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International

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■ The next edition of
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should be with you by June 10

GREENKEEPER

International

MAY 1997

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Naunton Downs – the Cotswold hill course which likes to set stiff challenges
Picture by Scott MacCallum

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Use the post-paid Reader Reply Card facing Page 2 for further information on the products and services advertised in this issue. Just state the companies' Ad Ref numbers, post the card to us and we'll arrange for further information to be sent to you direct.



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GREENKEEPER

International

is the official monthly magazine of the British & International Golf Greenkeepers Association

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Tel: 01909 568533, fax: 01909 568206

Greenkeeper International: winner of Certificate of Merit in Magazine of the Year category, Editing for Industry Awards 1994 and 1995

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Circulation is by subscription. Subscription rate: UK £34 per year, Europe and Eire £44. The magazine is also distributed to BIGGA members, golf clubs, local authorities, the turf industry, libraries and central government.

ISSN 0961-6977
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Golf Greenkeepers Association

Greenkeeper Education and Development Fund

The Fund provides the key to the future for greenkeeper, golf club and game. Individuals and companies can join the Golden Key Circle and Silver Key Circle. For details, contact BIGGA on 01347 838581.

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Wonderful thing about Tiger...

Reflecting on Tiger Woods' wonderful victory in the US Masters it would hard to find any down side to what seems likely to be a significant piece of golfing history.

There was one thing which worried me though, and that was the general assumption that having reduced par fives to a mere drive and a flick some of Tiger's powers would be nullified by the powers-that-be at Augusta National next year.

Augusta National changes every year with slight amendments to the course to keep it fresh. Indeed one of the most significant, not to say clever, alterations, was the decision to mow the fairways from green to tee so that the nap of the grass would knock a few yards of the length of drives.

However, if there were to be more yards added to key holes or bunkers inserted with the sole aim of catching out Mr Woods I believe it would be a mighty shame and no real service to golf.

We saw it in a minor way over here when a few yards were added to the Old Course at St Andrews just a short time after John Daly won The Open there. Unfortunately what's seen as good enough for The Old Course and Augusta National will surely be good enough for many existing clubs and those still on the drawing boards.

Particularly as we will soon be seeing the adverts. "Drive like a Tiger", "Adds 50 yards to your game". Everyone who picks up a club, me included no doubt, will be taken in.

Looking at it simplistically, and perhaps selfishly, longer courses with more hazards give green staff more work.

There are ways to restrict the power of the modern sportsman. Tennis courts haven't become bigger to cope with the power

of a Greg or a Goran, the authorities made the balls a little softer. Surely a similar amendment could be done in golf to stop players over powering courses.

But do we need to stop them? For all his power John Daly's winning score at St Andrews was 282, only three better – less than a stroke a round – than Bobby Jones' when he won at St Andrews in 1927. Henry Cotton broke the Open record for a round with a 65 at Sandwich in 1934, Tiger's best round at Augusta this year was a 65.

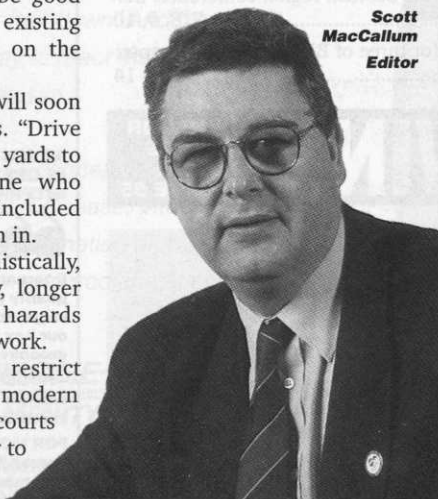
I don't believe we should worry too much until The Open is won with four rounds in the 50s. Even then wouldn't it be great to watch?

I really think we should just stand back and admire the graceful power of the new Masters Champion rather than look for ways of stifling him, while at the same time making the game impossibly difficult for the rest of us. Not forgetting the extra work for greenkeepers.

Anyway Tiger Woods is a unique talent, a phenomenon.

As the song says "The wonderful thing about Tiger is... that he's the only one."

Scott MacCallum
Editor



As I see it...

BY PAT MURPHY
BIGGA CHAIRMAN

I've had another busy month. It began with a visit to the South East Seminar at Brinsbury College. That doesn't sound too bad but it involved 14 hours travelling – seven each way – in the car to get there.

Having said that the Seminar was excellent. It was launched by the Vice Principal who said, as a lady golf it was nice to see the greenkeepers at the seminar on a Tuesday and not out on the golf course. I

replied by saying it was also nice to be at the Seminar because we didn't have to listen to the ladies!

Among the speakers was Billy McMillan, whom I'd heard speak at the Scottish Conference the previous month. He gives a superb talk and I agree with the person in the audience who said it was one of the best talks he'd ever heard. It was also my first chance to see the BIGGA Road Show and I thought it was first class.

The following week I was at Aldwark Manor, initially for the Working Party on Greenkeeper Salaries, and then a Board of Management meeting.

The aim of the working party is to have greenkeepers salaries agreed universally by all the golfing bodies and the working party will receive input from, among others, the R&A, the golf unions, the Golf Club Secretaries Association, the Golf Club Owners Association and the GTC.

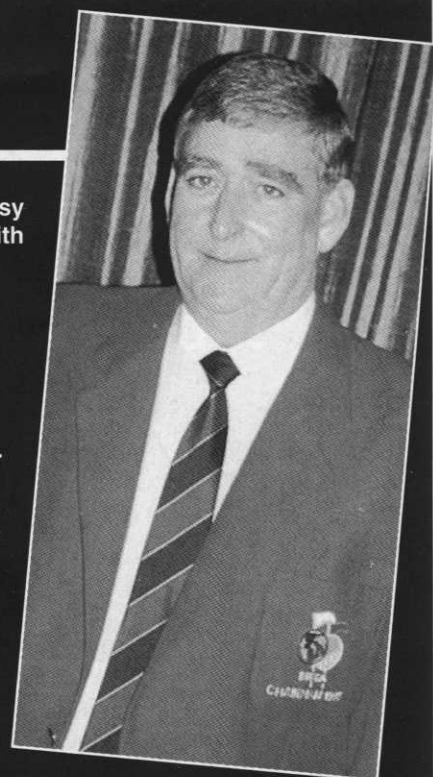
The main news from the Board meeting was that we are still looking at our options with regard to headquarters accommodation. The meeting also saw the welcome attendance of the Deputy Board Members from each region. The idea was to let them see how the Board of Management operated and I believe it was appreciated by those who attended.

Iain Macleod, the Deputy for Scotland, told me that he had no water problems on his course in Tain. That contrasted with Billy McMillan in the south east who had told me he was having real problems. I'm about half way between the two at Shipley and I suppose we're not as good as Iain but better than Billy.

I've also been to the Savoy Hotel this month for the Agricultural Engineers Association Conference and Luncheon. It was also the occasion when Graham Dale, Managing Director of Lely, was appointed AEA President and the first person I met when I went in the door of the hotel was a familiar face, Graham's wife, Debbie, who used to be BIGGA's Education Officer.

I was seated next to Peter Mansfield, of Lely, whom I know from Toro Student of the Year judging, and I also chatted with Tony Bourke and Kim Macfie, of Hayter, and Peter Bell, of Jacobsen.

All in all a busy, enjoyable and productive month.



Pat Murphy

Boost for training as turf industry achieves NVQ accreditation

The latest review of National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) has seen a major boost for greenkeeper training with the accreditation of NVQs in Greenkeeping and Sportsturf Maintenance. These qualifications at Levels 2 and 3 replace the existing NVQ Levels 2 and 3 in Amenity Horticulture (Greenkeeping) which together with the Greenkeeper Training Committee Training Manual provided craft and supervisory qualifications for the industry. The Training Manual will remain as the record of achievement for NVQ candidates working on golf courses.

"This is what I've been working towards since I joined the Industry Lead Body for Amenity Horticulture three years ago," said Greenkeepers Training Committee Education Director, David Golding.

"The GTC has always been totally behind the concept of vocational qualifications, which are now being promoted under the slogan 'Based on Skill - Awarded on Merit', but we self-

ishly wanted to make them more relevant to our industry.

"The problem previously was that the the Amenity Horticulture qualifications were too broadly based for our industry and did not cover enough greenkeeping and turf management skills."

'We shall now be able to tailor NVQs to our exact requirements'

To achieve this latest breakthrough a campaign of lobbying by the turf industry, orchestrated by David, involving the Home Unions, R&A, BIGGA, the IOG and colleges, was undertaken behind the scenes to convince the Industry Lead Body, the National Council for Vocational Qualifications, City and Guilds and the Scottish Qualifications Authority (formerly SCOTVEC) that the Fine Turf Industry was ready to take on the responsibility of managing its own qualifications. The current review of standards gave the opportunity

to bring about the changes.

"We shall now be able to tailor NVQs to our exact requirements to ensure that the requirements of the industry are met. Ownership of the awards means that we, the industry, can take the lead with the awarding bodies to ensure that our 300 Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper assessors and verifiers will monitor and uphold National Standards.

"We shall be in a position to call upon education providers, including colleges, to give the type of training that fits into the overall package required by the employers," explained David.

Those people who are currently going through the NVQ Amenity Horticulture Levels and are following the Training Manual will not be disadvantaged as their qualifications will continue to be relevant.

"This is a marvellous opportunity for all parts of the Industry to have an award that is closely matched to its requirements," said Ken Richardson, BIGGA's Education Officer.

FLYING DIVOTS

■ Tildenet is publishing a new series of educational books entitled "The Groundsman's Companion."

The first companion, out now, concentrates on the maintenance of cricket tables and outfield. Written by the STRI and edited by Len Smith Ground Supervisor at Glamorgan County Cricket Club, the book has been produced in four easy to read sections, Spring, Playing season, End of Season and Winter.

The first of their kind these publications bring together all the traditional methods of Groundsmanship including hints and tips from some of the best known groundsman in the country.

At the price of £5 this invaluable aid is available from Tildenet Ltd, call: 0117 966 9684 or any local Tildenet distributor.

■ Sisis has appointed three more Sisis Direct service engineers. They are Mark Rodman, West Country and South Wales, Lyndon Weeks, Surrey and South West London and Chris Goodchild, London and South East Home Counties.

■ Bourne Amenity has appointed Gordon Smith, formerly Course Manager at Liphook GC, Head Greenkeeper at Swinley Forest and most recently Course Manager at Selsdon Park Hotel, as Area Sales Manager to cover Surrey and Hampshire.

■ Grass Roots Annual Inter Club five-a-side competition will be held at Stockley Park Sports Ground on June 11, '97. For further information on the event which last year attracted over 300 greenkeepers, contact Grass Roots on 0118 9736600.

■ The Ransomes Dealer Technical Training Award for 1997 has been won by Rickerby Ltd, Ransomes' appointed grass and turf machinery dealer based in Carlisle.

Open to all of Ransomes' UK dealers/ the award was secured by Rickerby with an average score of 84.73% achieved by the company's 11 engineers who attended service courses held in recent months at Ransomes' international training centre at Ipswich.



Turf grower rolls out new delivery service

Rolawn's fleet of delivery vehicles has developed to the stage whereby the company is now able to offer its customers free mechanical off loading from any of its 16 turf depots located throughout the UK.

Because the company operates a no minimum order policy, establishing the service on a no cost basis nationwide proved to

be a challenge.

Rolawn Depot Managers and Regional Sales Managers have full details of the service which operates (mainly) with Moffett Mounty fork lift trucks being carried on the back of the company's delivery vehicles.

The fork lifts are used to off load the turf and position it ready for use.

"Issues such as Health and Safety, labour costs and speed of production are all driving customer demand for mechanical off-loading. As the largest turf grower in Europe we wanted to offer our customers this comprehensive service free of charge, and now we can," stated Terry Ryan, Rolawn's Sales and Marketing Director.

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Turfcare firm applauded in small business awards

The Grass Roots Trading Company has picked up a top award at the prestigious Black Horse Small Business Awards run by Lloyds Bank.

The company, whose Managing Director Jamie Bennett is a familiar face among greenkeepers in the home counties, took the Black Horse Small Business Award and Jamie was presented with the trophy and the cheque for £1000 by former Chancellor of the Exchequer Denis Healey.

"We are extremely proud. There was a very strict criteria for entry including customer liaison and accountancy audit and it was a most nerve wracking experience," said Jamie.

Grass Roots was launched two and a half years ago from Jamie and his wife Jacqueline's home



and they now distribute over 9,000 turfcare products to many of the country's top sporting venues including Sunningdale

GC and Wimbledon.

