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Greenkeeper Education and Development Fund
The Fund provides the key to the future for greenkeepers, golf club and game. Individuals and companies can join the Golden Key Circle and Silver Key Circle. For details, please contact BIGGA on 01347 8338581.

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December 1998 Greenkeeper International 3
A potential cast of thousands

It seems that at this time of the year the spotlight tends to fall on one particular part of the country.

Last year it shone on one little corner of Surrey with Hankley Common clinching the BIGGA Golf Course Environment Competition, in association with Amazone Ground Care and Rhone Poulenc Amenity, and Hankley's Course Manager, Ian McMillan, collecting the Toro Excellence In Greenkeeping Award. Quite a remarkable double.

Well, this year there was another double. Not by the same golf club but by the same city. Lindrick, while not exactly in Sheffield, does possess strong Steel City connections, won the Environment Competition and Abbeydale, in the south of Sheffield, is the home club of new Toro Excellence Award winner, John Coleman.

A Full Monty of BIGGA's premier awards, you might say. How lucky we are to have such fine winners and it reflects well on the development of both competitions that by general consent the quality of finalists in both was the highest ever.

Lindrick has long set the benchmarks for quality and sustained, environment work and to have Lindrick's name on the cup is a boost to not only the club, but the competition as well.

John Coleman is a rising star in the profession. He's educated, articulate, determined and ambitious and is keen to promote the industry wherever and whenever possible.

He feels, and there is merit in his thinking, that for too many people greenkeeping is not top of the list when it comes to thinking about a career. People fall into the job, discover what great opportunities it offers, and go on from there. They don't tend to do what John did himself, and start straight from school.

They reap the benefits from that because, at the age of 28, he is the finished article and the education he's about to start is to add to his considerable knowledge and not to fill gaps.

Congratulations also to Sally Doherty on winning the Toro Student of the Year Award. Another fine Champion, Sally is a university graduate and has quickly risen to the position of First Assistant on the famous Brabazon Course at The Belfry. Another excellent example of the quality of young people in the industry.

This month I suffered a disaster which could only happen in this, the modern age. While in the 80s it may have been like losing a Filofax; in the 90s it is losing a hard disc on a computer. This I managed on the computer which contains all my magazine work as well as all correspondence... just as the deadline for this magazine loomed!

However, out of adversity comes inspiration. Not to say perspiration, and we piloted the issue home. On three wheels you might say.

However, if you expected to see something promised in this issue and it's not included, or I've not answered a letter please show a little understanding.

It just remains for me, on behalf of everyone at BIGGA HOUSE to wish you a Merry Christmas and a sensational New Year.
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NOTHING RUNS LIKE A DEERE
Damages paid to Greenkeeper

A Hertfordshire greenkeeper who saw his own job advertised in Greenkeeper International has won damages of £14,440 after using the BIGGA Legal Helpline to take action against his golf club.

The 62 year old, who had worked, often single handed on the course, for four and a half years, saw the job of Head Greenkeeper Designate for his own golf club advertised, although no discussions had ever taken place about the possibility of a new appointment.

A short time later the greenkeeper was first suspended by the recently appointed man, at which time he contacted the Hambro Legal Helpline who put him in touch with the Association’s solicitors, Kirbys.

"We wrote to the club asking for reasons for his suspension and enquiring whether or not it was intended to pursue any disciplinary proceedings," said solicitor, David Burton of Kirbys.

"Having received no response from the club we wrote to the owner once again indicating that unless we received a substantive response to our previous letter our client would be retained in the employment of the club until such a response was received.

"We then received a fax from the club saying that due to the recent change in circumstances at the club our client's services were no longer required. Unfortunately we therefore have to make him redundant from today's date."

"This is certainly the first time in all the years that we have dealt with employment work that somebody has first found out that they have been dismissed via a communication to their solicitor," said Mr Burton.

