

Are you in the picture?

Copies of this photo of Open champion Nick Price with the BIGGA support team at Turnberry are now available, priced £5 for a 10x8in colour print. Send cheques to BIGGA HQ.

NEWS



Greenkeepers' anger at 'poor' consultants

Consultants are as welcome at golf courses as Tony Blair would be at a Conservative Party conference. That's the conclusion we drew after sitting down with a group of greenkeepers and asking for their views of consultants. It seems the good ones are very good and the bad ones are your worst nightmare – and they outnumber the true experts.

The nearest anyone came to praising them was John Bayliss, head greenkeeper at Coventry Golf Club. He said: "I have found that the majority are very good but there are a few that are only

interested in making money."

Canadian Craig Smith, head greenkeeper at Golf Club Mudau in Germany, said: "My general view is that consultants may be beneficial but because of poor controls on qualifications one can never be sure of sound advice."

He added: "I believe it is important to remember that consultants usually offer one man's opinion, and you should govern yourself accordingly."

Mark Jones, head greenkeeper at Preston Golf Club, was far more outspoken. He said: "They're very poor. They tend to

take the money and run. They seem to be accountable to no-one, the greenkeepers take the blame for any disasters." But he did single out the STRI for praise – "they tend to be more reliable."

Peter Gee, head greenkeeper at Sandy Lodge Golf Club, said: "In my view no individual, no matter what their qualifications or experience, can come to a club for four hours and set out a maintenance programme for a year. This is done by many consultants in golf course maintenance. Although for specific tasks such as irrigation specs and general management they can be useful."

Ian McFarlane, head greenkeeper at Salford GC, said he had mixed feelings. "I feel they pick your brains and feed back what the club want to hear, not what they think. If you are paid to do a job why do committees need another opinion as it is mostly the same content as you have given them?"

However he says there is one exception – Jim Arthur. "At least Jim is honest and forthright."

What do you think? Write to the Editor, Greenkeeper International, Aldwark Manor, Aldwark, Ane, York YO6 2NF.

Supporters give green light to ecology booklet

The long-awaited Education and Development Fund ecology project has been given the green light. At a recent STRI board meeting, ecologist Bob Taylor was given the go-ahead to produce a practical guide to the ecological management of golf courses. The booklet should be published late April '95.

"This project has been a long time coming to fruition," says BIGGA's marketing manager Bill Lynch, "but we're delighted it is finally happening. I'd like to thank all our golden and silver key members of the Education and Development Fund, but especially Jacobsens, for seeing this project through with us."

FLYING DIVOTS

■ If you pay your BIGGA subscription yourself, remember you can claim tax relief on the amount paid. This will save first assistants £11.25 and deputy head greenkeepers £13 as the subscription to BIGGA has been approved under section 201 of the Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988. Members should notify their local tax office on their annual tax return.

■ The date for next year's South Turf exhibition at Mottspur Park near Kingston, Surrey, has been set: June 21. Companies wishing to exhibit at the show should call Louise Lunn on 0347 838581.

■ Hayter has appointed Gwilliam Kellands Ltd, Somerset, as agents for Hayter Professional and Beaver mowers. Gwilliam Kellands spares distribution points are at Monkton Elm, Taunton and at the Cadbury Garden Centre, Congresbury, Avon.

■ Some fascinating facts are contained in a report published by the Golf Facilities Trade Association. These include:

- Scottish courses are more likely to use temporary greens for more than five weeks per annum than the South, where 50% more rounds are played;
- Buggies are now permitted on 50% of courses;
- Stand-alone driving ranges are more successful than ranges at courses, and ranges in the south are more popular than those in the north, Midlands, Wales and Scotland. The report costs £295 (£195 for GoFTA members). Tel: 0181 6811242.



■ Claymore Grass Machinery has appointed John Smith as its northern field engineer. He was previously in Claymore's

service department. His new duties include providing back-up and assistance when necessary for all machinery sold by Claymore dealers in the north of England.

Send your letters to The Editor,
Greenkeeper International, Aldwark Manor,
Aldwark, Alne, York YO6 2NF or fax them on 0347 838864



High flyers collect awards

Here they are – Langside College Glasgow's first HNC in golf course management graduates posing after a ceremony at Strathclyde University. Flanked by lecturers Margaret Hamilton and Colin Urquhart, the students are: (back row)

John Robertson, Stephen Hogg, James O'Neil, Thomas Hindmarch, Hugh Logue; (front row) Iain Barr, Gino Garfagnini, Alex Blacklaw, Brian Porteous, and Paul Brannan. Andrew McDowal and Mark McBride also qualified.