In an article in the Business Magazine which highlighted the awards it was revealed that

Grass Roots turned over £41,000 in its first year and that it rose to over £1.8 million in the second year.

My first six months in the region

It is now some six months since I took up the post as BIGGA Midland Regional Administrator which, in addition to the routine tasks previously performed by my predecessor, entails visiting golf clubs in the Region to meet current members and to recruit new members. To date I have visited over 60 golf clubs, attended a number of Section events and met many greenkeepers, secretaries, owners and managers.

The response generally has been that they are pleased to see someone from the Association and have the opportunity to talk

face to face on membership and what the Association has to offer. I have also talked to many greenkeepers who are not members of the Association and explained to them the benefits of membership and left them with promotional literature and membership application forms. It is difficult to assess how many of these potential members will actually join the Association, only time will tell, but the majority did show a keen interest.

In the coming weeks I intend to continue my visits and I look forward to meeting many more

members and potential members.

Now a commercial.

Following the poor attendance at the Midland Regional Seminar last November at the Sketchley Grange Hotel in Hinckley, the Regional Board has decided on a change of location. This year's Regional Seminar will be held at the Northampton Rugby Football Club (the Saints) on Wednesday, November 19, 1997.

The principal speakers will be Jack McMillan, George Brown, Ryder Cup player Peter Baker, (to be confirmed) and Martin Jones with supporting talks from Noel

Green, runner-up in the '96 Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year competition, and Mike Wadley, Secretary of the Northamptonshire County Golf Club, Danny Godfrey, Broughton Loam Ltd and David Powell, Saint's Head Groundsman.

Support your Region by making a special effort to attend the Seminar and also learn something from the experience. Application forms will be sent out later this year and if you do not receive one get in touch with me or your local Section Secretary.

Peter Larter

Association sets new challenges

More than 15 years after its formation, the Amenity Grass Marketing Association (AGMA) is setting itself new challenges.

Throughout its life through the efforts of its member companies, the Association has stood for quality – quality of products and quality of supply. These aims do not change...

"We support the use of purpose bred amenity grasses,

advice that offers the right quality of variety to meet users expectations and the surety of knowing the customer will receive what he originally specified," comments John Akers, Chairman of AGMA. He went on "We are planning to bring these ideals more to the forefront of amenity grass seed consumers with a programme of marketing activities in the coming months."

Further changes in the Association result from a change in the Secretaryship – the Association has been well served during the past five years by Anthony Andrews CBE, who as a result of increased workloads in his international seed consultancy business has passed his duties to David Keegan. The new 'address' for the Association becomes: AGMA, PO Box 30, Tetbury, GL8 8ZQ.

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Paul Crouch
Head Greenkeeper
Puttenham
Golf Club

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HAYTER CHALLENGE

Reasons to get in more practice

This year there are two huge extra reasons to spend a few more hours pounding balls on the practice range or honing your skills on the putting green in preparation for the annual Hayter Challenge. Those who win through from the regional qualifiers will have the rare opportunity of playing one of the country's finest in-land courses and there are also places on offer to represent the Rest of the World team to play against the Americas in the Hayter International Cup to be played in the USA next year.

Ganton Golf Club, near Scarborough, has hosted many major events including the Ryder Cup, in 1949, and regularly welcomes The Amateur Championship, the last occasion being 1991 when Gary Wolstenholme triumphed.

Once there, the player with a handicap of 12 or better, who represents and resides in each of the home countries and who performs best in this year's Hayter Challenge Final, will be selected for the Rest of the World team in the second Hayter International match, to be held at the Cherokee Town and Country Club, Atlanta, Georgia, in October 1998.

A rare opportunity indeed particularly as the team will have the chance to avenge the narrow defeat inflicted on the Rest of the World by the Americas at West Lancashire Golf Club last year.

As ever some excellent golf clubs are hosting Sectional Qualifiers while the venues for the Regional Qualifiers form a set of clubs which it would be hard to better.

- Scottish – Loch Green GC, Troon, May 27.
- South West and South Wales – Burnham and Berrow GC, June 11.
- Midland – Warwickshire GC, June 26.
- South East – Ham Manor GC, June 27.
- Northern – Matfen Hall GC, July 9.
- National Final: Ganton GC, September 17 & 18.

Full day is packed with events to spell success for Scottish conference



Distinguished guests at the Scottish Region Conference

Over 160 greenkeepers, club officials and other interested parties from all over Scotland and further afield filled the conference suite at the Isle of Skye Hotel for the 1997 Scottish Region's annual conference, writes Elliott Small.

It was an excellent day in more ways than one as the weather outside was probably the best day we had had for several weeks. However, what was going on inside was enough to keep us from thinking too much about the glorious sunny day outside.

The conference was opened by the first Chairman of BIGGA, Walter Woods, and the morning was a succession of one interesting speaker after the other. Firstly Master Greenkeeper, Ian MacMil-

lan, Balbirnie Park, took us on a trip through the "History of Golf and Greenkeeping". This was followed by another of the McMillan clan (no relation, different spelling, same clan), Billy this time from Wildwood GC on "Keeping Greenkeeping Simple". Andrew Vaughan, from Eamonn Wall & Co then gave us some valuable "Tips for Trees" and never mentioned a chainsaw once, as my members usually suggest. To finish off the morning session Dr Brian Clifford, plant pathologist from Aberystwyth Research, tried to help us to understand some of the problems of disease in turf and how to manage it. An excellent morning deserved an excellent lunch and

that is what the Isle of Skye hotel served up to us.

What a tester for Derek Ross, past Captain of Dumfries and County Golf Club, with the hot spot directly after that lunch. He made sure no-one fell asleep with one of the best talks we have had on communication and co-operation between greenkeeper and committee. Carol Borthwick, Elmwood College, was her usual inimitable self as she again brought us up to date with the latest in greenkeeping education. And finally Jim Snow, National Director, USGA Green Section, spent an hour on the "Search for the Perfect Green Construction Method".

Fascinating all of them and we are indebted to the speakers for providing us with such an interesting day. To finish the proceedings in this the 10th anniversary year, after starting with Walter, the first Chairman of BIGGA, we were pleased to have Pat Murphy, the present Chairman. Our thanks go to the Isle of Skye Hotel for all their help in making this a successful day and we must not forget our two conference Chairmen, Sam Morrison, the Scottish Region Chairman, and Alasdair McLaren, Scottish Region Education Convener, and last, but definitely not least, the Scottish Region Patrons for their continued and valued sponsorship of this conference.

Quality, safety and attention to detail seals £250,000 deal

When Oswestry based contractor Cliff Evans Limited placed a £250,000 machinery order with Hayter several important aspects played a major role in the decision. Quality and safety being just two.

Gary Jones, Director of Cliff Evans, visited the Hayter factory where he had a chance to see for himself how closely every machine is checked and tested before leaving the site. Gary was also impressed with the team spirit that was evident throughout.

Facing stiff competition, the Hayter machines were put through their paces with the result, that orders were placed for a mixture of both Self Propelled Triples and Gang mowers.

Commenting on the outcome Gary Jones said, "we have a very close business relationship with Hayter, and have had for several years now. I am confident that the decision made to purchase this fleet of new machinery will more than justify our continuing loyalty".

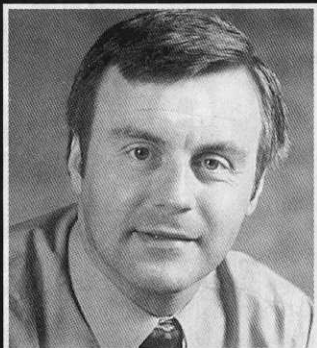
Operators have had the benefit of on-site training at their various sites via Hayter's Technical Support team, Robin Blackford and Gwyn Preece, who have successfully completed all installation work to the satisfaction of the operator concerned.

Robin Boyes, Territory Manager, said, "The operators are positive that the machines are the right ones for the work they are expected to do, they are strong, reliable and extremely easy to maintain."

President appointed

Graham Dale was elected Agricultural Engineers Association President for 1997/8 at the Association's AGM held at the Savoy Hotel, London recently.

Graham, Managing Director of Lely (UK) Ltd, has been Chairman of the AEA Outdoor Power Equipment Council for the last two years and a member of the Finance and General Purposes Committee for the past four years.



All set for the National

Cooden Beach Golf Club on the Sussex coast is preparing to welcome BIGGA members for the National Tournament which runs from August 4-6.

The programme can be found within this issue of *Greenkeeper International* and with entries limited to 81 booking early is strongly recommended.

Miracle Professional will again be sponsoring the tournament and they are delighted both with the attractive and challenging golf course, under the management of

Course Manager Stefan Antolik and the surrounding facilities.

The tournament banquet will be held on Tuesday August 5 in the clubhouse, while another highlight will be the Miracle Professional Social evening on the Monday, at the adjacent Cooden Beach Hotel, which will include a barbecue, entertainment and access to an open-air swimming pool.

As ever families will be welcomed to this traditional and ever-popular event.

Chippendale muscles in



Warrington based grass seed producer, British Seed Houses has announced the appointment of a new office sales executive in response to increased contracts and a more focussed sales drive.

Jonathan Chippendale, who recently joined the company, previously held positions within a number of landscape contract firms including Marbury Landscapes and Brophy Plc and will be responsible for the handling of national land-

scaping contracts within the agricultural and amenity sectors.

In response to his appointment, Jonathan said: "I am very pleased to be working for a company so highly regarded as British Seed Houses and I hope to make a significant contribution."

British Seed Houses is a leading producer of grass seed both within the amenity and agricultural sectors. Projects include the supply of seed to many of the country's top golf clubs as well as major amenity schemes and agricultural merchants.

Designers get low-down

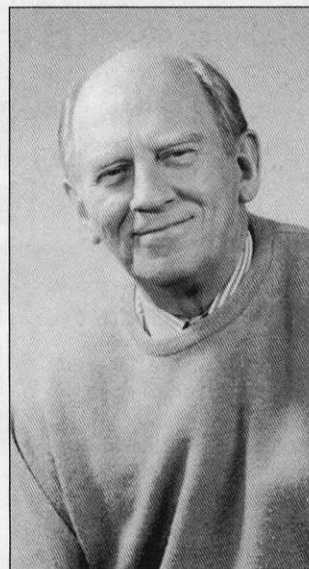
Over 20 golf course designers, architects and builders attended a seminar arranged by the ProSport Division of Hepworth Minerals and Chemicals (HMC) in mid March 1997. The principal speaker was George Shiels, consultant agronomist to, among others, the PGA European Tour.

The theme of his talk was the development of standards for the specification of root zones for golf green use. He traced the history of the USGA parameters

for the formulation of root zones and explained how they had been progressively improved and adapted to European use.

Sales Manager of HMC's ProSport product group, Tony Jacques, under the theme of 'Assuring Your Specification', explained how and which ProSport root zone formulations meet the USGA criteria and can be supplied with absolute consistency no matter what the size of the order or where in the UK it is delivered.

Raising awareness one of key aims for new BTLIA chairman



Gerry Wilkins was elected Chairman of the BTLIA at the recent AGM. The Association was formed in 1978 to regulate and improve the standards of system design and installation by companies specialising in sports turf irrigation, and was later enlarged to include landscape irrigation companies.

Gerry has worked for a number of irrigation companies in the UK and overseas since 1964 and is currently Sales Manager of British Overhead Irrigation. An enthusiastic supporter of the BTLIA, and a member of the Executive Committee since 1993, he succeeds Philip York who has been Chairman for the past two years.

In his inaugural remarks, Gerry paid tribute to Philip's work during his term of office. He stated that one of his main

tasks would be to raise awareness of the Association externally by developing closer links with organisations such as the Institute of Groundsmanship, BIGGA the Landscape Institute, the UKIA and the European Irrigation Association. He also referred to increasingly complex Health & Safety regulations and assured Members that the Association would give all possible assistance in this area: the newly-introduced H & S Manual was a practical example of this intention.

Under the guidance of its Secretary, David Halford, the BTLIA runs regular Diploma courses in modern irrigation design and practice at Myerscough College in Lancashire which are open to both Members and non members of the Association.

(mis)adventures of Gordon the Greenkeeper



Meetings, meetings... disciplinary meetings

The **LEGAL HELPLINE** can advise you

Greenkeeper Members call the LEGAL HELPLINE for FREE advice: 0990 234500

Yet another benefit of **BIGGA** membership



Three more firms join as Golden Key sponsors

Three new companies have become the latest to join BIGGA as Golden Key sponsors and the decision has been taken to close the programme at the current number of 20 Golden and six Silver Key companies.

Ritefeed joined at the beginning of April while Barenbrug and Watermation will take their places on July 1.

