

Abcon director found dead

The director of top-dress suppliers Abcon North-East Ltd has been found shot dead at his Gateshead home. The bodies of Alan Taylor's wife Joan and 28-year-old son Grant were also found at the gas-filled detached bungalow. A note was found and police are not looking for anyone else in connection with the killings.

Mr Taylor, 62, his 58-year-old wife and son all worked in the Blaydon-based family business which has been trading since the early '60s. The firm's main business was supplying the construction industry but it had been diversifying into top dressings. It supplied many golf courses in Scotland and northern England.

NEWS

Big plans for Leasowe

Extensive improvements are being planned for Leasowe Golf Club, Moreton, Wirral, and a new head greenkeeper has been appointed to take care of the project. Edward O'Neill, 24, joins the 18-hole links course from the County Kildare Hotel and Country Club (The K Club). He has also worked at Portal Golf and Country Club. Improvements to the course being planned by architect John Morgan are believed to include new greens, bunkers and mounds, and fairway extensions.



A group of Swiss greenkeepers try out the latest machinery from Ransomes during a demonstration at Woodbridge Golf Course. The greenkeepers were accompanied by their wives and representatives from Ransomes in Germany during the visit to the UK.

TV plunges the knife in

Following the Cutting Edge TV documentary which put the knife into Northwood Golf Club, Bob Lupton, course manager at Wolstanton GC, Newcastle under Lyme, received this letter from local lad James Cooper:

"I am interested in the position of YTS greenkeeper advertised in the Sentinel. However I have been told that your golf club is like that one shown on TV. Is that true?"

Interestingly, only one of the staff shown working while a member of the greens committee was being carpeted by (now ex-) chairman Bryan Lund and who were complaining about the lack of course etiquette among members, is a member of BIGGA. And that's Linda Exley, whose late husband Norman was the South East's regional administrator.

Golfer's praise for the unsung heroes

Shock! Horror! Hold the front page – a golfer on a municipal course is singing the praises of the groundstaff! The greenkeepers at Portsmouth Golf Club have been praised as "golf's unsung heroes". In a letter in the March issue of Golf World, club member Paul Fletcher, asks: where would we be without the valiant efforts of the greenkeepers?

His course is inside a housing estate and suffers from "more than its fair share of mindless, after-dark vandalism. Flagsticks are stolen or broken, and on one occasion someone engraved a game of noughts and crosses (crosses won) on the 6th green.

"Newly-laid turf has been used as frisbees and wooden shelters have been burnt to the ground... The situation gets worse in the summer, especially during school holidays, but still the groundstaff work extremely hard to ensure the course is returned to the high standard most golfers take for granted."

FLYING DIVOTS

New education chief wanted

■ The search is on for an excellent communicator, with initiative and an outgoing personality, to become BIGGA's new education officer.

The position, based at Aldwark Manor, is vacant because of a move to the south of England by the previous post-holder, Debbie Savage.

BIGGA is committed to a progressive education policy and is looking for an education and training professional, ideally with a background or knowledge in golf greenkeeping and the game of golf.

More details are in the job advertisement on Page 68 of this issue.

■ TONY BOURKE, 52, is the new managing director of Spellbrook-based Hayter.



A chartered engineer, he has worked for Philips, Granada TV Rentals and TI Domestic Appliances. Prior to joining the grass cutting machine manufacturer, he operated his own franchise business supplying office stationery and business hardware and software.

■ GRAEME FLETT, 30, IS moving from Thornton GC, Fife, at the end of the month to take up the head greenkeeper's post at Newtonmore GC, a privately-owned 18-hole course in the Highlands. He replaces IP MacDonald who has retired after 22 and a half years' service.

■ RUFFORD Topdress Supplies have appointed Nigel Tyler as their central area representative.



■ A MAJOR NEW LEISURE complex planned for Edmondsley, near Chester-le-Street, County Durham, will include an 18-hole golf course, nine-hole par-3 course, driving range and golf academy.

