How have you gone about meeting the needs of the modern day greenkeeper? Discuss...

We marvel, and rightly so, at the adaptability of modern greenkeepers and their ability to keep on top of the developments which have moved the amenity industry well and truly into the high tech age. But what about the companies which have had to meet the increasingly sophisticated demands of people who are striving to produce better and better playing conditions for golfers? We gave several of the biggest machinery manufacturers a platform to discuss how they have gone about meeting the demands of the modern day greenkeeper as we approach the 21st century.

INTO THE FUTURE

Hayter

It is December 31st, 1999. The dying embers of the 20th century are smouldering in the grate and the midwife is about to deliver the new year. A new millennium is about to be born. Actually, it's not. Mathematically, the third millennium does not start until 2000 years have elapsed and therefore we are all a year too early. And that presupposes that old Gregor, when he was devising the calendar we use today, managed to account accurately for the years after Christ's birth. There are some considerable doubts about this so maybe we are all worrying unnecessarily. Maybe the year 2000 computer problems are all just an industry scare tactic. Maybe we have already passed the year 2000 without a problem. The trouble is, the computers still think we are where we think we are today. Confusing, isn't it?

Anyway, what are we doing to adapt to the needs of today and what are we doing to address modern greenkeeping needs? Today's greenkeeper is a very different animal to that portrayed by many of the "old brigade" of golf club members. He or she is better trained and more professional than many of their forebears and their contribution to maintaining playing surfaces subjected to ever-increasing usage, is seldom fully appreciated. Similarly, the machinery at their disposal has adapted to these changing demands. The true surfaces wanted by members and professional golfers alike require precision machines capable of maintaining accuracy in almost all conditions. The development of power-driven cylinders was a major contributor to grass cutting in all conditions but the introduction of computer controlled equipment to make machine components, has transformed the accuracy of machinery design and repeatability of spare parts. This has helped ensure that modern equipment used on golf courses gives longevity as well as consistent accuracy over its lifetime. Computers now control the design, manufacture and finishing of modern machinery. From solid modelling and three dimensional computer aided design, through computer aided material turning, stamping, cutting, bending, joining, moulding etc. to computer controlled high class finishing, modern machinery helps produce the quality of equipment needed. And all that at a cost that, in real terms, is stunningly competitive with days of old.

Manufacturing investment has been massive. The investment in logistical support has been equally impressive encompassing satellite ordering for next day delivery of spare parts; electronic cataloguing for the easy and accurate identification of the required parts; internet updating of relevant health and safety considerations; training CD's; operational instructions etc, etc. These are some of the benefits that have been passed on to the user. It follows therefore that, as the reliance on the computer becomes all pervasive, we must ensure we have contributed adequately to Y2K compliance. Even if the date is wrong, the computer could still bring all the greenkeepers hard work to a standstill and render useless all the gains that have been made. Failing that, how many greenkeepers can still use a scythe?

Kim Macfie,
Sales and Marketing Director of Hayter
INTO THE FUTURE

When we look to the future we often find our thinking is restrained by the past which prevents us from imagining the outrageous or the totally radical. Let me give you an example. It was only 20 years ago that we used to struggle to find a telephone box which hadn't been vandalised. At the time it would have been impossible to imagine that almost everyone, including teenagers at school, would be carrying their own satellite linked mobile telephones.

Manufacturers have the problem of thinking the unthinkable to ensure that they do not miss future developments which could radically affect their industry. We all know about demographic changes which are already taking place. These include earlier retirement coupled with longer life expectancy and more influence in retirement. These changes are fast becoming matched with a ‘healthy living syndrome’ and if this movement continues, golf could become as much a part of the health care industry as the sporting one. Pergolas in the clubhouse being replaced by fruit and nut bars but on the course, environmental issues coming to the fore.

We have already seen the movement getting underway with battery driven mowers. As the battery industry becomes more powerful, including tractors. Failing this, the movement to clean energy driven mowers. As the battery industry becomes more proficient we could end up with all implements being electrically powered, including tractors. Failing this, the movement to cleaner engines (avoiding pollution) and probably using GLP as the power source could well become the norm.

In today’s media we find enormous controversy raging around GM food but perhaps some of our problems with turf culture could be solved by GM turf seed. What would the properties of the seed be?