"We are pleased to bring the Golden and Silver Key programme up to quota with three new companies and are delighted to have their support," said BIGGA's Executive Director Neil Thomas.

"BIGGA's Education and Development Fund was established in January 1992 and has since gone from strength to strength having been given excellent support from both Golden and Silver key company members and individuals.



"We feel we have reached the appropriate number of contributing companies which are instrumental in enabling BIGGA to provide education and training opportunities for greenkeepers and advance the profession," he explained. Among the projects facilitated by the Education and Development Fund last year was the financing of the acclaimed Golf Course Ecology video, which complemented the book produced the previous year as well as the significant subsidising of national and regional training courses.

Ritefeed, Barenbrug and Watermation will be presented with their Golden Key plaques at BIGGA's 10th Anniversary Golf Day at Aldwark Manor on June 23.

Ransomes strengthens its support with new kit for PGA European Tour

Ransomes is to raise the level of support it provides to the PGA European Tour.

Strengthening the successful partnership forged over the past year, the additional assistance from Ransomes answers a request from the PGA European Tour's event staging department for the loan of light-treading turf vehicles to help prepare venues for four separate Tour events taking place within the British Isles during 1997.

The selected vehicles – Cushman Turf-Trucksters with transport boxes – will be in action for up to six weeks on each course assisting with the movement and installation of signs, banners and the stakes and ropes needed for spectator control. Using a dedicated turf vehicle for the job will eliminate the risk of surface marking prior to the tournaments, ensuring optimum pre-

sensation of all courses where the PGA European Tour has a staging responsibility.

The four events where the Cushmans will be in action are the Alamo English Open at Marriott Hanbury Manor Hotel; the Volvo PGA Championship at The Wentworth Club; the Smurfit European Open at the K Club, Dublin, and the One 2 One British Masters at the Marriott Forest of Arden Hotel, Golf and Country Club.

Ransomes was appointed an Official Supplier to the PGA European Tour in 1996 with Ransomes, Cushman and Ryan grass and turf maintenance equipment becoming the preferred green-keeping machinery of the Tour and recommended for the preparation of all PGA European Tour venues until at least 1999.

The association between Ransomes and the Tour has flowered

during its first year as Ransomes answered calls for additional specialist machines to assist with course preparation prior to a number of events. According to the PGA European Tour's Director of Greenkeeping, Richard Stillwell, both the Czech Open and Moroccan Open owe their final success to Ransomes' prompt response and the effectiveness of the machines installed.

"I have nothing but praise for the way that Ransomes has reacted to our calls for specialist equipment and back-up support," he pointed out. "By being approachable, responsive and reliable, Ransomes has made many new friends since joining the Tour, proving through its actions that it is prepared to back the Tour, its selected courses and their owners, managers and greenkeepers to the hilt."



Distributor wins top award

Otterbine presented TIL of Ringwood, Hampshire the 'Otterbine European Distributor of the Year Award' for their performance in 1996. Peter Roberts, TIL's Managing Director, accepted the award at the GCSAA Show in Las Vegas.

In 1996, TIL achieved a 70% increase in Otterbine sales and provided the opportunity for five of the company's technicians to be factory trained in servicing Otterbine products. In the last 18 months, TIL has organised two, one day-day seminars on aeration and water quality management.

Commenting on this award,

Charlie Barebo Otterbine President said, "TIL is more than just a distributor. They have adopted an educational, consultant-like approach to water quality management. In addition, TIL has taken a leading role in educating the UK market in respect to holistic, environmentally sound water quality and lake management. As a result, the market as a whole benefits".

■ Pictured: Peter Roberts (centre) receives the 'Otterbine European Distributor of the Year Award' from Charlie Barebo (right) in the company of Quentin Allardice. TIS Scotland.



Former opera singer and golf club secretary, Paula Humphries, is the person chosen to fill the formidable shoes of Gordon Child as Regional Administrator for the South West and South Wales Region.

Paula trained as a singer at the London Opera Centre before winning a scholarship to the world famous La Scala in Milan.

She toured as a soprano throughout Italy as well as performing in Strasbourg and Vienna before returning to the UK permanently.

She is still in demand as a singer but recently fitted her engagements around golf club secretary work at Liphook in Hampshire, Tyrells Wood, Leatherhead, and, most recently, Downs Crediton in Devon.

A 24 handicap golfer Paula is also a former Lady Captain of Alton Golf Club, in Hampshire.

"I am looking forward to the role and, in particular, to getting to know existing members and recruiting new members," said Paula.

Goodbye weeds.



'Intrepid' will take care of your turf weeds

'Intrepid' is a new cost-effective selective weedkiller that can be applied throughout the growing season. It's powerful three-way mixture will control many broad-leaved weeds in turf. And unlike some turf herbicides, repeat applications *are* possible should new weeds germinate or deep-rooted weeds regrow during the season.

Goodbye empties.



Miracle will take care of your used containers

Empty pesticide containers are no longer a problem. In conjunction with a registered waste disposal contractor, Miracle Professional offer a **free** service on the UK mainland for all Miracle (ICI/Zeneca Professional Products) labelled containers. Envirogreen Ltd will collect and dispose of your empties in full compliance with legal requirements.

Good buy, Intrepid

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NEW PRODUCTS



■ The Kilworth RotoBurier range has been extended with two completely new models of rotary burier for tractors from 16 to 20 horse power.

The 85L and 110L have been designed with smaller tractors in mind as until now stone burying work has been restricted to tractors above 20 horse power. The use of a RotoBurier to bury stones, vegetation and debris prior to seeding or turfing has become an important part of the construction and reinstatement of playing fields, golf courses, green areas within new developments and other similar areas. As the RotoBurier can produce a seed bed in one pass the reductions in time and labour/machinery costs are considerable. The new models have all of the user friendly features of the existing larger machines including easy access to the blades, replaceable inner skin and mechanical side shift. The RotoBurier range now consists of six machines from 0.85m working width up to 1.7m working width. This brings the Kilworth stone burier range to a total of nine models up to 2.5m working width. Prices start at £3200 + VAT. For further information contact Kilworth on 01530 412690.

■ British Seed Houses has published a Golf Greens Guide which details the choice of grasses available for greens.

The Guide also includes extended sections on Providence and Avalon, the first velvet bent for 15 years.

Avalon possesses tremendous

shoot density and wear tolerance and represents a huge step forward in the choice available for overseeding greens.

The Guide is the first available specifically for golf greens and complements the Turf Grass Manual and Wild Flora Manual already produced by British Seed Houses.

The Golf Greens Guide costs £4.95 and is available from British Seed Houses, Bewsey Industrial Estate, Pitt Street, Warrington, Cheshire, WA5 5LE. Tel: 01925 654411.

■ Anyone who has tried adjusting a brushcutter carburettor, while also keeping the cutterhead running free, will know that it is virtually an impossible operation to carry out accurately. It can waste considerable time and, therefore, represents an inefficient workshop practice. In addition, it is important that, for maximum performance and long life, the carburettor on a modern high speed engine is set correctly.

There is now a solution to this problem from Risboro' Turf. The Park Brushcutter Workstation unit holds a brushcutter or trimmer in a locking clamp leaving the engineer's hands free to assemble an engine and make all the necessary adjustments. The Workstation rotates through 360 degrees and can be locked in any position. The unit will take machines up to 80 pounds in weight. There are seven models to choose from including floor, wall and bench-mounted versions.

Mark Barthelmie, Managing Director of Risboro' Turf, said. "This latest introduction in our workshop range makes what has in the past been a difficult operation, very easy. The Park Brushcutter Workstation improves workshop efficiency and cost effectiveness, while at the same time providing better working conditions for service personnel."

■ The True-Surface Vibratory Greens Rolling System is a set of three lightweight roller units which fit easily onto a standard greens triple mower and use the machines hydraulic drive to power their vibratory action.

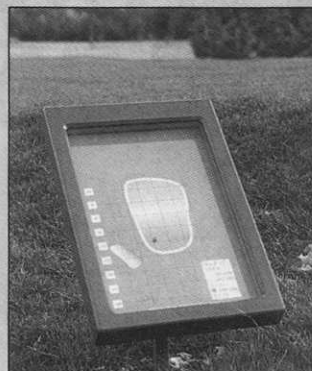
Although the rollers only weigh

■ The Pin Point Green System is the perfect answer to the question Where's the Pin? A clear full colour graphic overlaid with a grid shows the green side area of the hole. This gives the distance from the front or centre of the green to the hole about to be played. A magnetic marker then points exactly to where the hole is cut. The Pin Point Green Systems are available completely free of charge to golf clubs.

The system has been designed to enhance yardage booklet sales and a schematic of the whole of the hole can be included if the golf club so desires.

The Pin Point Green System is especially useful for any holes where a clear view of the green for the approach shot is not possible. Even when the green is on a level with the player, it is very difficult to gauge the distance to the pin.

Pin Point Green Systems

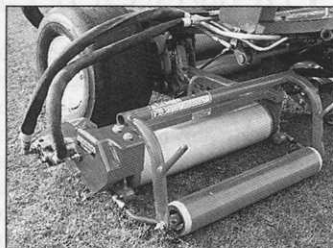


will sell the advertising space to sponsors, produce the graphics for each sign, including the advertising space that has been sold then supply the set to the golf club at no charge.

The cost of the sponsorship is £400 per box for three years for an area of 260mm by 110 mm. Alternatively the golf club can sell some of the space to sponsors to generate club funds.

For further information Tel: 01494 773757.

the same as a standard greens unit, they produce high frequency minimal weight vibration which energise the surface and transform the green back into its original shape, with the three individual roller units following the contours in exactly the same way as the mowers do. The effect is to true up the surface and increase the green speed without fear of compaction normally associated with heavy rolling.



Green speeds can thus be increased without the need to reduce mowing heights. This saves stress on the turf and produces lusher greens, hence the rollers popularity for tournament preparation.

They can also be used after Verti-draining to true-up the surface, and after topdressing

when their vibratory action will shake the sand down through the surface. Other uses include the greens true during the winter when there is little growth to mow, and quickly establishing a firm surface on new greens to allow them to be brought into play sooner.

For further information Tel: 0113 267 6000.

■ Swinley Forest has taken delivery of the first Material Injection System sold in Britain. Manufactured by Landpride Turf and distributed by Turfmech Machinery, the self-propelled MIS 2100 was installed at the exclusive Berkshire club by golf course equipment specialist, Surrey Grasscare.

Course Manager, Lawson Bingham, explained that the machine has been purchased principally to help alleviate sub-surface compaction on greens, tees, aprons and other problem areas around the course. "Injecting water at high pressure helps open up the soil to depth without causing surface disturbance," he commented. "It also enables wetting agents to be placed where they are most

needed. Owning our own water injection machine means that we can now aerate at the most appropriate time without holding up play for members and their guests. The MIS 2100 is a valuable addition to the club's machinery fleet."

Able to inject water or pre-mixed dry or liquid materials to a maximum depth of 8in (200mm), the MIS 2100 has seven nozzles set at 3in (76mm) spacings. Water is delivered to the machine's pump and injection nozzles via a hose connected to a nearby irrigation head or water tap capable of supplying 5 gallons (23 litres) per minute at a pressure of 15psi (1 bar). Liquid or dry materials are pulled into the soil from a separate container by the suction effect of the fast-moving water. Powered by an 11hp engine with electric start, the retail price of the MIS 2100 is from £12,615.

For further information Tel: 01889 271503.

■ Patissons has launched a new hole cup which encompasses the company's new five point anti mud design and can also accommodate American style flag pins.

"The original Bogey and Anti mud hole cups have been a great success for us but the tooling for these was getting very tired after having produced more than half a million over its 25 year existence," explained Mike Hinch, Managing Director. "We have been working on the new designs for over a year, pulling together all the feedback we get from greenkeepers and other associates to ensure that we get it right. With the new ferrule acceptor design and the rigidity of the cup we can be sure that the flag pins stand to attention rather than doing an impression of the Leaning Tower of Pisa!"

The new hole cups are available as from this month priced at £35.50 per nine. £3.95 each for the UK size and £38.25 per nine £4.25 each for the Expo, American version.

For further information Tel: 01494 794646.

■ BAC to Nature (Products) Ltd has extended its product range to include Natures Miracle a

culture of microbes that will cleanse and activate growth throughout the soil. Once greens have been treated with some fungicides and weed killer the only thing left alive is the grass and there will not be sufficient microbes in the soil due to prior applications of chemicals. This is not natural and this is why Thatch or Blacklayer may be experienced. Having no microbes in the soil leaves it wide open to attack from disease and creates problematic conditions. A solution is to apply cultures of natural beneficial microbes that will redress the balance and give a disease free environment. As a liquid Natures Miracle has many more attributes than any powder or granular form of microbe product.

