

Never  
mind  
the  
depth  
feel the  
quality

suitability test looks for those things that will affect plant growth such as sodium, bicarbonates and chlorides. It is important to test the water throughout the year to document the changes that may occur on a seasonal basis.

The second step should be soil sampling. The soil test will ultimately determine the degree of poor water that the turf grass will be able to tolerate. Samples should be taken throughout the golf course and from all greens, tees and fairways.

#### What Does It Mean?

After you receive the results of your water tests, how do you make sense of a page full of chemistry formulas. The components of water quality can be broken down into five main areas.

## 'Several problems may occur to turfgrasses growing in situations where high levels of soil salinity and irrigation with the saline water source are common'

1. **Salt Concentration** – TDS (Total Dissolved Salts) EC (Electrical Conductivity)
2. **Sodium Hazard** – SAR (Sodium Absorption Ratio), sodium in ppm or meg/1.
3. **Bicarbonate Content** – Adj SAR (Adjusted Sodium Absorption Ratio) and pHe Ratio
4. **Toxic Ion Concentration** – In turfgrass the main ones are boron and chlorides.
5. **Water pH** – pH scale is from 0-14 with 7 being neutral. For ideal turfgrass growth pH should be between 6.5 and 8.4.

Several problems may occur to turfgrasses growing in situations where high levels of soil salinity and irrigation with the saline water source are common. These problems are usually not uniform across the site but many occur sporadically. A high level of soil salinity can reduce or delay seed germination and seeding development. On establishing turf the first sign of a salinity effect is a blue-green colour of turf similar to drought. Salinity problems are most often encountered during periods of heat and/or drought stress. This occurs because the demand for water by the turfgrass plants is high at this time. Water availability to the plants is reduced because of the high salt content of the soil solution. High demand by the turfgrass coupled with reduced water availability due to salts causing drought-like conditions. This is compounded by the fact that it is very hard to leach excess salts from soil during periods of high temperatures and limited rainfall.

#### What Can I Do?

Following are some suggestions to help fight a poor irrigation source.

Remember, a solution to the problem may not be found in just one of the suggestions. Your problem may require a combination of several (or all) of the following suggestions.

- **Plant Salt Tolerant Grasses** – Not all grasses perform equally under the same conditions. When selected grasses play close attention to the electric conductivity of the irrigation water.
- **Improve Drainage** – Any additional tools that can be utilised to add aeration, reduce soil compaction and improve percolation may be beneficial in the removal of harmful salt concentrations.
- **Leach Excessive Salt** – Leaching salts through the plant root zone by exceeding the leaching fraction will carry dissolved salts with it through the zone.
- **Acidification of Irrigation Water** – The addition of acidification agents will cause the soil sodium to be more easily leached from the soil profile and neutralise the bicarbonates from the water and soil, freeing up available calcium forming better soil structures and increased water percolation.
- **Additional Soil Amendment** – Careful consideration should be given to the base saturation of exchangeable cations portion of the soil test. In poor quality water, the reduction of available calcium and magnesium is critical and must be replenished as required.

#### Summary

Use of poor water quality for irrigation of golf courses presents a unique set of advantages and disadvantages.

They potentially affect every decision the greenkeeper must make.

However, despite increased problems, concerns and cost, these impacts are not necessarily unsurmountable. Rather, they present a challenge which demands attention to every agronomic and management detail.

- **References:** Throssell, Clark S. and Kopac, David, 1994. Irrigation Water Quality-Salt Affected Irrigation Water and Soil: Impact on Turfgrass Growth and Management 1994 GCSAA Seminar; Peacock, Charles 1994 Wastewater Irrigation for Golf Courses: Advantages versus Disadvantages. The USGA, Lewis Publishers Inc Chelsea MI.