- Hard wearing
- Less cutting required
- More tolerant of lower cutting heights
- Moss and disease resistance
- Better root formation

If this were possible what cultivation techniques would be required? Fewer sprayers, better aeration and cultivation techniques to ensure an all year round playing surface.

In farming, modern satellite technology has given rise to GPS land mapping. The system identifies exactly whereabouts you are and what crop techniques are required to within a few yards in order to produce the maximum crop potential. Could the system in 10 years time identify to within 200mm areas which require moss treatment or specifically control the irrigation to only wet areas needing the extra moisture or even to tell the Head Greenkeeper which morning to mow the greens and which to avoid.

Many of these concepts feel uncomfortable but the industry will need to break free of its present paradigm in order to react to the vast changes that could happen! These will also include new buying patterns and use of the Internet at some stage with respect to equipment purchase and where to obtain the best service. Only time will tell in all these facets of the industry. Dialogue and creativity among the market place is an absolute must, starting now!

David Jankins, Charterhouse

Charterhouse: Greenkeeping 2010...

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John Deere

Last year, by industry accounts, John Deere captured over 20% of the worldwide golf course maintenance market. Over the same period Deere & Company invested more than a million dollars a day in research and development, with a significant proportion going towards golf & turf equipment design.

The golf & turf business has been the fastest growing part of the company’s commercial & consumer equipment division throughout the 1990s. Up to 30% of John Deere’s golf & turf sales are delivered outside North America, the majority in Western Europe. For each of the last seven years Deere & Company has been getting the views of thousands of greenkeepers through its annual Feedback programme, which has now been held in the USA, Europe and Australia. A wide range of new and prototype machines are scrutinised, driven and commented on by the people whose opinions matter most to John Deere - the customers.

“Feedback is the company’s annual reality check,” says John Deere Limited Managing Director Alec McKee. “We depend on these meetings, on pre-production demonstrations and on thousands of test hours on golf courses around the world to frame our product development and improvement programmes.

“We ask greenkeepers to be open, honest, and blunt - and they are. Greenkeepers are impressed not only because we are asking them for opinions, but because they can see that their suggestions are taken seriously.

“We’ve learned a lot from each Feedback we’ve held, and we still have a lot to learn. We want to be considered as business partners with our customers, and that means we look to greenkeepers for ideas and information.

“We had more prototype machines in the field last year than at any time since we entered this market more than 10 years ago. Many of the modifications and refinements on several new models in the last year or two are the direct result of what greenkeepers have asked us for.

“The basic design of any machine works worldwide, and greenkeepers’ concerns are similar - they want performance, reliability, quality of cut, serviceability. The Feedback meetings help us to fine tune the equipment so each machine does the right job for each individual customer.

“The main difference between the European and American markets, for example, is in the number of people employed on the golf course. European greenkeepers tend to spend more time on their machines, as they are fewer in number compared to the USA, so they demand higher specification seats. Low noise levels are also driven by European requirements.

“Deere & Company is genuinely committed to British and European greenkeepers. The worldwide Golf & Turf Division Business Manager, Ken Edwards, has regularly attended BTME and SALTEX, and he and his factory colleagues have visited many UK and Irish golf courses to learn more about European conditions and requirements. The company also employs a European golf & turf specialist, Howard Storey, who is based here in the UK, at Langar.

“Regular staff and dealer training courses, and investment in new products and manufacturing systems, ensure that the company will continue to provide the most advanced and reliable machines possible for the professional greenkeepers.”
Kubota

Kubota is recognized principally by Course Managers and greenkeepers for producing reliable, user-friendly compact tractors and ride-on front rotary mowers. However, lift the bonnet of many other makes and types of golf course machinery and there is a strong chance that you will find a Kubota engine providing the power.

Long established as the world’s number one producer of small water-cooled diesel engines, Kubota power units are the first choice of 80 other machinery manufacturers, many of them leaders in their field. Recognising the long hours and varied workloads of greenkeepers, Kubota is constantly seeking to enhance the comfort and convenience of its compact tractors and ride-on mowers to reduce fatigue and improve operating efficiency.

Kubota was one of the world’s first manufacturers to introduce tilt steering columns and fully adjustable seats to suit different sized drivers. Most Kubota tractors and mowers now come with rubber-mounted flat deck floors which combine low noise and minimal vibration with plenty of leg and foot room, providing easy access from either side of the machine.

