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FEBRUARY 1997

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Another great week at BTME

Now it's just a memory - but what a memory! The BTME 97 recorded a 27% increase in attendance with almost 5,500 delegates representing 17 nationalities heading for Harrogate. All the news and pictures from the big event are here ... Pages 12-18

Keeping an eye on the detail

It's not just a magnificent overview of your golf course which makes the difference - it's the little things that matter. Our Learning Experience feature delves deeper ... Pages 20-21

Hard disk, floppy disk - soft option?

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At one with nature

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Some of the action from BTME 97 - a week not to be missed by anyone in our industry ... Pages 30-31
Perfection is just down the road...

Well that's it for another year. BTME has come and gone and, judging by the number of congratulatory messages from delegates and exhibitors, all the hard work leading up to Harrogate paid off.

That's extremely gratifying because the preparation work which, incidentally has already begun for BTME 98, takes up a great deal of time. As you know when preparing for Captain's Day, giving time to the small things as well as the large makes all the difference and that attention to detail is noticed by the people who matter.

It was while at Harrogate that I was told of this wonderful new golf course.

It sounds absolutely superb and I'm tempted to get my name down as quickly as possible.

From what I've heard it's open 365 days a year, even when there's three feet of snow. There's never any disease on the course and the greens never stimp at less than 10 - even in the winter.

The Course Manager must be some kind of magician because he has fewer staff than at my current club and the capital expenditure budget is just a fraction of ours but he always seems to be able to produce perfect results.

I gather he never needs to hollow tine or vertidrain and as for temporary greens... You can forget them. Never strays from the greens on which we were intended to play - and the holes are always perfectly painted.

I also believe the flower beds around the clubhouse rival Augusta National's.

You never see greens staff on the course but I'm told the club never has to pay any overtime. So I don't know when the work gets done.

It's also in line for a Tour event sometime soon.

The whole place is something else. Outside, there's a dropping zone for your bag and it appears on the first tee with every club head gleaming and groove clean while you can see your face in your highly polished shoes. They even replace the spikes you lost the round before.

Inside the clubhouse there are saunas, jacuzzis, a swimming pool and gym. There are 10 snooker tables while you never pay more than £1.25 for a pint.

Oh yes. There's a team of volunteers to drive your car home for you if you've enjoyed yourself too much at the dinner dance.

When I heard all this it really whetted my appetite, more so, when I learned that the green fees are only £175 per year and there isn't a joining fee.

Obviously I wanted to meet the Course Manager, who speaks four languages and dances like Fred Astaire, but I was told he was back at the club personally trimming all the ladies' tees with nail clippers.

The name of this club? Well the guy at the bar referred to it only as "The Club Down the Road".

Sound familiar? Scott MacCallum, Editor

Wankefission...
Open invitation to BIGGA members

Applications are invited from members to join BIGGA's Greenkeeping Support team for the 1997 Open Championship at Royal Troon GC.

Those wishing to be considered must be Full members of the Association and should be available from Wednesday evening July 16 to Sunday evening July 20. The opportunity to take part in one of the most important golf events of the year is open both to team members from previous years and also those members who are wishing to participate for the first time.

Duties will be allocated on a rota basis over the four days of play and include early morning course preparation, bunker raking while matches are in play and evening course maintenance. Members may also be asked to co-operate with the gathering of information for distribution in the Press Centre which helps raise the profile of the Association at the Championship. All members of the Support Team will be expected to remain on the course throughout the day and be available in the event of any unforeseen circumstances arising.

Accommodation, all meals and transport will be provided by the Association but successful applicants will be expected to pay their own travelling expenses from home to the Championship and return.

Those members wishing to be involved should put their names forward in writing to John Pemberton, Administration Manager, at BIGGA HQ, Aldwark Manor, Aldwark, Alne, York YO6 2NF, to be received no later than March 14.

All candidates' names will then be placed into a draw to select the successful applicants. If you have not been to this event before in this capacity and wish to learn more about what will be expected please do not hesitate to contact John. Tel: 01347 838581.

