

FEBRUARY 1992

# GREENKEEPER

*International*

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from  
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Official publication of the British & International Golf Greenkeepers Association  
**FEBRUARY 1992**



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Greenkeeper International is the official magazine of the British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association and is published monthly at BIGGA Headquarters, Aldwark Manor, Aldwark, Airedale, York YO6 2NF. Tel: 03473 581/2 • Fax: 03473 8864  
Please address all advertising, subscriptions and address changes to BIGGA.

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Circulation is by subscription. Subscription rate: UK £29 per year, Europe and Eire £39. The magazine is also distributed to BIGGA members, golf clubs, local authorities, the turf industry, libraries and central government.

**Editorial Offices**

All magazine contributions should be sent to: The Editor, Greenkeeper International, 13 Firlie Close, Seaford, East Sussex, BN25 2HL. Tel: 0323 891291. Fax: 0323 895593. Although every care will be taken, no responsibility is accepted for loss of manuscripts, photographs or artwork. Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Association and no responsibility is accepted by the Association for such content, advertising or product information that may appear.

ISSN 0961 - 6977

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# GREENKEEPER

International

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Take a closer look...



...at what Greenkeeper International can do to promote YOUR business.

Here's what one of our advertisers has to say about the industry's most effective magazine:

'Our decision to use Greenkeeper International during 1991 has certainly been justified and we will be using BIGGA's magazine even more extensively during 1992.'

— ROGER MOSSOP, Marketing Manager, ICI Professional Products

Find out more - ring Bill Lynch on 091 413 7218, Carol Dutton on 0207 570117 or BIGGA HQ on 03473 581



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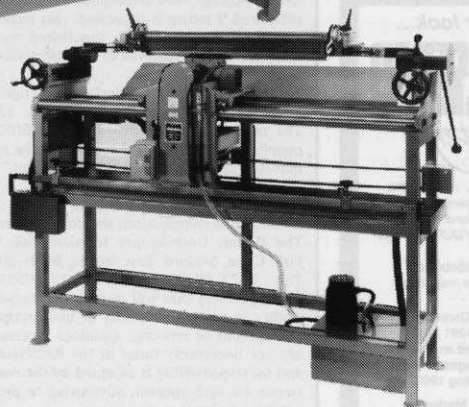
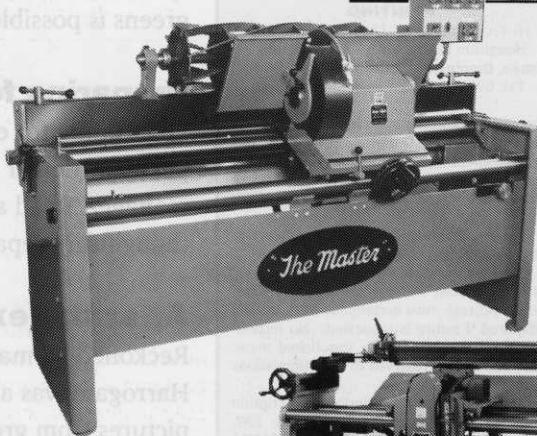
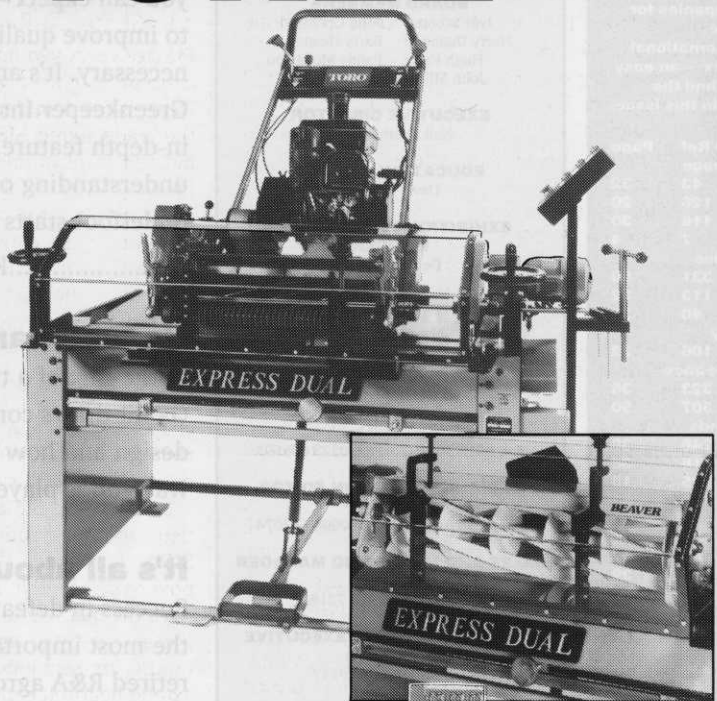
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■ This page is about faces *and* places, in particular a special place in Holland busily preparing for an invasion. I refer to Barenbrug's plant breeding centre at Oosterhout and the Nunspeet Golf Club, site for the Barenbrug Golf Trophy which takes place on May 18th.

From May 17th-19th a lucky handful of British greenkeepers will join fellow European amenity turf specialists in a truly international golf event and a Dutch tour which includes a visit to Barenbrug's centre. But to win you must be in – so if Holland takes your fancy, look again at the recent Barenbrug "See, Buy and Fly" missive, or 'phone Michel Mulder on 0359 70766.



Remaining with Barenbrug, but moving from 'places' to 'faces', it is good to see that John Bradley has joined their British subsidiary, Barenbrug UK Ltd, as technical sales rep for amenity grass seed. Readers will recall that John was previously with British Seed

Houses in the amenity market. He will now cover the south and west regions and support Barenbrug's special accounts.

■ The British Institute of Golf Course Architects, concerned that golf course development is generally misunderstood and is receiving bad publicity, will hold a one-day seminar on Wed. March 11th at the Institute of Civil Engineers, London, entitled "The Positive Face of Golf Development". The seminar aims to present some hard facts about such development and undo some of the myths which fuel debates; whilst restoring confidence in the values, aims and techniques involved in creating and integrating golf courses. Reservations through the Administration Secretary, Tel: 0883 712072.



■ Karen Smith, a familiar figure much respected as Ransomes 'always-on-the-ball' PR executive, has rejoined the company as PR and Marketing Manager, Ransomes Sims and Jefferies Ltd., following a short period away from Ransomes whilst working as PR executive at Quietwaters. Her new brief will encompass marketing analysis, public relations, exhibitions, promotions and marketing communications, working alongside John Wilson, General Manager, Sales & Marketing. Greenkeeper International is delighted to say 'welcome back, Karen'.

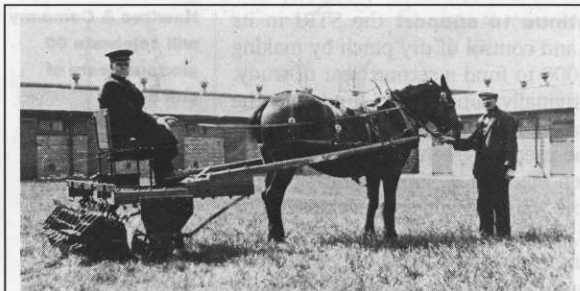


■ Hayter Beaver have announced the appointment of Robin Boyes as territory manager in the south-west of England. In this he will work closely with dealers to promote and sell the company's range of professional grasscutting equipment and add support to the after-sales service which Hayter Beaver provide for end users. Robin is no newcomer to the company, having joined Hayters 13 years ago and spending the last four years as demonstrations co-ordinator.

■ At the recent AGM of the Surrey section of BIGGA, a Southern Soils representative presented section chairman Clive Osgood with a three figure cheque, freely given and promised as a committed annual donation toward providing extra training for younger members of the section. Southern Soils feel this will offer good long term benefits for both members and the Association. Good for them!



■ Robert Hawthorne, perhaps better known to us as the head greenkeeper at Portadown Golf Club in County Armagh, has now joined John Lindsay Professional Sportsturf as their technical sales representative, specifically to develop sales in Southern Ireland and further strengthen the company's position in Northern Ireland. Robert is an ex-Greenmount College student.



■ Sixty years ago on February 11th, William Hargreaves, a steam engineer whose business was a victim of the Depression, founded W Hargreaves & Co. Ltd., – using the trade name SISIS. William thought that increased interest in physical recreation might offer a steady and growing market for well engineered equipment and, in the beginning, the company produced tennis and netball posts and other playing field equipment.

The then novel concept of machinery to aerate turf resulted in meetings between William Hargreaves and R B Dawson, Director of the Board of Greenkeeping Research, (now the STRI), at Bingley, and regular contact has been continued ever since.

From the first humble premises in an old converted chapel, the Company moved in 1962 to a custom-built factory in Macclesfield and ten years later expanded and built a larger factory – their current home.

By 1965 the SISIS name had been increasingly identified with the product and the company was renamed SISIS Equipment (Macclesfield) Ltd. The company are now represented in more than 30 countries world-wide.

To the man whose main vocation was to ease the job of the greenkeeper; and to the company that is now celebrating its Diamond Jubilee, Greenkeeper International extend heartfelt congratulations.

• Pictured: a 1937 SISIS horse drawn aerator.



■ David Heads, head greenkeeper at Frilford Heath GC, is the winner of the all-expenses paid trip to New Orleans in the 'Blazon Better Way to Spray' national campaign. At BTME, BIGGA Chairman George Malcolm offered David his congratulations.

## Get set for Westurf

■ At the start of 1992 I busied myself transferring important dates and regular events that I aim to cover from one ICI wall-planner to the next. Mercifully few fall under the category of tedium; whilst others, like the delightfully parochial Westurf Trade Show at Long Ashton, Bristol, are undoubtedly a real pleasure. Westurf particularly has come a long way in a short time and although I describe it as parochial, ie. provincial, it now stands proud as the biggest and best outdoor trade exhibition in the South West. From humble beginnings it has grown in both size and importance and is now unquestionably ranked with the 'big-uns' and is certainly the place to be on April 29th. For all its growth it still retains a friendly relaxed atmosphere that is difficult to pinpoint, but is the better for all that. Quite apart from good communications – Long Ashton is little more than a wedge away from the M5/M4 corridor – it offers free entry, free parking and the opportunity to view in some comfort the best of trade exhibits from around the country. The trade see it in an enlightened way too, supporting it with increased attendance and often using it as a launching pad for new and innovative products and services. BIGGA members and their green chairmen are seen in abundance, travelling from afar as Wales, London, the Midlands and the West Country. Make a date – April 29th – see you there? Trade details and available space? Ask Gordon Childs by 'phoning 0803 844056.



## Dry patch studies continue

■ **The R&A is to continue to support** the STRI in its research on the biology and control of dry patch by making a research grant of £25,000 to fund a second year of study. The dry patch project, originally initiated and funded by the R&A, aims to find the cause of dry patch and develop control methods that may be used by greenkeepers. Significant progress has already been made in defining the basic problem of dry patch and how water repellency develops in fine turf. Over the next year, studies will concentrate on identifying the causal factors responsible and on preventing occurrence of the problem.

■ **Recent scandals** about corruption in the stock market in Japan has brought to light similar problems in the Japanese golf industry (source: Japan Golf Report December 1991). There have been several well publicised cases of course developers bribing politicians in the hope of getting their particular projects approved, and of one huge scandal in particular concerning former transport minister Shintaro Ishihari and fellow politician Kiyoshi Mizuno. Both accepted large financial 'donations' from real estate agent Ken Mizuno, the latter Mizuno being investigated by police after selling no less than 52,000 memberships of Ibariki Country Club, although he had advertised only 2,830 for sale! Several of his companies have since gone bankrupt, the memberships are now worthless, and numerous claims have been filed from investors. Mizuno, who also acquired several golf courses in the USA, has been under investigation by Nevada police since 1972 for excessive gambling activities and suspected gangster connections. (nb. None of these

**Hawtree & Company will celebrate 80 glorious years of golf course architecture in 1992, my spy informant suggesting that Fred Hawtree will pen an anthology entitled: 'Hawtree on Golf 1912-1992'. This writer will look forward to its publication with great interest; and to an additional study also scheduled "which will actually destroy a theory once advanced which provided a Scottish alternative route to owning the patent". Which theory and which patent? We shall just have to wait and see!**

Mizunos have any connection with Mizuno Corporation, the sporting goods manufacturer.)



Nicklaus: Peace



Trevino: AIDS cure

■ **What do you give** to the man who has everything? The legendary four-some, Nicklaus, Palmer, Rodriguez and Trevino, competing in the 1992 Senior Skins Game in Hawaii in January were asked to reveal their ideal gift – and their New Year's Resolutions. **Jack Nicklaus:** 'My ideal gift would be lasting peace among all the people of the world, my resolution to work harder at being fit so that I can give myself a chance at winning a major in '92'. **Arnold Palmer:** 'My ideal gift would be a Cessna Citation VII airplane (he already owns a Citation IV), my resolution is to win some tournaments'. **Chi Chi Rodriguez:** 'I would like all the kids in my **Chi Chi Rodriguez** Youth Foundation and kids around the world to be successful in life. My resolution is to be No.1 in golf, but I would also like to see the people of the world put negative things of the past behind them and concentrate on making the future positive. **Lee Trevino:** 'Personally, I have everything I could possibly want, but if I had one wish, it would be that we find a cure for AIDS and Cancer. My resolution is to take time between tournaments in 1992 and spend more time at home!'

### NOTICE TO MEMBERS

The BIGGA Annual General Meeting will be held on **Wednesday 8 April 1992 at 2.30pm** in The Royal York Hotel, York (immediately adjacent to the Railway Station)

–NEIL THOMAS  
Executive Director



## BIGGA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Copies of the audited accounts will be available from Section Secretaries during the four weeks prior to the Meeting.

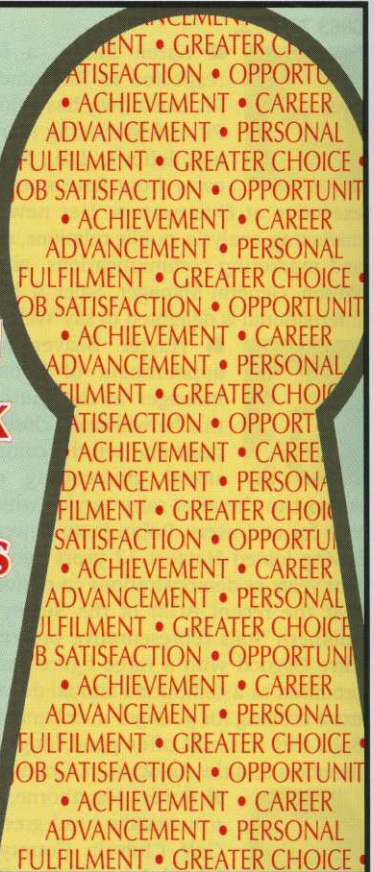
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# An exciting new era for the Association

Whilst it is indisputably true that money makes the world go around, it is equally true in the vocation of greenkeeping that education is the key to professionalism – and the two are inextricably linked!

No – please don't flick to the next page, for I am not about to launch into a 'party political' on Clubs that fail to recognise and follow recommended BIGGA pay scales, or of well documented examples where educated greenkeepers have risen to lofty heights and larger salaries. Like the forthcoming general election and the continuous haranguing that is bound to come, you'll be getting quite enough of that in the future.

Yes, it's true, we certainly intend to continue 'banging the drum' about increased knowledge bringing increased rewards, and of the role your Association will play in this revolution. It's true also that in the five years since its formation, BIGGA has purposefully set its cap toward the path of improving and enhancing the recognition of the greenkeeper as a professional and in advancing management and maintenance techniques to ever higher standards.

If there are some who still doubt, they need look no further than the establishment of numerous new college-based courses and the introduction of "in-house" training at Aldwark Manor. Look and marvel, for though all this educational activity costs money – lots and lots of it – your Board of Management has not sat around waiting for others to trail-blaze, rather they have hit upon a clever and provocative scheme whereby those within the game of golf and working in associated fine turf industries will be able to both contribute and offer suggestions on further advancements to the education and development of golf's best raw material, that unsung hero, the greenkeeper.

Titled the Greenkeeper Education and Development Fund, this exciting new promotional venture was launched at BTME by Viscount Whitelaw and acclaimed by everyone as a real breakthrough in fund raising and management.

In recognising that educational needs are legion, financial contributions are sought from both individuals and companies or groups, such to be channelled into one centrally founded Fund, to which some £56,000 is already committed for 1992 and which is confidently expected to grow substantially with an increased input from the Joint Golf Course Committee.

With the JGCC seeking to persuade every golfer in the land to contribute the price of a golf ball into their central fund (which will quite rightly include substantial provision for greenkeeper training) so also are BIGGA seeking contributions – but in a different manner.

Formed as either 'Golden Key Circle' or 'Silver Key Circle' memberships, companies or groups making donations to the Fund in excess of £3000 annually (Golden Key) will be recognised and profiled within the pages of Greenkeeper International and will become Company members of BIGGA. They will also have priority stand space at the BIGGA Open Championship marquee and be instantly identified by a specially designed plaque and 'Golden Key Circle' tie. Individuals who donate over £150 annually will share many similar benefits, including Associate membership, and earn a 15% discount on all BIGGA educational programmes. For Silver Key Circle donors representing groups or companies and contributing sums of from £1000-£3000, there will also be Company membership; together with the wearing of a 'Silver Key Circle' tie and the display of a distinctive plaque. As individuals, (donating from £75-£150) Silver Key Circle donors become Associate members and earn a 7.5% educational programme discount.

