RELIEF

Amino-Sorb R (root uptake) and Amino-Sorb F (foliar uptake) are unique supplements that give turf maximum protection and recovery from stress. Under such adverse conditions there is a greater demand for vital amino acids than the plant is able to meet. Amino-Sorb overcomes this problem. The 18 amino acids in each solution are all specifically involved with turf health, helping restore the nutritional balance. Use Amino-Sorb R in the spring and autumn, Amino-Sorb F throughout the summer.
Call for help 1

I am writing to you in the hope that some of the readers of "Greenkeeper International" may be able to help me. I have been the Course Manager of Manchester Golf Club for the past five years, undertaking in that time several changes to both the playing and maintenance practices of the club, and doing quite a lot of course improvements. During the past five years I have become very interested in the original layout of the course, original teeing grounds, bunkers and of course drains.

I have gained valuable information from some octogenarian members of the club and I have some fairly old maps, but this is not enough.

I need to find out more information on the course which was designed and built by the late, great, Harry Shapland Colt. I have searched the B&G archives for information remotely connected to Colt but to no avail. Would it be possible for you to print this letter as a request for information from any reader of the magazine to enable me to continue, and hopefully be successful in my quest for more knowledge about Manchester Golf Club and Harry Shapland Colt. I can be reached by good old fashioned pen and paper at Hopwood Cottage, Rochdale Road, Middleton, Manchester M24 2QP by telephone on 0777 3056268 or via email at peter@golfmgc.fsnet.co.uk. Thank you in anticipation.

Peter Thomas,
Course Manager, MGC.

Call for help 2

I have a question that perhaps someone can help me with. A reader of ours has been seeking information about a Short-Cut brand greens mower which apparently is of British manufacture. He needs a part to make a repair, but cannot find any information about this mower manufacturer.

Neither can I. Is there someone at your organisation who might be able to provide information about this mower manufacturer?

If you have any information, I would greatly appreciate your help. It is possible that this Q&A could be quoted.

Call for help 3

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Neither can I. Is there someone at your organisation who might be able to provide information about this mower manufacturer?

If you have any information, I would greatly appreciate your help. It is possible that this Q&A could be quoted.

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If you have any information, I would greatly appreciate your help. It is possible that this Q&A could be quoted.
Tommy’s Toro thanks

I would like to take this opportunity to thank TORO and BIGGA for the generous hospitality that I received on what was truly a trip of a lifetime to the USA. The whole experience exceeded all expectations that I had beforehand, and I was fortunate to meet up with so many friendly people whose contribution to the experience will not be forgotten.

I have learned many things while I was stateside, not only from the University course, but also about the culture and nature of our international friends. I also made a great friend of Gerry Mulvihill, from Ballybunion Ireland, whom I believe will go far.

To any future entrants to the TORO competition, I would have to say try your best, and with a bit of luck on your side you will find that the trip is unbelievable.

Finally, I would like to thank my wife, Dawn, as she soldiered on with the kids and her job while I had all the fun. I missed her very much and it’s nice to be home with my feet back on the ground.

Tommy Givnan, Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year, Bowring Park Municipal, Merseyside

Praise for Telegraph article

I agree completely with your comment “No news is bad news”. The Telegraph article in question was held aloft by the President of the WGU, Mike Cole, at the greenkeeping seminar held at the Welsh College of Horticulture on the very day it was published, I know there are unsubstantiated claims made, but that’s journalists for you!

The article has been on our noticeboard ever since, alongside BIGGA’s “The need for aeration” poster. Guess what? There hasn’t been any comment.

Statement from Textron

Textron has carried out a thorough investigation into Cedric’s missing part and followed the order from the time it was originally ordered by Abbey Mowers on his behalf to Japan and back.

“Abbey Mowers are free to source parts from any Textron dealer and in this instance selected Burrows (GM) Ltd.” said Mark Poppleton, Textron’s Parts Marketing Manager.

“The part, for which there had only been two orders in the past three years, was then ordered on an emergency basis by Burrows through Textron to Japan and it took 13-15 days to get from Japan back to Burrows then on to Abbey Mowers and then finally back to Mr Gough,” he explained.

Subsequently Mark has met with Cedric to discuss the matter in greater depth and ensure an amicable conclusion.
A cut so fine you could easily be mistaken.

For championship greens, tees, fairways and the rough there can be no mistaking the perfect finish you get from a Textron Jacobsen or Ransomes mower.

Every course that hosts The Open relies on Textron to produce the perfect playing surface. We’ll be helping to prepare St. Andrews this year for the Millennium Open and Royal Lytham & St. Anne’s, when the championship returns there in 2001.

