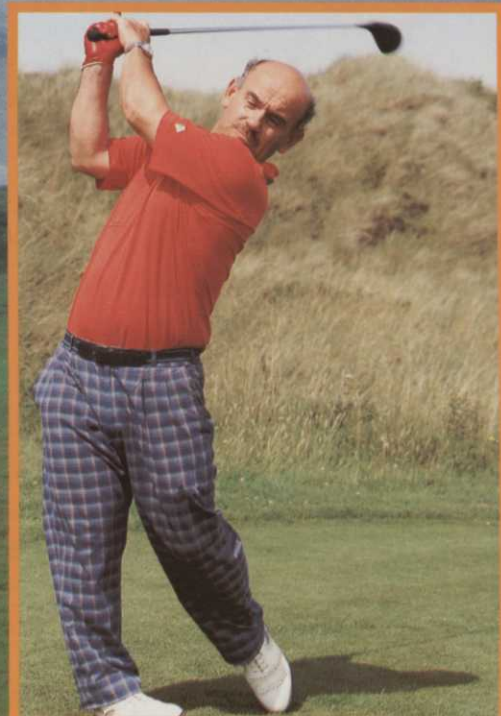
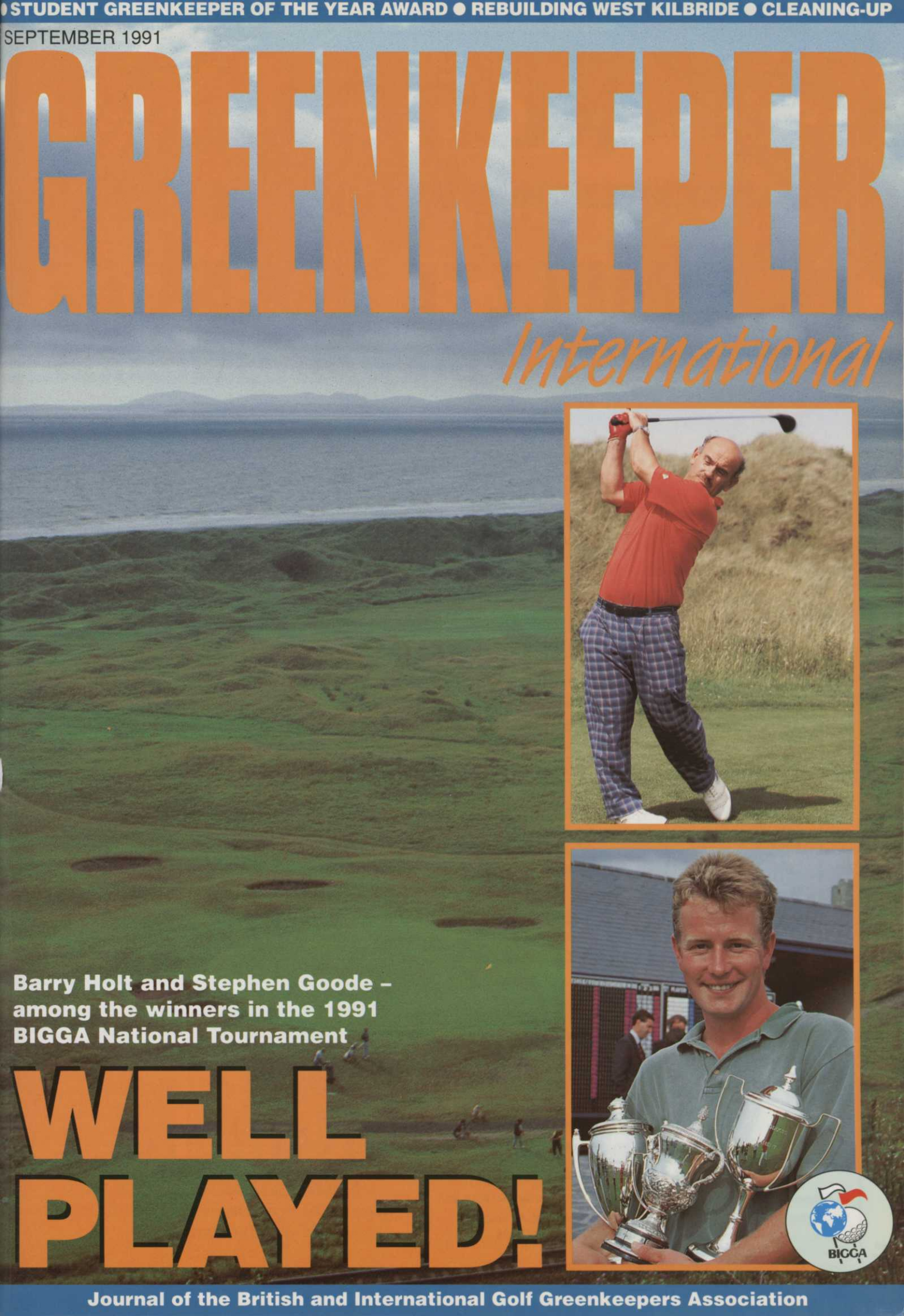


SEPTEMBER 1991

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International



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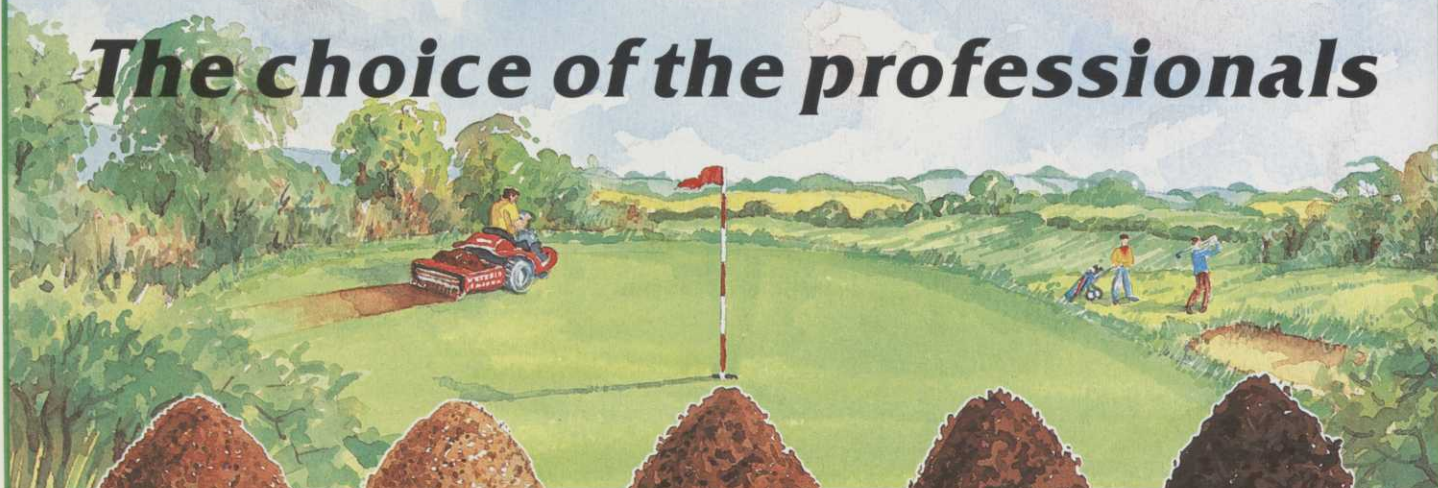
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Official publication of the British & International Golf Greenkeepers Association

SEPTEMBER 1991



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GREENKEEPER

International

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COVER PICTURES:

Two of the National Tournament's leading lights, against a background of Royal St. David's

Who and what are moving on and moving in, in the greenkeeping industry

■ The regulating authority for golf course architecture has amended its name to that of the British Institute of Golf Course Architects, previously known by the 'Association' nomenclature.

Founded in 1970, the Institute concerned itself with the aim of eliminating the risks posed to the profession and clients by inadequately trained and experienced designers.

A financial grant from the R&A has just been made towards training its students.

■ Graeme MacNiven called from Germany with news of those 'Rover Boys' – the intrepid warriors who left Surrey to set up camp in Munich in 1988. Graeme and brother Ian completed construction of the Munich course in 1989 and within three months the BMW Open was held – declared to be the youngest course with the youngest course manager (23) and the youngest head greenkeeper (20). Now they and the crew are on to other things: Adrian Locke now with Kevin Munt, Nick Aylwin and Paul Doughty to Golf Club Schloss under Graeme's father Kenneth and Ian onto a project near Zurich. Robert Coombe is working in construction with Southern Golf.

Pictured, from left at the BMW Open – Adrian Locke, Nick Aylwin, Graeme MacNiven, winner Paul Azinger, Ian MacNiven, Paul Doughty and Robert Coombe.

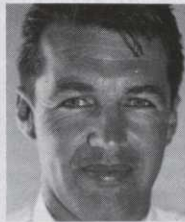


■ It's hard to keep the golfing McMillan's out of the news for long, and our congratulations go to Stuart and Elizabeth McMillan on the occasion of their recent nuptials.

■ Now let's turn to a completely new McMillan model – Hannah Louise – born under the Leo star to Karen and Ian McMillan in the early hours of July 26th. Our regional spy, Phil Baldock, reliably informs us that both mother and daughter are doing fine, with Ian ecstatic though a little bleary eyed.

■ Another newcomer is (belatedly) announced with the arrival of David Lloyd, son to Robert and Andrea Needham of Wortley GC. Weighing in at nearly nine pounds, the young Arien bruiser arrived just before the witching hour of midnight on March 29th.

■ Andy Church, formerly Head Grounds Manager at Tottenham Hotspur FC, has been appointed Sports Turf Consultant by Lawn Technology Ltd, specifically to lead a drive into a sports and leisure market sector which has already become a key area of specialisation for Lawn Technology Ltd. Church is well qualified. As well as his 10 years at White Hart Lane, he also turned out for the Club in Combination League games and is a nine handicap golfer.



■ As part of their expansion programme, Supaturf Products Ltd of Narborough, Leicester, have appointed two new Technical Support Representatives: Ian Burton and Matthew Harnan. Ian, pictured right, well experienced within the industry, is appointed to the East, with Matthew, already having worked in Supaturf's sales office during his college

Flying Divots

An appreciation of what is not always appreciated

Your chance to make 'em laugh

Prompted by the receipt of an oh-so-corny joke from B.B. & O. correspondent, Ray Clark, the jaded humour of your jaundiced old editor was nudged out of hibernation into actioning yet another competition, this time to discover the best greenkeeping jokes. As long as they are not libellous or positively 'feelthy', the stories could

end up in these pages – perhaps even illustrated by ace cartoonist, John Moran. Prize for the best joke printed between now and January '92 is a bottle of fine malt whisky – to be shared between winner and editor... now there's a joke for a start! Send entries to: The Editor, 13 Firlie Close, Seaford, East Sussex BN25 2HL.

■ **Turning to another idea**, this time for an on-going limerick contest and an opportunity for readers to gain international fame and recognition in print. Inspired by a contest currently taking place in The Independent, I'm offering a monthly prize to the entrant whose golfing limerick is published in Greenkeeper International on a given word theme. For October, mindful of the battle for Ryder Cup honours at Kiawah Island in late September, let me have your "Ryder" limericks. As a

limerick example, here's mine, The Open, based on "Finch" – Ian Baker-Finch:

*An Aussie, one I. Baker-Finch
Won at Birkdale with nary a finch
While others were faltering
With cries for much altering
Our champ made those greens seem a cinch!*

Entries (open to all readers) as above before September 14th please, thereafter as the inspiration takes you. Remember, this will be an on-going contest.

■ **"Would you like to fly** in my beautiful balloon?" is a tune that will have particular significance to Surrey greenkeeper Billy Martin of Wildwood GC, Alford, for it is he that won the prize donated to BIGGA's Surrey section by those progressive people at RFE Turf Machinery Ltd., to take to the air in RFE's own hot air balloon.

Three cheers to them for spirited enterprise in arranging to fly Billy over Wildwood in the middle of September, essentially to take an airborne look at his course, one still under construction. Though no secret, your editor is keeping quiet about the nuts and bolts of the exercise – having been invited to participate with Billy in the flight – but you may bet that come October we'll have a picture story that will literally lift the lid off space travel greenkeeper style!

■ **Couldn't help smiling** at USPGA Winner John Daly's quote of the month: "I just take out my driver, tee up, then Squeaky (his caddie) says KILL" ...and that of Jack Nicklaus on seeing the result... "Goodness gracious. What a coil, what an unbelievable unleashing of power."



DIVOTS by Badlegh Dunne

Mornning!... sorry abite the window, didn't hear me shile fore! eh?... well you know you had that confinded walking-man contraption blahsing in your ears... what'cha playing on it? ...Rocking-Rap or something frightful eh?... what? ...Turf-culture exam tape!?... are you studying to be a turfaccinetant? haw! haw! haw! joke!! I say!... aren't you the head-Johnnie here? the ahh... Head-Goalkeeper thingy-Person?... pardon?... oh!... Greenkeeper! Oh yes! that's right... ha! ha!... don't mind me... in one of me funny moods... I blame my Facemaker, wires crossed... ruddy-bionic I am!... Oh, by the by!... your um... First-Dissident, sorry! First-Assistant... young Rogerham... nice chap, bit over-chummy with the Mem-sahibs though... yesterday, back of the Clubhice... showing a young filly how to follow-through!... gal wasn't a golfer... he had no club! ha! ha! haargh!!... jammy younga blightah!... Y'know... it reminds me of 1942... Battle of Britain!... what?... no I never flew! I mean the battle between me... and W.A.A.F. officer Goodebody one evening out side Hornchurch in the back of my Bentley!! I said did I tell you abite the vicar and the messerschmid



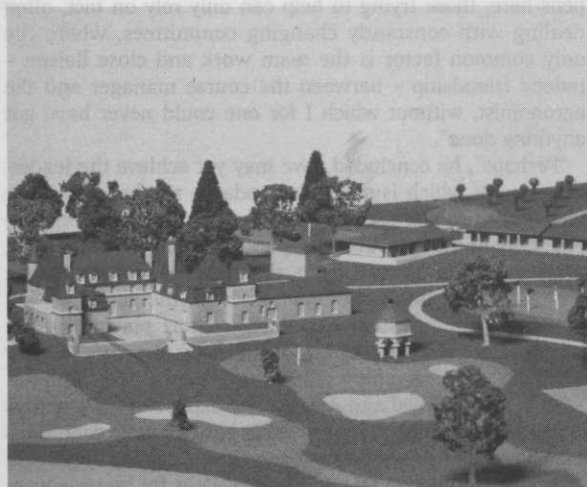
vacation, responsible for the Western region. Both men will liaise with distributors and customers to offer technical support and advice.



■ John Deere Ltd have made two new appointments within their grounds care business: Richard Charleton (above) as Sales Demonstrator/Instructor to provide back-up services to dealers and organise golf course demonstrations, with Howard Storey (left) promoted from Service Training and Marketing in UK and Ireland to Midland Region Grounds Care Territory Manager.

■ Joel Paul, whose trademark is 'Ideas to Reality', is in the golf course construction business in a unique way, having just completed his first golf clubhouse and course in model form. Joel, a sculptor and model craftsman, was commissioned to produce a perfect scale model of Chateau des Vigiers Golf & Country Club in France, with Chairman Lars Petersson now singing the praises of this work of art, which has tremendous commercial advantages in showing planning authorities and environmentalists – not to mention prospective members – how the Club will evolve.

Certainly the model is impressive and though there is no set cost, each depending on a client's brief, Joel's models are a fraction of the vastly expensive models often used in architectural practices. For £5,000 he can model the clubhouse and entire course, working from the same plans given to the golf course constructor by the architect – a good deal cheaper and much more attractive than a boring oil painting of the Club founder – in fact an art investment. Joel's 'phone number is 081 946 0397.



■ Michael Langdon is now the new Sales Manager for Watermation Sprinklers and Controls Ltd., having joined the company in July. This, however, is not Michael's first exposure to Watermation, for as a young man some 15 years ago he worked for the company in several departments. Welcome back, Michael: we wish you well in a growth industry that has seen dramatic advances in the past decade.



■ Honestly guys, you may think your mower is past its prime, but consider that of Roy Masters, a Fakenham blacksmith who won the Ransomes competition to find the oldest working motor mower in the UK. His is a Ransomes 24" Orwell



engined machine dating back to 1905 and used in the grounds surrounding his premises. Presented with a spanking new Ransomes 51 Marquis electric start motor mower, Roy will retire the old 'un to his small forge cum museum, where it will take pride of place.

Eric McCoy, Ransomes M.D. (pictured with Roy Masters) expressed the view that the latest Marquis would give years of trouble-free grasscutting whilst hoping that the 86 year old mower would be given an airing from time to time.

A 26 year association comes to an end shortly when Peter Marnoch retires as head greenkeeper from Coventry Hearsal GC, which he joined in 1965. Peter won the Greenkeepers Championship Trophy at Pyle & Kenfig at the age of 52 when his handicap was two. Peter will continue to play in retirement and family connections will continue with his youngest son, Steven Marnoch, an associate of the British Association of Golf Course Architects. His successor will be Ian Savage, formerly assistant head greenkeeper at the Club.



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Lessons to be learned

Post mortems have only two useful functions: to identify the cause of death so that future mortality can be avoided and to bring wrong-doers to justice. The corpse in the case of Royal Birkdale was *Poa annua* and the verdict accidental death!

What caused such consternation was not so much the admittedly disappointing appearance of the greens, which seemingly mesmerised many of the players and gave cause for much self-pity – although scores were low and birdies were flying everywhere on the last day – but the crop of rash and ill-considered statements emanating from the mouths of those least qualified to comment.

Such professionals, it seems, consider that expertise in only one aspect of a complicated game gives them the right to opine on all matters agronomic and the end result was a rash of 'instant cures' which the national press were only too pleased to leap upon and publish prominently. These were seen in some quarters, quite erroneously in my view, as an indictment against current British greenkeeping practices.

There are always two sides to a coin, and it is no secret that Royal Birkdale is a members' Club catering to rank and file play over 52 weeks every year. But the course is also an Open Championship venue and the Club must have some input. Did the Club abdicate responsibility one wonders, what caused it to happen, what led to the problem, how can it be avoided? I was in a mood to ask questions and quizzed many for non-emotive answers.

Turning first to the Sports Turf Research Institute, advisers to the R&A on The Championship and agronomists to the Club, I was disappointed not to gain some insight, but was told that the Institute are in active discussion with the R&A and will issue an explanatory document in due course. Perhaps this is right and proper, but the world of golf should not be kept waiting too long and one hopes that the report will not be a whitewash, for greenkeepers tell me they desperately want answers.

No-one was more aware of the problems which have plagued this particular course for The Open than Jim Arthur, for nearly two decades the consultant agronomist to the R&A's Championship Committee and even before that when – in his own words – he attempted unsuccessfully between 1946 and 1952 to advise the Club to change their greenkeeping system.

He told of over-reactions (natural enough in the light of their current knowledge) to the disastrous effects of over enthusiastic application of the acid theory to a links course without effective irrigation in the mid-1930s, which swung fertiliser treatment to the other extreme with the gross over-use of complete (NPK) fertiliser. This continued unabated after the War, and indeed even for a few years after the similar 1971 disaster and is confirmed by soil analyses, showing some of the highest phosphate levels on record. The soil under Birkdale's greens could in fact be legally sold as fertiliser!