Dampener on bird box success

Steve Thompson, of John O'Gaunt GC, has some bitter sweet news about the success of the bird box he put up in association with the Hawk and Owl Trust of the golf course – see June '96 Greenkeeper International.

The box has been used but when it was checked by a member of the Hawk and Owl Trust the bodies of two barn owl chicks were found and there was no sign of the adult.

"It's great to know that the box was being used but sad that the chicks had died and that something had obviously happened to the adult," said Steve. "It appeared as though the chicks were about six weeks old," he added.

Incredibly another discovery in the box was a golf ball buried in among the pellets. "I knew that the box had been hit a few times by golf balls but it's quite incredible that one actually found its way inside. It's unlikely that it had caused the deaths as it had obviously been there for some time."

A kestrel box has also been put up at John O'Gaunt – it is a different shape from the one used by the barn owls - but there has been no sign of kestrel activity to date.

Jacobsen set to take over Iseki franchise in UK

Jacobsen UK Ltd and Massey Ferguson have completed negotiations under which the Iseki franchise for the UK will be transferred from MF to Jacobsen.

In a joint statement, the two companies said that under the MF umbrella, the Iseki business had earned a leading position as one of the top three suppliers of specialist grounds maintenance in the sector of the market up to 40hp. Now, complemented by Jacobsen's extensive range of high quality turf maintenance equipment, the new arrangement will provide a broader customer base to ensure continued growth and offer users one of the widest choices of top quality products from a single supplier in the UK market.

Massey Ferguson will continue to serve the local authority and grounds maintenance markets with tractors over 40hp from its mainstream range available from the nationwide MF agricultural dealer network.
Leatherjackets can cause massive damage to fine turf. That's why you need a pesticide you know you can rely on.

Crossfire was one such product and now it's back and re-invented for the new millennium.

Its special new formulation is super-concentrated for maximum effect to ensure rapid and reliable control of leatherjackets and frit fly at low doses, stopping serious damage before it starts.

Safe for use on any turf type, there's only one sure way to deal with leatherjackets - Crossfire 480 - it's back from the future.
**Boost for environment competition**

BIGGA's commitment to golf course ecology and the environment has been further reinforced by the launch of the BIGGA Golf Environment Competition in association with Amazone and Rhône Poulenc Amenity, which was announced at BTME 97.

The competition which was originally conceived and launched two years ago by Rod Baker, Managing Director of Amazone, encourages golf clubs to take an active interest in ecology and promote the existence of the many varieties of flora and fauna golf courses are natural homes to. It also encourages the reinstatement and management of historical aspects of golf courses, such as wetlands, heath and natural woodlands which provide habitat for many of our wildlife species.

"I must pay tribute to the wonderful initiative and commitment shown by Rod Baker and his team at Amazone in putting such a valuable competition in motion two years ago and I feel sure that Rhône Poulenc Amenity's involvement and the expertise we have at BIGGA will ensure that the competition will go from strength to strength," said BIGGA's Executive Director, Neil Thomas.

"I am delighted that our initiative in starting and developing the Golf Environment Competition is now to receive 'industry support so that it can be maintained in future years, and that the positive involvement of Amazone Ground Care is to continue. It was always our intention that, having given this unique competition a two year track record we could invite support of this calibre to ensure its future," said Rod Baker, Managing Director of Amazone Ground Care.

"Rhône Poulenc Amenity is delighted to be sponsoring this competition which will encourage and enhance the wildlife on many of our golf courses. The careful use of our products and golf course management that encourages wildlife do go hand in hand and our involvement with this competition fits well with the understanding that pesticides are an important tool in turf management," said Jonathan Hill, Rhône Poulenc Amenity's Market Development Manager.

The BIGGA Golf Environment Competition in association with Amazone and Rhône Poulenc Amenity, is open to every golf club in the country. Entry forms will be available from BIGGA Headquarters and clubs will qualify for the final via five regional finals - South East, South West and South Wales, Midlands, Northern and Scotland.

