

# Open invitation to BIGGA members

Applications are invited from members to join BIGGA's Green-keeping Support team for the 1997 Open Championship at Royal Troon GC.

Those wishing to be considered must be Full members of the Association and should be available from Wednesday evening July 16 to Sunday evening July 20. The opportunity to take part in one of the most important golf events of the year is open both to team members from previous years and also those members who are wishing to participate for the first time.

Duties will be allocated on a rota basis over the four days of

play and include early morning course preparation, bunker raking while matches are in play and evening course maintenance. Members may also be asked to co-operate with the gathering of information for distribution in the Press Centre which helps raise the profile of the Association at the Championship. All members of the Support Team will be expected to remain on the course throughout the day and be available in the event of any unforeseen circumstances arising.

Accommodation, all meals and transport will be provided by the Association but successful applicants will be expected to pay their

own travelling expenses from home to the Championship and return.

Those members wishing to be involved should put their names forward in writing to John Pemberton, Administration Manager, at BIGGA HQ, Aldwark Manor, Aldwark, Alne, York YO6 2NE, to be received no later than March 14.

All candidates' names will then be placed into a draw to select the successful applicants. If you have not been to this event before in this capacity and wish to learn more about what will be expected please do not hesitate to contact John. Tel: 01347 838581.

## Association welcomes new staff

There were two new faces at BIGGA Headquarters at the beginning of 1997, Karen Conroy, who is Neil Thomas' new PA, and Tony Cocker, who joins the Association as a part time Accounts Assistant.



Karen is from Harrogate and joins BIGGA from Leeds-based company On Demand

Information, a supplier of Multi Media information.

A relatively new convert to the game of golf she has been playing for 12 months and like a great many others insists she has "more enthusiasm than ability". Her love of the game of golf was one of the main reasons she was delighted to join the Association as was her desire to move away from the large, impersonal type of working environment.

"In the short time I've been at Aldwark Manor I have found it extremely easy to fit in and I'm looking forward to a long and enjoyable career with BIGGA," said Karen, who fills the vacancy left by Vickie Peckham who left the Association late last year.



Tony is a fully qualified accountant and retired from his full time position of Company

Secretary and Accountant for York & County Press last year. Born a Lancastrian he has lived in York since 1979 but would vehemently reject any "Honorary Yorkshireman" status.

A keen footballer and cricketer in his youth he once scored an own goal past a legendary England amateur goalkeeper who never spoke to him again while he has also played cricket on the Test Ground of Old Trafford for North Lancashire Schools. While no longer playing he is still a keen follower of Blackburn Rovers and Lancashire CCC.

Other hobbies include an interest in railways and stamp collecting.

## Dampener on bird box success

Steve Thompson, of John O'Gaunt GC, has some bitter sweet news about the success of the bird box he put up in association with the Hawk and Owl Trust of the golf course - see June '96 *Greenkeeper International*.

The box has been used but when it was checked by a member of the Hawk and Owl Trust the bodies of two barn owl chicks were found and there was no sign of the adult.

"It's great to know that the box was being used but sad that the chicks had died and that something had obviously happened to the adult," said Steve. "It appeared as though the chicks were about six weeks old," he added.

Incredibly another discovery in the box was a golf ball buried in among the pellets.

"I knew that the box had been hit a few times by golf balls but it's quite incredible that one actually found its way inside. It's unlikely that it had caused the deaths as it had obviously been there for some time."

A kestrel box has also been put up at John O'Gaunt - it is a different shape from the one used by the barn owls - but there has been no sign of kestrel activity to date.



Peter Bell, General Manager, Jacobsen: looking ahead to broader customer base

## Jacobsen set to take over Iseki franchise in UK

Jacobsen UK Ltd and Massey Ferguson have completed negotiations under which the Iseki franchise for the UK will be transferred from MF to Jacobsen.

In a joint statement, the two companies said that under the MF umbrella, the Iseki business had earned a leading position as one of the top three suppliers of specialist grounds maintenance in the sector of the market up to 40hp. Now, complemented by Jacobsen's extensive range of high quality

turf maintenance equipment, the new arrangement will provide a broader customer base to ensure continued growth and offer users one of the widest choices of top quality products from a single supplier in the UK market.