The inevitable result of such very fertile conditions means annual meadow grass dominance. Jim Arthur expanded: "this may be tolerable if the enemy of good greenkeeping is not overstressed, e.g. by shaving greens to achieve faster speeds, but a change to austere greenkeeping, as practiced on our best links courses, literally kills the *Poa annua*."

by DAVID WHITE



'This disaster – which is not too strong a word for it – may yet do good on three counts'

– Jim Arthur

'The problems of this particular championship course have been well known and documented over a number of years. As such, criticism of the present head greenkeeper is not justified'

– Neil Thomas

"This year the problem was exacerbated but not caused – just before The Open – by a sudden and severe drop in mowing height and related treatments to achieve faster speeds. There are also complicating factors in buried thatch creating stagnation and inhibiting deep root development. This disaster (which is not too strong a word for it) may yet do good on three counts.

"One – the apologists for annual meadow grass must surely accept that it is not capable of producing top conditions. It may be inevitable but it is not nice! Generously fed and watered, it may be satisfactory for members' golf in summer but in the UK we play more under winter than summer conditions.

"Two – the insatiable demand by the professionals for faster and faster putting surfaces must be curbed. There are other ways to speed up greens than shaving them to below an eighth – by use of turf rollers for example – and conditions are, after all, the same for all competitors.

"Three – the ignorance of nearly all top players about greenkeeping, which resulted in so many foolish pieces of advice as to cause and cure of this problem, is exposed and they must learn to keep quiet to avoid the scorn of those who do know".

Continuing further, Jim suggested the proposals mooted that the R&A should enforce standards are unrealistic, "because British Clubs are a law unto themselves and do not consider they have to take orders from anyone, in contrast to America, where the USGA take over completely and control management via the Green Section's agronomists, as well as administration of the course selected. Until that happens here, those trying to help can only rely on tact, often dealing with constantly changing committees, where the only common factor is the team work and close liaison – indeed friendship – between the course manager and the agronomist, without which I for one could never have got anything done".

"Perhaps", he concluded, "we may yet achieve the leadership in golf which is so lacking today – not because those guiding British golf do not realise the need for it but because of the jealously guarded independence of our Clubs. The greatest threat comes from the professionals who are increasingly imposing their standards on the game, yet are singularly uninterested outside their short playing season here and are increasingly out of touch with today's all year round UK greenkeeping problems and cures.

"At least the Royal and Ancient is making serious attempts and generous contributions towards better course conditions but can at best guide and encourage – it cannot impose its will. The need above all and at all levels is for better educa-



at Royal Birkdale for The Open Championship



tion, even more of professionals and those tipping their caps to them, than of greenkeepers”.

Turning from Jim Arthur, I asked Neil Thomas for comment from BIGGA's viewpoint. Neil suggested that “the structure is now in place to ensure a uniformity of approach and the soon to be appointed Technical Panel of the Joint Golf Course Committee should be charged with the task of laying down guidelines and setting standards for the future maintenance and preparation of The Championship courses.

“Naturally there must be full co-operation with each Club and the interests of Club members will be a vital matter for consideration. Long term planning is essential and progress should be monitored by the Panel. The time span before The Open returns to a particular course allows the implementation of such planning. Over a period of time there would be substantial improvements in the condition of these courses and much relieving of pressure on the course managers concerned. The Association firmly believes that whilst there may be historic reasons for present inadequacies in standards, they must now be tackled and resources made available from within the game to ensure long term planning takes place”.

Commenting on the specific criticisms levelled at the greens of Royal Birkdale, BIGGA's Executive Director pointed out “that the problems of this particular championship course 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.”

As a final comment, Neil Thomas added that within the ranks of BIGGA there is much practical knowledge that can be brought to bear which will enhance the future presentation of championship courses. It is hoped that the new Technical Panel will make full use of this knowledge and that the game as a whole will quickly recognise the validity of the comment made in ‘The Way Forward’ ...that BIGGA ‘must become the central reference point for all other golfing bodies on matters pertaining to greenkeepers and greenkeeping’.

Speed greed, it seems, is the main and immediate culprit in this saga and it is sad to see so many of our erstwhile wonderful links and heathland courses losing the character of their greens due to such shaving tactics – often for months on end – in the insane chase for slick and trick, when in the end they finish being slower and trouble-prone. Why should Club members suffer (assuming they want to retain the ideals of firm, fast, true greens all year round) merely to satisfy a handful of not very far-thinking professionals, most of whom couldn't care less about any course the day after they have finished playing their tournament?

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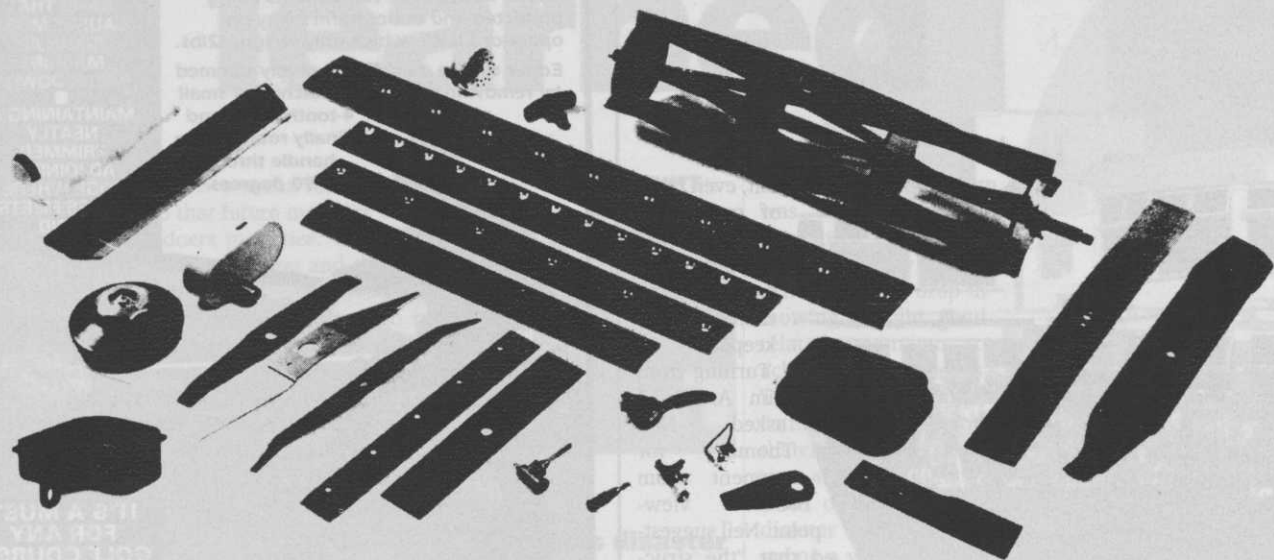
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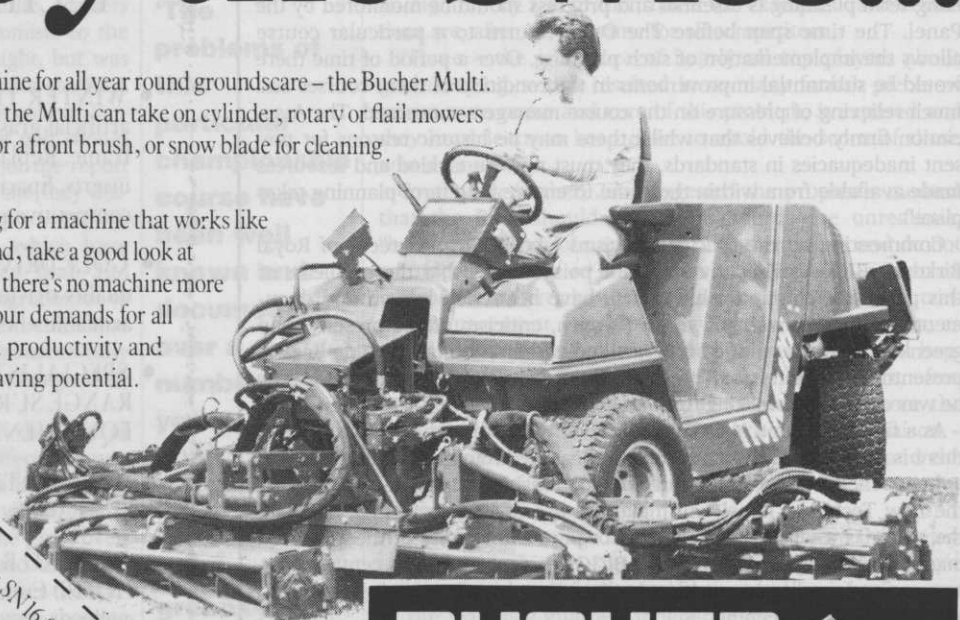
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Student GREENKEEPER OF THE YEAR

To be selected as a candidate for Toro/PGA European Tour Student Greenkeeper of the Year Awards can do different things to different people. For some it heralds an outbreak of nervous tension that can only disperse when the final assessment is made and the winner announced. For others it offers a rare opportunity to show the world what they're made of. For one - the Toro PGA European Tour Student Greenkeeper of the Year - it will open doors that hitherto could be thought of only as part of a fertile imagination.

The simple facts disclosed here offer nothing more than a taste of the young talent proffered by the 13 Approved Colleges, who have selected these young men as rightful candidates - in their opinion the cream of the crop - for this singularly important honour. That they have been selected is indicative of their individual excellence in training for a noble and honourable profession - GREENKEEPING.

Just one man will collect the top prize, a Toro sponsored expenses paid visit to the USA which combines residential student membership for six weeks at the Winter School for Turf Grass Managers, held at The University of Massachusetts. Others, runners-up in the awards, will accompany the PGA European Tour's Support team attending two tournaments selected from the 1992 Tour programme.

Results will be announced after the candidates attend their panel interviews at Aldwark Manor on October 21st.

The candidates

CHRISTOPHER LEWIS

Nominated by Warwickshire College of Agriculture

Christopher, aged 29, is an excellent example of how re-direction in a career can come good. Chris joined the RAF on leaving grammar school and carved an exemplary record in the force, remained until a sporting injury forced him to cut short his service career in 1987. Following a resettlement programme and a brief flirtation with the haulage industry, Chris took stock and decided to become a greenkeeper. For him that meant training to a

fine edge, with Warwickshire College his mentor. Golf had been 'in the family' and his step father, a former Club secretary, offered wise counsel.

Joining Scraftoft GC as an assistant greenkeeper, Chris fulfilled the confidence placed in him by sailing through the City & Guilds Phase II in Turf Culture, earning high praise from course tutor Andrew Cole.

Despite a busy work schedule and entry into Turf Culture Phase III, Chris finds time to play golf and indulge in watersports.



ARNE van AMERONGEN

Nominated by Cheshire College of Horticulture

Arne is a Dutchman who first began greenkeeping in 1985, working alongside an English greenkeeper, Bill Garner, in Holland. The bug must have bitten deeply, for since then Arne has set his sights high in his thirst for greater knowledge and understanding of a career that, in his view, has no limits. He is presently head greenkeeper with the British Army Golf Club in Sennelager, Germany.

Studying at Reaseheath, he has just completed his

Phase II in Greenkeeping, during which time his tutor, Dennis Mortram, tells of an enthusiasm that knew no boundaries, coupled with an infectious and winning personality that made him a firm favourite amongst staff and fellow pupils alike.

Summarising, Arne is of that new breed of European, one with high ideals and even higher goals. As such his nomination - perhaps the first of many 'Internationals' and bringing the 'International' part of BIGGA's title well to the fore - is welcomed.



TERRY FARKINS

Nominated by Cannington College

Terry is 26 years old and has been a greenkeeper since leaving school, for the past eight years with Torquay Golf Club - a parkland course on heavy Devon clay - where he is first assistant.

In 1989 he started the City and Guilds Phase II in Greenkeeping and plans to progress to Phase III in 1992.

Like all good greenkeepers, Terry plays as hard as he

works and featured in the Minor Counties Cricket Team for Devon in 1987 and 1988, together with captaincy of the County at Youth level. He plays golf to a handicap of 12 and is looking to devote more time to this side of his sporting interests, not only for the pleasure it gives but to understand the finer points of course strategy, which may then be applied in his greenkeeping career.

His ambitions are to become a good professional head greenkeeper and make Samantha, his wife of just one month, justifiably proud of him.



Which way now for the lucky 13?

BRIAN STORY

Nominated by Elmwood College

We can do no better than quote Brian's tutor, Carol Borthwick, who writes: Brian is an outstanding student who has now completed his third year with us, gaining all his modules with relative ease. His work throughout has been to a very high standard.

He has already achieved the Supervisory Modules through our Distant Learning Course, which he achieved over and above his block release course. He is regularly

on stage at our awards presentations and was praised highly by Lord Whitelaw, a member at Silloth on Solway, the course where Brian is a greenkeeper.

Brian is 23, but definitely has a much older head on him. He has been at Silloth since 1984 and now that he is finished with college on a regular basis, wishes to pursue his ambition to become a course manager at an Open Championship venue. He is a keen golfer with a handicap of 2, playing regularly for the Cumbria County Golf Team.



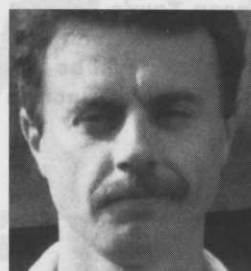
ROBERT WILKINSON

Nominated by the Welsh College of Horticulture

Robert has been a greenkeeper for five years, progressing throughout that time at his Club, Llanwern Golf Club in Newport, where he is now first assistant. He has just completed two years at the Welsh College where he was successful in completing Phase II in Greenkeeping and Sportsturf Management, a course where tutor Graham Wright tells of great enthusiasm and the setting of very high standards.

With Phase II complete, Robert has his sights set on completion of Phase III with an ultimate goal of becoming a successful course manager.

Like many attracted to greenkeeping, Robert is a golfer as well as enjoying football and an interest in steam trains. A Welshman steaming ahead, so to speak!



PATRICK WHELEMAN

Nominated by Sparsholt College Hampshire

A third year student in Greenkeeping, Patrick is 26 years old and has been greenkeeping for four and a half years, all of which in the employ of the West Berkshire Golf Club.

Patrick's tutor, Bob Young, writes of him in glowing terms, telling of an enthusiasm and dedication for work study that has seen him progress rapidly to the position of head greenkeeper, a post he has proudly held for 16

months. Also a passionate golfer, Patrick is a member of West Berkshire where he plays to a handicap of six. His immediate ambitions are to complete the reconstruction of his home course and to see it recognised as one of the best in the south of England. Creditable indeed!



MARK ELLIS

Nominated by Oaklands College, Hertfordshire

Mark Ellis is a familiar figure at BIGGA events, most recently as a part of the support team at The Open and at BIGGA's National Championships as a keen left-hander with an impressive swing and a happy countenance.

Mark has recently completed his Phase II Greenkeeping and Sports Turf Management and is fortunate in having achieved one ambition already – that of working on a Championship golf course – for he works with

course manager Neil Whitaker at the prestigious Woburn course.

The experiences of working on the preparation for several major championship events, including the Dunhill British Masters and the Ladies British Open, have been invaluable and set him well on the way to his ultimate long term ambition – that of becoming a course manager in his own right on a top class championship layout.



ANDREW McDOWELL

Nominated by Langside College

Andrew entered the greenkeeping profession by the now well-known route of a Youth Opportunities Programme followed by selection for one season by the East Kilbride District Council, a progressive local authority with inexpensive golf on public courses as a priority of their manifesto. That one season became a permanency and to begin Andrew worked on Langdales Golf course, where he remained until June 1990. Now at

Torrance House Golf Club, also an E.K.D.C. course, as first assistant, he has just completed Phases I-III in Sports Turf Management on a day release programme.

Andrew is a keen though struggling golfer, handicap 20, and when not at work or on the course is to be found motorcycling to other courses on his beloved 350cc Yamaha, where he enjoys observing different management methods.



Student GREENKEEPER OF THE YEAR

JOHN RICHARDSON

Nominated by Lancashire College of Agriculture and Horticulture

Writing of John, course tutor Dr. Richard Gibbs told us of how John entered the leisure industry from a background that involved him in a successful sheep and dairy farm in North Yorkshire. From this John decided to diversify into the amenity area as a positive career objective and in order to obtain as much practical experience as possible, is currently working at Wembley Sta-

dium. With little previous practical experience in sportsturf, John has turned out to be one of the most motivated and successful students in his year - a first year National Diploma in Turf Science and Sportground Management.

As if the hallowed turf of Wembley were not enough, John plans to gain yet more practical experience, this time in golf course management and maintenance, when in 1992 he will travel to Florida.



JOHN WAITE

Nominated by Askham Bryan College

John Waite was chosen by Askham Bryan as demonstrating leadership abilities in class as well as genuine interest in greenkeeping, a subject for which he shows great enthusiasm and which he reads and devours well beyond the needs of his current course. 'A likeable character', says course tutor Nick Bisset, 'who has the ability to get on with people and to impress his will on others'.

John is 27 and has worked for Leeds City Council since

leaving school. Currently at Temple Newsam, possibly the busiest municipal course in the county, he is first assistant. He has completed City and Guilds in Horticulture Phases I-III with credits and now is on Phase II of The Greenkeeping City and Guilds, with plans to progress to the Phase III Management curriculum.

A golfer, he believes this gives him an understanding of the needs of players and the ability to be more critical (and therefore more professional) regarding his own course.



ALAN MORGAN

Nominated by Oatridge Agricultural College

Another YTS graduate, Alan left high school to begin work in general agriculture, working on a dairy farm whilst attending college in blocks. From this encouraging start he attended Oatridge, first taking a certification course in Agriculture (for which he was awarded a cup for 'Most Improved Student') followed by a course in Agricultural Engineering. On both courses he received SCOTVEC certificates.

Now an assistant greenkeeper at Craigmillar Park Golf Club, he has completed three further years of study in Greenkeeping, qualifying in June and again being awarded a cup, this time as 'Best Third year Practical Student in Greenkeeping'. His hobbies are fishing and 'learning golf' and his ambition is to work as a course manager on a prestigious golf course, preferably abroad.



TONY BENNETT

Nominated by Plumpton Agricultural College

Course Tutor, David Blackmur, declares 27 year old Tony as this year's star pupil, indeed he was voted 'Student of the Year' during completion of his Phase II Greenkeeping and Sportsturf Management, which he took on block release. Now his aim is to progress further with a view perhaps of moving into Europe as a course manager, and to this end he will shortly begin Phase III.

What is equally praiseworthy is the fact that Tony

joined Canterbury Golf Club in 1987 as an assistant, working under John Millen and having some of John's wisdom rub off. When John moved away to undertake course design and building, Tony applied for and was appointed as Canterbury's head greenkeeper! Visitors and members alike have nothing but praise for this knowledgeable and likeable character, a man who cannot stop learning and who nurtures the fine turf at this Harry Colt designed course to near perfection.