There will be prizes for the Regional winners while the winning golf club nationally will receive £5,000 to be put to use in the further development of environmental and ecological projects on the golf course.

The current holder of the Amazone Environmental Award is Rudding Park GC, appropriately in Harrogate where the new BIGGA Golf Environment Competition in association with Amazone and Rhône Poulenc Amenity was launched.

**BIGGA and Toro launch new award**

Britain's Course Managers and Head Greenkeepers have something new to aim for in '97 with the launch of The Toro Award for Excellence in Greenkeeping.

The Award completes a unique double for The Toro Company as it already sponsors the Toro Student of the Year Award and the finals of both events will be held together at Aldwark Manor in late October.

The golf club of the winning Course Manager or Head Greenkeeper will win a world renowned Toro Greensmaster 3000 triple greens mower while the individual winner will earn a two week trip to the United States, taking in the Golf Course Superintendent of America Association Conference and Show as well as a trip to visit the Toro Company's Headquarters in Minneapolis and Riverside, California.

"To have one sponsor for both of BIGGA's top individual greenkeeping awards seems to make perfect sense and for that company to be Toro is a major boost for the greenkeeping industry. I am sure that The Toro Award for Excellence in Greenkeeping will be a target for many of the top greenkeepers and golf clubs in the country," said BIGGA's Executive Director, Neil Thomas.

"We are delighted to increase our commitment to BIGGA and the greenkeeping industry through The Toro Award for Excellence in Greenkeeping which, combined with the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year, gives the Toro Company the two most prestigious awards for greenkeepers in the country. It is also a further example of Toro's long term commitment to the development and education of the industry," said Bob Buckingham, Toro's European Sales Manager.

"I am delighted that the involvement which Lely has had in the shape of the Student finals and Show as well as a trip to visit the Toro Company's Headquarters in Minneapolis and Riverside, California.

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What's big, sprays in the wind and comes out at night...

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Three more Golden Key sponsors join Fund

BTME '97 saw three new companies joining BIGGA as Golden Key sponsors.

Amazone Ground Care, the PGA European Tour and Bailey's of Norfolk joined the Golden Key sponsors. The future of the Education and Development Fund, which is such a vital component in the education of greenkeepers, is assured thanks to the generous contributions of our new and existing Golden and Silver Key sponsors," said BIGGA's Executive Director Neil Thomas.

Another company which received its plaque from Viscount Whitelaw was John Deere, which became a Golden Key sponsor during 1996.

Amazone Ground Care, the PGA European Tour and Bailey's of Norfolk join the other 14 Golden and six Silver Key sponsors.

BIGGA flies the flag at conference in Portugal

In December BIGGA was represented by Chairman Dean Cleaver and Administration Manager John Pemberton at the 1996 PGA European Tour biannual Greenkeeper Conference held at The Meridian Penina Golf Hotel, Portugal. Headed by John Paramor and Richard Stillwell and jointly sponsored by Ransomes and Levington, the conference was sponsored by Ransomes and Levington and Amazone Ground Care, the Golden Key sponsors. The future of the Education and Development Fund, which is such a vital component in the education of greenkeepers, is assured thanks to the generous contributions of our new and existing Golden and Silver Key sponsors," said BIGGA's Executive Director Neil Thomas.

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Cut above the rest

The second Great BIGGA Bunker Competition at The Open Championship at Royal Lytham and St Anne's in the summer was won by Patricia Davies, of The Times, who was presented with her superb prize, a Hayter Harrier lawn mower, at The Belfry just before Christmas.

The media competition involved estimating how many bunkers would be found by players during the Championship with the data collected by the BIGGA Greenkeeping Support Team. A member of the team is assigned to every match and rakes all the bunkers found by players, thus ensuring professionally raked sand and minimal delay in play.

The genuine winner of the competition should perhaps have been the course itself because, no doubt influenced by the winning number of 701 at St Andrews the year before, everyone was wofultry short in his or her prediction. Patricia's estimate of 1113 was the highest among those who entered, although still well short of the final figure of 1618 bunkers found by players during the Championship.