A BIGGA Thank you



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For details of how you can support the Education and Development Fund, Contact BIGGA at Aldwark Manor, Aldwark, Aine, York YO6 2NF.
Telephone: 0347 838581 Fax: 0347 838864



An industry

In reflecting on the wholly unwarranted attack by the EGU on BIGGA through the pages of 'Amateur Golf' magazine and wondering still on the motivation for which no explanation has yet been given, the statement that "BIGGA... have the support of grants and gifts from the turf grass industry, though not without certain 'strings'", merits further comment. Traditionally greenkeeping has always enjoyed the support of companies within the industry and for many years this was at a local level and was reflected particularly in backing for section seminar programmes and prizes for golf tournaments. With the advent of BIGGA, it was inevitable that the nature of this support would change. In just a few years, companies found that they were now working closely with a large, professionally run Association which operated nationally and regionally as well as on a section basis. Companies continued to wish to support greenkeepers and the development of their profession but found there were now conflicting pressures at the respective levels of BIGGA. The Association for its part had no wish to see companies pressurised in this way and saw a need for consistency and fairness in its relations with companies working in the industry. After careful consideration, BIGGA's Education and Development Fund was established in January 1992.

This fund enables those companies so wishing to join either the Golden or Silver Key circles, thereby enabling the development of BIGGA's education and training programmes at national level.

Whilst eleven companies are currently taking this route, the Association is mindful of those companies who wish to continue with longstanding support at regional and section level, rather than nationally. This support continues to be much valued. The benefit of the Education and Development Fund to companies is that it provides equal recognition to all and that companies can



BIGGA in focus

BY NEIL THOMAS

clearly identify the educational and training projects on which their contributions are being spent. A meeting of Golden Key supporters was held at Aldwark Manor last October and set guidelines for the utilisation of company contributions. It was agreed that BIGGA's Education Sub-Committee should determine spending priorities which would then be communicated to Golden/Silver Key supporters at two meetings each year. All Golden/Silver Key supporters are to be acknowledged for each and every spending programme whether or not they are specifically funding a particular programme. The com-

BIGGA Staff Profile

LOUISE LUNN Sales and Marketing Assistant



Louise was one of the driving forces behind this year's BTME and had a chance to compare her role with her American counterpart when she went with the BIGGA delegation to the GCSAA show in Dallas. She says she loves working on the Exhibition – and work has already begun on the 1995 event. Louise moved to the Association from a family business, to further her career in sales and marketing. She has a degree in hotel management and institutional catering and

worked in Switzerland for seven months as part of the course. Hobbies include travel and cooking and up to the age of 13, Louise was a keen ice skater. If things had turned out differently, maybe Great Britain might have picked up a gold at Lillehammer...

partnership

panies agreed that they were anxious to avoid overt commercialism whilst their contributions to the fund would continue to be acknowledged and their companies to be profiled.

The fund then is established on a sound basis. Last year saw the production of the first training video – 'Setting the Standard – In Spray Application' and the recent BTME saw the launching of the video 'Keeper of the Green – A Career in Golf Course Management'. Shortly BIGGA members will be provided with a pocket booklet on weeds, pests and diseases and plans are in hand for an environmental project during 1994. None of these developments would have been possible without the fund or, importantly, without company support of the fund. BIGGA enjoys a friendly, business-like relationship with all these companies, membership of the Golden/Silver Key circle brings practical benefits whilst the spending priorities of the fund are the subject of open discussion. It all seems a far cry from "gifts... though not without certain strings".

Another area of industry support which may not be commonly known is the BTME Steering Committee. This committee meets three times a year and fifteen companies are currently represented on it. The Committee over the last few years has been of inestimable value in planning and improving the BIGGA Turf Management Exhibition, the success of which is due in no small measure not just to companies taking space at the exhibition but to the giving of time and effort by their personnel to attend meetings and actively promote the exhibition. The Association greatly appreciates this commitment and indeed the continuing support within the industry both for BIGGA and for the BTME whose development and growth the Association considers is dependent on a continuing partnership with companies working in the industry.