If your Kubota tractor or mower is fitted with a cab, you can be certain that all-round visibility, sound levels, ventilation and comfort are of the highest standards to promote smooth, efficient and safe greenkeeping operations from dawn till dusk.

Kubota appreciates also that first class service and parts support is a must for golf course maintenance machinery. To ensure that performance is maintained at peak levels, all of Kubota’s operations are regulated by ISO 9002 - an international quality control accreditation under which systems and procedures are consistently checked and monitored to maintain a consistently high standard. The most recent evidence of Kubota’s total commitment to its customers is a £300,000 upgrading of its Thame, Oxfordshire headquarters, with the emphasis on extending and enhancing the parts storage and distribution operation.

To complement these steps, Kubota UK technicians and the company’s appointed dealer staff throughout the UK and Ireland receive regular training from factory personnel so they remain right up to date with the latest technologies and developments.

Feedback from end-users in the golf course industry has always been a top priority for Kubota. To this end, the recently launched Kubota Owner’s Club is now providing a closer link with customers via the club’s quarterly magazine and national and local events supported by Kubota. Membership is automatically given to all new Kubota owners. It is impossible to list all of Kubota’s efforts and achievements aimed at meeting the needs of the modern greenkeeper. So here are just six to consider:

- The introduction of the first true four-wheel drive compact tractor.
- The introduction of the first four-wheel drive front rotary mower.
- The introduction of hydrostatic transmission systems on compact tractors and diesel ride-on mowers.
- The introduction of power steering as standard on 19hp - 45hp tractors and ride-on mowers.
- The introduction of Bi-Speed Turn, a system which automatically speeds up the tractor’s front wheels when the turning angle exceeds 35 degrees, resulting in faster, tighter turns with less scuffing.
- The continuing introduction of approved matching implements to extend the year-round working range and versatility of Kubota compact tractors.

The traction, durability and comfort of Softspike’s revolutionary new Black Widow™ cleat has established new performance standards for the industry. The Black Widow™ is simply in a different league from anything else. Its cantilevered ‘legs’ flex as you walk to provide maximum traction, and gives the same protection against green damage as our popular XP design. The Black Widow’s innovative polyurethane material makes it easily the most durable plastic cleat available.

A new concept in cleats: Bite.

You’ve never seen a green-friendly cleat like this. With eight independent flexible legs, the Black Widow™ gives you a cushioned feel you can’t get with any other cleat. Its springy reflex action ‘bites’ the turf, to give you traction you can’t get from an ordinary cleat. And its unique polyurethane plastic is both sturdy and pliable to give you the grip you need in heavy rough or awkward lies.

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SSIS has 13 salesmen and four demonstrators in daily contact with our customers, giving unvilled opportunities to discuss problems, needs and current trends. This valuable information is reported back to Head Office at Macclesfield and used to formulate design and development policy for future products. SSIS believes in listening to the customer, then setting out to meet his or her requirements with well engineered, long lasting machinery. Going back to the Company's foundation in 1966 it was watching greenkeepers laboriously turning and hand raking their greens that led to the development of the first powered aerators and, later, scarifiers. In recent years fairway maintenance has become more important and here also SSIS has answered: the hydraulic Veen to remove thatch quickly and efficiently, deep slitting and hollow corers for effective relief of compaction; the Quadraplay Fairway Groomer for fast, routine maintenance and improved presentation.

Textron

What do military aircraft and mowers have in common? Not much, you may think. But Textron Turf Care and Specialty Products are adopting practices used by the defence aerospace industry to help ensure ease of maintenance on their new turf care products. Textron, whose products include Ransomes, Jacobsen, Cushman, Ryan, lekoi and E-Z-GO, found through a series of user focus groups that turf care machinery maintenance downtime was a severe cost penalty to its customers. While we have always been aware that ease of maintenance was an important issue, we decided to introduce a Maintainability Assessment as part of the pre-production testing,” explained Director of Engineering, Steve Chicken. “The assessment placed a numeric value on the visibility, need for tools, safety, manual reach and grip, and prior actions required for each maintenance action. This measure-ment technique is not only used on new machines under development but we also use it on existing machines and competitors’ machines. This helps us highlight, good design features and also design as a benchmark from which we improve new products.” Steve added.

“As a result, our new municipal greenkeeping machine, which is being launched later this year, has been designed with a 40% improvement in its measured ease of maintenance, and we’re sure that’s a new feature which every customer will welcome.”