DAVID CAUL

Nominated by Teagasc College of Amenity Horticulture

What better entry into greenkeeping than to have a father who has been a greenkeeper for 40 years! David works with his father as an assistant greenkeeper at The Island Golf Club, Corballis, County Dublin, some 10 miles from his home in Malahide.

The Island has been his base for the past three years, having trained as a mechanic and qualifying with City and Guilds in Mechanical Engineering whilst working as

a part-time assistant during college training.

Now David cares for all the machinery at The Island and is responsible for repairs and maintenance, a task well suited to one with such impressive qualifications.

Currently participating in a City and Guilds Greenkeeping and Sportsturf Management course at Teagasc College, David has completed one year on block release and is declared by College Principal, Dr Paul Cusack, as 'progressing very well'. He likes to play golf and visit other golf courses, both abroad and in Ireland.



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■ **ILAM (Southern Region)**, in association with Sparsholt College, Winchester, are staging an important seminar at the college on November 22nd entitled: PUTTING GOLF TO THE FORE. Papers include: Developments which are taking place in the industry, Design conceptions for today's needs, Budget and Resource management, The public and Local Authority view on CCT., and Modern concepts of golf provision. Credits will be awarded toward Master Greenkeeper status and BIGGA members will be admitted at reduced fee. Details from Mrs A Bulleid, Tel: 0865 862565.

■ **Northern Ireland** members may care to note that IOG (Scotland and Northern Ireland Zone) will present SPORTSTURF/GROWERS N.I. 91 at the Royal Ulster Agricultural Showgrounds, Alexander Halls Complex, Balmoral, Belfast on October 3rd. The exhibition promises to be the largest event of its kind in Ireland and affords an opportunity to discuss both equipment and technique. Educational workshops will run continually throughout the exhibition and details may be obtained from Mr E T Brown, Tel: Belfast 795040.

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The analysis fallacy

There is an old agricultural saying that the farmer's boot is the best fertiliser. As many of my remarks, which seem to me to be incapable of misinterpretation, obviously need to be explained, it should be made clear this does not mean that farming should revert to ploughing with horses, but that there is no substitute for experience. Better crops will result more from cultivation and planting at optimum times than by analysing soils in laboratories and applying a little bit of that and some more of the other! Walking out onto a ploughed field, kicking it and declaring that it is fit for cultivation will produce better results than talk of trace elements and special fertilisers, once the basic crop needs for the crop yield expected have been met. Too many of those who lack experience think all grasses require the same fertilisers and all that golf courses need is more fertiliser.

I am accused of 'refusing to take the guess-work out of greenkeeping' and to use soil testing – whatever that means. I rejected the concept of the infallibility of soil analyses over 50 years ago, long before computers became everyday playthings and before most of my critics were born. This rejection was based on the fact that even today there are no criteria saying exactly what good golfing greens require, either seasonally or in total. All we do know is that they will survive and indeed thrive on soils so low in fertility, as measured in terms of chemical analyses, that few other plants can live and we arrive at a monoculture situation, representative of our best golf courses.

I should stress that my reservations apply only to chemical and not physical soil analyses. The importance of correct structuring of soils and avoidance of de-structuring by massive earth moving, all too characteristic of 'American' course construction, has been known and understood for a century and is no new invention of the soil scientists!

What, after all, do soil analyses tell us? Assuming that sampling has been fully representative – and that is a bold assumption – at best it tells us the levels of lime, phosphates and potash (plus, if you are sufficiently naïve to think that they are of any significance save on sterile pure sand greens, trace elements) in the soil being tested – always assuming that the analysis can be supplied quickly enough for it to have any realistic significance. What it does not tell us is what the grass needs and what should be applied.

Statements that 'grass needs a balanced diet of nitrogen, phosphate, potash and micro-nutrients' are, like many apparently self-evident truths, subject to qualification. We need to know how much, how often, and in what form. Frankly our best grasses need so little that it would defy a computer to work out the microscopic proportions. It is not I who has misconstrued the facts, but as ever, those who have only a fleeting knowledge of our problems. I am the first to agree that where grasses are grown hydroponically on sterile sand-only greens, this is a different kettle of fish. Such turf is entirely dependent on what it receives at close and regular intervals, be it water or nutrients. If such nutrients, including micro-elements, are inadequate the grass will die. The ill effects of lime in terms of encouraging *Poa annua*, earthworm activity, disease and weeds has been known and appreciated all this century. It follows that any parallels drawn between management of sand-only greens and sand-soil ones must lead to disaster. Most of our established golf greens, even some of the best, are far too rich in plant nutrients.

Recent soil analyses from superb greens with *Agrostis tenuis* and fine fescue cover show phosphate levels at around 10 ppm or even less, yet Royal Birkdale greens showed (at lower levels especially) over 1000 ppm.

Yet even acceptance of the perfection of the greens with

such low phosphate levels does not stop the fertiliser adviser, or even, I regret to say, the STRI itself, from recommending the application of a super-phosphate! There is an old American adage applicable, to the effect that if it's working don't fix it. We know from a vast range of published research that our fine grasses require nitrogen only and virtually never need phosphate or potash in fertiliser form. It is the low levels of these mineral elements that keep out fertility demanding species such as that enemy of good greenkeeping, our old friend *Poa annua*.

I emphatically dispute Ken Siem's statement (letters – August issue) that there are a lot of phosphorus and potash deficient courses throughout the world – at least there are none in Britain or Europe! How does he come to terms with the fact that there are millions of acres of fine turf in Britain alone, be they sandy heaths, acid moors or links (a term which must be noted is not restricted to courses north of the Border) which have never in recorded history received a single ounce of fertiliser. Any nutrient they do receive comes from a passing sheep, grouse or seagull!

I will not dwell unduly on other points raised as readers must be fed up with the word Pennncross. It is sufficient to say that this species is totally unsuitable because of winter dormancy anywhere where there is a mild open winter climate, be this Britain, Northern Europe, the mild climates of the U.S. Pacific coast or even where it has been tried in New Zealand. It also demands high cost maintenance, is prone to thatch and disease and is easily invaded by alien grasses, except where hot summers preclude their co-existence. What really annoys many of us is that those few cases where Pennncross is claimed as producing perfect putting surfaces are either under-played or shut in critical winter months. What is worse, pure sands are kept that way in some cases by the admitted illegal use of banned pesticides and mercurial fungicides. Pennncross is fine where there is no winter or else no winter golf because of ice and snow. Elsewhere, when it is sold (at present it is illegal to do so) it should bear a warning: *this seed will seriously damage your pocket*.

So far as the USGA Green Section specification is concerned, it should be recorded that for 25 years greens have been constructed to a slight modification of the spec. to enable construction to be mechanised, and thus cheapened. We simply cannot afford to build greens by hand as is deemed necessary when using only 4" thickness of 4mm gravel, which is soon driven into the green base and lost in mechanical operations.

No-one has presumed to title these greens 'USGA Spec.' but many hundreds of eminently satisfactory courses bear witness to the efficiency of the modification, which essentially is only one in relation to a deeper depth of larger stone, blinded of course (with two layers when particle size demands) to stop infiltration of the sand-soil root zone mix.

One hopes that no-one will go on thinking that the USGA Spec. means pure sand and Pennncross. It emphatically does not. Further, if anyone dares to suggest that British greenkeepers lack the skill and ability to look after Pennncross – when it is lack of budgets and resources which cause their difficulties – I may well be less than restrained.

We could do without advice from overseas visitors who lack the humility to recognise that they know very little about our grasses, climate, soils or indeed the way we play the original version of the Royal and Ancient game. In doing so they think they can transplant their specifications instantly and without modification and ignore all the work at all levels put in for more than a century – indeed since greenkeeping started – which can be equated with the general use of the reel type mower.



'I rejected the concept of the infallibility of soil analyses over 50 years ago, long before computers became everyday playthings and before most of my critics were born'

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HUGH TILLEY looks at sweepers,
leaf and litter collectors

Let's get this place CLEANED-UP



The ever popular Turf Tidy by Charterhouse

THE MACHINERY available for cleaning litter, leaves and grass is almost as diverse as the situations for which it is required, with each machine having its own particular strengths and weaknesses. The range extends from lightweight blowers through brush sweepers to vacuum collectors and from push models through the many tractor mounted or trailed implements to self-propelled machinery.

After a brush or rake, the most basic form of sweeper is the pedestrian operated push type (lawn) sweeper costing about £100. This simple device has a horizontal rotary brush driven by the wheels and collects debris in a canvas or similar collector. Whilst satisfactory for sweeping leaves or litter from small areas of turf or paths it has its limits – and time and effort are prime amongst them. The next stage in mechanisation is the same device but trailed by a ride-on, lawn or compact tractor. Obviously more expensive, but significantly less laborious and with greater output, such designs are available in widths up to about 5ft. However there are again limitations in use, for instance because they are driven by the wheels with a fixed ratio of brush rotation to forward motion, often causing difficulty in picking up heavy accumulations of wet leaves. Use of the height adjustment and making several passes usually results in an acceptable job, though this negates most of the economies of labour-saving machinery.

There are other options – like using a ride-on rotary with a collector. Many of these operate extremely efficiently having good suction built-in, usually because they have a separate suction fan. Buying a collector for an existing ride-on in your stable may prove an economic answer.

Going upmarket, to about £4,000, should provide a PTO driven sweeper/collector, or if sweeping is restricted to turf alone, perhaps a flail mower/collector of similar design will offer greater flexibility for other use. Hard surfaces with loose stone precludes the use of mowers – at least as primary collectors – although they may be able to collect from a heap or row.

However there are other relatively inexpen-

sive options for hard surfaces and these can usually be used on short grass. These include blowers and simple angled rotary brushes. Blowers, particularly lightweight models costing from about £250, are particularly effective at flushing leaves and light litter from under bushes and from the inevitable nooks and crannies around buildings. These 'air brooms' still leave a need to collect the debris and whilst many of them can be converted to vacuum, they are generally of limited capacity and dislike anything soggy. Of course with biodegradable materials such as leaves and grass it may be sufficient to simply remove them from turf, path or car park to a position where they can remain as mulch. If collection is essential then it is possible to windrow for collection by another type of machine.

The simple linkage mounted PTO driven angled brush, together with its derivatives, is more vigorous and efficient at moving all types of debris. What and how it will move depends on the strength of the bristles and how well it can be set. Given the right brushes, it should even be possible to clean mud off roads or stones from turf. Like the blower, it should be restricted in dry weather because it makes the dust fly. It is possible (and not difficult) to fit water spray bars to most rotary sweepers and some makers offer

it as an option – but it is not a DIY job. Water sprays add to both cost and complication and perhaps the worst of these complications is caused by failure to empty the water before a frost. With any mechanical brush it is important that setting height and replacing worn brushes is both quick and easy.

Industrial manufacturers offer various grades of bristle according to use demanded and these can include steel and nylon as well as bass and mixed fibres. It may also be possible to fit paddles, which work particularly well on cans, bottles and mud – ideal after a tournament invasion perhaps – though → 16

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**Kubota PTO Driven
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15 → wholly turf oriented machines may not have such options. If there is a lot of brushing to be done then consider fitting the brush to a loader or front linkage – it's more manoeuvrable and saves the operator's neck.

The next stage in sophistication and price is the brush collector combination. There are a number of such machines specifically designed for turf, these being produced in Britain or imported by well known companies. The buyer should also be aware that there are a number of quite similar machines which are no less effective on turf, these being produced for industrial or environment use. Assuming they are to be used on turf, one important point to consider is the GP – does the prospective machine have sufficient ground pressure? This is where most industrial designs fail.

Another point to ponder is the capacity of the collector. Flail cut grass produces bulk but little weight, thus you may fill the collector within very few yards and then have to travel miles to tip! In contrast, soggy leaves and soil cores weigh heavily and may jeopardise the stability of a tractor mounted machine. Many models can 'high tip' into a trailer and this may counteract lower capacity. Beware of claims that a

machine mulches and thus packs more into its collector, for mulched material can be less dense. Of greater importance is the power of the fan and the filler chute.

Flail mower/collectors may be available with a range of flails which include scarifier flails to allow easy cutting and collecting of thatch in one operation. These machines can cope happily with small branches and twigs.

In contrast, vacuum collectors seldom cope well with such material, though they are becoming increasingly popular, especially for litter picking. If your course is one where 'events' take place they may well be worth consideration. The trailed models are likely to be most popular for golf courses because of large capacity and ready availability of a tractor. A flexible wander hose attachment is perhaps more important than the ground head, however it must either be light or balanced by the boom, of suitable length and diameter and with some form of suction control from the nozzle, such as a slide, to admit air above the intake. Any ground head should have quick and easy control of height, preferably from a tractor seat – a modification which is normally easy to make. Some makers can also supply a brush sweeper to enhance the vacuum head.

Flotation tyres suitable for turf are essential but may not be the normal fitment, however it is the overall weight which can be carried on the wheels which is important. Self-propelled ride-on and pedestrian operated vacuum sweepers with brushes are also readily available, but with few exceptions are more applicable to hard surfaces.

Thus to obtain a clean sweep the first requirement is to define the areas and debris which need gathering, this long before selecting a suitable type for demonstration. Asking colleagues of their experience using specific machines costs little more than a 'phone call yet can save an expensive mistake. Half the hassle of getting a machine which does not do the job is the frustration in knowing too late that you selected the wrong machine in the first place.




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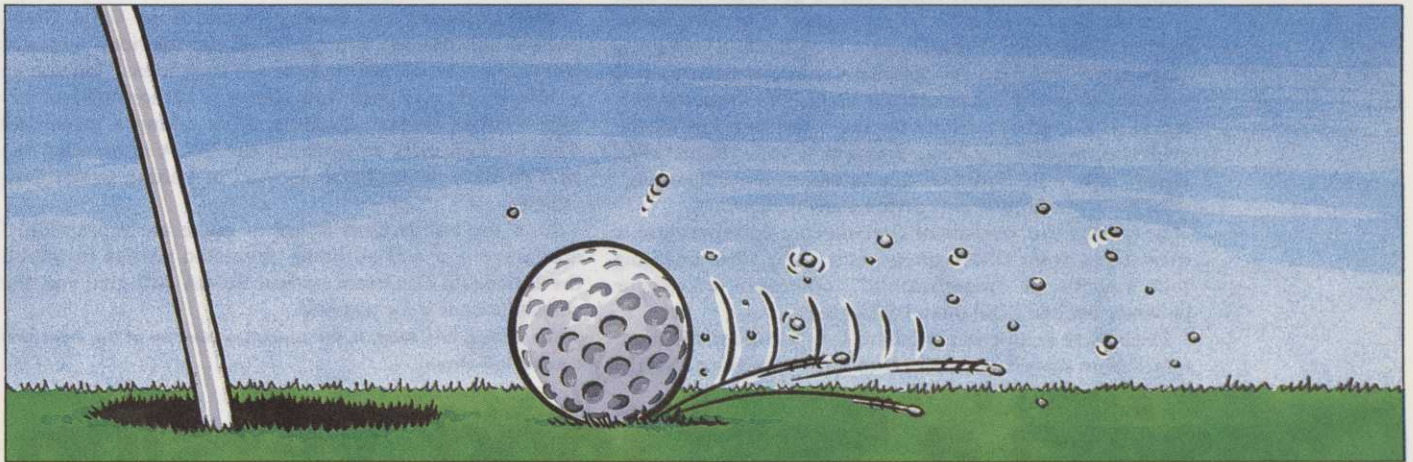
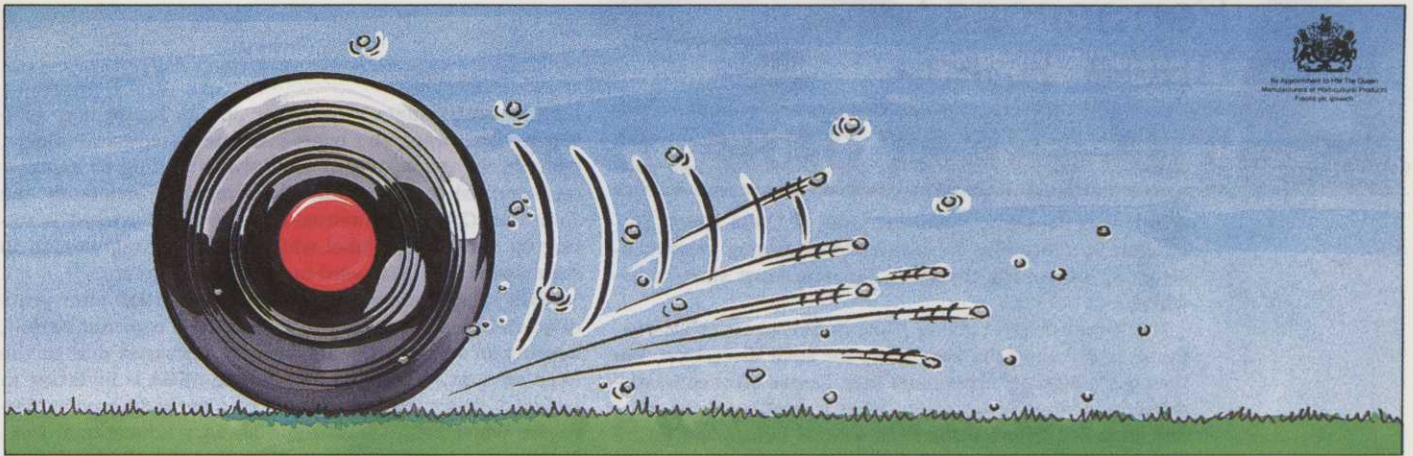
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THE GREAT DEBATE

Far be it for me to cloud the issue of USGA Green Section Specifications for a method of putting green construction by stating the facts, but one must start somewhere.

The 'Great Debate' taking place in Greenkeeper International is certainly the best place for such discussion, but the poor old greenkeepers and their bosses must come to a decision eventually regarding what is best for them. All I can do is help shorten the odds against failure and future high maintenance costs. Where else to get these facts than from the horse's mouth and my money is on Jim Snow, National Director of the USGA Green Section, which is responsible for these specifications. Jim has been quoted recently as saying 'while there is nothing foolproof in this world, USGA greens are by far the safest bet. For all the criticism, no-one has come forward with a scientifically based, time tested method that is better, or comparable'. (The full text of Jim Snow's article is printed below).

My message to readers of Greenkeeper International is this: if you want USGA greens, stay away from anything that smacks of "modification", otherwise take your chances, but *don't* call them USGA greens.

Since there is no other standard for greens construction, (Jim Arthur has come closest with articles on the subject) I

hate to contemplate what other nomenclature may arbitrarily come from golf course architects, course builders, committees, greenkeepers and others willing to compromise and risk long term successful results. Fortunately, the Joint Golf Course Committee for 'The Way Forward' is setting up a Technical Panel which will be strong enough to state which way is forward in this great debate.

USGA specifications were developed in 1960 after years of scientific study and have been under constant review, bearing in mind new data being discovered due to the huge amount of time and money the USGA is investing in turfgrass research. There should be a packed house at Harrogate when BIGGA hold their January Educational Conference, for I understand that Dr Norman Hummel from Cornell University and Stanley Zontek of the USGA Green Section will present papers. Of all the previous lecturers from abroad who have come to sell their ideas, this will be a refreshingly rare treat from the most authoritative of foreign sources. In fact, Dr Hummel is taking a sabbatical from his university to work for the USGA in creating the next revision of the USGA Method of Putting Green Construction.

