway through the time and only paid a portion of the recoverable VAT money.”

The new greenkeeping facilities include a new £30,000 storage facility and a second phase which will be completed soon.

“This will have showers, toilets, drying room, mess room, office, workshop facilities and will cost around £40-£50,000,” said Bob. “Had we had to wait until money became available it might have meant a four or five year phased plan and we may not have got as good as we are going to end up with.”

There have been no adverse comments from members at all because our existing building is on the way down to the first tee and they have been aware of our lack of facilities.

The infusion of money has also allowed Bob to tackle a long standing drainage problem at the bottom end of the course.

The course borders the A34 with housing between the course and the road and the problems arose because the course sheds down to the A34 but the houses stopped drainage water going down and there was no access.

“We have now been able to gain access to the A43 through one of the houses through which we've installed a proper drainage scheme, but it's cost a lot of money to do this,” explained Bob. “The resident is not a member but we wanted to put an irrigation system down his drive and he is getting a new drive and a patio and various other things out of the deal. All his legal costs have been paid by the club and it's not cost him a penny.

“We're not only solving a problem for the golf club we're also solving a problem for the resident whose homes were being flooded in winter time.”

The total cost of the new greenkeeping facilities and the drainage scheme is in the region of £100,000 paid entirely by the VAT windfall while the members also enjoyed a rebate on their subscriptions.

Have your club handled the VAT situation? Have you benefited directly from it or has the money gone into other areas of the club or back to the members? Write to Greenkeeper International and share your VAT experiences.

GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL January 1996
**Around the Green**

Keeping in touch with views and comment from the regions

**South Wales**

A Happy new year to you all.

Huw Morgan, Course Manager at the Wilderness Golf Club in Kent kick started a busy month of lectures with an evening lecture at Pencoed College entitled "From the Wilderness to the Wildness". You know you can always count of Huw to be controversial and as, true to form, he was.

Huw's talk was based on the main differences between managing a golf course in the south of England compared to that of south Wales. Huw's talk provoked much feedback and audience participation and left us with much food for thought.

The following Wednesday the newly-developed Celtic Manor golf and country club hosted a jointly organised STRI/WGU seminar entitled "On course in the 21st century". The seminar which encouraged an audience of over 60 covered many topics including an in depth assessment of what the STRI is, does and is all presented by the STRI's new Executive Director, Dr Mike Canaway. Other presentations were from Kate York – Diseases; Dr Bob Taylor – Ecology and our plant breeding and new cultivar testing; Dr John Linnecor – “Golf Club Management” in his opinion. Dr Mike Canaway – a look at the continuing research work of the Sport Turf Research Institute. Dr Anne Maria Brennan, the EUG's practising Ecologist on: “On course conservation, golf and golf in partnership” and last but definitely not least Mr George Shiels - "The presentation of a golf course from an agronomists point of view”.

An amazing day, thoroughly educational and for all £10. What more could you ask for? Perhaps a better attendance from this side of the bridge!

Our latest new member is one Mr Huw Ithone from Pencoed College for the use of their facilities, to Barenbrug for their support and sponsorship and to Gordon and Marion Child for their organisation of this seminar. Possibly the best yet.

You should have received a list of the winter evening lectures. If you haven’t then contact me, but they are Pencoed College on Wednesday evenings commencing at 7pm. January 17 – Gordon Jaaback “Dispelling the myths in golf course drainage and overcoming golfers fears”; February 14 – John Moseley of the National Rivers Authority “Quality control, abstraction and record keeping”;

March 15 – Bob Scott of British Seed Houses “Golf course renovation”.

It’s good to see so many new members not only joining the section but participating in events. Let’s hope we see a lot more of you throughout 1996.

I hope Tony Bull is on his feet, Tony of the Clyde Golf Club recently underwent surgery to remove two toes.

Fixture cards again sponsored by TACIT will be with you shortly.

Don’t forget the BTME 22-26 January at Harrogate. See you there!

Peter Lacey

**South West**

I don’t think it’s possible to wish all section members a happy, if not belated, New Year. A warm welcome is also extended to several new members who have recently joined the section among them Steven Blackmore from Taunton Vale Golf Club, Robert Jordan from Puckrup Hall Hotel & Golf Club and Kenneth Abraham from Isle of Wight Golf Club. The section looks forward to your support at forthcoming section events, the first being at Stinchcombe Hill Golf Club on Wednesday February 28 where it is intended to have a guest speaker as well as playing the usual golf.

