

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

BTME formula is just right: the correct decision has been made

To the Executive Director,

I have just received a copy of your press release regarding the decision to continue with the BTME in Harrogate.

May I just say how pleased I am that this decision has been taken – your formula for your show is right.

As a company we look forward to another successful exhibition with you in 1995 and many more in the years to come.

Lance Bassett, sales director, Allen Power Equipment Ltd, Didcot, Oxon.

● Editor's note: *We look forward to seeing you and the other 130 or so exhibitors at next year's BTME – and even more companies the following year. The number and location of shows seems to be the big issue at the moment and we'd love to hear the views of other companies, especially if they are members of the AEA.*

Occasion to remember

May I take this opportunity to say a very big thank-you to everyone involved in the Toro/PGA European Tour Student Greenkeeper of the Year finals at Aldwark Manor. Both the sponsors, Toro and the PGA European Tour, with the support of BIGGA, laid on a very memorable few days for myself and fellow finalists: bucks-fizz; smoked salmon sandwiches; fresh fruit in the rooms; what seemed like a very long, brandy assisted, wait leading to the eventual results; 8p a car toll bridges; and friendly debates with Bruce Jamieson of the European Tour on new courses, POA! and fertiliser programmes (do greenkeepers ever stop talking shop?)

I feel very honoured to have been chosen as the winner of the Toro Scholarship to the Turf Grass Managers Course at the University of Massachusetts in January 1995 and am looking forward to the experience immensely. I would also like to thank Effingham GC and course manager Peter Broadbent for their continued support and encouragement.

Euan Grant, Toro/PGA European Tour Student Greenkeeper of the Year

From bad to verse

Working for a club that has never had, or will consider, a No Start Before Time rule to allow greenkeepers an uninterrupted pair of hours in the morning to complete our greens cutting programme and be off the 'front nine' thus not annoying or interrupting the golfers' morning round, it has inspired me to compose the following verses of the daily confrontation between greenkeepers and the 'O-Dark 100' golfing set.

I hope it will bring a knowing smile to the

faces of other greenkeepers who are in the same position or a sigh of relief from those who are lucky enough to enjoy the luxury of a No Start Before Time cushion in their daily toil.

A KEEPER OF THE GREENS

*The sun was just out, there's no one about
as the greenkeeper cut the first green
His Ransomes it flew and with a good heavy dew
it was easy to see where he'd been.*

*When out of the blue, a golf ball flew
down the line on the green he was cutting
had the wind covered 'Ore? the Yell of a "fore"
or was the golfer a rush to be putting.*

*At the end of the line he stood as he should
waiting for the golfer to putt.
How nice it would be, to be sat drinking tea
with all the greens finished and cut.*

*With putter in hand the golfer did stand
assessing the borrows and breaks
Be sure to be up, just right of the cup
don't want to make any mistakes.*

*He took up his stance, this was a par chance
and struck the ball at the hole.
But he hit it too hard, no par on the card
as on and on it did roll.*

*Now by the way of compensation,
there's a fact known by golfers all
that the noise of a greenkeepers mower
affects the roll of a ball.*

*So glaring at the offending greenkeeper
to the next tee he strode away
loudly muttering that green cutting
shouldn't be done at this time of day.*

*The greenkeeper walked down the line he had cut
from his pocket he took out a tee
and removed the pitchmark from the green
that the golfer had left, unintentionally!*

*I could have joined the Army, the Navy or
Marines*

*But I volunteered to soldier here
as a "keeper of the greens".*

GOD GIVE ME PATIENCE

J MacGregor, greenkeeper, Exmouth

Wormkiller plea

An open letter to chemical companies,
Please make a wormkiller as good as Chlor-dane.

To the powers that be, a reprieve for Chlor-dane would be the best news possible to all British golf clubs.

Bruce Burnell, Cleveland section

Using Nortron to control Poa?

If you are, Jon Allbutt offers this warning

As the fight to maintain pure bentgrass and fescue/bentgrass swards approaches desperation, many greenkeepers are using some herbicides 'off label', sometimes based on established practises in other countries, to curb the march of Poa.

It is true that there is an approval for the use of Nortron (ethofumesate) in amenity turf, but before you rush out and place your order pause a moment and look at the product label. There are currently no label recommendations for the use of Nortron in amenity turf; its use for this purpose must therefore be at the risk of the user. The amenity approval was based on work that established a broad tolerance to the product by *L. perenne* in established ryegrass swards. However there is, as yet, insufficient field trial work to be sure of its phytotoxic effects on fine turf grasses. As with many pesticides there will be variation in the tolerance of the cultivars within a given species. Trial work is needed with different cultivars, at different rates, in different soil types, and also at different stages of growth before a label recommendation can be given with confidence.

What is clear, however, is that Nortron must not be used on non-ryegrass swards established for less than 12 months, or at the full label rate on even established fine turf species.

Ethofumesate is absorbed by both shoots and roots. As it is non-volatile, uptake always occurs from the aqueous solution. For some susceptible species, the most effective route of uptake is via the emerging shoot as it passes through the layer of treated soil. However, for other species root uptake of ethofumesate is also important to give effective control. As for all soil applied herbicides, the activity of ethofumesate can be affected by soil conditions. Ethofumesate activity may be reduced where there is insufficient soil moisture or by a high soil organic matter content.

Ethofumesate has a reasonable degree of residual activity (several weeks depending on conditions) and it is also effective against some broad leaved weeds.

Some preliminary work would suggest that there is good control of *Poa annua* with sequential treatments at lower rates, but the approval holder AgrEvo is adamant that more work is needed here to establish varietal tolerance in the many cultivars used in fine turf seed mixtures.

So greenkeepers take note, you run the risk of causing significant damage to your precious turf when experimenting with application rates; remember too that dose rates found to be successful in, say the USA, cannot be safely applied under UK ground conditions. Soil formation and moisture content are critical factors for the successful use of this type of herbicide.

You have been warned!