Massey Ferguson will continue to serve the local authority and grounds maintenance markets with tractors over 40hp from its mainstream ranges available from the nationwide MF agricultural dealer network.

# Boost for environment competition

BIGGA's commitment to golf course ecology and the environment has been further reinforced by the launch of the BIGGA Golf Environment Competition in association with Amazone and Rhône Poulenc Amenity, which was announced at BTME 97.

The competition which was originally conceived and launched two years ago by Rod Baker, Managing Director of Amazone, encourages golf clubs to take an active interest in ecology and promote the existence of the many varieties of flora and fauna golf courses are natural homes to. It also encourages the reinstatement and management of historical aspects of golf courses, such as wetlands, heath and natural woodlands which provide habitat for many of our wildlife species.

"I must pay tribute to the wonderful initiative and commitment shown by Rod Baker and his team at Amazone in putting such a valuable competition in motion two years ago and I feel sure that Rhône Poulenc Amenity's involvement and the expertise we have at BIGGA will ensure that the competition will go from strength to strength," said BIGGA's Executive Director, Neil Thomas.

"I am delighted that our initiative in starting and developing the Golf Environment Competition is now to receive 'industry' support



Jonathan Hill, Rhône Poulenc Amenity's Market Development Manager; Rod Baker, Managing Director of Amazone Ground Care and Neil Thomas, Executive Director of BIGGA with entry forms for the competition

so that it can be maintained in future years, and that the positive involvement of Amazone Ground Care is to continue. It was always our intention that, having given this unique competition a two year track record we could invite support of this calibre to ensure its future," said Rod Baker, Managing Director of Amazone Ground Care.

"Rhône Poulenc Amenity is delighted to be sponsoring this

competition which will encourage and enhance the wildlife on many of our golf courses. The careful use of our products and golf course management that encourages wildlife do go hand in hand and our involvement with this competition fits well with the understanding that pesticides are an important tool in turf management," said Jonathan Hill, Rhône Poulenc Amenity's Market

Development Manager.

This competition is a further example of the commitment shown by BIGGA to ecological and environmental matters and comes at the same time as the Association launches its "Golf Course Ecology" video which highlights some of the wonderful projects currently under way on Britain's golf courses and gives other golf clubs ideas on how to promote good ecological practice on their own courses.

The BIGGA Golf Environment Competition in association with Amazone and Rhône Poulenc Amenity, is open to every golf club in the country. Entry forms will be available from BIGGA Headquarters and clubs will qualify for the final via five regional finals - South East, South West and South Wales, Midlands, Northern and Scotland.

There will be prizes for the Regional winners while the winning golf club nationally will receive £5,000 to be put to use in the further development of environmental and ecological projects on the golf course.

The current holder of the Amazone Environmental Award is Ridding Park GC, appropriately in Harrogate where the new BIGGA Golf Environment Competition in association with Amazone and Rhône Poulenc Amenity was launched.

# BIGGA and Toro launch new award

Britain's Course Managers and Head Greenkeepers have something new to aim for in '97 with the launch of The Toro Award for Excellence in Greenkeeping.

The Award completes a unique double for The Toro Company as it already sponsors the Toro Student of the Year Award and the finals of both events will be held together at Aldwark Manor in late October.

The golf club of the winning Course Manager or Head Greenkeeper will win a world renowned Toro Greensmaster 3000 triple greens mower while the individual winner will earn a two week trip to the United States, taking in the Golf Course Superintendent of America Association Conference and Show as well as a trip to visit the Toro Company's Headquarters in Minneapolis and Riverside, California.

"To have one sponsor for both of BIGGA's top individual greenkeeping awards seems to make perfect sense and for that company to be Toro is a major boost for the greenkeeping industry. I

am sure that The Toro Award for Excellence in Greenkeeping will be a target for many of the top greenkeepers and golf clubs in the country," said BIGGA's Executive Director, Neil Thomas.

"We are delighted to increase our commitment to BIGGA and the greenkeeping industry through The Toro Award for Excellence in Greenkeeping which, combined with the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year, gives the Toro Company the two most prestigious awards for greenkeepers in the country. It is also a further example of Toro's long term commitment to the development and education of the industry," said Bob Buckingham, Toro's European Sales Manager.