SSIS also exists the help of greenkeepers to test new machinery. This ensures that controls are conveniently placed, times are easily fitted, machines are easy to handle. Pre-production prototypes are often to be found on the SSIS stand at BTME for the final seal of approval before production. In recent years everyone has become more environmentally aware and good mechanical maintenance techniques can often mean a reduced need for chemicals. Nevertheless, when pesticides are essential, the SSIS EcoSpray with fully shrouded spraying units, allows the responsible modern greenkeeper to apply them without risk to adjoining vegetation and water courses. The importance of the EcoSpray’s unique features was recognised with the award of the Millennium Award status.

Another growing trend seen as we approach the year 2000, is more concern over cost effectiveness. Thus multi purpose machines grow in popularity, the Quadraplay one-pass groomer; Rotoblaies with eight interchangeable reels for powered scarification; shallower spiking and brushing; powered aerators which will also operate brush, rake and spiker slitter. On smaller courses with limited budgets, deep aerators, hollow corers and top dressers only used once a year are hired. SSIS has risen to this challenge with SSIS Hire operating from three regional depots and now, with the acquisition of Husky’s Grass Machinery business, are able to offer an even larger range of equipment including the Technicore vertical action corer; the Soil Releiver for really deep treatment; top dressers; seeders and just about anything else a greenkeeper or turf professional could need.

To sum up, SSIS policy is to offer the busy modern greenkeeper his or her own local Area Representative to give advice and after-sales support, backed up by a truly excellent spares service and national net-works.

Above all SSIS acknowledges that today’s greenkeepers are to be listened to. By listening SSIS will continue to offer a range of reliable, innovative, well designed machines to enable modern turf professionals to give their golfers the very best surfaces on which to play, now and into the new Millennium.

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Other features are also being designed into new products to minimise the maintenance required. New machines being launched this year have a 60% increase in hydraulic replacement life and in some the first five hour of change has been eliminated completely. Textron have been working to introduce increased commonality of parts, such as filters and accessories such as gable, and lighting kits. This not only improves stock holding for the greenkeeper, it also makes training easier. The Parts service has also come under the spotlight and this year Textron have launched Parts Xpress - an overnight parts delivery service which guarantees delivery of Textron genuine parts to the Textron dealer by 7 am the next day.

Marketing Director, Peter Bell, explained, “We realise that when our customers need parts they generally need them yesterday rather than the day after tomorrow. “The company has made a massive investment in a new computerised parts warehouse at Ipswich which now allows us to offer a parts service which we believe is second to none.”

“As far as we’re concerned it is all part of our philosophy of understanding the needs of our customers. Of course they want reliable and effective machines which represent good value for money, but they also want to keep machinery main-tenance downtime to an absolute minimum and we hope that by making our machines easier to maintain, backed up with a parts service which is quicker than ever, we can help them achieve that aim,” added Peter.
Keeping in touch with news and comment from the Sections

Annual Match v Secretaries' Association
This year's annual match against the Secretaries' Association took place at Lanark Golf Course at the beginning of April. After last year's defeat at Glasgow Gailes we were looking for revenge. The secretaries had certainly picked a very challenging course in Lanark GC, one of the oldest golf courses established in 1831.

This year's BIGGA team had a mixture of youth and experience thus hopefully providing a winning blend and indeed this proved the case with us winning by 6 matches to 4.

Notable wins were by Duncan Gray & Andy O'Hara winning 7&3, Archie Dunn & Stephen Dunn by 5&4. Barry Gray & Colin McFarlane also recorded a fine victory by 7&5 wins for Alasdair McLaren & Chalmers Stillic, Colin Noble & Steve Sullivan and halved matches by Ian Bell & Sandy Balloch plus Peter Boyd & Derek Scott completed our victory.

Our thanks go to the Captain and Committee of Lanark GC for the courtesies on the day Stuart, John Rae, for making sure everyone was well fed and "watered" throughout the day. Also the patrons of the Scottish Region for all their continued support.


Congratulations go to Kenny Stirling, Best Low NET, on qualifying for the Chatehouse/Scots National Championship at Carden Park in October. Disappointment on the new member front this month! No one to welcome to the Section this time, so far this year we have gained 35 new members.

The sunshine brought out some wonderful golf that day like?