So, if my words have failed to make an impression, I encourage you and all other interested parties to attend the Harrogate Conference when BIGGA will give you the chance to hear it for yourself.

● The author, Eric Shiel, is the Executive Director of the Joint Golf Course Committee.

Chasing a 'fast food' version of the USGA spec green

by JAMES T SNOW
National Director,
USGA Green Section

It's come to this: After listening to golf course architects, builders, superintendents, and others complain endlessly about USGA specifications for green construction and watching them modify the specs a hundred different ways to meet their own desires, I've decided that what these people must really want is a 'fast food' version of the specs!

What constitutes my definition of 'fast food' specs, you ask? It's simple. Green construction according to the 'fast food' method must be all of the following: It must be **easy, fast, cheap and foolproof**.

Unfortunately, building greens is not like flipping burgers. If you look around long enough and set your standards low enough it's possible to find restaurants that serve food that meets all four performance characteristics. If anyone tells you he can build greens that meet all four standards, though, my advice would be look elsewhere.

It's not hard to find greens built with the first three characteristics in mind – **easy, fast and cheap**. They're the ones that often fail and must be rebuilt, or else cost many times their original expense in terms of extra maintenance costs, poor quality turf, aggravation and unhappy golfers.

The fourth characteristic – **foolproof** – is the standard the smart money goes with. It means building a green according to the method most likely to succeed, ensuring good drainage, resistance to compaction, consistently good turf conditions and, with maintenance, decades of good performance. It means a method of construction based upon good scientific principles and years of proven field experience; in other words, the USGA method of green construction.

Why wouldn't everyone build **foolproof** greens? Some critics say that USGA greens are too difficult, time-consuming and costly to build. But are these criticisms justified? Let's take a look:

Easy – USGA greens are fully described in a 24-page booklet. Laboratory personnel and Green Section agronomists are available to answer questions and provide other assistance. Sure, it takes some planning and co-ordination to build

USGA greens and it takes more steps than the alternative fly-by-the-seat-of-your-pants method. But which method is actually easier? With USGA greens all you have to do is follow the directions. One point in favour of the USGA specs.

Fast – It's true, building a USGA green is not the same as deciding to get in your bulldozer, pushing up some "native soil", planting some grass seed and calling it a green. It requires seeking out the best materials, allowing time for laboratory testing, mixing the components carefully and following through with all the details to ensure success. One point in favour of the critics, but nothing that some planning couldn't change.

Cheap – Okay, the best materials sometimes cost more and it could cost a few hundred more for lab. testing and a few thousand more for the time to put down the intermediate course sand layer. And let's go first class and hire a quality-control person on a costly green construction project. The extra cost for doing it the right way to ensure long-term success is usually less than 10% of the total. Another point in favour of the specs.

Foolproof – Admittedly, there is little that is foolproof in the world, but USGA greens are by far the safest bet when it comes to green construction. For all of the criticism, no-one has come forward with a scientifically based, time tested method that's better, or even cheaper.

During the past year we've heard from every imaginable corner of the game about how the USGA ought to change its specs to make them easier, faster and cheaper. Not surprisingly, most recommendations best served an individual's needs, rather than the needs of golf courses for top-quality greens. Rest assured, however, that the USGA is not going to put its name on construction methods designed primarily to make green construction easy, fast and cheap – without including the foolproof. If we ever endorse 'fast food' green construction techniques, it will only be after extensive scientific investigation and extensive field testing – and after the fat and cholesterol have been removed too!

● This article first appeared in the USGA 'Green Section Record' in July 1991 and is reproduced with due acknowledgement and thanks.
18 GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL September 1991

Prescriptions for the OLD GREEN SYNDROME

Sitting in the stands at Augusta National for the 1991 Masters, DAVID WHITE chanced to sit beside Cutler Robinson Jnr., a golf course superintendent and member of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America. Inevitably conversation centred around the perfection that was all around, the American dilemma of demanding slicker and slicker greens, and eventually to a discussion of Cutler's own course, an old established Club in Virginia. "I've had problems that would tax the very being of the fellows here", he said, "and would love to share them with my fellow greenkeepers on your side of the Atlantic". Here then is Cutler's answer to his little problem, one he calls 'prescriptions for the old green syndrome.'



Deep aeration with sand topdressing

Maintaining quality bent putting greens in south eastern Virginia is a very arduous task. Extreme heat and humidity throughout the summer months are very common, making management difficult. Elizabeth Manor Golf and Country Club has 'old style' greens which compounds this problem, characterised by heavy soil and lack of internal drainage. Many of these old greens also have shade and air circulation problems and are often too small for the amount of play they receive.

Reconstruction seemed a logical solution to the management dilemma of maintaining these traditional old style greens, but fear of losing the architectural integrity of the golf course and the expense involved precludes this approach. Besides, contemporary methods for putting green construction can create many more complicated problems than those associated with old greens.

Upon my arrival at Elizabeth Manor in 1986, I found the greens prone to *Poa annua* and algae infestations, mostly due to extremely poor internal drainage. The implementation of a deep aeration programme with the Verti-Drain provided quick yet temporary relief. The greens would take approximately three times the amount of water to reach field capacity as they did before, but anaerobic soil conditions were still common following heavy rainfall during the hot, humid months.

After the first summer I decided to begin a programme of drain tile installation into the existing greens. The poorest draining greens were selected to be done first. The sod was stripped and trenches dug in predetermined areas. Drain tile was installed and backfilled with stone and then sand/root-zone. The sod was then replaced and the greens were soon ready for play. The drain tiles from the greens were coupled with a solid pipe and daylighted in an appropriate location. The continuation of the deep aeration programme, with the Verti-Drain set at a depth just above the drain tile, allowed excess water unimpeded movement through soil profile and away from the green.

The precise management of irrigation throughout hot and humid periods is critical in these parts in order to maintain quality putting surfaces. The stringent and judicious application of water creates a healthy environment for turf survival. Dry greens putt better and withstand more traffic than wet, soggy greens. Hand watering and the use of wetting agents were found to be necessary to prevent turf loss from localised dry spots.

I subscribe to the view that the application of nutrients should be based on the requirement of the plant. Micronutrients and biostimulants have proven invaluable here in maintaining healthy greens through stressful periods. Certainly, old style greens will afford the greenkeeper more flexibility in this area when compared to sand based greens, which have poor nutrient holding capacity. The analysis of tissue as well as soil are again, I believe, essential aspects of a sound management programme.

Cultural practices such as shallow and solid tine aerification are still very important in the areas of thatch reduction and improved evapotranspiration. The incorporation of sand through topdressing, especially following aeration, will improve the infiltration of water through the soil profile.

The demands of the golfer for faster greens is a goal we should not shun too quickly. A dry, closely cut green that is ideal for putting will also have excellent surface drainage and improved evapotranspirational qualities. Achieving double digit stimpmeter readings during environmentally stressful periods is no easy task, but every effort to do so will be appreciated by your employers.

The management problems associated with old style greens are very simple in nature compared to the problems created through contemporary methods of construction. By managing the environmental factors affecting the maintenance of old style greens, such as internal drainage, shade and air circulation, you can save your golf course its original architectural integrity - as well as saving money.

● J. Cutler Robinson is a Certified Golf Course Superintendent by the GCSAA and President of the Old Dominion Golf Course Superintendents Association. He has a B.Sc in Resource Management with Agronomy.




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THE DAY A GOLF COURSE DROWNED



**...and how
the men of
West Kilbride
brought it
back to life**

The prospect of staging the Scottish Boys' Matchplay Championship with only 16 greens was never really a starter and Jim Paton knew this only too well. It was foolish even to contemplate, yet on January 5th 1991 this greenkeeper's nightmare came true, caused by a monstrous storm dumping its full icy wrath directly over West Kilbride golf course during the afternoon. The destruction took less time than it takes to play a round of golf, the desolation indicating a score of 'two under', two holes gone to a watery grave. Yes indeed, a 16 hole championship course seemed a distinct possibility.

Subsequent reclamation of the course, including those sectors that were literally hurled into the raging sea, was of such military order and precision that the accomplishment might have drawn admiration from General Stormin' Norman himself.

The day started peacefully enough, though trouble was certainly brewing in the air and no golfer ventured out that day to tackle West Kilbride's fair links, which • 22

84 days – from total wreck



On previous page: a view of the 14th green looking northwards during the eye of the storm. Above: the same scene today

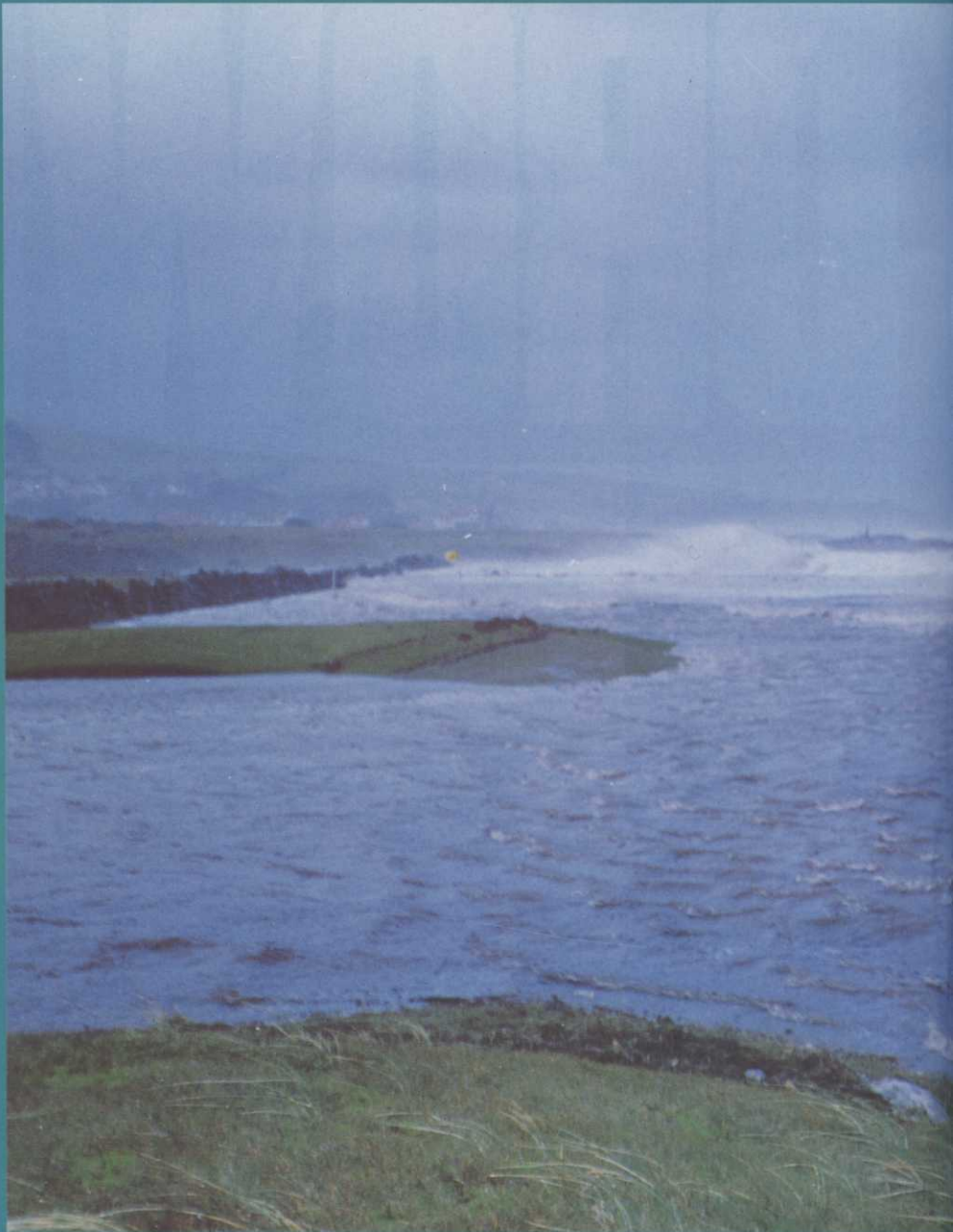


Above: What was left of the 14th tee – and what it looks like today, five months later

21 → are slap bang along the seashore of the Firth of Clyde and within sight of the Isle of Arran. Local wags are prone to quip 'if you can see the Isle it's going to rain, if you can't, it's already raining!'

At 1pm the storm eye hit West Kilbride, stripping vast chunks of golf course adjacent to the shore into the sea and dumping what was later called the six 'esses' – salt, silt, sand, shale, shells and seaweed – onto what but a few hours before had been the brightest jewel of golfing excellence twixt Troon and Greenock. The whole episode brought a brand new meaning to coastal erosion.

Men of West Kilbride – especially greenkeepers – are made of stern stuff and under the guidance of head greenkeeper Jim Paton, a masterplan was in operation within hours. Reviewing the aftermath, Jim's first priori-



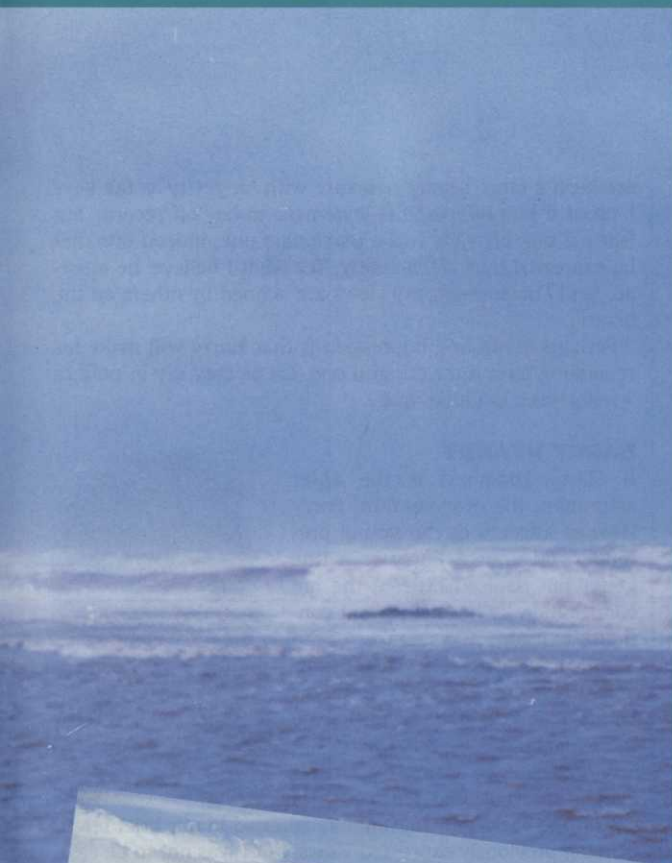
Same viewpoint, five months apart – but the dry stone wall to the left of the pictures is the only constant feature.

ty – since golfers will insist on playing their little game come what may – was to remove the hundreds of tons of detritus and wash away as much of the turf damaging salt water as was possible.

West Kilbride is no Titanic and there was never a thought of sinking, but Ayrshire is not Georgia and West Kilbride certainly doesn't have Augusta National's budget, machinery or manpower resources. This then was an exercise in hard graft, together with commandeering every available tractor, trailer, Cushman, wheelbarrow and willing shoulder.

All hands to the deck as the workforce sweated through the chill (it was January, remember) gave Jim hope that his primary aim – to speed recovery as swiftly as possible for member play – would soon be achieved and indeed, within 24 hours, the course rang once again

Back to totally respectable



The clean-up begins ...and is completed

to the sound of persimmon striking balata.

Damaged greens were nurtured back, though salt seemed unlikely to evaporate over a few days and this did cause problems of patchiness and burn-out, with traces still visible on two or three greens when I visited the links in June. The putting surfaces however, somehow miraculously remained firm and true.

Soon earth movers and excavators were scurrying across the wrecked beach, some good perhaps coming from the disaster in focussing attention, sharper than any plea made in council chambers, that erosion was a problem that would not go away. Subsequent efforts reveal solid progress made in dune and foreshore battlement re-enforcement, together with new tees and surfaced walkways immediately adjacent to the shoreline.

Like many a good drama this one had its happy end-

ing, for on April 1st – just 84 back-breaking days after the tempest – a proud Jim Paton and a relieved Club committee presented a rebuilt West Kilbride, complete and looking fresh as a young bride, to the cream of Scotland's youth for the Scottish Boys' Matchplay Championship. It would be grand to report the day loomed bright and sparky but it was not to be. The heavens opened once again and it rained and rained and rained – so much so that the Isle of Arran disappeared!

Somehow it didn't seem to matter to the boys, all of whom declared the event a great success, though there were sore backs nursed by Jim's stalwarts who stormed the breeches yet again, this time manning squeegees in their successful efforts to keep greens water-free. There's something about the cannie Scots, don't you know. It's called PRIDE.



Who's who in BIGGA



HARRY DIAMOND

The epitome of a true Scot, Harry Diamond is a ruddy faced and exceedingly jovial character (I use the term unreservedly, for he is a character) who nevertheless has about him a serious side. Not for him the chasing of rainbows to the ends of the world, as so many of his countrymen are apt to do, for Harry has found his niche in greenkeeping in his home location of Ayr, where for the past 21 years he has worked for Kyle and Carrick D.C., currently

as head greenkeeper, Belleisle and Seafield GC.

His record speaks volumes for location longevity for in all his long career – he is 61 – he has maintained a record that is one for the books; beginning with 11 years at Glasgow Gailes followed by 13 years at Bogside, 11 of those as head greenkeeper. His proud claim is that this first promotion made him the youngest ever head greenkeeper in Scotland at that time.

The bug must have bitten early, for Harry worked on a course during school holidays, 'far better than compulsory potato picking' he recalled, before promptly moving into the business proper when schooling was over. Glasgow Gailes was his launching pad and he vividly remembers their kindness. As an example, during National Service in Malaya he saw a 'plane overhead dropping a wee parachute which missed the target and landed in a river. Scrambling in fully clothed, Harry discovered the pack contained a soggy 'fiver' – an unexpected Christmas bonus from Glasgow Gailes and a fond reminder of happier days back home. 'What do you do with a soggy 'fiver' in Malaya?', I asked, 'dry the bloody thing and take it home' he chortled, 'it was the most welcome bonus I've ever had'.

Like most people who hold office Harry is a busy man. He still plays golf to a handicap of four (he was scratch for 30 years) and seemingly thrives on a diet of committee work that includes chairmanship of the Scottish section, working closely with the Ayrshire section and contributing years of wisdom and understanding to the Liaison Committee of Ayr College. Like most elder statesmen in his profession, Harry applauds the strides being made in greenkeeper education and although he didn't exactly spell it out, I formed the impression he's just a mite sorry the generation gap precluded him from such educational opportunities.

For the future, again not surprisingly, his enthusiasm is tempered by realism in acknowledging that the Association's main goal must be to attract more members. How to achieve this is another matter but his views are firm and unyielding. 'Greenkeeper International plays a vital part – indeed, the vital part – and its credibility is our strong and lasting link', he said. 'We owe it to members and prospective members to continue demonstrating our effectiveness and to show the world our position as the heartbeat and conscience of the profession'.