This then is the 'bones' of membership to the Greenkeeper



Education and Development Fund, a no-nonsense idea that is bound to catch on, presenting as it does an opportunity to put in to get out. We are in no doubt that improved professionalism benefits *everyone*.

Already there are many good friends in the trade who have indicated their support for the Greenkeeper Education and Development Fund in 1992 – in most cases tried and true supporters of our past endeavours – and I am delighted to single them out and acknowledge their contribution here: Iseki UK Ltd (for support of the Iseki Regional Golf Tournament), ICI Professional Products (for support of the Premier Greenkeeper of the Year Award), Toro Irrigation, Lely UK Ltd, and the PGA European Tour (for support of the Student Greenkeeper of the Year Award), Rufford Top Dress Supplies Ltd (for continued support of the Association), Kubota UK Ltd (for support of the BIGGA Management Course Programme); and Lindum Seeded Turf (for support of the National Education Conference).

Also at the launch ceremony at BTME were three worthy recipients of somewhat special awards and these men must not escape without plaudit. In 1987, when the former greenkeeping associations amalgamated to form BIGGA, the British Golf Greenkeepers Association placed its funds in trust for the very purpose of promoting greenkeeper training. Now those trustees, Alan Gamble, Alan Kite and Ivor Scoones, have begun to wind-up the trust and will transfer monies held to the new Education and Development Fund. It was for their selfless service as trustees that Viscount Whitelaw made the awards, giving credit where credit was most certainly due!

Where will the money go? Obviously there are many items on the educational agenda that cry out for funding, some perhaps more important than others but all deserving of wider exposure. The Association will look increasingly toward the funding of scholarship awards, the development of management courses; of training aids and text books and the provision of an Association library. The National Education Conference is vitally important, as are regional and sectional seminars and the adding of training resources at BIGGA headquarters and the promotion of the Master Greenkeeper Certification programme. We seek to provide technical training films and to promote greenkeeping as a career on videotape, to get deeply involved in research projects and look closer still at the wonders of computer programmes specifically designed for the greenkeeping industry.

It all adds up to an exciting new era for the Association and those who support our aims and ideals. To coin a phrase, it's a chance for the industry; and for those who benefit from the game in some phase or other either as players or officials, to put their money where their mouth is! So let's hear it for fund-raising BIGGA style. There has never been a more deserving case.

DAVID WHITE



Well *someone* must have designed it like that; in the first of a new series of articles, golf course architect JONATHAN GAUNT traces the early days of design philosophy and examines the 'penal school' and the 'strategic hole'

I have been playing golf for over twenty years, though only recently have I realised the true value of golf lessons. I've undergone a radical swing change and now stand on the tee looking at the course in a completely different way. I feel more confident about where the ball will go – which has a direct effect upon my playing strategy – and I can plan the way I want to play the course in direct relation to the way the course design influences my game. Because of this, I am increasingly aware of the design philosophy which I believe British golf course architects of the early part of this century possessed.

A well designed course is multi-functional (which it has to be in order to attract golfers of all ages and standards), but that stated, there are fine courses that cater for only a small group of golfers, such as Pine Valley, East Sussex National and Kiawah Island. These are long, difficult layouts which are enjoyable and eminently playable if you are a low handicap amateur or golf pro., but are of a design style that is penal or heroic, as opposed to strategic.

Since the beginning of this century an architectural style and philosophy has developed that best satisfies the criteria to rate it as 'good golf course design'. It has been successfully applied by a mere handful of architects throughout the world, with probably the most famous and well respected exponent being Harry Colt.

However, Colt was not the first to make his mark, for Willie Park Jnr. was highly regarded by both Tom Simpson and Sir Guy Campbell and they were of the opinion that it was he who first began to develop the strategic style – in 1901 – at Sunningdale and Huntercombe.

Park was one of the best professional golfers of his day – the ultimate all-rounder – having trained as both greenkeeper and club maker and masterminding a hugely successful clubmaking business. Also much respected, J F Abercromby was setting out golf courses around the same time, mainly in Surrey, where he also completed Worplesdon for Park.

The strategic style was said to be an adaptation of the characteristics and features found on the Old Course at St Andrews – a design philosophy based on the provision of an alternative playing route for the high handicap player whilst not removing the challenge. The Old Course was originally considered an example of penal design, but with alternate route to green alterations in the mid-19th Century it became considerably more strategic. To perceive the Old Course as the ideal form of strategic design is interesting, because it was, effectively, un-designed and had just evolved over hundreds of years, although *someone* must have first decided where teeing grounds and greens should be located. Now golf course architects were trying to achieve similar results by artificial means.

For the lower handicap player the strategic style provided more challenge – the bigger the risk the bigger the challenge. His best shots were rewarded, his poor shots punished. Strategic golf encouraged golfers of all abilities to improve their game by enabling them to use every club in the bag and build up a wider range of different shots.

Other architects began to make a name for themselves by appreciating and then applying the 'strategic' design philosophy to their own style of course design. In particular, examples of this style were to be found on the sandy soils of heathland and not, as previously had been the case, on linksland. Heathland was almost an inland form of linksland, invariably undulating with random ground cover of heather and silver birch. It was a golf course architect's delight, as the landscape needed very little alteration in order to create an exciting golf course. The skill demon-

**'A good golf course is an asset to a nation. Those who harangue about land being diverted from agriculture and used for golf have little sense of proportion. Comparing the small amount of land utilised for golf with the large amount used for agriculture, we get infinitely more value out of the former than the latter. We all eat too much'**

# A ma

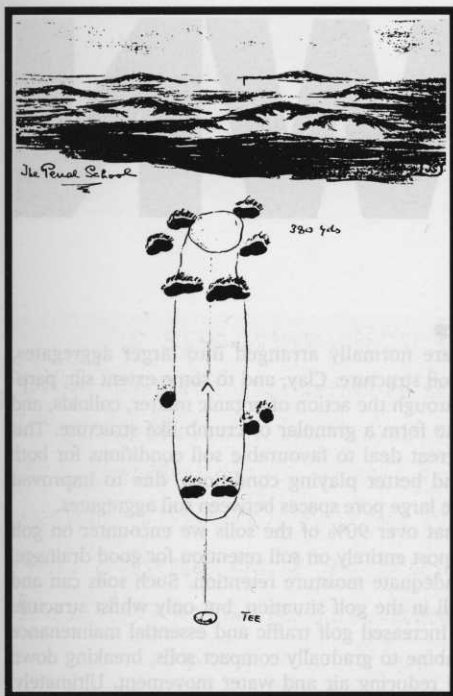
strated by these architects was essentially that of making an initial analysis of the site, followed by thoughtful placement of greens, tees and hazards. Herbert Fowler was known to have spent two years planning the course at Walton Heath, its opening in 1904 heralded with an exhibition match being played by Vardon, Taylor and Braid – 'The Great Triumvirate'.

Because of his great ability to swiftly recognise the potential in a site, Fowler soon became busy with other projects, notably at The Berkshire (both Red and Blue courses), Saunton, and a total re-design of Royal North Devon at Westward Ho! Along with Park, Abercromby and Colt, he was one of the first golf course architects who could actually be regarded as professional, rather than a part-time designer working in 'spare' time.

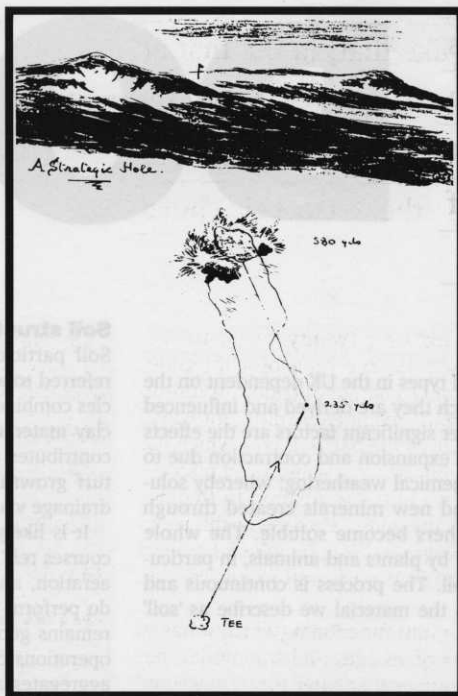
Vardon, Taylor and Braid first gained recognition through golfing prowess, later through their golf course architectural skills. Vardon was less prolific in course design than his two golfing opponents, largely due to persistent illness from tuberculosis prior to the First World War. Braid went on to design courses throughout the British Isles and in Scotland particularly, notably Gleneagles Hotel (both Kings and Queens), Dalmahoy, Royal Musselburgh, Brora, and the unsung gem at Boat of Garten. Taylor went into partnership with the ex-greenkeeper, Fred Hawtree and together they designed many fine courses, including the remodelling of Royal Birkdale. They were renowned for setting up the development of many municipal courses in Britain, and in forming the first Greenkeepers Association.

Harry Colt worked with two other architects, Alister Mackenzie and C H Alison. Colt and Mackenzie worked together at Alwoodley, Leeds in 1907/08, where Mackenzie was the Club secretary. Mackenzie was probably best known for his *Thirteen Essential Features of an Ideal Golf Course* and for his experience in the construction of camouflage features in the first World War. He was known also for being outspo-

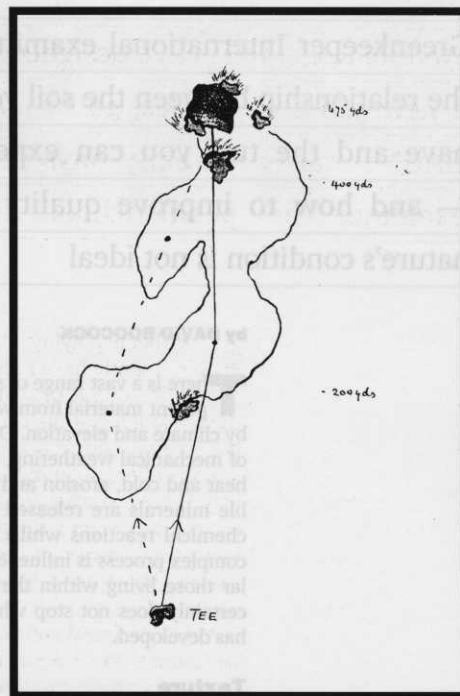




**The Penal School** – the bunkers assist the good player to steer his shot and focus distance, acting as lighthouses and framing the green. They are a source of worry from start to finish to the inferior player.



**A Strategic hole** – the good player who wants to make his second easy must take an initial risk with his tee shot. At this type of hole the true line should never be the centre of the fairway. The inferior player is not worried by the multiplicity of hazards.



**A fine test for all** – a difficult 4 for the Tiger, a difficult 5 for others.

# ter of course

ken and some of his comments were quite provocative. For example, he wrote the following in *Golf Architecture* in 1920: "A good golf course is an asset to a nation. Those who harangue about land being diverted from agriculture and used for golf have little sense of proportion. Comparing the small amount of land utilised for golf with the large amount used for agriculture, we get infinitely more value out of the former than the latter. We all eat too much." As a graduate with degrees in medicine, natural science and chemistry, he would know this better than most! He goes on to say: "The test of a good golf course architect is the power in converting bad inland material into a good course, and not the power of fashioning excellent seaside material into a mediocre one."

After a slump in commissions between 1918 and 1923, Colt set up in business with Alison (also previously a golf club secretary) and J S F Morrison. They worked on commissions throughout the country until 1962, when Morrison died. Alison and Morrison had been involved in contracts as far ranging as the USA, Japan, Australia and Africa.

Sir Guy Campbell, Cecil Hutchison and Stafford Hotchkin were all designing courses in their own right at about the same time, and in 1932 they set up a company purely to specialise in golf course design and consultancy. Campbell and Hutchison were both keen amateur golfers and Hotchkin owned his own Golf Club at Woodhall Spa in Lincolnshire. The course had originally consisted of nine holes, designed by Vardon, with Colt later designed a further nine to extend it to eighteen. Hotchkin bought the course in this completed state and added further revisions with Hutchison's assistance.

Sir Guy, writing in *A History of Golf in Great Britain* in the chapter entitled Links and Courses, defines the three architectural ages as Primitive, ie. natural, Orthodox, from 1848 gutta ball to 1902 rubber core ball, and Mechanical, from 1903 onwards. He claimed that during the Orthodox age

"some of these, almost all of them 'courses' (as opposed to 'links'), outraged nature in every respect. And they are best forgotten". I would tend to disagree with him, for there were notable exceptions: Ganton, Huddersfield, Sheringham, Royston, Royal Worlington and Woking, to name but a few.

From 1947, when the Town and Country Planning Act introduced strict restrictions on developments beyond the areas designated by District Councils, golf course developments were forced to move to sites which were often unsuitable for the style of course which had made Colt, Simpson and Morrison so popular.

It seemed that a second Orthodox Age was beginning, for golf course design really went into a depression. It was the age of building courses on a low budget whilst attempting to achieve high quality results. These courses were supposed to take modern maintenance techniques into account, though the implications of such was not considered in relation to the design of the course. This often meant that big sprawling tees, greens and bunkers were beginning to appear, due in part to the increasing influence of American design and, in particular, the design style of Robert Trent Jones.

Heaths and sandy warrens were no longer available and designers were now forced to turn their attentions to land with stony ground and heavy clay soils. Inevitably, drainage problems began as soon as soil was removed and, invariably though not always, designers had little knowledge of standard drainage techniques. The new courses may have been fine to play during the summer, but in winter they became quagmires and were virtually unplayable and as an alternative, temporary greens and tee-mats would have to be used. This was a time when a number of untrained designers (often ageing golf professionals), stepped in and effectively began a new career.

● Next issue: *The age of the Anglo-American hybrid.*

● The author and golf course architect, Jonathan Gaunt, is a graduate in Landscape Architecture. His recent commissions include the Family Golf Centre, Stevenage, Elemore in Sunderland, the 27 hole Farrington Golf Club, near Bristol, and Breinholtgard in Denmark.



Greenkeeper International examines the relationship between the soil you have and the turf you can expect — and how to improve quality if nature's condition is not ideal

# DOWN

by DAVID BOOCOCK

**T**here is a vast range of soil types in the UK dependent on the parent material from which they are derived and influenced by climate and elevation. Other significant factors are the effects of mechanical weathering, ie. expansion and contraction due to heat and cold, erosion and chemical weathering: whereby soluble minerals are released and new minerals created through chemical reactions whilst others become soluble. The whole complex process is influenced by plants and animals, in particular those living within the soil. The process is continuous and certainly does not stop when the material we describe as 'soil' has developed.

## Texture

All soils are made up of sand, silt and clay, the relative proportions of which determine soil textural class. Quartz is the usual mineral in sands with particle sizes ranging from 2 mm to 0.05 mm. They have a low surface area to weight ratio (S/WR), minimal chemical activity and low moisture retention. Because sand grains are resistant to further breakdown and compaction, selected grades are frequently used to modify soils.

Silt particles are intermediate in size with limited S/WR and chemical activity. Water retention is high and soils with a high proportion of silt can be weakly structured, thus compacting more readily so that drainage rates suffer.

Clays have a very large S/WR and are active chemically. Water retention is high, although much of this is unavailable to plants. Clay soils are particularly subject to compaction and smearing, which affects drainage rates.

## Soil structure

Soil particles are normally arranged into larger aggregates, referred to as soil structure. Clay, and to some extent silt, particles combine through the action of organic matter, colloids, and clay materials to form a granular or crumb like structure. This contributes a great deal to favourable soil conditions for both turf growth and better playing conditions, due to improved drainage via the large pore spaces between soil aggregates.

It is likely that over 90% of the soils we encounter on golf courses rely almost entirely on soil retention for good drainage, aeration, and adequate moisture retention. Such soils can and do perform well in the golf situation, but only whilst structure remains good. Increased golf traffic and essential maintenance operations combine to gradually compact soils, breaking down aggregates and reducing air and water movement. Ultimately, these factors must affect both turf and playing quality that any given soil can support, it having long been appreciated that turf grass species are just as important to year round playing conditions as the drainage properties of the soil.

## Links

Over thousands of years grasses have adapted to particular types of soil, depending on drainage, moisture retentive properties and the relative fertility of the soil. Thus on sandy links soil the grass species naturally present are predominantly the finer leaved fescues, both Chewings and creeping reds, together with some browntop bent, creeping bent and other minor species. All are adapted to conditions of free-drainage, good aeration and infertility, where summer drought is part of the yearly cycle.

That such soils are capable of growing excellent turf and can

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# TO EARTH



**Stronger root action following coreing**

provide first class playing conditions virtually year round is well established. In more recent times the increased popularity of golf and consequent greater pressures from play, especially on the free-draining links soil, has led to some deterioration. Much of this is due to the build-up of compaction and sheer wear and tear. In these circumstances the finer grasses are at a disadvantage. Root systems become shallow in compact, airless soil and recovery from wear is much slower, leading to a more open turf and inviting weeds, moss and free-seeding weed grass species, particularly *Poa annua*, to invade and bring a decline in playing conditions.

