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FUND RAISERS

Dale Robertson, Course Manager at Newmachar Golf Club, and two of his staff completed a 10 kilometer run in Aberdeen and raised £463.50 for the Archie Foundation in aid of a new children’s hospital in Aberdeen.

Dale is on the left of the picture with Patrick Wood, Deputy Head Greenkeeper, in the middle and apprentice Ben Brookes on the right.

SPORTSTURF IRELAND

All roads lead to Dublin on November 12 and 13 when Sportsturf Ireland, the largest turfgrass exhibition in Ireland is staged at the RDS venue close to the city centre. The show has recently been expanded to cover the legendary main hall of the Royal Dublin Society plus the adjacent modern Shelbourne Hall.

Sportsturf Ireland is a two-day trade show run on alternate years and isorganised by the GCSAI. It covers every aspect of turf grass management from golf courses, sportsgrounds and racecourses to public parks, cemeteries and amenity areas. The show will attract turfgrass managers, golf course and parks superintendents and visitors from all over Ireland and much further afield.

As this is a unique opportunity to meet those involved in the Irish industry ‘under one roof’, over 90% of the exhibition space has already been allocated with most major machinery and supply companies taking part. With the show having a two-year cycle a large attendance is expected driven by the curiosity factor to see what’s new in the market. It also acts as a social occasion as it is a great opportunity to meet and greet old friends from different parts of the country. Admission to the trade fair is free.

For further details about Sportsturf Ireland, the availability of exhibition space, or for a personal invitation, contact Tracy Coburn, the GCSAI’s Marketing Manager, on 028 406 22655, mobile 07803 237247 or email tracy@gcsai.org

MAKE THE MOST OF OLD MACHINERY

Clubs looking to maximise the use of their older machinery might like to take note of the work of Norbert Lischka and his team at Falkenstein Golf Club in Germany, who converted an old Toro 3000 into a leaf blower.

“Because of the number of trees we have here and the fact that it is a very hilly course the team came up with the idea of building a leaf blower on a 15 year old Toro 3000 green machine,” explained Norbert.

“We were able to use the old pedals for mowing and lifting. Therefore we bring the blower in the right distance to the surface by going up and down, when the area is undulated.

Norbert estimates that the cost to fit the blower onto the green machine was 2000 Euros (around £1,400).

ATV SAFETY WEAR

ATV operators should always wear the correct protective equipment and this includes a helmet. In the event of an accident, the most common injury sustained by an ATV user has been found to be a head injury and helmets are therefore a ‘must’ and not an option!

ATV manufacturers have worked closely with the HSE on the whole area of safety on quad bikes. As a result these machines are exempted from the requirement to fit a ROPS frame and seat belt because research has demonstrated that these vehicles are safer without them. However, good operator training is essential. This will include awareness of correct tyre pressure, speed control, body active weight distribution and correct personal protective equipment.

In a work situation an employer must provide, and the operator must wear a helmet. Failure to do so can lead to formal action by the HSE.

Welcome

IT’S AMAZING HOW TIME FLIES

A few months ago, during a rare moment of office time given over to reflection, I worked out that the September 2003 magazine would be the 100th I’d edited since joining the Association in April ’95.

Now here it is, the 100th magazine under my editorship and in a quiet way I take some pride in having achieved my own personal century.

What it also did was make me think back to those days when I began working for BIGGA and the changes that we have seen since then.

My first magazine, June ’95, featured Walter Woods who was preparing for his final Open Championship; there was an article from John Hacker, on “How a Green Committee Should be Run”, and a piece on “10 Further Pitfalls of Golf Course Maintenance” from Robert Frame, of the USGA Green Section.

News included a report on a special meeting a golf club was holding “to discuss the performance of its greenkeeping staff”.

A look at the Section Notes revealed the names of many members who are still working hard on behalf of the Association now. This highlights just how much a debt is due to them and how much we need new blood to come in. The more people involved the less of an imposition on individuals and the more people will enjoy their work on Association business at Section, Region or National level.

