AROUND THE GREEN

NORTHERN REGION

The Autumn work is now well under way with sitters, hollow-tiners and verti-drainers going like the clappers.

Headingly Golf Club was our last venue of the golf season. Everybody enjoyed the day as always and our sincere thanks to head greenkeeper Peter Blacker and his staff for their hard work, the caterers for an excellent meal, members of the trade who donated prizes last but not least Headingly Golf Club from allowing us the courtesy of the course.

I am writing this having just returned from the ISEKI National Tournament at Moor Allerton. Northern section members Edwin Walsh picked up first prize in the first division but failed to retain the overall winners prize.

The Northern region did win the course to the Greenkeepers, an annual match against the Southern region for £500 for rung funds. Northern section members in that team were Edwin Walsh, Dave Collins and Mick Hannan. The hospitality shown by Iseki was tremendous and thanks go to them for the support they give to BIGGA.

Don’t forget our Winter lectures and please ring me to book the Christmas golf and the trip to Ransomes.

Two of our reps moving around are Alan Hullah striking out on his own with Greenkeeping Services. Also changing companies is Steve Burroughs who has moved from GEM to horticulture and amenity specialists N. Hutchings Ltd. Good luck to you both.

News reaches me of the retirement of a former chairman and secretary of our section John Scott of Wetherby G.G. On behalf of the section we all wish you a long and happy retirement.

BO LUPTON

SOUTH COAST SECTION

I am indebted to Joe Burdett for the following notes on the Section’s Autumn Tournament, played at the Isle of Purbeck Golf Course on Thursday, October 6.

The weather forecast was forever true, and the morning round was played during much needed rain, but unwelcome for our tournament the afternoon round was played in much nicer conditions.

A ‘field’ of 47 players took part in the event sponsored by Roffey Brothers Limited and Frys of Gosport - and the prize table was a credit to their interest in golf greenkeepers.

J.T. Lowe Limited put up two bottles of Champagne for the longest drive on the 2nd hole, which was won quite convincingly by Mark Webb of Aireford with a drive of some 292 yards.

Synchemicals/Vitax put up a bottle of whisky as first prize in the draw, which was organised by Ian Greenfield during the evening meal.

Eric James officiated on behalf of Ken Lodge, who was unable to be present, and thanked the Host Club Directors for their generosity in permitting the Courtesy of the Course to the Greenkeepers, to the Co-Sponsors Roffey Brothers Limited and Frys of Gosport for their generosity in providing the prizes on display (Peter Hampton of Roffey Brothers further supplemented the prize table with 2 navy jumpers).

Mr James then requested the sponsors to present the prizes and sweeps to the winners:

Overall winner 36 hole foursome/greensome points. The Trophy and a pair Crystal Rose Bowls: Bernard Emberley and Paul Hector, Knighton Heath; 64 points.

Runners-up pair leather writing cases: Mark Diment and Derek Cheetham, Knighton Heath; 58 points. Third - pair 12 piece China Coffee Sets: Charles Burke and John Walker, Boscombe: 56 points.

Surviving best scores morning foursome points. Joint winners - pair navy blue jumpers: Dave Norman and Alan Mousley - Isle of Purbeck; 50 points - pair ‘wasted’ crystal tankards: Adrian Panks and Eric Jennings - Dowstairs; 50 points.

Surviving best score afternoon greensome points - pair ‘straight’ crystal tankards: Bob Walker - Boscombe and Joseph Burdett - Brokenhurst Manor; 34 points.

Congratulations to Joe and his partner, Bob Walker, for selecting a crystal tankard in the afternoon greensome points.

The section’s turkey trot on Wednesday, 6th December at the Royal Winchester Golf Club. The fee is £12.00 per person with 18 hole stableford format. Teeing off is from 10.30 a.m.

Applications to play to Joe at 948 Castle Lane East, Bournemouth, Dorset, BH7 6SP. Telephone: 0202 483017.

BOB DENNIS

SOUTH WEST SECTION

EVERYONE got stuck into repair work after an exceptional amount of play this past summer. Summer does seem a long way off though because of the drastic weather this month, which was epitomised by the British Assistants Championships at Turnberry when flooding stopped play on the first day, then gale force winds arrived causing all sorts of problems with balls blowing off greens. 

The ruling was that the concession stood.

One new appointment in the section this month sees Bob McKay arriving as Head Greenkeeper at St Nicholas via Dumfries and County then Douglas in Cork.

Congratulations are in order to Chris Kennedy on his appointment as Golf Course Manager at Wentworth.

DUNCAN GRAY

AYRSHIRE SECTION

The annual match against the Welsh Section at St. Rollox (Pesticides) Foundation on this past summer.