Using Natures Miracle BAC to Nature claims will: Disperse Blacklayer; stabilise trees from shock; activate growth; vastly reduce the need to use fungicides; save on preparation time and be cost effective in course management

As all the products are 100% natural and organic it will not harm any human~ animal, or plant life. They will condition the soil naturally and accelerate the natural process.

Natures Miracle is primarily a beneficial selection of microbes and not a fertiliser. Although containing some nutrients in the solution Natures Miracle is a growth stimulant and soil purifier.

For further information Tel: 01904 331313.

■ The new range of Bray Seed Slotters and Spikers has been designed by a professional working groundsman, following years of development and trials.

The overriding principles used throughout the design stages were to provide an affordable range of products which would eliminate the time consuming and expensive methods of seeding, overseeding and repairing damaged or worn areas of grass.

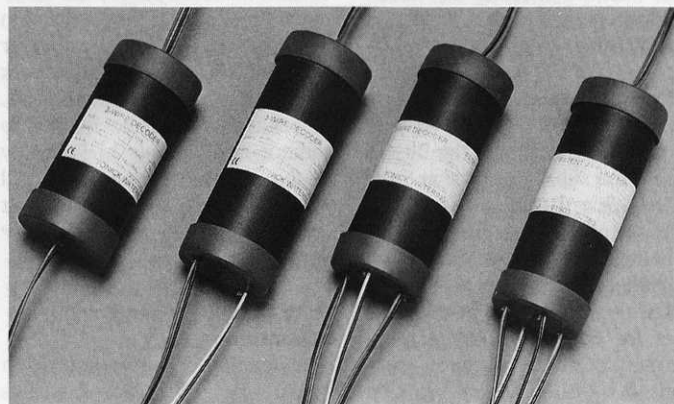
The equipment can easily be attached to existing machines, while the hand held equipment is ideal for local repairs and the smaller club.

For further information Tel: 01304 621037.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT FOR GREENKEEPERS

TONICK or TORO decoders? The choice really is yours!

We hear that TORO have "evaluated" Tonick decoders which work with their SC3000/1000 controllers and NWCDS control system.



Using technical mumbo jumbo, they have issued dire warnings against using the very competitively priced Tonick equivalent decoder with their equipment.

BUT... we know that they work perfectly well and so do the many satisfied greenkeepers who use them.

What really concerns TORO we believe, is the opening of their market to competitive tendering by many reputable installers of alternative product.

Decoders from Tonick, sprinkler parts from BEAR and controllers serviced by independent repair centres mean that Greenkeepers do, at last, have real freedom of choice.

● Guaranteed compatibility

● 3 year warranty

● Long life - designed to last for at least 10 years

Compare our prices

TORO single output* £60	Tonick equivalent £48	Saving £13
TORO dual output* £80	Tonick equivalent £66	Saving £14
TORO triple output* £100	Tonick equivalent £80	Saving £20
TORO quad output* £120	Tonick equivalent £95	Saving £25
TORO encoder £500-£900?	TONICK equivalent £98	

*(TORO prices believed current at time of going to press).

Refer to our display advertisement in this issue

Trade marks acknowledged.

Tonick  **Watering**

2, Prince William Close - Worthing -
West Sussex - BN14 0AZ

Tel: **01903 262393** Fax: **01903 694500**



Education Update

BY KEN
RICHARDSON

This month sees the deadline for three of BIGGA's major competitions and the launch of this year's Regional Supervisory Management Courses and the introduction of a scheme to assist greenkeepers to pay for education and training.

BIGGA Education and Training Grants

At a recent meeting of the BIGGA Education sub Committee and the BIGGA Board of Management, it was decided to introduce a scheme that was open to all greenkeeper members and would assist them with the payment of fees for education and training courses. Courses already subsidised by BIGGA would not be eligible and the scheme would only be available to individual greenkeepers and not their employers.

To be eligible greenkeepers must:

- Have been members of BIGGA for at least two years.
- Be attending education and

training that is relevant to their profession, ie. language courses, computing courses and motor mechanics would be eligible but wine and beer making would not.

- Have paid their own fees.

If the above criteria were met then greenkeeper members would be eligible to claim up to 80% of course fees to a maximum in any one year of £200. Refunds of fees would not be paid until proof of completion of a course (or courses) had been provided. A limit has been set for the maximum amount that the Association would grant in any one calendar year and the scheme would work on a first come first served basis. Greenkeepers will be invited to submit applications in February each year and the first grants will be awarded in 1998. Watch out for further details in *Greenkeeper International*.

Toro Student of the Year Competition

The deadline for this competition is 30 May 1997. Some entries have arrived at BIGGA HQ but many colleges still have to respond. Remember that regional judging will take place in July this year, commencing in Scotland on 28 July, moving to Bradford on 29 July, Hemel Hempstead on 30 July and Cheltenham on 31 July. This competition not only gives

you the chance of winning the prestigious Toro scholarship but also gives you the chance to boost your career prospects.

Toro Award for Excellence in Greenkeeping

The entry deadline for this competition is 30 May 1997. Make sure that you have a chance of winning by submitting your application NOW and it could be your chance to win a Toro Greensmaster 3000 mower for your golf club and a trip to the United States for yourself.

Regional Supervisory Management Courses

Full details of these courses have been inserted in this magazine. If you have not received your copy then contact BIGGA HQ. New locations for this year are Northern Ireland and South Wales and new subjects include Golf Course Design Construction and Maintenance, Leadership Skills and Recruitment and Selection. These courses are excellent value and are becoming very popular so make sure of your place by booking early.

BIGGA Slide Library

As mentioned in previous articles, we have started a collection of 35 mm colour slides which will become the BIGGA Slide Library. If you have any slides that you

wish to donate then please contact BIGGA HQ.

The Learning Experience 1998

Plans are well advanced for the National Education Conference, Workshops and seminars for January 1998 but there is still time for you to become involved. If you would like to talk or would like to hear a particular speaker or would like to suggest a topic for discussion then please let me know. New for the Education Conference in 1998 will be a "Greenkeepers Question Time", when a panel of "experts" will try to answer your greenkeeping problems. Watch out for further details in *Greenkeeper International* but in the meantime make notes of the questions that you have always wanted answered.

BIGGA Golf Course Environment Competition, in association with Amazone and Rhône Poulenc

Although the deadline for entries into this competition was 30 April, there is still time to enter your club and compete for the first prize of £5000. Fill in your entry form today and send it to reach BIGGA HQ by 16 May.

INTRODUCING THE NEW GREENSMaster 3200-D.



Requirements for golf clubs and greenkeepers

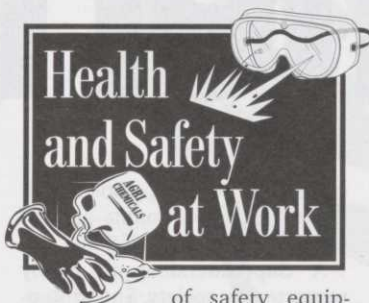
by Tony Rees MIOSH, Health & Safety Consultant & Senior Instructor with ATB-Landbase Training Services

This month we look at the employees duty to themselves and to others.

Employee's Duties, Section 7. "Every Employee must:

- Take reasonable care for his/her own health and safety
- Take reasonable care for the safety of anyone who may be affected by his/her acts or omissions co-operate with the employer to enable the employer to fulfil his statutory obligations

All employees have a duty under the act to ensure that they look after their own health and safety, to this end all employees should not put themselves in a position where their own safety is in jeopardy. To most this point would be taken as using common sense but we must ask ourselves if we always take this attitude. It is often too easy for us to say that it's nothing to do with us as individuals but we should always remember that however many safety procedures, whatever type



of safety equipment our employers provide if we do not choose to use them in the way they were designed to be used and followed then they will be ineffective and we could be held liable.

We also have a duty to take reasonable care for the safety of anyone who may be affected by what we do or don't do. An example would be if we left an unattended piece of equipment next to a green or fairway and a player was injured from this equipment, or if we left the keys in an unattended tractor or grass cutter and an unauthorised person moved this and injured themselves, we as individuals may be deemed to be responsible.

Covering all the above we all have a duty to co-operate with

our employer to ensure that he can fulfil his statutory obligations, this may include us as employees using the personal protective equipment provided by our employer to reduce the risk of injury, or following the written procedures adapted for us by our employers.

Other Duties of employees

Section 8: No person must misuse or interfere with anything provided in the interests of health and safety – when our employer provides safe equipment for our use then we should ensure that we use this equipment in the way it was intended, not interfere with any guards provided and follow all safety procedures laid down

Section 9: The employer must not charge for anything done or provided for health and safety where the provision is required by law – when our employer has provided personal protective equipment for our use as a means of reducing risk as required by the regulations then these must be provided to us free of charge.

Section 36: Where an offence

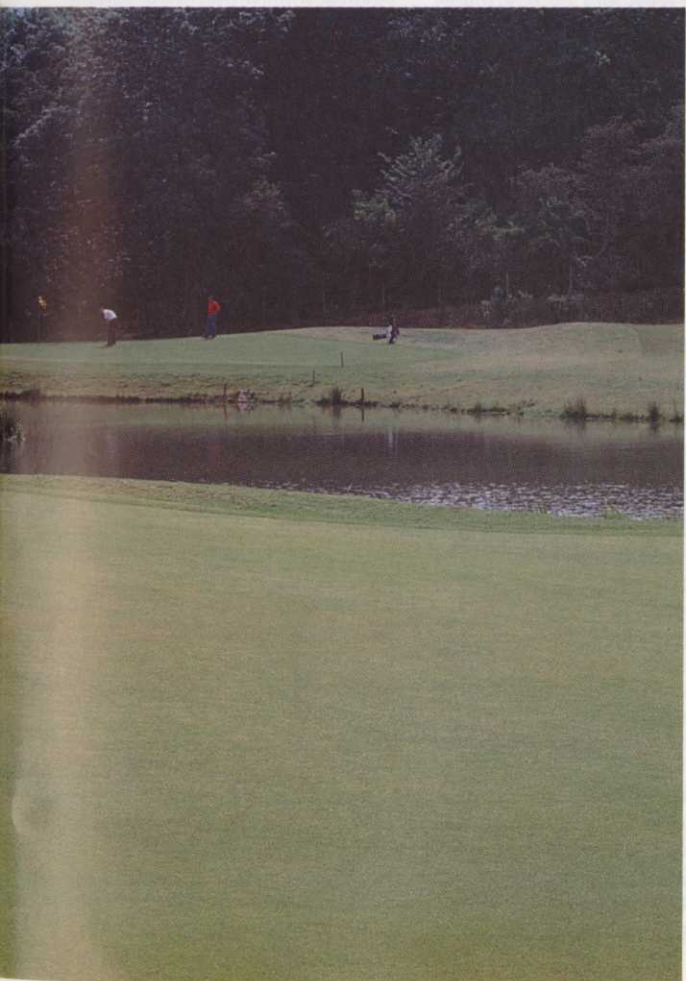
is committed by a person due to the act or default of another, either or both may be prosecuted – if a greenkeeper took a guard off a machine to use it and the following day the assistant greenkeeper used that machine with the guard not on and he received an injury from the unguarded machine, then the assistant greenkeeper could be prosecuted for using an unguarded machine, the original greenkeeper could also be prosecuted for taking the guard off in the first place.

The previous articles show that although our employer has the ultimate responsibilities for health and safety, we as individuals can also be held accountable for our actions.

Next month we will look at The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations and how they affect our daily work routines.

Further information on training courses and consultancy contact ATB Landbase Training Services (Jean John on 01282 617466 or Tony Rees on 01686 622799).

SO QUIET, YOU CAN HEAR A PIN DROP.



Early morning mowing is no problem for this greenkeeper. He knows there'll be no complaints about noise because he's operating a Greensmaster 3200.

With an exceptionally quiet engine it maintains its power for a full day's work.

An operator's dream, this new model is the latest in Toro's top-selling Greensmaster 3000 series. Its unique new cutting system gives a superb quality of cut.



The new cutting system

If you want to hear a pin drop, give us a call and we'll walk your course with you and recommend the best machine for your needs.

You can trust Toro expertise and quality.

Simply telephone 01480 476971 and we'll arrange for a local dealer to contact you.



TORO

Bringing perfection to play.

The American

Andreas Herrmann, from Golf Club an der Schlei, Schleswig Holstein, gives an insight into his two year Golf and Turf Management Programme at Rutgers University, in New Jersey.

The annual turnover of the golf industry in the United States amounts to 60 billion dollars. Currently there are 15,000 golf courses and around 120 are being built annually. As a European it is hard to imagine these figures. One must see the endless expanse of this country in order to get an idea of it.