"We immediately issued Industrial Tribunal proceedings, following consultation with Hambro."

Prior to the Tribunal the club threatened that unless a modest sum of compensation was accepted the club would be put into liquidation and during the Tribunal the club argued that the greenkeeper had been offered and turned down another position and that he was suffering illness and would have been dismissed in any event.

"Perhaps not surprisingly neither argument prevailed upon the Tribunal and our client was ultimately awarded the maximum compensatory award which, together with wages in lieu of notice and his basic award for unfair dismissal, totalled £14,440," said Mr Burton.

"Commenting on the award, BIGGA's Executive Director Neil Thomas said, "This is an excellent example of Hambro and Kirbys working jointly to protect the interests of a member, albeit in the distressing circumstances of dismissal."

"It is important also that members are alert to the services that can be provided before a case reaches disciplinary stage and in appropriate circumstances members can be provided with legal support at an early point in any dispute or disciplinary proceedings e.g. a summons to appear before the Green Committee.

"In this way the Association aims to assist in preventing disciplinary proceedings moving on to an advanced and possibly terminal stage.

"While other Associations provide support following dismissal and through Industrial Tribunals, I believe BIGGA is unique in the service it can give to members in the assistance it can give to members in a supportive and preventative capacity at the onset of a dispute or disciplinary proceedings.

"It goes without saying that this service is a very considerable membership benefit.""

SSSI status conferred on Thorpeness GC

Thorpeness Golf Club has been designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest by English Nature, due to the work carried out by the green staff on bracken, bramble removal and gorse regeneration which has caused the Woodland and Nighjar population to increase to above the national average.

"In 1997, the number of nesting sites of the Nighjar was recorded on the entire area, including the Aldringham Walls and the golf course, as 10 and Woodlark nest sites as 42. Now the golf course can boast at least 10-15 Woodlark nests sites in its own right which makes the course a SSSI," said Course Manager Ian Willett.

"On the same day as we were informed about the SSSI the club learned that it had been given a Countryside Stewardship Award for habitat creation in areas of the course that are out of play and usually left. As Course Manager I have been working with Brenda Williamson, from the Suffolk Wildlife Trust, and Steven Curtis, from the Suffolk Sandlings Project, to show that golf and conservation can mix and complement one another," explained Ian.

"I have the backing of the club from the Managing Director, Tim Rowan-Robinson, Secretary, Neville Griffin and Frank Hall, the club Professional, the committee and members but last, but by no means least, my excellent team of greenkeepers. In working towards the stewardship award, this shows that team work plays off.""

A cry for help from across the pond

Wanted! Information in any amount of detail about slit-tining. I am currently working in the USA in western Colorado and am trying to convince our Superintendent that we need to start working on slit-tining. I am interested in all the literature and theories about increasing rooting depth from other greenkeepers. I am also interested in any information on equipment. Thank you to any of you who may like to help me.

My address is as follows and I will reimburse postage costs.

Paul Davies, PO Box 1524, Palisade, Colorado, 81526, USA.

Hell of a facelift for infamous bunker

One of the most notorious and infamous bunkers in the world is undergoing a facelift.

Around 150 railway sleepers have been lined up around the highest parts of Hell Bunker on the 14th hole on the Old Course to stabilise the face. The sleepers will be retrofitted with stacks of turf built up so when complete the sleepers will not be visible.

At around 1500 square yards Hell Bunkers is one of the largest on the course and at 10 feet deep is one of the most difficult from which to escape. This was highlighted in the 1995 Open when Jack Nicklaus took four attempts to free himself of its clutches.

"We usually have to revet bunkers every five years and this is the first time we have used sleepers. They will help to stabilise the surroundings and provide a template for future reconstruction and repairs. The bunker is now back to its pre-1995 size," explained Old Course Head Greenkeeper Eddie Adams.

