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Finally, if you have not received your entry form for this year’s Spring Tournament to be held at Beeston Fields GC on May 13, could you please give me a ring and I will gladly send you an entry form. Please remember if you wish to play in any Section golf day your form must be returned to the Secretary before the closing date. Also to all those attending the day, may I thank you for your support and wish you a most enjoyable day.

Antony Bindley
Midland

Well it’s that time of year again, everybody still has the hangover from BTME and the season is almost on us. BTME always gets better every year, I am sure you will agree. For those of you who went to the show you will be aware of the launch of the grand raffle to raise money for the building fund for the new offices at HQ for those of you who are not aware of this raffle then you will be interested in this next information. I have now got tickets which are available to buy and you can then be entered into the prize draw which will take place on the June 22 at the Annual Golf Day. When buying a ticket you will also receive a badge depending on the value of your ticket purchased, the prices are as follows: £1 per ticket, £5 = 1 bronze badge, £25 = silver badge, £50 = gold badge.

By the time you are reading this report you should all have received your fixture cards and applications forms, if there are any problems please contact me on 01384 292396.

On behalf of the Midland section and his friends at Little Aston Golf Club I would like to wish Alan Borraston a speedy recovery from his recent ill health. Alan is always a keen member of the Section and is known to a great number of the members. Get well soon Alan. I would like to finish by introducing a long list of new members to our section: Martin Sowerby, Nicholas Bird, Jason Cunningham, Colin Foxhall, Simon Finch, John Miklausie, Darren Yates, Paul Freeman, Graeme Couchman, Ian Beech, Steven Edwards, Barry North, Anthony Duffy, David Bevan, Paul Quinn and Anthony Weckes.

Jonathan Wood

East of England

Not much to report this month apart from the Section does now have a computer/printer and your secretary will hopefully get to grips with it, so you may see some changes in the format of your notices. The Section is looking for trade members to sponsor the postage for communications for the section so anybody interested please contact Graeme MacDonald. The Midland Region is to set up a Greenkeeper Support Group. Anybody who wants to talk to a fellow greenkeeper with any problems contact 0116 2793919.

The fixture list for 1998 is as follows: April 8, Burghley Park - PGM and Barenbrug Seeds; May 5, Lincoln GC (Torksey) Purdeys and RiteFeed Qualifier; June 11, Tyston Park - Rigby Taylor, June 24, Stoke Poges - RiteFeed Regional Final; July 15, Northshore - Burdens Groundcare; August 20, Oundle - EOE v E Midlands - Toro Shield; September 15, Toft GC - EOE v Secretaries Association - Chandlers Cup; October 26, Belton Woods GC - Fieldcare Texas Scramble, AGM

The Section has a Smith Corona Word Processor/typewriter for sale if any members are interested please contact Graeme MacDonald 01636 626564.

Graeme MacDonald

BB & O

The first golf event of the season takes place at Reading Golf Club on Thursday 16th April, hopefully everybody received their invitation (if not please inform asap). The tournament is also the RiteFeed Qualifier for the Regional Final. Fortunately for us the Regional Final is to be played at Stoke Poges which is just down the road. This means anybody qualifying will not have to travel hundreds of miles to participate. This actually means that the old excuse of teams in the past about being “too tired” after travelling will no longer apply, so hopefully the B B & O can seriously compete for the major honours at last!

I mentioned briefly last month, that The Oxfordshire was looking for some volunteers to assist with bunker maintenance during the week of May 14-17 ata the Benson & Hedges. At present we have a list of volunteers organised but David assures me that...
Creating grass seed mixtures to meet successfully the diverse demands put upon today's turf and grassed areas has become a highly technical science.

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they could accommodate a few more helpers. If you would like the opportunity to assist in setting up a course for a prestigious PGA European Tour event then please contact myself asap.

Remember we are holding our Summer Competition there in August so this would go some way to thanking those who have helped so far. As a reminder we are looking for volunteers to rake bunkers during the Volvo PGA at Wentworth, this will be run similar to the 2007 event where you are allocated a group to follow. Imagine walking inside the ropes alongside Woosie or Seve!

