MASTERS IN WATER AND WEATHER MANAGEMENT

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We have arrived at the time of the year when the “gongs” are handed out in the Association’s top competitions - the BIGGA Environment Award in association with Amazone and Rhône-Poulenc and the Toro Excellence in Greenkeeping and Toro Student of the Year Awards.

These competitions have grown in stature over the years to the extent that, outside of the wonderful prizes which go along with winning, the prestige value is quite incalculable.

For a student, even to reach the final of the Toro is a significant achievement and one bound to open the eyes of any prospective employer while the Excellence Award, which was also once seen as a great lift to a career, is now sought after by people who are already at the top of the tree.

It goes without saying that “BIGGA Environment Award Winner” is a badge any golf club in the country would be proud to wear.

I say these things because competitions are often seen as glorified back slapping exercises where winning comes because it happens to be your turn and not so much because an achievement has been judged to be greater than any other.

For example the Sports Personality of the Year is invariably the person who has been on the television most frequently - irrespective of achievement or indeed, personality and who happens to perform in a viewer friendly sport - usually motor racing, athletics or tennis. Put your money on Tim Henman this year!

Think of the Oscars, an old favourite who hasn’t picked up one of the statuettes before is usually the favourite ahead of the young star who produces a stunning performance in a superlative budget film.

It is a charge to which some Awards are open but we believe that the intensity and quality of the judging in all three of our competitions takes away the accusation of subjectivity and ensures that the winner is fully deserving of the prize.

In the Environment Competition this takes the form of written submissions from each of the clubs and, in the case of the finalists, two visits from Bob Taylor, the STRI Ecologist and one from a senior representative of English Nature.

In the Excellence Award those clubs entered receive a visit from a respected local greenkeeper and then, if successful Walter Woods, the Association’s first Chairman and a man respected the world over, visits the finalists before they travel to York for the final interview before a panel of industry and Association experts. Only then will the winner be identified. Students also have to come through a rigorous process starting with their own college before a final interview singles out the winner.

You can be sure that the winners of our three main competitions will be out of the top drawer and that the successors to Ian McMillan (Toro Excellence), Steven Nixon (Toro Student) and Hankley Common with the ubiquitous Ian McMillan (BIGGA Environment Award) will reap the benefits of having entered.

You never know, I could be writing about your success next October.
For more than two years the Rain Bird Maxi Nimbus computer control system has been the only Windows operated system for decoders and satellites in Europe.

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A future course is under development to include Farnham GC, Cavisham GC, Royal St Georges, Southport and Ainsdale, Royal Cinque Ports, Richmond GC, Ballybunion (New) and Woburn (New) due for installation this year.

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Aldwark Manor Hotel and Country Club, home of BIGGA’s new... and old headquarters, has taken delivery of a new stableful of Ransomes/Textron machinery.

The investment was made by the new owner of Aldwark Manor, Newcastle-based businessman Brad Holbrook, who is keen to forge close relationships with his sitting tenants, BIGGA and the Greenskeepers’ Training Committee.

"Initially I didn’t know who BIGGA were but when I learned of their importance in the industry I wanted them to be here as long as I am, which is for the long run," explained Brad.

"Now that BIGGA have built their own headquarters we’ll be promoting ourselves as Aldwark Manor Hotel Golf and Country Club - the home of BIGGA." Head Greenskeeper Richard Gamble was at the heart of the decision to purchase the Ransomes machinery.

"Ransomes put a lot in so when Brad asked for my input regarding machinery there was no question in my mind it had to be Ransomes," explained Richard.

"I explained what I wanted and the reasons why and got everything wanted," said Richard.

The new Ransomes-Textron machinery was supplied by Henton & Chattell of Nottingham and includes one Ransomes CT 325 compact tractor; one Ransomes CT 445 compact tractor; one Ransomes CT 333 dedicated hydrostatic tractor with cruise control; one Cushman three wheel truckster; one Ransomes Fairway 305 mower; one Ransomes Greensplex 160 Diesel; two Ransomes F-Plex 185; one trailed Ransomes Magga gang mower and a GA30 top dresser.