The advent of pop-up sprinkler irrigation has all too often been another nail in the coffin of fescue/bent swards, not because water as such is bad for grasses, but simply that applications have often been too excessive. The perceived answer to a thin sward was often more fertiliser and even more water. With high-pressure salesmen pushing high analysis N:P:K mini-granulates as hard as the could, (and in past times there was barely a single nitrogen only proprietary fertiliser on the market), there can be little wonder that soil fertility levels and thatch increased. Both practical experience and trials have shown that fescues are less successful with increased water and fertiliser use. Initially, the more aggressive bent grasses take over, but if high levels of play continue and aeration remains unsatisfactory, even they suffer. Thatch build-up and an increased spread of *Poa annua* completes the cycle of deterioration witnessed on far too many formerly excellent links courses.

Fundamental to the management of links is adequate provision of machinery and manpower and the correct deployment of both. Regular aeration, involving a combination of occasional Verti-draining or hollow coring treatment along with regular slit

ting, particularly during autumn and winter, is essential to promote deep rooting, the relief of compaction and aid thatch breakdown. Top dressings need to be very sandy in character, ideally using local soil and sand compatible with that existing on the course. Fertiliser use should be kept to a minimum and water applied in just sufficient quantity (and in the right places) to maintain slow, steady growth. Inevitably a significant amount of hand watering is required on featured greens.

It is important to appreciate that there are fairly strict limitations in the amount of use golf links can take whilst continuing to provide first class swards and playing conditions. It is widely recognised that turf consisting predominantly of fine fescues with relatively small amounts of browntop bent will provide firm, resilient and uniform playing surfaces year round, with excellence in summer when swards are closer mown and are dry, fast and true. Such systems are essentially low input and therefore relatively low output. They cannot support high levels of play both winter and summer.

Increase inputs of fertiliser, water and aeration to sustain higher levels of play and there are alterations in sward characteristics. Browntop bent becomes more vigorous whilst fescues decline to perhaps 25-30% of ground cover. Even so, playing qualities can remain first class throughout the year. Such an approach based on moderate input will still only support moderate output and a fairly tight rein should be kept on rounds played, say 30,000 to 40,000 per annum.

## **Heathland**

Courses established on heathland are frequently based on sandy soils which have naturally free-draining characteristics. These soils are often acidic and basically low in fertility, again encouraging a sward dominated by finer turf species like fescues and browntop bents. Management must aim at preserving free-draining, well-aerated soils through a sound programme of mechanical treatments. This will include frequent slit tining and either Verti-draining or hollow coring in alternate years. Top dressings must be compatible with the existing sandy soil and should not be too acidic, thus maintaining soil pH levels more or less where they are. For similar reasons, limit the use of acidifying fertilisers, substituting chelated iron preparations (without added N) for sulphate of iron sprays in autumn and winter.

## **Parkland**

Medium loam soils are frequently characteristic of parkland courses. These may be slightly acidic, are often of moderate fertility and can support excellent browntop bent swards, though often with a good deal of *Poa annua* and some courser species, notably Yorkshire fog grass. Such soils rely entirely on soil structure for drainage and the maintenance of good structure is of paramount importance. Compaction from over play leads to a reduction in soil air content and slows down drainage quite dramatically. This can quickly initiate a cycle of deterioration, especially where attempts are made to escape the situation with excessive inputs of fertiliser and water. If this path is followed, typically there is increased thatch accumulation in surface layers, a further slowing down of drainage and production of a soft, spongy, moisture-retentive turf which becomes dominated by *Poa annua*. Not only is this bad for golf, it also encourages fungal disease. The effects of winter die back – and dead patches due to disease – produce disastrously weak and uneven playing surfaces through spring and early summer. All too often the response, perhaps in desperation to escape criticism from members and committee alike, is to reach for the fertiliser bag! A shot in the arm from high analysis complete fertiliser, or worse still Nitro-chalk, may at best provide temporary relief, but like the drug addict, you have to keep going back with more!

On such soils golfers must realise there are limits to the amount of use putting greens can take, especially during the wetter months of autumn and winter when the compacting effects of play on moist soil are at their worst. There comes a



# 'New constructions should follow modern practice on greens and tees, providing drainage carpets of stone with emptying pipe drains. A sand/soil mixture with drainage rates determined by lab tests must be provided as a growing medium'

point when even vastly increased aeration work becomes counter-productive, and, of course, ground conditions limit what can be achieved mechanically anyway. Where necessary, it is surely better to restrict play to temporary surfaces when the main greens are saturated with moisture in winter, or when they are affected by white frost of just thawing. In that way, the majority of members benefit from playing surfaces which have some chance of improving quickly in the spring, once weather conditions become suitable.

Regular slitting and use of the Verti-drain, combined with hollow tining to control thatch, will aid rooting and will help integrate top dressings. All are important. Use of sandy top dressing material will be beneficial in breaking up and diluting thatch, as well as helping to maintain acceptable pH values and, of course, is essential to maintaining smooth surfaces. The often kinder inland climate and more fertile soil allows moderate to strong growth with good recovery throughout the growing season, though care is still necessary to avoid over-use of fertiliser and three or four dressings with a mainly nitrogen product will usually suffice. Such soils are unlikely to be deficient in phosphate or potash. Use sulphate of iron with care, particularly where pH levels are already acidic – in that situation the chelated products which are much less acidifying are to be preferred.

## Clay

Courses built on clay soils pose their own special problems. These are quite often fertile, retaining nutrients by the process of cation exchange. Phosphates in particular can build up to high levels if applied regularly. Soil pH values are relatively slow to change. The more acid clays often support excellent, hard wearing and wiry swards based predominantly on bents,

both browntop and creeping bent mixed with some fescue, especially on the less heavily trafficked fairways.

Neutral soils support more vigorous turf, often containing a great variety of grass species but predominantly browntop bents and *Poa annua* with paler-coloured, courser-leaved patches of Yorkshire fog on the greens.

The overriding characteristic of clay is its great moisture-retentive capacity and slow-draining properties. Surfaces readily smear and compact under the effects of play and use in winter can be severely curtailed. Where bad initial construction has destroyed what little structure there is, or has created severe compaction into the bargain, conditions in winter can become a quagmire.

New constructions should follow modern practice on greens and tees, providing drainage carpets of stone with emptying pipe drains. A sand/soil mixture with drainage rates determined by laboratory tests must be provided as a growing medium.

On established courses one has to make the best of what nature has provided or face up to the disruption and high costs of reconstruction. At low play levels, clay courses can provide acceptable conditions, almost year year round, but with high membership figures and a lot of winter golf, Clubs soon come to grief. It is at this stage that the know-alls start to clamour for more fertiliser, water and lime application to promote faster growth and recovery from the damage created by over-use in winter. Bow to these pressures and within a year or two the tough, acid bent grass turf has been replaced by soft *Poa annua* dominated swards, riddled with worms and often weeds, building up thatch very quickly. Winter conditions are abysmal and putting surfaces are frequently only really acceptable from mid-summer to autumn, when growth of *Poa annua* is at its peak.

Clay soils at field capacity are slow-draining. That fact of life has to be accepted. Play on them when saturated in winter and you are storing up trouble for the season. It therefore becomes imperative to provide and use temporary greens whenever necessary, especially from November to March. Pipe drainage systems can help make the most of these soils but are no magical cure. Water still has to percolate through soil in order to reach the drains. Timely and regular aeration will of course help, and it remains important to ensure there are no compacted soil layers which act as barriers to the free movement of water through the soil profile. The Verti-drain is less effective in these conditions and can make matters worse where you put water to depth and there is nowhere for it to go. It may be necessary to utilise a mini-mole plough to form channels which can help lead such water more quickly to outlet via pipe drains. Hollow tine coring can certainly help, and by a process of soil exchange it is possible to develop a sandy top profile that can support play better without severe smearing or surface compaction.

I am not in favour of pure sand top dressing. Too often there is no integration with the underlying soil and root systems are confined to the immediate surface. The turf becomes shallow-rooted, highly susceptible to drought in summer, and demands heavy watering and feeding with the inevitable spread of *Poa annua*. In winter the top may be firmer but drainage is often worse, due to the perched water table at the interface between the fine capillary pores of the clay and the sand layer. There are no simple answers on clay soils, especially where there are high levels of play.

In summary, adopt a management style which will suit the soil type on your course, with an emphasis on 'lean greenkeeping'. Committees and members must be prepared to back up their head greenkeeper with adequate levels of manpower and machinery. It is also essential that members recognise that whilst our mild climate may permit enjoyable golf almost 12 months of the year, soil conditions are always a limiting factor. Abuse putting surfaces through overplay in the winter and the inevitable result is poorer surfaces through the main competition season of spring and summer.

● David Boocock is a senior agronomist with the Sports Turf Research Institute.

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TERRALIFT





# Letters

■ May I express my appreciation to both ICI and BIGGA officials for the hospitality shown to me during the recent ICI Premier Greenkeeper award held at Aldwark Manor.

I felt this to be a real learning experience and would urge all greenkeepers to support these educational competitions.

Finally, may I again congratulate David Whitaker on his success and wish all finalists good luck in the future.

**TIM MCCREADIE** Oundle, Peterborough

■ I feel I must enter the fray regarding the controversy arising from the cutting heights declared by George Barr at Ham Manor (October Greenkeeper International), and the subsequent letters which appeared in December.

First, I must come clean and admit to being a long-time Jim Arthur fan, though not always totally agreeing with everything he says, as will be seen from the following.

Reading your article, I considered it the most sensible and honest I had ever read since first becoming interested in this profession. I control eight golf courses and seven bowling greens and every one is managed in a very similar way to that outlined by George Barr, including height of cut. The only real difference is that my top dressing is an 80/20 mix of medium/course sand and sterilised soil, though I have used a straight sand in the past on numerous courses in Ireland, (where good soil is at a premium) with great success. My findings suggest that a medium/course sand, rather than a medium/fine, is infinitely superior as a green top dressing, with peat a definite no-no.

Returning to the point re Barr's seasonal cutting at 1/8" Messrs Bertinshaw and Jones suggest that this is not good greenkeeping practice, as does the STRI and, apparently, Jim Arthur. Indeed, judging by the number of courses I play with s-l-o-w greens, there are a large number of other greenkeepers who share this view.

Let me state a few facts on cutting height. First: If a basic maintenance programme is unsound, with soft, spongy surfaces produced as a result, then bench setting becomes irrelevant, as the mower will obviously be 'sitting down' into a thatch layer when cutting. This 'sitting down' produces scalping when cutting heights are dropped, the results of which could be seen to dramatic effect last year on television.

Second: I have been cutting greens to 1/8" for 12 years now, only raising to 3/16" in winter, and have never experienced any problems **because the surfaces remain firm** thanks to a solid maintenance programme. During 1990 my five bowling greens at Northfield hosted the Scottish Ladies, Scottish Mens and Ladies Home Internationals over four weeks in July/August. Over that time, plus a gradual drop over the preceding weeks, they were cut at 3/32" twice a day with Paladins and still retained the same high percentage of fine grasses found at the start of the season. Our bowling greens have been overseeded for the past 3 years in Autumn with a 50/50 mix of browntop and Emerald creeping bent – yes, creeping bent – and this works very well because they are not played on in the winter.

Third: In his book *Practical Lawn Care*, published in 1939, R B Dawson of the STRI reveals the results of an experiment in cutting heights carried out at St Ives, summarised as follows: Two areas were cut at 1/8" and 3/8" respectively. First result: the long cut produced only 75% – 97% of grass clippings depending on seasonal variations. Conclusion – the shorter cut encourages more vigorous growth. Second result: After two full seasons the plot cut at 3/8" contained (having been sown with highland bent) 17.6% *Poa annua* and 6.3% weeds, with the plot cut at 1/8" containing 0.5% *Poa annua* and 2.1% weeds. Moss was slightly more common on the shorter cut. Other results showed that counts of shoots and tillers on the 1/8" cut were outnumbering those on the longer cut by nearly 2-1, thereby giving a much denser sward. One other interesting fact revealed that worm activity was three times greater on the longer cut.

This, remember, was back in 1939. I do not subscribe to the theory that because of heavier play nowadays things have changed. Certainly, there is a greater need for vastly improved aeration, but not for cutting heights.

One other point concerns winter cutting. Every old publica-

**Something to say?**  
**Letters on all aspects of greenkeeping are welcomed. Send your correspondence to the editor, Greenkeeper International, 13 Firle Close, Seaford, East Sussex BN25 2HL. We reserve the right to edit submissions.**

tion I have ever read on greenkeeping states categorically that grass should be cut regularly in winter. My experience certainly confirms that not cutting, or cutting too high or too infrequently, causes course growth and wet, soft patches prone to disease and damage.

Finally, I would take issue with Mr Bertinshaw over his comments on cutting height adjustment. Surely he can work with millimetres if he wishes, just as I and many others work in sixteenths of an inch, as we wish. If he cannot set a mower accurately using a ruler and straight edge then he apparently still has a bit to learn.

**DUNCAN GRAY**

Golf Course and Bowling Green Superintendent,  
Kyle and Carrick District Council, Ayrshire

■ In order to avoid possible misinterpretation and confusion, I would like to observe that the otherwise excellent, informative (and condemnatory!) article by Tim Colclough on sand greens (January Greenkeeper International) is fatally marred by his failure to specifically differentiate between sand-only green constructions and those with 'sand based root zones'. Virtually all greens are now built with sand-based root zones, ie. sand/soil/peat; sand/fen soil; or even sandy links greens with the links sand ameliorated by natural build up of humus, as Tim correctly observes.

The recommendations and observations in his article, based on STRI research and practical observation, refer to **sand-only construction**. Even if followed, they cannot prevent severe and serious attacks of *Ophiobolus* (Take-all Patch) and eventually *Poa annua* dominance.

I must ask that all concerned realise that greens with root zones (however sandy and free draining) which incorporate a humus rich additive to act as a buffer or nutrient-retaining element should never be fed with phosphate or lime and only exceptionally with potash using only limited amounts of basically slow release nitrogen, or *Poa annua* invasion will be as rapid as it is extensive.

However, if omission of the qualification about sand only, as opposed to sandy humus-enriched root zones, was the result of an oversight, his qualification to the unarguable statement that "there is no place for pure sand greens in this country" except where there is "a complete lack of suitable local materials and a tight construction budget" is illogical and misleading. If money is short, why install a system which demands very intensive and expensive management to even postpone the inevitable disastrous end result? Furthermore, there are nationally available ideal sources (no monopoly of any one firm, though some are better than others) of suitably organic-rich light soils with very low clay and silt fractions for admixture with quality controlled sand at prices which add, at most, 1% to construction costs.

It is to be noted that the use of 'local soil', which I have long condemned as being expensive to extract and screen, unreliable, often contaminated and very rarely physically suitable, not to mention the restoration costs involved on site, is now "not advised by the USGA Green Section". Hopefully, we shall soon have an agreed specification for British and European green construction – if it can be agreed before the Germans (and their 'Greens') get theirs in first on the EC table – for if that happens the resultant problems and embargoes will be horrendous.

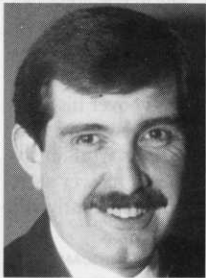
When German architects state that they want their courses to look like Disneyland (I quote verbatim) where will our Royal and Ancient sport still be played?

**JIM ARTHUR** Budleigh Salterton, Devon  
**GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL** February 1992 13



Reduced registration fees makes top award more accessible

# Be a Master of your profession



**BIGGA Education Officer David Golding: 'I urge all members to apply for an MGC registration form'**

None can deny that the recent happy occasion – the presentation by BIGGA President, Viscount Whitelaw, of Britain's first ever Master Greenkeeper Certificate to Laurence Pithie – which took place at the BIGGA Turf Management Exhibition in January – represented a new era in the recognition of greenkeeping as a vitally important profession, together with the continuing need to have clearly definable professional qualifications.

Ever mindful of this need, the Association has announced a major change for those members contemplating registration for the Master Greenkeeper Certificate. **The initial cost of registering for MGC, which was £60, is reduced to just £10.**

BIGGA Education Officer, David Golding, has broken the MGC specification down into plain language, enabling members to clearly understand how the scheme operates and the 'scoring' which takes place.

"There has been a great deal of interest in the scheme by both members and employers, but many are unsure of the mechanics of the scheme," said David.

Details are as follows:

## STAGE ONE

The 'goal' is 200 credits, with members gaining credits toward this goal by both experience in the workplace and educational exposure .

**Experience:** By definition, this is calculated by multiplying the number of years a member has been employed in greenkeeping by four, for example:

- Apprentice greenkeeper, Slyceham Golf Club 1970 -1973
- Assistant greenkeeper, Divot Valley Golf Club 1973 -1980
- Deputy head greenkeeper, Hackinatit Golf Club 1980 -1987
- Head greenkeeper, Shankem-on-the-Tee Golf Club 1987 - 1991

Thus our fictitious example gives a total of 21 years x 4 = a total of 84 credits.

**Education:** Credits are awarded for the completion of any of the following:

- Sports Turf Research Institute one week course...8 credits
- BIGGA Management courses (each of one week).8 credits
- Supervisory Course (Elmwood College) one week course .....8 credits
- City & Guilds
  - City & Guilds Phase I – one year course.....15 credits
  - City & Guilds Phase II – two year course .....54 credits
  - City & Guilds Phase III – one year course .....24 credits
  - City & Guilds Phase IV – one year course .....24 credits

**Note:** If any of the Phases I-IV are taken at an 'Approved College' of the Greenkeepers Training Committee, add three extra credits per phase (maximum 9).