THE ONE THING WHICH WOULD  
MAKE THE JOB SO MUCH EASIER IS



"If you received quotes for what  
you actually asked for"

- Mark Anderson,  
Newbury Race Course GC

## ALLEVIATE WATER-LOGGING BY THE SLOTTING METHOD

Slot draining is the latest idea for effective draining of fine turf playing surfaces (golf greens, hockey pitches, football pitches etc.). The method by which this is achieved is by the Grasstex Slotter which cuts eight slots at 250mm centres 20mm wide, 170mm deep. The slots cross main drainage pipes set at three metre centres, 400mm deep, 35mm diameter pipe. These then run to collector mains which carries the water to an outfall. The slots are filled with a fine grit to within 40mm of the surface.

The mains are also filled to 40mm below surface. The whole area then is top dressed and overseeded.

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Thanks were expressed to Chris.

He then outlined Adas services for golf courses 1. Feasibility studies for new courses, 2. Detailed design work on new courses, 3. Existing Courses. Improvements, extensions and upgrading.

Our March meeting is Bob Twaddle of British Seed Houses and there is a change of venue. The meeting will be at Eaglescliffe GC on March 21 at 7.30pm.  
Bruce Burnell

### Northern

First of all I would like to welcome the following new members to our Section: Christopher Hill, Leeds Council; Craig Norford, Temple Newsam GC; Richard Hartas, Aldwark Manor GC; Adam Basnett, Woodsome Hall GC; Edward Nutt, the Oaks GC; Kevin Lee, Crownest Park GC; Neil Burnley, Beverley GC; David Chadwick, Moortown GC; Neil Tootle, Bridlington Links; Alastair Cobbett, Mid Yorkshire GC; Brian Carr (recognise this chap from somewhere!), Chapel Allerton Lawn Tennis Club; Steven Kitchen, Elland GC; Daniel Lindley, Hanging Heaton GC; Derek Jackson, Garforth GC; David Kirk, Moorview Golf Centre; Richard Hollingworth, Ridding Park GC and Sam Wardill, Outlane GC. I hope you will participate in the golf and social events in the area.

On the education front, the first of the Regional Management Courses were held in the last month. I attended one in Chester and found it to be interesting, informative and also great fun. It was also an opportunity to meet many members of the Association attending this type of event for the first time. The delegates ranged from the more mature to the up and coming whizz kids. I understand the course in York had been just as successful and it is hoped to develop these further next year.

For those of you interested in the NVQs, Pat Murphy is drawing up a waiting list of people who wish to be trained as assessors. This is funded by the GTC.

While on the subject of education I would remind you of the North West Seminar at the Mere Golf and Country Club on March 26. There are some very interesting speakers and the price is only £20 including lunch. Contact me if you wish to book.

Golf events now and the tee off times for this season's comps: April 24, Scarborough South Cliff, tee off 1pm; June 12, President's Day at Howley Hall, tee off 1.30pm; September 4, Invitation Day at Bingley St Ives GC, tee off 12.30pm; October 9, Autumn Tournament at Malton & Norton GC, tee off 1pm. A £10 deposit is required for each event and as these are restricted I would advise booking early to avoid disappointment. The Roses Match is on August 15 at Whitefield GC and will again be fully sponsored by Pattis-

## Around the Green



sons. All you have to do is get there. A team of 16 is required so please forward your name to me if you would like to play on the winning team. Members wishing to play in any of the golf events must book and pay their deposits at least one week before each competition.

Congratulations to Nick Bissett at Askham Bryan College who has recently been promoted to Head of Horticulture.

I would like to convey the Section's best wishes for a speedy recovery to Alan Gamble, our Chairman, who has been ill recently. Look forward to seeing you at the Dinner Dance on March 16, Alan.

Please contact me if you have any news or gossip. Tel: 01782 750539 or 0850 235554.  
Bob Lupton

### Midland

Here we go again, another season just about to start. After the cold weather and snow, it will be nice to have a bit of good old sunshine.

I spent a very enjoyable and educational week at Harrogate. There were some very good speakers at the National Conference, and I would like to congratulate Dean Cleaver on his becoming the Chairman of the Association. It was good to see a fellow Section member achieving this position.