Another point which was brought home when looking at the June ’95 magazine was that it was predominately black and white and that, together with the fact that Ken Richardson still looked like a relatively young man in his photograph, adds to the feeling that the June ’95 magazine is now a little piece of history.

I recall one of my early trips was to Royal Porthcawl where a Support Team was assisting David Ward with the Walker Cup. Tiger Woods was still an amateur then but a young man in his photograph, adds to the feeling that the June ’95 magazine is now a little piece of history.

Among the highlights for me over the 100 magazines are the eight Harrogate’s I’ve attended each year and the opening of BIGGA HOUSE by HRH The Duke of York.

Eight and a half years time will be equally fun.

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Scott MacCallum, Editor
GOLF COURSE COMMITTEE PLEA

Given the potential for serious disease damage in situations where fungicides are banned, reference the story from Sweden and the Netherlands in last month’s issue, the R&A would like to hear from anyone who has managed this problem without recourse to fungicides over the last 3 years.

Please contact Steve Isaac, Secretary to the Golf Course Committee at The Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews, Fife, KY16 9JD or e-mail: steveisac@randagc.org

STRONG BACKING

Work by the GTC to develop standard learning materials based on best practice and principles for golf course maintenance has been strongly backed by the industry’s training providers.

Meeting at the GTC headquarters at Aldwark Manor Hotel and Country Club last week, over 50 delegates, representing most of the 28 accredited training providers in the UK and Ireland, were unanimous in supporting the move. They looked forward to receiving the new standard learning materials for the Sports Turf (Greenkeeping) National Occupational Standards – NVQs and SVQs Levels 2 and 3.

The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, City and Guilds and the Learning and Skills Council have also voiced their support for the GTC initiative, which is intended to ensure employers have greater confidence that their greenkeeping staff are learning what they really need to know.

As part of the changes, the GTC is raising awareness of A1, the new assessor qualification, and will be offering its network of training provider centres the opportunity to achieve the new award. In turn, this will raise awareness of how Course Managers or Head Greenkeepers can act as assessors in the workplace.

“Standardised training materials written by experts in the subject add extra credibility to the very good range of courses being run up and down the country. Students and their employers will both know exactly what knowledge level is required for the NVQs Levels 2 and 3,” said Keith Harrison, Lecturer in turf agronomy at Merrist Wood College in Surrey, who attended the meeting.

“Taking steps to ensure that students get better assessment of how well they are doing in the workplace from their own supervisor is also very welcome. How students put the knowledge they have gained into practice, and how well they fit into the working environment, can only really be tested on the ground by the people who know them best,” he added.

David Golding, GTC Education Director, explained “The skills which trainee greenkeepers learn are vital to the long-term success of the industry. We are constantly looking at ways of strengthening the partnership between the industry and its training providers, as we know that ultimately the success of individual businesses depends on the skills of their staff. We are delighted the training providers share our view that everyone will benefit from this new initiative. Employers are equally enthusiastic because the consistent standard of the new learning materials will ensure that they have the opportunity to become more involved in deciding how their own staff can benefit from the training on offer, and where and in what form it should be provided.”

The picture on page 27 of the August issue covering The Open Championship shows Ben Scrivener on the extreme right, not Alan Magee as we stated in the caption. Apologies to both Ben and Alan.

A GEM OF A DAY

The Harry Diamond Memorial Quaich was played over Belleisle Golf Course on Sunday, July 13. The 13th may be an unlucky number for some but not for the day of Harry’s Quaich. The sun was shining, the golfers (142 of them) turned out to enjoy the day. All Harry’s family were there. It was, if possible, for golfers, a perfect day.

It took the usual format, Stableford Foursomes and a shotgun start and the job of the event is that it is very much a family affair with ages ranging from 14 to 76.

After the match and before the presentation there was, as usual, a free drink, and many other little extras that Harry’s family could think up.

This year 10 greenkeepers took part in the competition and I am more than pleased to tell you that Derek Wilson, Head Greenkeeper of Irvine Bogside, was one of the four winners. There is now a greenkeeper’s name on the Quaich, which I am sure would have pleased Harry no end.