- Scotec/Scotvec
  - Modules – 40 hours- .....6 credits
  - Half module – 20 hours .....3 credits

**Note:** The maximum credits attainable for greenkeeping craft level modules is 102, with 15 credits for supervisory modules. Three extra credits will be awarded for each set of

five modules, obtained at an 'Approved College' (maximum 9 credits).

- Attendance at BIGGA National Conference
  - From 1988 onwards: per conference.....5 credits
- Attendance at BTME Seminar Programme
  - From 1990 onwards: per session.....1 credit
- Attendance at BTME Workshops
  - From 1991 onwards: per workshop.....4 credits
- Attendance at Regional/Section Seminars
  - From 1990 onwards: per seminar.....3 credits
- Pesticides Certification
  - PA 1 – pass.....5 credits
  - PA2A or 6 Hand held or tractor mounted.....5 credits

**Note:** The maximum credits attainable under Pesticide Certification is ten.

The Association also exercises overall discretion to award additional credits for other approved qualifications not detailed above; and will be pleased to give any certificates held by a candidate due consideration. Copies of such certificates should be forwarded to HQ when registering. Upon registration, a detailed credits report is prepared for each candidate and forwarded to him/her. As further credits are gained, each candidates report is updated at BIGGA HQ.

When the magic '200' mark is reached, a further fee is required from candidates. The cost of this has been increased from £100 to £150, and upon payment the candidate moves to stages 2 and 3 of the MGC.

## STAGE TWO

(For course managers and head greenkeepers only)

During the season of growth the candidates golf course will be visited by two assessors, this to ensure that correct management and maintenance practices are being implemented. The date of such visit will be confirmed following agreement between the candidate and David Golding. Assessment guide-lines are sent to each candidate to guide them in preparation for their course visit.

## STAGE THREE

Upon receipt of the £150 fee for stages 2 and 3, candidates will be provided with a syllabus to work on prior to an examination, which is held annually in May. The examination consists of two three-hour papers: 1) A case study. 2) Five questions, one from each individual section of the provided syllabus.

Summarising, David Golding said: "The MGC is clearly seen as the 'Way Forward' for BIGGA members and I firmly believe that in the future many potential employers will increasingly refer to the MGC as the standard of excellence within our industry.

"Members should ensure they are not left behind by registering now. I urge them all to apply for an MGC registration form (obtainable from HQ), complete it, and send copies of certificates held and a cheque for £10 to BIGGA HQ.

"I hope this clarification of the scheme will inspire many more greenkeepers to join and I will be happy to discuss any points – including any credits already earned – with them. I expect my telephone line to run 'hot' in the weeks ahead!"



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# Viscount Whitelaw's proud message at the launch

If ever proof was needed that the greenkeeping profession is in a very healthy state – along with the industry that serves it – the undeniable evidence was to be found in Harrogate at our fourth and best-ever BIGGA Turf Management Exhibition – and it didn't take much finding!

From the opening ceremony, when a relaxed and smiling Viscount Whitelaw announced the launching of the new Greenkeeper Education and Development Fund, offered congratulations to Laurence Pithie on his Master Greenkeeper achievement and praised all members of the greenkeeping profession for having "arrived and come of age" in no uncertain measure, the feeling throughout was one of upbeat optimism.

Special awards were made, special thanks given, hearty congratulations offered. All this in a show that refused to lie down and wallow in the so-called doom and gloom of current business fashion. In a play on the initials BTME, one informed wag likened the letters to Brilliant Times, Magnificent Enthusiasm!



BTME means different things to different people, though above all else it means the opportunity to learn more of new technology, to take concentrated doses of professionalism in a busy and sustained seminar and workshop programme and to meet the trade in an interaction that is as important for them as it is for us. And it works. Order books were reportedly bulging, salesmen observed with grins from ear to ear and a good many green chairmen appearing enlightened in a way that had hitherto been merely wishful thinking on the part of their head greenkeepers. No doubt about it, BTME was a winner.

In a week in which so much took place it is well nigh impossible to highlight each and every happening. However, for this writer the events that remain indelibly fixed are of a human nature: the lump in the throat as Laurence Pithie took his first fitting of a very special "Masters" jacket, the Middlesbrough Golf Club Chairman, Jack Higgins, rendered near speechless at being presented with a plaque in recognition of the Middlesbrough Club's selfless encouragement of "our" Chairman, George Malcolm, and the solid mass of enthusiastic Scottish faces filling a multitude of theatre seats when their very own Jim Paton spoke of "Villains and Heroes." *Roll on BTME '93!*

**DAVID WHITE**



The Iseki Golf Tournament is now an established favourite with BIGGA members. Viscount Whitelaw presents Iseki's Colin Gregory, with a special award



Rufford's are longtime supporters of BIGGA's aims and have funded many worthwhile ventures. Viscount Whitelaw presents Rufford's MD, Peter Jefford, with a special award



Kubota UK Ltd have supported BIGGA generously in the provision of Aldwark Manor Management Training Courses. Viscount Whitelaw and Kubota Vice President, Brian Hurtle, share a quiet word or two



The contribution from ICI Professional Products is represented forcefully in both the ICI Premier Greenkeeper of the Year and our own National Golf Championships. Receiving a special award from Viscount Whitelaw is Roger Mossop, Marketing Manager of ICI Professional Products



An award was made to Alan Kite, seen here with Viscount Whitelaw, in recognition of his excellent trustee service following the transfer of BGGGA funds to the new BIGGA Education and Development Fund



Also present was Alan Gamble, a fellow trustee of BGGGA funds, who was presented with a special award by Viscount Whitelaw. The third trustee, former Association Chairman, Ivor Scoones, was awarded a special plaque in absentia



of best-ever BIGGA Turf Management Exhibition:

# GREENKEEPING HAS COME OF AGE



A sentimental and altogether delightful award was made to Middlesbrough Golf Club Chairman, Jack Higgins, in gratitude for the Club's unselfish support of George Malcolm throughout his year of office



A gathering of the clans - as four previous Chairmen of the Association meet at Harrogate. From left: Walter Woods, Paddy McCarron, Jack McMillan, Neil Thomas (Executive Director) and George Malcolm



In recognition of Lindum Seeded Turf's support of the National Education Conference, Stephen Fell, Executive Director, receives a special award from Viscount Whitelaw



Pictured receiving their awards from Viscount Whitelaw for support of the Student Greenkeeper of the Year Award are Carlos Ochoa, Director of Golf International, Toro and Graham Dale, Managing Director, Lely (UK) Ltd.





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# The way to spray

by JON ALLBUTT

The work of the consultant requires that he tread the turf of many a hallowed venue as well as that of the small Club. You would think that the level of equipment would be in keeping with the size of the budget, but not so! It is true that there is usually an impressive array of new tractors, Cushman's etc at the larger Clubs, but there is certainly no consistency with sprayers. There are many smaller Clubs with carefully maintained old sprayers that are still doing a very good job and there are also a fair number of new sprayers about too. What is surprising, at least at some of the larger Clubs, is to find some very tatty specimens indeed, often found in the corner of the sheds and covered in old hosepipe or fertiliser bags, and full of something very smelly and unidentifiable! Although the general standard of spraying equipment has improved over the last five years, there is still a long way to go.

## To update or replace?

There is a temptation to upgrade an existing unit and in some cases this is a good idea. However, there are some important points to consider before making such a decision.

The Amenity Code of Practice sets the criteria whereby it should be possible to spray and minimise the impact to the environment. To meet this criteria, all sprayers must now be capable of applying a pesticide using nozzles and pressures that will ideally eliminate spray drift.

To ensure that nozzles do not drip they should be fitted with diaphragm or nozzle filter type check valves. Some old sprayers will not easily convert and may require new booms. Over the years, old pipework will have become worn, along with an accumulation of residues from old pesticides that will flake off and block filters. In addition, and this may come as a surprise to some, the inside of the main tank must be free of all residues. In reality, many aged tanks are so stained they are impossible to clean.

The sprayer should be fitted with a clean water tank to allow for the rinsing of containers away from the yard and also for emergency wash down. Some of these older sprayers are only ideal for use in applying seaweed and other liquid soil conditioners, and it may now be considered wise to purchase a new sprayer to apply pesticides, wetters and liquid Iron.

## What to buy?

Compatibility with the tractor or other prime mover is a first consideration. Never assume the sprayer will fit, but always specify the prime mover when ordering new equipment. Make sure that the sprayer has all the necessary features to enable the operator to spray in accordance with the Code of Practice. These can be categorised thus:

- Bout markers. These are important to allow accurate spraying of fairways.
- Pump capacity. One that will allow all nozzles to apply at 1100 litres per hectare at low pressure with medium spray quality is desirable.
- Nozzles. Specify low pressure nozzles, or at least nozzles that will give good performance at 1-2 bar pressure, with no spray drift.
- Hand lances. The ability to use a hand lance directly from the main tank is important when applying growth retardants to banks; making spot treatment around trees; or total weedkilling of paths, not to mention the ability to apply a drench spray to greens when using fairy ring destroyers, wetters etc.

## Electronic or manual controls?

The traditional method of operating sprayers is to manually



ChemPro/Cushman spray unit



Innovative Equipment spray unit

switch a valve on or off; pressure being set by turning a control valve one way or the other to achieve a desired setting. On tractor mounted equipment this usually requires the operator to turn around in his seat and operate the controls behind his head through an open window. It is difficult enough trying to keep a straight line without making matters worse by taking one's eye off the line of direction. In health and safety terms it is important to always be in control of the machine, for when operating on undulating ground and frequently looking away from the direction of travel, the work can be potentially dangerous.

Most manufacturers will supply electronic controls that operate the booms and pressure, these operated from within the cab. Some machines are also available with a control console which not only operates the booms and pressure but also ensures that the sprayer always sprays at the rate set, even if speed or pressure drops. These are very useful technical aids to safe spraying, but they do need to be checked regularly by calibration.

There are several American sprayers now available in the UK and these units are usually fitted with electronic controls. If you decide to invest in one of these imports remember they are set up for US rather than Imperial gallons, so ask for information on capacities and outputs to be provided in litres.

The new sprayers manufactured by Innovative Equipment Inc., a Canadian company, and under serious consideration for marketing in the UK by Jacobsen, have some interesting features: the boom sections travel on their own wheels – allowing the booms to take the shape of the ground being sprayed – and the boom sections are covered in a hood called a windfoil, designed to minimise any spray drift (this, however, will require some careful cleaning after spraying and may cause problems in instantly identifying blocked





**The Hardi PS300**  
Cushman

nozzles). To minimise compaction on greens, hose-fed walking booms are available, these giving a spray width of 2 metres.

At the Wisley course, David Whitaker bought two of the American Hahn MultiPro 418s (also available as the John Deere sprayer), these being used by Wisley head greenkeeper, Bob Gilbert, and his staff. Bob, who has vast experience in using many different makes of sprayer, described the Hahn as a fantastic machine – praise indeed! The sprayer has a 568 litre tank, is very stable and manoeuvrable on the undulating ground at Wisley and will spray very large volumes, making it ideal for applying wetters, Iron and fungicides. The computer control system will work in metric measure and both US or Imperial gallons and stores valuable information about the spraying operation, which is then used to check the job and aid entry in the spray log and operator spray record book. There is a manual over-ride system in case of problems. Bob experienced a computer breakdown recently and was delighted when a replacement came from America within a week, faster service, perhaps, than some manufacturers here in the UK!

At the Buckinghamshire Golf Club, soon to be opened,

## 'Perhaps high-tech is the 'way forward' for the British greenkeeper. Time will tell!'

THELMA HOLLIS

Chris Marsden uses the American Chempro sprayer, imported by RFE Turf Machinery, with the Wilker Walker boom as an extra attachment for spraying greens. The Chempro also has a floating boom, which can be fixed in position. The bout markers are by Hardi, fitted here in the UK, though markers can be fitted at time of manufacture as an extra. Chris has used the system to good effect, the Wilker Walker working very well, though a marker dye is found desirable to assist with accurate covering of the greens. Like the Hahn, the system uses large volume hollow-cone nozzles, which spray an acceptable spray quality.

These systems are more expensive than any equivalent UK sprayer of similar specification. For example, the new Hardi PS300 Cushman can be fitted with electronic controls for on/off at an extra cost of £235.00 and a similar computer control system would be an extra £1150.00. This would take the total cost of the PS300 to nearer £3500.00, which is somewhat cheaper than the £8700.00 quoted for the Chempro with walking boom and bout marker.

The operators of these high-tech machines are very happy with them, all saying they are superior to the older, more traditional specification manual systems. We will all need to take a great deal more care in the application of chemicals in the future, so perhaps high-tech is the 'way forward' for the British greenkeeper. Time will tell!

● The author, Jon Allbutt, is an independent technical consultant to the leisure and amenity industry, best known to greenkeepers as a no-nonsense trainer and lecturer in pesticide regulations and the Code of Practice.

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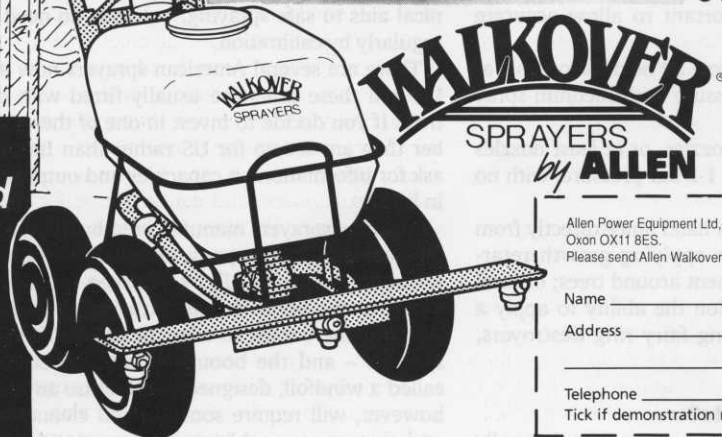


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## Straight talking from JIM ARTHUR

Probably, no, *indisputably*, the worst problem that can face anyone in charge of any established golf course is how to improve dominantly annual meadow grass greens (*Poa annua*) and survive to tell the tale, let alone produce results.

All too often the failure of such a programme, with the resultant trauma all round and loss of reputation if not job, has led some who have tried and failed to claim that the task is impossible and "we have to learn to live with annual meadow grass". The experience of others belies this.

In theory, since we know that the natural grass cover of any ecological system is determined by its management as much as by its environment, all one has to do is identify the cause of *Poa annua* dominance, reverse the management practices that changed the grass for the worse, and 'hey presto' – more desirable, hard wearing, fine textured species will replace that ubiquitous weed grass, dominance of which is the source of 90% of our greenkeeping problems but which like the poor (pardon the pun!) will always be with us!

Since we know that *Poa annua* responds to high fertiliser treatment and specifically to high phosphates; over-watering and under aeration, more austere management with low levels of nitrogen-only fertilisers; controlled and limited irrigation and deep frequent aeration should bring about the desired result. That's the theory. Practice is something else!

Only where there has been a relatively short period of bad or misguided management and there has been a past history of dominance by either bent (*Agrostis tenuis*) or fine fescue (*Festuca rubra*), or a mix of both, is this programme likely to restore the original more desirable grasses. But all too often the abuses have been perpetrated with gay abandon for many many years, whether this has been a famous links or the local course.

If in such cases we then institute a maintenance programme specifically designed to discourage *Poa annua*, what happens? The weed grass goes – its speed of departure depending on the enthusiasm with which austere (ie. traditional) greenkeeping is implemented – but without the positive steps all we get is bare ground. Then, as is natural, there is disillusionment at all levels and a return to the bad old systems – especially as all too often this is what today's new golfers want – 'nice and green' holding greens and plenty of grass under the ball on fairways – the latter effectively ensuring that no-one can stay on firm greens, which in turn results in demands for more feed and more water. It is hard to credit, but I have had several personal reports of courses where the greens have responded to management and become faster and firmer and of Club captains and their like demanding that a collar be created round the green "mown at 1" in height to stop balls rolling off the putting surface". Words fail me! They might with equal logic demand low chicken wire fences on the perimeter of the putting surface. Balls trapped hard up and against either 'wall' are naturally unplayable – doubtless leading to demands for a free lift and drop!

Since some programmes have been successful in changing the grass type on the greens, what is the secret?

The first and most important thing is education of *the members*, through the normal channels. Explanations as to the benefits which will derive from tolerance of a relatively short if traumatic interim period may induce tolerance if not understanding, especially if the events are not as bad as their forecast paints! To achieve this understanding we *must* have continuity of management as well as enthusiastic acceptance of the desired aims. Sadly today, this is probably the hardest aim to achieve, involving as it does replacement

# How to control POA and live to tell the tale

of conventional annually changing green committees by a *permanent* and properly structured management body working to a defined course management policy document.

Few things have cost head greenkeepers (particularly younger and/or less cautious ones), more loss of sleep, of reputation and even of jobs, than a campaign against annual meadow grass dominance impatiently implemented without prior warning and agreement. If for no other reason, consultation, explanation and consideration for the golfing calendar will avoid all three problems. Historic research and investigation is needed: If the root zone is impeded or there has been a past history of gross overfeeding over many years, it may be easier to accept that we have to continue to live with this wretched weed grass, producing tolerable conditions for only half the year at best. Nevertheless, backed by a convincing Club management, understanding members, and with greenkeeping skills akin to riding a bicycle over Niagara on a tight wire, superb and permanent transi-



tions have been achieved. Almost in every case the common factor is *continuity of management*. I know of none where the green committee changes all the time. We must eliminate the channel of promotion to captaincy that is so often believed to be through a stint on the green committee.