I recently attended a Regional Board meeting at Northampton along with our Chairman R. Clark. The main thing to come out of the meeting was the proposal to set up a Greenskeepers Support Line. This will give Greenskeepers in our Section the opportunity to discuss in the strictest confidence any problems which are causing them sleepless nights. Working with mother natures brings its own stresses as we all know, so I’m sure this line will be busy. The scheme will run for a 6 month spell at which point it will be assessed, with the possibility of it becoming permanent. The number to phone is 01462 049141.

Lindsay Anderson 01491 578147

South East
Derek Farrington
Tel: 01903 209055

London
At Hadley Wood GC, a massive earth moving operation began back on September 10, 1997, in order to set up a new reservoir. The existing lake had 9,000 cubic metres of silt removed and a further 27,000 cubic metres of soil was dug to extend the lake area, giving approximately five million gal-lons of water when full.

The new reservoir area threatened to alter the natural flow of the feeder stream, so a by-pass ditch was dug to divert the water-course around the lake and reinjoin downstream. The diggers moved out at the end of the week and the Green staff had hardly time to draw breath before the Irrigation Contractors had rolled in to install a full greens, tee, approach and fairway sprinkler system.

Due to the hard soil conditions, a brand new chain trencher was required to work. Due to the hard soil conditions, a brand new chain trencher was required to work. The contractor had to be used throughout the installation, which meant an extra arduous task for the Greenskeepers of removing the excess soil from the trench lines. The Contractors finished the job at the end of February and Course Manager, Craig Handside, is, and I quote, “dead chuffed” with the result. He would like to thank his Deputy, Nick Woods of Collier, and all the rest of the staff for the work done and help given, but most of all for preserving his sanity during all the upheaval.

At Northwood GC, the second phase of a tee renovation pro- gramme has been completed which involved four tees being re- laid and nine bunkers. Work was carried out by Course Manager, Colin Fairley, and his staff with final levelling and turfing by Steve Pask using Inturf. Work will continue on a further ten existing bunkers. Colin has now been at Northwood for twenty eight months with wife Jeannie and young son Calum, having previously been in charge of a new course in Holland.

A new bore-hole has been drilled at Finchley Golf Club under the eagle eye of David Millard, who estimates that it will be able to extract up to 10 cubic metres per hour. Simultaneously a further ten bunkers are being constructed by Greens staff.

Date for your Diary - The RiteFeed Classic will be held at Highgate GC on Tuesday, April 22nd.

Peter Hopkinson

East Anglia
On February 10 five members of our Section were invited to Eastern College near Norfolk. We were asked to give some advice on setting up college courses at NVQ Levels 2 and 3 in horticulture. Steve Millard and myself managed to arrive without mishap but on meeting Roger Plummer, David Childs and Ernie Hart we discovered that Ernie had managed to get himself down on the wrong road where as Roger explained you might meet a stagcoach or the old Highway man was in hiding.

We were met by Paul Metcalfe and had a chat about NVQ course and how the college was working towards certification with City & Guilds. We then took us all on a tour of the college grounds and showed the group the new facilities that were going to be in place in the Autumn of this year. Another meeting is due to be held late in March and I will report on fur- ther developments later in the year.

On Thursday, February 26, Collier Turf Care put on their annual seminar at the Hotel Norwich, as usual John and Andrew and the team made the day go very well and the displays and presentations were of a very high standard.

The presentations were given by Justin Smith - ASE Solutex Ltd on “Soil and soil water movement” followed by Stuart Ashworth - Amenity Technology Ltd on “Nutrients and cycling in the soil system” these concluded the morning lectures. In the after- noon Dr Tim Lodge, Agronomist with the STRI in East Anglia, introduced us to “Irrigation strategies for fine turf”. I found the presenta- tions very informative and very poignant as this area of the green staff’s work has been greatly helped due to a large amount of rainfall in the country, and also managing irrigation sys- tems along with fertiliser applica- tion is so important to us all. Once again all my thanks to Collier Turf Care for an excellent day hope to see you all next year.

Ian Willett

Essex
With our membership now reaching 185 we would like to take this opportunity to give a warm welcome to the following new members:

Dean Ricci, Gosfield Lakes; David Gibbons, Langdon Hills; Terence Blowes, Burnham on Crouch; Graham Saunders, Orsett; Stuart Jenkins, Romford; David Bush, Stoke By Nayland; Neil Cordery; Gordon Hadley; Thomas Baird and Eric Mead, Ilford Golf Club.