Above: Peter Wilson shows the Mayor, Mr Hamil Clarke, a Textron-Jacobsen ride-on mower outside the Ipswich headquarters.

A new name over the door

The Ransomes factory at Ipswich now has a new name over it. Ransomes was acquired in January by Textron, and joined with Jacobsen, Textron’s American producer of golf course machinery to form Textron Turf Care and Specialty Products. The Mayor of Ipswich, Mr Hamil Clarke, unveiled a plaque to mark the launching of the new name on the factory.

The Ransomes and Jacobsen business, which also includes the Cushman and Ryan brands, has a combined world-wide turnover of $650 million, will have its head office at Ipswich.

Ipswich will also be the manufacturing and central distribution point for the whole of Europe. Significant investment has already been made at the Europark site to gear up the company to meet the new needs of the Group.

This has involved new Cardex parts dispensing systems being installed and a large mezzanine floor being built for product storage to cope with the enlarged distribution aspect of the business. The main factory area has been reorganised to create additional space so that some of the Jacobsen product for the European market can be built at Ipswich.

"Ransomes and Jacobsen both have a proud history and an excellent reputation in the market, and we will continue to sell our products under these brands. Although we are now part of a large multi-industry company we will continue to stay very close to our customers and be a company that is easy to do business with," said Peter Wilson, President of Textron Turf Care and Specialty Products.

Ransomes and Jacobsen are now the world’s largest supplier of turf care equipment for the local authority and golf course market sectors and also supply people and burden carriers for a wide range of industrial applications.

The company is also responsible for the distribution of golf cars throughout Europe, which are produced by their sister company E-Z-GO.

Aldwark Manor invest in Textron

Aldwark Manor

On the move!

The new address for the British and International Golf Greenskeepers Association is BIGGA HOUSE, Aldwark, Alne, York YO61 1UF.

Telephone: 01347 833800
Fax: 01347 833801
E-mail: bigga@btinternet.com
Internet: www.bigga.org.uk

Robin makes the grade

The benefit of the greenskeeper assessment programme has been highlighted again with the success of Robin Evans, an assistant at Whitby GC, who has passed his NVQ Level 2 after working closely with his assessor, Andrew Boyd, Head Greenskeeper at Bridlington GC.

After a two year period which involved between 30 and 40 meetings between 32 year-old Robin and Andrew he received notification from the assessment panel body that he had attained level 2.

"Everyone is delighted including myself," explained Andrew.

"Robin is like a dog with three tails with his own Head Greenskeeper, Ian Lavelle's comment was that 'Robin is now a man we never knew we had' such has been the motivation and enthusiasm with which Robin now works.”

Amenity Tech on the move

Amenity Technology has relocated to larger premises which offer better meeting facilities and a far larger warehousing capacity. The move coincides with the appointment of Amenity Technology as the exclusive European distributor of the Sustane fertiliser range and will allow better stocking capabilities of both the Sustane and the Andersons. The new address and contact numbers are Amenity Technology, Products Ltd, 3 Askewright Rd, Reading, Berks, RG2 0LU, Tel: 0118 931 1111.

Melvyn joins Green Pride

Melvyn Guy has joined Green Pride, the Lincoln-based company specialising in grass related products to the sportsturf and landscaping industries.

Melvyn is well known in the golf course industry and brings to Green Pride a wealth of experience in sands, rootzones and top dressings to add to their existing ranges of seeds, fertilisers and chemicals.

He will be covering the Yorkshire and North Lincolnshire area.
Norrie Whytock Trophy goes West

The Scottish Inter Section Tournament for the Norrie Whytock Memorial Trophy was played at Leven Links GC on one of the five best days of the summer. The five Sections had their top players out for the challenge of winning the Trophy, which was being played for the third time, and the North Section were hoping to maintain their monopoly of it.

The tournament is run with teams of four playing Stableford with the three best scores counting. However at the end of the day two teams were locked together on 93 points and could not be separated despite various attempts so for the first time the two scores not used were taken into account. This resulted in the West Section taking the Trophy by two points from the East Section. The difference may have been accounted for by the fact that the fourth member of the West team played all 18 holes while the fourth of the East packed in after 16 because he said he was playing badly.