Ten greenkeepers from the South West recently attended a one-day course on the EPA (Pesticides) Foundation module. Another such course could easily be arranged at Cannington College if sufficient numbers come forward, greenkeepers do not necessarily have to be Association members to attend this one.

Two dates for your diaries:

Christmas competition and luncheon, Weston Super Mare G.C. on 14th December.

New Year’s Meeting, Bath Golf Club, Sham Castle, Bath, 18 holes morning and tour of course for non-players then lunch followed by afternoon speakers. This is on January 10. In the event of the course being closed by snow the afternoon lectures will still go ahead. We look forward to full support.

PAUL WORSTER
THANK you for the excellent two days I spent at Aldwark Manor. I am sure that I can speak for the other lads in saying that we were treated like five star guests. Everyone was so kind, helpful and reassuring especially for the interviews which I thought were conducted in a superbly relaxed way. I've come back from Aldwark with more confidence about myself and our profession, and feel I can now see the way ahead. With the help of BIGGA behind us the future looks really exciting. Could you please extend my thank you to the other BIGGA and Toro representatives for such a rewarding two days. It was such a good feeling being part of a group of people so professional and being treated as an equal. Good luck for the future in your superb new headquarters.

Guy Woods,
Dafford Building, Larkhall, Bath

WRITE to you concerning my recent visit and consequent success in the Toro Scholarship award at Aldwark Manor. I would first of all like to convey my sincere thanks to all the BIGGA team who were involved in all the organisation of this highly successful event. A lot of hard work and dedication must have gone in to organising everything and it was all done with the upmost professionalism. It is a great pity all the nominees could not have gone to Amhurst. I am looking forward to my trip immensly and will do my best to represent the BIGGA and the young greenkeepers of Great Britain.

Mark Proctor,
The North Lodge, Cobblers Cross, Tarporely, Cheshire.

WOULD like to thank all concerned who were involved in the Toro Young Greenkeeper of the Year awards, which turned out to be a very successful and well organised few days. I found the four days spent there enjoyable and relaxing and am sure that I have benefitted from the exhilarating experience and again send my thanks to all concerned.

Simon Fearnley,
94a Kingston Road, New Maiden, Surrey.

Thank you lads for the thanks! It is great to know that Mark and Simon took time to sit down and express their gratitude.

I am writing to comment on your recent article on "nitegolf". As the company I work for has become the U.K. importers for this product I feel I am worthy to comment on this subject.

One of our directors saw the potential of "nitegolf" in America whilst on a trade show trip to Orlando, he brought the idea back with him to England. He could see the possible "fun" side of this type of golf. The first showing of the idea was at a competition we held for charity, teeing off at 8 p.m. Sixty competitors took their places for a Texas Scramble start. For the first competition the response for people to play was terrific. The game was played for fun and everybody really enjoyed themselves, all asking when the next one was to be held.

The possibility of marketing this product was seriously looked into as the response was so good. A package was devised and information was sent to every club. A lot of clubs from all over the country took this offer up, some of them were so pleased with their first matches that they have re-ordered and played several more. To date we have had some 25 nite lite matches at Wexham all of them a success. If the event is properly organised there should not be any accidents.

As regards the "extra work" for the greens staff, I can honestly say that the only operation my staff have to do is to dig a small hole for a rocket launcher firework tube to go in (which we do not use anymore) and to pick up some of the old lightsticks, which are attached to the flagpoles. The competitions can be run so easily now that the professional has passed the organisation of them to some of his junior staff.

I do not believe in pampering the golf course and our type of course is there as a commercial venture and making money is the name of the game. That is what we try to do. The extra work and tear is very minimal. As all of my staff receive an incentive bonus based on the green fee takings they are not, or would not be, bothered about any work they may be called upon to do for a nite lite competition. And we charge a green fee even if it is pitch black.

I have been trying to persuade our local committee to hold a nite lite match at our club for the past year, but to no avail. Believe me it is a great fun evening out. If anybody is interested in trying it out at their club or for a bit of fun at a BIGGA evening do not hesitate to contact me on 0753 662122.

Roy Kate
The Junipers
Elizabeth Park
Wokingham
Surrey

CONGRATULATE you on your excellent magazine. As a proud member of BIGGA's growing international membership I know my colleagues will be happy to assist. In Sweden we have 260 Head Greenkeepers. In all there are 500 members of the Swedish Greenkeepers Association.