Contact your local dealer or call Textron on FREEPHONE 0500 026208.
Richard Rayner is one of Textron’s Regional Sales Managers and until recently was Groundscare Manager with the financial services company, Lombard. Here he looks at the various finance options that are available to golf course operators.

Above: Finance packages ensure that equipment that is needed today, can be obtained without a large initial outlay

Finance for buying equipment has in the past been viewed as a dirty word. Visions of loan sharks and “shady deals” have often deterred golf clubs from using finance companies. In addition, it is often viewed as both complicated and confusing. However, the various financial packages available can enable golf clubs to use their limited subscription fees and residual money better, by making it go further when buying equipment instead of using their hard earned cash. Using a financial package may be the way a club can get the equipment it wants, at the right time, in a way which matches its income streams. So let’s look at some of the benefits that finance can offer:

- Equipment that is needed today can be obtained without the large initial outlay.
- Equipment can be purchased at today’s costs with tomorrow’s money.
- Equipment can be paid for as it improves the course and generates income for the club.
- Finance can assist in the planning and budgeting for the club.
- Unlike a bank loan, a finance loan is non-repayable on demand. This means that as long as the club makes the required payments the finance company cannot close the loan.
- By using finance to buy equipment, it enables structured and long term buying policies to be incorporated.

The different types of finance

Although some finance companies may give grand names to their products, in reality there are really only three types of finance arrangements:

1 Hire Purchase
2 Finance Lease
3 Operating Lease/Contract Hire

The selection of a preferred option should really only be based on two issues:

a) Ownership
b) VAT

If a course wants to own the equipment and is able to claim all the VAT back from the Inland Revenue, then the choice should be Hire Purchase. From an accounting point of view HP purchases can be treated in the same
Buy now, pay later

Right: Mostlands Golf Club in Kent used a finance package to purchase new course maintenance equipment recently.

Below: Contract Hire enables a club to budget for the full cost of running a machine over a given period of time.

way as buying with cash. As such, all the VAT on the purchase price of the machine can be claimed back in the normal way at the time of buying the equipment and once the final instalment has been made the club owns the equipment.

If ownership is not an issue and a club is VAT exempt then Finance or Operating Leasing should be investigated. With both of these options the finance house will always own the equipment and the golf club will have full use of the products until the end of the term. In addition, rather than paying all the VAT on the purchase price on Day One, the VAT can be spread over the course of the agreement, being added on to each rental payment. This may be a sensible option for golf clubs that are partially VAT exempt and only able to claim back a percentage of their VAT.

The similarity between these two leasing options ends here. For a Finance Lease the length of the agreement is termed as the primary rental. Once the agreement has reached the end of the primary rental there are three choices:

i) Continue to use the equipment and pay a secondary rental that is made on an annual basis. This will continue as long as the equipment is used.

ii) Sell the equipment on behalf of the finance company having gained their permission first. Once the equipment is sold many finance companies may offer a rebate of rentals and, as such, return a percentage of the sale price to the customer.

iii) Hand the equipment back to the finance company.

In addition, a Finance Lease may be treated for accounting purposes on the Balance Sheet, and shown as a leased asset.

At the beginning of an Operating Lease, a third party takes a view on the residual value of the equipment at the end of the lease. The rentals are calculated based on this third party guaranteeing the agreed residual value. This often results in the rentals being lower with an Operating Leasing as opposed to a Finance Lease. However, at the end of the term of the agreement, the equipment is handed back to this third party, although some finance companies do offer the golf club additional options such as...
extending the lease period or making an offer to buy the equipment at a fair market price.

An additional option for an Operating Lease is to add a maintenance programme to the rental and this arrangement is termed Contract Hire. The maintenance can be adapted specifically to the club’s needs but usually covers the standard servicing costs and the usual wear and tear products. The major benefit of Contract Hire is that it enables the club to budget for the full cost of running a machine over a given period of time.

Repayment Terms
Greater flexibility of repayment terms is another benefit that finance companies offer. In what is a very seasonal industry, finance houses may offer flexible repayment periods of up to seven years. This means that repayments can be made to match the income stream of the club.

For example, clubs often have a surplus of money at the beginning of their finance year as subscriptions flow in. Some clubs may prefer to make a one-off, annual repayment with the payment being made a month after the club subscriptions have been made.

Clubs with a high percentage of summer green fees or those that are “Pay and Play” will have lower incomes during November to March. These clubs will benefit from a flexible repayment arrangement that allows for higher payments in the summer months, when income generation is greater, with reduced or no payments during the winter. This has the added benefit of paying for the equipment as it generates income. Traditionally, course maintenance equipment is locked up in the shed during the winter months, but by using flexible repayment terms it is possible to make the majority of payments when the equipment is being used and when cash flow is at its highest.