The Old Course has 112 bunkers and several have names and historic associations. Next in line for revetting is Shell Bunker in front of the 7th green.
A new man at Whitby

Thanks to the NVQ system Whitby Golf Club discovered a "new man" amid its existing staff.

Two years ago, Robin Evans saw the benefits that could be gained by going down the road of NVQ.

Prior to this decision he had been finding it hard to proceed through the normal system because he found, as many do, it difficult to express his ideas on paper. The NVQ system seemed to be the answer, offering a practical hands on way of proving his technical ability.

Robin took it upon himself to finance his way forward and prove himself by means of the NVQ System.

Within a week or so, in the capable of hands of Head Greenkeeper, Ian Lavelle, the golf club noticed a big change in, not only the attitude, but also the once hidden talents of their now it seems revitalised, greenkeeper.

"Robin's whole outlook has changed. He has begun to display a renewed personal motivation in his job, pride in his work which was evident and his previously subdued skills were now coming to light once more," said Ian.

The delight of Whitby Golf Club in his new attitude spurred Robin on and he constantly looked for new ways to improve his new standards.

Robin states, "All I knew about the job was down to Ian's training and the time he made for me to learn the required skills. However, I thought it was about time I achieved a formal qualification in my own right and sought out details of the NVQ Course.

Robin's assessor, Andrew Boyd, Head Greenkeeper of Bridlington Golf Club, was delighted with his response, especially now Whitby Golf Club could see the worth of the NVQ way forward.

"What is most rewarding to me as Robin's Assessor is to see the system in place and working to produce a professional man with a whole new outlook and motivation. Added to this is of course the valuable help given to both Assessor and Candidate in the skilful hands of the G.T.C. and support throughout the two years of hard work."

Geoff Cooling, Whitby's Greens Chairman said, "The Committee is delighted at Robin's success. At a time when a man of his practical experience might reasonably be expected to rest on his laurels, it is pleasing to see that he has made this tremendous effort to improve his knowledge. Both he and the Club must benefit in the long term."

Ian Lavelle added, 'Robin has served Whitby loyally for many years and I and the other members of my staff are delighted at his achievement.'

Practical Greenkeeping given a boost

Following the decision re-print Practical Golf by Jim Arthur, R&A Secretary Sir Michael Bonallack, has written to all greenkeeping colleges explaining that the book promotes sound greenkeeping practices and should be made available to students.

"It is an excellent book and we have agreed to a re-print and I wrote to all the colleges to let them know of its availability," explained Sir Michael.

"Jim Arthur's book promotes sound greenkeeping practices and the colleges should use it as part of their teaching tools," he added.

While carrying Jim Arthur's name the book, in addition to containing Jim Arthur's philosophies on greenkeeping gathered and honed from a lifetime in the industry, is a collection of views and writing from acknowledged experts in many different fields of the game including Donald Steel, Neil Baldwin, Barry Cooper, John Allbut and Jim's own son, Richard Arthur.

"The original idea for the book came from current BIGGA Chairman, Gordon Child, and it has become a compendium of views from top experts in their respective fields," said Jim.

Autographed copies of the book are available from BIGGA HOUSE priced £29.95 plus £3 p&p.

Royal Inverdivot GC...

by Tony Husband

We've had complaints there's too much sand in some of the bunkers

Really Which ones?

That one for a start

[Drawing of a bunker with sand and club images]

8 Greenkeeper International December 1998
Peter Wilson leaves industry

A reorganisation within Textron Turf Care and Specialty Products has seen President Peter Wilson promoted to another Textron company out with the fine turf industry and Paul Hollingworth become Managing Director of Textron Turf Care & Specialty Products Europe.

Peter, previously Chief Executive of Ransomes plc, will now become President of Textron Fastening Systems Europe where his responsibilities will cover the 23 operations across Europe, a total of 5500 staff and revenue exceeding $700 million.

