

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.