"I am delighted that the involvement which Lely has had in the shape of the Student of the Year Award has increased with the addition of The Toro Award for Excellence in Greenkeeping to Toro's portfolio. I have noticed a steady increase in the standard of the Student finals and am sure the ever improving greenkeeping



Graham Dale, left, Managing Director of Lely, Neil Thomas, Executive Director of BIGGA and Bob Buckingham, Toro's European Sales Manager with the magnificent prize on offer

standards generally will see the quality of The Toro Award for Excellence in Greenkeeping finals rise steadily as well," said Graham Dale, Managing Director of Lely, Toro's UK distributor, and a

man who has, and will continue to be heavily involved in the judging of the finals.

Brochures and nomination forms will be sent out to golf courses in February and March.



## Three more Golden Key sponsors join Fund

BTME 97 saw three new companies joining BIGGA as Golden Key sponsors.

Amazone Ground Care, the PGA European Tour and Bailey's of Norfolk received their Golden Key plaques from the Association's President, Viscount Whitelaw, at the Chairman's Lunch held in the Majestic Hotel, Harrogate, on the Wednesday of BTME week.

"We are delighted to welcome Amazone Ground Care, the PGA European Tour and Bailey's of Norfolk as Golden Key sponsors. The future of the Education and Development Fund, which is such a vital component in the education of greenkeepers, is assured thanks to the generous contributions of our new and existing Golden and Silver Key sponsors," said BIGGA's Executive Director Neil Thomas.

Another company which received its plaque from Viscount Whitelaw was John Deere, which became a Golden Key sponsor during 1996.

Amazone Ground Care, the PGA European Tour and Bailey's of Norfolk join the other 14 Golden and six Silver Key sponsors.



## Cut above the rest

The second Great BIGGA Bunker Competition at The Open Championship at Royal Lytham and St Annes in the summer was won by Patricia Davies, of *The Times*, who was presented with her superb prize, a Hayter Harrier lawn mower, at The Belfry just before Christmas.

The media competition involved estimating how many bunkers would be found by players during the Championship – with the data collected by the BIGGA Greenkeeping Support Team. A member of the team is assigned to every match and rakes all the bunkers found by players, thus ensuring professionally raked sand and minimal delay in play.

The genuine winner of the competition should perhaps have been the course itself because, no doubt influenced by the winning number of 701 at St Andrews the year before, everyone was woefully short in his or her prediction.

Patricia's estimate of 1113 was the highest among those who entered, although still well short of the final figure of 1618 bunkers found by players during the Championship.

The Great BIGGA Bunker Competition will take place for the third year at Royal Troon in July when the BIGGA Greenkeeping Support Team will again be in action. The 50 strong team not only rakes the bunkers but assists the home club's greenkeeping staff with the general day to day preparation of the golf course and also collects interesting on-course news snippets for circulation in the Media Centre.

■ The picture shows Patricia Davies being presented with the Hayter Harrier lawn mower, valued at over £650, by Kim Macfie, left, Sales and Marketing Director of Hayter. *Greenkeeper International* Editor Scott MacCallum looks on.

## Make a date for the best in the west

There's lots to see, lots to try, much to learn and friends to meet. A combination hard to beat in the west country. On April 30, at Long Ashton GC, Westurf will provide all this free just for you... So don't miss out of the very best in the west.

Westurf is the first outdoor exhibition of the year where you can see every type of turf care machinery demonstrated on an area which includes fine and outfield turf. The products and accessories on show will cover your every need from seed to turf fertilisers to top dressers, tools to irrigation.

You are sure of a welcome on the BIGGA stand, and you can enter the competitions. Come in and talk to staff and your Regional Board. You can get advice from the experts on insurance and legal matters, and if it is education you need advice on, all the Region's colleges will be there to talk too. Westurf is for you. Make that note in your diary – April 30.

## BIGGA flies the flag at conference in Portugal

In December BIGGA was represented by Chairman Dean Cleaver and Administration Manager John Pemberton at the 1996 PGA European Tour biennial Greenkeeper Conference held at The Meridian Penina Golf Hotel, Portugal. Headed by John Paramor and Richard Stillwell and jointly sponsored by Ransomes and Levington Horticulture, the conference brought together Course Managers from most of the leading European courses as well as delegates from as far away as Australia and Dubai.