I know of many courses, – built cheaply in the 1960s boom, or even in the earlier one of the 1920s, on heavy soils with no stone carpets under the greens and with heavy 'unimproved' clay root-zone levels – where annual meadow grass has been almost totally replaced by *Agrostis tenuis*, but it has not been done overnight – nor without problems.

If our management kills annual meadow grass and local conditions are inimical to the establishment of perennial fine-textured grasses, an austere greenkeeping programme will inevitably leave at best a thin open turf – a condition know as 'Arthrititis'. One answer is to overseed in late summer or early autumn, introducing 'chitted' seed in damp top dressing into closely spaced shallow hollow tine fork holes. Heavy seed rates are counter productive – they cause excessive competition and damping off. Here again, long term forward planning is vital to achieve a sensible compromise between the golfing calendar and the optimum seeding period which would otherwise clash. Late seeding (ie. October) is a waste of time and money.

We must use the most *vigorous* strains of bent and fescue available – even using Highland (*A. castellana*) instead of eg. Egmont (*A. tenuis*).

There is no argument about the methods which have so successfully restored erstwhile old fashioned greens, sadly deteriorated as annual meadow grass took over once there was money available with which to make mistakes. One reason why our older courses had such good greens thirty or forty years ago was that there was no money to spend on fertilisers and as a result no money was needed to control disease. It is fully admitted that conditions then were not as manicured as on today's well presented courses, but the worst that happened was a plague of leatherjackets or *temporary* browning of the greens in particular and the course in general in a prolonged drought – but it soon greened over again with the first fall of rain.

Bad construction, poor drainage, bad materials, the use of the wrong grasses and bad management techniques in the past 25 years all led to invasion of annual meadow grass; and as it periodically suffered from disease, traffic and win-

“  
**One answer is to overseed in late summer or early autumn, introducing 'chitted' seed in damp top dressing into closely spaced shallow hollow tine fork holes. Heavy seed rates are counter productive – they cause excessive competition and damping off.**  
 ”

ter wear, remedial measures which were unwise or based on panic reactions ensured its rapid dominance.

Incidentally, I was depressed to hear a comment the other day that perhaps the Penncross and allied bents have not been given a fair trial. They were first misguidedly used in Britain over 20 years ago, following the enthusiastic recommendation of those who played on superb bent putting surfaces in summer on American courses that were closed all winter – or indeed where there was no winter at all. Very little if any survived the first year or so, with annual meadow grass eagerly filling the gap. How much longer do we need to give house room to these alien grasses, excellent where there is either no winter or no winter golf, but useless where we play under winter conditions as well as demanding high budgets and high manpower to keep the species in trim?

I do not accept observations or criticism from those whose experience relates only to the States or where their courses are under snow for months on end. All I ask is that we learn from the expensively acquired experience of others who have trod the same path before us and that we do not repeat the same old costly mistakes. These same mistakes with Penncross etc. have been made in New Zealand and in the States as well as in Europe (outside the Mediterranean area), with well documented evidence to prove it.

What then is the message? Simply to plan ahead – even a year ahead – and spend the time between plan and execution in educating the members of the advantages to them in terms of better winter playing conditions, if they will only tolerate some inconvenience and less than perfect playing surfaces for fairly limited short periods over a span of two to three years. A successful programme hinges on everyone concerned (well, almost everyone, as this is a far from perfect world) being in agreement about the aims and understanding the repercussions of the methods.

Bull at a gate methods, with vociferous and uninformed members baying for the greenkeepers blood, will always end in tears. Your first task – and the hardest – must be to bring the members with you – enlisting the aid of agronomists or Golfing Union officials with evening discussions and constant reminders. This may take more than one year, but be patient – and if there is clearly no support, move on.

Why? Because there is no future for greenkeepers without recognition by their Club management of their professional status.



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## TRADE TOPICS



■ Kubota (UK) Ltd, specialist suppliers of compact tractors and ride-on mowers, has launched a stylish new collection of corporate clothing for their UK dealership network. The new range, which includes ski jacket, car coat, sweatshirt, polo shirt and coveralls has been designed for wear during demo's, at shows, in the workshop or in dealer premises as well as for leisure time. The collection colours are an eye-catching combination of navy, white and Kubota blue with piping and stripes in matching colours.

■ The Inturf Group have announced that their southern turf nursery (Inturf South Ltd.) located at Mildenhall, Suffolk is to close within a few months. In the meantime, the company will be looking for possible new sites throughout the south and east of the country.

Problems with soil type, location and organisational difficulties have led to this decision after three years of operations as one of the group's regional production units. Mr C Hayselden, the director responsible for running the nursery, has resigned and has set up his own business in the locality.

Plans to run the unit down were made a year ago and to compensate for any shortfall in production, two other Inturf nurseries at York and Grantham have had large increases in acreage to ensure continuity of supply. Details: 0759 304101.

■ Maxwell Hart Ltd is launching the US product, PERK Soil Treatment, in 1992, a non-toxic liquid chemical designed to reduce soil compaction and improve soil drainage and aeration. When applied, PERK goes to work deep into the soil, breaking down the strong bonding processes that are found when clay is present or when the ground is subject to heavy traffic. PERK loosens the soil and improves the soil's ability to percolate water, resulting in more uniform root growth and improved nutrient uptake to the plant. Details: 0734 785655.

■ AF Trenchers Ltd, have a new address: Edgworth Road, Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 6TG. Tel: 0787 311811, Fax: 0787 310888. To date, AFT have manufactured and sold over 2,000 trenchers in their 25 years experience and now look forward to producing the next 2,000 at their new location. Details: 0787 311811.

■ Boral Lytag have recently developed Lytag sand, the dry density of which is around 780kg per square metre compared to 1,300-1,400kg per square metre for normal weight sand. The grading is almost single sized with 90% falling within the sieves 1.25mm and 2.36mm. The most common use for Lytag would be in narrow drainage trenches (up to 20mm) where its free flowing characteristics allow for easy installation. The small particle size means that the trench could be filled to the top, with overspill unlikely to damage gang mowers. It is available in bags or bulk. Details: 0889 58446.

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# NATIONAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE

The Royal Agricultural College,  
Cirencester, 27-29 March 1992

For the fourth consecutive year, BIGGA's National Education Conference this spring will feature a programme of international speakers. The event is to be sponsored, once again, by **Lindum Turf** and Associates. Some of the speakers and their topics are:

**Tom Cook:** Maintaining Pure Bentgrass Greens - Is It Possible in Cool Temperate Climates?

**Neil Baldwin:** Green Pest and Disease Control.

**Derek Green:** Dry Patch.

**Tor Senstadt:** Greenkeeping in Norway.

**Patrick O'Brien:** Bentgrass Management in the South Eastern USA.

**Jon Allbutt:** Using Chemicals on the Golf Course and Complying with the Law.

**William R Roberts:** The Development of Education Programmes for the Greenkeeping Profession.

**Carol Borthwick:** Where do we go from Here?

**Laurence Pithie:** Golf Course Development - a Greenkeeper's Viewpoint.

**Barry Cooper:** Golf Course Drainage - Before and After Construction.

**Jonathan Gaunt:** Project Management - how does it compare to normal Golf Course Construction Contracts?

**Jim Arthur:** Sound Traditional Greenkeeping Practices versus Gimmicks

**Gordon Jaaback:** Limitations in Rootzone Design.

**Bernard Findlay:** Can you Build a Seaside Links or is that Nature's Job?

For a copy of the Conference Programme, call BIGGA HQ on 03473 581/2 or fax 03473 8864





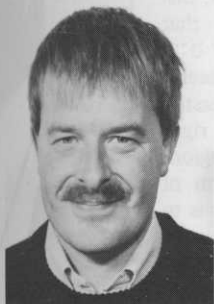
# NATIONAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE

The Royal Agricultural College,  
Cirencester, 27-29 March 1992



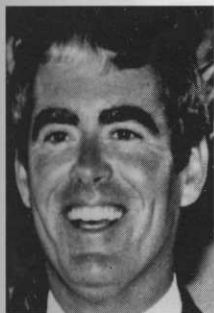
Members and golf Club officials will have received a copy of our 1992 National Education Conference programme and this will probably have whetted the appetite for attending the Cirencester event in March. Interest and participation in the conference has grown substantially since the first conference was held at Queens College, Cambridge in 1989, and now the fourth conference promises another rewarding experience, learning both from within the lecture room and in subsequent conversation and discussion. In both this issue of *Greenkeeper International* and in March, we profile some of the key speakers. If you have not already done so, reserve a place now by sending your booking form to Samantha Flint at HQ.

*We look forward to seeing you in Cirencester.*



**Neil Baldwin** graduated from Liverpool Polytechnic in 1985 with a first class honours degree in Applied Biology and a PhD research degree in Plant Pathology. After brief appointments with ADAS and the Scottish Agricultural College, Neil joined the STRI in 1986 to undertake research, advisory and consultancy activities in turfgrass diseases. Over the past six years he has published over 25 scientific papers and 39 general

articles on this subject. His current research interests are the dry patch condition of golf greens and the development of integrated pest and disease management practices for golf courses. Neil will be speaking on "Green Pest and Disease Control".



**Patrick O'Brien** is Director of the South Eastern Region, USGA Green Section, having held this position for some five years and visited Clubs in the region since 1985. His responsibilities include turfgrass advisory service visits, as well as writing articles for publication in the USGA Green Section Record. In addition, he speaks at conferences on both state and national levels.

A native of Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, Pat graduated from Marietta College in Ohio with a Bachelor's degree in Biology in 1976, earning his Masters degree in Agronomy from West Virginia University in 1979.

Joining the USGA staff in May 1989 in the Mid-Atlantic region, Pat is a member of the American Society of Agronomy and of Beta Beta Beta, a biological honour society. A former semi-professional baseball player for the Morgantown Cardinals in West Virginia during 1976-78, he also participates in basketball and bowling during the winter months. He is an avid golfer with a handicap of eleven. Pat's two presentations will be 'Bent Grass Management in the South Eastern USA', and 'The Ten Best All-Time Tips of the USGA Green Section Staff'.



**Tom Cook** is a native of Washington, growing up in the eastern part of the state and working on golf courses whilst going through school and college. His degrees come from Washington State University and the University of Rhode Island, with work experience commencing with two years as a research associate at Washington State (alongside Dr Roy Goss) and currently with Oregon

State University, where he is Associate Professor. Tom is married with an eleven year old son and his interests include gardening, golf and photography. Professionally he has worked increasingly on weed control, golf turf culture and sportsfield maintenance programmes and his primary responsibilities at Oregon State University involve teaching undergraduates and handling turf extension statewide. Tom will present two papers - 'Maintaining bent grass greens: is it possible in cool temperate climates?' and 'Characteristics and performance of sand based tees and greens in the Pacific North West of the USA'.



**Carol Borthwick**, currently Senior Lecturer in Greenkeeping at Elmwood College; where she has worked for almost ten years, will present an intriguing address entitled 'Where do we go from here?'. She moved into greenkeeper education in 1986 before being appointed to her present position in April 1990. Carol has a diploma in Horticulture from the West of Scotland Agricultural College and holds the IOG's Intermediate Diploma in Horticulture, having previously gained the National Technical Certificate. At present she is undertaking an HNC in Management.

Carol is a keen six handicap golfer, hovering on making the Perth and Kinross County Golf Team. Only the fact that she commits herself fully to her career and greenkeeping education keeps from this honour, but as she herself says "I love my job and am what you might call a workaholic".

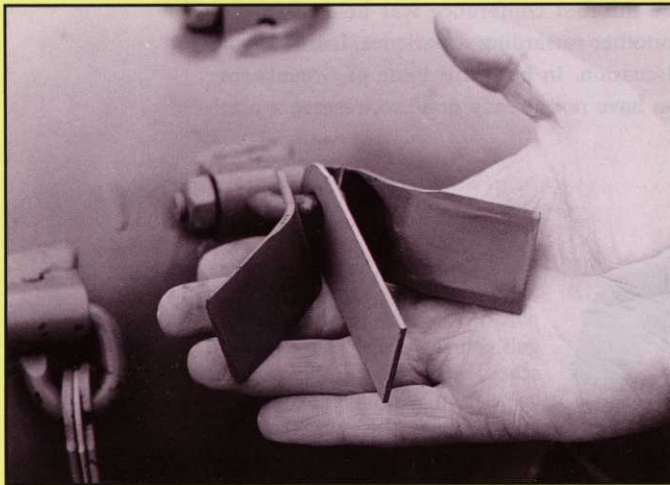


● For a copy of the National Education Conference programme and booking form, contact BIGGA HQ on 03473 581/2



■ In recessionary times it is no mean feat to boast business expansion and profitability, but PAR 4 Irrigation Ltd, owned by Eddie and Linda Simms, can do just that. The past two years have seen an increase in turnover of 185% and continued confidence in the business will see PAR 4 extend their present premises, at Ripon, in March. At present PAR 4 are handling over 140 annual service contracts and it is rare that any new customer fails to take advantage of this offer post-warranty. It is Eddie's opinion that whilst contracts may slow down, his service department can continue to expand.

Contractually, PAR 4 are just completing large projects with SC3000 control at Hillesborough GC and Middlesborough Municipal GC, and, perhaps most important for the Association, PAR 4 are also responsible for the installation at BIGGA HQ at Aldwark Manor of a fully automatic system with SC3000, which will be ready by spring. Details: 0765 602175.



■ Amazone Groundcare has developed a new narrow profile scarifing blade (pictured above) for its Groundkeeper range of flail type grass cutting and collection equipment. The blades are 2mm wide, instead of the standard width of 3mm. The narrower profile has been found to achieve a better cutting action in trials, with increased trash clearance and minimal damage to existing sward. Priced at £1.35 each, the blades are reversible and have the same 'quick attach-no tools' design as the wider scarifing blades and standard Amazone mowing flails. Details: 0579 51155.

■ Agriland, the manufacturer of established foliar feeds Agrimaster and Agricrop, is launching three new liquid fertilisers for the '92 market. The first has a ratio of 20-0-0, the nitrogen being present in a fast-acting form and designed for use on all types of soil and sand based constructions where adequate reserves of phosphate and potash are present, and will give good colour without forcing excessive top growth.

The second product has an NPK ratio of 15-0-10, an ideal N to K ratio for most turf situations where an adequate supply of potash is available in the soil.

Finally, the third is a balanced formulation for use on sand or light sandy soil constructions, where high water infiltration rates can cause leaching. The product contains NPK in the ideal ratio of 10-2.5-7.5, plus calcium 3% and boron 0.1%.

Dr Paul Wilson, Agriland's Associate Research Director, told Greenkeeper International, "The calcium and boron work together to build stronger cell walls in the grass plant and thus enhance resistance to fungal diseases. Many acidic soils may be deficient in calcium and this product supplies the necessary corrective without raising the soil pH". Details: 0202 532291.

■ Gordon Bennington, long time General Manager, Wright Rain Rainbird Division, has left the company after 22 years and has formed his own irrigation company, GB Irrigation Ltd. With such wide experience there is little doubt that Gordon and G.B. Irrigation Ltd. will enjoy a high profile. Details: 0425 473329 (Ringwood) or 0909 473999 (Worksop).

# The importance of looking the

**B**elieve it or not, the 1st of January 1992 marked five years from the inception of the Association and, perhaps unknown to many members, activated an important segment of the Association's Constitution. Paragraph 17 reads that 'After five years from the inception of the Association, each full member shall be required, when attending a formal national occasion, to dress in tie and jacket of the Association and to follow the guidelines on shoes, slacks and shirt'.

Recently within the Board of Management, concern has been expressed in relation to the substantial number of members who appear at BIGGA events and cannot as such be recognised as members – no tie, no jacket, no sweater, no shirt – not even a lapel badge identifying with BIGGA. Within the context of the constitutional obligations placed on members since 1st January, discussion ensued on how best to ensure that members now meet their obligations.

New greenkeeper members on enrolling receive an Association tie as part of their membership package and this is clearly a step in the right direction. There is increasing evidence of regions and sections awarding prizes in the form of BIGGA merchandise at golf events and this is to be welcomed. One way or another, after five years there seems little excuse for any member not being in possession of a BIGGA tie and wearing it on all appropriate occasions. Not only does it look smart but it projects a professional image and demonstrates the individual member's pride in belonging to the Association. Whilst the Board of Management has high expectations in respect of members wearing the Association tie, there is an appreciation that the jacket can represent a substantial financial commitment for many members. That having been said, a good number of members do now own a jacket and many favourable comments are forthcoming when our members are seen in jackets and ties on formal occasions – they have contributed much to enhancing the greenkeeper's image and to his achieving professional recognition. Given the cost, the Board of Management will take a flexible view generally on the wearing of the jacket whilst at all times encouraging members to invest in one. A BIGGA badge added to an existing blazer remains a cheaper and practical option. Regions and sections are being actively encouraged to support the purchase of jackets – utilising region/section funds and implementing an instalment repayment system. If you are interested in possible purchase through this means, contact your section secretary.