I will conclude this month with reference to another industry event, the recent GCSAA Conference and Show this year held in Dallas, Texas. This continues to be the major exhibition in the industry with the BTME in hot pursuit! This year's show was bigger than ever but what was surprising was the large number of UK based companies represented there

either directly or indirectly. Again our members were there in good numbers particularly from Europe and importantly the sporting of BIGGA blazers and ties made an excellent impression. It continues to surprise me that GCSAA members do not wear blazers or ties whilst the GCSAA staff similarly do their own thing as far as dress is concerned. The GCSAA has been through a traumatic year losing not only its Chief Executive Officer but two of its senior staff directors who have been replaced by Steve Mona as Chief Executive Officer, Joe O'Brien as Chief Operations Officer and Julian Arredondo as Chief Financial Officer. In discussion with all three, it became clear that their Association is going through a period of reappraisal and reassessment no more so than in considering their future international role. With their new management team in place I see a further strengthening of our relationship as well as a future presence at the BTME. Our stand was exceptionally busy with enquiries for membership, Master Greenkeeper enrolment, magazine advertising and the BTME. Perhaps the abiding impression was the international respect for BIGGA, for our position as the second largest greenkeeping association worldwide, for our professionalism and for our development and progress in such a short timespan. Viewed from afar we are seen to be going places. And finally if you are thinking of going to Dallas, my simple advice is don't – it should be removed from all travel brochures!

Open invitation

Members wishing to be considered for the greenkeeping support team at the 123rd Open Championship at Turnberry, July 14-17, should forward their name and address to Samantha Collins (Sami) at BIGGA HQ as soon as possible. Preference will be given to members who will be able to attend from Wednesday July 13-Sunday July 17 inclusive.

The players will be competing for a purse of £1.1million – that's £100,000 more than last year. First prize is up by £10,000 to £110,000.

Radio 5 will be broadcasting special preview programmes and phone-ins as well as live commentary from all four days.



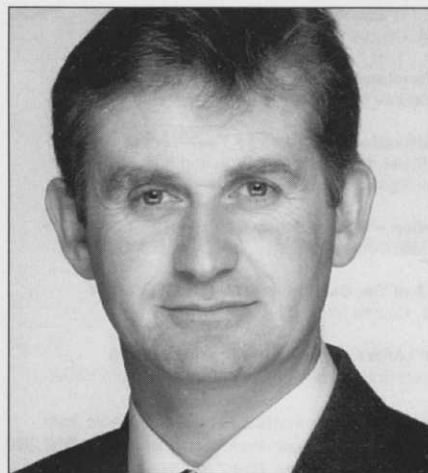
Golf and Turf Equipment's managing director, Tom Scanlon (above), collects his award as Hayter's top UK dealer.

Moving in

Trevor Manning has taken up his new post as head greenkeeper at Ellesmere Golf Club near Manchester. The 29-year-old replaces Andy Peel who has gone to Bull Bay GC after three and a half years at Ellesmere. The category one golfer takes over there from Deric Carter who has retired after 28 years at the Anglesey course.

Stalwart dies

Doris Plain, a familiar face at many regional tournaments, has died after a short illness. She accompanied her husband of 47 years, Bob (ex-head greenkeeper at Beaconsfield GC and before his retirement at Hazlemere GC) to many BGGGA and latterly BIGGA events. Our sympathy goes to him, daughter Heather and all the family.



Sales post

Roy Auld, 37, has taken up the position of sales manager product development with Scottish Grass Machinery, dealers for Ransomes, Cushman, Ryan, Massey Ferguson, Victa and Hardi.

NEWS

Road route would alter golf course 'beyond recognition'

Hill Barn golf course in Worthing, Sussex, will be changed beyond recognition if the Department of Transport's preferred route for new dual carriageway is adopted, a public inquiry was told.

Bryan Griffiths, a director of Golfconsult International, said the 60-year-old municipal course would become harder and slower to play and more expensive to maintain.

Appearing as a witness for Worthing Borough Council, Mr Griffiths said the most critical effect of the change would be to reduce the net revenue by 90 percent or about £180,000, even when the replacement was fully operational after three years. Before that, the effect would be much worse.

Once the course reopened for limited play in July 1997 there would have to be strict control on the total rounds played annually. There would be steeper gradients in some places which would not encourage older golfers. This was a factor which had lost a number of senior members to nearby West Hove Golf Club when that was altered to accommodate a new road.

To them, golf stopped being a pleasure. A similar situation could be expected at Hill Barn.



National Education Conference

8-10 April 1994
University of Warwick
Warwickshire

For the sixth consecutive year, BIGGA's National Education Conference in the spring will feature a programme of international speakers.

