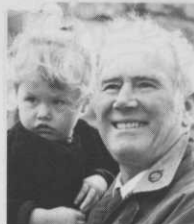


## Don't drive into trouble

■ **The ever vigilant** Jon Allbutt, never one to miss loopholes in the law or keep silent about inconsistencies in their application, has been looking into the tangled web of The Law as it applies to driving greenkeeping machinery upon the highway. At first sight it appears you can drive straight across a highway without taxation or insurance cover (though this seems foolhardy, as an accident might occur) but should you need to turn left or right – even for a few yards – a different ruling comes into play. Jon is discussing the matter with New Scotland Yard and will be reporting via Greenkeeper International. In the meantime, if you are in any doubt regarding legality, you are advised to contact your local police station.

■ **Vandalism on the nation's courses** has reached such frightening proportions that plans are afoot to cover the subject in depth during 1992. However, one isolated piece of information received is too good (or too bad) to let pass without immediate comment. Last spring, to 'celebrate' the privatisation of a municipal course in the Midlands, a number of the greens were sprayed by 'persons unknown' with a total herbicide, necessitating removal of the poisoned soil and subsequent returfing. Such senseless vandalism of excellent bent/fescue greens was bad enough but worse was to follow.

The work was put out to tender and an inexperienced firm put in the lowest bid. Instead of working largely by hand, earth moving equipment was brought in – several machines on a green at one time – creating severe compaction and soil destructuring. Despite a sensible specification, which included raking and heeling to ensure correct establishment of a firm but unconsolidated turf bed, the good quality turf was laid direct on to a rotavated and rolled turf bed, with inevitable subsequent local subsidence. One report told of a dog walking over one of the returfed greens and sinking to its belly! Here was a classic case of the contractor failing to understand the importance of maintaining soil structure or taking note of the standard specification: 'no wheeled or tracked vehicles shall be permitted on the area of the green and immediate surround once the basal formation has been constructed' An avoidable tragedy, but little doubt remains as to which was the greater vandalism!



■ It is appropriate that our final front cover for 1991 should acknowledge the recognition shown to Walter Woods, on the occasion of his British Empire Medal presentation at St Andrews.

A prime motivator in the formation of BIGGA and its first ever chairman, Walter was the man to whom the Association so often turned in those formative years. Walter's key role in raising greenkeeping standards is readily acknowledged and we add our congratulations to his richly deserved award.

• **Picture shows Walter sharing his glory with two year old granddaughter, Leah.**

■ **As a Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper** member of BIGGA, you will recently have received a survey for completion and return to HQ. When analysis of returned surveys is completed, vital information will be available of lasting benefit to you, your golf club and the industry. If you have not already done so, please take time to complete the survey and return without delay.

Each greenkeeper completing the survey will receive a synopsis of the report; a similar survey conducted in the USA positively revolutionised the industry in that country.

■ **Reports from the recent** International Golf Trade Exhibition suggest that Tony Jacklin, yet one more professional golfer who has formed his own golf course design company, Golfscape, is in serious discussion with the PGA, who are considering leaving their base at The Belfry and purchasing Deer Park in Stoneleigh. If the deal reaches fruition the PGA would not only have new national headquarters but three 18 hole golf courses. One would be a 'championship' course designed by Jacklin, the idea being that it could host the Ryder Cup in 2001!

■ **Absolute clarity** in reporting is something which Greenkeeper International seeks always to achieve. My attention has been brought to a Flying Divot comment in October which was perhaps not entirely clear, that of the edict issued concerning Open Championship courses and of the R&A's insistence that Championship Clubs follow the advice of their appointed agronomists to the letter. This was, of course, not directed specifically at Royal Birkdale and certainly not at the Club's head greenkeeper, Tom O'Brien, but at all seven Clubs on the Championship roster. To quote our Executive Director, Neil Thomas, "the problems of this particular Championship course (Royal Birkdale) have been well known and documented over a number of years. As such, criticism of the present head greenkeeper is not justified – he worked within established guide-lines in presenting the course for The Open, but in terms of preparing the greens he was clearly not working from an ideal base". Greenkeeper International offers an unqualified apology to Tom O'Brien for any misunderstanding in the interpretation of this comment that may have been caused.

### The BIGGA recommended minimum salary/wages scale

The Association has updated its recommended minimum salary/wages scale, although actual figures remain the subject of negotiation between the Golf Club and Greenkeeping staff. The quoted rates apply from 1st January 1992.

	18 Holes	27 Holes	36 Holes
Course Manager/ Head Greenkeeper	£17,440 pa	£19,020 pa	£21,290 pa
Deputy Course Manager/ Deputy Head Greenkeeper	£12,590 pa	£13,715 pa	£15,345 pa
First Assistant	£209.30 pw	£209.30 pw	£209.30 pw
Assistant Greenkeeper	£196.70 pw	£196.70 pw	£196.70 pw
Apprentice Greenkeeper (All Courses)	Age 16/17 – £98.35 pw; Age 18 – £122.95 pw; Age 19 – £147.55 pw; Age 20 – £172.15 pw; Age 21+ – £196.70 pw.		

**NB: Where appropriate these rates should be increased to reflect Regional variations up to a maximum of 24% in the South East region.**

The First Assistant is a post designed to recognise a third-in-charge where appropriate to the size of the Club. In cases where the First Assistant is the recognised Deputy,

the appropriate Deputy Course Manager/Deputy Head Greenkeeper salary scale should apply.

NB: Staff in possession of recognised qualifications should have this reflected in an addition to basic salary.

■ **Basic conditions of employment should include:**

1. Where accommodation is provided by the Club, it should be rent free with heating/lighting costs borne by the Club. The Club should compensate for Poll Tax liability.
2. Where accommodation is not provided by the Club, a suitable remuneration in addition to the above salary should be paid.
3. 40 hour week.
4. Retirement Pension Scheme.
5. Telephone costs on Club business.
6. Mileage allowance.
7. Time off to attend lectures, demonstrations, BIGGA functions and tournaments.
8. If not salaried, basic overtime to be paid at time and a half, with double time on Sundays and Statutory Holidays.