All members of the section will once again be able to keep track of the year’s events thanks to the offer from T.H. White to produce a fixture card for 1996. Assistance in every respect is always provided before trade meetings and thanks are once again given to Pat Smith and T.H. White for their continued support.

In the winter months there is more opportunity at section level for education, with, once again, what will be a full coach from the South West going to the BTME exhibition at Harrogate on January 23.

A management course organised by Headquarters at a greatly subsidised price of £20 of weeds in bowls, and Thornbury Golf Club on February 12 and 13. Frank Newbury is the instructor for a course entitled “Essentials for Busy Supervisors”. A venue and date are yet to be finalised but if interested in being included please contact me on 0117 9550127.

It is worthwhile noting that a change in legislation now means that anybody wishing to use a knapsack sprayer now needs qualification to PA6 standard and one night’s accommodation at Thornbury. To secure a place please contact Ken Richardson at Headquarters.

An excellent day, thoroughly educational and interesting. Mr John Linneker - "Golf Club Management” in his opinion. Dr Mike Canaway – a look at the continuing research work of the Sport Turf Research Institute. Dr Anne Maria Brennan, the EUG’s practising Ecologist on: “On course conservation, golf and golf in partnership” and last but definitely not least Mr George Shiels - "The presentation of a golf course from an agronomists point of view”.

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Peter Lacey

**North West**

An evening lecture and AGM took place at West Derby Golf Club recently. Clive Heghinsbotham of Mirage Profesional gave a very interesting talk on the problems of weeds in bowls, and the waterways.

Clive stressed the need to consult the National Rivers Authority before using any products to control areas of pollution. The presentation continued and the certificate is valid for three years only before a refresher course needs to be taken.

Finally I close by wishing you successful greenkeeping and good golf for the forthcoming year.

Kevin M Green

**Scottish Region – North**

The inaugural section dinner/dance in Aberdeen was a great success with around 60 people attending and a good time was had by all. A special thank of thanks must go to Hughie McAdie and Dougal Davidson for organising this event which we hope will become an annual affair.

Our newest member is one Mr Robbie McCafferty from the Outer Hebrides. We hope to see him sometime. How about a section outing there!

As I mentioned last month the secre-
ALAN SHEPARD PLAYED GOLF ON THE MOON

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**Around the Green**

Duly elected to the committee. Chair- man, T. Allard. Vice Chairman, D. Leatherland; Secretary A. Bindley; Treasurer, R. Barker; Committee members, G. Robson, P. Tatlow, P. Forshaw, A. Porter and G. Arnold. Regional representatives R. Barker and A. Bindley. I would like to thank my retiring Chairman Steve Goode for all the hard work he put into the section while in office. I'm sure members would agree that the section prospered under Steve's leadership. Thanks should go to Kirby Muxloe GC for coming up for their course and to the kindness and hospitality shown to us. Also I would like to thank Vitax for sponsoring such a fine prize table. A cheque was also presented to our National Chairman Barry Heaney for £300 towards the BIGGA building fund. I would like to take this opportu- nity to thank Barry and Scott MacCal- lum for making the long journey down to Kirby Muxloe to be with us. More golfing success was enjoyed for the section with Steve Goode and 1 finishing runners-up in the Ramsdale Park Society Open with a score of 63 Stableford points.

A snooker evening has been arranged for members on February 28 at the Willie Thorne Snooker Centre in Leicester. Any member who has not received a form can give me a ring and I will forward them a copy. Please remember to send your form back to me before the closing date.

A series of lectures has been arranged courtesy of Brookby College for the benefit of all greenkeepers. The dates and speakers are as follows:

- **Thursday February 22**, 7pm, John Brassey, Gardeners World. The talk will be on development and modern seed mixtures.
- **Thursday February 29**, 7pm, Stuart Rich – Herbist sportground. Aspects of modern sportground and golf course construction.
- **Thursday March 7**, 7pm, Howard Storey – John Dee UK. Machinery developments and mowing trend changes.

If anybody requires any further information on any of these lectures they can contact Ann Hurt at the college Tel: 01164 434291.

**Antony Bindley**

**Cleveland**

Our November lecture and slide pre- sentation was by Gerald Brady of Rhome Poulcene Ltd on “Pesticides in Perspective” who explained the low risk factor of using modern pesticides and herbicides. Follow the label and we can have full confidence of success. He was thanked by Chairman Bruce Burnell.

Ian Pemberton has a new address and can be found at 53 Eddison Drive, Bedale, North Yorks.

**South Coast**

Hello again. Well here we are at the beginning of another year with lots of things going on. It’s only a couple of weeks to the start of BTME. This promises to be bigger and better this year and with most of the major companies exhibiting it is the place to visit. I myself will be looking forward to it and hope to see other members of our section there.