As for my game, well with the back nine, I think it all went rather well. As for my game, well with the benefit of hindsight, I wish now that I had dunted my clubs off a couple of weeks prior to this event, as my partner Ian Smith & Alan Jack, I am sure, will not doubt contest! Thanks for the game anyway lads. We thank the Captain Mr Alan Winning of Bothwell Castle GC for providing the course and facilities on the day.

Bothwell Castle was in great condition and our thanks go to Sam Morrison and all his staff for their hard work. Well done Sam.

Thanks also go to the bar and catering staff, Terry Latby and his wife Sandra, thanks for an excellent meal. The sunshine brought out some good scores on the day, so without further ado here are the results:-

Scratch Prize Douglas McIntosh, Cathkin Braes GC, scratch 70, 1st Class 1st Place Ian Smith, Drumpelier GC 73-3(68), 2nd Place Peter Cowan, Clydebank GC 81-9(72)BH, 3rd Place Scott Ballantyne, Cowden GC 78-
BIGGA have recently offered Sections the opportunity to provide “learning workshops”, on any subject with the provision that it is in relation to greenkeeping. Subjects might include: Irrigation, Course Design, Construction, Soil Science, Using PC’s, etc. The only requirement is that each course must have a minimum of thirteen bodies in attendance to justify the offer from HQ.

Anybody interested please write to, or contact S. Bulloch for further information. A date, to be finalised, in August has been arranged for a challenge match between Clubmaster V Greenkeepers. Numbers are restricted to 16, if you are interested and would like to take part contact S. Bulloch.

Finally congratulations to Steve Richardson, formerly Bothwell Castle GC. Steve’s new appointment is at Wentworth. Good luck Steve, hope you settle in well. Congratulations also to David Huton who moved recently to Bothwell Castle from Hamilton GC. Sam Morrison informs me that he and Ian Wilson are still good friends, despite employing one of Ian’s men. Sam reckons that it was because he had plied him with drink to soften the blow!! (Which in itself is quite strange, you see I always thought Ian was teetotal?) Answers on a postcard please.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any news or anything you might think worthy of a mention.

M: 07050 173080 H: 0141 776-1532
Gavin Jarvis

Cleveland

Well the Spring Tournament was held at Seaton Carew. Many thanks to the Head Greenkeeper and staff for all their hard work in producing a great course in such difficult conditions, and the caterers and bar staff for looking after the hungry and thirsty.

The best results of the day were: Best Gross, Richard Castle, Denton GC; Best Nett, Michael Nolan, Bampton GC; Over 55; Bert Cross, Dave Cowhigg had the longest drive on the 9th and Paul Daley had the nearest the pin on the 10th.

The qualifiers for the regionals are:-

3rd Class: 1st Place Joe Bell; 2nd Place John Brown, Broomend GC 80-13(67); 2nd Place Gary Semple, East Kilbride GC 83-14(69); 3rd Place Alan Miller, Wishaw GC 83-13(70).

1st Class: 1st Place Joe Bell, Kilmacolm GC 94-29(74).

2nd Place Simon Murray Douglas Park GC 98-21(77); 3rd Place Barry Brown Douglas Park GC 104-25(79). The trade prize as won by none other than Derek Doubich/7-5(72). The visitors prize was won by Andy Pearce, Port Glasgow GC 77-5(72).

Nearest the pin was Peter Cowan winning a bottle of Vodka.

Thanks also to all the trade members for their help and support.

The 29th was also the first draw of the recently launched “100 club”. “All 100 tickets sold successfully, weren’t they Robert.”

On such an occasion, I personally feel that a fanfare of trumpets or drum roll would have been in order, to build up to the moment that my ticket came镌刻. Sadly though it was not to be, however the lucky number “21”, the holder being Brian Lolland, well done Brian. Still, there’s hope yet, two more chances one at the Autumn meeting and another at the AGM. For the millennium Mike Dooner has kindly offered to sponsor the “100” club.

Please make a note in your diaries, Wednesday 22nd of September, Autumn meeting at Windyhill GC.

John Scott Jnr recently attended the Section Secretaries meeting, held at HQ and reported that the two day course was very good and most informative giving those who attended an insight into the workings of HQ. He also commented on the size of the new building and felt that it should be slightly larger, giving the opportunity of people attending this particular event. Keep your eyes peeled for an article penned by Robert Hogarth. Robert has been asked to write an article for the magazine on the subject of “The difficulties of an internal verifiers job", I must say I look forward to learning more about, what should be an interesting topic.

