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The result of the game was a convincing win for a strong East Midlands team. The course was in fantastic condition as usual. The grass was cut really short, and the greens were in good order. The result was a 4/1 victory for the E.O.E. section players.
Our next event is a go-karting afternoon on Friday November 26 starting at 1 pm, prices are £80 per team of four. Please contact Martin Forrester for more details.

The next golfging day is combined with our AGM at Rochester Hundred Golf Club on December 15, please make a note in your diary as this is an important event to air your views. This is your Section. Details will be posted nearer to the date. Don’t work too hard!

Davie Wells

Regional Seminar November 24
Cannington College. The theme is Research with some excellent speakers including Dr Canaway of StRL, Dr Thorogood from IGER, Prof. Adams University of Wales, Aberystwyth, Stephen Bernhard of Bernhard & Co, Dr Danish of the Levinhing Research Centre and Steve Jones, formerly of the London Club. Book your places at £15 per head with Paula Humphries now.

BTME Express 2000. Places strictly limited to 100 per first come basis. List filling up fast. If you want to come on this superb value trip get your application form in quickly. If you require a banquet ticket please state this on booking from your main contact and A or B and include payment of £40. Entries from Paula quickly to avoid disappointment. The coach once again sponsored by Amenity Technology and the trip heavily subsidised by Westurf to give you all the chance to attend our PJ. Flegg sponsored regional training course and the year 2000, so what better reason to give generously to this very worthy charity.

December 8 as in previous years noticing an impressive array of prizes kindly donated by our many sponsors.

The next event which is coming up very shortly for the region is the Autumn tournament at Hockley Golf Club on Thursday November 11, followed by AGM. The Christmas Tournament will take place on Wednesday December 8th at Kingdon Golf Club.

I have already arranged a number of smartly and first aid sessions to take place well in advance. Once the dates and venues have been confirmed I will let you know next month. If you have already contacted me about attending a course, I have already written your name down on the waiting list. If you would like to attend a course next month, please contact me on 01249 783382

Paul Cunningham

South Coast

For those of you who have not got your application forms in for the Regional Seminar at Cannington, there is still time, so don’t delay, get them in now. As you organise your seminar agenda, there are some very good speakers. Any queries give Jeff a ring on 01635 846575.

As I said in last month’s report our section AGM and Turkey Trot will be held at Hockley Golf Club on Wednesday December 8th. This will be followed by our AGM, Christmas Dinner and prize giving. All details can be obtained from Fred Dearden on 01420 88679.

Any items you would like to be included in the agenda please let Jeff have your details no later than three weeks before the AGM. Anybody who would like to serve on the committee should also contact Jeff.

The last time we were at Hockley was for our Spring Tournament in the early 1980’s. I can remember John Dodds, who was the Head Greenkeeper at the time, he was reputed to have said “If those two want fast greens I’ll give them fast greens”. He did! They were like lightening, in fact some of the low handicappers were finding it difficult to keep their puts on the greens. How many members can you imagine playing golf the now customary course walk way to start the festive season than by Richard Wisdom, showing members his golf the now customary course walk way to start the festive season than by Richard Wisdom, showing members his

Regional Committee November 24
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Northen Ireland

South-East

The first annual Northern Irish Greenkeeper Charity Open day was held at Clandeboy Golf Club on Friday September 3rd. Over 80 competitors took part in this event. A Special mention must go to Course Manager, Terry Crawford, and his team for the course was in excellent condition and very well presented. Special thanks to the Greenkeepers for giving the competitors a courtesy round which enabled all entry fees to go to the charity Heartbeat. The sum of £1300 was raised which will go to this very worthy charity which treats children with heart problems.

We would like to thank Clive Richardson and Horta Soils, John Lindsay, Adrian Eastwood, Coburns, Oneida Cutlery, Bill Donnell at Staks Park, Terry Magee General Manager Spa Golf Club and Ken Graham General Manager at Clandeboy Golf Club for all the donations of money trophies and prizes. First prize went to Sidney Spence, Greenkeeper at Southwick, 2nd Alister Harrison, WD Irwins, 3rd John Lindsay.

Course Manager Alan Strachan and the greenkeeping team at Royal Co Down Golf Club and Section members would like to wish Walter Beattie Head Greenkeeper at Royal Co. Down a very happy retirement. Walter has been at Royal Co. Down for 28 years.

I would like to thank members of our regional training course on the 2nd and 3rd December 1999 at the Burrendale Hotel, Newcastle, Co. Down. The course is on Budgeting & Finance and is presented by Ben Bardon.

