August Around the Green. While writing about Effingham Golf Club we can congratulate Peter Broadbent and his lovely wife Karen on the birth of their fourth child Alfie who weighed in at 9 lbs and in Karen’s own words “at that size they make your eyes water!”

Another Golf day that I’m sure will produce a large attendance is the McMillian Tankard which will be played for on 6 August. If you have not yet got an entry form then please don’t hesitate to contact me on 01474 879200.

Brian Willmott.

Kent

Our first golf event was held on 24 May at Churt Hills GC and this was the Section qualifier for the National Championship. Before I list the results I would like to say a big thank you to all of the trade companies who sponsor these events and make it all possible and secondly to thank Chart Hills GC for the courtesy of the course and the excellent meal which was provided. Also I’d like to personally thank Paul Hobden and his staff for the excellent condition of the course which I know they all worked very hard to achieve.

The results were as follows: Best Nett, N. Gillem. Best Gross, D. Kelso, 2. Nett, P. Copsey who also won the nearest to pin competition. 2nd Gross, J. Fulberger, 3. Nett, G. Dehnam, 3. Gross, J. Nolloth, 4. Nett, K. Diamond and the trade guest was G. Ogley. There was an excellent turn out of 58 entrants, which was very good to see and it was a very enjoyable day, especially as the weather held out.

Now I’m afraid I’ve got some very sad news as Trevor Hindmarsh, our Chairman, has been taken seriously ill with some form of cancer of the blood. So from everyone who knows you, I’d like to send you our best regards and wish you a speedy recovery.

Lastly I’d like to know how many people would be interested in a golfing card which will be put out at the end of the summer. The destination is unknown but if anyone is interested or has any suggestions, then contact me and leave your name, number and any preference of a venue.

Also if anybody has any news or comments for the magazine, then please don’t hesitate to contact me on 01474 879200.

Kneale Diamond

Devon & Cornwall

The Section would like to take this opportunity to thank PFIeg Ltd for their generous sponsorship of the fixing cards over the last two years. Many years ago the section committee decided that the sponsorship of our fixture cards should be on a two year basis to allow all companies the chance to sponsor. It is with great pleasure that I can announce that Rigby Taylor has kindly agreed to take on the sponsorship of these cards for the next two years.

The Section would like to congratulate Kerran Daly on his appointment as Course Manager at the Gog Magog Golf Club. Kerran has been a great ambassador for the greenskeeper profession within the South West Region. His input on the Regional and National Boards will be missed. I recall a wet February day in 1992 at Bighbury Golf Club when Kerran presented his afternoon educational talk on computers. Kerran had spent some time preparing his overhead transparencies for his talk only to have a leak in the roof land directly onto them causing the ink to run. Kerran completed his talk like a true professional.

Best wishes Kerran from all your friends and we look forward to seeing you at Harrogate next year.

I finish this month’s report on a sad note after hearing that a fellow Head Greenkeeper within our Section has felt it necessary to resign from his position after extreme pressures put on him by his committee, including cutting the greens through the winter at an extremely low height of cut. We wish him well for the future.

Richard Whyman.

South Wales

Our thanks to Southendown Golf Club and to Gary Johnstone and his staff for yet another enjoyable event for our spring tournament. Thanks to the sponsors: Softspikes, Spicest, and Avoncor. Thanks also to the caterers, Jan Williams and Vice Captain Geraint Davies.


The best Nett and Gross scores of the day - Steven Lloyd and Gary Johnstone both qualified for the Charterhouse/Scots sponsored National Championships to be held at Caerleon Park from the 3rd - 5th October.

Unfortunately the match BIGGA versus Pencoe College was cancelled on 2 June but hopefully will be re-scheduled for another day.

On the 17 August BIGGA versus the South Wales PGA will take place at St. Mellons GC. Cardinal.

Richard Hatcher - 01636 742761

South West

Tall Pines Golf Club was the venue for the Greenkeeper Amateur event which was held on May 18. Despite conditions being rather wet underfoot, the course was still playable even though a number of local courses were forced to shut.