Arnold Palmer's popularity made the game of golf very popular in the 50s in the United States. Today one finds courses of every style. From public courses with five greenkeepers (up to 80,000 rounds per year) to private exclusive courses such as Augusta, Pine Valley or others,

with a working force of 30 and more in the summer. With a budget of one million dollars, bent-grass fairways which are cut every day and greens maintained at the highest standards are no rarity. No wonder that German golf tourists coming back from the States dream of these fairways.

By the way, Pine Valley has been maintained for decades by Eb Steiniger, a graduate of the University of Stuttgart Hohenheim. He left Germany at the beginning of the century and moved to America. Today Eb Steiniger is in his 90s and lives in South Jersey. He is said to be one of the grandfathers of the GCSAA.

GCSAA (Golf Course Superintendent Association of America) is an international organisation with more than 16,000 members. Like BIGGA, the GCSAA organises and promotes seminars, journals,

career development, scholarships, money saving discounts and, of course, the annual Golf Show.

A Superintendent is highly respected by society. Superintendents have various backgrounds. The majority is between 30 and 39 years old and has a two or a four year college degree in turf science. The Superintendent has to train himself constantly. I cannot confirm the impression that many Europeans have about the American Superintendent, who stands on the green with his mobile giving orders to his Assistants, without being involved in any work on his own. All my classmates (and future Superintendents) had several years of practical experience in the field and they were very well familiar with the boredom that may occur while aerating fairways, with dirty hands after fixing drainage problems or with a tired body after a 12 hour working day.

The Superintendent primarily is a manager. He has a budget of millions of dollars, he hires and trains people and he is a public relations person.

One shouldn't compare the American Superintendent directly with the German Greenkeeper, since the circumstances are different.

The Golf and Turf Management Program at Rutgers is one of the most challenging in the United States (besides other very fine turf programmes).

It is unique in one way because the classroom work is required only during winter. Two intense 10 week sessions over two years and two seasons of supervised field experience lead to a two year certificate. A weed collection as well as a 12 page report about the field experience has to be presented in the second year. The training is designed for people who already have practical experience in the field, for people who make a career change or for people who can't afford or schedule a full-time programme.

We are mainly trained on three levels: science (botany, soils, grasses), leadership (communication, leadership principles), and business (business calculation).

The Superintendent has to be a scientist, a manager and a businessman all in one.

The biggest part of the course is botany and related classes. Classes are held from 9am to 3pm, Monday to Friday. The weekend is free and day trips to New York (only 50 minutes by train) are an attractive option.


My class consisted of 42 people. The average age being 29. The students came from all over the United States: California, Nevada, Colorado, Florida, Tennessee, Virginia, New York... I was the only European.

The first day started with a warm welcome and a general introduction to the programme. Everybody introduced himself briefly and talked about his goals. Quite a new experience for me, being a German. There were people there who were not shy to talk about their personal goals with an enthusiasm I'd seldom seen before. The attitude of the people was generally speaking very positive and they wanted to be the best at whatever they were doing at the time.

After I'd introduced myself, coming from a Bernhard Langer Course in Germany, everybody asked me about my "friend Bernhard". I wasn't really able to answer the questions, since I don't know "Bernhard" well enough to be able to talk about his well-being. Bernhard Langer is quite popular in the United States, as he had won the Masters a couple of times.

Classes started the second day. There were 16 classes in total: Golf Course Construction, Turf Diseases, Surveying, Weeds, Botany, Irrigation, Turf Establishment, Turf Maintenance, Turf-grass I.D. and Morphology, Soils, Landscape Plants, Landscape maintenance, Business Communication, Public Speech and Managing your Golf Course Employees.

Besides the brainstorming at school – and I mention this intentionally because the work of these ten weeks is a lot more than what is taught during a normal ten week session in a four year programme – there is always time to get in touch with colleague students. Many already had a two or a four year college degree in another field, often in business. For example T.J from North Carolina worked for the United States Government in the former



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Soviet Union. A.J from Virginia had a bachelor in classical music (he knew all the German composers and musicians). Andrew from North Carolina was an actor at theatres before he went into the golf field (he played Shakespeare and we often talked about old Greek philosophy). I had worked as a therapist in my own consulting room before I changed career. Strikingly few came from the agricultural or farming field.

In common we all had the love for nature and for the game of golf.

Generally nature and pollution control is a big topic right now in the golf industry in the United States. The spirit of the age didn't leave America behind. Although some places still apply chemicals without thinking of pollution (a nearby course of Jeff's in Maryland applied \$200,000 worth of chemicals last year, this is about the total budget of some courses in Germany), the environmental awareness of Superintendents is definitely improving. The USGA has installed a special department which deals with pollution control and has spent \$12 million on research in this field in recent years. It supports the "Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program", which advises and supports golf courses which practise an ecological approach to their landscape maintenance: for example the reestablishment of wetlands or other areas that were sacrificed to some fairways, the ecological maintenance of roughs, the building of nest boxes for birds, the protection of "environmentally sensitive" areas and a lot more.

The often used argument of many environmentalists that Golf Courses are like greenhouses with highly cultivated monocultures loses its power when seen in this background.

Another new trend is IPM (Integrated Pest Management). Two main reasons seem to be responsible for that. First, it reduces the impact on the environment and second it is money saving in the long run. One example would be the *Pseudomonas* Treatment for Biological Management of Turfgrass Diseases. A specially developed strain of the bacteria "*Pseudomonas aureofaciens* Tx 1" licensed by Michigan State University plays an important role in reducing the occurrence of several fungal diseases. There are three main routes by which bacteria are able to control turf grass pathogens: Production of antibiotics – Competition for nutrients – Parasitism.

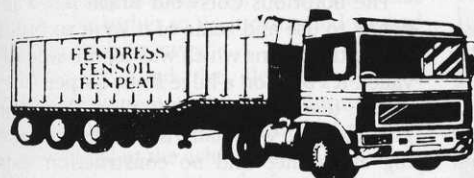
In the ninth and tenth week the tension in the class reached an almost unbearable level. We missed our homes and friends, we had enough of grasses, trees, fertilizers and mowing frequencies. Dan from the Pebble Beach Company wanted to be back in California to be able to play golf in Hawaii. Rodney missed the mountains and the sun from Col-

orado, Tracy missed the Whiskey from Tennessee and I missed a Wiener Schnitzel. However, the highest obstacle, all the final exams, was still ahead of us. We watched each other looking more and more tired. The beards grew longer (no time for shaving) and the shirts weren't ironed anymore. Everybody had reached his personal limits. The days were long and the nights became short.

In the end we had a big party and we embraced and congratulated each other for still being part of the game.

Whatever we, as Europeans, may think about Americans, their positive attitude is definitely infectious. An experience of special value, recommended to everyone who likes a challenge and an excellent level of turfgrass teaching.

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The Course Manager at Naunton Downs Golf Club is a rare breed – a “Hook” that is welcome on the golf course.

Scott MacCallum met Robert Hook to discuss the problems he's overcome

Naunton Downs is a fine golf club. It has a location to die for, high on the Cotswold hills, with views which would have had Constable drooling. It is a testing course which satisfies its 800 plus membership as well as hosts of visitors and a clubhouse with comforts which make the worst 18 hole nightmare bearable.

But it was not always so.

When Course Manager Robert Hook arrived at Naunton Downs three months after it opened three and a half years ago, he found a course which had fallen into many of the traps and pitfalls which lie in wait for new golf developments.

“There was no definition to the fairways. The rough was cut once every three weeks with a rotary mower. They’d started cutting the greens low immediately and didn’t know about groomers so they were always on and they’d hollow cored just after the turf was laid. Everything generally was very ‘sick,’” recalled Robert.

But one of the biggest problems was the actual design of the golf course itself.

“Part of the golf course, which is laid out over old agricultural land, included a huge ravine and four consecutive holes were played straight across it. On one of the holes you might have to take a 9-iron off the tee and follow it up with a full five-wood to get across the ravine. It was difficult to play and the course’s reputation suffered as a result,” explained Robert. As we looked at where the four consecutive ravine holes had been and the huge gully into which golfers had to submerge themselves, not knowing whether they would have the strength to come out the other side, it brought to mind images of Peter Pan – the “Lost Boys” being replaced by those “Lost Golfers” who had failed to make the ascent and were living in the bottom. Robert’s seafaring ancestor, the black sheep of the family, Captain Hook, could have been completed the picture. Indeed an ability to retain one’s youth and vigour would have been useful to the golfers at the Naunton Downs of a couple of a couple years ago.

Due the fact that the course had 650 newly-signed up members champing at the bit there was also great pressure to open before a significant growing-in period.

Robert knew within a very short time of arriving that drastic, remedial action would be required to put Naunton Downs on the right path. He girded his loins and approached the owners.

“I told them that things needed to change. It took a bit of persuasion but I made them realise that they had to scrap holes, redesign and construct new ones,” explained Robert. In fact the land containing the ravine holes was sold off to finance the new work.

What followed might have acted as the perfect story line for Mission Impossible, or Challenge Anneka!

“I got back from a holiday around midnight and opened a letter that was waiting for me from the golf club. It said that the directors had decided to go ahead with changes to the golf club but that I had to get the whole project completed from start to finish – that was



MISSION

build three greens, five tees, ten bunkers, reshape the fairways and install the irrigation – in seven weeks! Oh yes, and the course had to stay open during the construction work.”

It was a project Robert tackled with relish and no little skill, much of it learned under Jim Russell at Lingfield GC and Ray Day at Saunton.

“The first thing I did was sit down and work out how much I thought it would cost and put that figure to the directors. I estimated £10,000 per green and with the tees, bunkers and the casual labour said the project would cost in the region of £75,000.

“I told them I could build a green in a week. It was September but fortunately it stayed dry, otherwise we would have been in big trouble.”

Another complication was that we didn’t have any maps for the irrigation because the company which had originally been used was no longer in business and the work was com-

pleted by a local contractor. That meant we had great difficulty finding the mains when we plumbed in the new, Write Rain, irrigation.

The notorious Cotswold Brash left a lot of debris to use and some of it went to build up one of the greens which was on the side of the valley. It’s built on a huge stone carpet.”

The team was Robert, plus three other greenkeepers who had 18 months greenkeeping experience and no construction experience, between them.

“I took on four more from the Job Centre but we lost quite a lot of the casual labour because they couldn’t cope with the long hours – 12 hours a day seven days a week. One guy disappeared within half an hour. We gave him a pair of boots and didn’t see him again,” laughed Robert, as he recalled the incident.

“We were lucky that we had an excellent JCB driver who knew exactly what to do. I put

Left: the ravine which caused original problems.
Right: a new tee

all the levels out and got the specification right and the gang would follow behind the JCB putting in all the root zone from our five tonne dump truck, and 40 horse power tractor and three tonne trailer.

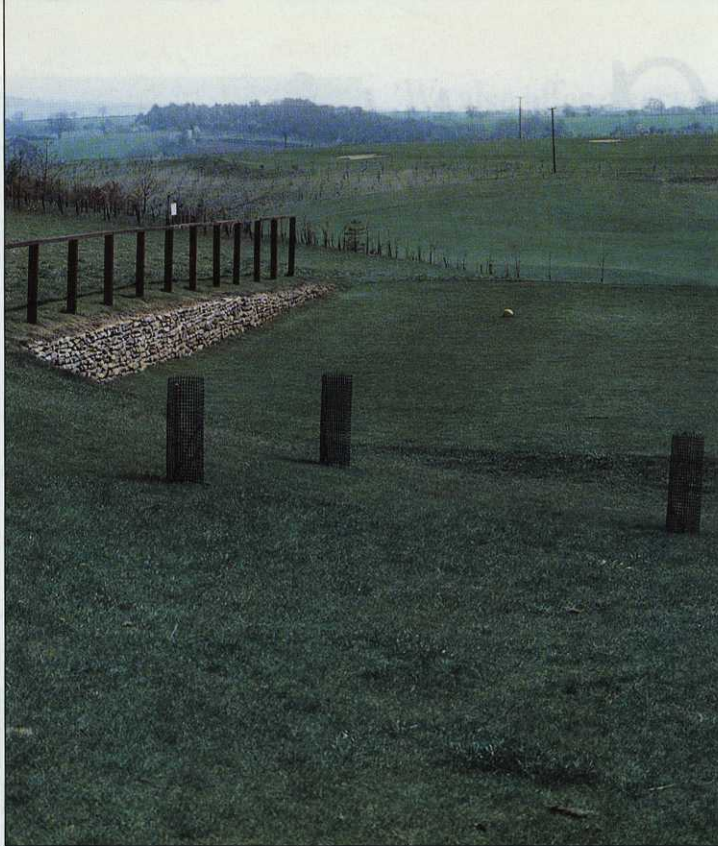
"After seven weeks of this we had all the turf down, we'd used big turf rolls laid by contractors on the greens and smaller turfs on the tees."