Many thanks to tournament sponsors, Rhone Poulenc; organisers, McKenzie Munro, Rhone Poulenc's Scottish Area Sales Manager, Peter Boyd, and Andy O'Hara and his staff.

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A tribute to Jimmy Neilson

A retirement dinner was held recently at Kingsknowe Golf Club to celebrate the greenkeeping career of Jimmy Neilson, the Scottish Regional Chairman. To us in the East of Scotland Jimmy has and always will be a legend.

Jimmy is by nature, and you might find this hard to believe, a shy person but give him a few brandies and American and he is great company.

He began his affliction with greenkeeping at Swanson Golf Club after serving many years as an agricultural mechanic with Alexander’s, local the Ford Dealer. He then made his move to Murrayfield Golf Club and spent the rest of his career there.

To mention all of the things which have made Jimmy a legend would be impossible. Jimmy was a stalwart in the old SIGGA Brigade and has been a front line soldier for greenkeepers rights and better conditions of employment. Education has always been top of Jimmy’s agenda - the most important thing in making the greenkeeping profession a highly recognised and respected trade.

Jimmy has made a lot of friends on both sides of the Atlantic and in Europe in all aspects and corners of our trade.

Kubota Golf Club Challenge Finalists

The 15 golf clubs which will compete in the final of the revamped Kubota Golf Club Challenge which will be played at The National Golf Centre at Woodhall Spa has been confirmed.

A total of 480 golf clubs from throughout the UK set out of the course to the final, teams of the Club Secretary and the Head Greenkeeper playing head to head matches, with five rounds required to set up the final which is due to be played at the beginning of this month.

"It was decided that a new format was needed which would directly involve golf club secretaries and Head Greenkeepers playing together as a team, furthering Kubota's long and close relationship with their respective Association's," said Tom Barnes, Kubota's Marketing Manager.

**Finalists**
- Bonar Bridge & Ardgay GC - H. Sutherland & J. Evans
- Carlake GC - M. D. Black and A. Colquhoun
- Chippenham GC - D. Maddison & C. Sealey
- Clayton GC - D. Smith & R. Smith
- Dinton Park GC - A. R. Lynd & C. Bland
- Fynn Valley GC - T. Tyrell & N. Hickford
- Haverfordwest GC - J. Solly & A. Roach
- Liphook GC - B. Morgan & D. Murdoch
- Lullingstone Park PC - B.M.
- New North Manchester GC - D. Parkinson & J. Cumminsley
- Pines Golf Centre - B. Gray & D. Gray
- Ramsdale Park Golf Centre - B. Jenkins & M. Smith
- Rawdon GC - S. Clark & A. Armitage
- Welshpool GC - D. Lewis & T. Horsan

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I would like to apologise to anyone who did not get an invite to the dinner but we could have filled a hall ten times the size. But finally to Jimmy. Have a long and happy retirement. You are, and you have been, a credit and inspiration to us all.
Steve Dixon, East Section Secretary
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Above: Just a few of the many guests at the party Right: Jimmy in fine form

Turfmech's Tornado

In the August edition Greenkeeper International the feature of leaf blowers and clearers omitted several types of machinery, some of which are produced by Turfmech Machinery.

Among these are the Tornado blowers, the TM5 High-lift vacuum collector and the TurfVAC TM11 vacuum collector.

The Tornado Blower is available in versions suitable for mounting on tractors or on ride-on front mowers in place of the cutter deck. It produces a 150mhp blast of air to blow leaves and debris rapidly and effectively into rows.

The TM5 High-lift vacuum is a high capacity, high-tip vacuum collector for use behind smaller tractors - 13hp plus. It has a full-width suction head with a full-width powered agitation brush and a 2.2 metre wide suction head with a full-width powered agitation brush and a 2.2 m high unloading capability. The TurfVAC TM11 requires a tractor of 13hp plus and has a load volume of 11,000 litres. Trailered and powered, it is ideal for a 2m, 2.2m and 2.5 m wide suction heads.