The erratic weather conditions also led to some erratic driving on the course, not so much in the golfing sense of the word but more the buggy driving. An unnamed source has informed me that Duncan from Chippenden GC was seen "bombing" down a hill at the wheel of a buggy in Formula 1 style.

Unfortunately he didn’t notice a large hole looming ahead of him until the last split second. Somehow he performed an incredible swerving manoeuvre and just avoided disaster. However, his rolling partner and passenger Keith Milton was not so lucky. Keith was catapulted out of the side of the buggy and was seen tumbling out of control to the bottom of the hill. Fortunately he was first onto the scene but was unable to offer first aid because he was still wetting himself with laughter.

Anyway the result of the competition was as follows: 1. J. Cooper & J. Hennes, 44 points; 2. C. Tezer & G. Fox, 40 points; 3. N. Kelson & C. Ashworth, 39 points. Thanks go to Mary Waterman and the rest of the greenskeeping staff for all their hard work in getting the course into great condition.

The next event is the Summer Tournament at Lilley Brook GC on July 22. This will also be the Section qualifier to see who will gain a place for the National Championship at Caerleon Park in October, so get your name down for that.

There is still no news on the disappearance of the Region’s team T-shirts. However, brand new shirts have arrived which have been sponsored by Rolawn.

Richard Whyman.

Kneale Diamond

South Wales

The Articulator features four individual cutting blades on its four-wheel drive, 25" wide area, contouring mower that’s well suited to all types of terrain. Add headlights for night driving. An unnamed source has informed me that Duncan from Chippenden GC was seen “bombing” down a hill at the wheel of a buggy in Formula 1 style.

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Richard Whyman.
Turning to education and training. The one day first aid courses being held at Cumberwell Park on August 17 is almost full. Those of you that have asked to do the course should have received a booking form, which should be returned to me. Other courses taking place include a PA1 on September 22 and a PA6 on October 13. I hope to run a number of other courses shortly including abrasive wheel and fire safety. If you want any more information, please contact me on 01249 783382.

Paul Cunningham.

**South Coast**

Our Spring Tournament was held at Canford Magna Golf Club on 4 May. The results were as follows. Division One: 1. (Huxley Shield) Simon Ridley; 2. Mark Grogan; 3. Darren Miller. Division Two: 1. (Avoncrop Trophy) James Kryzanowski; 2. Ian Noble; 3. Dave Thompson. Division Three: 1. (Roffey Cup) Alan Rideout; 2. Sid Cutler; 3. Don Friend.

The Lowest Gross Score was Mark Grogan and the Lowest Nett was Simon Ridley. Both Mark and Simon go forward to the Charterhouse/Scotts National Tournament. Well done to all those who took part and congratulations to all the winners.

We would like to thank the owners of Canford Magna for allowing us the courtesy of their superb golf courses. Also to Pete Level and his staff who presented the courses in such pristine condition. Thanks to the bar and catering staff who kept us well fed and watered. Last but not least, thank you to our sponsors for the day. They were Avoncrop, Roffeys and Huxleys. They provided us with the prizes and trophies. We are very grateful to you all. Lastly, thank you to all of you who participated in the Tournament.

Just a reminder for our Summer Tournament at Rowlands Castle on 22 July. All details were in the June magazine. For those of you who have not yet got your entries in, get them in to Fred as soon as possible.

We had a very happy event on the 14 May. Fred Deamen's wife, Susan, gave birth to a baby boy, Luke Bernard Olde. I hope I have got those names right Fred. Mother and son are doing well. As far as I know, father isn't doing too bad either. Congratulations to you both. What a nice way to end July's report.

Ken Lodge.

**North East**

Sorry for nothing in last month's issue, but I had nothing to write about. So come on, anyone who has any news or has anything they think deserves a mention, give me a ring 01574 276001. It has been a very busy time for us here at the moment with the opening of our new Golf Course, which is called The Golf Club at Stakis Park. We expect this to change any day now as we have been taken over by the Hilton Group.

We would like to wish Royal Portrush and their staff all the best for the staging of the up-coming of the seniors. Finally, Maserelme GC has recently signed a deal and has taken delivery of £110,000 Toro machinery kit.