Topics and speakers are:

Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper - What's In A Name?

Duncan McGillvray, Course Manager, Letchworth Golf Club

Top Dressing Successfully

Professor Paul E Rieke, Department of Crop and Soil Science, Michigan State University, USA

Everything You Will Ever Need To Know About Annual Meadow Grass Control

Kevin Munt, Course Manager, Buckinghamshire Golf Club

The Role Of Higher Education In Greenkeeper Training

Nick Rigden, Head of Horticulture, Cannington College

Looking At A Bad Year In A Good Light

David A Oatis, Director, Green Section, Northeastern Region, USGA

The Restoration And Conservation Of A Links Golf Course

Philip Baldock, Head Greenkeeper, Royal Portrush Golf Club

The Selection, Planting And Management Of Trees For Golf Courses

Dr Ian Campbell, Long Ashton Horticultural Consultants

Where Does All The Money Go? - A Review Of Maintenance Costs At Collingtree Park

Peter Jones, Course Manager, Collingtree Park Golf Course

Golf Course Management Now And In The Future

Joseph G Baidy CGCS, President, Golf Course Superintendents Association of America

Soil Analysis: Why, How And What For?

Dr Bill A Adams, The University College of Wales, Aberystwyth

Golf Euro Disney - A Case Study

Anthony Black, Golf Course Manager

Under Pressure

Barrie Gregson, Course Supervisor, Mottram Hall Hotel

From Farmland To Golf Course In 1993

Alan Mitchell, Course Manager, The Hampshire Golf Club

Fitting Cultivation Programs To Your Needs

Professor Paul E Rieke, Department of Crop and Soil Science, Michigan State University, USA

Concept To Completion - A Case Study Of The Wisley Golf Club

David Whitaker MG, Course Manager, The Wisley Golf Club

Conservation And The Golf Course Working Together

Guy H Woods, Course Manager, Lansdown Golf Club

Winners And Losers: How US Turf Fared In 1993

David A Oatis, Director, Green Section, Northeastern Region, USGA

Copies of the programme and application form are available from
BIGGA HQ, Aldwark Manor, Aldwark, Alne, York, North Yorkshire YO6 2NF.
Tel: 0347 838581 • Fax: 0347 838864



Barrie Gregson



Alan Mitchell



Peter Jones



Bill Adams



David Whitaker

Lifting the lid on pressure

A greenkeeper who counts the Bahraini royal family among his former employers is set to lift the lid on pressure.

At the National Education Conference at the University of Warwick, April 8-10, Barrie Gregson - course manager at Mottram Hall Hotel in Cheshire - will discuss all the various types of pressure involved in greenkeeping. This not only includes the pressure exerted on playing surfaces by players, methods of maintenance, weather conditions and construction methods and materials, but also pressure from owners, committees, salesmen, golfers, the media, and agronomists.

"Although I hope some of this will be humorous, it will all be based on things that have happened to me over the years but will be introduced to the audience as a fictitious golf club and fictitious greenkeepers," reveals Barrie, whose career started in 1968 as an apprentice at the Hesketh Golf Club in Southport. Following a car accident in 1973, Barrie became a hotel manager for three years, returning to greenkeeping at Hillside GC where George Lloyd was head greenkeeper.

In 1978 he became head greenkeeper at Haydock Park where he enjoyed three years before succumbing to the lure of foreign climes (and salaries). From 1981 to 86 he worked in Bahrain, in the Persian Gulf, managing various grass projects, including an 18-hole golf course, a double track horse racing course and parade rings, five football pitches and many other projects, mainly for the Bahraini royal family.

After a spell in Europe working for golf course architect Dave Thomas, Barrie, who is married with two children, returned to England and took up the job at De Vere Hotel's Mottram Hall.

Barrie is just one of 17 - yes, 17 - experts lined up for this year's National Education Conference.

Speakers include top greenkeepers from both sides of the

Atlantic as well as leading consultants.

They will cover a wide variety of subjects. Alan Mitchell will talk about the construction of The Hampshire, an 18-hole pay and play with membership development near Andover. He will cover the problems encountered and overcome considering the limited budget available and compare this with his experiences as a greenkeeper at Test Valley and Botley Park.