The best results of the day were: Best Gross, Richard Castle, Denton GC; Best Nett, Michael Nolan, Bampton GC; Over 55; Bert Cross. Dave Cowhigg had the longest drive on the 9th and Paul Daley had the nearest the pin on the 10th.
patrons, Barrows (GM): Cheshire Light MACHINERY, Acorn Equipment and Ritty, in their support with the prize table, also White Moss Amenity, Gary Worrall, Greenkeeping Supply Co. Aitkens, County Crops, Richard Campsey, for help to swell the prize table.

The two members who qualified for free entry to the National Championship sponsored by Scotts/Charterhouse are, best gross, Richard Castle, Denton GC, best nett, Michael Nolan, Brampton GC.

The six qualifiers for the NW team to play in the Regional Final at Macclesfield Golf Club on Wednesday 25th August are B9 Richard Castle, Denton GC, Tim Nolan, Denton GC; 10-18 Michael Nolan, Brampton GC, John Coar, Blackpool NS GC, 19-28 Mike Hogg, Childwell GC, Paul Eddlestone, Fishwick Hall GC. This competition is sponsored by R. J. Campey (Macclesfield).

The next meeting is the Summer Meeting at Longridge Golf Club on Thursday June 17, Lunch 12noon-1pm teeing time 1.30pm. If you have left it late to enter ring Bill Merritt on 0151 284 4416. Any problems or queries ring me on 0151 724 5412.

Bert Cross

Northern

The Annual Dinner dance was again held at Bradford Golf Club. Many thanks to Dave Thackray and Mel Gay for the hard work in organising the event. This year we tried a carvery style meal which went down very well with everybody and once again a good time was had by all.

This year's Spring Tournament and Charterhouse/Scotts National Qualifier was held at Hornea Golf Club. The weather was splendid, which enhanced the course presented to us.

Congratulations to Roger and his team for all the hard work in preparing the "track" to such a high standard so early in the year. The exceptionally warm welcome from the new lady Secretary, quality of catering and service from the bar staff made the day one to remember.

Many thanks to Adamsons for sponsoring the prize table, Turfcare for the donation of a colour TV for the nearest pin prize, Ritter for the picnic hamper for the longest drive and to the rest of the trade for their raffle prizes.


Good luck to David and Roger when they compete in the Charterhouse Scotts National Tournament at Carden Park later this year.

A couple of people have been moving within the Section. Jonny Platt has moved to Cockedley Hall GC as Deputy Head Greenkeeper from Crow Nest Park and Richard Blackburn has gone to Outlane as Deputy Head Greenkeeper also from Crow Nest Park. It is hard to believe that Alan Lothhouse, of Huddersfield Golf Club, has got married. Congratulations Alan, you can buy the boys a beer later in the year to celebrate! Anybody who has any news with us in the Section, please contact me at 1 Cockley Meadows, Kirkheaton, Huddersfield, HD3 0LA or telephone 01484 317813 or 07788 442755.

This year’s Summer Tournament has been run, but by the time you read this it will be too late. I hope we can organise more later in the year. Remember, it is not only important, it is the law. I'm back on line, so to speak. I've been up to Alkwork with Howard McD'Adley to start the process of becoming I.V for Wales, returned with half a rain forest neatly packaged in folders.

I also attended a course at the college on Basic H & S run by the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health. Very illuminating. I just hope I passed. Which brings me on to the next thing, first aid courses. Did you know that any work place employing more than five people MUST have a qualified first aider who has taken the 4-5 day course. Well do you now! The college is running four day courses on 21 - 24 June and the 12 - 15 July, costing £100 per person. Other refresher courses have been run, but by the time you read this it will be too late. I hope we can organise more later in the year. Remember it is not only important, it is the law. I believe a cracking day was had at the sprint meet at Llanymynech. Thanks go to Alan and his team and also the club for giving us the courtesy.