Eamonn Farrell.

**South East**

The Section would like to pass on its best wishes to Tommy Bradshaw on his retirement after many years service at Malone Golf Club. Welcoming new members to the South East Section, joining this month are: Ian Harrison, Head Greenkeeper at Bangor GC and Paul Lappin, Assistant Head, also at Bangor GC. Also joining as Associate Member is Joseph Paulin from Golden Eagle Agronomy.

Our Summer golf event will be held at Bangor GC on Thursday 8 July. Tee-off at 2.30 pm and we would welcome all members to attend.

Finally, I would like to congratulate Ken Henderson, Allen Park GC, and Alison Sloan, Ballymena GC, on being selected to the Greenkeeper support team for the Open Championship at Carnoustie GC. Well done.

Jonathan McCabe.
Congratulations to all the qualifiers so far in the Charterhouse/Scotts National Championship for the BIGGA Challenge Trophy.

Keep those results coming in, and we'll highlight the winners every month.

Qualifiers to date...

The following members have so far won places in the Charterhouse/Scotts National Golf Championship at Carden Park, October 3-5

William McMeikan  Tony French
Keith McCartney  Ross Wilson
Shaun McMillan  Simon Clark
Kenneth Mail  Mark Whittle
Craig Pennyquick  Brian Turner
Gareth Rogers  Duncan Kelso
Scott Williams  Neil Gilham
Mike Wilson  George Barr
George Barr  Tony Bremer
Tony Bremer  Larry Eden
Mike Wilson  Ian Simple
Kenneth Mail  Nicholas Brewster
Kenneth Rutherford  Terry Moreton
Richard Castle  Steve Cox
Michael Nolan  Chris Ward
Dave Collins  Mark Grogan
Stephen Tolley  Simon Ridland
Roger Bielby  Alan Gawman
John Humphreys  Anthony James
Robert Lewis  Gary Johnstone
Robert Lewis  Steven Lloyd
Dave Leatherland  Alison Sloan
Andrew Wood  Nick Webber
Paul Neve  Joel Crawford
Andrew Lomas  Eamonn Crawford
Graeme Macdonald  

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The introduction of vocational qualifications into industries, has caused the colleges to re-think their training policies and the GTC will be issuing guidelines for the golf greenkeeping industry as to which colleges employers and their staff should be supporting. Anyone with a query regarding greenkeeper training should contact the Greenkeepers Training Committee at Aldwark Manor, Aldwark, Ayle, York YO61 1UF. Tel: 01347 838640.
Craft. Supervisory and elmwood

BERKSHIRE COLLEGE Hall Place, Burchett's Green, Maidheaden, Berkshire, SL6 6QR. Tel: 01628 824444 Fax: 01628 824095

Currently GTC approved for training courses up to Craft level only. Full-time courses: BTEC First & National Diploma. Part-time courses: GTC Manual — NVQ2 and 3 Amenity, Sports Turf (day & block release); Short courses: FEPA, Horticultural Machinery, Chainsaws, Greenkeeping for Golfers.

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Currently GTC approved at Regional Training Centres, offering courses at Craft, Supervisory and Management levels.

Currently GTC approved for training courses up to Supervisory level.

Pending GTC approval for all courses.

Currently GTC approved for training courses up to Craft level only.

CURRENTLY GTC approved for training courses up to Craft level only.

Please note that all the college details published in this guide were supplied by the colleges themselves. Greenkeeper International takes no responsibility for accuracy of information provided. Contact the college directly for prospective courses & comprehensive information.

A GUIDE TO THE COLLEGES AND COURSES AVAILABLE

Please note that all the college details published in this guide were supplied by the colleges themselves. Greenkeeper International takes no responsibility for accuracy of information provided. Contact the college directly for prospective courses & comprehensive information.