Philip Baldock, who started greenkeeping despite his father's advice (he's also a greenkeeper), will discuss the 'Restoration and Conservation of a Links Golf Course'. A former chairman of the Surrey Section of BIGGA, he is now the head greenkeeper at Royal Portrush GC in Co Antrim.

"Where does all the money go?" is the title of Peter Jones' talk. Peter has been involved in golf course construction and grow-in for 20 years, starting with the Dukes Course at Woburn and subsequently the in-house construction of the Duchess Course by the greenstaff.

He left Woburn in 1987 and moved to the Collingtree Park development at the start of construction. Peter stayed with Collingtree Park throughout receivership and now works for the new joint owners, the European Tour and IMG. In his talk he will review the maintenance costs at the course.

As well as fascinating talks, there is also some great entertainment planned, including a quiz night and a banquet with an after-dinner speech by Stan Taylor, a former submariner and Life President of the Comedians' Golf Society.

The price for BIGGA greenkeeper members is £188 including VAT, £164.50 for spouses. This includes accommodation and meals.

For further information speak to Samantha Flint at BIGGA HQ on 0347 838581.

NEWS

Pesticides schedules: putting the record straight

Rumours abound that there will be changes in the pesticides test schedules this year – here are the facts according to Jon Allbutt:

“At the end of last year the NPTC (National Proficiency Tests Council) was asked by MAFF (Ministry of Agriculture etc) to conduct a review of the pesticides test schedules. A draft revised schedule was produced by a working party with minimum consultation. Following critical comment a further revised schedule has recently been submitted to MAFF.

“The document does not contain proposals for change. The most important change that affects the amenity sector is to discontinue the current arrangement whereby those who take and pass the PA2A test will also be qualified to use any hand-held applicator. If accepted by MAFF, this means additional training and testing for those who wish to use different types of sprayer. However, the change will not be retrospective.

“A decision by MAFF is expected this month (March) but there will need to be a period for instructors, training material, examiners and standard setters to be updated.”

Anybody wanting more information can call Jon on 0959 575575.

Unusual features

Golf course superintendents at a course being planned in South Carolina, USA, will have an extra set of tees to tend.

And, if we tell you that the design team includes big-hitting pro John Daly, you can imagine where they'll be – yes, behind the championship tees.

Called the 'Daly Signature Tees', they're expected to be just one of the many unusual features of this 7,000-yard Myrtle Beach course being designed by Daly and architect Clyde Johnston.



Wetting agent on test

Royal Liverpool Golf Club's links manager, Derek Green, has been testing a new long-term wetting agent, Ultraflo, in a bid to cure the course's dry patch problems.

Ultraflo is a once-a-year treatment, say the manufacturers Vitax. A low-foam, non-ionic wetter, Ultraflo can be mixed in cold water and at low temperatures and according to the sales bumpf “provides deep and rapid penetration through thatch and dry patch affected turf”.

New man for Goodwood

Goodwood Park Golf Club in West Sussex has a course manager again. Twenty-four-year-old Stephen Norton takes over the job left vacant last April when Raymond Hunt, who'd been there six years, joined the geese and deer at another Whitbread site, Forest of Arden.

Eleven-handicapper Norton, whose father and grandfather were greenkeepers, was previously assistant course manager at yet another Whitbread club, Tewkesbury Park, Gloucestershire.

Arena in deal with Moneystone

Arena Sports Turf Services have taken over the sales and marketing of Moneystone Ltd products, including sand for bunkers, top dressing and green construction. According to Jim Burrows, chairman of Moneystone, the new arrangement promises “lower prices and faster delivery”. ASTS's chairman, Paul Hutton,

says the new deal will enable them to offer golf course developers a complete service from course construction, supplying all drainage and rootzone materials to turfing or seeding of greens, tree planting, pathway materials as well as accessories such as holecutters, tee markers and flags.

FLYING DIVOTS

■ CHRIS HALE, FORMERLY with wholesale seed merchants DLF Trifolium UK and Ireland Ltd, has set up her own company, Napier Richards Ltd. She plans to expand her interest in natural grasses, wildflowers, herbs and garden flowers, as well as representing the Finn Corporation, manufacturers of hydroseeding equipment and WRI producers of recycled wood fibre. Tel: 0453 890706.

