

BIGGA education officer appointed

David Golding, the Northern Regional Administrator has been appointed to the newly created position of Education Officer for the Association.

David, 37, hopes to take up this challenging position before the beginning of March if release dates can be agreed with his present employers, Trafford Borough Council.

He has been the authority's Golf Courses Superintendent for the past five years as well as an active member and past Secretary of the North West Greenkeepers Section.

Married with a daughter and two keen golfing sons, David sees his new role developing in three particular areas.

Working closely with colleges on the expected updating of the City & Guild Syllabus, the growth of training for mature greenkeepers, denied formal greenkeeper education, through weekend courses and the promotion of better opportunities for school leavers, who see their future on golf courses.

He will also be heavily involved in the Association's Conference and Seminar Programmes, as well as the Employment Division of BIGGA.

David says he is particularly keen to offer a training scheme to a large number of members anxious to widen and improve their practical greenkeeping knowledge, but who may now feel reluctant to follow a formal examination syllabus leading to written examination.

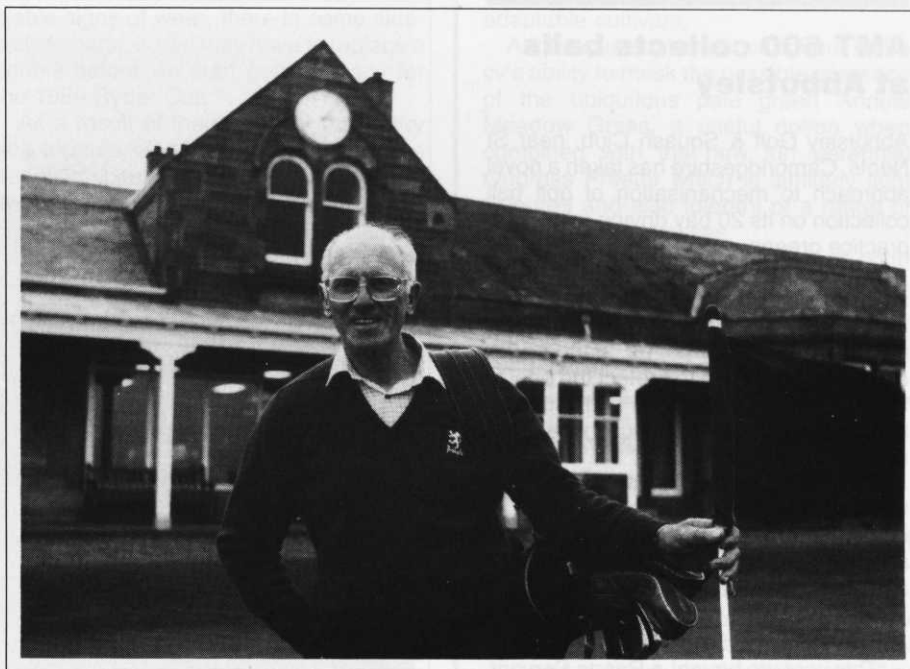
New Years Honour for Royal Troon greenkeeper

Royal Troon's Head Greenkeeper, 61 year old Norman Fergusson has been awarded the British Empire Medal in the New Year's Honours List.

He has been in charge of this year's Open Championship course for 30 years and was born in the greenkeeper's house at Royal Troon, where his father was head greenkeeper for 40 years, before Norman took over the prestigious appointment.

Greenkeeping has been a family profession for three generations and his brother William is also at Royal Troon as first assistant.

A one time single figure golfer, Norman still enjoys a round with his son, an insurance broker, at Carnoustie, but a slipped disc put paid to his competitive play.



Norman Fergusson awarded the British Empire Medal.

The honour came to him as a complete surprise, but he does recall a visit to the club by the Lord Lieut. of the County some 18 months ago, when this dignitary spent a couple of hours with him, discussing the various items of golf course machinery.

He said he is looking forward to his fifth Open event in July and the eleven greenstaff are hard at work preparing the course.

So far they have refaced 50 bunkers and built a new tee at the 18th to extend the final hole by 30 yards, but apart from this change the course will remain as it was for the last Open Championship in 1982.

A major problem still to face will be the installing of a 60,000 gallon water tank to service the now essential tented village.