On March 29 at 2pm we have the second winter lecture at Telford Golf and Country Club. Arrival time is between 12.30 and 1pm and the bar will be open to welcome you.

The speakers are Richard Minton, Miracle Professional, talking on nutritional requirements of a golf course and Simon Hannah, Inturf, talking about Turf Production and he would also debate Dwarf Ryegrass v Non Ryegrass mixtures.

There will be a buffet after the lectures, please could members dress appropriately.

The fixture list will be sent to all members ASAP. Ritefeed are sponsoring a new Singles competition open to all members and the entrance sheets will be sent accordingly.

The Committee had a meeting on January 17 where it was decided not to put on a Skittles Evening at the moment as only six members had telephoned me to express their wish to attend.

Finally we welcome the new members for this month. They are as follows:- Michael Bryan, Ian Underhill, Roy Whatmore, Michael Wade, Robert Tomlin, Anthony Tysall, Stuart Hall, Colin Wood and Robert Jervis.

Kim Blake

### East Midlands

While you are all reading this month's article I shall be sunning myself in the Sates and playing plenty of golf - hopefully Bindleying the Americans.

Congratulations to Carl Chamberlain on his appointment as Deputy Head Greenkeeper at Scraftoft GC. I'm sure all members would like to wish Carl all the best in his new position. Also congratulations are extended to Gavin Robson for the addition of a baby son to his family.

I'm sure all members must have enjoyed this year's BTME. It was nice to see a few more Section members there. It just goes to show that things get BIGGA and better every year.

By the end of this month all members should have received their entry forms for the forthcoming Spring Tournament and the annual singles and pairs K/O competitions. Please try to support your section by entering as many as you possibly can. Also enclosed is this year's fixture card, which has again been kindly sponsored by Amenity Land Services and Scotts UK. Any member who has not received their form can give me a ring and I will gladly forward a copy.

Finally this year's AGM has been arranged at Hinckley GC on November 6 followed by the Christmas Tournament on December 12 at Charnwood Forest GC.  
Antony Bindley

### East of England

I have just returned from BTME at Harrogate and the exhibition seems to get better every year.

It is the ideal showcase for the products of the manufacturers and to talk at first hand with product representatives. For myself it was the bumping into so many friends that makes the show. Then there are the seminars, at one of which our East of England Chairman, David Walden, took to the stage with his experiences in winning the Miracle Professional Premier Greenkeeper of the Year competition and what differences winning had made to his career. I asked him what the differences were and he said, "I was on cloud nine for two to three months, there was lots of fuss which died off. The US trip was a good experience and it's been good for my career."

The total membership for our section now stands at an all time high of 119 due to a recent influx of students from Riseholme. May I welcome all the new members to our Section who are:- R. Cresswell, S. White, D. Anderson, A. Wire, R. Hepworth, J. Morrall, D. Reeves, M. Gamble, L. Bradsell, D. Garfitt, D. Clew, M. Anderson, C. French and A. Eaton.

Any more information on job moves, promotions etc or if I can help with anything call me on 01733 260297.

Graeme Macdonald

### Mid Anglia

A Health and Safety update was

given by John Allbutt to the Section in January which was very useful to members. He gave information with regards to the use of carbaryl which has been restricted in certain aspects. If anyone needs more information on this please phone John's company, I'm sure they'll fill you in fully on the changes.

Harrogate was once again successful and if was good once again to see so many members in attendance and to hear John Wells speaking at the conference. John was also presented with his Master Greenkeeper Certificate and I'm sure you all saw the picture in last month's magazine.

You should have all received by now an entry form for the fourball tournament which must be completed by March 15, and a separate form for the usual tournaments. Please photo copy this second form so you have enough for the Spring, Summer and Autumn Tournaments should you wish to enter. If you have not received the necessary forms please check with BIGGA HQ to make sure you are included in the Mid Anglia Section. Gerald Bruce, our Secretary, can only send the appropriate details to those members who are actually registered on the computer printout from headquarters.