During the week long event talks were presented on a wide range of topics including Health and Safety by Jon Allbutt; The Rules of Golf, by PGA European Tour Tournament Director, Andy McFee; Rebuilding the Henry Cot-

ton designed Penina course by agronomist, George Shiels; the Golf Professional's course expectations by former European number one, Ronan Rafferty, as well as presentations by the sponsors.

As with most events of its kind the conference also gave participants the opportunity to make new acquaintances, renew friendships, as well as exchange experiences and ideas. BIGGA Student of the Year runners-up John Bachelor and Noel Greene were particularly active in soaking up as much knowledge as possible in the presence of such high profile company.

"The conference proved to be an invaluable opportunity to discuss current greenkeeping issues as well as strengthen relationships between the PGA European Tour and BIGGA" said John Pemberton.

(mis)adventures of Gordon the Greenkeeper

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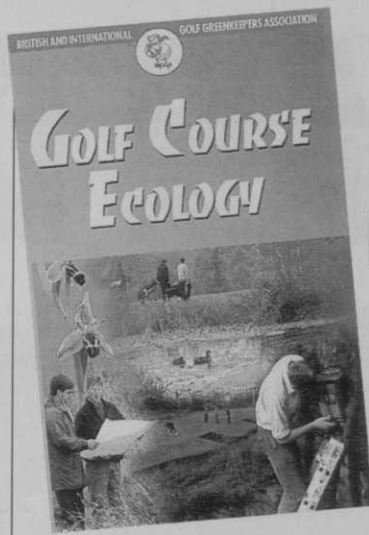
## Kitchen firm cooks up new job for Louise

BIGGA's Sales and Marketing Executive, Louise Lunn, left the Association on a high after this year's successful BTME.

After four years at BIGGA, during which time she has been responsible for selling advertising on *Greenkeeper International* and the organisation and smooth running of BTME, Louise is leaving to take up the post of Assistant Marketing Manager with Leeds-based Symphony plc, one of the country's leading fitted kitchen specialists.

"Louise's work on behalf of the Association and, in particular, on BTME at Harrogate has been exemplary and certainly contributed to the great success the Exhibition has become. On behalf of everyone at BIGGA, and I am sure her many friends in the industry, I wish her well for the future," said BIGGA's Executive Director Neil Thomas.

"I'd like to thank all my friends in the industry for some super times over the last four years and also thank all those who contributed to the wonderful present I received from the industry during BTME," said Louise.



## Video launch highlights concern with ecology

BIGGA's latest video "Golf Course Ecology" – launched in Harrogate at BTME 97 – reflects the growing importance the Association is placing on golf course ecology and the environment in general.

The video, which complements the book "A Practical Guide to the Ecological Management of the Golf Course" produced last year, examines the environmental and ecological techniques employed by some of the country's top golf courses including Royal Birkdale, Lindrick, Temple and Ridding Park – winner of the recent Amazon Environmental competition. It also hears views of the importance of the environment in the game of golf from some of the game's top stars. The video is endorsed by English Nature, the

Scottish Golf Course Wildlife Trust, the Sports Turf Research Institute and the Greenkeepers Training Committee.

"As an Association BIGGA is well aware of the ecological benefits a golf course can bring to an area. Our superb new video "Golf Course Ecology" is an opportunity to show others many of the important initiatives already being undertaken by greenkeepers up and down the country and perhaps gives some hints to other golf clubs about what can be done," explained BIGGA's Executive Director, Neil Thomas.

The video was financed by BIGGA's Education and Development Fund to which the Association's Golden and Silver Key sponsors contribute.

## FLYING DIVOTS

■ BIGGA's Building Fund received a major boost with the presentation of a cheque for £1000 from the South West and South Wales Region.

"We are absolutely delighted to receive this valuable contribution from the South West and South Wales Region as we move closer towards our goal of new Headquarters Offices," said BIGGA's Executive Director, Neil Thomas.

■ Winner of the annual Kubota award for the Best Machinery Student at Lancashire's Myerscough College is Mark Aynsley.

Mark recently graduated from the National Diploma in Turf Science and Sports ground Management course.

■ David Lawton has been appointed Head Greenkeeper at Trentham GC. He was previously First Assistant.