Results, Best Gross - Alan Lewis 74 (nett 69) say no more! Charterhouse/Scotts National Championship qualifier, Garden Park. Best nett John Humphreys 68, Charterhouse/Scotts National Championship qualifier, Garden Park and Lesco Trophy, 2nd Andy Cornes 3rd Don Radvando 69, 4th C. Rogers 72, 5th R. Lewis 73, Longest Drive R. Lewis, Nearest the Pin Haydn Jones 3’5”, Guests 1 G. Fitzpatrick 69, 2nd E. Heaps 69, 3rd M. Jones 70, Longest Drive Llanymynech Lady Captain (Ladies tee 168 yards forward of men’s). Nearest pin R. Owens 15’11”, 2’3” Haydn Jones, Adrian Ellis, Marn Brute, P Farizay G Fitzpatrick (6 balls each).

By the time you read this, R. J. Campey (Macclesfield) have moved to Cookedley Hall GC as Deputy Head Greenkeeper from Crow Nest Park and Richard Blackburn has gone to Outlane as Deputy Head Greenkeeper also from Crow Nest Park. It is hard to believe that Alan Lothhouse, of Huddersfield Golf Club, has got married. Congratulations Alan, you can buy the boys a beer later in the year to celebrate! Anybody who has any news with us in the Section, please contact me at 1 Cockley Meadows, Kirkheaton, Huddersfield, HD3 0LA or telephone 01484 317813 or 07788 442755.

This year’s Summer Tournament has been run, but by the time you read this it will be too late. I hope we can organise more later in the year. Remember, it is not only important, it is the law. I'm back on line, so to speak. I've been up to Alkwork with Howard McD'Adley to start the process of becoming I.V for Wales, returned with half a rain forest neatly packaged in folders.

I also attended a course at the college on Basic H & S run by the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health. Very illuminating. I just hope I passed. Which brings me on to the next thing, first aid courses. Did you know that any work place employing more than five people MUST have a qualified first aider who has taken the 4-5 day course. Well do you now! The college is running four day courses on 21 - 24 June and the 12 - 15 July, costing £100 per person. Other refresher courses have been run, but by the time you read this it will be too late. I hope we can organise more later in the year. Remember it is not only important, it is the law. I believe a cracking day was had at the sprint meet at Llanymynech. Thanks go to Alan and his team and also the club for giving us the courtesy.

Results, Best Gross - Alan Lewis 74 (nett 69) say no more! Charterhouse/Scotts National Championship qualifier, Garden Park. Best nett John Humphreys 68, Charterhouse/Scotts National Championship qualifier, Garden Park and Lesco Trophy, 2nd Andy Cornes 3rd Don Radvando 69, 4th C. Rogers 72, 5th R. Lewis 73, Longest Drive R. Lewis, Nearest the Pin Haydn Jones 3’5”, Guests 1 G. Fitzpatrick 69, 2nd E. Heaps 69, 3rd M. Jones 70, Longest Drive Llanymynech Lady Captain (Ladies tee 168 yards forward of men’s). Nearest pin R. Owens 15’11”, 2’3” Haydn Jones, Adrian Ellis, Marn Brute, P Farizay G Fitzpatrick (6 balls each).

Without doubt, the new Verti-Drain Mustang is the fastest, most effective aerator on the market today. Whilst it still features the unique, patented 'heave' action, there are many new improvements, including single point arm adjustment, a stronger tine support system and fewer working parts.
The opening golf day of the season was held at Beaconsfield GC on April 20. The day was a great success with around 40 entrants competing for two spaces in the national finals at Carden Park in October. The only problem was the continuous rain which I suppose was to be expected in April.

Our thanks go to Bill Patterson and his team who presented the course superbly; it was certainly a credit to all concerned. The meal was also very good, altogether a great venue and one I hope we will be able to return to. The prizes for the day were supplied by Gem Professional, thanks to Bernie for his continuous support for the Section. Last but not least thanks to Richard Fontmeuller, and ETT, who supplied all the raffle prizes.

The results of the day were as follows: Best Gross R. Wilson 74.


Congratulations to all winners the weather made the scoring very difficult. Tony French and myself will do our best at Carden Park to represent the Section.

Lindsay Anderson has now passed over the writing of this article to me but continues as Secretary. Thanks for the tips, Lindsay.
East of England

The first competition of the year was held at Thorp Wood, Peterborough, where the small turn out played over a testing course set by David Walden. The course was in great condition and held up well to the atrocious weather conditions. The sponsors of Thorp Wood, Machinery and Barenburg seeded prized for the golf day to be sponsored next year in a warmer month as they have been the April Competition for the last five years. Thanks to Ailair of PEM and Ben Rejetian of Barenburg for their support in sponsoring the competition. They brought some great prizes and the raffle prizes which were donated by other trade members, were much appreciated by our members. The eventual winner was Graeme MacDonald of Newark G.C. 36 points. Second was David Wellbery of Kirtom Holme 31 points and Kevin Hodges of Burton Park 30 points. Leigh Sidden of UAP took home the trade prize of 269 points.

