

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.



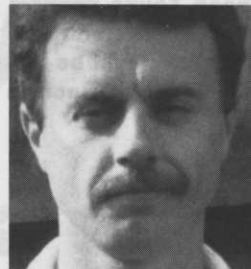
ROBERT WILKINSON

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.