■ Stephen Pike, Head Greenkeeper at Trentham Park GC, Stoke-on Trent, died suddenly in mid January. He was 30.

■ Apologies to Ian Harrison, of Mendip Spring GC, whose name appeared in the Golf Course Management Date Planner under the list of winners of the Miracle Premier Greenkeeper of the Year Award as "Ian Harrington".

■ Standard Golf's BTME '97 catalogue entry in the January issue of *Greenkeeper International* was incorrect. It should have read Standard Golf (UK) Ltd 20b Buckingham Avenue, Slough, Berkshire SL1 4QA. Tel. 01753 537410 Fax. 01753 534663.

## Miracle Professional to merge with Scotts-Sierra

Exercising the option built into the partnership deal set up at the inception of Miracle Garden Care, The Scotts Company of Marysville, Ohio, USA, has purchased the other two thirds of the company for an undisclosed sum. Miracle Professional will merge with Scotts-Sierra (UK) Ltd as part of Scotts International Division, headed by Robert Stohler.

All existing brands will continue to be actively marketed in the UK, including Longlife fertiliser, Casoron, Touchdown and Daconil Turf.

Robert Stohler, as Managing Director of Miracle Garden Care Ltd and head of Scotts International will be based at Godalming and will replace John Wilson.

All other existing personnel

will continue to be employed by the new owners, including Roger Mossop, who heads the turf and amenity business and Steven Gent running the horticulture sector.

"The products and people in the Miracle team will complement the existing expertise to give us formidable strength in the horticulture and amenity markets," said Robert Stohler.



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# Greenkeeper awarded MBE

Jimmy McDonald has been awarded the MBE in the New Year's Honours List.

It topped off a wonderful year for Jimmy, who ensured that Royal Lytham & St Annes was in magnificent condition for last year's Open, the final major championship of his illustrious career.

"It was a wonderful surprise and reflects well on the work that the entire greenkeeping staff put in during the run up to and the week of the Open itself," said Jimmy, who receives the award for "Services to Golf".

It is a fitting tribute to the success of the '96 Open and, with him due to visit Buckingham Palace in the next few months to receive the Award, makes his quote in the lead up to the Championship all the more fitting.

"If your dear old aunt was visiting you'd make a damn good tea but if the Queen were coming you'd do it a wee bit differently, wouldn't you," he said at the time when discussing the meticulous work which went into preparing for the Championship.

The effort paid off and during and since the Championship



Jimmy, fourth from right, and his team

praise for the course has been unstinting.

"I have had letters from all over the world congratulating us on a wonderful Championship and on the condition of the course.

"The feedback I've had is that the genuine links with burnt up grass was just what was wanted. Ironically just a few weeks prior to it I was worried because it was still pretty green."

As ever Jimmy has some thoughtful views on the country's great links courses.

"They should be treated like listed buildings and not tampered with. Ideally, on the Open venues play should be restricted and the clubs compensated. They are like

pieces of antique furniture and should be treated as such."

Since July's Championship much work has been done to return, particularly the spectator walkways and tented village area, to what it should be.

"Because we had two dry summers in a row the sward wasn't a thick as it should be and the damage was quite considerable on the walkways and the nine hole course but John Mallinson, of Ormskirk, who we used after the last Open, has done a great job in repairing the areas."

The recognition Jimmy has received reflects well on the entire greenkeeping profession and Neil Thomas, BIGGA's Execu-

tive Director paid tribute to him.

"The Award is richly deserved and reflects a lifetime's commitment to the greenkeeping profession. Many greenkeepers have worked with Jimmy and been trained by him over the years and a good many have gone on to manage their own golf courses having benefited greatly from the time spend with him.

"As well as being a personal award it is pleasing to see the recognition of greenkeeping as a profession and today the profession offers excellent opportunities. This is in no small measure due to the efforts of the older generation such as Jimmy who has set standards and through the year's enhanced the status of greenkeeping and greenkeepers," said Neil.

Jimmy's CV is the envy of most. He has been Head Greenkeeper at four Opens, four Senior Opens, been Deputy at another Open and has Ryder and Curtis Cups under his belt. He also helped to rebuild the nine hole course at his home in Traigh in the West Highlands.

"The first congratulatory fax came from Traigh. I was chuffed by that," said Jimmy.



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