Once again the main playing season is upon us with our first golf competition, the South East Regional Qualifier, to be held at Burnham on Crouch GC on April 22. For further information contact Richard Pride on 01268 732281.

A note for all committee mem- bers the next meeting is to take place on April 12 at 4 pm at Bentley GC.

If anyone has any news from around the section please contact me on 01371 828380 if you will be needing to save any lives and I will get you down for that one.

The Section has now received a batch of badges for the Buy a Brick Fund for the new HQ, so all donations of a fiver receive a badge and free entry into the grand raffle in which prizes include a night out with Janet Adenuga and some Collingwood memorabilia amongst other things. So please all donations are gratefully received. Please contact Peter Baymon about that one.

On May 8th we have the RiteFeed Classic at Isle of Wedmore on April 21and then Westurf on the 29th at Long Ashton. This is Paula’s first Westurf and it promises to be a very good one so please, please come along and bring all your colleagues, Greens Chairmen, committee members, Ladies Captain etc. and, I’m sure we will all hopefully we will see you there.

Marc Haring

South West

South West and South Wales
Paula Humphries
Tel: 01903 209277

South West
A beautiful spring like day greeted 42 greenkeepers at the Lawson Trophy at an immaculate Bath GC at the end of February. The course was in amazingly good condition thanks to Guy Woods and his crew and, even more amazing, Michael Fawcett did not win. That particular hon- our went to our Chairman, Chris Sealey, after taking the course apart, with his own particular brand of power golf and coming in with a very impressive 39 points.

2nd went to J Bryne on the back nine with 35 points and third was Nick Wilson showing a welcome return to form. Nearest the pin was Nick Perkins and not a very close competition as he had put down. The nearest the pin competition raised a splendid £50 for the golf clubs charity; research into Parkinson’s Disease. A major money raiser will be made of Phil Greenway who also managed a superb 39 points but being a trade member was not allowed to receive a prize. Sorry about that Phil but thanks for coming anyway.

Huge thanks to George Sinker, from Lawson Products, our spon- sors, for coming anyway.

Paul Jenkins, from Lillybrook GC, kindly provided us with a noticeboard containing details of a fire safety course to be run by Gloucestershire Fire Service and so anybody is interested then please give me a ring. We are also running a First Aid course in the very near future, I do not know exactly when but contact me on 01380 828380 if you will be needing to save any lives and I will get you down for that one.

Our Quiz Night was held at the Royal Victoria Hotel in Bath and it promises to be a very good one so please, please, please come along and bring all your colleagues, Greens Chairmen, committee members, Ladies Captain etc. and, I’m sure we will all hope to see you there.

Marc Haring

South Coast
Our Quiz Night was held at Bramshaw Golf Club on February 4. Unfortunately it was not very well attended. We managed to muster three teams. Not very good. I would like to say thank you to the people who did turn up. They were Fred Deamon and his team and Adrian Wiltshires team from Bramshaw Golf Club.
Tony Gadd once again thanked Sparsholt College for continued support. The sponsors for the day, namely Huxley's Grass Machinery, Driving Force Leisure, ISS Aquaturf, Gem Professional and Winchester Garden Machinery for all of their support. He then thanked all of the speakers for taking time out to make it such a successful day. Tony then went on to thank Paula for taking on the task of chairing the seminar. Last but not least our thanks to Gordon Child our National Chairman who conned me into buying Jim Arthur’s book on Practical Greenkeeping. It should be on everyone’s bookshelf for all to read.

This is the last call for the 10th Westurf. Paula mentioned this at the seminar. A lot of things are Competitions, BIGGA hospitality tent, free glass of wine with a slice of anniversary cake and a panel of experts to solve all your problems. There is also a competition for members of the trade and a demonstration area. As I said before it will be a fine sunny day. Bring along your Club Captains, Committee Members, Secretaries and Club Proprietors. Make it a good day out for everyone. See you all on April 29 at Long Aston.

Ken Lodge

Devon and Cornwall

The Section’s first meeting of the year was sponsored by Barenbrug Seeds and held at Bud & North Cornwall GC on Wednesday, February 4. The day started with golfing members competing in a St Andrews foursome format for the Barenbrug cup, our non golfing members were treated to an excellent workshop on Business Management for Greenkeeping which was presented by Robert Brewer, Course Manager and Golf Director at St Mellion International.

