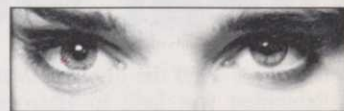


Time and the place of BTME's VIP opening ceremony



Prince Andrew will arrive at the Harrogate Exhibition Centre at 10.15am on the first day of the show, Wednesday January 20. The opening ceremony, which will also be attended by BIGGA president, Viscount Whitelaw, will take place at 10.30am.

Following presentation of the awards, the Prince will tour the Exhibition and is expected to depart Harrogate at 12.30pm.



Looking ahead

Don't miss this one

JOHN WILSON, editor and publisher of 'The Golf Club Secretary', describes his first visit to the BTME last January, and explains why he is convinced that golf club secretaries and green committee chairmen can learn much from being at Harrogate next month.

I arrived in Harrogate on a frosty morning last January, on the third day of the 1992 BTME, just in time to attend the official opening ceremony of the Trade Show, performed in his usual urbane and charming manner by Viscount Whitelaw, President, BIGGA.

I was impressed at once by the array of colourful blazers on view on the stage and by the number of awards which were given to companies that had supported BIGGA in the past year. The final presentation was of BIGGA's first Master Greenkeeper Certificate to Laurence Pithie, then course manager at Minchinhampton. He was also presented with a very smart blazer which he donned immediately, as if he had just won the US Masters!

This exhibition was far larger than I expected, filling three halls of the Harrogate Exhibition Centre. There were over 80 stands to visit, each containing something of interest to those responsible for the management of golf courses and other fine turf areas. Ford, Kubota, Iseki and other manufacturing companies demonstrated their latest machinery and Huxley's were rightly proud of their all-season turf maintenance vehicle, designed to compete strongly with the well-known Cushman range.

There was much else to see, though, apart from the array of red, green, yellow and orange machinery. Ranges of fertilisers, grass seeds, grinding machinery for mower blades, and course equipment, all were there - all so easy to see at close range, with technical experts skilled at imparting their knowledge and making things easy to understand. The Patisson display included a pedestrian-operated golf ball collector,

one of which is apparently used by a grandmother to collect hundreds if not thousands of balls daily on a driving range.

Several exhibits were new to me, but perhaps not to the more knowledgeable visitor. I was impressed by the Nikken Knapsack brush cutter where the 2-stroke 1.9hp motor is carried on the back of the operator, leaving him free to operate the various cutting and lopping attachments available. I also learned how turf can be reinforced using, for example, the Netlon rootzone system or Fibreturf's mixture of sand and artificial fibres. More basic for pathways were plastic pavers from Golpa.

'The BTME is much more than just a trade exhibition'

Two microcomputer programmes were also being demonstrated. The Datachem system is designed to assist those involved in applying chemicals to turfgrass and other areas by helping to identify weeds, pests and diseases and then calculating the amount and type of chemical needed to rectify the problem. The Trims software, marketed through BIGGA, enables the head greenkeeper to maintain a complete record of all work carried out on the course.

The BTME is, however, much more than just a trade exhibition. The very full week begins with a choice of four two-day workshops, and last January these intensive, practical sessions covered green construction methods and materials (led by two amusing experts from the USA), irrigation, basic agronomy and one with the title 'From Greenkeeper to Course Manager'. Next month's four workshops look equally interesting, with perhaps pride of place going to the one being run by Jim Arthur, Barry Cooper and Brian Pierson on 'How To Achieve All Year Round Golf'.

Seminars are held in the Royal Hall attached to the Exhibition Centre for the remaining two-and-a-half days. In 1992 these began and ended with Graham Phillips of The Marketing Group advising

greenkeepers on 'How to Prepare a Case for Golf Club Committees' and further on 'How To Win The Day'. Any committee member listening to those two talks would have gained a valuable insight into the tactics which might be used when his head greenkeeper next presented a case for new equipment. The other sessions ranged over a variety of topics, such as turfgrass nutrition, course construction and maintenance (with three interesting case histories), the image of greenkeepers and one under the title 'Will We Wear Out Our Golf Courses?'.

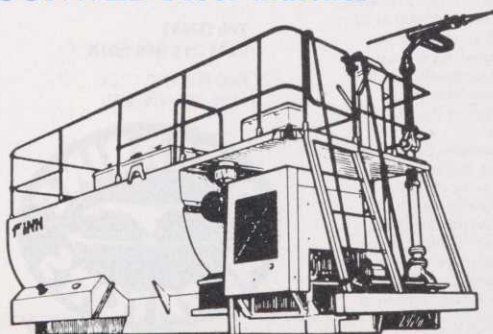
The seminars planned for next month look equally promising, again covering topical subjects likely to be of interest to many delegates attending the Exhibition. I am particularly looking forward to hearing John Millen talk on 'Golf-365 Days A Year', and Jane Ryan, an assistant greenkeeper, on 'Why We Should Hold Our Heads Up High!'. Two social events are arranged during the week to increase the opportunities to meet other delegates - a quiz night on the Wednesday and a full scale banquet the following evening. Last year the subsequent entertainment was provided by Norman Collier, best known for his chicken imitations, and next month it will be the turn of Wayne Dobson, the TV magician. If he can show how to make thatch and fusarium disappear from greens in the same way that he makes a helicopter vanish, he will have more than earned his appearance fee!

The BTME promises to be bigger and better than ever this time, thanks to the enthusiastic and efficient organisation of the BIGGA team. It deserves to be fully supported, not only by the greenkeepers who always attend, but also by golf club secretaries, green committee chairmen and others concerned about the proper management of their own golf courses. From my own experience last January, it is hard to imagine that anyone attending the BTME will come away without feeling that his or her visit has been very worthwhile indeed.

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