The Great BIGGA Bunker Competition will take place for the third year at Royal Troon in July when the BIGGA Greenkeeping Support Team will again be in action. The 50 strong team not only rakes the bunkers but assists the home club's greenkeeping staff with the general day to day preparation of the golf course and also collects interesting on-course news snippets for circulation in the Media Centre.

The picture shows Patricia Davies being presented with the Hayter Harrier lawn mower, valued at over £650, by Kim Macfie, left, Sales and Marketing Director of Hayter. Greenkeeper International Editor Scott MacCallum looks on.

Family worries?

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Yet another benefit of BIGGA membership
My first trip to BTME will not be my last

I felt I must write and congratulate all involved with the BIGGA Turf Management Exhibition and Seminar programme. I am ashamed to say that this was my first visit but it certainly will not be my last. Unfortunately Martin Gunn (Course Manager) and I could only stay for two days. Martin because of a construction programme and myself as my own business does need me occasionally.

The event is run on the most professional lines and the lectures I attended were extremely well presented and very interesting. Having sat through lectures presented by American, European and British lecturers it was fascinating to realise that we all seem to agree on what is best for British golf courses. All we have to do now is to educate the golfer.

Over the seven years I have been involved in Golf Course Management, Martin and I have visited many clubs and spoken to green staff all over the British Isles. It has always been worthwhile and I have always been shown great respect and considerable interest to renew old friendships and to make new ones. We learnt as much in the bar and over the dinner table as in the Seminar.

If only club golfers appreciated the asset they have in their greenstaff. I am always impressed with the dedication and professionalism of the people responsible for our golf courses. They deserve all the support they now receive from enlightened golfers.

Malcolm Peake, Chairman of Green, Temple Golf Club

Chest a minute...

It is of the utmost importance that an esteemed organ such as Greenkeeper International takes an active role in making its readership aware of Health and Safety matters and the magazine should be applauded for the considerable effort taken to highlight such issues.

Unfortunately one area seems to have been completely missed. Using the photographic evidence in both the magazine and the 10th anniversary calendar, can we contaminate areas of the body temporarily invisible. This must have been embarrassing for the model, although as the young man seems to be very localised in it the chest area use of a warm vest should suffice until her nipples reappear.

The question that needs answering is what does the aforesaid combination of elements do the male anatomy? Am I to be doomed to a life of vinegar one limb disappears half way through a presentation to my committee? If two limbs disappear, am I to expect to reappear one at a time, or are they like buses and travel in pairs? When they return will they artfully sidle and be pointing in the same direction? I am sure that you will agree that this is an area of great concern.

I plead with you to continue the magazine's crusading approach in order to bring sufficient pressure to bear on the manufacturers of either the paint or the fertiliser to research all possible sides. Secondly, could I suggest that the young lady in the photograph to be contacted and invited, as my guest, to the first of Kent Section's golf days. I am sure that the extra large turnout would enable us to collect a considerable amount of money towards a disability fund for her.

Richard Page, Shortlands GC, Bromley

A job well done

I would like to direct this correspondence to the entire BIGGA staff and the greenkeeping profession.

Our most recent visit to the BTME was to date the best conference I have ever attended due to two factors. Number one was the manner in which one limb disappears half way through a presentation to my committee? If two limbs disappear, am I to expect to reappear one at a time, or are they like buses and travel in pairs? When they return will they artfully sidle and be pointing in the same direction? I am sure that you will agree that this is an area of great concern.

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Richard Page, Shortlands GC, Bromley

Help me out of a hole

I am a third year Golf Course Management student at Cannington College and for my major assignment this year I am studying bunker placement and design. I would greatly appreciate any information relating to the subject. Are there any garden writers, magazine's or publications that specialise in the subject and could be a valuable input or exceptional and different bunkering and bunkers. This would include those which are considered to have been placed fairly or unfairly, those which have been removed and why and why new bunkers have been introduced to a course.

The help of any greenkeeper who has been involved in such work would be of great benefit.

Bill Montague, MG, Oakwood Club, Cleveland, Ohio

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