Injured greenkeeper saved by golfers

Cries for help from a trainee greenkeeper and the prompt response from golfers when he was caught in machinery while cutting fairways at a Welsh Golf Club saved him from further injury a court was told in December.

Unguarded machinery was blamed for the fracture of an employee's arm, Llangollen Magistrates heard at a court hearing on 5th December.

The 600 member Vale of Llangollen Golf Club were fined £500 after pleading

guilty to failing to ensure the safety of an employee, Mr Jeremy Hughes an 18 year old trainee greenkeeper who broke his arm when his sleeve got caught in moving machinery.

In a prosecution brought by the Health and Safety Executive, the court was told Mr Hughes had tried to remove a stick caught in the blades of a fairway gangmower when the incident occurred.

It was only the alertness of two golfers on the seventh fairway responding to his cries for help, who saved him from further injury.

Mr Tudor Williams prosecuting for the Health and Safety Executive said, "the machinery was unguarded and under Section 2 of the Health and Safety at Work Act, the employer should ensure the safety of all employees".

He told the Magistrates Mr Hughes had stopped to see what was wrong and why the blades were not working correctly when his sleeve was caught in the machinery.

Mr Williams added that a Health and Safety Executive Inspector had visited the golf club in November 1985 and had remarked on the lack of guarding on some pieces of machinery, which had been purchased 4½ years ago.

Mr Anthony O'Toole defending Llangollen Golf Club, an 18 hole private club in Clwyd, said "If this man had used an iota of common sense and turned the machinery off this incident might not have occurred.

AMT 600 collects balls at Abbotsley

Abbotsley Golf & Squash Club, near St Neots, Cambridgeshire has taken a novel approach to mechanisation of golf ball collection on its 20 bay driving range and practice greens.

The linchpin of the new system is a specially modified John Deere AMT 600, a five wheeled load carrier fitted with low ground pressure tyres as standard. A cage has been fitted to protect the operator from airborne golf balls and two front mounted tow bars for coupling a front mounted Range Servant.

"In 1986 the whole job was manual and we employed an army of school boys to collect the balls and wash them each morning. This was very labour intensive and not very satisfactory," explained Jenny Wisson, General Manager, Abbotsley Golf & Squash Club.

"This year we bought a Range Servant and originally pushed it around with a tractor. During the winter months it cut up the range, balls were buried where it ran over them so we looked at alternative ways to collect the golf balls," she said, "Our main concern was to get the balls picked up with the minimum damage to the range."

Keith Tysoe, Woodlands Agricultural, came up with the AMT 600 as a solution. The modification of adding an operator's cage means balls can be collected any time in complete safety and the range does not have to be closed.



The operators cage means the driving range can be kept open.

"The AMT 600 has not damaged the range, can run over balls without burying them and is very easy to drive which is good news," said Jenny.

After collection, balls are tipped into a ball dispenser which also washes them. "It has made ball collection and cleaning a one man job," said Jenny.

Tom James, Course Manager is particularly pleased with the AMT 600's

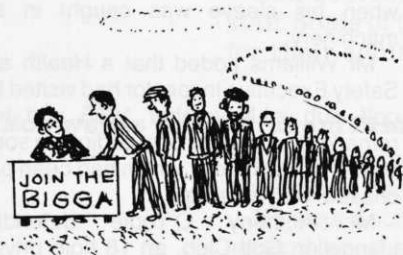
performance. "We can even run it over the practice greens and collect the golf balls without any damage which we could not do with the tractor," he said.

When not in use on the driving range the AMT 600 also works on the main 18 hole course. "The ground staff find it is particularly useful for running around the course and the trailer on the back makes it particularly valuable," said Jenny.

THREE WISHES FOR GREENKEEPING IN 1989

BY JOHN CAMPBELL

1. To have every greenkeeper in the country become a member of the BIGGA



2. A new chemical for the control of poa annua.



3. A reduction in the number of superfluous bunkers. Most courses have too many which adds to the work of the greenkeeping staff.



Special turf tyres run over the Belfry

Maintaining two golf courses in 'tip top' condition, particularly when one of them is the venue for the Ryder Cup is no mean task, but Derek Canning, Golf Course Manager at the Belfry and his staff of 13 take it in their stride.