By the end we'd done 1400 square metres of green and 2000 square metres of tees and banks.

Having met the seven week deadline the course was given a rest to allow it to grow in until the spring. We were taking the grass down a millimetre at a time, dressing well back into early March and we had very good root development when we opened.

"The owners had given us a definitive deadline because, they didn't want to miss any potential new members joining at the beginning of the following season. They'd actually said they wanted it to be open on April 1 but I told them it was unlikely because we're 800 metres up here and our growing season is about five or six weeks behind so we finally opened the new holes on May 1."

Even that took a bit on planning as right up until the day of opening the course was still



"I just went for it. I also did accounts and secretarial classes in the evenings as well as I wanted to be ready for office work.

"BIGGA has really helped me because every angle is covered by my education with BIGGA or articles in the magazine," said Robert, who is fulsome in his praise of his team of Roger Myatt, Deputy Head Greenkeeper, Leon Piercy and Colin Martin.

Looking back at the work which was completed two years ago Robert is extremely proud of what he and his team achieved.

"Although we were working to a tight deadline everything was done to specification and there were no corners cut and I do believe the

finished product is good. The one thing we might have done differently is make the tees bigger but we are currently extending them as part of on-going construction work" said 35 year-old Robert.

"We've also rebuilt a lot of the bunkers and had to drill into them with Kangol hammers because the original design was such that where you would expect the top of the sand to be was the base soil. We've done about ten bunkers that way," explained Robert.

"The greens are fine. I'd actually say they are better than the originals. We hardly have any annual meadow grass because we dry them out aggressively. We keep a lot of water in the profile but let the top inch or two get very dry to encourage the roots to go down."

Naunton Downs is now moving in the right direction. The course is well received – the layout has shed most of the required climbing and members can spend their time on the practice range instead of the gym.

"The main shareholder, Ian Wilson, is very forward thinking and we are currently building astro turf tennis courts as it provides added value to members and their families."

It shows that with expertise and hard work even the most unpromising of situations can be turned round and that though skills learned through BIGGA's education programmes demanding projects can be tackled and completed successfully.

IMPOSSIBLE

being played in the conventional manner.

"On opening day I shifted the new tees to play to the new greens and, as I knew where the rough was going to be, I'd fed the areas three weeks earlier so up it came and we had definition straight away."

Bearing in mind the element of haste involved in the remoulding of Naunton Downs Robert can now look at the finished product and feel proud at the achievement.

Robert has a real thirst for knowledge and his CV can tell of three years on a Grassland Management Course from Bicton College in South Devon; a National Certificate and National Certificate Advanced and Levels 1-3 – 3 being Business Management and Accounting; a correspondence course for a National Practical Certificate Technical; Phase 3 Management in Greenkeeping; Phase 4 Business Management as well as spraying and tractor driving courses.



The greenkeeping team at Naunton Downs

Scott MacCallum travelled east to visit Bailey's of Norfolk, a newcomer to Golden Key sponsorship, and found a company which is setting new standards.

On one particular day back in the late 80s Alan Bailey set off, from his base in Norfolk, for Surrey with the aim of selling his own brand of top dressing.

He called on 14 golf clubs in one day, taking care to establish directions to and the name of the Course Manager or Head Greenkeeper of the next club on the list before moving on. At some clubs he didn't meet his intended target so left his card, a brochure and a sample before moving on to the next.

By the time he had returned home to Hevingham, close to Norwich, there were orders from 12 of the 14 clubs already at the office.

From that encouraging start Bailey's of Norfolk has grown to become one of the principal suppliers of top dressing to the golf industry with clients from as far afield as Scotland in the north and Plymouth in the south.

It is a success of which the family firm is particularly, and rightly, proud and this year Bailey's of Norfolk has taken another major step by becoming one of BIGGA's Golden Key sponsors donating money to the Association's Education and Development Fund.

So what persuaded Alan Bailey to make that trip to Surrey?

"I could see that golf was a part of the leisure industry which was poorly served by top dressing suppliers and I also knew that it was a sport which had huge potential, especially with the advent of golf coverage on the television," explained Alan, who prior to that had been in the top soil industry since 1976.

"I did my own market research and found that the demand for top dressing was not being met. Clubs were being told they couldn't be supplied for six weeks. There is no industry in the capitalist society where you can do that because there is soon someone who will move in. We moved in and filled the void.

"I considered Surrey to be the Stockbroker belt and that it was the wealthiest part of the country and so the best place to start."

It proved a very wise choice. In that first year Bailey's turned over £212,000 in the golf industry and supplied around 60 golf clubs.

"We went from a nil turn over to quarter of a million in one year," recalled Alan.

That signalled an expansion of the company which had previously consisted of just Alan and

Setting the standards



Soil scientist John Farrell at work



his son Adrian and initially it caused a few problems.

"There were so many lorries coming through the village with raw materials and leaving with the finished product we ran into difficulties with the planning authorities."

However a public inquiry, a move to a new 33 acre site half a mile from the original site six

years ago and a half million pound investment in a huge 15 bay building saw the company well placed to make the massive strides that it has.

"We have the capacity and planning consent to treble our output. In effect we are only currently operating at between 30% and 35% of our potential.

"We have our future guaranteed here. We do not comprehend, and would consider it physically impossible, to produce turf dressings or other products using the careful husbandry quality control methods we employ if we moved away from this plant," affirmed Alan.

"We only manufacture turf dressings – TD1 and TD2 – that are produced with the natural

resources of the area. We have indigenous sources of lovely lime free sand and vast supplies of Norfolk fen soils and the indigenous Norfolk sandy loam which we can make into divot mixes and fairway dressings. It really is a lovely unique product with a very low clay content."

They can also counter any criticism that being "out in the sticks" in Norfolk they cannot compete with more centrally based competitors.

"If someone were to call now from Plymouth wanting a load we would have it to them by the time they start work tomorrow morning," said Alan having first checked the clock and found it to be reading 12.10pm.

"We can deliver within 12



Adrian Bailey who, with his father Alan, founded Bailey's of Norfolk

hours anywhere in the country. We have an excellent relationship with the haulage companies we use and it is probably quicker and cheaper than if we had our own vehicles," said Alan, before revealing that the bill for haulage would this year be over £400,000.

Despite its growth Bailey's still remains very much a family firm. The production staff of six is headed by Adrian as Production Manager/Partner and Alan's wife Mary runs the office. Alan's best friend from his youth also works for the company.

It was as a family that 12 months ago they discussed the future strategy of the company.

"The options were to continue to supply the existing demand or

to plough a lot more money into the business and become 100% professional and sell 100% professional product which would meet the highest standards.

"I spoke with various agronomists and learned more about the industry and which way it was going. We then decided to produce all of our products to USGA guidelines."

To achieve this aim soil scientist, John Farrell, a graduate in Natural Resource Management was employed on a full time basis from the middle of last year.

"When I arrived here all I had was an empty room and in the first four months I set up the laboratory. I want to be able to set up more tests for things like compaction and porosity and we are

'We also offer a service to our customers whereby we test samples from their course so we can give them independent reports what their problems are or are likely to become'

just getting the equipment for them in now," explained John.

His arrival has enabled Bailey's to be totally confident that whatever is sent out through the gates is of the highest possible quality.

"Everything is tested on a daily basis. Each bay holds 200 tonnes and I take 10 samples from each one. The replication ensures that the analysis is representative of the dressing in that bay. The samples are then analysed, tests include particle size distribution, pH, organic matter content, permeability and porosity.

In an industry where an inferior product might not produce a problem for three or even five years it is sometimes difficult to persuade the purchaser away from products that do not meet our stringent specification but are nevertheless easy to apply.

Alan and John are keen to ensure that greenkeepers do not have problems which are stored up for the future.

"Each load which leaves our plant goes out with a full specification sheet which the greenkeeper is encouraged to file away and keep.

That is his guarantee that he bought the right stuff for the job.

"We are producing a product which is as tightly controlled as is possible in this country," explained Alan.

"We are embarking on a course to be registered by ISO 9002 so our current laid down laboratory procedures will be under constant scrutiny. We should have achieved this within the next three months," he added.

"We welcome the fact that people can take samples and have them independently cross checked whenever they wanted," confirmed John.

"We also offer a service to our customers whereby we test samples from their course so we can give them independent reports what their problems are or are likely to become.

"I believe that if the USGA specification with regard to porosity, capillary action and particle size distribution were to be adopted

universally in the production of turf dressings and root zones the long term future of golf courses would be safeguarded. There are things within the industry which make me concerned but obviously companies which do produce quality products have nothing to worry about."

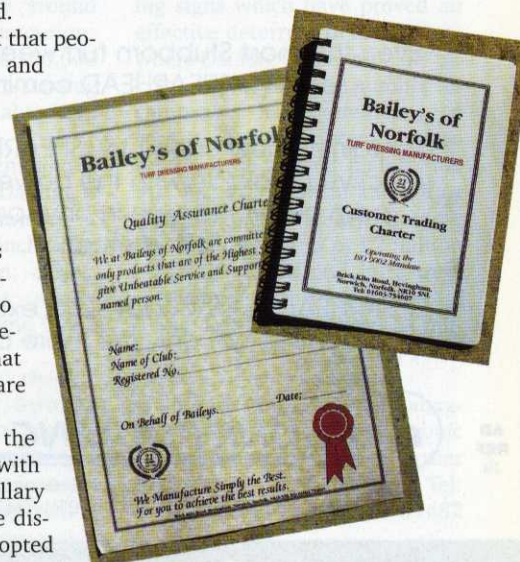
It is with the aim of becoming more involved in the industry and assisting greenkeepers wherever possible which persuaded Bailey's to become Golden Key sponsors.

"Golden Key was something which we discussed and we believed that BIGGA's objectives with regard to maximising the knowledge of members for the benefit of the turf are compatible with our views," explained Alan.

"If we are going to work to a standard we want the greenkeepers to be aware of what we are trying to achieve and what the benefits will be. That way the industry can move forward together," said John.

With Golden Key membership bringing a higher profile for Bailey's of Norfolk the company will no doubt continue its growth and Alan Bailey will continue to travel up and down the country on the kind of sortee which brought him so much success as when he first visited Surrey.

"The majority of my customers are also friends and I want to support this industry as much as I can. I think it has a huge future particularly if industry standards can be set and met by everyone and the speculative amateurs and their inferior products are driven out."



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A game of TAG

We all remember mothers sewing names into school pullovers to improve the chances of recovery should they go astray. The idea has survived, been refined and, as Douglas McCartney explains, could help prevent valuable machinery from disappearing.

If the most profitable criminal activity in the world is drugs, the second most profitable is most definitely theft. Overall crime is estimated to cost Britain more than £20 billion a year.

During the late 1980s the UK motorcycle industry was faced with a crisis which threatened its very existence. That crisis was theft. In 1989 nearly 85,000 machines – around 10% of all registered motorcycle – were stolen. Losses were so great that in 1990 the industry's leading insurer, with 62% market share, announced a withdrawal of theft cover for high performance machines, no theft cover for high risk areas and no theft cover for owners under 28 years of age. In short, the industry was faced with virtual destruction.

The main problem centred around "ringing" – machines stolen and broken for spares or rebuilt from written off machines. As in most cases of professional crime, police intelligence units were aware of those involved but the ease with which existing markings such as frame and engine numbers could be removed had meant that even when suspected thieves were caught in possession of machines or parts with dubious provenance no clear evidential link could be established with actual stolen property. The result, in many cases, was that suspected stolen property was being returned to those suspected of stealing it.

Physical security products such as hitch locks, wheel clamps, ground anchors, padlocks, etc. present only a mild irritation to

the determined thief. Though such products may deter the opportunist amateur they would not provide a long term solution to the problem.

It was reasoned by the police and auto crime experts that a truly effective, permanent identification system, would greatly increase risk of detection/conviction and at the same time greatly reduce the value of items stolen. Technical groups from the leading motorcycle manufacturers began testing various existing marking systems – eye legible, magnetic and electronic. Both eye legible and magnetic were cheap but easily overcome and were discounted.

The final solution was Datatag, an electronic identification system, developed by multi-national giants Yamaha Motor and AEG Electronic of Germany.



Datatag scanning gun

At the heart of the Datatag system is a coded microchip transponder or "tag" which is designed to be hidden inside property. These tags do not require power and because they are so small they can be covertly fitted to items ranging from something as small as a Bonsai tree through to large earth movers.