Paul Hollingworth commented, "We congratulate Peter on his new appointment and promotion and we wish him every success with his new responsibilities. I have benefited from working closely with Peter over a number of years and can confirm that it will be very much business as usual in the Turf Care Group within Europe."

Concurrent with this announcement, a new Group is formed headed by Carl Burtnie, who becomes Chief Executive Officer of Textron Golf, Turf Care & Specialty Products Group, that now incorporates the E-Z-GO company with the Turf Care Group.

Carl will be supported by Bob Grenhart, who becomes Vice President Finance Textron Golf, Turf Care & Specialty Products Group.

The new appointments take effect from January 1.

Iseki renew Textron link

Representatives of Japanese tractor manufacturers Iseki recently renewed an agreement with Textron Turf Care in Ipswich for Textron to continue to act as Iseki's UK agents. Jacobson Textron had previously marketed Iseki from their base in Kettering. The new five year deal is set to take the relationship between the two companies well into the 21st century.

Iseki were represented by Mr Fukatani, Executive Managing Director; Mr Abe, Overseas Business Managing Director and Mr Hamada, Director Iseki Europe. The agreement was signed on behalf of Textron by Peter Bell, Marketing Director.

Speaking after the signing, Peter Bell said, "Jacobsen have had an excellent relationship with Iseki and their tractors have built up a tremendous reputation in the UK for both quality and performance. Textron is delighted to continue the partnership and we regard Iseki as a fundamental part of our strategy to provide the strongest possible choice of products for our customers to meet all applications both now and in the future.'

Five Lakes Greenkeeper tees off to pastures new

Five Lakes Greenkeeper, Martin Huckleby, is moving on to Nigel Mansell's Woodbury Park, as Head Greenkeeper after four successful years working on the Links and Lakes courses at Five Lakes.

Commenting on his appointment, Five Lakes General Manager Noel Byrne said, "We are delighted that Martin's hard work has paid off with such a prestigious move for him. He leaves his successor with a tough act to follow."

Record sales of BAR2 for Barenbrug

Steve Lawrence, Head Greenkeeper at The Suffolk Golf And Country Club, took delivery of the landmark 2000th bag of BAR 2 making it today’s most successful mixture on golf greens and Barenbrug UK's best selling. The significance of the occasion was reinforced by the presence of Michel Mulder, Managing Director of Barenbrug UK.

The supply of 2000 bags represents 50,000 kg of BAR 2 grass seed: enough to reseed at least 200,000 greens across the UK.
**Thank you 1**

During October I travelled more than 1400 miles on two separate visits to Aldwark Manor. I have been invited to attend the official opening of the Association’s new Headquarters by HRH The Duke of York. I felt that the day was a great success and it would be quite an achievement for all our staff for their efforts in making this outstanding run so well. We will look back in years to come with great pride.

My second visit was as one of the Toro Excellence in Greenkeeping finalists and, although I didn’t win the top prize, I found the whole experience very educational and rewarding.

I couldn’t believe the camaraderie shown by all the finalists and look forward to renewing friendships at this year's BTME.

I’d like to thank Toro for sponsoring the awards and to the judges Bob Elias and Graham Dale, from Toro and Lely, and to Walter Woods, who had to travel the length of the country to assess each finalist’s course. Not forgetting Ken Richardson and Sami for all their hard work in organising the awards.

Richard Whyman,
Bude, Cornwall

**Thank you 2**

On behalf of the Canadian participants, the Hayter Company, the CGA真的在October I want to tell everyone how much we enjoyed the friendships developed, the social events shared and the friendly, yet competitive spirit.

Canadian golfers, Sylvain Alarie, Mike Baden, Doug Meyer, President; Dean Biller, Vice President, along with myself and Past President, Pelino Scolaro, were able to attend a qualifying international event which was organised and funded by the Hayter Company. We acknowledge with gratitude Hayter's commitment to this event and we appreciate their efforts in making it such a great event for all of us. We also acknowledge the assistance and support provided by CGA, as representatives from the host country and at first try was what we can do to do.