As a serving member of the magazine sub-committee Harry speaks from a platform of authority and it was on this subject that I felt I touched a raw nerve. 'I've only a year to run before retiring from the board and committee and, of course, have no way of knowing who will take my place, or indeed other places on the committee. As an Association we have much the same board and committee structure as that of most golf Clubs and I feel we are in danger of perpetuating the same mistakes. If we were to be really courageous we should follow the dictum of "The Way Forward" and

Prompted by an idea spawned in committee and properly brought into youthful bloom at The Open Championship, where an air of relaxed informality creates just the right atmosphere for taped interviews, your editor talked with members of the executive and regional administration, set on taking them from what may perhaps be seen as local parochialism into the national eye of the Association. I began by talking and listening to Harry Diamond and Barry Heaney

establish a more lasting structure with longevity as the key.' I asked if he preferred the statement to be "off record" but learned that his view was a passionate one, indeed one that he expressed most vehemently. 'It's what I believe' he insisted, 'and I'm sure that my views are echoed by others on the board'.

Perhaps my lasting impression is that Harry will make his remaining term a meaningful one, for as they say in politics 'even a week is a long time'.

BARRY HEANEY

If Harry Diamond is the elder statesman, the ever youthful Barry Heaney appears as the young pretender. I'd known Barry as a fine golfer but realised little of the big contribution he has made, and continues to make, as a member of the Board of Management. His appearance belies his age and one might be forgiven for disbelieving that he is 55 years old.

Barry began by giving the Greenkeeper International team a little pat on the back for achievements attained in our brief reign, echoing previously expressed views, but I was not to be easily led down this path, wanting to learn more about Heaney the man. Is he going to be reluctant to 'spill the beans' was one thought that crossed my mind.

Not so, for here is a man in love with his profession and he enthuses over it like a teenager over his first motor car. Like many fine greenkeepers, Barry has found his perfect patch, Wortley Golf Club, where he has happily worked as head greenkeeper for over 19 years. 'It's such a good place to work that I plan to remain until my retirement' he said, 'they are as understanding as any Club could be and are totally supportive. They are like good friends'.

Quite apart from thoroughly enjoying his chosen career, Barry has enjoyed a long lasting love affair with the game of golf itself and is its most enthusiastic exponent. 'I first took to the game about 30 years ago', he grinned, 'though as any good Yorkshireman should, I was 'blooded' into cricket first and enjoyed a few good seasons before taking up the sticks'. He is, dammit, one of those for whom the game came naturally and though never once having a lesson, played to single figures within 12 months and has maintained his strength of purpose by remaining thus, playing now to a handicap of eight.

To get to his proud position of head greenkeeper – and to maintain it – Barry worked hard at educating himself in the intricacies of his craft, though his tuition was of the night school variety and he opined that the opportunities of today were just not available to him as a youngster. It was largely down to IOG courses, which were the best, indeed probably the only courses available in his time and his appetite for learning was voracious. 'If I could wave the magic wand', he said, 'I'd make college education compulsory for new incumbents to our profession, further I'll ram home the thought that burns within me: greenkeepers, get involved in everything the Association does and you'll get the best out!'

Magic wand waving just once more, Barry wished that rank and file golfers would understand that greenkeepers don't slit, hollow tine or top dress greens for amusement, but for their lasting benefit. 'How nice it would be' he concluded, 'if they appreciated the situation, rather than heaping scorn on our efforts'. And so say all of us.



Vital survey relies on YOUR help

Within the next few weeks BIGGA greenkeepers throughout the country will receive a comprehensive Golf Course Management Survey through the mail, which they are earnestly requested to complete and return without delay.

There can be few who have not been confronted by survey forms of some sort or another before and will perhaps question why this one is so different, why it is so very important and why it should be acted upon?

First, the information sought is such that every answer will be absolutely confidential. No names or addresses will be requested and data gathered will be used only in producing trends, regional averages and – perhaps most important of all – highlighting differentials.

Next, you may ask, what's in it for me? The answer – simply – is that it will assist you in managing your course with every possible means at your disposal by way of information. This information will enable you to fight your corner with totally accurate facts rather than hearsay or fantasy. In using current jingoism, BIGGA endorses the statement: if you can't accurately measure it, you can't accurately manage it!

Each greenkeeper completing the survey will receive a free synopsis of the report, believed so valuable to greenkeepers that a similar survey and report conducted in the USA some little time ago positively revolutionised the industry in that country.

Golf is undergoing unprecedented changes, together with a much more enlightened approach to total management of the most important facility – the course itself. BIGGA urges you to spend a little time in completing the survey – a vitally important tool of good management – the urgency generated by the knowledge that the end result will be of lasting benefit to the greenkeeper and his chosen profession.

Be a professional – stand up and be recognised.

Gearing up for Iseki, Ransomes and Kubota tournaments

There is an air of excitement around the greenkeeping fraternity that is positively boiling. Already we've experienced some of the most electrifyingly close battles in greenkeeper golf at Royal St David's, venue for the ICI Professional Products sponsored BIGGA National Tournament, where a single stroke separated players in the gross competition and handicap players demonstrated skills often beyond their wildest dreams. Clearly the ICI Professional Products Tournament was a great success.

Fine tuning of skills continues unabated for the forthcoming Iseki Championship finals to be held at Hillside on September 12th and whilst none could have failed to be impressed by the strength of play of those who have battled through the many rounds in order to reach the pinnacle, the question remains on everyone's lips – who will be the Iseki Champion for 1991. Greenkeeper International will be at Hillside to catch the players in action and a full report and pictures will appear in our next issue.

But that's not all, for just two weeks later the venue changes again, moving to the delightful Fulford course on October 2nd for the Ransomes Interna-

tional Greenkeepers and Superintendents Tournament. This will be the seventh such tournament, with a select and hugely talented field culled from the best of greenkeeper golfing skills around the world, each bent on proving national superiority in a team competition that has no peer. Competitors will also enjoy a BIGGA Seminar at Aldwark Manor on October 1st, given by an international panel of speakers and entitled "Environmental Considerations in Golf Course Management". All this, together with a spirited two day entertainment programme, suggests a promise of something quite extraordinary.

Finally the scene changes yet again, with successful British greenkeepers, who earned their laurels by finishing high in their class at Royal St David's, competing in the Kubota Team challenge at the Belfry on October 17th. BIGGA's team have a successful record in this event and will be keen to wrest the Trophy from last year's winners, the Club Secretaries, who took the BIGGA held trophy from the Stewards in a cliff-hanging final.

To them all, good fortune with never a three putt. May they return laden with trophies, honour and glory...

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This recently established service for BIGGA members has been of great service to greenkeepers throughout the UK. Greenkeepers do not always have the time to select the best mortgage possibilities available, and so to have someone searching for the right deal is really useful.

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Lautro

To Neil Thomas:

■ Thanks very much indeed to you and members of the Association for their very valuable service provided at Royal Birkdale during The Open Championship.

Certainly the bunker raking between matches has now become an accepted part of The Championship and makes things much easier for the players and their caddies. This is so important to those in a following match, who find that bunkers have been left in a fair and consistent condition.

We look forward to having you all with us again next year.

MICHAEL F BONALLACK

Secretary, Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews

■ Thanks to all those who gave valuable help at The Open, particularly with divoting and bunker maintenance.

All BIGGA greenkeepers were very smartly turned out and a true credit to the Association. I am most grateful and again my sincere thanks.

TOM O'BRIEN Head Greenkeeper, Royal Birkdale Golf Club

■ I was most concerned to read in your interview feature (July, pp. 23-25) with Bruce Jamieson, that turf sterilisation using methyl bromide is suggested as a greenkeepers technique to kill *Poa annua* in greens. Gassing greens with methyl bromide by greenkeepers is illegal in the United Kingdom and is also a highly hazardous process.

Special equipment is needed for its application and the chemical may only be used by professional operators trained in its use and familiar with the precautionary measures that must be observed. Methyl bromide is subject to the Poisons Act 1972 and Poisonous Rules 1982.

I consider your article to be lacking by the omission of this important information and request you publish this letter in order that greenkeepers may be aware of the hazard presented by gassing with methyl bromide.

NEIL BALDWIN Plant Pathologist, Sports Turf Research Institute
The point is well taken, though it should be noted that the article offered the viewpoint of one respected individual and was not intended to be definitive instruction on methyl bromide gassing. Taken further, my understanding is that such operations have only ever been undertaken (by expert operators) in the British Isles on new green constructions prior to seeding, with results that were most encouraging. Its application remains untried on any established British green. Since Clubs are, understandably, reluctant to act as guinea pigs, especially as gassing is viewed by some expert critics as impractical for our climate, perhaps there is a case for official field trials to be held in Britain - Editor.

■ The R&A Championship Committee have failed miserably in one of their main briefs, namely as the body 'responsible for organising and running the Championships'. I refer to the poor state of a number of greens at Royal Birkdale during The Open Championship.

The main complaints from players were: inconsistent green speeds and differences of colour on individual greens, making them difficult to read.

The question must be asked: has the Championship Committee ignored the advice set out in the R&A's document 'The Way Forward', compiled by leading greenkeepers, agronomists and others concerned with the condition of our championship courses or, as seems more likely, have they succumbed to pressure from the PGA and media? The latter seem heavily influenced by American values including colour and lightning-fast greens.

If the pro. golfer requires putting surfaces that have constant stimpmeter readings, without regard for the location or climate he is in, then surely he requires synthetic turf to play upon.

If we are to take the advice of Payne Stewart and 'tear the greens up and replace with bent grass', the outcome would be greens suitable for play over just four months each year. The remaining eight would be taken up with overseeding, causing constant disruption to the putting surface, and die-back as a result of winter play on dormant grass. I find it incomprehensible that someone earning vast sums on the putting surface knows so little about the surface on which he works.

As the oldest golf championship, The Open has always been played on traditional links where bent and particularly fescue are commonplace. This will remain as long as our putting surfaces are not shaved to meet the demands of a stimpmeter, cam-

■ **Hero at the Nationals... yes, a golfing greenkeeper made hero status at Royal St Davids, though not especially for his golf.**

Two young children were stuck on a sandbank, unaware that an incoming tide was rushing in, the water around them dangerously out of their depth. When their calls for help were heard, our hero played it cool, (twirling round three times in a 'phone booth) peeled off his shirt before calling for the assistance of another to take one child, then swam semi-clothed to rescue the other. Safely to shore, the children were returned to their much relieved mother.

Who was this hero? No, not Superman swathed in a red and blue cape but denim clad Ian Holoran of the Cleveland section.

Well done Ian, we are proud of you!

**ROGER AND VALERIE GLAZIER
Cuddington GC.
Surrey**

Letters

era lens or golfer who cannot change his game to prevailing conditions.

I hope this will not be regarded as pompous, rather a viewpoint from the practical stance of a greenkeeper who understands the burden places on our courses and upon those who maintain them once the cameras and professionals have had their fill.

BERNARD FINLAY Course Manager, Portstewart GC.

This letter also appeared in The Daily Telegraph under the heading 'pampered pros must adapt'.

■ As the August issue had nothing to say about Birkdale, I feel some statement is necessary about the sorry state of Birkdale's greens for The Open. Surely it is in the interest of every greenkeeper in the country to know exactly what went wrong.

I am prompted to ask this after reading (Tom O'Brien profile July) that the aim was to have firm, fast greens for The Open. To my mind they certainly were not firm!

JAMES PEACE Head Greenkeeper, Newburgh on Ythan GC.

Scotland

Mr Peace implies that Greenkeeper International has failed by keeping quiet. Not so, as he will see in this issue. This magazine, like most monthlies, is prepared and laid for press at least two weeks before publication. The Open finished on the 21st July, one full week after editorial deadline. It speaks wonders for our production team that two colour pages were set aside in order to include my late photo montage of BIGGA's activities at Royal Birkdale, this being achieved without delay to publication day. The luxury of overnight reporting is something that must be left to the national dailies - Editor.

■ I heartily agree with your astute comments (July editorial) but feel one point of contention was overlooked. The so-called consultant was saying that he would like to see more university graduates overseeing young greenkeepers. Not so, say I, for after finishing college and passing exams these younger greenkeepers need the guidance of older and more experienced greenkeepers, men capable and willing of passing on their wide knowledge of local soil conditions and weather patterns.

As an example, the spring of '91 caught out many greenkeepers with little prior knowledge of the effects of cold, dry conditions on the growing cycle. I myself run a small upland 9 hole course single-handed and by using my knowledge of such spring conditions, often experienced in this corner of the country, managed to keep my greens in excellent condition whilst others were suffering with bare greens.

On a different subject, I think the industry is losing sight of golfers' real needs and that maybe they don't want to play on huge, fancy complexes. My own experience suggests that the ordinary golfer is happiest on a simple parkland course where he can tee off on grass, play two shots to the green and putt out on a good putting surface, all at a reasonable green fee.

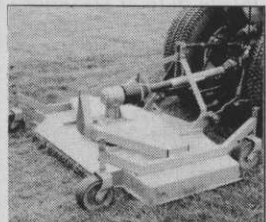
E GRAINGER Melrose, Roxburghshire, Scotland

The exchange of information and knowledge is one that BIGGA positively encourages. Perhaps the greatest stumbling block is a reluctance on the part of many greenkeepers to admit to a colleague that they have a problem and could use some guidance. On so-called championship courses, you touch a raw nerve. Having teed up on some architectural nightmares built only for Supermen, especially those in America, I have no desire to return and lose another cluster of golf balls - and my self-esteem - Editor.

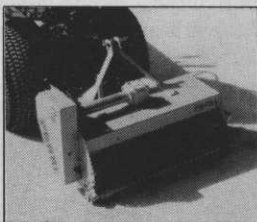
FOOTNOTE: *The receipt of so many letters of congratulation for the National Tournament is hugely satisfying and I join with those involved, especially at Royal St David's, ICI and Head Office, in acknowledging the writers concerned. Space limitations prevent the publication of such letters, encouraging and flattering though they are, and so with heartfelt appreciation for your generous comments, we thank you one and all.*



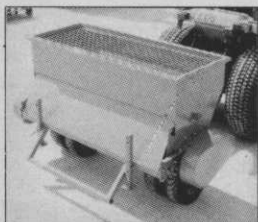
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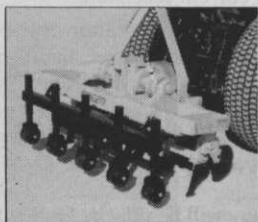
ROTARY MOWER



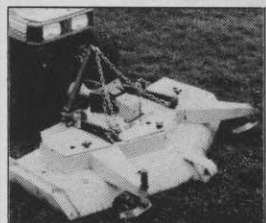
FLAIL MOWER



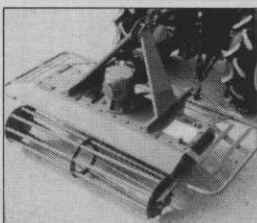
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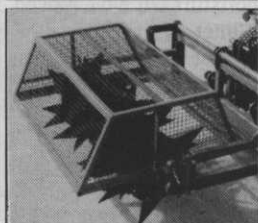
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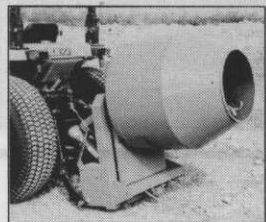
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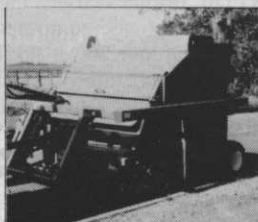
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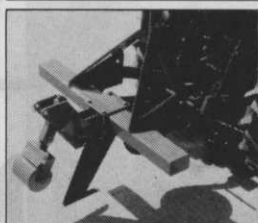
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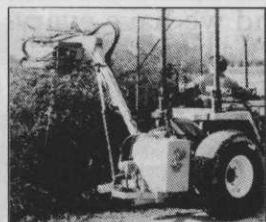
FRONT LOADER



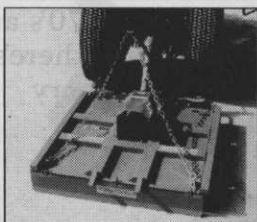
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TURF DRAINER



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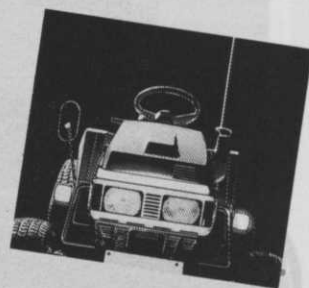
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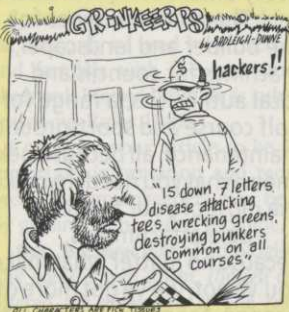
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TRACTORS · MOWERS · POWER EQUIPMENT · ATTACHMENTS

TRADE TOPICS

■ Subject to German anti-trust agency clearance, John Deere-Lanz Verwaltungs-AG, part of John Deere Group, intends to acquire the major shareholding in SABO, manufacturer of lawn mowers and other grounds care equipment, and - under the trade name Roberine - rotary and reel mowers for commercial use. Worldwide, John Deere has a workforce of 38,000 employees.



■ Dan Haas, Director of Sta-Brite Supplies Ltd, was 'ticked pink' at news just announced that Sta-Brite have been awarded Main Distributor status by Rhône-Poulenc Environmental Products.

This prestigious distributorship can be seen as recognition of Sta-Brite's prominence in the south as major suppliers of turf care products. Equally gratifying must be the news that sales are growing 33% each year, despite the so-called current recession.

■ Garfitts are back... and after over 200 years of manufacturing scythes and mower blades of all kinds, this is good news indeed. The new owners, Gerald and Trevor Brooks of Turf Machinery Ltd, have purchased the business assets and will continue producing quality cylinders, blades, parts and grinders from Cross Scythes Works in Sheffield.

The company will be now be known as Garfitts International.

■ Aitken's Sportsturf Ltd have moved, their new depot in Sherburn-in-Elmet, North Yorkshire giving them a fine edge by being close to most motorway networks. As main distributors for many major manufacturers, the new base will help them to increase market penetration, whilst continuing the personal service for which sales specialists Norman Sheddon, Peter Fell and Tony Kvedaris are famous. Telephone: 0977 681155.

■ After trading for 21 years as Sachs Dolmar (UK) Ltd, Britain's largest independent supplier of outdoor power equipment will change its name to Outdoor Power Products Ltd. The new name more accurately describes the company's widening product range, which includes chain-

saws, shredders, rotary mowers, brushcutters and those clever Robin Dagger soil ameliorators.

■ I admit to being sold on the versatility of skid steer loaders, more so since watching the Bobcat range perform so famously on new bunker building at Pennyhill Park G&CC last March.

It's good news then, especially for those in the golf course construction industry, that Bobcat-Melroe Europe have introduced a second larger model in their 50 series, the 853, with an operating capacity of 771kg. Details from Bobcat-Melroe on 0455 251725.