INTERNATIONAL OUTLOOK

Sydney driving range to stay open all hours

Australia's first central city golf driving range is being developed in Sydney. Situated in the heart of the central business district, the 46-bay complex will operate on a seven day and night basis. It has four levels of undercover parking, a bistro/bar, putting

green and a large retail shop that opens onto Pitt Street.

◆ A new nine-hole course is due to open this month at the Honichi Golf Leisure Club in Shenzhen, China. The 18-hole course that opened there two years ago now supports 1300 members, with most of these coming from Hong Kong, 45 minutes away by motorway. Work on another nine holes is due to start in March. A lodge, hotel and cottages are also being developed and should come on line in the next two years with funding coming 50/50 from Japan and China. There are now 38 clubs in China with 26 of them opening within the next 18 months.

◆ Naples (Florida) National Golf Club's superintendent, Gary Grigg, has been nominated for the presidency of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America and should take over the post at the GCSAA International Golf Course Conference and Show in San Francisco, California, February 20-27. He is currently the vice president.



■ Lee-on-Solent Golf Club assistant head greenkeeper Stephen Pellatt has been named as top student on the Sparsholt College green-keeping phase II/level 2 course. Stephen, 30, was also a regional winner in the Toro/PGA Student Green-keeper of the Year Award.

Sticking to the rules

As product manager for worm control products at Rhône-Poulenc Environmental Products, I would like to explain our situation to the greenkeeper pleading for a wormkiller in last month's issue.

We try very hard to understand customer requirements and realise that chlordane, at the time, must have come close to the ideal solution to the problem of worm control. We, therefore, understand the concerns over its loss of use.

Paradoxically, many of the features of chlordane that users deemed ideal were exactly the same features that led to its withdrawal of approval by MAFF. For example, long persistence and broad spectrum activity.

Due to the long residual nature of chlordane we as a company would be wasting money trying to develop something similar. The registration would fall at the first hurdle.

We work within a very tight regulatory framework, perhaps the strictest of any industry, even pharmaceuticals. This is because we are concerned with the safety, not only of the end user, but also the general public and the environment as a whole. Constantly trying to satisfy both customer requirements and the regulatory authorities is a very difficult task.

Bearing in mind both customer and regulatory requirements, we as a company believe we have the best products on the market in Twister Flow and Castaway Plus.

If anyone requires further information on our worm control products or would like to provide us with further customer feedback, please call us on 01277 301114.

Jonathan Hill, product manager, Rhône-Poulenc Environmental Products

Disappointing

I have just received the November issue of *Greenkeeper International*. I must say I find the content disappointing.

We must remember that BIGGA is an association of greenkeepers and not golfers. The amount of space in the magazine featuring golfers exceeds matters that are relevant to greenkeepers. The

amount of goodwill and sponsorship from leading machinery manufacturers that is poured into golfing events would be better being diverted towards the GTC.

To obtain the status that the greenkeeping profession rightly expects will not be achieved by imposing a glossy image, it will come about by the efforts of fully trained professional greenkeepers maintaining courses to high standards.

David Ward, course manager, Royal Porthcawl GC, Mid Glamorgan

● Editor's note: *I was disappointed with the November issue as well, but not for the same reason. November and December are traditionally our smallest issues. I had a great deal of material I wanted to get in but only a limited number of pages to play with since we work on a 50/50 editorial/advertising split. The article by Dr James Beard, published this issue, was planned for November but there was so much news and information for the members (and to recruit new members) that I couldn't fit it in. Only two of the 27 editorial pages featured golfers – and they were greenkeepers competing in a prestigious tournament at The Belfry. Incidentally, the three golf competitions we cover in detail – the Hayter Challenge Tournament, the ICI National Tournament and the Kubota Challenge are all sponsored by companies that give a great deal to greenkeeper education via BIGGA's Education and Development Fund (see BIGGA in Focus, page 7).*

Invaluable

I would like to convey my thanks to everybody involved in organising and running the management courses that I have attended over two weeks at Aldwark Manor.

I feel that I have been looked after in every way and the knowledge that I have gained is invaluable and will help me in my day to day running on the golf course. It has made me look at green-keeping in different ways and has given me room for thought. I particularly like the Belbins team role.