For further information: Tel: 01889 271509.

Celtic Manor hosts new Welsh event

The first of playing of a new competition for the South Wales Section took place at Celtic Manor on August 27.

Club teams, comprising Course Manager, Assistant, Club Captain, Club Secretary and Chairman of Green, played for prizes, donated by Scotts, with the winning club enjoying the sweet smell of success thanks to a team of three points plus.

Played out in tremendous weather the 20 teams faced up the daunting task of the magnificently conditioned Roman Road Course which had been brought to a peak by Course Manager Jim McKenzie, Russell Anderson and the rest of the staff.

Celtic Manor, who granted courtesy of the course, have agreed to host the event next year on August 25 when there will be a maximum of 30 teams.


Among these are the Tornado Blower available in versions suitable for mounting on tractors or on ride-on front mowers. It produces a 150mhp blast of air to blow leaves and debris rapidly and effectively into rows.

Greenkeeper International would like to apologise to Woodbury Park GC for the appearance of a bogus photograph in the article on the club in September’s edition. The photograph, and accompanying caption gave the impression that Woodbury Park used Ransomes equipment while in fact it is another Textron brand, Jacobsen, which Woodbury uses. Greenkeeper International is happy to put the record straight.

Royal Inverdedit GC...

by Tony Husband

Can I have a word... look. I know your new to the job.

but that new bunker we asked You to build

It's not quite what we had in mind.
Rigby Taylor has expanded its specialist technical sales team in Scotland with the appointment of David Morrison as Brand Manager for the company’s Mascot range of turf care products in Scotland.

Having worked for over 30 years in the amenity sector in Scotland, David is well known and his appointment will utilise his wealth of knowledge and experience.

Based at Newbridge, Mr Morrison will also have responsibility for direct sales in the central, Tayside, Grampian and the Highlands region to provide greater support for Rigby Taylor’s existing customers. He will deal directly with local authorities, landscapers and contractors.

David worked for 10 years as Area Sales Manager with ICI/Zeneca and more recently with Scotts Miracle. In his new role, he will be responsible for new product launches throughout Scotland.

Turner sketches out winning round

Sunningdale Course Manager, Brian Turner, put his local knowledge to good use during The Gerald Micklem Cup at the famous Berkshire course.

While former Amateur Champion and Walker Cup player, Gary Wolstenholme, was winning the main prize with two rounds of 68, Brian won the Over 50’s prize.

Brian has been at the club since 1996 and is a member of Sunningdale Artisans Golf Club.

Right: Brian is pictured receiving his prize from Sunningdale Captain, Christopher Needham.

Tickets are still available for the Golf and the Environment Conference to be held at Askham Bryan College, York on October 21 - 23.

The Conference, which is to be opened officially by HRH The Duke of York has assembled a top quality list of speakers for the three days and will cover a wide range of environmental related issues.

Programme highlights.

Wednesday, Session One

- Official Opening by HRH The Duke of York
- Golf Courses - Their Amenity and Environmental Impact - Dr Roger Bennett
- Securing Planning Permission - Avoiding the Bunkers - Mr D.M. Rolison
- Wildlife of the Golf Course - Is Management Necessary - Dr. Gordon McKillop

Thursday - Session 2

- Is Golf Committed to Green - David Stubbs
- Golf Course Management - An Ecological Perspective - Bob Taylor
- The Use of Pesticides on Golf Courses - David Garthwaite

Session 3

- The Scottish Golf Course Wildlife Initiative - Jonathan Smith
- Golf Environmental Management. Gain of Pain - Rod Baker
- Golf and Landscape - Jeremy Pern

Friday - Session 4

- Keynote - Dr Keith Duff
- The Latest Developments in cultivating turf production and turfgrass systems - Derek Edwards
- The Rudding Experience - Mark Mackness
- Plenary Session led by Dr Roger Bennett

Ticket Information can be obtained from Kate Ecklett, at Askham Bryan College Tel: 01904 772277.

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