

Greenkeeper dies in mower accident

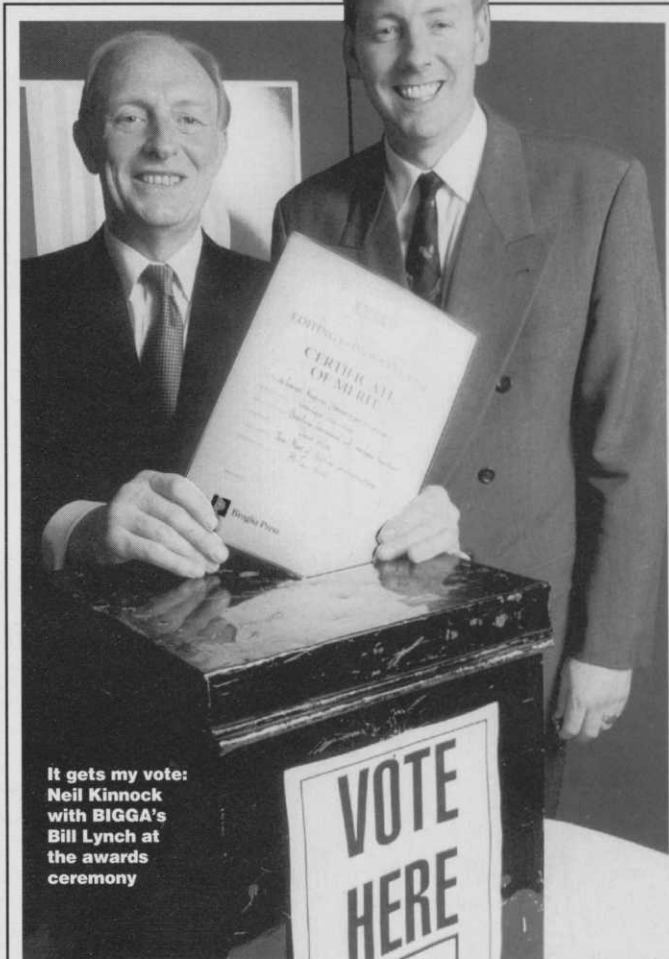
A part-time greenkeeper has died in a horrific accident involving a mower.

It is believed that 60 year old Ronnie Mitchell's anorak drawstring became entangled in the ride-on mower's driveshaft, dragging him into the machine. Although the blades missed him, his head and chest were crushed in the narrow gap between the blade arms and the wheels.

The engine was still running when a colleague at the Bradley Hall Golf Club, Greetland, near Halifax, found him.

A single man, Mr Mitchell had been the head greenkeeper there for 30 years until he retired two years ago.

NEWS



It gets my vote: Neil Kinnock with BIGGA's Bill Lynch at the awards ceremony

Highest praise for BIGGA magazine

Your magazine, Greenkeeper International, is "superb". We're not blowing our own trumpet, it's official. Judges in the prestigious Editing for Industry Awards, which are organised by the British Association of Industrial Editors, called it "a remarkable magazine", "which hits the mark spot on".

Competing against publications backed by mega-rich companies, Greenkeeper International won a Certificate of Merit alongside Esso's "Update". The winner was "Aspect" from British Gas.

At a presentation in Edinburgh, former Labour leader Neil Kinnock presented the certificate to BIGGA's sales and marketing manager Bill Lynch. Mr Kinnock commented that he had seen the magazine before at a golf course in his Welsh constituency – and was able to recall an article in it from three years ago!

The judges took our description of the magazine – "Self-supporting through its advertising content and recognised as an industry leader" – and added: "Therein lies the perfect appraisal of this remarkable magazine. Jam-packed with full colour ads and till-jangling small ad section providing a healthy platform for well-written, informative and genuinely interesting features that guarantee appeal even wider than the captive audience of greenkeepers. It is very difficult to fault such a superb magazine which hits the mark spot on in a specialist market."

FLYING DIVOTS

■ Muirfield's course manager, Chris Whittle, is heading back to his roots to take over the head greenkeeper's job at Royal Birkdale. Chris hails from nearby Formby and started his greenkeeping career at Formby GC in the early '70s after a spell in a bank. He is looking forward to returning to Merseyside after nearly six years at Muirfield.

Twelve-handicapper Chris, who has just turned 40, will take over when Tom O'Brien retires in October. He beat nearly 60 candidates to the job of keeping 18 new greens on the Open Championship course.

■ Work has started on a new 18-hole parkland course at Walton, near Wakefield. Waterton Park Golf Club, set in 200 acres, is designed by the Simon Gidman/Chapman Warren partnership with input from Yorkshire's international touring pro Gordon J Brand. It will open for play in September '95 with membership restricted to investors.

■ Barry Neville, a former Student Greenkeeper of the Year, has been appointed deputy head greenkeeper at Stanmore Golf Club, Middlesex. He was previously first assistant at Whitehall Golf Centre.

■ John Houston, 37, has left Royal Blackheath GC to take over the course manager's position at Fulwell Golf Club, Hampton Hill, Middlesex. He takes over from the late Hugh MacGillivray.

■ Work on a full nine-hole, double tee course has started at Rustington Golf Centre, near Littlehampton, West Sussex. The centre, which is close to Ham Manor, already has a nine-hole par 3 course and a 30-bay driving range. Four greenkeepers will look after the site. Head man is 24-year-old Stephen Payne.

■ Bill Sibley has taken over as Sisis Equipment's area representative for Kent, Sussex and Surrey. He is married with a son of three and newborn twin boys.



Taking over



David Halford, a senior lecturer at Myerscough College near Preston, has taken over the late John

Shildrick's job as secretary of the British Turf and Landscape Irrigation Association. David says it will be a hard act to follow: "John was, to all intents and purposes, the heart of the Association. I will endeavour to maintain the standards he set but it will be difficult."

He will administer BTLIA affairs from an office at Myerscough which has its own golf course equipped with virtually every example of sprinklers used on UK golf courses.

Waste not...

Wessex Water is selling bags of dried human sewage to golf courses as fertiliser. The odourless pellets are made from sludge that used to be pumped into the Bristol Channel. The company says that, unlike chemical fertilisers, it can be used quickly while the course is still in use and it does not make the grass grow too fast.

■ The East Sussex National Golf Club has started giving golfers information sheets which show pin positions and Stimpmeter readings before they tee off.