Stig Persson
Chairman
Swedish Greenkeepers Association

GREENKEEPING MANAGEMENT welcomes letters, comments and views from readers. Letters should be addressed to The Editor, Greenkeeping Management, Spencer House, Market Lane, Swadlincote, Derbyshire DE11 6DS.
ON THE COURSE

CHRIS KENNEDY - ON COURSE FOR WENTWORTH

EXT time you curse when you come across a green which has just been turned into a giant sieve by the holocoring antics of the greens staff, think of an egg. So says Chris Kennedy of Haggs Castle, who has just been successfully head-hunted for the top greenkeeper's job at Wentworth. His philosophy might be called 'The Omelette Syndrome.'

Another success for a 'BIGGA' and better man

Kennedy, 42, a pioneer of an enlightened era of course management, was one of Scotland's first batch of fully qualified greens staff. "The job is a science, an art, and a way of life - you have to enjoy it or you would never work the ungodly hours," Cookery doesn't come into it, but the analogy is worth examining. "It is impossible to make an omelette without cracking eggs," he explained. "Maintaining golf courses is like that. Sometimes you almost have to destroy an area to put it right. Golfers do not always understand that, especially when they are entertaining guests. They do not enjoy greens which have been subject to holocoring, top dressing, or slit tining, but they are necessary evils, believe me.".

With a few eggs still need cracked from time to time at Haggs, members there more often have a cordon bleu course on a plate. In comparison, a big basket awaits him at Wentworth, where a plan had been drawn up to restore the complex to its former condition, that at Haggs, where he feels must be improved to attract and keep the right people: "The rewards on the Continent are far greater," he points out.

The rewards on the Continent are far greater,

The R & A document also urges firmer, faster, and truer greens, and mud-free fairways. He believes Scotland is a decade ahead of England in educating greens staff. In 1966. Students "are considerable... for well-meaning amateurs put in a terrible position for a period of one to three years." Frequently volunteers, they are not spared - even by their friends - if the course is in poor condition, and he adds:

"Then, by the time a good working relationship is established with the greens staff, their period of office is over and it is someone else's turn."

"Private clubs are not businesses, they are run for members, which is good in some ways but the management committee does change. I would rather see the role of the greens convener become one of liaison between the permanent greens staff, responsible for the condition of the course, and the committee."

Kennedy's experience in the 1972 reconstruction of the Haggs course under the direction of Dave Thomas and Peter Alliss was important in his being chosen by Wentworth, where a new South course is being constructed, the architect being done by John Jacobs, Gary Player, and Bernard Gallacher.

"Mr Willy Bauer, the chief executive, has very positive ideas about what is going to happen to put it back at the No. 1 inland complex in Britain."

Kennedy will be in charge of a greens staff of more than 30, similar to Augusta National, but with three and a half courses to attend to. It is still much bigger that at Haggs, where he has a staff of six, plus two YTS employees.

He believes Scotland is a super layout in beautiful golfing country which has been cut out of trees, and there is much overseeding and renovation work to be done. Other the two 18-hole courses have suffered because of dry weather and are in a rundown condition. And with two big televised tournaments, the pressure on the course of the crowds from feet alone is great.

Kennedy will be in charge of a greens staff of more than 30, similar to Augusta National, but with three and a half courses to attend to. It is still much bigger that at Haggs, where he has a staff of six, plus two YTS employees.

He said: "One of the nice things that has happened in my time at Haggs is the number of young men I have trained who have gone on to become head greenkeepers themselves and who have called me to say thanks - and that they are now passing on the same lessons to their own staff." Among his proteges are the top greens men at Bothwell Castle, Renfrew, Dumfries & County, and others in England and Ireland - eggs which have hatched as he moves on to a new and bigger nest.

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December '99
SUCCESSFUL working relationship comes from understanding the other man’s problems and making sure he understands yours. A club member becomes the Chairman of Green for many and varied reasons - it may simply be to give something back, to be the change he wants to see, or to be the Chairman; he may be asked to stand because the Captain thinks he knows about growing plants or has a nice lawn; he may be co-opted into the job by a few die-hard members.

Whatever the reason, the common thread is that he knows nothing whatsoever about turf or its management. If he accepts this, then he can be helped through his term of office without any more acrimony that can exist in any working relationship.

Either way, the Chairman of Green is elected on the basis that he will direct and motivate course management to the highest standards for the least possible financial input. While in providing funds for the course, he has, in addition, to compete with the demands of all the other clubs which make up the General Committee, all wanting the lions share of a limited pot. This throws up the first big hurdle, if the Chairman of Green does not understand turf, often coming from the argument how can he argue effectively against demands for expenditure which is readily understandable – new carpets/curtains, roof repairs, mixer, club members. Measurements and records can be simple and easy to make note of, and with facts concerning the course to hand, arguments can become irrefutable.