OAKLANDS COLLEGE Oaklands Campus, Hatfield Road, St Albans, Herts AL4 0JA. Contact Ian Merrick. Tel: 01727 737000 Fax: 01727 737752. Full-time courses: National Certificate in Greenkeeping and Sports Turf Management. Part-Time courses: leading to NVQ Level 2 Greenkeeping, Modern Apprenticeships. Evening courses: leading to NVQ Levels 3 and 4. Short courses: Pesticide, Chainsaw, Greenkeeper Mechanics.

BERKSHIRE COLLEGE Hall Place, Burchett's Green, Maidheaden, Berkshire, SL6 6QR. Tel: 01628 824444 Fax: 01628 824095


*Regional Centre for Leisure and Land based Industries & Professions*


WRITE COLLEGE, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 3HR. Tel: 01245 424200 Fax: 01245 424956 SPORTSTURF PROGRAMMES (Contact - Stewart Brown) NVQ Level 2 - Sportsturf. 100% of Greenkeeping (GTC) or Groundsmanship (IOG) NVQ Level 3 - Sportsturf Maintenance. NVQ Level 4 - Amenity Horticulture. HNC - Horticulture Science. HND - Sportsturf and Golf Course Management. Other Programme: First Diploma. National Certificate. National Diploma (with Sportsturf Option). BSc (Hons) Horticulture. BSc (Hons) Landscape and Amenity Management. MSc Landscape and Amenity Management. NVQ 2 and 3 Service Engineering. FEPA. Chainsaw. Tractor Driving..

EALING TERTIARY COLLEGE - Norwood Hall School of Horticulture, Norwood Green, Southall, Middlesex UB2 4LA. Contact Declan Gallagher Tel: 0181 231 6225 Fax: 0181 571 9479. E-mail: declan.gallagher@ealingcoll.ac.uk. Full Time courses National Certificate Sports Ground Management. National Diploma in Sports Ground Management. Part Time courses NVQ Levels 2 & 3 Sports Turf Management and Maintenance; IOG Intermediate and National Diploma in Turfculture. FEPA PA1, PA2a, PA4a. In this guide were supplied by the colleges themselves. Greenkeeper International takes no responsibility for accuracy of information provided. Contact the college directly for prospective courses & comprehensive information.


GOSTA TRAINING LTD Unit 2B, Clydeview Centre, 45 Finniston Street, Glasgow G3 8JJ. Contact Chris Bothwell. Tel: 0141 248 2772 Fax: 0141 248 2453. sec II in Amenity Horticulture will all options including Greenkeeping and GTC Training Manual. Available daily/ Block release from November - February. Evening classes also available. Short courses including pesticide training, noise assessment, chainsaw and health & safety courses. SVQ III in maintaining sportsturf - Mix of block and day release. SVQ IV in Amenity Horticulture available from Winter 1998.

ELMWOOD COLLEGE Cupir. Fife KY15 4JB. Contact Carol Barthwick. Tel:01334 658910. Fax: 01334 658918. Craft Level courses. Full-time National Certificate in Golf Course Management (as above) & the GTC Training Manual. Six week specialist modular programme (January/February), including Golf Course Construction, Pesticide Application and Plant Protection Procedures. SVQ Level III Block Release and SVQ Level IV coming soon. HNC/HND Golf Course Management available as full-time, block/day release and distance learning. FEPA, COSHH and Health & Safety short courses also.

OATRIDGE AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE, Broxburn, West Lothian, Near Edinburgh, EH52 6HN. Contact Steve Miller - Tel: 01506 853878 Fax: 01506 853373. E-mail: OATRIDGE_AGRICULTURAL_COLLEGE@EDU.UK. NVQs: National Certificate in Golf Course Management and Certificate in Greenkeeping. Block and day release SVQ Level II and Level III (GTC and IOG manuals) and Modern Apprenticeship. SVQ's in Groundcare Machinery. Short Courses: FEPA, Chainsaw, Forklift, etc.

GREENMOUNT COLLEGE Greenmount Campus of Agriculture and Horticulture, Ayrshire, BT41 4PU. Contact Brian Corr. Tel: 01849 420668. Day release courses leading to (a) GTC Certificate/NVQ Level II Greenkeeping and Sportsturf (b) GTC Certificate/NVQ Level III Golf Course Supervision.