Our first golf event is on March 29 at John O'Gaunt GC. Entry forms should be sent to Richard Saunders in the usual way enclosing a cheque for £20.

The Texas Scramble this year has been arranged for December 3 at Dunstable Downs GC.

A match against the Midland Section has been scheduled for September 2 and will take place at Whittingham Heath GC, Lichfield, Staffs - the format being 10 a side.

Lectures/Course Visits are currently being arranged for 1997 as are golf fixtures.

I would like, on behalf of the Section, to wish Jim Burton, every success in his new position with Kings Horticulture and Kevin Todd, good luck in his new position at Beds & County Golf Club as Deputy Course Manager.

Finally I would like to welcome the following new members from Mentmore GC to the Section. They are Daniel Gilbert, Daniel James, David Edwards and Eamon Slattery  
Paul Lockett

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"If it only rained at night"  
- Alan Rowney, Gay Hill GC



# A Temple to excellence

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Toro GM3  
John Deere 2653  
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Workshop Tools and Tool Kit

never allowed any change at Temple without prior consultation with a golf course architect among them Henry Cotton, a former professional of Temple GC, Frank Pennick and Donald Steel. It was only natural for us to contact Donald when we had reached this stage of our development.

I rang him not just to talk about architecture but also because he has been Chairman of Green at Denham for many years," explained Malcolm.

"He came and asked what we wanted to do and we said that we wanted him to review the course generally. We decided to walk round the course and he would ask us on the tee what we thought and he would either agree or not as the case may be.

"Then he did us a report hole-by-hole which is now our long term plan of what we want to achieve.

"The more I talked to Donald the more I came to realise that we had some superb short par fours. We wanted to extend the course where possible, but not if it might be to the detriment of a hole.

Much of the work involved changing the shapes of the greens or, more accurately, returning them to how Willie Park Jnr had designed them in the first place.

"We are trying to return to Willie Park Jnr's design, and particularly the bunkering, and that is where Donald helped us," said Martin.

"It's quite exciting as we are getting quite close to it now. Reshaping the greens have given us an immense variety of new pin placements which some of he members haven't even seen yet," added Malcolm.

"I'm getting comments from members that they are now able to play chip and run shots and going back to playing shots they haven't done for many years. It is much more exciting."

All the construction work has been carried out in-house and at every phase, in fact, for all the significant work carried out on the course it is photographed and put in an album.

"This is very useful. We found

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**'Very few courses reach their true potential because they are prevented by the very people who misguidedly seek to improve them'**

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after the first two years that we need comparisons. People would conveniently forget how bad something once was and by showing them the photographs they could actually see the improvement which had been made. I was getting bored with people saying 'I'm sure that was better before'," said Malcolm.

The album and the monthly report to the Board will give the people who follow Martin and Malcolm a total history of what has gone on at the Club and they way it has developed and provide the continuity which is missing at many golf clubs.

"Very few courses reach their true potential because they are prevented from doing so by the very people who misguidedly seek to improve them. It is a damning indictment of the golfing population when you

consider that many of these people, in the form of committees, are responsible for the day to day running of the nation's golf courses.

It is hardly surprising that a lot of courses, many of them high profile, are in a state of decline," said Malcolm.

Martin adds a cautionary note to his colleagues not fortunate enough to have the continuity he enjoys.

"I believe that a lot of Course Managers and Head Greenkeepers are not going to survive this period unless the problems of continuity are solved. People are setting objectives almost on a year to year basis and you can't survive like that. You need direction which stretches for a period of time."

Martin has nothing but praise for his own Board of Management which has backed him to the hilt.

"I have seen a marked increase in my budgets in machinery and labour and we now have a different set of objectives. When I first took over the objective was "To Maintain the Golf Course" now it is "To Maintain, Improve and Take Forward the Golf Course' which is a very different concept."

