

# Budding author needs help in 'exposing' tyrannical golfers

I am currently Head Greenkeeper at Whitby GC and am compiling a book called *Golfers Through a Greenkeeper's Eyes*. It is a satirical look at our golfing fraternity and the people we have to deal with on a daily basis.

Having sent the finished article to a couple of agents the reply was more or less the same – it isn't long enough to be a book and is more of a booklet. As I explained to these people I'm a greenkeeper not a writer and, although there was much encouragement, it was strongly recommended that I "fill out" the aforementioned literature with some humorous drawings. Seeing as how my ability to draw cartoons is even less favourable than my ability to write I was wondering if there are any, like minded, greenkeepers out there who would like to partake in a joint venture.

I must, however, forewarn any budding Schultzs that this book/booklet is a scathing and bitter attack on our beloved golfing associates, albeit very "tongue in cheek" and should we not make a million in the first publication we may end up huddled carrying on some building site or other remembering the days when we used to cut grass for a living!

I'm convinced that this request will be greeted with open arms as a chance to put our side of the story in a light hearted and jovial manner and should anyone want to take up this metaphorical gauntlet I would only be too willing to send a few descriptive paragraphs so a visual likeness could be sketched.

I thank you.

**Ian Lavelle**  
Head Greenkeeper  
Whitby GC

## Thanks for support

I write to thank the BIGGA members, staff and my many friends in the industry for the letters, cards and messages I received during my recent bereavement.

The support given has been a great comfort to me during a very sad time.

I would also like to send my best wishes for the future to my successor as Association Guardian, Walter Woods, and to Neil Thomas and all at BIGGA during this 10th anniversary year.

**Bill Lawson**

## Green card system could be made to work in the UK

I would like the chance to reply to David Roy's article "Employers and Intruders", February issue.

I too have endured two inclement years with very dry summers, the worst winter of snow for 15 years in 1995/96 (eg first snowfall November 5, '95 disappearing on April 12, '96), frost down to 15cm and windchill factors below -30° 1996/97. I consequently can fully follow your articles and sympathise.

You are totally correct when you refer to the green card system. This applies to Denmark, Sweden and, I believe, Germany and Norway. Our requirements work on a points system covering etiquette, rules and how to play.

All the new members have to pass tests on: bunker shots, chip shots, fairway shots, etc which are conducted with an existing low handicap player or the club professional. These new members start with a handicap of, wait for it, 55! for both men and women. They must play nine holes to this handicap on the nine hole par 3 course before they are allowed to move on to the main 18 hole par 72 course. This is a popular system with our new golfers and improves the etiquette on the course ie pitch marks, divots etc.

However this only accounts for

the new members and I still have the "old brigade" who neither like change or improvements especially when it interferes with their daily routine.

I quote: "What's wrong with the greens? They're worse now you've made all these holes in them!" These greens have 635 mg per litre of phosphates – I could actually legally sell it for fertiliser!

Or: "I've been playing here for 25 years and never seen it closed when the frost comes out." We have had 10cm of frost moving up coupled with 6mm of rain. This led to a cocktail when walked upon almost like roundup on your feet... "of course we can see that but the grass is 25 years old so it must be able to cope." This is actually 25 years of over fertilisation, over watering and a lack of root system. Enough said.

The worst day has to be the men's day with the hard core of 20 members who incidentally do not have green cards, who leave the course with pepper pot greens and bunker size divots. Of course there's nothing you can teach them.

On numerous occasions we have tried to hold information evenings to educate the membership on greenkeeping techniques and forthcoming disruptive operations.

Strangely enough the aforementioned seem to develop a rare strength of Indian 'flu on that day but are fit to tee off at 8am the next morning.

My quarterly article in the club magazine is appreciated by the majority and it is to those the information is aimed. I do believe the green card system will work, although it will take a long time to see the results.

Maybe the British would benefit from this system, improving course quality and lower our greenkeeper's stress levels.

Thanks for another brilliant Harrogate Show.

**Chris Haspell**  
Course Manager  
Falster GC  
Denmark

**Fortiva**  
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## Great Hadham's Green Recovery

When David Dollimore took over at Great Hadham GC on the Herts/Essex border, greens were worn and weeds were starting to get a foothold.

His problems increased when a late April herbicide was followed by unusually severe frosts. Attempts to re-turf and then re-seed were also thwarted, this time by drought.

It was then that he spotted a Fortiva advert and, after consulting Kings Horticulture, decided to give it a go.

"We added the Fortiva treated pure bent mixture to a top dressing, chitting the seed over a weekend, just 12 days later, it was up and running," he recalls.

"Normally I'd expect grass to take 21 days to establish, but within a fortnight it had bedded in. This was an incredible recovery, the best I've seen in 15 years.

"Fortiva treated seed is certainly worth it," he says. "Now I'll rarely consider anything else on the greens."

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