Finally it was nice to meet Tracey Maddison, Membership Services Officer again at the L.O.G. Show in Belfast on the 28th September. On behalf of all the members within the region many thanks to Tracey for coming over to the show again this year.

The section would like to pass on best wishes to Walter Beattie on his retirement at Head Greenkeeper from Royal County Down Golf Club after 27 years service to the club.

Congratulations to Eamon Crawford on his promotion to Deputy Course Manager also at Royal County Down.

Our charity golf day at Clandeboy Golf Club on the 3rd September was a great success with eighty in attendance raising over twelve hundred pounds for Heartbeat (for children’s charity). Many thanks to the sponsors, Horta Soils, Coburns, John Lindsay’s, Spa Golf Club, Staks Golf Club and Eastwood Bookmakers. Also thanks to all those who made the effort to attend and give generously.

J. McCabe

42 Greenkeeper International November 1999
Same Mildothane. New twist

Now Mildothane Turf Liquid has a brand new approval for use against casting worms.

- Selectively suppresses casting worms, leaving many non-casting species unharmed
- Incredibly economical with its application rate of 7.5L/ha
Scotsturf
10-11th November 1999
Exhibition Hall, Royal Highland Showground, Ingliston, Edinburgh
Details: 01232 803050
A visit to The Pines Golf Centre in Dumfries can have you questioning your own sanity. Don't get me wrong it's an excellent new pay-and-play complex boasting floodlit driving range, testing 18-hole courses and an attractive alpine style clubhouse. It's just well... let me explain.

When I drew into the car park for the Ayrshire Section meeting last month I could see Section Chairman, Duncan Gray, standing with a group of students on the 1st tee. It transpired they were from Barony College and Duncan was setting them a project for the afternoon. He greeted me warmly and sent me into the clubhouse to meet up with the rest of the guys.

Having said my hellos and chewed the fat for a few minutes I looked up and recognised the man pulling pints behind the bar. It was Duncan Gray.

A few more minutes passed and the soup and sandwiches arrived. The waiter? Duncan Gray.

Later, after the golf (during which, incidentally, Duncan marked the card of the new course record holder) over the course that was designed, built, and maintained by Duncan - and between handling queries involving till receipts and range balls - Duncan revealed that the curry, a popular option on the menu, was his own recipe. Really, we should have known!

Duncan, however, certainly wouldn't want it to be seen as a one-man show at The Pines. Wife, Greta, is just as busy and operates from a disadvantage from which Duncan doesn't suffer. She's not particularly keen on golf.

While both muck in the general division is that while Duncan is in charge of everything outside Greta does the same inside.

So how did Duncan, a greenkeeper of long standing with a CV boasting such illustrious names as Prestwick St Nicholas and Lahinch, reach the point where he is Captain of his own ship - and many of his own crew members as well?
"I was in charge of the Kyle and Carrick municipal courses in Ayrshire when competitive tendering arrived and destroyed the budgets to look after the courses," said Duncan as we sat in the living room of the Gray apartment, overlooking the 18th green.

"Greta and I had always talked about starting our own business and, being in golf, running a driving range was an obvious way to go, as we couldn't afford our own course... or so we thought at the time."

A trawl around Ayrshire uncovered a couple of possible sites but it was not until they widened their search to Dumfries that things began to move.

"Being local to Dumfries we knew the town didn't have any practice facilities. There are about 33,000 people in Dumfries, and another 70,000 within 20 miles, but there was no decent practice area for them at all."

"Fortunately we came across an old school pal of mine who had land that he was willing to lease and with the help of another school friend, a solicitor, the deal was struck with an option on the rest of the land, with the long term thoughts on a course."

"We looked at planning approval in December '94 and started work in December '95."

"We did all the work on the driving range ourselves. We prepared the foundations, poured the concrete, did all the slabbing. Even Greta drove dumpers," recalled Duncan.

The project was funded by equity from the family home in Prestwick which was sold, but there were some nasty surprises along the way.

"Putting in the electricity alone cost £12,000 and we had to lay 700 metres worth of road earlier than expected," revealed Duncan.

"The range was a great success. We had a caravan on site which acted as a clubhouse offering snacks," said Duncan, who along with Greta lived in another caravan alongside for about two and a half years.

The range was run by Duncan, Greta, a young skill seeker, a couple of part-timers, with a couple of youngsters who worked as ball pickers in the evenings.

With the range up and running Duncan's thoughts turned to the possibility of building the course.

"I'd already sussed out the ground and found that there was quite a bit of sand. If it hadn't been there we wouldn't have been able to build," he admitted.

He took on some more Skill Seekers and talked with the Enterprise Board who provided some labour from the Training for Work programme.