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"If rabbits had to cross a road to get here"

- Martin Gunn, Temple GC



# Higher standards – yet more **SPEED**

tem of grass cutting is being heralded as the way forward, but the idea is far from new. On fairways and sports areas in this country we have been recycling our grass clippings since the first gang mowers were introduced well over a hundred years ago!

There has always been criticism that the rotary mower when used without a collector, leaves the cut grass too long. The over all appearance is unsightly and clippings take a long time to disperse. For over three decades small mulching systems have been available to eliminate this problem, but it is only in the last two years that there has been any significant development. With the mulching

principal, grass clippings are retained inside the cutting deck and chopped into fine particles before being blown back into the turf.

Research has shown that there are a number of environmental advantages in using this system. Nitrogen and water contained in the grass are returned to the turf to provide nutrients and moisture. For it to be effective the mown grass has to be left fairly long which is ideal for the rough.

Greenkeepers are beginning to recognise the benefits of out-front rotaries with recycling decks and they can now be found in an increasing number of courses.

When walking round BTME

this year the visitor could not fail to see the wide range of grass mowing equipment that is available. In fact, today's Course Managers and greenkeepers are spoilt for choice. Interestingly, a closer inspection often reveals that most machines have the same engine, hydraulic system and general layout. The only difference between these is all those extra features, so its worth finding out exactly what these are before making a final decision. With ride-on mower technology advancing a cracking pace you are likely to discover additions that will make your job easier and produce the high standards of finish you are now being asked to attain. Time spent

thoroughly investigating just what is now being offered will put you at the forefront of today's technology and pay dividends in the long run.

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"If the committee had an endless bank account."  
- Derek McJannet,  
Sherwood Forest GC

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- Collingtree Leisure
- Cottesmore Golf & Country Club
- Crompton & Royton Golf Club
- Delapre Golf Complex
- Eaton Golf Club

- Ely City Golf Club
- Fortrose & Rosemarkie Golf Club
- Gleneagles Hotel
- Goring & Streetley Golf Club
- Harpenden Golf Club
- Harrow School Golf Club
- Helliidon Lakes Golf & Country Club
- Hirsell Golf Club
- Kinross (Green Hotel)
- Leasowe Golf Club
- Læk Golf Club
- Lingfield Park
- Lymm Golf Club
- Malone Golf Club
- Massereene Golf Club
- Mere Golf & Country Club

- Milltown Golf Club (Dublin)
- Mold Golf Club
- Mount Murray Golf Club (IOM)
- Muirfield (Gullane) Golf Club
- Nairn Golf Club
- Newbury & Crookham Golf Club
- Newcastle-under-Lyme Golf Club
- Omonde Fields Golf Club
- Pitlown Golf Club
- Pinneridge Golf Club
- Ponteland Golf Club
- Preston Golf Club
- Rowlands Castle Golf Club
- Royal Ashdown Forest Golf Club
- Royal Dornoch Golf Club
- Royal Liverpool Golf Club

- Royston Golf Club
- Rye Golf Club
- St Andrews Links Trust
- Sherborne Golf Club
- Slaley Hall Golf & Country Club
- South Moor Golf Club
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- Tehidy Park Golf Course
- Telford Golf Club
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- The Berkshire Golf Club
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"It is the best piece of machinery this course has ever invested in, a fine machine that I would recommend to anyone." Mr. John Bashford, Head Greenkeeper of the Green Hotel Golf Course, The Kinross Estate.

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# No way to treat valuable staff

I became interested in greenkeeping late in life – I was serving Queen and country at the time but I became so interested that I used to work part-time to learn as much as I could. Being an Associate Member of BIGGA at that time I read in *Greenkeeper International* that education was the way forward for greenkeepers so prior to leaving the Armed Forces I took and passed City and Guilds Phase 2 Greenkeeping and Sports Turf Management plus PA1 and PA2A to go with the experience and knowledge I had gained.