On a much warmer day the Purdy’s Cup and Charterhouse/Scotts Charity Tournament was held over Les Purdy’s home course at Retford. This course was in excellent condition thanks to John Shain and staff. Les, as usual, produced some prizes which would befit the club’s Head Greenkeeper for his hard work on the course, and presenting it in such good condition. A big thank you to all the sponsors for the excellent course. He then went to the Captain’s Day prize table. Thanks to Les, Annie and Andy for the sponsorship. Also thanks to the other sponsors, Tower Chemical (Gary you will hand out those hat-cuppers) Rugby Taylors, Greenpeace and Roy’s bottle of wine.

The Charterhouse/Scotts National Championship qualifiers are: 1. G. Wallace. Best nett 74.

Surrey

After all the rain thank goodness for the recent spell of sunshine that made the end of April and beginning of May so warm and a pleasure to be in.

Alex Bradshaw must have either sold his soul or spirit and spent all of the previous Sunday praying for fine weather for the Spring Tournament at Malden Golf Club. Well, whatever he did it worked. The sun shone and shone and made this first golf day an absolute pleasure to be part of.

The course was in excellent condition, thankfully presented and we thank Malden Golf Club for their courtesy and the catering staff for the superb meal.

The day was sponsored by Tiaicare and the prizes were presented by John Hobbs.

The results were as follows:-
1. G. Wallace, nett 69; 2. Brian Turner nett 68

Finally if anyone has any information where the small turn out played over a testing course set by David Walden. The course was in great condition and held up well to the atrocious weather conditions. The sponsors of Thorp Wood, Machinery and Barenburg seeded prized for the golf day to be sponsored next year in a warmer month as they have been the April Competition for the last five years. Thanks to Ailair of PEM and Ben Rejetian of Barenburg for their support in sponsoring the competition. They brought some great prizes and the raffle prizes which were donated by other trade members, were much appreciated by our members. The eventual winner was Graeme MacDonald of Newark G.C. 36 points. Second was David Wellbery of Kirtom Holme 31 points and Kevin Hodges of Burton Park 30 points. Leigh Sidden of UAP took home the trade prize of 269 points.

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East Midland

I have just had news from an old friend of our Sections, one of our former secretaries, Gordon Mitchell. Gordon has returned to his native Scotland, working at Piperdam Golf & Country Club in Dundee.

Gordon formerly worked at Melton Mowbray GC and Westwood GC, in Staffordshire. If any member would like to contact Gordon he has passed on his address and telephone number to me and he would like to hear from his old friends again within the Section. On behalf of the East Midlands section I would like to wish Gordon all the best at Piperdam Golf and Country Club.

Next year’s Autumn Tournament will be held at Matlock Hall, Matlock Bath G.C. on September 20 and will again be generously sponsored by Banks Amenity Products. Results from this year’s Spring Tournament will appear in next month’s newsletter.

Finally if anyone has any information they would like to see in this article please let me know.

Antony Bindle

Midland

The spring Tournament was held at Walmley Golf Club on a fine, sunny April day. The day was a real success and was enjoyed by everyone who attended. Many thanks on behalf of the East Midlands section to all the staff at Walmley Golf Club and especially to Les Purdy, the Chairman, whose son, Thomas, arrived five weeks early at the beginning of the year.

Brian Willmott.

Essex

On April 13, 40 souls ventured out to Burnham-on-Crouch Golf Club for the first meeting of the year. The day was a real success, with the meal, and the prizes were presented by John Harvey, Three Rivers Golf Club, Andrew Harris and James Wicks.

Sponsorship qualifier was played over Les Purdy’s home course at Retford. This course was in excellent condition, despite the wet winter. Thank you Rob Boyce and his team for making us so welcome and the excellent course. He then went to the Captain’s Day prize table. Thanks to Les, Annie and Andy for the sponsorship. Also thanks to the other sponsors, Tower Chemical (Gary you will hand out those hat-cuppers) Rugby Taylors, Greenpeace and Roy’s bottle of wine.

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