"Basically we got a year's free labour but it worked well because everyone we used now has full time jobs," said Duncan, who also has his D32 and D33 and trains his staff on site.

"Initially I built a loop of 11 holes, including two temporary greens and these were played from July '97."

"They were a tremendous success and we were practically overrun with people coming to play, so we thought we'd fire ahead and build the rest of the course. We finished the last nine in September '97 and opened the full 18 in June '98."

Duncan designed the course himself using experience gained from designing several courses in Ireland including Drumoland in Country Clare which was used for a televised pro-celebrity golf series.

"The routing was done fairly quickly and I always had 18 holes in mind when I did the first holes. I created a loop with the 7th green beside the 10th tee and the 14th tee beside the 10th green." He has also used six different types of construction on the course.

"I used the course as an experiment as I've always been very inquisitive and what better way to try things than to use your own course. You can only blame yourself," he smiled.

"I've got three greens cut out of existing turf, top dressed, overseeded etc and these are on two different types of land. The 1st is on top of sandy loam while the 5th and 15th are on agricultural soil."

"Then there are two greens built and sodded with my own soil; another two with bought-in turf, while two greens which were seeded with creeping bent. The rest of the greens are build and seeded with fescue bent."

Duncan's greenkeeping philosophy is...
not to do much feeding and he has not put on a fungicide since the course opened.

"I've never used much fungicide when I was at Prestwick St Nicholas and Lahinch... and here that approach also helps to save money," he added.

Another other of the major projects was the clubhouse itself.

"When we opened our 18 we were still using the caravan as the clubhouse but with things going well we looked at building a proper clubhouse.

"This proved to be a big problem. We had built the course using income from the range, and had benefited from an interest free loan from the R&A and a grant from the Enterprise Board. As a result we had very little borrowings, but it was extremely difficult to persuade the banks to lend money. It was only when we'd run the course and shown it to be successful that we were able to persuade them," said Duncan, who suspected that as it was around the time that Loch Lomond ran into financial difficulties banks were worried about becoming involved in golf.

"We started to build the clubhouse in the first week of June last year and again we did a lot of the work ourselves. It was finished in three months and one week," he said with justifiable pride.

"Part of the clubhouse contains our flat which means we are married to the job and can't get away but at least it's better than a caravan. Greta has been a real martyr. Not many wives would put up with what she's had to.

"He is under no illusion that despite the course being open and extremely busy he still has a great deal to do on the course.

"I need to put in quite a bit of drainage and will also do some tree planting and tree transplanting. We've got quite a few trees of good size on the periphery and we'll use our digger to move them. I also want to put in a few more bunkers, but not too many."

Asked about how he feels, as he sits looking out at the course he can rightly claim as his own, he has mixed emotions.

"I do have feelings of fulfilment but also a lot of tiredness.

"When you hear other people saying 'I don't know how you've done it. It's an amazing feat' you think well, I suppose, maybe it is, but because we're so heavily involved - basically it is 24 hours a day - it takes a bit of the gloss of it," said Duncan.

Remarkably Duncan is also involved in the design and building of several other courses including one in Dundee, another at Southern Gailes and another in Crete.

"When you're asked to do it it's tempting to say 'I've got enough on my plate but it's not often you get asked to design a golf course and it helps to ease the finances. I've only started to take a small wage out of The Pines."

As well as the benefit to the golfers of the Dumfries area - the professional gave lessons to 700 youngsters last year and the £12 a round green fee is no deterrent to new golfers - The Pines has also done a great deal of good to the local community with 25 people earning their living through the club.

"So from having a boss and working for other people - and having someone to blame - the boot is on the other foot and I have many people relying on me now."

Despite that Duncan still considers himself to be a greenkeeper through and through.

"I still go out and change holes and cut greens while I don't employ a Head Greenkeeper for two reasons. One, we couldn't afford one and two, I wouldn't like it. It's my course and it will be done the way I like it."

You would certainly be right in thinking that Duncan Gray is a one-off but surely, a visit to The Pines would have you believing that there must be more than one of him.
As the nights draw in, more and more of facilities require some form of outside lighting. Genset has produced a flexible, portable, stand-alone lighting tower.

The MiniTower can deliver a 50% reduction in running costs compared to conventional lighting towers. Also, its compact size means it can be used to floodlight areas previously impossible to light effectively.

The tower, available from good hire outlets, has a five metre telescopic mast which elevates the 4 x 500w halogen light cluster. The unit can be powered by a variety of generators, and is fitted with a specially enlarged fuel tank to allow extended running periods.

One of the unique features of the MiniTower is the flexibility it provides - the lighting mast is detachable, and the generator can be removed and used independently to power tools or other appliances.