On returning to "Civvy Street" I worked as an Assistant Greenkeeper at a golf club for almost two years and, despite several requests was never given proper written terms and conditions of employment. The golf club ran into financial difficulties and had to be sold, and, as I understand it, all greenstaff had to be made redundant before buyers would complete the purchase. Course Maintenance was then contracted out to the owner of another club

who would interview the existing greenstaff for the vacancies that now existed, plus I found out later, outside applicants. On the day of the interviews I was unfortunately sick and sent my apologies and to say that I would contact them when I recovered. I rang to arranged a new date for the following week to be told that they had selected the personnel required and that an interview would be a waste of time for both parties! Is this what is known as Equal Opportunities?

I am actively seeking employment in greenkeeping but can't help wondering if it is worth it? From my experience the wages offered are below BIGGA's recommendations, terms and conditions aren't offered as per the article on July's *Greenkeeper International* and if people are treated as I have been how do clubs expect to get the best from staff?

Surely golf clubs have a duty to give their members the best course conditions possible and they should realise that they will

only achieve this by employing dedicated qualified, well treated, happy staff. Mine may be a "one off" case but I'm curious to know if any other members have experienced similar problems or treatment.

**Michael Kimber, Oundle, Peterborough**

## Many thanks

Through the pages of your magazine I would like to thank all those concerned who have helped and supported me over the past two years as Chairman of the Scottish Region and the four years I have served on the Board of Management.

Although perhaps it may be inappropriate to mention some people in particular and not others, special thanks must go to my wife, Pauline, and my family who have been more than understanding with all the time it has taken up. Also my employers, St Andrews Links Trust and Management for their encouragement, Elliott Small in the Scottish Region and Neil Thomas and all the staff at Aldwark.

The list is endless, there are so many others throughout BIGGA, too numerous to mention individually but I offer my sincere thanks for all they have done and their friendship.

Some of the time has been hard work and difficult but this was more than compensated for by the good times I've had and friends I have made, things I hope to continue at many different events in the future as our Association goes from strength to strength.

**Gordon Moir, St Andrews**

## A great honour

May I through you express my sincere thanks to all concerned who made my trip to the GCSAA conference in Orlando, such a memorable one.

I was absolutely delighted when my husband Mike won the 1995 Miracle Professional Greenkeeper of the Year Award. Having seen his total dedication to his profession, I felt at last he had been suitably rewarded for all his efforts.

I did begin to wonder as to whether I personally would have preferred for him to have been second or third in the competition when I realised that these

prizes were for two people whereas the first prize was, in fact, just for Mike! I needn't have worried though as The Tytherington Club which is owned by Club Partners International where Mike is Course Manager decided to reward Mike's efforts by sending me on the trip to Orlando. To them I am eternally grateful.

I feel extremely privileged to have been a part of the conference in Orlando as it has given me a far greater insight into the greenkeeping profession.

I must commend the BIGGA team Neil Thomas, John Pemberton and Sami Collins who were all great ambassadors for British greenkeeping and who worked extremely hard throughout. Also to the BIGGA Chairman Dean Cleaver and not forgetting last year's Chairman Barry Heaney and his charming wife Joan. Barry is a great inspiration to us all.

There were so many other people who made the trip a huge success including Nick Bissett, Senior Lecturer at Askham Bryan College; Craig and Mhari Stewart from Germany; Mr and Mrs Bott, from Portugal; Lawrence Pithie and Mark from the American Golf Corp; Peter Todd, the London Club; James Braithwaite, who deservedly is the current Toro/PGA European Tour Student Greenkeeper of the Year and not forgetting BIGGA's great supporting gentleman Jim Fry.

My thanks to each and every one of you and to Miracle Professional for supporting this excellent award and to the Tytherington Club without whom it would not have been possible to share in Mike's success. This was a trip of a lifetime which I shall never forget.

**Karen Goodhind, Macclesfield, Cheshire**

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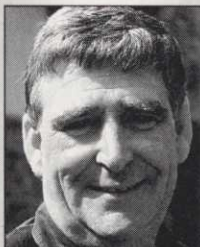
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"No golfers"  
- Pat Murphy, Shipley GC