Our next winter lecture is on Febru- ary 7 or possibly 8 at Alvechurch Golf Club. The speaker will be Ed McCabe of Brockenhurst Manor Golf Club and his topic will be “Certainly”. This promises to be bigger and better this year and with most of the major companies exhibiting it is the place to visit. I myself will be looking forward to it and hope to see other members of our section there.

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Well done to you all!

We hope to see you all at our next lecture on February 1 which will be given by Duncan McGilvary, Course Manager of Letchworth Golf Club, at Rotherham Golf Club at 2.30 pm.

**John Lax**

Devon and Cornwall

Happy New Year to all.

I hope to see a good amount of people at the AGM at The Moat House Hotel on Wednesday, November 22. The day started with golfing members arriving at 8.30 am to compete in the competition for tomorrow’scoursoponent for the Toro Tro- phy. Unfortunately I was under the weather with flu and unable to share the delights of playing such a wonderful course, although this gave me the opportunity to join our none golfing members on the guided tour of the course by Head Greenkeeper, Mike Symonds, as always the walk turned out to be more informative.

After lunch the prize presentation for the Toro trophy took place with Alan Dompier of Devon Green Machinery presenting the prizes to: 1. E. Barber (Teign Valley) & C. Rawlings (Paddocks) £35; 2. K. Pipes (Holmbery) & T. Jenkins (Theleph) £35; 3. L. Andrew (Ashbury) & P. Gross (Ashbury) £315; 4. R. Ridgway (Fis- gle Glen) & T. Hughman (Ashbury) £30.

Our thanks to Alan for donating and presenting the day’s prizes, and to the Manor House management team for the enjoyable day. We hope to see a good amount of people at the next lecture on February 1 which will be given by Duncan McGilvary, Course Manager of Letchworth Golf Club, at Rotherham Golf Club at 2.30 pm. John Lax

**East Midlands**

Our section AGM was held at Kirby Muxloe GC in Leicestershire on Novem- ber 8. The day started with a team match with a phone call from Trevor Bennett who had lost all his balls (golf balls). This was quickly rectified by sourcing out some new balls which I had put aside for such occasions. The winners in the Texas Scramble were: 1. Dave Leatherland, Chris James and Antony Bindley; 2. Richard Barker, Roger Barker and Mar- tin Smith; 3. Mike Billings, Brian Booth and Gary Thuran.

Moving on to the serious business of the AGM with the following members present: President, K. Wood, Hazlehead; D. Duguid, Westhill and B. Anderson, Kings Links. They go forward to the Scottish final at Royal Aberdeen at the end of May.

I hope to see a good amount of North members at Harrogate this month. Mine’s a Becks!

Finally the 1996 200 Club tickets will be on their way to your doors soon. Please buy some to help the sec- tion. Please return them immediately so that they can be sold before the first draw can be made. We ended up with 10 tickets unsold which if they had been returned would have been sold and vital revenue for the section not lost. Please support your sec- tion – I’ll get back down off the soap box now.

Iain Macleod

**Kerran Daly and his staff will provide an excellent and testing course for the days play. So please make a note in your diary.**

**Jeff Drake**
Deep aeration on an intensively used golf course is vital if the grasses which we require are to survive.

We purchased our first Verti-Drain back in 1983 and very quickly bought a second. Both these machines have been working on a continuous basis providing excellent results and utilising only a minimum of spare parts.

Comment From Walter Woods
St. Andrews Links Golf Course supervisor

Courses Throughout the World

TS EFFECT IS SHATTERING

Charterhouse

...
straight into the AGM and the only change this year was the enlistment of Phil Betten, Ramsey GC, everybody else still retain their posts.

May I take this opportunity to thank all the clubs for allowing us courtesy of their courses and a thankyou to all our many sponsors for their excellent prizes.

The new fixture cards will be coming out soon as the competition schedule is now complete for 1996.

Thank you to Howard Storey of John Deere for his help in organising the cards.

The Winter education programme carries on from last year's success with John Hacker and possibly D. Walden giving a talk on various topics at Kenwick Park, Louth in February.

In March a tour of the John Deere factory is arranged and will incorporate a quiz or machinery workshop. (Dates to be confirmed.)

A welcome to our new members who are: Steven Simpson, James Herring, Mark Hammond, David Elakington, Geoffrey Hill.

Your secretary has moved to the new post of Head Greenkeeper at Ryston Park, Downham Market, Norfolk, from Eyebury Golf Club which closed in September 1995.