TEAGASC COLLEGE Teagasc College of Amenity Horticulture, National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin, Dublin 9. Contact Pat Suthe. Tel: 00353 8374 388. Block release courses in greenkeeping providing Level III Certificates by the National Council of Vocational Awards. Further Education Programme also available.
The big red machines of BIGGA Golden Key Supporter Toro are a common sight on golf courses all over the world but, as Scott MacCallum found out, the talents that have to be combined to produce them are anything but common.

The Toro empire - I wonder where we got that line from," said Barry Beckett, the ex-pat Brit who is Toro's Worldwide Marketing Manager. "But it's true. 24 hours a day someone is using Toro product. When we ask if it's being used in the Far East or in Europe, he said before explaining about the inherent difficulties this causes but which have been eased by advance of the Internet.

"If someone somewhere in the world is having a problem we have 'Frequently Asked Questions' on our Website and all the users have to do is click on the appropriate national flag and the information appears in their own language." It is that sort of attention to detail and depth of thinking that has ensured Toro's name is so frequently to be seen in golf course maintenance facilities across the world.

The complications of dealing in a universal market are emphasised by Barry when he talks about providing products on a worldwide basis.

"There are different regulations in place in different countries so that means standardisation is difficult. Also the Japanese for example tend to be a different shape from, for example, the Germans so seats have to be different sizes and set differently to take account of this. Everything has to be produced in different languages from on-board instructions to the operator manuals." Toro started out by making agricultural tractors to pull ploughs in Minneapolis in 1914, before being recruited to produce munitions for the first world war.

"In 1922 we were approached by a local Golf Course Superintendent who had still been using horses to pull his gang mowers but who thought it might be possible to hook his mowers to one of our tractors. They tried it and it worked and from those humble beginnings we were launched into the golf business," said Barry.

"In the mid 1960s Toro took the significant step in acquiring an irrigation company, and the product lines have increased markedly since then, through in-house development and as well as acquisition, to the extent that Toro is so comfortable that it is the one-stop shop for every potential need outside of the clubhouse building the phrase 'Total Solutions' is the Toro mantra. This covers fine turf products and services such as irrigation equipment, reel and rotary mowers, utility vehicle, sprayers, consumer and contractor equipment, site management software, infra-red grass diagnostic services...; the list is ever growing. Indeed one of the latest additions to the stable is Multicore, whose products are currently being integrated into the Toro family.

"We are always thinking five to ten years ahead. You can't jump over a high bar from a standing start. You have to take a run up," said Barry. "It's not always a smooth path. Things go wrong, the industry changes, competitors do different things but we know this is the only way to go because you can't do everything at once, you have to plan in stages.

"The list of things you want to do is always longer than what you can do. With people, time and money you can do anything but there isn't enough of all of them. Quite often it isn't the money part which comes up short it's the people and the time." Toro has built up an exceptionally close relationship with the distributor in each of its major markets and
in the UK it is Lely (UK) Ltd. “We have been with Lely for about 16 years now and we have done well in the UK because of Lely’s commitment to building the business. In fact the average length of the relationship of Toro with each of its European distributors is 27 years and in the case of Switzerland it is 32 years.

Lely and Toro are in touch at least once a day, machines, and the care that email that communication has increased.

“Wherever I am in the world I can attach spreadsheets and send and receive information from Toro from Dale or Pete Mansfield. Electronic communications have really helped us a lot in terms of being able to keep on top of business. We have video conferencing facilities which allow us to get a lot of people in the room at this end and the same at the other end and we can get a lot of work done quickly as a group.”

The main manufacturing base for the commercial market is 180 miles from Bloomington in Tomah, Wisconsin, where all the familiar products are assembled including the Sidewinder and the Dingo which were launched last year.

The Tomah factory has a staff of around 600, the majority of the assembly workers being women who appreciate the nine month working year with the summer holidays off.

“We wind down in June and start up again in September and during the down time we clean the entire plant,” explained Plant General Manager, Don Yahnke, a man whose pride in his factory shines as brightly as a spanking new red machine which has just emerged from the 15 stage paint process.