Derek's staff include a head greenkeeper, eight greenkeepers, three gardeners and a full time mechanic. They have a vast array of powered turf care equipment at their disposal, to keep the courses in first class condition including two agricultural tractors for the fairways and semi-rough and it was with these that a problem presented itself prior to the 1985 Ryder Cup.

The tractors, a MF265 and a MF590 are both fitted with Ransomes Hydraulic 5/7 Sportcuttes and with standard tyres, they were leaving substantial tyre track impressions on the fairways.

Because turf tyres were not available for most full sized tractors, specialist wheel and tyre manufacturers, Undergear Equipment (RPB) Ltd of West Bromwich were called upon for help.

Undergear Equipment experimented with various tread patterns and tyre pressures until a satisfactory pattern, was achieved. Tyres with this tread pattern were then specially produced and fitted to the MF tractors in time for the Ryder Cup preparations.

Since then both tractors have been used every day on their special turf tyres. "They are excellent tyres and don't mark the course at all" said Derek Canning "Undergear Equipment did a first class job and although the tread shows no appreciable signs of wear, there is some side-

well damage, so we may have to replace a couple before we start getting ready for the 1989 Ryder Cup."

As a result of their work for the Belfry golf courses, Undergear Equipment have supplied special turf tyres for agricultural tractors to a number of District and County Council, Leisure and Recreation Departments and also just exported 50 of these tyres to Sweden.

Epsom on STRI merit list for 1989

Already established on the French, Dutch and continental lists, Epsom, the new Chewings fescue from Johnsons Seeds, is featured in the STRI 1989 merit list for the first time.

Epsom is a fine-leaved cultivar which receives an 'A' rating for the important complementary characteristics of compactness, mowing tolerance - down to 5mm - summer greenness and disease resistance (notably Red Thread).

While its superior turfgrass qualities make it suitable for both ornamental and fine sports turf, Epsom has been selected for its ability to perform well under conditions of low fertility. Thus it has a wide application under low and minimal maintenance where tolerance to environmental stresses and low inputs of nitrogen are primary considerations.

Easy to establish, Epsom possesses a characteristic and attractive light green hue which is retained even under warm, dry conditions and importantly low fertility. It does not require the high inputs of nutrients necessary to sustain other less

adaptable cultivars.

Another useful benefit of Epsom is the cv's ability to mask the possible presence of the ubiquitous pale green Annual Meadow Grass, a useful option when combined with the new turf perennial ryegrass Prester which is similarly light coloured and also tolerant of a range of environmental stresses.

Bred by the leading Dutch seed company D.J. Van de Have, Epsom is available exclusively for Johnsons Seeds. Limited quantities are available for the 1989 season.

SISIS visit by greenkeepers

North West Greenkeepers were guests of SISIS, the Macclesfield machinery manufacturers, last month.

The morning was spent at the nearby Tytherington Club where a number of equipment items were put through their paces, including the Powaspread top dresser, the Varicore aerator and the pto driven Rotorake.

Following lunch the party toured the SISIS factory and saw how computerisation is used to assist in design techniques.

New Scottish Golf Course in Japanese Deal

Letham Grange, the recently completed 18 hole golf course north of Carnoustie modelled on the layout of Augusta National has missed by a whisker, being included among Britain's fifty best in a survey by Golf World.

No mean feat when compared to the opposition provided by the most mature golf courses on both sides of the Irish Sea.

Owner Ken Smith, who turned a neglected 350 acre estate near Abroath into a first class sporting complex complete with a luxurious 20 bedroomed hotel has now signed up a deal with Japanese business interests for further expansion.

Work has already started on a second 18 hole golf course, a conservatory club lounge and enlarged professionals shop.

New plans include 35 additional bedrooms to the hotel, conference facilities and 80 residential housing plots, destined to become time-share properties, together with a swimming pool, squash courts and an indoor golf academy.

Viewers of BBC TV's 'Play Better Golf' with Peter Alliss, scheduled to be shown in the Spring will have the opportunity to



Turf tyres fitted to one of the Belfry's MF tractors.

see the extent of the new golf course. The complete series of nine half hour programmes has been filmed at Letham Grange.

Ken Smith anticipates the staff, currently 40 will be doubled once the new projects are completed.

He said, "Letham Grange has been the realisation of a dream for me. This agreement will result in continued growth and expansion."