After an excellent lunch John Ballard, on behalf of Barenbrug, presented the morning’s golfing prizes to the winners of the Barenbrug golf competition. John then gave a short presentation on Barenbrug.

Results: 1. Kevin Yeoman, Dartmouth, 39pts on back 9. 2. Shaun Getson, St Mellion, & Andy Parker, Crediton, 39pts on back 9.3. Tony Gooch, Torrington, & Peter Bond, Sidmouth, 39pts To conclude the superb day
Enter this year's Toro Award for Excellence in Greenkeeping and you could be the winner of a world renowned Toro Greensmaster Triple Greens Mower for your club.

The individual winner will also receive an all expenses paid trip to the GCSAA Conference and Show, in Orlando, and visit the Toro factories in California and Minneapolis.

There is still time for nominations to reach BIGGA Headquarters by the closing date of May 1, 1998.

Head Greenkeepers, Course Managers in Great Britain are eligible, except, of course, Ian McMillan, from Hankley Common, the winner in 1997.

I wish to nominate:

Name
Address
Tel
Noninated by:
Name
Position

Please send your nomination to: British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association, Aldwark Manor, Aldwark, Aine, York YO6 2NF. (To arrive no later than May 1, 1998).

Entry forms and full details will be sent to nominees by return. You may photocopy this form.
Robert Brewer, Course Manager and Golf Director at St-Michelton International presented our afternoon seminar on Business Management for Greenkeeping.

The Section would like to thank Robert for his excellent educational presentation, also our thanks must go to the day's sponsor, Barenbrug, for without their financial support, this meeting would not have taken place, also to my crew of Jason, Polly and Greg who always work so hard to present the course at its best, last but not least our thanks must go to Bude & North Cornwall for all their help.

April has arrived at last and those dark winter nights are starting to fade in our minds with our thoughts turning to preparing our courses in the best possible condition during the season ahead. What better way to help you achieve your goal than to visit Westurf on April 29 at Long Ashton Golf Club, Bristol where you will be able to see all the latest products and technology at your local turf care show.

Remember the Date April 29 at Long Ashton, Bristol. Richard Whyman

North East

BIGGA would like to congratulate Emmet Curran, formerly of Foyle International, on his recent move to Downpatrick GC. We wish Emmet the very best in his new position. We would also like to wish Mickey O'Neil, of Fort William GC, a speedy recovery after his recent operation. I know Mickey will be looking forward to enjoying a game of golf.

Our North East Section would like to thank everyone who attended our recent social event held at Allen Park GC. Many travelled a fair distance to attend that night. We all enjoyed a great night's entertainment of chipping competitions, a quiz and a talk by the evening's sponsor Maxi Crop. The Chipping competition was won by Paul Lapplin of Royal Portrush (famous at last Paul) and the table quiz was won by Emmet Curran, John People and John Shields. Thanks also to Allen Park for the use of their facilities and Martin Lavery for setting the questions for the quiz. At least we think we mean thanks.

Our Section will be holding a Golf Day on April 16 at Green Acres GC. This is an ideal opportunity for members to get involved in the game and get a handicap to enable them to take part in competitions you may even be eligible to play in the RiteFeed Classic at Malone GC. Anyone wishing further information please contact our secretary, Mark Farrell on 01849 429001.

Finally Greenmount College is keeping up its excellent tradition of Greenkeeper training by purchasing a new Kubota 2130 compact tractor and six Allett tees mowers. "We are committed to the highest possible standards of training in our industry, these new machines represent a substantial investment in that training" said Neil McLoughlin, a College Lecturer.

Eamonn Farrell

South East

I'll begin by welcoming the new members to the South East Section who are, Terry Crawford, Course Manager, Clandeboye GC, Richard Capes and James McCready, Bangor GC.

Further to our first meeting the proposed agenda is as follows:

- March/April Jacobsen Work Shop Day, May/June Golf Days, July The RiteFeed Classic open to all BIGGA members, with the final at Gleneagles, August BBQ exact dates for our agenda are to be confirmed so I'll keep you posted. Members will be notified of Golf Days. In case anyone didn't know, our Section meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month at a different location throughout County Down and Armagh in order to make each meeting accessible to all members.