At its peak there are several production lines working at any one time but such is the sophistication of modern manufacturing is put into their assembly, the number produced per day is surprisingly low.

“We can make 13 workmen a day; seven Fairways, 6000 series; 22 Sidewinders and the same number of Dingos,” explained Don, and when you consider such output is to service the entire globe you can appreciate the reasons behind the occasions when there might be a delay before a dealer can get one to you.

With such a large company it would be easy to lose the personal touch and in that regard Toro works hard to ensure that its distributors and dealers work to the same high standards.

“We want customers to appreciate that when they deal with Toro there is an expectation of what they are going to receive in terms of parts and general support,” said Barry.

“Anyone can sell a piece of machinery to a golf course but it is when it goes wrong that the acid test is applied. Where is the parts back-up? Where is the technical back-up? Who do you call to help figure it out? Where do you get an operator trained? It is the after sales service and support that is the key to the second and third purchase.”

“You've got to get the people who have purchased product once or twice to buy again next year, and in five...ten years time. If you have a bad experience you're more likely to try one of the other companies next time.”

To ensure that doesn't happen Toro has people who travel the world checking the standards of distributors and dealers.

“They arrive at a distributor and say they are going to do an inventory or they might ask what the part's fill rate is. Or they might give an order for ten parts and see what they can supply off the shelf. We have a criteria that they have to meet. If they are bad they can be literally put under notice and told that if they want to keep the Toro franchise they must start investing in whatever is needed to put it right.”

That's not to say that no-one at Toro ever puts a foot wrong. “We're not perfect. We're a people orientated business and someone will press the wrong button or insert the wrong number on a part's order. It's human error but how you recover the situation is the key.”

So looking down the line what can the BIGGA member expect from Toro.

Director of Public Relations, Don St Dennis, believes the greenkeeper of tomorrow will be tapping into satellite technology but is aware of the need for cost effectiveness.

“Satellite global positioning is now being used in golf carts to speed up play etc. We can share that same technology and map out the course for spraying and chemical applications so that they can be more cost effective and environmentally sound. People will be able to keep detailed computer records of what was applied, what the wind speed was at the time etc so when the inspectors visit all the information can be supplied at the touch of a button.”

Having said all that the size of the fine turf industry is small and that puts limitations on what can be achieved.

“Our industry is relatively small in the scheme of things and a lot of development of the new technology and materials comes from the automotive business and the people who are developing new plastics and polymers. We tend to piggy back on them.

“We could produce the world's greatest lawn mower with ten computers on it, satellite navigation etc but it would cost half a million so whose going to buy it. You have to wait for other industries to do the ground breaking development first - remember how expensive the first computers were.”

So there you have it. So the next time you hear about the latest new product released by The Toro Company you'll have a better idea of the immense work that goes into it and be more inclined to say "Wow!"
This month, Greenkeeper International's bi-monthly series featuring Course Managers and Head Greenkeepers from every Region profiles Competition Preparation

### Competition Preparation

Compiled by Malcolm Huntington MBE

1. What is the biggest event you have to prepare for each year - or have prepared for?

**Name: David Gower**  
**Course:** The Oxfordshire  
**Region:** Midland  
**Course Type:** Parkland  
**Number of Holes:** 18  
**Staff:** 12 summer, eight winter

The Benson and Hedges International Open each May. We also hosted a regional round of the Anderson Consulting World event for two years and we have also had the English Open Ladies' Championship.

**Name: Ivor Scoones**  
**Course:** Long Ashton GC  
**Region:** South West and South Wales  
**Course Type:** Heathland and parkland  
**Number of Holes:** 18  
**Staff:** Course Manager plus five

The Martini in 1967 when the joint winners were Peter Alliss and Bill Large. We have had the Carris event, the Coca Cola young professionals and the national girls championship.

**Name: Robert Patterson**  
**Course:** Royal Aberdeen  
**Region:** Scottish  
**Course Type:** Links  
**Number of Holes:** 36  
**Staff:** Nine

We had the Northern Open last year and we also had our club bi-centenary (the club opened in 1780) in addition to our spring and autumn club medal events which are important on our calendar.