Any more information on moves, promotion, etc, let me know on 01733 260297 anytime.

H. A. MacDonald

East of Scotland

Well welcome to this month's report the first of '96. We would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a happy new year and hope you all have a good one. So now down to business in November we had our AGM at Swanson Golf Club which was sponsored by Stewarts & Co who put on a lecture in the morning, a buffet lunch then we had a "small get together" in the afternoon for the AGM which was poorly attended as usual considering the membership we have. P. Ormiston stepped down after two years in the chair and S. Dixon took over for his second stint as he has grasped this position before four years ago. So best wishes for the future as Peter Ormiston stood down from the committee after a number of years. A good luck to Steve for the next two as he will need it! Stevie picked one of the old times as his vice-chairman Jimmy Neilson – best wishes to you. There was a space on the committee and only one nomination this was Mike Williamson, Torwoodlee, and he was duly elected. So we welcome on board Mike, see you at the first meeting.

In January the Committee now reads: Chairman - S. Dixon, Vice-Chairman - J. Neilson, Secretary/Treasurer - R. Hogarth, Messrs C. Yeaman, G. Wood, S. Greenwood, T. Murray, A. Forrest, M. Williamson. There wasn't a lot discussed so not a lot to report except our Summer half-day tournament returns in '96 and from 1997 our Autumn outing will be a 18 holes only starting at about lunch time, so members of the section can prepare their courses before coming to the outing.

The Annual Dance on December 2 was a great success as was the traditional Christmas shopping because it is all under one roof.

Around the Green

Well that's it for the first one of '96. Lots more to come over the coming months. Any info you have let me know. If you're a winner regarding any of our competitions, weddings, etc anything you want send it to me now. See you all next month if I survive a week at Harrogate.

We had a Christmas shopping trip to the Metro Shopping Centre in Newcastle (Gateshead for the lads from the North East Section) on Sunday November 26. A great day was had by all of us so we just managed to cover the cost of the bus. Better luck next year (we hope), as it is going to be good opportunity to do the Christmas shopping because it is all under one roof.

Chris Yeaman

Ayrshire

Our AGM was held on Thursday November 30. The attendance was slightly up on last year, but still disappointing from what we now have 100 section members. I am sad to report the death of one of our life members, George Alexander, who enjoyed a long retirement after I took over the Head Greenkeeper job at Prestwick. St Nicholas from him in 1980. George had a long and active involvement with GGSA before and after his retirement.

AND I am sure his many friends will join me in passing our condolences to his family. A minute's silence was observed at our AGM to honour his memory.

The Spring outing has been confirmed as being at the Dumfries & Galloway Club on the April 25 1996 with the Autumn outing still to be confirmed. Details of both will be sent out in due course. A bowls night will be held in the week before the December AGM for the usual festive fare, results in the next issue.

A quiz was held after the AGM, with contributions from Terry Anderson, Stewarts and Bob McKay of St Nicholas. After a closely fought battle with some rather erratic thanks to thoughtless questions from David Roy (Gray and Harry Diamond) won in a tie break from the "Winners" (Jim Paton and Derek Wilson).

That's all this is to wish all our friends in BIGGA a happy and successful 1996 and hope to meet many of you again at Harrogate for the annual get together.

Duncan Gray

North Wales

It's the time of year when we need to know what is going on over the next few months. Well here it is.

January 10, Grasses Workshop with Phil Davies, Northop College; January 11, BTME coach available at Northop College on Golf Course Management; March 15, Dutch visit to GEM Pro with Terry Anderson; February. Details of the golf day at the Bakewell College put on 10th March at Haddow Golf Club will be given to you.

The Region wish to extend their best wishes to Jim Paton, Secretary of St. Finbarr's Golf Club for his retirement after 22 years and four opens. Walter Rigby Taylor and a talk on Conservation. Howard Storey of John Deere for his help in organising the cards.

The Winter education programme carries on from last year's success with John Hacker and possibly D. Walden giving a talk on various topics at Kenwick Park, Louth in February.

A close up look at our competition will be held at Swanson Golf Club on February 19 with details of the Autumn outing to be held at Aberlady for a great night. The band was also excellent but as usual a small number had something to moan about, while there were 84 people in attendance. Any comments on the dance then let me know.

Whether I am Competition Secretary next year or not I would like to say thank you to all those concerned with the smooth running of this section this year and the many friends I have made.

I would like to thank you all for the support you have given us and wish you a happy New Year.

TP Evans

Scottish Region

The Region wish to extend their best wishes to Walter Woods on his retirement as Links Supervisor at St Andrews. We wish you and Caroline all the work you have done for the Scottish Region and BIGGA Walter, thanks again and we wish you and Caroline all our best wishes.