■ COMPACT TRACTOR specialists Kubota (UK) Ltd has appointed two new dealers in the south – Premier Groundcare in Arborfield, Reading, and Hewitts Agricultural and Garden Machinery who have bases in Cranleigh, Surrey, and Newport on the Isle of Wight.

■ RICHARD LONG Engineering Ltd, of Alfreton, Derbyshire are now marketing their own range of products under the name Long-Equip. The range includes the new RL2004 Hi-Tip Flail/Scarifier collector, the new RL Flexispread Top Dresser, the RL1502 Versatile Collector and the 60in Finishing Mower. Tel: 0773 520301 for more details.

■ DANNY GODFREY has joined Boughton Loam Ltd as technical manager, so if you've got a question about seeds, soils or dressings, he's the man to ask. Tel: 0536 510515.



■ ARTHUR KING, THE ex-chairman of greens at Brockenhurst Manor GC and a well known figure on the seminar/workshop circuit, had a heart attack while on holiday in Bermuda. He spent 10 of his 14-day vacation in intensive care before being flown to a UK hospital. We wish him a speedy recovery.

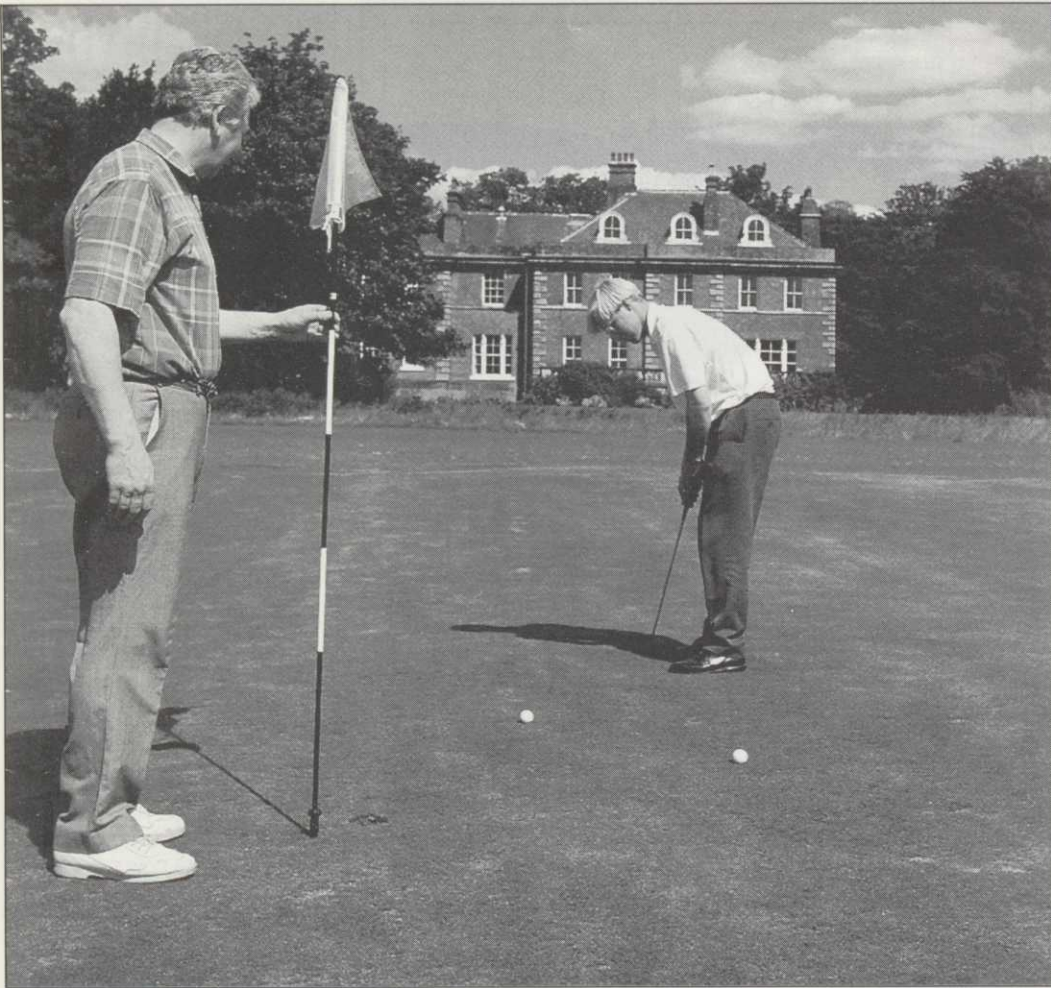
■ THE NEW DEPUTY HEAD greenkeeper at North Middlesex Golf Club, Whetstone, London, is Mark Tunstall, 28. He takes over Mathew Conarty's job in April after being a foreman in charge of three nine-hole public courses.