Joe Paulin's letter rightly condemns writing in misleading generalities, (but writers in journals are always subjected to the risk of the strict limitations on words.) I share his view that greenkeeping is the art of applying science - echoing my own sentiments exactly.

However, I must take issue on the subject of 'Toro A-green Silencer' for the USGA Greens Section's specification for putting green construction, devised in 1960. Today it has been so regularly and drastically modified and the parameters have been so widened as to include almost everything (in an attempt to please everyone and avoid litigation) that in their own words it is no longer a specification, but a guide.

In line with the record, we should really refer to perched or suspended water table green construction, of which the USGA's is one version. The principle hinges on soil drainage physics - the essential point being to balance the retention of water (and nutrients) by the surface tension of the soil particles,against drainage dependent on the head of water. The finer the soil the deeper the root zone to achieve that drainage, but in any case there is a fixed and proven ratio between the average size of the particles in the three strata, (soil types in sand and root zone) of 1.8:1 to 1:10. Below or above this ratio, disaster is inevitable.

I have been building perched water table greens since the mid 60s, in blissful ignorance initially of the “USGA spec” of those days.

Joe maintains that excellent results can be achieved with most things provided all other management was correct. The accrual is on the most - and certainly some root zones in past disasters have been so bad that they could never be improved by good management, primarily because of excessive "lines".

I fully agree with Joe that the percentage of soluble fertilizer finding its way by drainage from greens to water courses, except in the case of frequent massive applications of NPK needed by sand-only greens, has been proven to be virtually nil. I need not stress that pure sand greens (an anachronism for desert conditions) are emphatically not "USGA specification".

Let's see some more healthy legislation on a head to head basis and in good humour. I suspect that this would be far more to your readers' liking than thinly disguised trade advertisements masquerading as articles.

May I take this opportunity to clarify my comments on the Forest of Arden article. First of all, the last thing in my mind was to imply any criticism of Raymond Hunter, who after all came first to Whitbread on my say-so at Goodwood, and who has been a staunch advocate of greenkeeping since he first learned it from my old friend Bill Lawson.

I can recall several occasions when I was consultant to the Group when I had to rebuke their hotel managers (including one long departed at Forest of Arden) for interference. "You don't tell your chef how to cook his greens so don't try and tell us how to run ours".

As for Steve Clement, the facts as known are at variance with his claims and if he did not mean it he should not have said it, but to say "the bunkers acted as swimming pools when the irrigation system was switched on" is unfair to the most knowledgeable greenkeepers - or it is not true. I have a card in my office which says "I know you believe you understand what you think you say, but I'm not sure you realise that what you hear is not what I meant". The written word is there for all to read.

What is irrefutable is that Raymond has produced excellent conditions over the years for both his employers and the Tour.

J. H Arthur
Budeleigh Salterton, East Devon

**Setting the record straight**

With reference to your October letters, may I comment without unnecessarily prolonging acrimonious debate.

Firstly to Ian Tomlinson. The Ghost grass syndrome has been known in (cereal crops too) for at least 50 years and the general consensus is that it is caused by a virus. Some have suggested nematodes because that's what we know as soil pests, so rather like 'Take All Patch, lie back and accept that the condition will cure itself. Pru is the chief victim. So try to swing the greens back to a better balance - easier said than done, but not impossible.

Joe Paulin's letter rightly condemns writing in misleading generalities, (but writers in journals are always subjected to the risk of the strict limitations on words.) I share his view that greenkeeping is the art of applying science - echoing my own sentiments exactly.

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Kim Blake, Course Manager
Fulford Heath GC, Wylam

**Letters**

Address your letters to the Editor, Greenkeeper International, BIGGA HOUSE, Aldwark, Aine, York Y061 1UF. You can also fax them to 01347 833801, or e-mail them to general@bigga.co.uk