**Name: Simon Heppenstall**  
**Course:** Howley Hall  
**Region:** Northern  
**Course Type:** Parkland and moorland  
**Number of Holes:** 18  
**Staff:** Five plus seasonal in summer

The Howley Hall Scratch 36-hole tournament, on of the North Region Order of Merit events. When I was at Fixby we had the Laurence Batley Seniors.

**Name: Steve Jones**  
**Course:** The London Golf Club  
**Region:** South East  
**Course Type:** 18 holes inland links, 18 holes US style parkland  
**Number of Holes:** 36 (four loops of nine)  
**Staff:** 30 in winter and up to 38 in summer

We had the London Masters Senior event two years ago won by John Bland, but now it is mainly club competitions.
2. How far in advance do you start thinking about it and how much preparation goes into the event?

We work on problem bunkers the previous October, but we begin thinking about a plan of work in August. We don't do a lot of extra work, apart from working on finer details, such as striping fairways. Our members expect fast greens all the time.

3. Are there any special requests made by the organisers?

We haven't had many special requests, excepting greens of a 10ft stimpmeter reading. We have ours at eight to nine feet regularly in any case.

4. Do you think more carefully about pin positions and sometimes give them a few tricky ones?

The European Tour choose pin positions, but we had very windy conditions on an open course for the three years before this year and even the Tour officials found difficulty in finding suitable positions.

5. Do you enjoy the excitement of preparing for large events? Would you like to hold an Open/Tour event or prefer to work on producing excellent conditions all the year round rather than peaking?

I would say it's a buzz rather than enjoyment. A lot of effort has gone in but, until this year, we have had three very disappointing years from a weather point of view and so it was tough for the staff and their morale.

Twelve months before, although nowadays you try to get the course to its highest possible standard every day of the year. Obviously we break it with top dressing, striping etc for a big one.

We received many special requests in the past, most of them too late to act on. I recall being asked two days before an event for a stimpmeter reading of nine feet when we had them at 60 feet. All greenkeepers would like a lot of notice of special requests because it gives you time to work on them.

As there are plus handicap players in the event I try to make pin positions a little more difficult on a course set up to its maximum length. As a general rule I follow the usual greenkeeper's practice of six hard, six easy and six average.

At Howley Hall I don't get special requests, but at Fixby the European Tour people specified height of cut and pin positions etc.

The PGA decided for the Northern Open and I had no control of where the pins went. But they took note of advice on different positions and places to avoid if there was heavy rainfall. Generally it's 6-6-6 so there is something for everyone.

As this is a members club I try to get good conditions all the year round, but two weeks before our scratch event we top dress, double cut the greens and get the fairways nicely striped or diamond cut and bring it to a peak.

Yes, I do like to put our work on show as it were and to have the course tested by top players. But to be frank I like top quality on a regular basis because the most important people, as far as I'm concerned, are our members.

For a major event you are told by the PGA where they want pins and they mark them with a tee peg. We have little input. For club events I follow the accepted pattern of six easy, six difficult and six average.

Yes, it's nice to see the course laid out in the best conditions as it is being played by very good players and you hope for positive feedback but I prefer working on producing excellent conditions for our club members, rather than for a Tour event.

Yes, it gets the adrenaline going. I like to produce good conditions all the year round, but we certainly also peak for special club competitions.
Here's your chance to win £50!
Simply look through all the products and services in our guide and name the companies which the following telephone numbers refer to:

a. 01472 874200
b. 01795 427333
c. 01895 834411

Write down your three answers on a postcard and send your entries to:

Know Your Numbers, Greenkeeper International, BIGGA HOUSE, Aldwark, Alne, York YO61 1UF

Entries to reach us no later than Friday, July 16, 1999. The first correct entry drawn will receive a cheque for £50!

The judges decision is final. No correspondence will be entered into.

This competition is not open to BIGGA staff or non-members.

Last month, Phil Haig of Crosland Heath GC, certainly knew his numbers when he correctly identified all three telephone numbers.

Our congratulations and a cheque for £50 are on their way to you!