Using finance is certainly not complicated and it allows golf clubs the flexibility to purchase equipment without the initial outlay of cash. Many course managers and greenkeepers do not enjoy the benefits of limitless equipment budgets and this often restricts the choice of equipment. Invariably the choice of equipment is made predominantly on price, rather than on the benefits that the machinery will provide for the club. This in turn restricts the quality and productivity of work, and in the long term may prove to be a costly choice. If you use finance effectively it may just open up a few additional alternatives, improving both the quality of equipment and the playing conditions for your members.
Education and Training - May 2000

This month, BIGGA’s Education and Training Manager, Ken Richardson, highlights qualifications and training courses

**Qualifications awarded by professional bodies**

Many professional bodies award their own qualifications eg the Professional Golfers’ Association, the Institute of Personnel and Development, the Institute of Marketing and BIGGA is no exception. BIGGA awards the Master Greenkeeper Certificate to those Head Greenkeepers/Golf Course Managers who have:

- **a.** Accumulated 200 credits through formal and informal education and training plus experience as greenkeepers.
- **b.** Had their golf courses inspected by current Master Greenkeepers to assess competence in a range of greenkeeping and management skills.
- **c.** Passed a two stage examination to assess knowledge of a wide range of subjects from soil science to personnel management.

**Equivalence of qualifications**

A question often posed is "How can I compare the different types of qualifications?" The answer is, unfortunately, not very easily as the qualifications are different. Work related qualifications are mainly based on what someone knows but has not proved they can do the work on the job and work based qualifications show that someone can do the job at work and has an underpinning level of knowledge. The holder of a Master Greenkeeper Certificate has shown that they have accumulated skills knowledge and experience. A good test is to look at competence.

**For example:**

Greenkeeper X holds a National Certificate in Greenkeeping and has one year of greenkeeping experience. He/she is qualified but has little experience and may or may not be competent to perform all assistant greenkeeper tasks.

Greenkeeper Y holds an NVQ Level 2 Certificate in Sports turf and has been working as a greenkeeper for 3 years. He/she is qualified and should be competent to perform all assistant greenkeeper tasks.

Greenkeeper Z holds an HND in Golf Course Management and has worked on a golf course for one year. He/she is qualified but will not be competent to perform all assistant greenkeeper tasks.

Greenkeeper A holds an HNC in Golf Course Management and has been working as a greenkeeper for 10 years and for 3 years as a Head Greenkeeper. He/she is qualified and should be competent to perform all Head Greenkeeper tasks.

Greenkeeper B is a Master Greenkeeper. He is qualified and is competent to perform all Course Manager tasks.

Greenkeeper C holds a BSc in Turfgrass Science and has worked as a greenkeeper for 2 years. He/she is qualified and has gained very detailed knowledge, however his/her competence at a level higher than assistant greenkeeper has yet to be proved.

Greenkeeper D holds a Masters Degree in Turf Grass Science and has worked in greenkeeping for 10 years of which five years was as a Golf Course Manager. He/she is qualified and is fully competent to perform all Course Manager tasks.

Therefore, the way to assess one qualification against another is to look at competence. Vocational Qualifications indicate competence, Work Related Qualifications plus experience equals competence and experience can give competence without a qualification. BIGGA is fully committed to maintaining high standards of greenkeeper education and training and through its membership of the GTC monitors and controls training standards. If you are concerned about training standards in general or at a particular training provider then please contact me at BIGGA House or David Golding at the GTC.

**STRI training courses**

STRI will be running a five days training course for golf greenkeepers from 13 to 17 November 2000. The programme comprises five consecutive one day courses on Grasses, Fertiliser, Diseases, Ecology and Irrigation. The cost of each one day course is £88 + VAT per person and £78 + VAT for STRI Subscribers. Discounts are available for those booking two or more sessions. Full details are available from Amy at STRI on 01274 563131.

**Review of Apprenticeships**

Just when employers, employees and your Education and Training Manager were beginning to understand National Traineeships and Modern Apprenticeships, the Government has decided to review the schemes to bring them into line with other industrialised economies. Two year Foundation Degrees will be introduced to link higher education to the world of work and all 13 to 19 year olds will be allocated a mentor to help ease the transition between education and work.

There will also be a new apprenticeship structure with National Traineeships becoming Foundation Modern Apprenticeships and Modern Apprenticeships will become Modern Advanced Apprenticeships. The aim is to improve the structure of the schemes and make major improvements in the skills and knowledge requirements.

Specified off-the-job learning and specific minimum periods of learning will also be included. The Government has pledged an extra £30M to the scheme which it says will help to train 250,000 young people in 2001 (not all of them greenkeepers!)