The newly-introduced Bobcat 853

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DIGGING FOR DIRT



A review of the Golf Landscaping and Construction Industry and a plea for responsible reporting in the national press

by MARK PIERSON

The Golf Course Construction Industry, like many others, is cyclical. Last year, and to a certain extent this year as well, the steady increase in the number of new golf courses available to golfers was maintained, with the only noticeable difference in '91 being that as banks and financiers began to draw in their horns, several highly publicised and ill-conceived projects ground to a halt.

These bank inspired closures gave the national press something of a field day in highlighting the often more imaginary than real problems and gave great joy to so-called 'environmental guardians', who took delight in shouting *golf is bad for you*. Not only are golf courses a bad financial risk, they howled, but just look at the effect on the environment!

Curious then, it seems to me, that the most desirable houses in the country are often found in our beautiful English countryside nestling close to or on a golf course, itself a haven and often last preserve of certain rare or endangered species or flora and fauna.

Bankers must live somewhere and they are often the lucky ones enjoying such residential delights, sad then that their actions and those of the misleading environmental issues should have muddied the otherwise clear water.

Pressures on the environment cannot be overlooked by any thinking and responsible body and thus it is → 30

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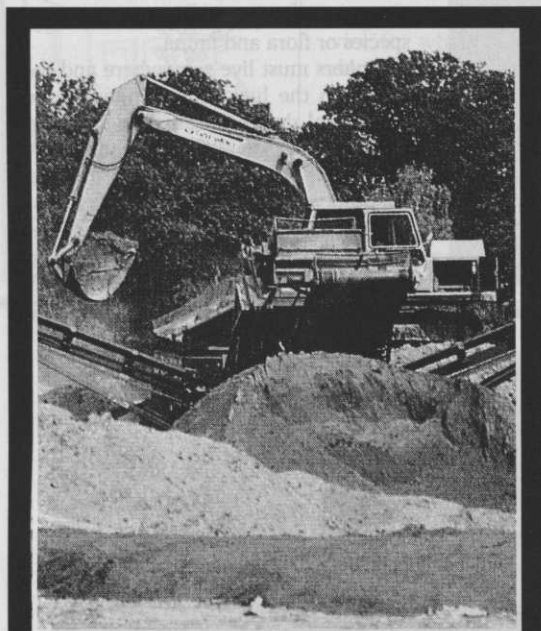
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Beautiful endings from machinery-scarred beginnings. Are such developments really the work of 'the devil incarnate'?



'Our industry is environmentally friendly and we continue to be the envy of many other industries'

how practical – or indeed how necessary – their proposals and demands really are? We know for certain that local planning authorities *will* listen to sensible proposals outlined by organisations wishing to protect our countryside and heritage, but how will they know which organisation is right?

I concede that the lobbyists have a point about Trojan Horse developments. They are not what our industry is about and are best left to property speculators, who should properly be divorced from the golf course industry. However, given the 1,400 or so *granted* applications for new golf courses, how will local authorities judge and compare those applying with the right sort of land in the right place to those already granted in the wrong place?

As an example, I know of one county where 12 new courses have been approved and that – thank you very much – is quite enough! Does this strange sort of logic now preclude

galling to those in our industry, who spend their working lives enhancing the landscape, to hear that within the space of a single year our work is now that of the devil incarnate. Certainly we know we must respect the countryside, but the issue of *carte blanche* directives and inaccurate statements does no good to anybody, save that of giving one environmental pressure group a chance to score brownie points over its rivals.

How many of the pessimists and killjoys, I ask myself, have ever made contact with the BAGCA, BAGCC, BIGGA or governing bodies of the game to establish just

the one good site that is sensibly drawn up, located in a prime position (where golfers can travel easily) and on the right land? Do not think I am advocating an opening of the flood-gates, but to illustrate my thinking I know of one site where a partially-built course is described by locals as being smack in the middle of a bog! It seems unlikely ever to be completed, but should it be, the players will need to emulate Jacques Cousteau.

My point is this: the bog is registered as a golf course and forms one of the total for which permission has been granted. Its presence gives a distorted view.

Balance in newspaper narration is very important but since the recent rash of 'let's bash golf' reports in the tabloids, I haven't seen a single report of the good side and wonder where the reporters are hiding. My feelings run high on such irresponsible journalism and I know that some local authorities are having their judgement clouded by misinformation.

Our industry has the right information to hand and longs to give out the good news – the many successes – but no-one wants to listen.

Here, for those tabloid reporters who may chance upon these words in *Greenkeeper International*, are the good tidings.

The standard of new courses is improving every year, we are meeting the demands of new players and golf is still relatively inexpensive at the pay and play end and seemingly attractive at the private and very exclusive end. Massive attention is being paid to environmental and archeological issues, a good example being the introduction of barn owls to a new course in the Midlands. Our industry *is* environmentally friendly and we continue to be the envy of many other industries, with a growth potential that is quite staggering.

We believe golf occupies a very special place in our national way of life and that development tempered with good husbandry and caring attitudes has a very long way to go before ever reaching saturation. We hope the irresponsible pundits may begin to understand and will soon change their tune to one that heralds *golf is good for you*.

● Mark Pierson, is New Developments Manager at Brian D Pierson (Contractors) Limited.



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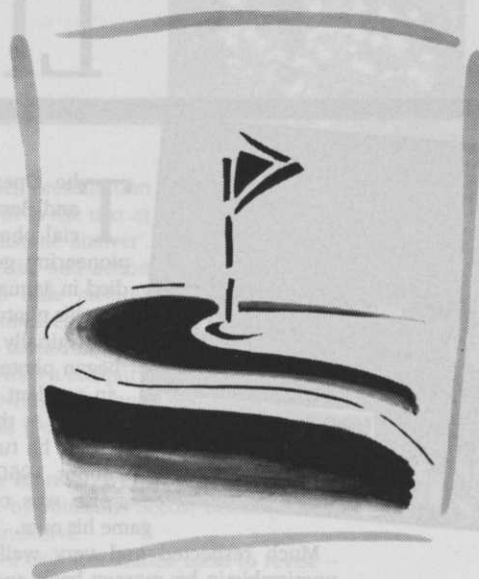
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The Open is something special and Bert Neale was a very special photographer. Bert, a truly pioneering golf photographer, sadly died in January 1990 before he could see this photo journal take shape.

Originally an athlete himself, he began photographing athletics when an accident forced him to stop competing. At the suggestion of a sports editor he turned his lens on golf in about 1950, when hardly anyone else was covering it, making the game his own.

Much respected and very well liked by the players, unmissable in his maroon beret and duffle coat, Bert was a unique character and he produced a range of outstanding photographic work. A founder member of the Professional Sports Photographers Association, set up in 1972, he was also the first photographer to be made an honorary member of the Association of Golf Writers. The book, a record featuring Bert's essential golfing photography is spiced with clever text by Michael Hobbs.

The Open 1960 -1990 - 200pp hardbound - is published by Pipkin Press at £16.95.

There is growing evidence to suggest that we *all* may be at risk from the widespread use of pesticides. Studies have linked pesticides with health problems that include leukaemia and other cancers, with regular users such as those in farming or the golf course maintenance industry at special risk and in need of special guidance. Yet

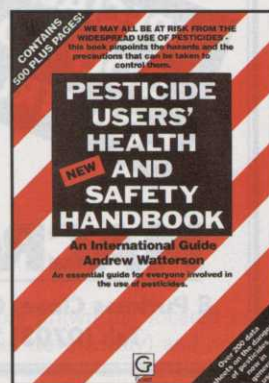
pesticides continue to be used widely - sometimes seemingly indiscriminately - both in commercial applications and at home.

Information often scattered in many different and inaccessible sources can now be found in one volume, written by Andrew Watterson, who is entirely independent of the agrochemical industry and who has investigated the regulatory controls over pesticides and the availability of pesticide health and safety information for ten years.

Drawing on international sources, this comprehensive work of reference brings together for the first time a wealth of key research findings on the health and safety hazards posed by pesticides. Covering toxicity, practical pesticide application, protective clothing and the long term effect of chemicals, it puts forward some sensible alternatives to widespread pesticide use.

More than 200 data sheets outline the potential dangers of specific pesticides now in general use and whilst not an exhaustive medical, chemical or technical guide to the hazards of pesticides, it does fill in some of the basic gaps in information on the dangers and ensures that research which is often hidden away in technical libraries reaches a wider audience.

The book will allow users and consumers to make up



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their own minds about the various assessments of pesticides hazards made by governments, international agencies and non-industrial scientists.

Not only an essential health and safety handbook for everyone involved in regular handling, it is of particular relevance to those whose task it is to ensure that safe use is carried out at all times.

Pesticide Users' Health and Safety Handbook, by Andrew Watterson – 504pp hardback – is published by Gower Technical at £45.

A comprehensive manual on the use of wild flowers in amenity grassland has been published by Johnsons Seeds of Boston. Written and edited by Geoff Taylor, after years of careful research and practical study, it is set fair to become the definitive publication in this field.

The British Wild Flower Manual, illustrated throughout with line drawings, caters specifically for the professional seed specifier, landscape designer or those for whom a practical knowledge of the subject will bring rewards in creating an improved and more attractive environment – golf courses, for example.

The first part of the Manual sets out ground rules on wild flowers, provides advice and recommendations on mixtures and their use and offers a 10 point action plan. But by far the largest part, listing over 80 questions on wild flowers with detailed answers, covers the design, creation, management and subsequent maintenance of flowery amenity grassland.

Questions and answers are split into 20 different sections dealing, for example, with definitions, planning, soil nutrients, invasions, species, sowing, mixtures and management

– to name but a few. Such presentation allows the reader to dip-in to the text at random to obtain an 'instant answer'. Also included is a check list and action plan which acts as an *aide memoir* before users commit themselves to mixtures more complex than monocultures.

The Manual concludes with a comparison of costs between flowing grasslands and conventional amenity grass swards and a useful bibliography for further reading.

The British Wild Flower Manual, by Geoff Taylor – 40pp softbound – is published by Johnsons Seeds, Boston, Lincs. PE21 8AD at £2.50 post inclusive

Each year the Rules of Golf Committee meet to revise – and in some cases simplify – the Rules of Golf. Few would argue that golf rules are often too complicated, certainly if one is to believe the huge amount of time and temper expounded at any weekend medal post mortem. The rules are meant to be obeyed, but how, they ask in unison, can we interpret and really understand them... therein lies the sixty four thousand dollar problem! The book, 'Golf Rules Illustrated', issued as an official publication of the R&A, faces that problem and cleverly takes the reader through many of the more common gaffs – obstructions, O.B., water hazards, loose impediments, casual water, lost balls, unplayable lies – giving a visual answer to these and many other problems. Quite simply, every golfer should have a copy in his bag.

Golf Rules Illustrated – 108pp softbound – is published by Hamlyn at £6.99.



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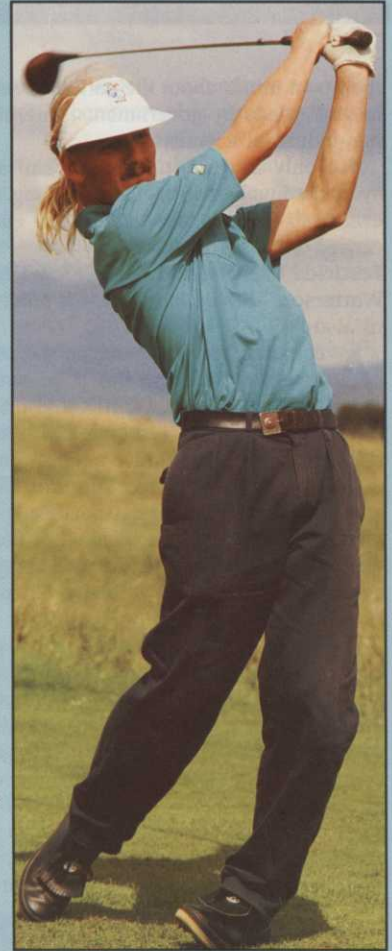
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'This was golf of the highest order played on a wonderful

Stephen Goode in action and collecting his prizes from ICI Professional Products' David Siddon, and from Ransomes' Sue Royle



Right - Trevor Davies: winner of Patisson Trophy for low nett over 36 holes



Below - Gerald Bruce presented with Techturf runner-up award by Gordon Rolfe



Steve Sullivan - winner of Toro Trophy for low gross over 36 holes



Mike Heath presents head greenkeeper of Royal St David's - Roger Kerry - with Vitax Putting Trophy



Mark Smith: winner of Fisons Bowl, low nett 18 holes

Course steeped in character,

The good thing about professionals – greenkeeping variety – is that unlike their prima donna counterparts performing in that circus known as The Tour, they are prone not to criticise greens, rough, sand texture, weather or the totally disturbing flutter of butterfly wings from a distant meadow. As both players and keepers of the green they have that rare gift known as empathy.

The choice of Royal St David's at Harlech, a gem of a course located in that corner of North Wales known for its mountain grandeur and stunning scenery, proved inspirational for BIGGA's National Tournament and provided head greenkeeper Roger Kerry the opportunity to show competitors what real links golf was all about.

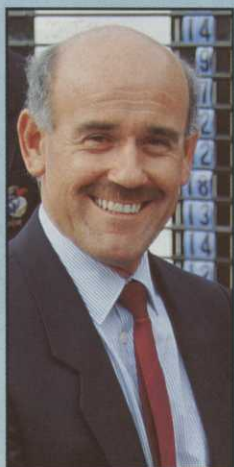
Roger had declared his course plan earlier: to provide a fair test of golf with no trickery and so it was, with never an adverse comment, or indeed cause for such. His course presentation, viewed panoramically from the high balcony of St David's Hotel, was a portrait to behold, with clever use of mower swathes both on fairways and greens all directed at just the right angle to catch the direct line of our vision.

Players were chomping on the bit to get to the links for Sunday practice, each later declaring their own particular game plan. Without exception, thinking golfers opined the course to be one where accuracy of tee shot was all, for just as the fairways were in fine fettle and the greens tempting and offering just the right amount of pace, so was the rough certainly rough enough!

The first day and nerves seemed on knife edge, aggravated a mite by an unwelcome invasion of wind and rain and the necessity for full waterproof regalia. It was tough for everyone with both late and early birds declaring they had the worst of the weather, though posted scores (recorded here in nett form) suggested that some had it mastered, others clearly baffled. Notable leaders on this difficult day were Mark Smith and Don Major on 69, Steve → 36



Mark Dimont: winner of ICI Professional Products Trophy (Junior Division) over 54 holes



Barry Holt: winner of the Techturf Trophy for low gross 54 holes

Report and photographs by DAVID WHITE

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BIGGA NATIONAL TOURNAMENT

RESULTS

Nearest the hole:

Monday – Ian Holoran
Tues – David Spurden
Weds – Gerald Bruce

Longest Drive:

Monday – David Wood
Tuesday – Jason Moody
Weds – Jason Moody

The Fison's Bowl

– Played on Monday:

Mark Smith
– 74-5=69 First
Don Major
– 76-7=69 Second
Stephen Goode
– 83-12=71 Third

Low gross:

Steve Sullivan – 74

The Maxwell Hart Cup

– Played on Tuesday:

Simon Woolley
– 77-8=69 First
Trevor Davies
– 89-18=71 Second
Mark Ellis
– 93-22=71 Third

Low gross 18 holes:

Barry Holt – 76

Over 55s (36 holes)

Don Major – 148 nett

The Vitax Putting Trophy:

Roger Kerry – First
Jimmy Richardson
– Second

The Pattison Trophy (36 holes)

Handicaps 15-28 inc.
Trevor Davies
– 142 nett – First
Mark Ellis
– 145 nett – Second

The Ransomes Cup (36 holes)

Handicaps scratch-14 inc.
Stephen Goode
– 142 nett – First
Michael Hughes
– 145 nett – Second

The Toro Trophy (low gross 36 holes)

Steve Sullivan – 153

The William

Hargreaves (SISIS)

Cup – Final day:

Barry Holt 74-4=70
– First
Don Major 78-7=71
– Second

Stephen Goode

84-12=72 – Third
(on countback)

The Jubilee Team

Trophy
Roger Willars, Richard
Barker, Stephen Goode
– East Midlands

The Techturf Trophy (54 holes gross)

Barry Holt 228 – First
Gerald Bruce 229
– Second

The ICI Professional

Products Trophy (54 holes nett Senior)

Stephen Goode 216
– First
Michael Hughes 217
– Second
Don Major 219 – Third

The ICI Professional

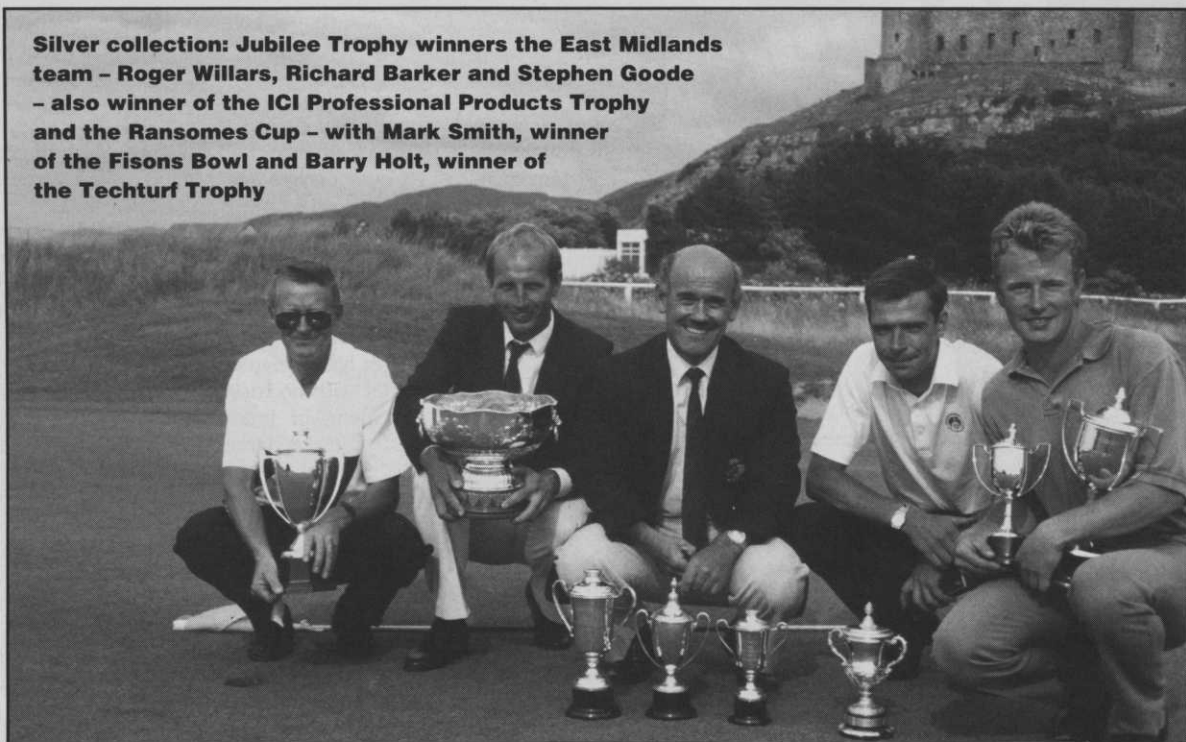
Products Trophy (54 holes nett Junior)

Mark Diment 219 – First
Mark Ellis 221 – Second
Trevor Davies 227 – Third

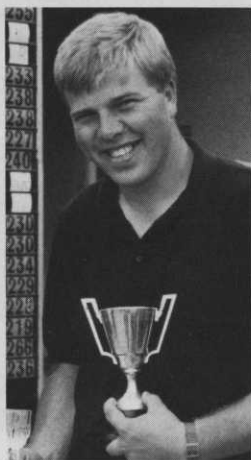
Special Prize (54 holes nett)

Trade ex greenkeeper:
Terry Anderson 219

Silver collection: Jubilee Trophy winners the East Midlands team – Roger Willars, Richard Barker and Stephen Goode – also winner of the ICI Professional Products Trophy and the Ransomes Cup – with Mark Smith, winner of the Fisons Bowl and Barry Holt, winner of the Techturf Trophy



Don Major: winner Over-55s



Simon Woolley: winner of Maxwell Hart Cup



David Spurden: nearest the flag

35 ➔ Sullivan on 70 and a trio comprising Mark Diment, Stephen Goode and Trevor Davies on 71.