Tags contain a microprocessor circuit linked to a read/send antenna and are preprogrammed with a 10 character Hexi-Decimal code which enables more than 500 billion code combinations. Programming is carried out using a sophisticated laser etch system which means codes cannot be



Warning signs: a powerful deterrent

altered or deleted when attacked by electrical or magnetic devices, or even exposure to low level radiation. Tags vary in size from as small as a grain of rice to a credit card.

Tags are read by scanning devices supplied to Police, Customs and other authorised bodies free of charge. When an item is scanned the tag number is displayed on the scanner and is then cross referenced with the Datatag main frame computer through a private Videotext system also supplied to authorities free of charge. The Datatag computer is on-line 24 hours per day, 365 days per year and provides details of the item, owner and any incident including crime reference number and Police Station handling.

Since 1992 Datatag has reduced motorcycle theft from 10% of bikes registered to less than 1% and is available through all motorcycle main dealers. Recoveries of whole or part machines are currently around 55%. Numerous prosecutions have resulted. More than 120,000 bikes are now fitted with Datatag and discounts are available from all leading insurers.

With a proven system and a national infrastructure Datatag is now operational in a number of additional markets including: plant and construction, cycles, marine craft, caravans, equestrian, computers to name but a few.

It may be argued that there is little common ground between motorcycles and ground maintenance equipment which is true apart from ...a dramatic increase in theft incidents, high value equipment, easily removable

identification, large second hand market, notoriously difficult to secure and low risk of detection and prosecution for the criminal.

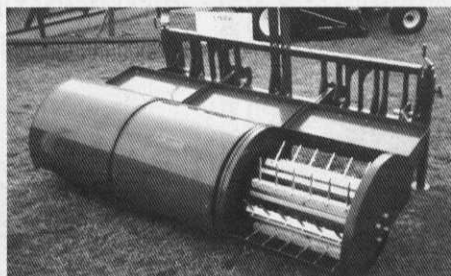
Datatag recognises these similarities and in 1996 launched a tagging project into the garden and agricultural machinery markets. The project has the backing of the British Agricultural & Garden Machinery Association and involves BAGMA members tagging all types of golf course and grounds maintenance equipment, ranging from hedge trimmers, and chainsaws to tractors and trailers. Greenkeepers will be only too aware of the high value of modern golf course equipment and the increasing number of thefts and should seriously consider the electronic tagging as a norm rather than the exception.

Costs vary in relation to the item to be tagged and range from around £20 for pedestrian mower to around £80 for a JCB. All items tagged display prominent warning signs which have proved an effective deterrent in all markets where Datatag is operational.

In recent years a number of companies have attempted to copy the Datatag system. To date none has succeeded mainly due to a lack of technical know how and financial stability. Datatag has spent in excess of £2 million on development and infrastructure provision. It is estimated that a total spend will exceed £4 million in order to satisfy fully scanner and Videotext demand.

■ Douglas McCartney is Managing Director of Datatag Electronic Identification Systems. Further information can be obtained Tel: 01482 222070 Fax: 01482 224545.

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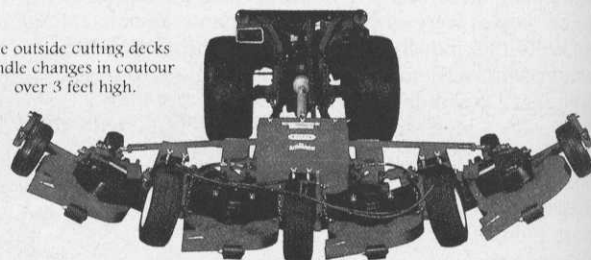
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Centrifugal pumps create flow and pressure by centrifugal force produced by an impeller. Liquid enters through the centre of the impeller and as the impeller spins, centrifugal force throws the liquid into a spiral passage leading to the outlet. The only moving parts in centrifugal pumps are the shafts and impellers.

Some Centrifugal pumps are manufactured using materials that wear quickly or corrode due to commonly applied abrasive materials used in the Amenity industry. These pumps also require priming and are subject to back pressures from nozzles and control units

Agitation

Tank agitation is important to ensure a uniform mix of chemicals. Without agitation the chemical mix may separate and the spray will not be applied in the correct concentration. All sprayers



benefit from a tank agitator to maintain uniform mix. The most common type of agitation is hydraulic jet agitation, however, machines operating mechanical agitation are also available.

Hydraulic jet agitation, commonly called jet agitation, uses a portion of the pump flow to create a mixing action in the tank. A pump must be selected that is large enough to provide the extra volume the jet agitator requires. The flow can be through a standard nozzle or a specially designed ventura nozzle that creates a vacuum which increases the discharge from the nozzle.

The ventura type nozzle increases the mixing action by two and a half times and is very

effective when pump flow is otherwise marginal.

Mechanical agitation is less common and produced by paddles or propellers located in the bottom of the spray tank. The agitator is powered from an electrical motor that drives the mixers. Any of these agitators, when properly designed and operated, will adequately agitate most pesticides or suspended chemicals.

Sprayer monitors and controls:

System monitors are available that sense the operating conditions of the sprayer, such as travel speed, pressure and/or flow. These statistics feed into a micro-computer along with such information as swath width and litres

of spray mix being used. The console displays the pressure and travel speed.

The accurate monitoring of the spray operation will result in improved pest control and more precise pesticide placement.

Pressure gauges:

The pressure gauge should be designed to measure liquid pressure with a range about one-and-a-half or two times the maximum anticipated pressure. Liquid-filled gauges are preferred over dry gauges because the former reduce vibrations.

Boom control valves:

Boom control valves are essential when the spray operation does not require the use of the complete boom i.e. when spraying fairway perimeters, reduced width turf areas or when finishing a putting green. The valves, either manual or electrical, control the flow to either the left, centre or right boom section, or any combination of these. These boom controls, whether manual or electrical should be balanced pressure units.



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LETTERS

It's all about keeping in touch

This letter has taken about three months to compile, but it is with great pleasure that I write to pass on my thoughts about my first year in office as the Section Secretary.

The job of Secretary is not an easy post (as some may think). You almost have to be a walking Filofax crammed with a huge bank of faces, names, places, facts and figures and an endless supply of telephone and fax numbers. Other qualities for being successful in the job are agony aunt, diplomat, liar, the ability to teleport to any part of the UK and a good drinker – the last part being by the time you get through the rest of it you need a good drink to keep you sane!

Seriously, you do need a good home life and an understanding wife as the hours needed to do this job are incredible. In the past I have been Vice and Chairman of my Section twice and until now, I did not appreciate my own Section Secretary.

Over the past year the help and encouragement I have received from different areas of the Association has been superb. From trade companies, members of BIGGA, my own golf club, Section committee, Elliott and Edna Small and the staff at Aldwark Manor. Without the help from all these areas I could not have done the job.

I have to say that I am still learning and will do for a long time to come but as they say "Things can only get better!" So please bear with me.

On a sadder note I have to say that there is still a great deal of apathy. Within our Association our members (my own specifically) still do not attend BIGGA functions whether that is golf, social or educational. Just what do we have to do to get bums on seats!

This Association that we have built is a superb club if you can look at it in this way. It is not purely for Course Managers/Head Greenkeepers or the hierarchy but for everyone employed in the fine turf industry.

The friends that I have made all over the UK through BIGGA, the great times I have had and all the ideas and knowledge that I have collected in the last 10 years are things that I would not swap for anything.

If there are people in BIGGA who do not share this point of view with me, then they are very sad individuals. You have to put a wee bit in to take a wee bit out.

And after all we are Jock Thompson's bairns.

Do not be afraid to approach the likes of Walter Woods, Jack McMillan, Jimmy Kidd, Chris Kennedy or other such big names to say hello. These guys are human and share the same problems as you.

The same goes to the Head's of BIGGA.

Honestly they do not bite, even though they wear different jackets. They are nice helpful people and are there for you the member.

Last of all, please speak to the Section Secretary. We do like to keep up with all that is going on in our Sections and who knows we might be able to help solve a problem.

Stephen Dixon

Section Secretary East of Scotland

Enthusiasm will see us through

The article by David Roy in the February issue of *Greenkeeper International* sadly echoes many similar comments I have recently heard from greenkeepers around the country.

I don't think the article overstates the case of uneducated and thoughtless golfers and I believe the comments of frustration from greenkeepers can equally apply to many Chairmen of Green. I have been involved at my own club as Chairman of Green for the last 7 years and, more recently, to give continuity, a new title of Course Consultant.

When I started I really had no idea of what I was letting myself in for. After reading the R&A discussion document "The Way Forward" I began to get some idea of the immense task ahead. I was extremely lucky to have Martin Gunn as Head Greenkeeper (now Course Manager) and we struck up an immediate rapport. I felt that a lot was wrong with the quality and health of the course but I did not know why and this is where Martin could and did help me.

The Club first brought in the STRI in 1987 but little notice was taken of their recommendations. However, since 1990 we have closely followed the advice on the management of the course by Agronomist, Jeff Perris, and Ecologist, Bob Taylor. Using the services of the STRI again gave us the opportunity of educating members and on the recommendation of the STRI we now have a Policy Document in place. This will protect the course from our boundary hedges, woodlands, traditional flower and hay meadows to the tees, fairways, bunkers and greens.

To keep members informed of work and plans for the future we have produced quarterly newsletters and also run occasional "On Course" evenings with our Agronomist and Ecologist in attendance. We also have a prominent Course Notice Board for information on a day to day basis.

However, we still receive a certain amount of criticism from ill-informed members. Sadly it appears that in every club I have visited there is this small hard core of critical members who think they know better than their own qualified greenkeeper, agronomist, ecologist, and even golf course architects. You do certainly need to become very thick skinned to

last in any job involving the golf course.

I think every golfing authority, the R&A, the Home Unions, BIGGA and STRI are agreed on "The Way Forward" for golf course management. It really is of prime importance now to convince the golfers and there are now videos, books, pamphlets – in other words lots of help available. The support is there and it is now up to all clubs to take responsibility for the education of their members into realistic golf course management.

We have found that many members now support our policies but unfortunately they are the silent majority and it is important for Greenkeepers and Club Officials to be strong enough to handle the vocal minority of ill-informed critics.

The more I have become involved in the wider issues of course management and have been lucky enough to work on the fringe of the education of golfers I am convinced that many of the problems that have developed over the last few years have been created because more and more golfers are taking holidays in Spain, Portugal and Florida. They are playing on golf courses managed in a totally different way and with different climates to their courses at home. The courses abroad are often managed in an environmentally unfriendly fashion with extreme use of water, pesticides and fertilisers and at immense cost. We need to convince golfers, and the non-golfing public, that natural and environmentally managed courses are the correct route to take and that golf on them is in fact much more fun and has certainly more variety.

These issues are not going to go away, water will become more expensive, that is if it remains available for golf courses, and many pesticides will become illegal. Other methods need to be found.

Many golfers who have taken up the game in the last 15 to 20 years have not had the opportunity of playing traditional British golf and do not appreciate the joys of playing the ball along the ground as well as in the air. Television has a lot to answer for, as many courses have tried to ape the American style of play which is never going to be successful on older designed courses with small tightly bunkered greens and with totally different climates. Golfers from all over the world flock to the British Isles to play courses such as Carnoustie, Ballybunion, Portmarnock, Royal St. Georges, Royal County Down, Sunningdale and, of course, St. Andrews and there are many other lesser known gems.

It is important that greenkeepers like David Roy do not lose their enthusiasm or become disillusioned with the unrealistic demands of what I hope is the minority of golfers. It is up to everyone in authority in the clubs to support these issues and to back "The Way Forward" for golf.

Malcolm Peake

Temple GC

Henley on Thames

Allow foxes to eradicate rabbits

In your article on rabbit control undertaken by the Middlesex based MG Wildlife you rightly refer to the conservation aspects of the work they carry out.

Rabbits are a major pest and unless the present population explosion is brought under control major damage to trees, shrubs and some meadow land plants can be expected.

The damage to greens, tees and fairways is also considerable and expensive to repair in both labour and materials.

It therefore came as a surprise to see in your article that this company which purports to control rabbits uses "silenced rifles to control animals such as foxes".

As foxes are a major predator of rabbits and other small rodents which can cause damage on a golf course it seems to me to be counter productive to shoot them unless the object of the exercise is only to promote shooting.

I feel that the eradication of rabbits which, despite the cuddly aspect of the little beast portrayed, is essential. We should encourage all predators including, and most importantly foxes.

I have for the last 40 years been responsible for the maintenance of two 18 holes and a 9 hole golf courses and would in no circumstances encourage the shooting of foxes.