NEWS

New course Hirst Priory gears up for spring opening

The new golf course at Hirst Priory, Crowle (between Doncaster and Scunthorpe) has a new team in place ready for its opening this spring.

The full compliment of six staff have now been appointed with Paul Wylie (Southport Old Links) joining as deputy to head green-keeper Jim Sargeant, who's been there since construction began. Allen Walker (Petercutter, Aberdeen) has been appointed as



Putt-ing in the effort to make a success of a new course: Hirst Priory opens in the spring

STRENGTHEN



L3250

the general manager.

The 18-hole, 6130-yard course is set in a 147-acre park containing much mature woodland and an impressive Georgian house. It will have a small membership of 300-350 plus "upmarket" pay and play and society facilities.

During 1992 an original design by David Baxter was modified and construction began under the supervision of one of the directors. Before any work commenced, experienced head greenkeeper Jim Sargeant (Royal Dublin, Royal Porthcawl) was appointed to oversee the green and fairway construction. Extensive land drainage was carried out, together with the excavation of four small lakes. A Rainbird tee and green irrigation system was installed and seeding was completed by October 1992. Further tree planting was then carried out.

According to one of the directors, Mr P Fitzgerald, "The course has since been maturing well and despite the wettest autumn/winter any local can remember, there is no evidence of any standing water problems.

"The new team, with advice from the STRI, is now looking forward to an early spring to show their mettle and deliver a much needed course to the area."

Ken wins scrum for new job

Former local rugby player Ken Robson, 32, is getting set to tackle a new job – that of head greenkeeper at Hawick Golf Club in Scotland. He moves up the ladder from assistant following the retirement of Ralph Henderson.

Compound is back

Remember the Keep Keen Lawn Mower Sharpening Compound? Well, after an absence of seven years it is back. The Cutting Compounds Corporation is reintroducing it.

Ernest Patchett invented the product about 20 years ago. He

was cutting his lawn, wishing he could keep his lawn mower blades sharp (keen) all the time. So he ground a sharpening stone into dust and added it to a grease mixture so it would stay on the blades long enough to sharpen them. The product, which is said to work on any cutting tool where the action of cutting is metal on metal, was developed over the years and word spread far and wide thanks to the BBC World Service broadcasting news of this innovative method of sharpening lawn mower blades in seven different languages. Golf courses using it included Troon in Scotland. Then, due to a devastating fire seven years ago and other commitments, the product disappeared from the market.

Now it is back with RG Trading of Otley, West Yorkshire, handling the distribution. Telephone 0943 462380/461390.

July seminars

Two days of seminars and a small trade exhibition are lined up for Newmarket Racecourse on July 12 and 13. The first day's topics will relate to general groundsmanship. The following day will be directed at greenkeepers. Speakers include Derek Ganning of The Belfry, Martin Jones, Myerscough College and John Philp, Carnoustie. For an invitation call Lynn Hilton at SISIS on 0625 503030.

FLYING DIVOTS

■ EAST SUSSEX NATIONAL Golf Club has launched a junior scholars' golf club membership to groom home-grown talent.

Members are being asked to help budding champions, aged 12-18, by sponsoring and introducing them into the club. Students will have to pay £150 plus VAT, with members picking up the tabs for tuition, entrance fees for tournaments "and other extras".

■ THORPE HALL'S HEAD greenkeeper, Doug Smith, has been seeing to a new development – his first child, a daughter called Jena Sharon.

■ GRASS cutting equipment supplier Etesia UK have promoted Robin Taylor to UK sales manager. He is looking to appoint new outlets in selected areas.



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