

Search begins for cream of the crop

The 1995 Miracle Professional Greenkeeper of the Year will be drawn from an excellent shortlist which comprised one from each of the five BIGGA regions when the final is held on December 3 & 4 at Aldwark Manor.

Candidates for the award were originally nominated by golf clubs, greenkeepers and their teams, sections and regions and were whittled down to three from each region. A member of BIGGA's Board of Management and a Miracle Professional manager then visited each of the golf clubs before nominating the finalists for the seventh Greenkeeper of the Year Award.

The winner and the man who will follow in the illustrious footsteps of Laurence Pithie, Anthony Davies, David Whitaker, Ian Harrison, Gordon Irvine and, last year's winner David Walden will receive an all expenses paid trip to the GCSAA Show in Florida while his team will receive £500 to reflect the belief that behind every top greenkeeper is a top team. The runner-up will win an all expenses paid trip to London including tickets to a top West End Show while third place will receive an all expenses paid weekend at Aldwark Manor.

Prior to coming to Aldwark each of the finalists – whose details are below – will again be visited at his club by Pat Murphy, from the BIGGA Board of Management and Education Sub-Committee and Richard Minton of Miracle Professional for another inspection.



James Devlin, Scotland
Age: 39
Club: Golf Course Superintendent at Troon Golf Courses

James began his career under BIGGA Board of Management member Harry Diamond at Ayr Belleisle in 1982.

He was promoted to Head Greenkeeper at Seafield in Ayr five years later and, in 1991, promoted to Contracts Supervisor in charge of three golf courses and the championship bowling greens at Northfield in Ayr.

He took up his present position in charge of two Championship courses and one group two course, five bowling green contracts and various other contracts, including work on football pitches and numerous lawn areas around South Ayrshire in 1994.

His staff at Troon consists of seven full time, four seasonal and four skill

seeker trainees.

James completed a three year SVQ course at Ayr College and was the top student in the 1988 session. He also holds his D32 assessor certificate and his PA1 and PA2 certificates.

Married to Nancy they have two children, Mark (15) and Kerry (12).

He enjoys golf, loves fishing and, by his own admission, likes a pint.



Don Wilson, South East
Age: 29
Club: Course Manager Dyrham Park CC

Don joined the profession at the age of 16 as a YTS trainee greenkeeper at Shotts GC between Glasgow and Edinburgh. Six months later he was offered an apprenticeship which allowed him to attend Woodburn House College on day release for three years obtaining his Scotvec greenkeeping qualifications.

He then followed several of his Shotts colleagues south as an assistant at Burnham Beeches in Slough and three years later moved to become Deputy Course Manager at Dyrham Park CC becoming Course Manager two years later.

He is married to Lorraine with children Stephanie (9) and Ryan (4). He plays to a handicap of 14 is an avid Glasgow Rangers fan and is a member of the London BIGGA section committee organising golf events and controlling the handicap system.



Ed McCabe, South West
Age: 37
Club: Course Manager Brokenhurst Manor GC

Originally from Seaham in County Durham, where he began greenkeeping, he now has 20 years experience, five as a Head Greenkeeper and the last 10 as Course Manager. He is well into his own improvement programme at Brokenhurst Manor, deep in the heart of the New Forest, which he has been implementing for the past eight years.

He originally attended Houghall Agricultural College in Durham where he achieved his City and Guilds Greenkeepers Certificate.

He presented a paper at the National Education Conference at Keele University on communication and also produced a two day work-

shop at the BTME on formulating a Golf Course Policy document. He is co-author of our Golf Course Policy Document which has been adopted by many clubs throughout the country and he sits on the South Coast section committee and the Education Committee.

He is married to Marion and they have two children Daryl (8) and Nathan (4). Ed is a 6 handicap golfer, a course angler, a fell walker while he also finds time to manage his son's under 9s football team.



Chris Brook, Midland
Age: 32
Club: Course Manager Chesfield Downs

Chris has been greenkeeping for 15 years and has been at his present club since, in his own words, he "arrived with the bulldozers in May '89". He saw the 27 hole complex with 27 bay driving range through to the present day and the courses success can be judged by the 550 members and 56,000 rounds on the 18 hole course and 42,000 rounds on the nine hole course per annum.

Married to Laura, they have two children Chloe (3) and Gemma (six months). He is Chairman of the Mid Anglia Section of BIGGA and he enjoys cricket, rugby and playing golf off a handicap of 10.



Mike Goodhind, Northern
Age: 35
Club: Course Manager Tytherington Club

Has over 19 years experience in greenkeeping and was Course Manager at Cavendish GC in Buxton, Derbyshire for nine years before taking up his current position.

The Tytherington Club is the headquarters for the Women Professional Golfers European Tour and in that regard Mike has prepared the course for two Ladies' English Opens, as well as for numerous National Corporate Events.

He has recently qualified as a GTC NVQ assessor. He is married with four children and is a keen all round sportsman interested in most sports but particularly cricket and golf.

■ The winner of the 1995 Miracle Professional Greenkeeper of the Year will be announced in the January issue of *Greenkeeper International*.

Appeal launched as Tiller's Turf chief finds hi-tech help for ill son

Thanks to a unique appeal over the Internet the son of Tiller's Turf's Tim Fell has been given hope in the search for a cure for a horrific brain disorder.

However, having been put in touch with the Pittsburgh-based world's leading authority on Trigeminal Neuralgia the Fell family is faced with raising the £150,000 required to put 9 year-old Matthew through the intensive course of treatment.

Matthew was struck down with Trigeminal Neuralgia at the beginning of the year having previously been a normal, active fun loving youngster. The disorder is not uncommon in adults but is virtually unknown in children and Matthew is, in fact, the only child ever to have been diagnosed with his particular condition. Trigeminal Neuralgia sees a blood vessel getting wrapped around the Trigeminal nerve and causes intense and unremitting pain. Attacks can last for up to half an hour and can occur at intervals of less than five minutes.

Since May Matthew has not been able to sit, stand or read and for many weeks the agony is so great he can't eat or drink.

In May he underwent an operation to cure the problem but it was not a success and, with the British medical professional having done all it could, Tim and Lindsay Fell sent a message on the Internet asking for help and it arrived in the shape of Dr Janetta from Pittsburgh, the world's leading authority in dealing with the disorder.

The medical expenses extend to £150,000 with an exploratory operation and two remedial operations costing £30,000 each and hospital recuperation costing a further £60,000.

The Matthew Fell Appeal has therefore been set up to raise money to help free Matthew from his indescribable and near constant agony.

Anyone who would like to contribute should contact the Matthew Fell Appeal, Castlethorpe, Brigg, South Humberside DN20 9LG Tel: 01652 650555 Fax: 01652 650064.