Finally, I would like to thank Janet Adamson once again for her help in establishing the Northern Ireland Region and wish her every success in her new job. Jonathan McCabe

Headland Amenity

The word is spreading

- Low rate of use (1 litre per hectare) allows you to treat more area for less.
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Ever increasing standards are being set for the dress of greens staff as more clubs realise that presentation is all important. However, while smart pullovers with the club crest look neat they cannot be called protective clothing nor are they ideal for working outside. In contrast, polycotton boilersuits or jack-and-trousers probably do meet this criteria and are easy to launder, furthermore; they are readily available in many colours and designs. However, protective clothing can, and should, be construed more widely than this and considered as a head to toe concept.

Precisely what protection is necessary depends largely upon the particular job and the circumstances. The most basic protection is against the dirt and grass of day-to-day working, but perhaps most greenkeepers will think more readily of wet weather gear. Chemical protection is another dimension, and specialist wear, but one which probably brings up images of hot clammy suits (it needn’t), while anyone employed with a chain saw will need a different form of protection. Strimming, hedgetrimming and brushcutting are other tasks which require the operator to wear specialised gear, while workshop work should require protective footwear at least.

Nor can dust masks and respirators be forgotten as there are many times when they should be employed, just think of strimming edges when the weather is very dry, or perhaps filling a sprayer, both tasks which will need a specific type of protection.
Those who suffer from chapped hands or dermatitis from handling chemicals, including fertiliser, should consider gloves, or perhaps if working with machinery, mitts. These instances highlight the requirements for protective clothing which is suited to the task. In the past scant regard has been placed on protective clothing, however, changed perceptions as well as the advent of health and safety legislation means that it must now be regarded seriously. But there is more to protective clothing than safety, modern protective clothing adds a look of professionalism, and by keeping the wearer comfortable should add to productivity.

Protective clothing is available from a wide variety of outlets, but generally those closely associated with specific activities, ie suppliers of chemicals and fertilisers to golf clubs usually have chemical and weather protective suits, while the best place to locate protective clothing for chain saws and brushcutters will be at a dealer specialising in such machinery. Furthermore the supplier, should be the best person to advise on the most suitable form of protection. Wearing inappropriate protection is as foolhardy, dangerous and even illegal as wearing nothing at all. However, there are specialist suppliers who may also offer a mail order facility - and these should also be available to advice with authority.

Normal everyday protective clothing such as boilersuits and work boots are also available from country stores. Head gear has not in the past received much attention, however, the last year has seen protective hats specifically designed to protect against flying golf balls. In the past one of the problems with headgear has been "image" - macho man's image. Builders' or jockeys' hard hats have not seemed appropriate course wear, and woody bobble or soft baseball hats don't do much for a club's image - nor do they offer any protection against ball strike. For tasks such as chainsawing, brush cutting and trimming a hard hat which combines visor and ear defenders is likely to be ideal, although both ear and eye protection can be provided by separate units, and this may be a more flexible approach and allow goggles or visor and ear defenders to be used for other tasks.

There is much to be said for protective items such as masks, goggles, ear defenders and even hats to be considered as "personal property" and specific to an individual. That way the wearer can be made responsible for them - for their being available, worn and in good condition - and it prevents excuses such as condition or loss being used for not wearing them. In addition with many of these items there are often strong personal preferences, for instance one greenkeeper may prefer a polycarbonate and/or acetate visor for trimming while another may prefer a mesh one or even goggles. Goggles tend to steam up, although this is easy to remedy by cleaning them thoroughly. Both these and plastic visors are made of relatively soft material so are easily scratched.

Boots must be considered as personal wear, this is seldom a problem, particularly as expensive chainsaw boots are only likely to be needed by one or two people in the team - those who have received training on the use of the saw. Normal protective footwear is not expensive - and it is VAT zero rated. Gum boots may be ideal for keeping the wet out, but they also get hot and promote hot sweaty feet. Nor will these rubber boots provide a high level of protection against other hazards - like dropping a drawer on your foot - or putting a fork into it - unless they are a special protective model. Clubs which make an allowance for protective clothing may find it pays to provide the occasional tin of waterproofing wax or oil for wax jackets and boots.