Stamping out 'hooligans' at tournaments

A growing fear of soccer type hooligan behaviour at professional golf tournaments has prompted Tony Jacklin, Europe's Ryder Cup Team Captain to name his 'troubleshooters' at the Belfry in September to be his star players.

He has suggested that if crowd behaviour develops into booing and hissing the opposition he will expect Ballesteros, Lyle, Faldo and Woosnam to silence anyone who says anything out of place.

Signs of an unruly element in the crowds were seen at St. Andrews during the Dunhill Cup in October when Nick Faldo was given some rough treatment by people, who one hopes were not Scottish golfers, but ignorant partisans, sheltering with anonymity among the true followers of high class golf.

At the Belfry in 1985, some of the American wives were hissed and the US team were considerably upset when applause broke out after Craig Stadler missed a vital three foot putt on the 18th green.

In September the Ryder Cup will be an all ticket affair and if these are sold through the established clubs it should ensure spectators are limited to those who know the game's etiquette.

Arrangements are already in hand for the BIGGA to be represented at the Belfry with their own hospitality stand and it is understood the organisers are planning something a little special.

Sod producers at York

A study tour around Britain by over 50 visitors from the American Sod Turf Producers Association, brought them to the historic city of York at the end of October as guests of Rolawn's Managing Director, Ken Dawson.

Ken, the founder of the Rolawn turf growing business based in the old world village of Elvington, a few miles from the

spires of York Minister, is the current Chairman of ASPA's International Committee.

To mark their visit, he organised a Saturday morning seminar at the York Novotel, brought in Neville Barker from British Seed Houses, Bill Hickey, Chief Executive of BALI, John Shildrick from the NTC and together with his own staff put his guests completely in the picture on turf culture in Britain.

On a fine autumn afternoon the party visited the offices and fields around Elvington to see how one of the leading firms of turf growers on this side of the Atlantic, produce amenity grass for a wide range of uses.

Rolawn are best known to greenkeepers as suppliers of fine turf to golf courses, but their range covers both the full sporting and domestic field.

At the seminar plans were announced to put Rolawn turf on sale through the Sainsbury owned Homebase DIY shops from the Spring of 1989.

The turf will be supplied through local agents on an order basis, but a cash and carry scheme for a few rolls of turf in the back of the car has not been ruled out. Ideal for the weekend gardener who wants to repair a few bare patches.

As a fitting climax to the weekend the visitors attended a Medieval Banquet in the thirteenth century Merchants Adventurers' Hall.

Sheer embarrassment forbids naming the two guests who mistakenly went to the equally famous Merchant Taylors' Hall and imbibed free gin and tonics before realising they were at the wrong party!

Northern groundsmen take top prizes

The two best groundsmen in Britain hail from the North West of England.

Geoffrey Brereton a 38 year old part-time turf culture lecturer at Reaseheath College and groundsman for Birtles Cricket Club at Macclesfield has won the coveted Groundsman of the Year Award, sponsored by ICI Professional Products.

Title of Young Groundsman of the Year has been awarded to 19 year old David Rhodes a groundsman at Bolton School and part time student at Myerscough.

Both will fly to Los Angeles in February to take part in the GCSAA Convention, which this year will be held at Anaheim, the home of Disney World.

Among other winners of IOG Education and Training Awards announced at the Reform Club was Christopher Nolan, the 38 year old Head Greenkeeper at Castle Golf Club, Dublin, a member of the Irish Greenkeepers' Association.

As runner-up to Geoff. Brereton, Chris will take part in an extended weekend visit to Germany.

Blue waters run deep at the Belfry

With millions of television viewers expected to tune into the 1989 Ryder Cup, The Belfry is taking no chances.

Its greens, fairways and, even its lakes,

BIGGA

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

This will be held on Tuesday, 28th February, 1989
at 2.30 pm in
The Royal York Hotel, York
immediately adjacent to the Railway Station

must look at their very best for the event.

And that is why The Belfry sent out an urgent request to ALS (Amenity Land Services) of Telford to obtain 16 gallons of a very special dye - Aqua Shade.

"Aqua Shade is a non toxic, blue dye that will help ensure that The Belfry's ten acres of lakeland water will literally sparkle in front of the television cameras," explains Tony Howard of ALS.