I shall look forward to coming back to do the other two courses.
Doug Fernie, Epsom GC

Golf centre plays safe

A 27-hole golf centre has been built at Leroch Farm, Blairgowrie, Perthshire.

The course is designed by John

■ Andrew Robinson has been appointed to the board of Rigby Taylor Ltd as divisional director with responsibility for Scotland. Mr Robinson joined Rigby Taylor as Scottish area manager in 1993 when Sports Turf Services Sales, the business in which he was a partner, was acquired by Rigby Taylor.

■ Sports Ground Irrigation Co, Hunter distributors for the UK and Eire, have appointed Sports Turf Services as sole Hunter distributors for Scotland. And Hunter Industries has appointed Barry Pedler as district manager for Europe, South Africa and the Middle East. He will be based in London.

■ Rockingham Castle Estates near Market Harborough, Leicestershire, will be the venue for the Drainage '95 exhibition on May 9.

Salvesen, who was also responsible for the new pay as you play course at Charleton, Colinsburgh, Fife.

Strathmore Golf Centre will also have a 10-bay driving range and practice ground, and a relatively small clubhouse. When demand justifies and finances permit the changing area and

lounge bar will be extended to incorporate full dining facilities, a larger bar area and pro shop. Jim Brown, 36, formerly course manager at The Deer Park, Livingston, West Lothian, is growing in the course single handedly this winter and will eventually head a team of four or five when the complex opens in spring '96.

ORAG acquisition expands Textron operation to Europe

US-based Textron Inc, a \$9.1 billion multi-industry company, has bought ORAG, the Switzerland-based golf and turf care equipment distributor.

"This acquisition enables Textron to expand ORAG's role to include market development, sales and distribution of our E-Z-GO golf cars and Jacobsen products throughout Europe," said Textron chairman and CEO James Hardyman.

"By maximising ORAG's sophisticated distribution network and experienced, in-country management teams, we will be better positioned to capi-

talise on market opportunities and expand market share in Europe," he added.

On the move

Graham Wissett, formerly deputy head greenkeeper at Llanwern, has taken charge of Lydney, a nine-hole course in meadowland overlooking the River Severn. One of 33-year-old Graham's first tasks will be moving the 9th tee to a new position to make way for a new by-pass alongside the course. Graham replaces Paul Gibson who has moved to Forest Hills Golf Club.

FLYING DIVOTS

■ Course manager Gary Munro has left Bedale GC to take charge of the course being built at Wynyard Hall near Billingham.



■ Allan Moffat has joined Risboro Turf as sales rep for South Bucks, Middlesex and Surrey. Tel: 0844 274127.

■ St Pierre Golf Club course manager Mark Proctor is currently conducting trials with British Seed Houses' Cobra creeping bentgrass. BSH says Cobra is ideal for greens that have become thin or badly worn.

■ Eagle-eyed readers who thought Liphook GC were advertising for a position that had already been filled failed to realise the obvious - we slipped up. Gordon Smith has not got the Liphook job, he is leaving it to replace retiring William Barrie at Swinley Forest.

Greenkeeper's Festive Puzzle

Can you insert these ten pieces into the grid in such a way that each vertical column contains a six letter word connected with Christmas and a seventh appears in the horizontal row indicated with an arrow. We've inserted one piece to start you off.

Last month's Crossword solution:

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T E N T E D V I L L A G E
H E N I R I V
E S T E S E N L A R G E
S T N E W D E R
O V I N A E A C H D A Y
L N R R A T
H I G H E R H O L L O W
E E S R A O
I N S T A N T L U C K Y
M L P O V A O E
C L I P P I N N Y S S A
U G L E D T R
P R O F E S S I O N A L S
    
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...and the winner is Mr Ronald Bunting, course manager at Kilmacolm Golf Club.

Compiled by Mark G Smith



Solve the puzzle and you could win either a BIGGA blazer (worth £87.95) or £50 in cash! Send entries to Festive Puzzle, Greenkeeper International, Aldwark Manor, Aldwark, Alne, York YO6 2NF. Closing date: January 3, 1995. First correct entry drawn after the closing date will win the prize. Photocopy your entry if you don't want to cut up your magazine.

Name:

Address:

If I win, please send me £50 cash or BIGGA blazer, size.....