Day two and on again with the waterproof garb, our Welsh hosts, bless 'em, quick to point out the rain is an aberration and will quickly pass – we much less sure! Scores again from the sublime – a talented few – to a veritable gaggle of high numbers from the field. The links was living up to its reputation and did not 'give' easily, good scores having to earned. Come sundown the board reveals just one 69, posted by the talented Simon Woolley, with three 71s from Mark Ellis, Gordon Payne and Trevor Davies (again). The post mortem suggested many players in with middling 70 scores were still very much in the hunt, each day being played both cumulatively *and* as an individual 18 hole total, and spirits were high.

High spirits are the order at any BIGGA banquet and that held at St David's Hotel in the evening was no exception. Our sponsors and hosts, ICI, pushed the boat out in a way that left us gasping, together with a generosity of purpose that included many of their trade and business associates, who had all contributed magnificently to the awards table. I've been to hundreds of such dinner cum presentations in my time, but have never witnessed such a huge and magnificent trophy profusion as that of the Association and its generous donors. The festivities were spiced with short, humorous speeches and the presentation of an award to Roger Kerry for his wonderful course presentation, before being crowned to perfection by the full might of the Cor

Godre'r Aran Welsh Male Voice Choir, the night ending, quite literally, on a very high note indeed!

We knew it the moment dawn broke – the day was pure magic – and hope sprung eternal in the heart of every golfer. Would the pressure of leading the field be too much for Trevor Davies? Would someone leap from the pack for the coveted 54 hole Techturf (gross) and ICI Professional Products (nett) Trophies? Who would be crowned Putting King? We were soon to find out as time and again players demonstrated true determination and 'stickability', holding their games together when the going got tough and at last we were acclaiming the winners.

That mighty atom, left-hander Barry Holt, excelled as never before to take the Techturf Trophy with a gross total of 228, whilst Stephen Goode won the ICI Professional Products Senior Division with 216 nett. Mark Diment, ever reliable, scored 219 nett to capture the ICI Professional Products Junior Division, with Royal St David's head greenkeeper and undoubted man of the week, Roger Kerry, the cliff-hanging winner of the Vitax Putting Trophy, a sudden-death sixth hole victory against the ever exuberant Jimmy Richardson.

This then was golf of the highest order played on a wonderful course steeped in character. To the Club and especially the green staff, our gratitude and congratulations, to ICI Professional Products, our generous sponsors, three hearty cheers. Finally, to all competitors – the winners, the losers, the might-have-made-its and if-onlys... well played!

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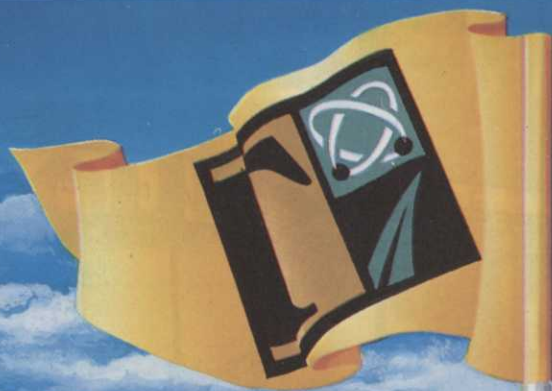
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Specifications for a Method of Putting Green Construction, written by members of the USGA Green Section staff and edited by William H Bengeyfield.....£2.50 inc postage

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THE *POWER* THAT LEADS

The object of a course review is to provide accurate information to aid decision making by the management committee. As in any business, those elected or appointed to manage have a responsibility to allocate both financial and human resources. That is to say, how the money will be spent and what work will be done.

A comprehensive course review will allow for a defensible statement of proposed course changes by the management committee and should act as an insurance against pressures for ad-hoc changes by the persuasive and vociferous few.

Pressures to install additional course features are a regular problem for the committee and generally come from members who have admired a particular feature on another course. Their next step is to discuss the idea with their playing partners to decide which hole should receive the benefits of their considerations. Soon they are convinced that their proposal would result in greater visual enjoyment and also improve the playing quality of their selected hole.

At this stage they are likely to canvass support from fellow members who, wishing for a non-controversial life, readily agree. With this additional backing they approach selected committee members and ask for their idea to be presented to the management committee.

What they often fail to consider is: would the suggested feature suit the style of their own course and how would it affect the playing difficulty of the selected hole? However, even if rejected, there is still danger that it may be resurrected in early autumn when a winter programme of work is being prepared. It is at this very moment that the benefit of a course review will allow ill-considered suggestions to be discounted.

A comprehensive course review is definitely not a one man job, for if one person were to investigate all the selected features the first report would be out of date before the last was complete. It will not be the product of a walk around the course, nor will it be the product of a single project. Because of the number of course features involved it is the bringing together of several individual projects.

When the concept has been agreed the management committee will select a project co-ordinator. He will need to be a 'Mr Fix It' who

Reviewing the course

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE GREEN

Part 5

has extensive knowledge of members' abilities and interests, together with an ability to match talents to individual projects.

Recruitment of suitable labour should not be difficult, as there are growing numbers of members who have taken early retirement. Many will have skills which they would be happy to use for both the benefit of the Club and for their own personal satisfaction.

Together with the project co-ordinator, the management committee will select which course improvements are to be included in the review. Whilst each feature is important in its own right, it is prudent to consider each one individually before allocating priorities. To emphasise this point, consider if it would be prudent to change the playing difficulty of a hole without considering the effect on Stroke Index?

Even though the emphasis of the review will change according to the type of course, most will almost certainly include hole indices and such basic features as greens, tees, bunkers, irrigation and drainage.

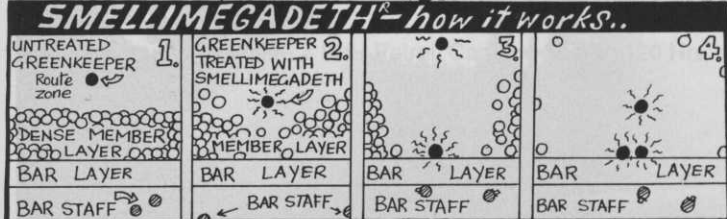
At about this time the project co-ordinator will be preparing for individual projects by collecting information from office archives. During the search it will become apparent how little detailed knowledge is available, for most courses are older than the oldest member and few will have a full set of up-to-date drawings of the golf course and its features.

It is prudent at this stage of the review to take advice from

those best suited to give it – such as the STRI – and a telephone call or discussion with the agronomist during his annual visit will reap rich rewards. He will be able to suggest suitable reading from their own extensive list of publications and supplement discussions with some of their own excellent advisory leaflets.

■ *Mr Lidwell's comments regarding course reviews are no doubt well-meaning, but he makes no mention of involving the most important man of all – one who knows the course better than all others – the head greenkeeper. Further, such 'alterations' often change the essential character of a course to such an extent that the course ceases to represent the intentions and ideas of the original architect. Before embarking on any major course alterations it is, in my opinion, wise to reflect long and hard on the thinking behind the architect's original concept. If the alteration proposed is major surgery, an architect sympathetic to the original architect's plans should, of necessity, be commissioned. Too many Club golfers fancy themselves as golf course architects, with their mistakes and 'follies' glaringly apparent on courses throughout the land – Editor.*

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During the season, the clubhouse-bar can suffer from 'bar compaction'. * Increased traffic, increased thirst, increased compaction. Despite a symbiotic relationship between green staff & bar staff (the latter are often seen on the course), green staff suffer when member compaction sets in. We, at the well-known Pennink chem-labs have developed a vermicide called 'Smellimegadheth', which whilst fulfilling its agricultural task, can also help prevent this appalling condition. In the above diagram, we see a greenkeeper encountering 'bar compaction' in the route-zone, dense member layer prevents him from penetrating to the Bar layer. In the 2nd picture he returns treated with 'Smellimegadheth', we note there is already a loosening of the compacted member layer as our greenkeeper continues to penetrate. By the 3rd picture, the greenkeeper has reached the bar layer and the member-layer resistance has attenuated. Picture 4 shows ideal bar situation. We recommend treatment at: 1 greenkeeper to 3feet of bar. Next month we deal with that perplexing, perennial pest-the 'fair-way hacker' Hiroshima™ flame-wands shows a novel solution! * Common on all courses.

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A tongue-in-cheek observation from **Willie Blair**, a greenkeeper of the bold school

Quick way to God-like wisdom

Often wonder if members of BIGGA think as I do, that the excellent greenkeeping education I have received over the past years has been a complete waste of time?

When I recall the vast number of years I've spent in greenkeeping, the educational lectures attended, the nights and days (including weekends) learning my craft, about grass species and how to treat and cut them, the technology of new machinery and products, applied man-management, water measurement and application, together with time spent on absorbing technical articles and journals, I am prompted to think 'what a waste of time it all was'.

Who needs education? *Anyone* can look after a golf course, so why are we sending our youngsters to college? Surely now is the time for us clever greenkeepers to really start using our brains.

Instead of education and college attendance, take a look at my tip for the future. My unique way means no more lectures, more time with loved ones, more time for leisure, more time for golf.

How do you do it? It's easy: *Become a member of a Golf Club*. Within weeks you will know all there is to know about grass, fertilisers, machinery and everything else associated with a golf course. Better still, be a talker and soon your friends will vote you into Club office. Looking for more? Okay, this is the big one. Persuade the Club officers you are

the man for the job of green convener/chairman.

Believe me, you will become an expert overnight, with nothing missing from your knowledge. You will have total command of the subject, in fact you will be far more expert than the green staff and instantly capable of instructing the head greenkeeper on how the course should be managed and presented and how it can all be done on a shoe-string.

Weekends will become even better, for you will sit around the clubhouse following your round, taking well-earned praise from friends on the condition of *your* course. Members will buy you drinks and thank you for keeping the course open during the last tidal wave, dismissing the little matter of having to wear wellington boots. 'How could the educated green staff be so stupid as to suggest closing the course for such a little water' they will say, and you will agree, echoing the cries of 'never!' 'So what if it snows, we can always use yellow balls, can't we?'

Believe me, my finest education has come from listening to the golf club member: what he doesn't know about greenkeeping is not worth knowing. So fellow professionals, forget about training and education, we don't need it. To be an expert you need just one qualification: membership of a Golf Club.

Willie Blair, Kingsknowe Golf Club
(a greenkeeper, not a member!)

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AROUND THE GREEN

Keeping in touch with news and comment from the regions

SURREY

The annual Scotland v England match was held at Lingfield Park GC on July 5th, the result being a three-all draw despite the Scottish Captain having only a week to muster a team. Sorry Robert, it wasn't deliberate, honest! In maintaining a drawn result the Scots retain the trophy yet again.

My thanks to both Robert Brewer for Scotland and Terry Huntley for England, for noble efforts of captaincy and to Jim Russell and his staff for preparing the course for the match. Additionally, a big thank-you to the new owners of Lingfield Park for their generosity in allowing us the use of their facilities.

The Cresta Cup was played at Ashford Manor GC on July 12th and proved to be quite a test of golf. The highest score was 37 points from M. Yorston, who was honest enough to tell us of his revised Club handicap, which was lower than his BIGGA handicap.* Second after a countback was Paul Weston with 35 points, narrowly beating Terry Edwards, also with 35. The Trade prize was won by M Luker with 38 points. The course was in great shape - thanks to Terry and his staff - and we were made most welcome by the Artisans Section. Finally our thanks to all our sponsors who are so generous throughout the year.

In mentioning Paul Weston I understand that he recently had his clubs stolen from his workshop at The Drift GC. The moral... don't be complacent and keep your clubs locked away, for it seems that thieves have a lot of nerve. On a personal note, I hope Paul's new weapons don't improve his game too much, for I have still to meet him in the Huxley Bowl!

News of forthcoming events now, with the Regional Tournament scheduled for Gog Magog GC on October 8th. Entry forms from Derek Walder on 0737 246088. These must be returned ASAP to S Silvester, 7 Park Rd, Aldeburgh, Suffolk IP15 5HL.

The Surrey Autumn Meeting will be held at Purley Downs GC on October 18th and forms should be returned as soon as possible.

Also planned for October is a lecture at Ashford Manor Artisans Section on October 1st, the lecture being given by Ruffords Top Dress. Your support will be most welcome - please!

The seminar on November 6th is approaching fast and with only 120 places it will be a case of first come, first served.

Please contact me, Phil Baldock, on 0251 254287 for tickets.

PHIL BALDOCK

* *Creditable certainly, but we would do well to remember how the greatest of all golfers, Bobby Jones, when praised for throwing the book at himself on one occasion, became indignant. 'There is only one way to conduct yourself in golf' he said. 'You might as well praise a man for not robbing a bank' - Editor.*

NORTH SCOTLAND

The section AGM will take place at Letham Grange GC on Tuesday November 26th, with 32 tee times reserved - prior to the AGM - on the new course, starting at 11am. Places will be on a first come, first served basis and competitors will be split into two teams on arrival. The new course at Letham Grange was opened in June of this year, has a par of 66 and will be in operation throughout the winter whilst the old course is undergoing essential maintenance.

Any section member wishing to enter the competition to win a trip to either BTME or the National Conference should remember that forms must be returned to Iain MacLeod, 21 Hartfield Street, Tain, by November 30th at the latest.

GORDON MOIR

SOUTH WEST

The prize for the most improved course in the country has just been won by Kevin Green of Filton Golf Club. Kevin joined this Bristol Club from Wentworth some three years ago and since then an amazing transformation has taken place. In fact, give him another three years and he'll probably have a seat on the board!

Filton was the venue for our 1991 Section Championships and in spite of recent heavy rain we were treated to a dry, bright afternoon on a very fine, fair golf course. As one might expect from such a good course, there were some good scores returned, though none better than Craig Fudge, with a 69 gross that included 4 birdies and a hole in one! This was a double first for Craig, 21, from Tracy Park GC - his first win in the Assistants Championship and the first hole in one recorded in this event.

There was also one notable disaster: Laughlan 'Jock' Millar stood on the 18th tee needing a par four for a highly respectable 74 and ended up taking a ten on this tricky hole which features OB on the right and the British Aerospace hangars on

the left, the roofs of which are also OB - ask 'Jock'!

The 1991 South West Section Championships:

1st C Fudge - Tracy Park - 69-4=65, Winner and Assistants Cup. 2nd C Kenyon - Shirehampton - 84-18=66. 3rd P Worster - Lilley Brook - 71-4=67 for the Head Greenkeepers Cup. 4th J Kane - Clevedon - 74-6=68. 5th M Powell - Filton - 96-28=68. 7th S Frankcom - Tracy Park - 93-23=70. Best first nine J Taylor - Tall Pines - 33. Best last nine S Paul - Chipping Sodbury - 34. Veterans Prize J Farley - Painswick - 95-19=76. Longest drive on the ninth Chris Light - Knole.

Many thanks to Filton GC and in particular their Chairman, Ian Foulmer, for their welcome hospitality throughout the day. Thanks also to the steward for the excellent meal and finally to our sponsors who so faithfully support our tournaments: ICI, Roffey Bros., Avoncrop Amenity, Rigby Taylor, Synchemicals, Sta Brite Supplies and Daiwa UK. Thank you one and all.

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AROUND THE GREEN

43 ➔ sweaters, shirts, ties etc and if anyone would like to see before buying give me a ring – I'll do my best to arrange a fashion parade.

Please keep plugging away on the recruitment front and if you know of any greenkeepers who are not members please go and visit them. Half rates on subscriptions apply for the rest of '91, so there's never been a better time to join!

An autumn/winter lecture programme is being put together at the moment – watch this column for further details.

PAUL WORSTER

SHEFFIELD

Our annual Summer Tournament over 27 holes was played on July 17th at Hillsborough GC. The trophy winners were: Best gross (27 holes) M Scothern 107 1/2. Best nett (27 holes) I Whitehead (should be off single figures) 102. Best nett (18 holes) D Chappel 68. The top four prizes went to: I Whitehead – 102. N Maltby – 105 (on back nine). M Colts – 105. M Scothern – 107 1/2.

We thank Henry Gillespie and his staff for presenting the course in excellent condition and also Hillsborough GC for courtesies extended. Also to the catering staff for feeding us so well and so thoroughly. Finally, our thanks to the trade for donating to our prize table in such a generous manner. All in all a fine day enjoyed by everyone.

On now to the regional Iseki final at Keswick GC. The section congratulates B V Lax and J K Kirkham on reaching the pinnacle of greenkeeper golfing – the final at Hillside on September 12th. Good fortune to you both with a special cheer for Barry Lax, who will, I'm sure, be trying extra hard to keep an Iseki trophy in the family after son John's success last year.

Finally, on a sad note I have to report the untimely death, at the age of 46 years, of David Brown of Wath GC, who died suddenly at the end of May. David was a good friend and colleague who supported section winter lectures as well as tournaments and will be sadly missed by all who knew him.

Our deepest sympathy to his family and friends.

IAN COLLETT

NORTH EAST

July 24th saw our now traditional annual match against Club Secretaries held at Gosforth GC, courtesy of the committee, for which grateful thanks. The result was a resounding win for the greenkeepers by six to one! Our thanks especially to Jimmy Hayes and his staff for what proved to be an excellent course in great order.

Congratulations are again in order to 'that man' Craig Kilgour. Not only has he won the 72 hole stroke play County Championship but now adds the Durham County Match Play Championship to his formidable list of titles. This double was last achieved over 30 years ago – well done, Craig!

What more can be said about the North East qualifiers for Iseki honours at Keswick? From the field we have 4 of the 12 who go forward for major honours and just to add salt to the wound, we won the team prize as well! Now let's hope we do equally well in the final at Hillside.

JIMMY RICHARDSON

MID ANGLIA

Our Summer Tournament was played at Letchworth GC on July 17th with 'superb weather adding to the splendid course nicely manicured for us by Duncan and his crew.

I'm sure all those present will echo my sentiments in thanking the Club for attending to our every need and especially to the Letchworth GC Captain, who joined us for our evening of jollity and presented prizes to the following: 1st – P Raynor (Maxwell Hart Prize) 2nd – M Smith. 3rd – F Scullion. Best AM – P Robinson. Best PM – G Boulton.