**VAT per person and £78 + VAT for STRI Subscribers. Discounts are available for those booking two or more sessions. Full details are available from Amy at STRI on 01274 563131.**
How to stop the grass growing from under your feet.

Longhand account.
Trinexapac-ethyl is the active ingredient in Shortcut that works by redirecting plant growth. It specifically targets the gibberellic acid site responsible for cell elongation in grass. Not only does Shortcut inhibit vertical growth but actually diverts plant growth downward into the root system to produce increased food reserves and lateral stem development. This in turn produces a thicker, healthier sward that better equips your turf to withstand temperature extremes, moisture loss, traffic and wear and even helps in the management of Poa annua. American research has also established that Shortcut can enhance the performance of a fungicide when jointly applied and has no adverse effect on seedling development.

Shortcut version.
A unique turf management tool that can reduce mowing frequency and grass clippings by half, improves turf colour and helps manage annual meadow grass.
This month, Tracey Maddison, BIGGA's Membership Services Officer, welcomes almost 170 new members to the Association and gives some important membership renewal information.

If you are planning on leaving moving house or job or if you have moved recently, to ensure you carry on receiving your copy of Greenkeeper International and other important membership information, don't forget to inform your Association of your new details. Just complete the prepaid 'Change of Address' card at the back of this magazine, and drop it in the post - no stamp required!

Be a winner!
As you all know, if you introduce at least two new members to the Association this year, your name will automatically be entered into a grand prize draw at BTME 2001, to win one of three fantastic prizes. Last month, I told you about the second prize, a weekend break for two in York's Monkbar Hotel. Don't miss next month's Membership Update for details of the first and third prizes.

Still to Renew?
If this magazine doesn't belong to you, because your membership expiry date was December, January, February or March, and you still haven't renewed - it's not too late. If you are not a member and would like to join, contact the Membership Department for more details. Not only are you missing out on your own copy of Greenkeeper International, but you are unable to take advantage of the legal helpline, the personal accident insurance cover, and the new fantastic 20%* saving offered exclusively to BIGGA members from ARCO, the leading UK supplier of workwear, safety clothing, equipment and industrial and maintenance products.

For members who want to place an order, or to request a free ARCO catalogue, ring ARCO's special BIGGA Hotline on 01482 611773.

(*Discount not available on selected technical products and special offers.)

Advice and help with falling inflation
If you have been watching the movements in your building society account or bank account during the calendar year 1990, you might have noticed that your capital has not reduced in absolute terms, over time, its effects can be considerable.  "If you had invested £10,000 into a bank or building society account during the calendar year 1990 your income net of basic rate tax would have amounted to £9,956. By contrast, if you had taken your income throughout, in the twelve month period to 3 April 2000, the same £10,000 investment would have provided a net return of just £2,099.46, an effective reduction of 78%,

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People who have used banks or building society accounts as a means of generating income from their savings have suffered as a result of the fall, over the last ten years or so, in the UK Base Rate set by the Bank of England. Individuals who are reliant on their bank or building society accounts for income would have seen the income produced fall considerably over the last ten years. The trend in recent years has generally been downward, as these are driven by the UK Base Rate.

For example, if you had invested £10,000 into a bank or building society account during the calendar year 1990 your income net of basic rate tax would have amounted to £9,956. By contrast, if you had taken your income throughout, in the twelve month period to 3 April 2000, the same £10,000 investment would have provided a net return of just £2,099.46, an effective reduction of 78%.

(Investment advice based upon an average of the top ten current and former building societies.)

It is important to remember that, when taking income from a bank or building society account, your capital will remain level irrespective of the period of time the money is invested. Whilst this may appear attractive due to the fact that your capital has not reduced in absolute terms, the damaging effects of inflation would reduce its real value.

Inflation is something which cannot be ignored, as over time, its effects can be considerable. To put this into perspective, 30 years ago £10,000 would have bought a small family house whereas in today's terms the same £10,000 is what you would expect to pay for a small family car! Not surprisingly, there is now a growing need for alternative investment options to be provided which will help prevent this problem occurring in the future.

One such option is the J Rothschild Assurance Income Distribution Bond, where the fund managers aim to fund worthwhile charitable organisations. As you all know, if you introduce at least two new members to the Association this year, your name will automatically be entered into a grand prize draw at BTME 2001, to win one of three fantastic prizes. Last month, I told you about the second prize, a weekend break for two in York's Monkbar Hotel. Don't miss next month's Membership Update for details of the first and third prizes.

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Trevor Downing of J. Rothschild Assurance illustrates how income distribution bonds can make a difference if the interest on your savings has fallen.

It's your move!

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