It must be said that from now on there will be occasions when the wearing of a jacket and tie will be compulsory, particularly when representing the Association nationally – the annual Kubota Golf Challenge comes to mind as a good example. In any team event, like the recent Ransomes International Tournament, again there would be an



*'It is not financial but also a status of... and those within the Association... thereby...'*



your profession in the best possible light

# PART



expectation that those honoured with representing their country would be dressed in BIGGA jacket and tie and here particularly one would look to regions/sections to assist those members so honoured who were in genuine need of support. At other major events like the BIGGA Turf Management Exhibition, the National Conference, National Tournament and Iseki Golf Tournament, the Board will be looking for increasing evidence of conformity with the Constitution whilst accepting that there will not be an overnight transformation. Draconian measures are not called for, but throughout the structure of the Association persuasive voices will be heard – if you doubt the benefits of appearing in official BIGGA uniform then speak to any member who has made the commitment and you will soon be convinced that it is for you. It is not merely a financial commitment, but also a commitment to advancing your own Association as a professional body and thereby enhancing the status of greenkeeping and those who work within the profession.

Whilst on the subject of BIGGA uniform, I will take the opportunity to clear up a few points where there seems to be some confusion! First, whilst there are alternative ties which can be worn, the official BIGGA tie is the navy one with the central motif. Whilst the other ties may be worn at members' discretion, at all 'official' BIGGA functions, the navy tie should normally be worn.

It had been the intention of the Board of Management to introduce an 'official' sweater and shirt, jade being the planned colour. However, it transpired that the supplying company is accustomed to changing colour shades each year which, of course, renders any exercise to introduce an official sweater/shirt valueless. However, there will be occasions/events when regions and sections wish to standardise sweaters and shirts. To this end I would suggest that an order is placed (in whatever colour) a minimum of eight weeks before the event to guarantee supply.

For financial and logistical reasons, even were it deemed desirable, the Association is not able to hold large quantities of stock to enable immediate supply in all cases following the placing of orders. Some items will be in stock but members should be aware when placing orders that there could well be a delay in delivery of between 6-8 weeks. Despatch is immediate upon receipt of stock.

Members are asked for payment when placing an order as we need to know that the order is committed. However, it is important to note that cheques are not banked until the order is available and posted.

The Association now has a reasonably comprehensive selection of merchandise but is always ready to consider new options. If you have any ideas please let headquarters know and we will see what can be done.

Finally during 1992 please consider your own need to be looking the part.

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## B O O K S

**A Manual on Golf Course Construction, Turf Establishment and Cultural Practices, by James B Beard.....£22 inc. postage**

**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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# Age of the trolley

Judging by their inexorable proliferation on the golf course, this is indeed 'the age' of the golf trolley, especially the sleek, electrically powered model. The procession of golfers following in the wake of their occasionally self-willed machines up and down our fairways has perhaps eased the burden of carrying clubs, but what are the implications of using trolleys in terms of depreciating course conditions?

Their primary drawback can be related to the constant attrition of the same 'paths', notably around the playing areas of greens and tees. Without restrictions being enforced the most economical routes are always adopted and at the extreme this can culminate in the golfer navigating a precipitous path between putting surface and adjacent green-side bunkers! The inevitable consequences of the same route being exploited through entry and exit are worn turf surfaces and compacted soils where the weight of golf traffic has been focussed. In contrast, golfers who prefer to carry their clubs can circumvent obstacles with

greater ease and traverse the putting surfaces, thus adopting a much wider range of traffic routes. Furthermore, the restrictions placed on golf trolleys can reduce the pace of throughput, notably when the ball strays from the straight and narrow into rough! This is a source of frustration for the golfer, the cumulative effects of which may impinge on the potential playing levels which can practically be supported by the golf course.

The pressures imposed by golf trolleys are particularly acute during the late autumn and winter months, when the decline is aggravated by the lack of natural turf recovery and the vulnerability of wet soils to compaction forces. The rigidity of traffic flow patterns around tees and green sites, enforced by the use of trolleys, is often reflected by distinct, heavily worn arcs or muddy streaks in the following Spring which are slow to make a satisfactory recovery. The advent of wide-wheeled trolleys has eased the pressure to a degree, but the emergence of heavier electrically driven trolleys has increased the 'scouring' effect on the turf –

notably under wet surface conditions.

An appropriate course of action should be formulated in accordance with individual site conditions, with the following factors taken into consideration:

- The drainage potential of the course.
- Course layout and design, eg. compact or expansive, flat or undulating.
- The aspect of the course, ie. exposed or protected.
- The prevailing ground and weather conditions.
- The intensity of play and its distribution throughout the year.

Undoubtedly, the temporary suspension in the use of golf trolleys will, in most instances, have a marked influence on the viability and quality of the turf surfaces. Enforcing a local rule that clubs **MUST** be carried will help to break the pattern and spread the load of golf traffic more evenly. The majority of golfers should be sufficiently fit to carry a golf bag without significantly diminishing their enjoyment of the game. Indeed, a golfer armed with, say, eight clubs and a lightweight bag may appreciate a different perspective of the course with no significant increase in exertion! There may (very exceptionally) be mitigating circumstances on the grounds of ill-health, but doctor's certificates must be warily scrutinised to ensure the rule is not abused.

A ban on trolleys will prove most effective through the winter months when the surfaces are most vulnerable, although this needs to be tailored to each site's requirements. The ban should encompass both pulled and powered trolleys, as this will prove simpler and less divisive.

Where good channels of communication are established and the cooperation of all golfers is assured, then temporary suspensions – in accordance with prevailing ground and weather conditions – may just

be a workable compromise. However, this strategy is usually less effective due to the difficulties of decision making, monitoring and enforcement within the usual structure of course management.

The use of trolleys is inextricably linked with the need for adequate traffic control directives. These can take several forms, including ropes, hoops and white lines; backed up by clear, strategically placed signs. Through these means, vulnerable areas can be protected and different traffic routes brought into use. The designation of 'trolley parks' may serve a similar purpose and dictate an alternative route from fairway to green and green to next tee. To realise the potential of these devices requires that good channels of communication be established at all levels within the Club so that strategies can be agreed and objectives clearly defined prior to implementation.

Development of separate, 'alternative' tees, mainly for Winter play – but possibly pressed into use during the summer if required – can have a profound influence on patterns of traffic flow. Where there is sufficient scope for the strategic placement of these tees, the golfers will be forced to take alternate routes to those adopted during the summer. This will ease the pressures on the turf surfaces, provide a valuable period of recuperation and enable the benefits of remedial procedures to be realised. Furthermore, the introduction of purpose-built trolley traffic paths may be warranted in certain situations, eg. alongside tees, but they must satisfy golfing, management and aesthetic criteria.

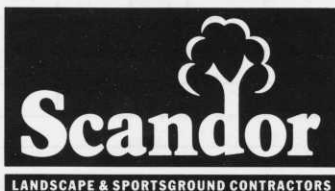
The above measures should not be regarded as a substitute for a trolley ban, but rather as being complementary with the objective of countering the increased pressures on our golf courses and maintaining optimum playing conditions year round!

● The author, Jonathan Tucker, is the STRI's Advisory Agronomist.

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### SCOTTISH REGION CONFERENCE

on March 10th, 1992  
at Langside College, Glasgow  
9am to 4pm

Speakers include Danny Godfrey, Ben Simpson, Wentworth's Chris Kennedy and Turnberry's George Brown. Neil Thomas will address the conference on the progress of BIGGA in the 1990s. Cost including morning coffee and lunch: £14 BIGGA members, £16 non-members.

More details from Elliott Small, Tel: 0259 31445



## Gardner, bloom and blossom

AN EXCITING new era started in the autumn for Oaklands College: the old Hertfordshire College of Agriculture merged with two F.E. colleges - De Havilland College and City College - to form a new and enlarged college to be known as Oaklands College, which incidentally is the name it has been colloquially known by for over sixty years. With over 1,000 staff and 5,500 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) students, the future is certainly exciting. The senior management team consists of the Principal, Mr Keith Gardner, two associate Principals, Dr Norman Bloomer and Richard Blossom and three Faculty Heads. The new Head of the School of Agriculture is Roger Thomas, previously Head of Machinery at the old Hertfordshire College of Agriculture.

Plans have been approved to develop a 'golf academy' at the college, this giving even better practical facilities for greenkeepers whilst also providing a place for professionals to bring their pupils for coaching.

As part of on-going development the college has introduced a one year full time course in Golf Greenkeeping and Sportsturf Management.

## New course for Cannington

EXCITEMENT is bubbling from the very pores of staff and pupils at Somerset's Cannington College, first with the welcome news that a Higher National Diploma (HND) in Golf Greenkeeping with European Studies has been developed and will commence in September 1992, coupled with the revelation that a new resource, a full length nine hole golf course, is to be built on college land covering 55 acres, with stunning views overlooking the Quantock Hills and within sight of the Bristol Channel. The course, designed by Martin Hawtree to specifications by Jim Arthur, will be constructed as a 'working' golf course that will receive the wear and tear of normal play (it is intended the course shall be open to the paying public) that will enable student greenkeepers to experience real life working conditions and prob-

lems, thus enabling them to successfully manage their own golf courses in the future. In addition, arborists, tree surgeons and would-be landscapers will lend their weight to the enterprise, one that is worthy of high acclaim for this nationally known seat of academic and practical learning. The college is seeking support from manufacturing industries associated with greenkeeping in the development of the course, which will also include a tuition area and ample practice facilities.

## Kenneth beats his disability



KENNETH Henderson, 24, an East Kilbride greenkeeper, has completed his three year block release SCOTVEC National Certificate in Greenkeeping at Elmwood.

This achievement is no mean feat, for Kenneth, pictured above, can neither hear or speak. This was recognised by SCOTVEC when he was awarded the "Greenkeeper of The Year" award for Land Based Industries at the Glasgow Royal Concert Hall. Kenneth was assisted in his course by Mrs Ann Dick of the Fife Regional Council Adult Support Unit, who helped him enormously during his times at college.

East Kilbride are obviously pleased with Kenneth's achievement, particularly Stuart Taylor (his then head greenkeeper and now at Glasgow, Killermont), who helped him as much as possible with his college work.



TWO female greenkeepers have started their training at Elmwood, enrolled on a Greenkeeping Block Release of three years, the girls attending college for seven weeks each year. Caroline Patrick and Tarn Stewart are the first females to enrol for many years, highlighting the point that a career in greenkeeping is no longer an exclusive male bastion. It is hoped many more ladies will follow their example.

## Double win for high flyer Tom

TOM Spence has completed the National Diploma in Turf Science and Sportsground Management, at Distinction level, at the Lancashire College of Agriculture - a three year full time course.

Tom was awarded the Institute of Groundsmanship Cup for the top academic student, and the Rufford Topdress Cup for the best student in Management.

Tom, a former Tudhoe Grange pupil, has gained employment as first assistant at Newby Grange GC, Carlisle.

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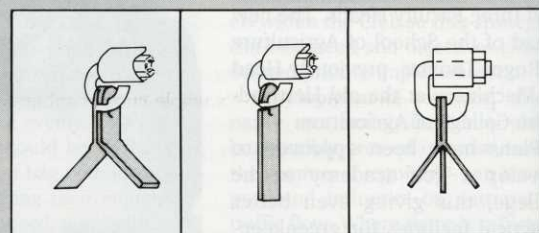
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# Equipped for success

On December 17/18th last, an inaugural meeting took place at Aldwark Manor between the officers of BIGGA: Neil Thomas, David Golding and Debbie Savage, and representatives of the various regions and sections-ecretaries, administrators and committee members. The purpose was to give an opportunity for those present to familiarise themselves with headquarters; staff; and facilities available, and for the officers to outline BIGGA's current progress and future plans.

Most sections were represented and there were quite a few new faces (seven of the twenty-five section secretaries this year being newly elected). Amongst the newcomers, I'm sure all were pleased to see Jane Ryan, our first lady secretary, from the Sheffield section.

On first impression, many were overwhelmed by Aldwark Manor's baronial splendour: lofty oak-beamed ceilings, grandfather clocks and the like. For a lucky few, rooms even had four-poster beds (no preferential treatment, but Jane had one, of course). Neatly tucked around the corner from the hotel, the BIGGA offices were a hive of activity. Samantha Flint seemed permanently occupied just answering the 'phone, with a visitor's chances of catching anyone else's attention dependent upon speaking quickly as they rushed past. The offices themselves are light, airy and packed with technology, but hardly large enough to accommodate dedicated cat-swingers! Neil Thomas later explained that another section of the building was available and that the Association hoped to make use of it in the near future.

For the body of the meeting itself, the party divided into three groups, each spending a couple of hours with the officers in turn. Discussions ranged over BIGGA's whole current sphere of operation, with the most recent activities being highlighted: the launch of the Education and Development Fund, the reduction of the Master Greenkeeper Certificate registration fee, and the preparation of a greenkeeper 'training' video. The latter is

intended to show the role of the greenkeeper within the game of golf. It is hoped to make the completed tape available to individual Clubs, schools and colleges, promoting recruitment and on-going education. If a general conclusion can be drawn from these sessions, the Association has come a long way very quickly – from very little to more than 4,000 members and with our own magazine and exhibition. However, future major developments such as a site for our own practical and technical training – although already much discussed – currently await funding beyond our present resources.

On the social side, a splendid Christmas dinner was launched by 'Santa' doing Lance Percival impressions and dishing-out Iseki stationery. Many members may recognise the 'face behind the beard' from this brief description – and those who can't probably don't want to! A welcome guest was our chairman, George Malcolm, who spoke after the meal and thanked all involved with running BIGGA. We were also, thanks to Jane, privy to George's views on whisky and women (no preference expressed!). The evening concluded with an impromptu pool competition for small stakes, in which the Leicestershire greenkeepers demonstrated their tenacity wherever money is involved. Well done Roger Willars! (the writer was a disappointed second).

Before leaving Aldwark Manor, an hour was set aside for an 'open forum'. The officers of the Association were keen to hear any views passed on by members (for example difficulties in obtaining BIGGA garments), from which good will hopefully result. It was the general feeling that the meeting was worthwhile, not only for the exchange of information between HQ and sections, but also for the informal discussions between representatives on how different sections are run. Why not, indeed, make this an annual event?

TONY HOWARTH

## Pattisson



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David White meets Neil Whitaker, down amongst the sheltering pines of Woburn, and learns how once Poa-dominated greens were transformed into tournament standards of excellence



# Woburn's troubleshooter

The world of golf course architecture was robbed of one of its finest when the Scot, Charles Lawrie, died in 1976 at the untimely age of 53. Whilst it is not uncommon for new architects to produce quite routine designs for at least their first couple of tries, Lawrie, who had come to architecture late in years after a 'glittering-prize' lifestyle that included Fettes, Oxford, the Coldstream Guards and amateur golf of a high order, produced two absolute 'corkers' straight from the gun: The championship Duke's and the quite exquisite Duchess, both at Woburn.

One can imagine the thrill that Lawrie and his partner Frank Penninck must have experienced when they first drove through the pine firs that dwarf the narrow lane leading to the Woburn Club, for here undoubtedly was a tract of land that cried out – "build a golf course here". Ten years or so later, Neil Whitaker must have experienced similar tingles of excitement when called upon to mastermind a task that was to thrust him into the high profile maelstrom of championship golf at international level.

Neil's first exposure was anything but peaceful, however, for he was brought in by Woburn's MD Alex Hay specifically to coax the Duke's course back from the brink of a precipice, just seven weeks before the first 'major' – the early season Dunhill Masters – and at a time when the greens were bare, *Poa annua* dominated and decidedly un-tournament like.

Neil's reputation as a trouble-shooter stood him in good stead, he waved his own peculiar spell-binding magic over the Duke's and the rest, as they say, is history. But his was no seven week wonder, for history has a way of repeating itself and each season thereafter has seen Neil's team deliver the goods with skill and aplomb whilst earning unsolicited praise (the only kind worth having) from touring professionals, Seve especially! Whilst it is true that many pro's don't

know their *Poa annua* from their *Agrostis*, apparently they do appreciate good working conditions.

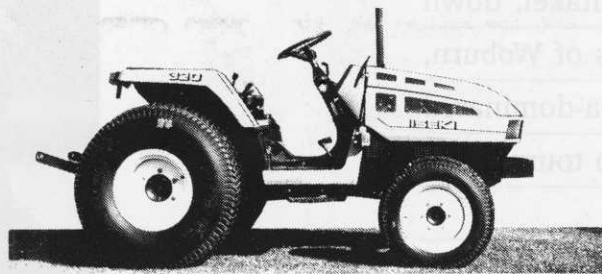
In Neil's case his early season wand-waving continues year long and is witnessed by the thousands who flock to play this little corner of God's Kingdom. Having played with Neil when both courses were at their autumnal best, I was keen to learn more of his maintenance programme and primed him for this later quizzing, which took place in January.

Vigilance is Neil's watchword, for with early tournaments uppermost in his mind (the Ford Ladies Classic lines up in late April!) there is no room for error. Natural vigorous growth is no early bird in Bedfordshire, and an ever watchful eye means that any signs of weakness and possible disease is leaped upon – always prevention rather than cure!

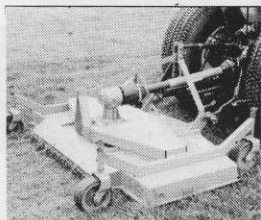
The courses have not been without major problems, notably intensive green compaction that became so acute that rebuilding of several greens was called for, this after trying a number of ways in an attempt to break up the pudding-like sand/silt soil, taken from nearby Birchwood Farm, and laid over an unwashed limestone carpet layer which had literally become solidified. The carpets themselves resisted all attempts to re-open proper drainage, including the unconventional use of road drills!

