

Education update

BY KEN RICHARDSON



Still time to go in for top prize

This month's column includes reminders on the Zeneca Premier Greenkeeper and Toro/Lely/PGA European Tour Student of the Year competitions, changes of dates for the next MGC examination and an update on N/SVQs.

Zeneca Premier Greenkeeper

Entries for the 1995 Zeneca Premier Greenkeeper of the Year are beginning to arrive at HQ. However, there is still time for more entries to be submitted. Entries can be from individual greenkeepers, greenkeeping teams or golf club committees and members and they can be made by returning the card in this issue or by writing to HQ. The first prize, for the winning greenkeeper, is an all expenses paid trip to Florida for the 1996 GCSAA Exhibition and Conference plus £500 to the winner's team. Runners up prizes include a weekend in London with tickets for a top West End show and a weekend for two at Aldwark Manor. Remember, the competition is to find the greenkeeper who gets the best from his course with the facilities that he has available and aims to recognise services to the greenkeeping industry.

Toro/Lely/PGA European Tour Student of the Year

Entries are invited for the Toro/Lely/PGA European Tour Student of the Year competition 1995 from colleges in the United Kingdom and Southern Ireland. Full details of entry criteria are given in a leaflet, obtainable from BIGGA HQ and most colleges and nomination forms must be returned to Aldwark Manor by May 31 1995. Regional finals will take place during September and the National Final will take place at Aldwark Manor on October 8/9.

Master Greenkeeper Certificate

Since the last issue of *Green-*

keeper International was printed, unforeseen circumstances have caused the dates of the MGC examination technique day to be moved to March 6 and the next MGC examination to April 28.

National/Scottish Vocational Qualifications

Discussions are continuing at Lead Body meetings on the revision and modification of Amenity Horticulture (Greenkeeping) Vocational Qualifications to make the qualifications more acceptable to all parts of the amenity horticulture industry. David Golding, education director with the Greenkeepers Training Committee, is continuing to hold seminars which describe the N/SVQ system, the problems of changing from a knowledge based assessment system to a practical, competence based system and the need for greenkeepers to become assessors and advisers. The N/SVQ system can only work effectively when assessment of competence can be done at the workplace ie on golf courses. Anyone wanting further information on how to become an assessor or adviser should contact me or David Golding on 01347 838846.

Library

I had hoped that BIGGA might be successful in acquiring some or all of the John Shildrick memorial library. However, a recent meeting of the National Turfgrass Council decided that all the books should be held in one library, that the books should become part of the National Library system and that only establishments with a full time librarian could be considered. Therefore, as they met all of these criteria, Myerscough College will receive the books. Our library is growing, albeit slowly, and I would welcome contributions from anyone who wishes to donate a book or books.

Send your letters to The Editor, Greenkeeper International, Aldwark Manor, Aldwark, Alne, York YO6 2NF or fax them on 01347 838864

Hard hats can give the wrong impression

With regards to the letter concerning 'hard hats', I wish to offer my feelings on the subject.

There is a golf course in the Torbay area with a lady greenkeeper who dons a green hard hat for her protection from the occasional stray Cayman ball.

I am grateful for Mr James Smith's concern for the protection of greenstaff, but the hard hat only covers a very small part of the body. It does protect the onboard computer, namely the brain, but leaves other vital parts of the anatomy unprotected and subject to severe bruising and excruciating pain.

If the greenstaff wore hard hats for safety reasons, I feel it would create a false sense of security for the wearer who would be even more at risk from the oncoming golfer, who would consider the greenkeeper to have been given adequate protection.

May I suggest we forget the hard hat and ask all golfers to respect the greenstaff in their very difficult and sometimes dangerous duties in striving for perfection for the benefit of others.

Martin Petherick, Waterbridge Golf Course, Devon

Such a success

To the executive director,

I would like to congratulate you and your staff who worked so hard to make the BTME show such a success. I would also like to thank the board of management who give up their time and the exhibitors - for without them there is no show. I have been to all the shows at Harrogate so far and the show gets better every year. As soon as you enter the exhibition hall there is a friendly atmosphere and let's hope the show goes on for many more years.

Ron Ullathorne, secretary of the Sheffield Section

GREENKEEPER'S LAMENT

The story true is often told,
Of Percy once a greensman bold,
As a bloke was not contentious,
But at his job most conscientious.

Twenty summers came and went,
While Percy often did lament,
How can I make my greens
sensational,
Just like those at Augusta National?

For you must dear reader pity,
Perce who had a greens committee,
Who yearly saw the National greens,
All lighted up on telly screens.

Looking at this turf like lightning,
Really could be rather frightening,
For Perce knew after the Masters' fleeing,
The committee quickly would call a meeting.

"Perce!" they'd cry all tongues a lashing,
"From the members we get a bashing,
They want us for it is fashionable,
To get our greens like Augusta National."

So they went and gave to Perce,
And now you'll see things getting worse,
I think the man's first name was Peter,
Who gave to Perce the dreaded stimpmeter.

With this tool they would stand tall,
And have greens to beat them all,
Slick and green with curvy bends,
On which they could impress their friends.

Well Perce tried hard to tell the facts,
But it availed not, they wanted acts,
"Give us greens like we desire,
Or Percy, you, we'll surely fire!"

Then Perce left the meeting site,
Though he had put up quite a fight,
They didn't want to know the reason,
Augusta looked so good each season.

So here stood Perce quite all alone,
To the vagaries of English climate prone,
Take-all patch and dollar spot,
Fusarium wilt, he'd got the lot.

No USGA spec greens for him,
What could he do just for this whim?
He reduced the height to speed the ball,
And in three months had lost it all.

With greens all sad and looking sick,
The committee the fault with Perce did pick,
And so they sent him soundly packing,
For they thought that he was lacking.

And now Perce doesn't tend his course,
He rather goes with cart and horse,
And feeling like the committee to throttle,
At each front door leaves a fresh milk bottle.

Alan Mitchell, course manager,
The Hampshire, Andover