The Scottish Region Conference 1996 will be held on Wednesday March 27th at the Edinburgh Stakis Hotel at Edin- burgh Airport. Speakers include: Graeme Forbes, Managing Director; Stewart & Co Seedsmen - Kenneth Gordon, Fil Pumps; Ian Henderson, Ian Henderson Finance; Andrew Laurence, Fenchurch; Steve Millar Outgrass College; Gordon Moir, Head Greenkeeper; St Andrews Links; Iain MacLeod, Head Greenkeeper; Tain GC, David Roy, Course Manager Linlithgow GC and John Souter, Managing Director, Source of Stirling.

The date in your new diary.

Elliott Small
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Happy New Year to all members.

My aim in 1996 will be to continue to provide education and training opportunities for all greenkeepers by attempting to meet your needs. This year commences with The Learning Experience, in association with Ransomes, at Harrogate from 22 - 26 January. Details of speakers and their talks appear elsewhere in this magazine.

**BASIS CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT POINTS**

The Learning Experience, in association with Ransomes, is a must, not just because it offers the widest range of education and training to be found in Europe, give credits towards the Master Greenkeeper Certificate and provide evidence towards an N/SVQ qualification but also because BASIS has recognised the National Education Conference, Workshops and BTME seminars as meeting their requirement for awarding BASIS points. BASIS points will be awarded as follows:

- **National Education Conference** - 5 points
- **Workshop 1** - 3 points
- **Workshop 2** - 2 points
- **BTME Seminars** - 2 points per session

**REGIONAL SUPERVISORY MANAGEMENT COURSES**

In response to members' requests for more localised Supervisory Management Courses, I have arranged for two extra courses to be provided. These are Mildenhall on February 21/22 and Bedford on February 27/28. Please contact me for further details.

**MIRACLES DO STILL HAPPEN**

Well almost. At a meeting held at Aldwark Manor on December 5, the day following the very successful Miracle Premier Greenkeeper of the Year Competition 1995, it was decided that the competition would continue for at least another year. Roger Mossop and Richard Minton, from Miracle, were very impressed not only by the quality of the five finalists but also by the standard of all the entries, which have continued to improve through the years.

As one of the original aims of the competition was to encourage greenkeepers to better themselves, through education and training, and therefore to improve the standards of playing surfaces, they felt that the competition was achieving its aims and, therefore, worth saving. The rules of the competition for 1996 and the prizes awarded will be very similar to 1995's and are as follows:

1. Entries may be submitted by Head Greenkeepers/Course Managers, club officials, golf club members and greenkeepers who feel that their head man and consequently their golf course deserves to be recognised for achieving the best possible standards from the resources made available.
2. All entries must arrive at Aldwark Manor by 31 May 1996.
3. BIGGA Regions will each select their Regional Finalists. They will select their Region's representative to progress to the National Final.
4. The Regional Finals will take place in June/July and will consist of a fact-finding visit (course evaluation) by a Regional evaluator who will be accompanied by a previous Premier Greenkeeper Finalist. They will select their Region's representative to progress to the National Final.
5. The five finalists will have their courses evaluated by a member of theBIGGA board, accompanied by a representative of Miracle Professional, during August/September 1996 prior to the final interviews taking place on December 8/9.

The prizes for the Competition will be:

- Miracle Professional Premier Greenkeeper will receive a plaque, an all expenses paid Weekend Break for two, which includes the chance to see a West End Show.
- Second place will receive a plaque, £750 of Miracle Professional Equipment, and an all expenses paid London Weekend Break for two. Fourth and fifth will both receive a plaque.
- Third place will receive a plaque and £500 of Miracle Professional Equipment.
- The runner-up will receive a plaque and £300 worth of Miracle Professional Equipment.

Remember, your course does not necessarily have to be another Augusta National. The judges are looking to see that you are getting the best out of your course, your staff and your resources. Give it a try, you might even win.

**LATEST BIGGA TRAINING VIDEO ON SALE AT BTME**

The latest BIGGA training video titled 'Golf Green Reconstruction' will be on sale at BTME. The video shows some of the problems that may occur with greens, discusses some remedies and concentrates on green replacement. At £14.95 for members and £29.95 for non-members this 15 minute video represents superb value and should not be missed.

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**RANSOMES REAL PARTS**

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**MY NEW YEAR’S RESOLUTION IS:**

"To relax and enjoy the golden years" — Gordon Child, Churston GC, Devon (soon to be retiring)