Rebuilding the greens solved those earlier drainage problems, though a new difficulty now presents itself, that of coping with a jet black root zone mix which has a fondness for congealing and massing and demands Vertidrainning every 6-8 weeks in winter to keep it open and friable. Regular core extraction has also been necessary, the 1" core holes being filled with a 90% sand mix to help bring about a partial soil exchange. With continual top dressing, this has produced a surface which Neil describes as a 'pretty decent' top,

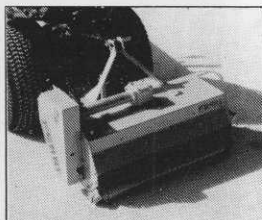




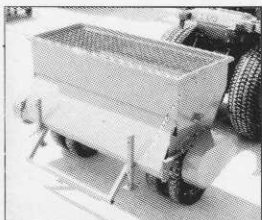
**If you've got one of these...**



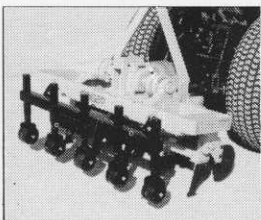
**ROTARY MOWER**



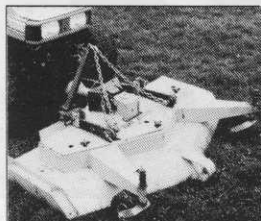
**FLAIL MOWER**



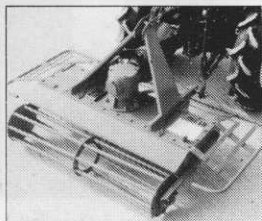
**MULTISPREAD**



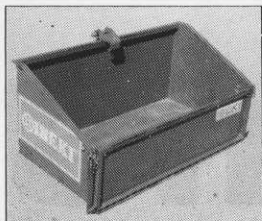
**VIBRAMASTER**



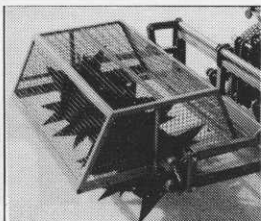
**FRONT MOWER**



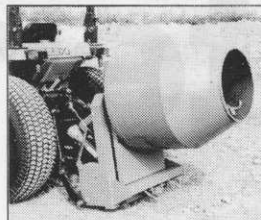
**ROTARY HARROW**



**TRANSPORT BOX**



**POWER LEVEL**



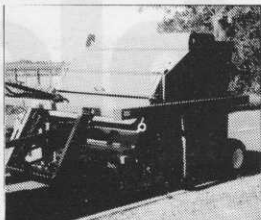
**CEMENT MIXER**



**GRADER**



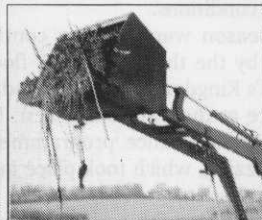
**BACKHOE**



**SWEEPER COLLECTOR**



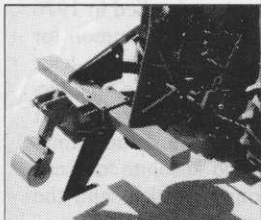
**TIPPING TRAILER**



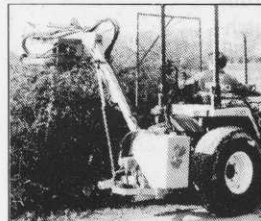
**FRONT LOADER**



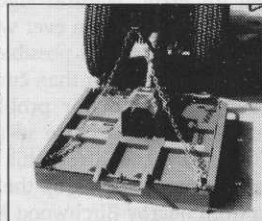
**ROTARY CULTIVATOR**



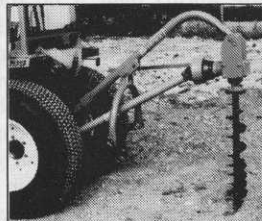
**TURF DRAINER**



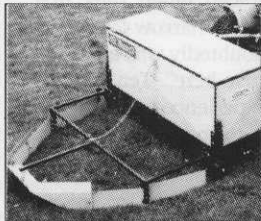
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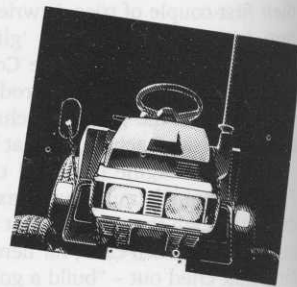
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G1.2.92





Neil Whitaker and Alex Hay, Woburn's MD, inspect a new mesh element tee

**'Greens are overseeded with bents every September and Neil would dearly love to repeat this in April, though tournament demands prevent this happening'**

though the underneath remains 'claggy' and demands constant vigilance. A policy of slit-tining every two weeks throughout the winter is followed, bringing worthwhile results.

Bearing in mind that both courses are used for tournaments, we touched on green speed and resultant turf quality. Interestingly on the Duke's, where rapid surfaces are paramount for the Dunhill Masters (a minimum of 9-10 feet on the stimpmeter) and greens are tournament cut at 1/8", there is a greater predominance of *Poa annua*, perhaps as much as 70%, whilst on the Duchess, where cut is restricted to 3/16th, this is reversed, producing sward that is 70% bent/fescue. Neil follows an otherwise identical management programme on both courses, one that includes verticutting and grooming, the implication being that the shorter and twice daily hand mown tournament cut on the Duke's encourages *Poa* domination. Greens are overseeded with bents every September and Neil would dearly love to repeat this in April, though tournament demands obviously prevent this happening. In the speed league he's looked seriously at turf rollers; has had a working demo of the Australian model and is impressed by its results. For 1992 he hopes to use the PGA owned unit from Quietwaters; and who knows, if it works as he thinks it will... maybe he'll get one in 1993?

In 1990 the fairways were wiped-out by drought and subsequently over-seeded with a mix containing 34% mixed Chewings fescue, 45% Creeping red fescue, 10% bents and 10% smooth stalked meadow grass. These fairways receive almost as much attention as the precious greens; and indeed the fairways, tees and greens are all verticut and Vertidrain, cut with fine mowers and receive an application of wetting agent in March. This has definitely paid off, with results showing an encouragingly high percentage of finer grasses in the fairways. The application of wetting agents on fairways may on the face of it appear extravagant, but Neil reckons that subsequent water saving (all Woburn water is metered and the courses have a complete irrigation system) easily justifies this move.

Typically, each January begins with Vertidrain of tees, greens and fairways, repeated again in March (when the irrigation system is re-activated) and followed by wetting agents and the application of a suitable granular slow-release fertiliser. A weekly 'topping only' cut is carried out on greens throughout the dormancy period. Soil tests are evaluated annually to establish any particular weaknesses, the readings indicating that Woburn is low, indeed nearly off the scale, in phosphates and lacking in Potash and Nitrogen. In early April and, temperatures permitting, weekly thereafter, verticutting, grooming and light dressing (70%

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## Woburn's play policy during frost is a sound one, demanding the immediate use of properly prepared 100-200 square metre frost greens'

sand/30% loam) is the norm. Given that appearance is important, especially for TV, a spray dressing with a seaweed agent containing Iron is applied before the earliest tournament to give a 'fix' and bring about a greening effect.

Woburn's play policy during frost is a sound one, demanding the immediate use of properly prepared 100-200 square metre frost greens, all created away from the main greens and approaches, either to the left or right. Tee areas are large enough to enable constant tee block re-positioning and the spring programme is aimed at keeping them well drained and open. The dreaded 'black pudding' is found on tees as well as greens, though on the few tees that have been converted with the mesh element created by Netlon, not only is this eliminated, but vastly improved deep rooting is evident. Woburn was the first to try the system and obviously must like it, for they are currently installing six further mesh element tees and will eventually complete every championship tee in like style. Trees abound, predominantly Scotch pine and birch, and whilst they are beautiful; a lot of trees means a lot of work when they shed needles, leaves and cones. For the Ford Ladies Classic this creates extra work raking up tons of the wretched things, the ladies insisting on a fair carpet if they stray from the straight and narrow!

How is all this achieved? By year round dedication from a crew of just twelve greenkeepers plus Neil himself, a fully occupied machinery engineer, Martin Davies; and more recently a full time irrigation engineer, Lee Murdoch. 'Team work is all', says Neil, 'and I am unbelievably proud of every one of them'. Proud he may be, but when one digs below this course manager's apparent modesty another and even deeper burning passion is discovered. It is for the Duke and Duchess as well!

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## COMING UP

**February 10th-17th:** GCSAA Exhibition and Convention – New Orleans, USA.

**February 11th:** STRI Welsh Seminar – 'The Environmental Impact of Golf Course Construction and Management' – Caer Beris Manor, Bulth Wells.

**March 11th:** British Institute of Golf Course Architects Seminar, 'The Positive Face of Golf Development', Institute of Engineers, London.

**March 24th-26th:** RECMAN (Sports Council) Conference and Exhibition – National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham.

**March 26th-29th:** Golf Asia '92 – World Trade Centre, Singapore.

**March 27th-29th:** BIGGA National Education Conference – Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester.

**April 8th:** BIGGA Annual General Meeting, Royal York Hotel, York. Commencing 2.30pm.

**April 23rd-26th:** The World of Golf, Olympia, London.

**April 29th:** BIGGA South West and Wales Region Trade Show WESTURF '92 – Long Ashton GC, Bristol.

**June 3rd-4th:** Landscape Industries '92. Trade Show – National Agricultural Centre, Stoneleigh, Warwickshire.

**July 16th-19th:** The Open Championship – Muirfield, Scotland.

**August 10th-12th:** BIGGA National Golf Tournament – Littlestone GC, Kent.

# AROUND THE GREEN

## Keeping in touch with news and comment from the regions

● Will section reporters please note that final copy date for inclusion of *Around The Green* material in the April issue is March 1st.

### KENT

December 12th saw our annual Turkey Trot played at Ashford GC, and despite this taking place in the middle of a very cold spell – frozen ground et al – we were very lucky to find a pleasant, clear day. The course was in excellent shape, especially the fairways, and our thanks again go to Willie McConville and his staff. Once again the catering staff did us proud with a superb Christmas dinner and we are thankful that Ashford GC, undoubtedly fine hosts, are prepared to have us visit them on a regular basis.

First pick of the prizes went to Peter Gee with 41 points, followed by David Wood with 39 and Peter Biscoe with 38. It was nice to see some new faces participating and I hope we will see them again in other events later in the year. The trade prize was won by one of these 'new boys' – Chris Dale of Haynes – with 44 points. I can assure Chris it will be the last time he plays off a 24 handicap! Thanks also to the many trade members who supported us and provided raffle prizes, especially Mike Lincoln-Smith who brought the Ransomes Goblet, also won by Peter Gee.

Some members may have noticed that we held a 'vegetarian' Turkey Trot this time – no turkey

appearing on the prize table. I understand one was sent, but it was unable to read directions, its main problem apparently stemmed from disorientation after crossing the new Dartford Bridge and in receiving little help when asking the way. Running round the toll-booths emitting gobble, gobble noises only seemed to annoy people and when it eventually found the M20 and got through the road works, it finally got lost in the fog!

Following our dinner and prizegiving we held our AGM, which must have been the fastest in BIGGA history, for those assembled (representing only about one third of our membership) had very little to query. The committee remains the same as last year, seemingly no volunteers coming forward for election. However, this year the role of secretary and 'main man' has been filled by David Wood of Holtye. As some of you already know, John Millen has taken on greater responsibilities with the Joint Golf Course Committee, his Board of Management work and his new Weald of Kent course (which will open in the spring) and this will consume much of his time. Our thanks to him for his skill and devotion in handling the majority of our section affairs over several years. During the meeting, David Wood gave a brief summary of our activities in 1991 and reminded us of the events planned for 1992. If you need to contact him, his number (evenings) is 0342 850875.



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# AROUND THE GREEN

It further transpired that I failed in off-loading my job of Around The Green scribe, so you will have to put up with my ramblings and rantings for another year – you lucky people! Please always remember that Around The Green is YOUR section of the magazine and I will be pleased to include any snippets of gossip you may feel the urge to pass to me. My number is 0634 682908. With snippets in mind, may I welcome Neal Carter back to Kent, this time as head green-keeper at the new Birchwood Park development near Swanley. The Welsh wizard returned from his Italian post full of pasta and with pockets bulging with lire (and boots full of Farmura), and though he lasted longer in Italy than Jimmy Greaves, it seems his main dislike of that country – and therefore his inspiration to return to Kent – was probably the inability of his Italian staff to grasp his rules for indoor cricket!

PAUL COPSEY

## SOUTH WALES

December 11th saw our annual Christmas Competition held at Pyle and Kenfig for the Vitax Shield, the day being well attended with 33 people playing and the competition going well, especially when one considered the hard ground conditions which made judging putts difficult. The weather got the better of a few golfers, some playing only nine holes, but all in all I think the rest enjoyed the day. The winner of the Vitax Shield was Idwal Morris with a very respectable score of 35 points, this enabling Idwal to win a cut glass decanter set, donated by Allan Stow of Vitax, and a statuette. Andrew Jenkins, a new recruit for 1992, scored 36 points and was awarded a consolation prize, with the field following thus: 2nd D Donne, 3rd M Stokes, 4th L Hallett, 5th N Owens, 6th D Jones, 7th P Lacey, 8th P Long, 9th B Price, 10th B Kitcher, 11th M Jones-Inco, 12th R Lucas, 14th M Norfolk, 15th P Swain, 16th J B-Jones, 17th A Bull, 18th T King, 19th M Jones-Llanishen, 20th A Millar. Each of the above won a bottle, varying from whisky and wine to lager; and our thanks to some of our members, along with the following traders, for presenting prizes: Proturf, Sisis, Western Log Company, Tacit, Birds of Cowbridge, Colin Murphy, Rigby Taylor and Avoncrop Thanks must also go to the captain and committee for allowing us courtesy of the course and clubhouse facilities.

We held our AGM in the clubhouse with a total of 42 members in attendance and a number of items successfully discussed. The following officers were elected:- Chairman: H Parry, Vice Chairman: M Jones-Inco, Section Administrator: P Swain. Golf & Social Committee:- H Morgan (chairman), R Kitcher, L Hallett and T King. Education:- D Archer (chairman), P Lacey, G Price and A Jenkins. Regional Board:- P Swain and H Morgan. H Parry is our representative on the Board of Management. Those elected were given a unanimous vote by all present.

Thanks must go to Paul Robinson and his green staff for the course preparation, to the steward and stewardess for looking after us throughout the day, and the cook for providing an excellent evening meal.

Congratulations to Mr and Mrs John Walsh and Mr and Mrs Brian Price, each on the addition of little one. They can also look forward to sleepless nights! Fixture cards will be sent to members in the new year and I hope to see many more of you attending our meetings in 1992.

PHILIP SWAIN

## DEVON AND CORNWALL

With the frost slowly clearing, twenty pairs tested their skills on December 11th against a well prepared Oakhampton course, a credit to Richard Wisdom and his staff. This event saw numbers limited to a maximum of 80, which hopefully made lunch more comfortable for those attending – and what a meal the girls served to us! It kept coming until we could eat no more and our thanks to them all – including those in the kitchen – for their superb food and service. Fol-

lowing lunch, Patrick Flegg of P J Flegg presented prizes to those who had battled for honours in playing a greensome Stableford. 1st: J Mitchell and R Parr 35 points, 2nd: G Child and T Gooch 34, 3rd: B Lewer and C Rawlings 33. Just missing the prizes and in 4th place were K Kellow and P Bullen with 32 points. Our thanks to Patrick for both donating and presenting the awards.

Following the prize presentations we all sat back to enjoy our afternoon cabaret by the 'Wag from Widecombe', Mr Tony Beard, who kept us all entertained with his West Country humour and ably demonstrating that his will be a hard act to follow – but we'll try! Tony's cabaret act completed we held two raffles, the first for the Avoncrop hamper, donated and presented by Rod Feltham to our lucky winner, Clive Ralph. The second raffle saw members choose from a table laden with over forty prizes! Our thanks to all who donated such fine prizes, also to Oakhampton GC for making us feel so very welcome and to Don Hunt for providing us with wine over lunch.

MEMBERS PLEASE NOTE: Westurf '92 is to be held at Long Ashton GC, Bristol, on Wednesday April 29th. Please support this show, in order that the region may support you.

RICHARD WHYMAN

## NORTHERN

I will start by wishing all our members a happy new year. In December we saw the winter golf competition and AGM held at a bitterly cold and frost-bound South Leeds GC. Just 14 members bothered to turn out and this looks like being the last winter competition unless considerably more interest is shown. However, the lads who did play enjoyed it and Telford (bandit) Jarvis won first prize, followed by Robin Smith and Chris Martin.

The AGM which followed was attended by 12 members, and for those who were not there, the following is a brief resume: The treasurer reported a reasonable financial position, but money had been hard to come by and a large loss was incurred at the annual dinner/dance. The secretary's report stressed again that members should support the section. On a more successful note, 38 new members had joined; Telford Jarvis had won the ISEKI final and the Northern Region won the team event. Additionally, the Northern Section retained the Patissons 'Battle of the Roses' trophy. Golf in 1991 had been arranged at Bradford, Northcliffe, Scarborough South Cliffe, and Kirbymoorside. The secretary then thanked the president, chairman and committee, also Norman Sheddon, Tony Dodson and the rest of the section's trade friends. The new committee was elected as follows: President-Bill Mountain, Chairman-Philip Taylor, Secretary/Treasurer-Bob Lupton, Committee – Alan Gamble, Ian Thomson, Dennis Cockburn, Telford Jarvis, Colin Garnett and Brian Carr.