Harry’s immediate family, the three girls, two brothers and his wife, Jessie, presented the prizes while the Secretary, “Brownie” (as the locals call him), read out the winners.

The course was in very good condition and one could see the extra effort that the Head Greenkeeper and his staff had put in for this special day. It is always a pleasure to be present at this day to the memory of Harry Diamond.

The family send their grateful thanks to all who assisted in bringing the tournament to a happy and successful end for this year and, as we say in Scotland, “Haste ye back next year”.

Cecil George

MYERSCOUGH COLLEGE

From this month, Myerscough College will be the first college in the UK to offer an exciting new on-line Foundation Degree in Sportsturf.

The distance study options involve interactive internet-based teaching and learning materials making qualifications in Sports turf accessible to all with internet access, regardless of location or nationality. This more flexible method of study will also be a major breakthrough in overcoming the participation barriers currently experienced by those employed full-time in the Sportsturf industry, allowing them to gain a higher education qualification while they work.
Achieve Your International Goals

All over the world sports are expected to be played on first class surfaces. Our MSc Sports Surface Technology will teach you the skills needed to create and maintain outstanding surfaces, increasing your earning power and opening up worldwide career opportunities.

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- Over a maximum of five years you will complete all ten plus a research project which can be carried out at your own venue.
- We can also offer a one year full time course. Apply now to start in October 2003.

Supported by the Institute of Groundsmanship, British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association and the Football Association as well as other leading professional bodies and industrial organisations.

Bursaries available

For further details please contact Sue O'Neill, Student Enquiries, Cranfield University, Silsoe, Bedford MK45 4DT.
Tel: 01525 863319 Fax: 01525 863399
Email: StudentEnquiries.silsoe@cranfield.ac.uk
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**THE HARD WAY!**

Steve Welch, Course Manager of Taunton Vale Golf Club, Somerset, has recently taken five days to walk around an average length of any 18 hole course. He had little sleep, endured a temperature range of -10 to +35 degrees and was psychologically shattered. Confused? Let me explain.

Steve, on agreeing to help raise funds for the Golf Club's charity day, agreed to find the most difficult way of getting around the golf course as possible. When he realised that his course's length was so similar to the height of the world's highest stand alone mountain he knew what was to be done. Tanzania's Mount Kilimanjaro just had to be climbed!

However, Steve, 46, is well known to be scared of heights! Not deterred, he set about the arduous training of carrying a 20kg ruck sack on plenty of weekend walks.

Steve contacted the Expedition Co. and quickly realised that the expertise on offer from this local company was what he needed to help him reach the summit.

So earlier this year, Steve set out for an adventure of a lifetime. A day spent climbing through lush tropical rainforest, followed by a day of upper-highland type of scenery brought little in the way of problems.

However, on reaching the second campsite altitude sickness hit in a big way, with symptoms like the worst hangover possible. Two more days of steady climbing brought the team to their final camp.

"I have always sought to do crazy things, finishing 28th in the world 'Trail Running' Championships over 80 miles or jumping out of a plane for charity but nothing could have ever prepared me for the scariest four hours I could have ever imagined" said Steve.

Steve's dislike of heights, coupled with climbing in total darkness, made his sense of fear work overtime.

"My heart rate went off the scale and I'm still not sure how I reached the top" said Steve.

The £600 raised by his efforts will certainly be welcomed by the local hospital, but Steve now reckons that selling raffle tickets is for him from now on!

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**ARE YOU LOOKING FOR A RELIABLE AGRONOMIST?**

Robert Laycock, the current keeper of the Register of Independent Professional Turfgrass Agronomists (RIPTA), answers some questions about RIPTA.

**What is RIPTA?**

RIPTA is a register of 16 individuals who advise on turf surfaces of various types and who meet strict criteria for inclusion. These cover independence from commercial interests, scientific qualifications to at least first degree level, experience of providing independent advice on turf for a period of at least four years and adequate professional indemnity insurance cover. Individuals must gain most of their income from advisory work on turfgrass surfaces and abide by a written code of ethics.