Once again we were well supported by our friends in the trade, for which many thanks.

Our programme continues with a visit to Hanbury Manor CC on 8th October, beginning at 2pm. (please park at greenkeeping maintenance area).

This is followed on October 30th by 27 holes of golf at Woburn G&CC, the event being also the final of our knock-out competition. The programme will be sponsored by Lodgeway Tractors Ltd and entries may be made via Ken Bunting, telephone 044284 3359.

GEOFF SMITH

DEVON and CORNWALL

With the start of our autumn and winter meetings only weeks away, may I remind you to return entries to me as early as possible and certainly by the closing dates, as this makes arrangements with our Club hosts a lot easier. Hopefully by now you will have all received your diary inserts with all our sectional and national events for 1991/92 – this courtesy of sponsors, Devon Garden Machinery.

The region has put together an excellent package for the Harrogate BTME Exhibition and Seminar programme in January 1992 for a cost of only £95. If you haven't yet booked I urge you to do so now and avoid disappointment.

Finally, I look forward to meeting you all at Carlyon Bay on Wednesday October 23rd.

RICHARD WHYMAN

BUCKS, BERKS & OXON.

To those members of BB&O who have just collapsed at the sight of this epistle in Greenkeeper International, I apologise... whilst reminding you all that I'm not worth much so it's not worth trying to sue me!

While on the subject, there are probably many rumours and/or theories as to the reasons for the lack of BB&O reports in the magazine, so I will take this opportunity to put the record straight.

First, it was felt that with the inception of

our own newsletter the need for national reports would be less, especially as these tended to be submitted late and were – in effect – little more than out of date golf results. Due to communication problems, what few reports that might have been became none, so after a minor re-shuffle within the committee I've somehow managed to land the 'plum' job of communicating to all of you out there in greenkeeper-land.

My first aim is to write reams of boring rubbish so that you will never feel the need to read anything pertinent to your section again. Unfortunately, this could be seen as self indulgence.

As usual, we have a rich and varied calendar of events planned – yes, you've guessed it, golf, golf and more golf! This starts with our matches against other sections, as well as the real 'crunch' match against Club secretaries within the section. These are always highly entertaining, so don't just sit there thinking about it, get involved by ringing our Captain, Dave Childs, on 0296 624068 and see your name is forward. On that point, if there are other BIGGA sections that fancy a thrashing at golf, give Dave a call and we'll try to organise a raiding party.

On the horizon is our Autumn Invitation at Sonning GC on October 16th and a later date – November 5th – for our day at The Berkshire. These are both sure to be over-subscribed so enter early and look for details in your newsletter.

Our Summer Fourball Competition for the Rigby Taylor Trophy is well under way now, with a few notable early victors in Heads and Porter from Frilford Heath and Childs and Goodchild from Ellesborough, together with dark horses Collis and Reeve from Sonning. All will unfold as the season progresses, climaxing with the final at Frilford Heath in November, a great Rigby Taylor day. Our thanks to Roger Bowles for his hard work in making the event possible and if last year is a yard-stick, it will be another great day.

A reminder that our 1992 Gentlemen's Dinner will be at Frilford Heath in February, cost about £20, with D.J.s or lounge suits the dress order of the day. Interested? send a £5 deposit/reservation to Bob Woodward, 19 The Green, Burnham, Bucks. SL1 7BG.

That just about wraps up my first G.I. report, but if anyone has any comments they would like me to ignore – sorry, consider – please do not hesitate to contact me. The name is Ray and the number is 0628 34095.

RAY CLARK

KENT

It is rather sad that our Summer Tournament, scheduled for play at North Foreland on July 17th, was cancelled.

It would perhaps be simple to say that its demise was due to lack of interest, although we may have more detail at a later date. Though that particular meeting was cancelled, you may rest assured that the Autumn Tournament at Knowle Park will positively go ahead.

For those who feel the need for summer golf, why not contact your fellow greenkeepers at other courses and arrange a visit combined with a spot of competition? From past experience, if approached in a correct and proper manner, most Clubs are very hospitable to greenkeepers. Always remember to take your BIGGA membership card with you and remem-

ber to behave in a manner that reveals an ambassador for greenkeeping and the Association.

May I welcome Neil Turner, the new head greenkeeper at Bexleyheath following two years at Effingham, into our section and wish him well in his new post. If you haven't yet met him, you may detect a wee hint of the Scottish burr.

Without too much to report this month, may I say how pleased I was to read David White's editorial comment in our defence in the July issue, which concerned an article appearing in another trade journal by a supposedly expert agricultural agronomist who played golf to a handicap of 8 and played four times a week. Like David, I also read this article and whilst I'm normally a calm and good natured sort of chap, I can tell you that this piece threw me into a blinding rage. In essence, this 'expert' trashed the British greenkeeper as some sort of ignorant rabble; laying the blame for all the problems of condition and presentation of courses in this country only at our door! He paid little attention to the real problem – the average Club management structure and the appalling attitudes found within the game. Thankfully, the golfing bodies are addressing this problem and I can only hope that they have the teeth to actually bite!

To the 'expert', I would suggest that every greenkeeper wants to present his course in peak order 365 days a year, barring remedial work or atrocious weather, but in the majority of cases is prevented from doing so by financial restraints that cut back on manpower, training, machinery and material needs.

Personally, I am not prepared to carry the can for these deficiencies, especially when we expend so much time and energy at our own courses just fighting for changes that will improve our budgets (and their courses!).

Perhaps, as in other areas of business, our 'expert' should take a look higher up the golf Club management ladder... and then go back to advising farmers!

PAUL COPSEY

EAST OF ENGLAND

For our July outing 20 members boarded a 'charabanc' (you think I jest) for a visit to the 'Pencross sward' of Collingtree Park.

A warm welcome was extended on our arrival by host, Peter Jones, and refreshments were well received by those who had missed lunch.

Peter showed us around the Pro's shop with all its television and video equipment installed to 'sort out' a player's swing. This was followed by a slide show giving us an insight into Peter's previous greenkeeping experience, then slides of the construction of the course at Collingtree Park. Many of us would, I feel, benefit by taking photographs of work in progress at our own courses.

Next, an outside demonstration of the Toro Hydroject 3000, conveniently delayed from the planned morning demo by the inch or more rain which fell in Northampton over the previous night. This proved an interesting extra for our group and was followed by a golf buggy tour around the course, with Peter showing us both his successes and his troubles. Our route ended at the workshop area, where it is always fascinating to see the machinery used by others. As you might imagine, many questions were fired at Peter and Phil, his right-hand man.

AROUND THE GREEN

Our thanks for a most interesting and enjoyable afternoon were voiced by our chairman, Graeme Patrick and echoed by us all.

One thought about Collingtree – if the golf isn't going too well the trip round the buggy track will compensate.

Our next fixture is the Rigby Taylor Trophy to be held at Sleaford GC on September 11th.

COLIN SWINGLER

SOUTH COAST

Little news of association members has come my way since our Summer Tournament so just a reminder regarding our Autumn Tournament: Venue: Hockley GC, Winchester. Date: Tuesday October 15th (please note, this is a change from the date published in the fixture list). Format: AM 18 hole Foursome. PM 18 hole Greensome. Each member is requested to bring along either a non-greenkeeper amateur partner from their Club, or a fellow greenkeeper from another Club. Fee: £16.50 per person. Closing date: October 5th.

Applications, together with handicap details and fee to: Joe Burdett, 40 Church St. Fontwell Magna, Shaftesbury, Dorset SP7 0NY. Telephone: 0747 811439.

Fixture cards listing all sectional and regional events for 1992 are available upon request. Please let me hear from you so that you can fully participate in your Association's activities.

BOB DENNIS

EAST ANGLIA

Our travelling band gathered at Royal Cromer on a damp day in June. 'An improvement already', I hear you cry, for this was only rain and our last was a monsoon!

I must say that everyone at Royal Cromer made us extremely welcome with Roger and his men preparing the course to an excellent standard. There was wine on the table – courtesy of the Club – and a liqueur from the president. The Club captain said it was a pleasure for them to entertain us, for which we thank you sir, recognition at last.

Needless to say, the locals 'cleaned up' in the golf with even their steward playing yet still finding time to prepare the grub. Good lad!

Someone remembered to bring back the Kings Shield, so we thought we'd play for it and the results are as follows: 0-18: 1st Dave Wilkinson 36. 2nd Michael Fance 35. 3rd H G Wells 35. 19-28: 1st Steve Pigott 39. 2nd Tony Tyrell 38. 3rd Mike Kenyon 26. Guest results: 1st Dave Sego 41. 2nd G Smith 41.

Someone was taking orders for tee shirts with a suitable lowering of tone, for – honestly – the caption was "greenkeepers like a bit of rough!" Anyone want one? shh... see me. Steve Piggotts wore one but it was his birthday and we all sang for him.

On a serious note, Ernie Hart was missing from Cromer, his wife having sadly passed away. Our sympathies are with you at this time, Ernie, and we hope we shall see you at

our gatherings again ere too long.

We took an unprecedented step by giving Toddy a stroke back for age... poor devil couldn't climb up one of the tees and we musn't be too heartless. Prizes were donated by Rigby Taylor, CMW, Ransomes, Colliers, DOE, Pattissons, Chris Toolbrook and Olcock. Thank you sincerely, especially Royal Cromer, it was our pleasure and privilege.

Some dates for '92 – yes 1992 – are Woodbridge in June, Colchester in August and Eaton in October (might have some greens by then, might I add). Trying to get Bungay for April but have yet to phone Mick to pave the way.

Nice to have a cheer for one of ours at The Open. Who? Robin Mann of course. Robin is son of Wally Mann, head greenkeeper at Rushmere, who is currently waiting to have a hip operation. Hope all goes well for Wally and well done Robin, keep up the good work.

MICK LATHROPE

SOUTH EAST REGION

A regional golf tournament will be held at Gog Magog GC, Cambridge, on Tuesday October 8th. Entry is £16 (pay on the day) and entrants should send name, membership number and handicap to: Sam Sylvester, 7 Park Lane, Aldeburgh, Suffolk IP15 5HL.

MICHAEL PETERS

NORTHERN

As summer passes quickly by we are almost at the end of our golf fixtures, though there are still some places left for the Autumn Tournament at Garforth.

Your committee are endeavouring to locate the whereabouts of a trophy presented to the section by Jeff Mawson, formerly of Scarcroft. Can anyone shed light on the location of this silver salver? Please call me if you have any information.

I am sure you will be saddened to hear that long standing Northerner, Mick Hegarty of Leeds GC, has suffered a heart attack. The best wishes of all section members go to Mick in the hopes of a speedy recovery.

BOB LUPTON

EAST SCOTLAND

Dunbar GC was the setting for the first committee game, playing for the 'Eddie Holt Memorial Trophy', donated by Eddie's daughter Rosemary. Eddie, who passed away suddenly in April '89, was on the East Scotland committee for many years and thus it seemed fitting that this trophy remain within the committee. Our grateful thanks will always go to Rosemary and her family for such a kind gesture.

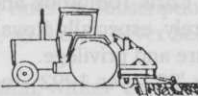
Once decided on date and venue, our search widened for a sponsor. Word was put round and in stepped our faithful friends, Frew & Co. of Edinburgh. It was they who provided transport, lunch, tea and 'light refreshments', with Colin McGeorge and Kenny Hunter designated 'teetotal' drivers, as well as ➡ 54

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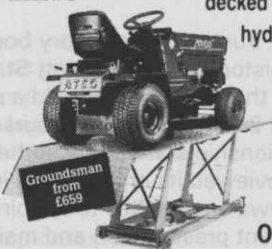
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● Continued from Page 52

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AROUND THE GREEN

45 joining us for a round of golf. I'm sure these lads enjoyed the day as much as we. Frew & Co. have always been good friends of the Association and this kindness only served to increase the bond between us.

Players from the committee were: S Dixon (chairman), C Yeaman (vice chairman), W Blair (secretary) and committeemen P Ormiston, S Greenwood and G Wood. It was sad that Jimmy Neilson couldn't play due to his broken leg but he was adamant that he could have done better with one pin than most of us with two! I'm inclined to put this down to 'light refreshments' and although a non player, he came in very handy running around in the buggie - supplying still more 'refreshments' at the tees.

The lucky winner was none other than Steve Dixon, although it could be said that the rest of us lay down for him and it was most fitting that the first recipient should be one who enjoyed such a long relationship with Eddie. In his speech, Steve spoke highly of our dear friend and was, I'm sure, moved and delighted when the trophy was presented to him by the vice captain of Dunbar GC, proud to be the first named winner.

Another celebration (head wetting, as the saying goes) was the birth of daughter Amy, born a few days earlier to Chris and Carol Yeaman. To them both we send congratulations, along with long life and happiness to Amy.

Thanks are especially due to Graham Wood for the excellent condition of the course (although the holes were set in the wrong place for me!), the captain and council of Dunbar GC for courtesies extended, the caterers for bonnie meals and the vice captain for presenting the trophy. Finally, I cannot close without again saying thanks to Frew & Co for sponsorship. We really did appreciate it.

WILLIE BLAIR

SOUTH WALES

On July 30th we held our annual Summer Competition for the Birdie Cup at Royal Porthcawl GC. The section acknowledges with thanks the generosity of Royal Porthcawl members and committee for use of their clubhouse and facilities and the steward and stewardess for greatly enjoyed services to the 'inner man'.

The competition was well supported, with over 30 players enjoying a course in super condition. To this end, thanks to head greenkeeper, David Ward, and his staff for their hard work put in over the past 12 months since our last visit. The results were: The Birdie Cup (best nett) - Mike Jones nett 71. The Duncan Cup (best gross) - Tony King 85. The John O'Gorman Cup (2nd nett on countback) Brian Price 78. Each received an engraved tankard and hootch with which to fill it!

A raffle followed which helped to boost section funds and winners were: Hugh Morgan (putter) P Robinson (camera) Colin Murphy (Wine) Phil Swain (wine) Richard Minton (sherry). Thanks to Colin Murphy for sterling work in selling tickets.

Our sponsors were Birds, for which grateful thanks, and other trade supporters in the raffle were Peter Hampton, Avoncrop, Stabrite, Rigby Taylor and ICI, for which many thanks. Your continued support - both physically and financially - is most worthy.

Congratulations to Hugh Parry on his appointment at Bristol and Clifton GC. We all wish him good fortune, even if it is 'over the water'.

PHILIP SWAIN

A reminder...

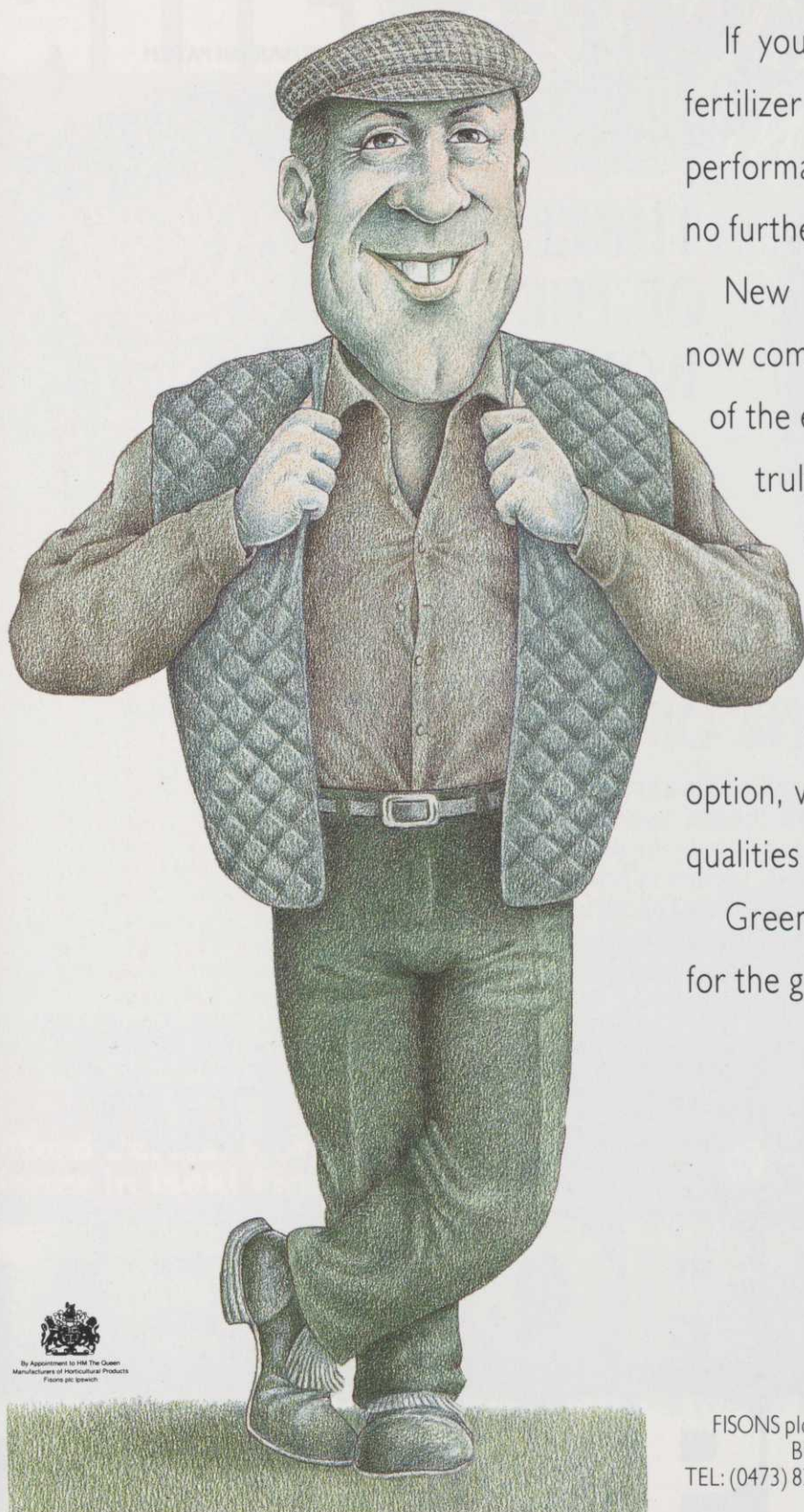
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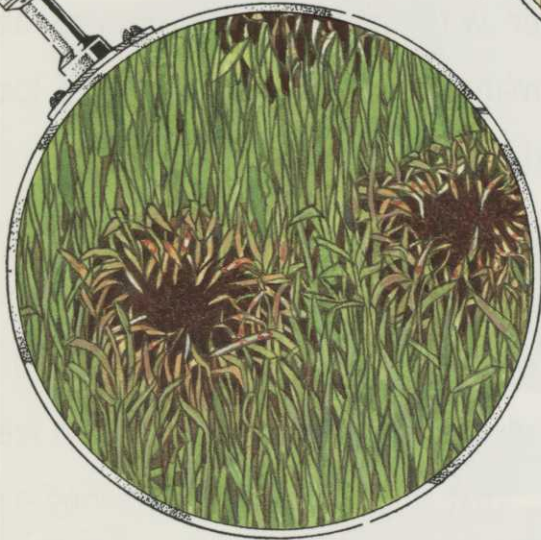
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