Places are still available for the trip to Lloyds of Letchworth in March – please ring me for details.

You will shortly be receiving details of golf for 1992 – is your address correct? Please notify me if you move. Please also note that all entries require a £10 deposit for each tournament. You will not be placed on the entry sheet until a deposit reaches me. This seems to be causing some consternation with some members. The reasons for having a deposit system are 1) Caterers need to know exact numbers one week before a competition, and these numbers must be paid for. 2) Numbers of players must be known beforehand so that I can budget for the prize table. 3) Golf Clubs not only limit numbers of players but also require – in advance – names, addresses and

handicaps of all players. I am afraid that the days of 'just turning up on the day' are gone.

Finally, on a sad note, I have just heard of the death of Eric Armitage, formerly of Mountains. Eric had been ill for a long time and I am sure his passing will be sadly noted by our more senior members.

BOB LUPTON

## LONDON

The AGM of the London section was held at Mill Hill GC on November 28th, the committee for 1992 being elected as follows: Brian Kelly-Secretary, Norman Exley-Chairman, Andrew Phillips-Treasurer. Committee – Martin Smith, Barry Moggeridge, Nick Baldwin, Craig Handyside and Doug Smith.

Our Turkey Trot preceded the AGM, the eventual winner being Craig Handyside of Hadley Wood GC with 34 Stableford points, a good score under difficult conditions. Thanks go to the trade members for supporting us again, and to Mill Hill GC staff for looking after us so well on the day. For 1992 the London section has set up a sub-committee of three to organise golfing events throughout the year. Hopefully, if this is successful, entry forms will be sent out for all our golfing events. This will enable us to calculate exact numbers for catering, for we have been lucky so far in guessing numbers for lunch or dinner, but it might be only a matter of time before we get it all wrong and upset all concerned, especially the host Club. We must organise ourselves better and, to this end, the new sub-committee is relying heavily upon you, the members, to advise them well in advance if you intend playing at our selected venues in 1992. More information about this will be made available in our next 'Around the Green'. The sub-committee consists of: NICK BALDWIN (tel: 0525 714452), CRAIG HANDYSIDE (081-447 0214) and BARRY MOGGERIDGE. Please give them a call about any London section golfing event.

Dates for 1992: London Section: April 9th-Spring meeting/ISEKI qualifier at West Middx GC. July 7th – Summer competition at Panshanger GC. August 11th – Summer competition at Hatfield and London CC.

South East Region: March 13th- Gentlemen's Dinner at Walton Heath GC. July 6th- ISEKI Regional Final at Chelmsford GC. August 10th to 12th – BIGGA National Tournament at Littlestone GC.

If anyone has something interesting to tell, please do not hesitate to contact me, telephone 081 441 3216.

ANDREW PHILLIPS

## SOUTH COAST

Once again our annual Christmas Stableford Competition took place at the Royal Winchester GC in December. Over sixty members took part in the competition – a record for the section.

We are made most welcome at the Club and the support from the committee and manager, Mr David Williams, is much appreciated.

The competition took the form of individual Stableford points over 18 holes and was sponsored by Rigby Taylor and New Forest Farm Machinery. Results: Winner of the Rigby Taylor Shield- Brian Newcombe, Woodcote Park, 40 points. Runner-up, for the New Forest Machinery/John Deere Cup – Eric James, Bulberry Woods, 37. Third Alex McCombie, Parkstone, 35. Other prize winners were: Stephen White, Jeremy Norris, E Ball and John Payne. My thanks to Mark Wilton and Nick Clarke for providing and pre-



# AROUND THE GREEN

sending the prizes and especially to Kevin Unsworth, head greenkeeper at the Club. Although not in the prize list, Kevin did qualify for the ISEKI regional tournament in June.

After the competition and before the section Christmas dinner the AGM was held. The main change was in the composition of the committee. Mr Ted West, founder member of the committee in 1973, did not seek re-election. Thanks to Ted for his long stint was expressed by our chairman, Ken Lodge, and endorsed by all those present. In addition to the existing committee, three additional members were elected. They are Kerran Daly, Ian Rickman and Alan Mitchell. A superb Christmas dinner followed, with wine being provided by Jim Fry, section president. The award of prizes concluded a very enjoyable day.

The final Winter Lecture will be held on March 5th at Alresford GC, commencing at 7pm. The speaker will be Ken Barber, head greenkeeper at the East Sussex National Golf Club, who will talk on course maintenance. Come early if you want a seat!

BOB DENNIS

## EAST ANGLIA

The biggest event of 1991 for section secretary Mike Peters was his hole in one, bagged in December. The following was submitted by Mike's father, Roger Peters.

'Twas a real cold frosty morning, on the eighth day of December,

And as the days event turned out, a good one to remember.

The usual Sunday game of golf, twixt Michael and his Dad,

Was starting at the usual time, although the day was bad.

The tee-off followed usual trends and both balls went astray,

Dad hooked his drive off to the left, Mike's went the other way.

Approach shots didn't go too well, as each ball took a dive,

And so the outcome of this hole: they both went down in five.

Mike drove from the second tee with all his heart and soul,

He then turned to his Dad and said "It's in the bloody hole!"

ROGER PETERS

## EAST MIDLANDS

A Stableford competition for the Rigby Taylor Salvagers was held on December 18th at Birstall GC, the results being: DIVISION ONE - 1st Dave Leatherland, 2nd Ian Marshall, 3rd Richard Barker. DIVISION TWO - 1st Adey Porter, 2nd Brian Mott, 3rd Jamie Bedford. Congratulations to all.

Some indifferent golf was overshadowed by the Christmas dinner afterwards by Joe Barsby's ability with the knife and fork and Dave Leatherland's lung power. Seriously though, thanks to all at Birstall GC, and to Rigby Taylor.

This month the section is pleased to welcome the following new members: Jim Murray, Ian Dunmore and Stephen Tolley - all of Longcliffe GC - and Michael Bird of Leicester City Council. We hope to see you all soon. Finally, if anybody needs to contact me, my home telephone number is 0509 650140.

TONY HOWARTH

## NORTH SCOTLAND

First may I welcome an old friend, Mike Wilson, who returned to our area after several years of plying his trade in South Wales. He recently took over at Kingussie and we wish him all the best in his new job and look forward to welcoming him at our outings this year. The autumn event, of course, will be held at Kingussie.

Our fund-raising activity this year is the formation of a 200 Club, those members receiving tickets being urged to sell or buy them as quickly as possible, or return them for resale. We propose to make a draw at each of our three main outings,

each draw naming four winners. The committee feel that this scheme will be better than the lottery, where tickets were often not returned by several members and returned late by others. Starting the 200 Club this month should enable all tickets to be sold before the first draw is made at Montrose in May.

The latest (January 1st) information on our regional seminar in November at Dundee College of Further Education is that five speakers are confirmed, with two others being sought. Three co-sponsors have been found and the programme is coming together well.

Finally, may I thank all the staff at BIGGA headquarters for a very enjoyable and productive meeting of regional administrators and section secretaries, held at Aldwark Manor during mid December. I hope this will become an annual event, as it provides a great opportunity to meet other regional administrators and section secretaries, to put faces to names, and to share in lively debates on running a section.

IAIN MACLEOD

## SOUTH WEST

'Twas a crisp and sunny morning at Shirehampton Park GC for the annual Veals Christmas Tournament and Luncheon on December 11th. The sunshine was certainly bright, and with temperatures plunging to minus 8 overnight the course was certainly crisp (crisp enough for most people, anyway)! Steve Francom, the head greenkeeper at Tracy Park, found the elusive temporary greens to his liking, recording the days' best score of 39 points.

The coldness of the morning was more than compensated for by the warmth of welcome that we received from staff and officials alike at this busy Bristol Club. In fact, the hospitality was such that we felt entirely 'at home' throughout the whole day. Many thanks to Chris, Colin and all the outdoor staff for their efforts on the course, with special thanks to Club secretary, Piers Barington-Wells, for presenting the prizes, and to the catering staff, ably led by Anne Roberts, for the outstanding meal. Last, but certainly not least, thanks to our main sponsors - Veals Lawnmowers - and to Messrs Avoncrop, Sierra UK, Ransomes, Roffey Bros., Western Golf Development and TH Whites, for their generous contributions to the prize table.

The full results were: 1st-S Francom (Tracy Park) 39 points, 2nd-J York (Wells) 38, 3rd-P Connert (Lyme Regis) 35, 4th-C Sealey (Chippenham) 34, 5th-I Montacute (Bradford on Avon) 34, 6th-J Cooper (Saltford) 34. Congratulations to all!

The Winter Lecture programme is now in full swing, with members urged not to forget that MGC credits are allotted to all those who attend, thus providing them with a chance to get ahead of the game in this, our industry standard.

Two big events coming up in the near future are the National Education Conference, held this year at the Royal Agricultural College in Cirencester on March 27th-29th, and WESTURF '92 at Long Ashton GC on April 29th. Both events will be well worth attending and we may be calling for volunteers at both to man the doors/gates etc., so be warned!

In the meantime, may I leave you with a gentle reminder: 'you've got to be in it to win it!' Loosely translated, this means that any greenkeeping staff not in our Association are likely to miss out in a big way. Of course, it goes without saying that the Association also needs YOU!

PAUL WORSTER

## CLEVELAND

The committee elected for the Cleveland section in 1992 is: Chairman - H Lees, Vice Chairman - G Munro, Secretary/Treasurer - R Shaw, Regional Representatives - I Holleran and G Malcolm, News - B Burnell, Social - K Heslop. Golf - G Pyle, G Munro and S Shotton.

The Spring Tournament scheduled for April will be held at Stressholme GC, Darlington. The exact date will be announced later.

Gary Munro, head greenkeeper at Bedale GC., is hard at work constructing a 35 acre extension, and quite apart from his busy work with 24 greens and numerous bunkers he is also the proud father of a new son, Thomas James Munro, who was born last June. Gary's father, Jim Munro, retired recently as professional at Eaglescliffe following 27 years of service. On the proud father front, we hear that Roger Shaw is next in line, with a new baby expected in March.

George Malcolm, head greenkeeper at Middlesbrough Brass Castle is yet another busy man, currently working on green construction work. We in Cleveland are justly proud of George as our worthy National Chairman, the more so as he is never too busy for his fellow man and is always willing to help other greenkeepers - you just have to ask!

The December inter-section quiz, Cleveland versus the North East, was held at Durham GC and proved a memorable event, thanks especially to our sponsor Terry Charlton.

BRUCE BURNELL

## SURREY

With March fast approaching it is time to dust off the golf clubs and commence preparation for another superb season of golf on offer to Surrey members. The first golf event precedes the annual Regional Gentlemen's Dinner at Walton Heath GC on Friday, March 13th and early rounds of the Huxley Bowl will also be due. Later in the month (March 27th-29th) the Royal Agricultural College in Cirencester plays host to BIGGA's National Education Conference. As delegates at recent conferences will confirm, it will be well worth making the effort to attend this event.

Best wishes go to Iain Hamilton on his attaining a new dual position at the Cherry Lodge and Coulsdon Court Golf Clubs. Any other news from within the section will be most welcome, so please call either David Andrews (081 651 3251) or myself, Roger Tydeman (081 657 7256).

ROGER TYDEMAN

## BUCKS, BERKS & OXON

Sorry for the brevity of this report, but I have just become 'Uncle Ray' following the birth of my sister's first! Don't worry, I'll make up for it next month.

The results of our recent Turkey Trot revealed a 'dead-heat' of three - all on 34 - and final placings were decided on count-back: 1st H Tribe, 2nd L Anderson, 3rd D Porter. Harvey Tribe won the CMW donated turkey, with L Anderson taking the John Deere Trophy for the best gross score of 81. Richard Minton fired off the longest drive and nearest the pin was won by H Wilson. Our grateful thanks once again to Frilford Heath GC, especially secretary, Jacques Kleynhans, and course manager, Dave Heads, together with dedicated staff who turned out the course so superbly. Finally our gratitude to the catering staff for excellent 'inner-man' provisions and to our friends in the trade who once again served us proudly: John Deere, CMW, Golf and Turf, Risborough Turf Supplies, Rigby Taylor, ➡ 50



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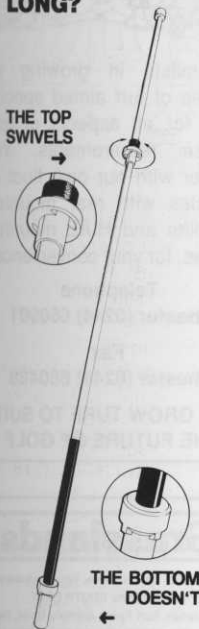


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## MID YORKSHIRE GOLF CLUB

Darrington, West Yorkshire

Construction has now been completed of this 6,750 yard 18 hole championship course and the management are seeking a HEAD GREENKEEPER and FIRST ASSISTANT to commence in March or April this year. It is estimated the course will open in the spring of 1993.

A generous remuneration package is envisaged with all the usual staff benefits.

Apply in writing to:

**Course Director**

Mid Yorkshire Golf Club, Havercroft Lane, Darrington WF8 3AL

## DEPUTY COURSE MANAGER

required for

### NEW 27 HOLE GOLF COURSE COMPLEX

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Full details to:

**The Managing Director**

Birchwood Park Golf Club Ltd., Birchwood Road, Wilmington, Dartford, Kent DA2 7HJ  
Telephone: 0322 662038

## Camberley Heath Golf Club

require

### AN ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

Applicants should be enthusiastic and committed to a career in greenkeeping.

Qualifications, experience and knowledge of golf would be an advantage.

Salary up to £11,000 per annum, depending on age and experience.

No accommodation available.



**Please apply to the Head Greenkeeper, Camberley Heath Golf Club Ltd., Golf Drive, Camberley, Surrey GU15 1JG**

## McDONALD GOLF CLUB, ELLON

### HEAD GREENKEEPER

required for established 18 hole course situated 15 miles north of Aberdeen. Applicants must be fully experienced in all aspects of greenkeeping, and must be prepared to work with, motivate, and control staff.

No accommodation – salary negotiable.

Apply in writing with full CV to:

**The Secretary**

McDonald Golf Club, Hospital Road, Ellon AB41 9AW

## BADGEMORE PARK GOLF CLUB DEPUTY HEAD GREENKEEPER for 18 hole golf course

The position is ideally suited for an enthusiastic candidate looking for his first position in this capacity. The successful applicant will be suitably qualified and experienced in all aspects of greenkeeping, with a thorough knowledge of machinery and maintenance essential.

Applicants should have at least five years experience and spraying certificates PA1 and PA20 would be of benefit.

Salary will be BIGGA recommended rates though this will be negotiable upon the applicant.

Apply in writing with full CV to:

**The General Manager**

**Badgemore Park Golf Club**

Badgemore, Henley on Thames, Oxon RG9 4NR



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# AROUND THE GREEN

41 → Maxwell Hart, Sta-Brite, EuroTurf and County Mowers.

May I once again remind members of our Gents Dinner on March 6th at Frilford Heath – tickets are still available – contact Bob Woodward (0628 664512) or me, Ray Clark (0628 829208). Forthcoming events: Mar 17th, Lecture (7pm) at Sonning GC. May 15th, Spring Tournament at Henley GC.

RAY CLARK

## SCOTTISH REGION

The Scottish region will be holding a conference on March 10th at Langside College, Glasgow, commencing at 9m. Speakers include the irrepressible Danny Godfrey, Wentworth's Chris Kennedy and Turnberry's George Brown. An added bonus is presented by the attendance of Neil Thomas, who will address the conference on the progress of BIGGA in the 90s. Details from me, phone 0259 31445.

ELLIOTT SMALL

## AYRSHIRE

The section AGM took place in late November and was fairly well attended. Things appear to be going quite well, although we could do with a bit of a push on those greenkeepers in our area who seemingly don't appreciate the benefits now associated with membership in BIGGA. Come on lads, let 'them' know what they're missing!

Ian McNab, head man at Dumfries and County has been appointed liaison officer for the Dumfries and Galloway area and will be attempting to form a D&G sub-section – please give him your support.

We held a games night just before Christmas in the Ardeer Clubhouse, which went very well. Prizes were of the traditional festive nature and by the end of the evening the mood was in the same vein. Thanks to the Ardeer committee and staff for the use of their premises – and for smashing catering.

Not much movement this time on the job front, with the only known change being that of Brian Finlayson taking over the helm at Glasgow Gables, this after four years at the Troon Municipal courses. The section send good luck to him – although we know he won't need it!

DUNCAN GRAY

## South West and South Wales Region



BRITISH AND INTERNATIONAL GOLF GREENKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

Make a note in your diary to visit the 1992

## WESTTURF TURFCARE TRADE EXHIBITION

to see the latest developments in turfcare equipment technology and amenity products.

THE DATE: 29th April 1992

THE PLACE: Long Ashton Golf Club, Bristol

THE TIME: From 10am to 5pm

There is a limited amount of stand space still available to potential exhibitors – but it's going fast!  
Further details and information from GORDON CHILD on 0803 844056

*See you there!*



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