Some of those on the Register may be employees of larger organisations, but they appear on the register in their own right.

The Register was launched in 2002 and meets annually, but members communicate in between by email and telephone. There are no staff or offices; a member of the register takes a voluntary turn as keeper or administrator to look after the register from year to year. Jeff Perris, Director of Advisory & Consultancy Services of the STRI was the first "Keeper" of the Register.

**How did RIPTA come about?**

Several independent agronomists became aware of an increasing number of advisors working for greenkeeping supply companies who were masquerading as independent when it was patently clear that they were aiming at increasing the sales of products sold by them or their parent companies. They decided to establish the Register to help potential clients choose suitable advisors.

**New Toro Trainer**

Toro turf machinery distributor Lely UK has appointed Ian Sumpter as its new Toro Training Manager.

His appointment is part of a programme of wider initiatives being introduced by Toro aimed at establishing itself as the turf machinery industry's No. 1 in customer care.

As such lan will play an important role in ensuring that Toro dealer service engineers, and those at its customers on golf courses, sports grounds and other locations, are fully trained and proficient in all aspects of servicing Toro machines.

He will work closely with Lely's technical advisors to develop and deliver a programme of operator and service training throughout the UK, which will also include end-user personnel who operate equipment, and Lely's own staff at its St Neots, headquarters.

"This is a very exciting opportunity for me," said Ian.

"Toro has a reputation for delivering a superb standard of after sales service and training and I am looking forward to being part of that process.”

He brings with him 13 years' experience of a wide range of related industries, including greenkeeping and sports and amenity turf management.
Following discussions between BIGGA and the Greenkeepers Training Committee (GTC), it can be announced that the January 2004 Continue to Learn Programme will be a joint BIGGA/GTC presentation.

There are several important changes to the Programme for 2004. These are:

• National Education Conference and Seminar Programme will be held in a purpose built facility in Hall D of the Harrogate International Centre (HIC).

• Continue to Learn Workshops will be held in the Moat House Hotel.

• The Conference and Workshop Registration Desk will be in the HIC Foyer (Entrance opposite the Moat House).

• All Conference registration will take place on Monday 19 January and Tuesday 20 January, in HIC, from 8.00 am.

• All Workshop registration will take place on Monday 19 January, in HIC, from 8.00 am.

• The BIGGA Education & Training Stand has moved to Stand Q8.

The BIGGA Annual General Meeting will be held in Hall D of The Harrogate International Centre on Wednesday 21 January at 5.15 pm.

The theme of the National Education Conference is: Golf Sport and Business

Chaired by Roger Greenwood.

Speakers include:
Jimmy Kidd
Peter McEvoy

Professor Al Turgeon
Chris Hartwiger
Billy McMillan
Kenny Mackay
Kate Entwistle
Alex McCombie
Terry Buchan
Michael Stagnetto
Jeff Carlson

They will show how the Sport of Golf is a business, how business impacted on golf in the past, how golf impacts on business today, on golfers expectations and on how greenkeepers can cope in the future.

Three one-day workshops will cover:
Health and Safety
Jerrard Winter from Haztek International.

Water and the Golf Course
Dennis Mortram.

Real Influencing Skills
David Bancroft-Turner
The Conference and Workshops will be supported by the John Deere Team Challenge.

Seminars will follow the format of Continue to Learn 2003 and will last 30 minutes. The Hall will be cleared after each Seminar giving extra time to attend BTME & ClubHouse Exhibition.

The Exhibitions Banquet starring Bootleg ABBA will take place in the Majestic Hotel on Thursday 22 January.

On Wednesday 21 January, the Keynote Speaker, supported by Ransomes Jacobsen is Alvin Law.

The Careers Fair, supported by TORO will be held in Hall Q.
Ken Richardson looks forward to this year’s autumn training courses and reminds Course Managers of their responsibilities for reducing workplace stress.