"Nothing can be done by acquiescence . . . nor by bloody-minded competition"

So, in the meantime, what can be done to ease the burden of responsibility, and consequently to aim for a more equitable working relationship?

Nothing can be done passively, simply by keeping out of the way or by acquiescence. All this leads to is small problems growing into large ones. By the same token nothing is to be achieved through bloody-minded confrontation, nor indeed by the belief that the Green Committee should accept everything the Greenkeeper tells them in gospel, and provide everything that is asked for without question. This does not happen in any working situation whether it be on a golf course or not.

Active development of a working relationship with the Chairman of Green and his Committee comes through provision of usable information, in a form which is understandable both technically and financially.

And if this usable information can be backed up with an independent viewpoint, the Chairman, the Chairman of Green, is in a position to argue strongly against demands for expenditure. Where this can lead is that the Chairman can have the facts at his disposal, which can be used to argue that expenditure on the green, over the period of several years at a time, if voted into the club's constitution, then the swings and roundabouts of constantly changing committees can be circumvented, bringing in vital long-term continuity.

Such documents are only produced if interest and enthusiasm can be generated through committees, because they involve a lot of hard work for a few. But once instilled within the structure of the clubs management, setting standards and making provision for meeting those standards becomes a responsibility which cannot be overturned by demands for self and the course, longer term, such information is invaluable in forming the basis for a course management policy document. This is something every club should have, covering every aspect of life on the green, over the period of several years at a time. If voted into the club's constitution, then the swings and roundabouts of constantly changing committees can be circumvented, bringing in vital long-term continuity.

Working with as well as for the Chairman of Green to the general benefit of the course can only benefit one's career in greenkeeping in the long term. But still it has to be accepted that some Chairman will never come to the realization of anything they do not want to agree too, and at the end of the day these people are in charge and have to have their own way – good or bad. It is to be hoped that the current tide of change encouraged by the R&A and the Golf Unions will create a situation where these few become an ever-declining number, and a positive working relationship can be developed at every club.

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Apply in confidence with full C.V. to Box. No. 14, Greenkeeping Management, Spencer House, Swalwell, Tyne & Wear

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SALARY NEGOTIABLE  
Applications in writing will full CV to:  
The Secretary  
Willesley Park Golf Club  
Measham Road,  
Ashby-de-la-Zouch  
Leicestershire, LE6 5PF

LEADING LEISURE PLC  
require a  
Head Greenkeeper  
To commence employment by 1st March, at the latest, on a new course nearing completion near Winchester, Hampshire. This 18 hole championship standard course designed by Dave Thomas Ltd. will compliment a luxury hotel complex development.  
The successful applicant will have a minimum of 5 years experience as a Head Greenkeeper with a thorough knowledge in the use and maintenance of modern greenkeeping machinery.  
The ability to manage and motivate staff is essential.  
The salary and benefits package is negotiable depending on ability and experience.  
Interviews will be held in early January.  
Write with full C.V. to:  
Mr. Bill Squires at  
Dave Thomas Ltd.  
Love Lane, Betchton,  
Sandbach,  
Cheshire, CW11 0TS

TERRITORY SALES MANAGERS  
Grounds Maintenance Supplies  
& Sports Equipment  
Around £15,000 plus Car OTE  
STA-BRITE SUPPLIES LIMITED, the fastest growing supplier in the amenity turf care market, seeks 2 or 3 energetic Territory Sales Managers with proven track records of success in personal selling of grounds maintenance supplies in the southern counties of England. An attractive remuneration package including a high basic salary is offered to reflect the challenge of increasing the company’s turnover substantially.  
SALES OFFICE CLERK also sought, aged 22+ with experience of our industry and a good telephone manner.  
All applications will be treated in strict confidence. Please write enclosing a detailed CV to:  
Mr M J Lyons, Managing Director  
STA-BRITE SUPPLIES LIMITED  
Unit 7 Bessemer Park, Bessener Road  
BASINGSTOKE, Hants RG21 3NB

STA-BRITE  
STA-BRITE SUPPLIES LIMITED

PONTEFRAC T AND DISTRICT GOLF CLUB  
require a  
HEAD GREENKEEPER  
Applicants must be experienced in course management, machinery maintenance and have the ability to lead and motivate staff.  
The club intends to make an early appointment.  
Salary by negotiation.  
Accommodation available.  
For an application form and further details, please contact  
The Secretary  
Pontriffract and District Golf Club  
c/o 24, Fair View,  
Carleton, Pontefract,  
West Yorkshire, WF8 3NU

GREENKEEPING  
W E S T  Y O R K S H I R Eструктор Eine

December '89