"Aqua Shade is totally inert so it is environmentally safe. It works on the basic scientific principle of cutting off the sunlight to control the growth of algae and troublesome weeds. It has been extensively tested and meets all environmental regulations to safeguard fish, wildlife and people.

"However what Aqua Shade does do is turn the colour of the water a magnificent shade of blue."

This special dye is not generally available in the UK, but ALS has already been able to deliver the 16 gallons of Aqua Shade to The Belfry's Course Manager Derek Ganning.

Westurf to be held in May

Westurf 89, the Turf Care Trade Exhibition for the South West and South Wales Region of BIGGA, will be held on 24th May 1989 at Long Ashton Golf Club, Bristol.

For further information please contact Gordon Child, Archway, Churston Road, Churston Ferrers, Nr Brixham, South Devon, TQ5 0HU. Telephone Churston 844056.

New Zealand browntop for British courses

The New Zealand based company Pyne Gould Guinness has appointed Booker Seeds as the Breeders Agent for Grasslands Sefton in the UK and Eire.

Booker Seeds say that this new variety of Browntop looks like being the answer to the greenkeeper's prayer. It is an extremely fine leaved and dense cultivar with superb year round colour and capable of producing a true, fast green.

Chris Peel, who recently joined Booker Seeds from the Sports Turf Research Institute at Bingley (where he was jointly responsible for the evaluation of new varieties) is confident that this New Zealand bred introduction is going to set new standards.

"Grasslands Sefton is the best variety of *Agrostis tenuis* in trial by far and I have no

doubt that it will be highly sought after by discerning greenkeepers."

Ian Misselbrook, Product Manager - Amenity Grasses, says that seed of this new variety should be available from July 1989 - but only in limited quantities. "We are confident that demand will exceed supply so forward thinking customers who are keen to make an early evaluation of Grasslands Sefton must order their requirements in the near future," he told THE GOLF COURSE.

Golf theme at Norwood Hall Symposium

This annual symposium, offered jointly by Norwood Hall Institute of Horticultural Education and the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, will be held on Tuesday 28th February 1989 at the Jodrell Lecture Theatre, Kew Gardens.

Admission is by programme, which will be sent free of charge on request.

There will be five papers delivered during the day and these are: Modern Golf Course Design and Construction by Simon Gidman; Trees and Shrubs - their use in Sportsturf Design by Gerry Davis; Seed Mixtures for Play and Conservation by Geoff Taylor; Golf Course Management - a Green Committee View by John Harris; and Managing a Heathland Golf Course by Ian MacMillan.

For further information and a programme, contact: R B Dickinson, Principal, Norwood Hall Institute of Horticultural Education, Norwood Green Road, South-

all, Middlesex UB2 4LA. Tel: 01-574 2261.

OBITUARY

Lionel Croad died recently following a short illness, he was aged 80.

Lionel joined Enmore Park Golf Club Bridgewater, Somerset as a member in 1934 and was employed as a Steward/Greenkeeper in 1959 and continued as a greenkeeper until 1979, when he retired at the age of 70. He helped out on a part time basis even after that when his help was needed.

Lionel was a very keen low handicap golfer and a member of the BIGGA South West Section for many years.

It is with great sadness that the directors of Rigby Taylor Ltd. announce that, following a heart attack, their colleague Richard Elliott passed away on Monday, December 19, 1988 aged 56.

Richard - 'Dick' - was a very well known figure in the trade having first worked for Ransomes, followed by many years at T. Parker & Sons, firstly as area representative progressing to area manager.

In 1981 he joined his former colleague Jon Ryan in forming Rigby Taylor (South) where his drive and enthusiasm were greatly instrumental in establishing the company.

He had recently been appointed to the position of National Sales Director of Rigby Taylor Ltd.

Richard will be sadly missed by his many friends. Deepest sympathy goes out to his widow Joyce and family.

OPEN CHAMPIONSHIP

17th-23rd JULY, 1989

If you wish to assist with bunker-raking and other duties at Troon, please forward your name and address to the Executive Director as soon as possible with an indication of the dates on which you are available. Please note that assistance is needed for the practice days as well as the four Championship days.

Preference will be given to those members who can make themselves available for the whole period.