Many members wonder what they get for their membership fee each year. On average, we spend £25 per member on Education and Training, including: Regional Training Courses, the National Education Conference and Workshops, BTME/Clubhouse Seminars, Regional Conferences, Field Guides, Posters, Lending Library, Manuals, Videos, CD ROMS, DVD, Higher Education Scholarships and Refund of Fees. We have almost completed the planning of this Autumn’s Regional Training Courses and places are available on the following:

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Venue</th>
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<tr>
<td>28 &amp; 29 October</td>
<td>Essential Management Skills</td>
<td>Sunningdale Park Conference Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>29 &amp; 30 October</td>
<td>Basic Computer Skills</td>
<td>Newark Golf Club</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 &amp; 5 November</td>
<td>Next Steps in Management Skills</td>
<td>Beedles Lake Golf Club</td>
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<tr>
<td>11 November</td>
<td>Fire Safety and Manual Handling</td>
<td>Pennard Golf Club</td>
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<tr>
<td>25 &amp; 26 November</td>
<td>Basic Computer Skills</td>
<td>BIGGA House</td>
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Each one-day course costs BIGGA members just £30 + VAT (35.25) and each two-day course costs £60 + VAT (£70.50). As the actual cost of staging a one-day course is £80 plus VAT and £160 for a two-day course, members can gain a subsidy worth more than their membership fee by attending just one day of training.

Courses in Tractor Driving, Risk Assessment, Presentation Skills, Abrasive Wheels and Chainsaw Operation are being held this autumn, however, they are already sold out.

More courses are being planned for the Spring of 2004, including, Tractor Driving, Further Computer Skills, Risk and COSHH Assessments, Budgets and Finance. Watch out for details of these and other courses in future editions of Greenkeeper International.

STRESS MANAGEMENT

The Health and Safety Executive treat hazards that lead to stress related illnesses in the same way as hazards leading to physical injury. Major changes in Health and Safety Law have made it easier for employers to control stress. The Health and Safety Executive treat hazards leading to physical injury. Major changes in Health and Safety Law have made it easier for employers to control stress.

Workplace stress is of increasing concern and it has been estimated that stress related illnesses are responsible for more absenteeism from work than any other cause. However, due to the stigma associated with reporting stress, there has been a high degree of under-reporting. This is set to change and golf club managers need to analyse the risks to health and safety caused by stress.

How many of you recognise some or all of the following as being a problem at your golf club?

- Boring or repetitive work or too little to do
- Having responsibility for others
- Poor working relationships
- Bullying, racial or sexual harassment
- Inflexible work routines
- Physical danger
- Poor working conditions
- Lack of communication
- Lack of support for personal development
- Blame culture when things go wrong

Golf Course Managers and Golf Club Management must implement strategies to control or remove these risks. Some are easy to put right by training. For example by providing training when and where necessary and increasing the scope of jobs for those already trained. Change the way in which jobs are done giving workers more variety of tasks. Avoid bullying and/or abuse.

I am sure that many of you will say ‘it’s yet another set of rules that meddle in affairs that are not the concern of Government’ but as with all Health and Safety, reducing stress is a matter of common sense. Think about your club and reduce the risk.

Further information can be found at www.hse.gov.uk/stress/index.htm from the HSE.

Tony Smith, Course Manager at Teeside Golf Club will be presenting a seminar on Stress in the Workplace on the Continue to Learn Programme on Wednesday 21 January 2004.
Grinding specialists, Bernhard & Co has strong links with the US where a high percentage of the Top 100 courses use their grinders.

In conjunction with BIGGA, Bernhard is offering 10 greenkeepers the opportunity of a lifetime, to take a trip to the leading golf show in the US the GCSAA Golf Course Conference & Trade Show to be held in San Diego, California, in February next year. It is the third year such a delegation will be heading to the States, following on from the very first one which visited Canada.

ALL BIGGA GREENKEEPER MEMBERS ARE ELIGIBLE TO APPLY.

To enter just complete the form on the front of this magazine and return to BIGGA HOUSE before 30 September 2003.