Greenkeepers who pay for their own protective clothing should be able to claim a tax allowance for this. Most protective clothing is also zero rated for VAT, and both of these financial incentives should promote higher levels of wear.

The most frequently considered protective wear are "footwear". Again there are many personal preferences, from all-in-one's to jacket and leggings, not forgetting long coats. Cost is as variable as the style. Experience suggests that some are much better value for money than others.

The more obvious factors are length of life and initial cost, however, this is far from the whole story, and perhaps more important is comfort and wearability. Most people will know all about the need for the garment to "breathe" - to allow perspiration out while not letting rain in. Hood or hat again may be down to personal preference, for myself I prefer a sou'wester to a built-in hood - and a towel round the neck of the jack-
The protection racket

tective wear suppliers have not. So if your proportions do not match the supplier's "norm" you may have a problem - usually with cuffs covering your hands or up at your elbows. If you have this problem it may be worth trying a yacht chandler - you'll probably get a bright yellow suit but you will keep dry. Water and chemical proof suits are mandatory for handling chemicals and come in various styles, many are disposable - ideal, except that they are probably more easily torn, which defeats their whole purpose. The commonest complaint is that they are hot and clammy - but if the spraying vehicle has a closed cab with air filtration there is no need to wear them inside it in fact they should not be worn inside because you then bring in any contamination - to a closed compartment. Sprayers should have a locker specifically for contaminated clothing.

Chemical handling will require waterproof gloves, and these need to be long enough to cover the wrist and seal with the jacket cuff. If your chemical supplier does not have gloves which are large, comfortable or strong enough, try an agricultural dealer specialising in dairy supply. Grip can be a problem with rubber gloves, but most designs have special grip areas moulded in. Turning the gloves inside out may be possible and this will allow left and right handed gloves to be interchanged - and it may save having to throw away one good glove.

Mitts - particularly woollen ones, are also likely to be reversible. These won't do for chemical work, but are ideal for machine operation where thumb and forefinger are needed to work throttle or screw adjustments. Forestry mitts have the forefinger separate as well as the thumb. A whole range of working gloves are available to suit all types of task, nor are these expensive - especially when viewed against the misery caused by chapped and raw hands. The greatest problem is that inexpensive gloves seldom fit very well, few match your actual hand width and finger length which is likely to reduce their life considerably. If you need substantial leather gloves for hedge work, etc., and cannot find what you need locally try a supplier of welding goods - they usually have a great range of substantial gloves. If grip is necessary - for instance when raking, consider a knitted pvc coated or kevlar design similar to those used by yachtsmen. Lightweight latex gloves can often be worn inside a more substantial leather or leather/canvas glove to give weatherproofing with resilience to damage.

Dust masks and respirators, while both coming under the banner of breathing protection, are totally different in concept, thus it is vital to recognise what you are trying to be protected against. There should be very few instances when a full small fan powered against noxious fumes is needed on a golf course. If such gases are present then specialist advice should be taken. For normal chemicals the greatest risk is of splashes and spray mist and this should not need a full respirator - read the label on the can. However, there are plenty of occasions on the golf course when a dust mask is indicated. For most situations an inexpensive disposable mask will be adequate, the dust is the nuisance and not normally toxic. Every greenkeepers shed should have a supply of these masks, few actually have. Some people will find more expensive face masks more comfortable to use. Particularly comfortable may be one of the powered respirators, but these are expensive. They use a small fan powered by a battery pack which pumps air through a filter to the face. The slight pressure induced around the face keeps dust out.

Comfort in use is one of the most important criteria in selecting any protective wear, on the basis that if it is not comfortable it won't be used. Another important point to consider, particularly with clothing that is used around machinery is that it should be close fitting and not have flaps, pockets or belts which can get caught. Pockets which catch on levers or door handles are dangerous. Velcro is a wonderful invention to keep pocket flaps shut - and it works well on cuffs.

For the wearer there may be other reasons to prefer protective clothing, for instance it is likely to be neater and easier to launder or clean. It may also avoid a need to have to think of what to wear to work. There are a whole host of standards relating to protective clothing. Protective clothing is seldom expensive but this is no reason not to look after it. Special lockers to hold it are a worthwhile investment, and a good maxim is that if you look after your protective clothing, it will look after you.