For further information contact GenSet Plc on 01639 777000 or visit their web site at www.genset.co.uk.

Ship ahoy for Tildenet

Tildenet had to go full steam ahead complete a recent contract. They were given just 10 days to design, manufacture and install two custom made golf teaching nets on a luxury cruise liner. Tildenet Sales Manager, Lawrence Green even had to negotiate a crane driver strike at the port in Genoa, eventually maintaining the equipment into place in deck twelve. The task was completed with just one hour to go before the ship, Seven Seas Navigator, set sail on her maiden voyage.

The nets will be used by four American PGA professionals giving lessons to over 1,000 passengers paying £1,000 a day for a two-week cruise.

Greensward’s one stop trailer makes loading easy

EASY-LOAD is a new trailer purpose designed for Greenkeepers and Groundsmen incorporating a number of features that, until now, have been hard to find in any single groundcare trailer.

Its widely spaced wheels give the trailer body a low centre of gravity for easy loading and excellent stability and the design also incorporates a high tipping facility enabling it to discharge its load directly into a top dressing spreader.

These benefits, at an economic cost, have long been sought after by ground-care professionals. Now they can have all these benefits in this one trailer from Greensward.

A parallel lift raises the trailer to a maximum height of 64in and a diverter valve controls the lifting and tipping of the trailer body. This high tipping position and the flow control gate, enable quick and easy loading of top dressers. The EASY-LOAD can also accurately and directly tip loads into a neatly placed heap, a feature particularly helpful for topping up golf bunkers.

The minimum tipping height is 22in. Load capacity with standard sides is two tonnes and with the tapered extension sides 3 tonnes.

Price with standard sides is £3495 and extension sides plus flow control gate cost another £300. All prices are exclusive of VAT.
A greenkeeper’s request

This is a request for information and photographs (which would be returned) from any BIGGA member regarding suitable furniture and fixtures that would be appropriate for a golf course built at the end of the 1960s in 20 year periods. This would include tee markers, seats, pin and flag design, hole cups and any other accessories that would be in keeping with courses designed between 1900 - 1920, 1920 -1940 and 1940 - 1960. If anyone has any information on the above and would be willing to lend it to me for a short period of time, I would be very grateful. Please include a description, including the period during which the item would have been used, and a photograph if possible. Please contact me at the address below:

Robert Woodward
Berkshire College of Agriculture, Hall Place, Burchett Green, Maidenhead, Berkshire SL6 6QR
Tel: 01628 824444

Carbendazim clear-up 1

I am writing regarding the article on microbes written by Ms Stella Ingletthorpe of Grass Roots Trading Co. which appeared on pages 53-58 of the September issue of Greenkeeper International. In the article, Ms Ingletthorpe states that “Production of carbendazim, the last remaining worm control agent (and a fungicide) is to cease at the end of the year”. AgrEvo is a major manufacturer of carbendazim and sells this substance to The Scotts Company (UK) Limited which holds registrations for products approved for professional agricultural use on golf greens. Both companies would therefore like to point out that AgrEvo has no current plans to cease its production of carbendazim by the end of 1999 or in future years. Obviously, AgrEvo cannot speak for other carbendazim manufacturers, but I can add that I have not heard of any such phase-out plans by the other major manufacturers.

I am sure you will appreciate that both AgrEvo and The Scotts Company (UK) Limited will have been understandably concerned at the inaccurate information contained in the article by Ms Ingletthorpe. I would therefore be very grateful if you could include a statement in the next available issue of ‘Greenkeeper International’ clearly explaining that AgrEvo is not planning to cease its production of carbendazim. This will provide appropriate reassurance to The Scotts Company (UK) Limited and to users of this company’s carbendazim-containing products.

Mr R G Evans, Product Safety Management, AgrEvo UK Ltd

Carbendazim clear-up 2

I refer to the article in the September edition of Greenkeeper International, written by Stella Ingletthorpe of Grass Roots Trading, concerning modern microbiology. In this article she states “the production of carbendazim, last remaining worm control (and a fungicide) is to cease at the end of the year, and MAFF are looking carefully at other chemicals on the market”. Your worthy magazine is held in high esteem by your members, and this information has caused concern with greenkeepers who have an on-going problem with worm casts. I am sure it is difficult to ascertain that the information provided to you in such articles is correct, but the effects of such misinformation can be harmful. Vitax Twincarb contains carbendazim and this active ingredient. I can assure your members, is being supported through the BC Review Programme and the manufacturers do not have any plans to cease the manufacture of this important product.

Clive R Williams
Commercial Development Manager, Vitax
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