I recommend to all your readers the need to eradicate rabbits wherever they are found and the encouragement of foxes.

D I Wilkinson

Hull, Yorkshire

■ Editor's Note. A spokesman for MG Wildlife said he agreed that foxes kept the rabbit population down and that they actively encouraged foxes unless they were, on the rare occasion, the only predator on the golf course.

Bad attitudes on display

I read the article on the London Golf Club's course in the April issue of *Greenkeeper International* with despair and incredulity. If it had been written on the basis that no one should try to emulate the methods adopted at the London, even in the extremely unlikely event of equalling their budgets and manpower it may have served a purpose. As it is, virtually every statement contradicts standard practices elsewhere. Criticisms of UK education are unwarranted, though certainly standards at some colleges need tightening up and this is being actively implemented.

The sad fact is that the London is an example of a tiny minority of megabuck courses, most of which have failed and most of the survivors continue as rich men's playthings or loss-making prestige symbols. It would be invidious to name the few exceptions.

As a final comment may I pass on the comment of one of my friends in the USGA who complimented British courses in having teams with largely qualified staff contrasting with American courses, where in too many cases one finds a graduate sitting behind a computer console, supported by ill-educated labourers capable of doing only their own specialised task.

J H Arthur B.Sc.(Agric)

Budleigh Salterton

East Devon

Don't knock the educators

I write to express my sincere concerns highlighted in your excellent article regarding the London Golf Club.

My concern is of criticisms levelled at NVQs and Modern Apprenticeships which are at present being introduced within our industry.

I have in the past shared with Steve Jones (Course Superintendent) the frustrations, disillusionment, despondency and even anger with the so-called system of education for Greenkeepers in this country for almost all of my 28 years in Greenkeeping.

I too have made attempts to introduce systems of training within individual Golf Clubs to compensate for the inadequacy of colleges and college lecturers.

However this approach cannot be right because: (a) We must have a standard across the whole industry as employers need to know who to employ according to what that person is capable of; and (b) An insular approach to training is extremely costly if it is to achieve acceptable results (in terms of time as well as money). I do not care how much your training budget is – an efficiently managed business cannot afford to throw time and money away.

Most of my frustrations have been allayed however since the Greenkeepers' Training Committee became involved in first NVQs and

just recently the Modern Apprenticeship Scheme.

Without going into any detail, NVQs are about standards on the golf course (not in a lecture room). The standards are set by your own industry and judged/assessed by your own industry, ie Golf Course Managers (on the golf course) who are qualified GTC trained Assessors and who are industry competent.

Modern Apprenticeships have been introduced for under 25's to provide a structure for NVQs so that progress can be monitored (using individual training for each apprentice) throughout the period of the apprenticeship and is again monitored by your own industry using industry competent Golf Course Managers as well as elected, approved training providers/centres.

Under the structure of Modern Apprenticeships the refunding of training costs is available to the employer on the Apprentice's achievement of the relevant level. The Government has had to do this to get employers to invest in training and I for one cannot miss out on money available for training. As a Course Manager I would not be doing my job properly if I ignored this fact.

I would therefore strongly urge any Course Manager or any Employer who shares the frustration of Steve Jones not to try to "go it alone". There is an excellent system in place governed by your own Authority on training – the Greenkeepers' Training Committee. Please contact them on 01347 838640. Once you know all the facts you can then make an informed decision.

Duncan McGilvray

Golf Course Manager

Letchworth Golf Club

(mis)adventures of Gordon the Greenkeeper



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POINTLESS REVOLU

Alternative, or soft, spikes have arrived with a bang in the United States in the last four years but will they make as big an impression on this side of the Atlantic? Scott MacCallum spoke with the man charged with the task masterminding their introduction to Europe.

or just a fad?

The clatter of golf spikes on paths and car parks is as much a familiar sound at golf clubs up and down the country as surlyn on wood or the cry of "Fore!" but it may soon be consigned to the golfing archives, becoming no more than an audio reminder of what once was... alongside the hickory shaft, featherie golf ball and loud checked trousers.

Having said that, noise pollution is perhaps the least significant development of the alternative spike revolution which is currently sweeping the United States and which seems poised to make an impression on this side

of the Atlantic.

Alternative spikes -Softspikes is a trade name like Sellotape or Hoover - arrived in America four years ago and, pushed by the superintendents, around 1,000 of the 14,000 golf courses in the United States have gone "spikeless". It is forecast that that figure will rise to 5,000 by the end of the year.

You can well understand the superintendents' appreciation for the new soft cleat which barely marks the green but through their design - small gripping teeth around a plastic base - still offers significant traction for the golfer.

On certain courses spiking can make quite a mess of the green. You may recall last year's USPGA

Championship at the Riviera Country Club and the problem the later starters had finding a route to the hole devoid of destructive spike marks.

A boffin has worked out that the average number of paces taken on a green is 52 and the number of spikes per shoe is 11. With that in mind each golfer leaves 572 spike marks on the green, 10,296 on a round. That's over 41,000 potentially damaging spike marks for each fourball.

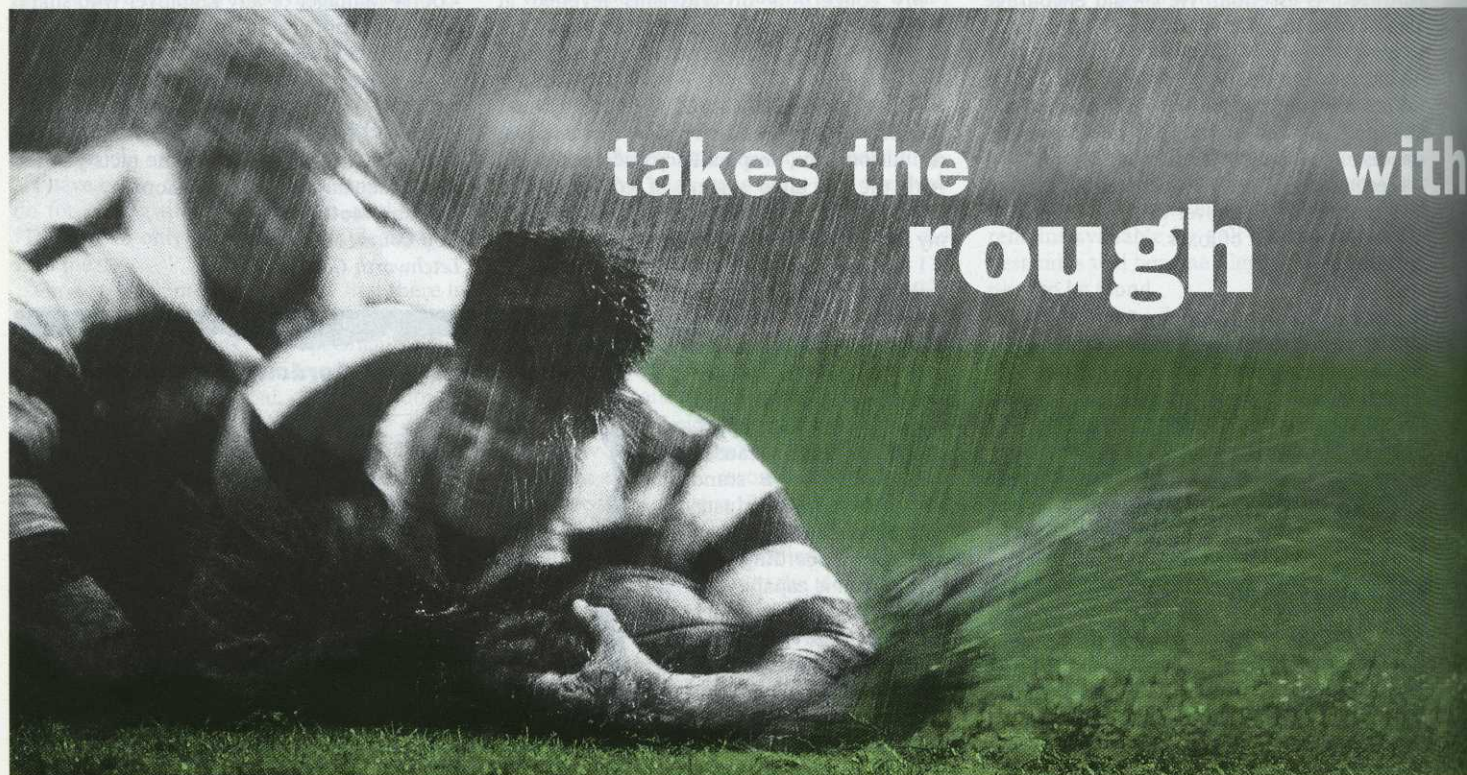
Cliff Hitchcock is Managing Director of MacNeill UK, a fully owned subsidiary of MacNeill Engineering Worldwide, the world's largest manufacturer of sports shoe hardware, which produces the Tred-Lite alternative

spike and many others under the name of golf shoe manufacturers.

"Since 1931 we have produced five billion golf spikes. We're currently producing four million spikes a day. I just can't understand where they all go. It's an amazing number of spikes," said Cliff, who masterminds sales and distribution for the whole of Europe from his base near Leicester.

"I keep being asked whether the alternative spike phenomenon in the States will come over to Europe and I think it is down to the types of grasses used. There are more courses in the States which use Bent grasses which have roots very close to the surface and which tend to spike up more easily than traditional European greens.

"I spoke with an American at the trade show in Orlando recently who told me that his course had gone 'spikeless' three months previously and he could not believe the improvement in the quality of the greens since that day," he said.



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TION

"I suppose certain courses, with those types of greens, in Europe will go spikeless. I know Valderama already has."

There is a big difference, however, between an individual trying alternative spikes and liking them from a comfort point of view and a golf club turning round and saying you have got to wear them.

"I believe the clubs in Europe which make it mandatory will be in a very small minority."

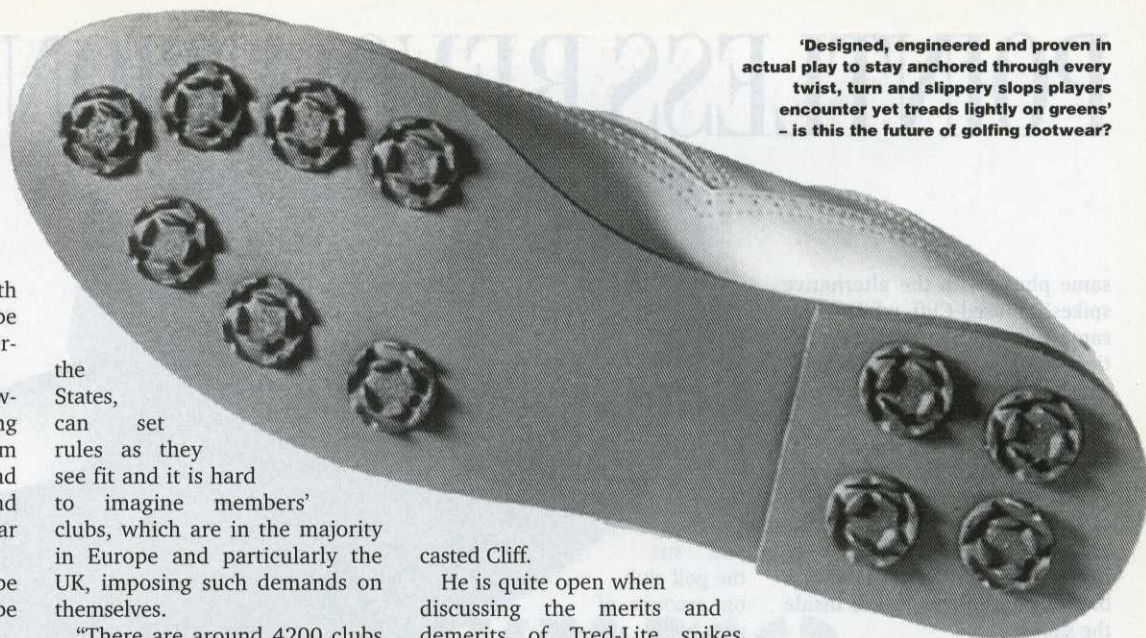
It is easy to understand Cliff's reasoning. Proprietary-owned golf clubs, which predominate in

the States, can set rules as they see fit and it is hard to imagine members' clubs, which are in the majority in Europe and particularly the UK, imposing such demands on themselves.

"There are around 4200 clubs in Europe and I believe no more than 400 will have gone spikeless in the next 12 months," fore-

'When they were launched greenkeepers thought they were great and were delighted that spike marks were to become a thing of the past'

'Designed, engineered and proven in actual play to stay anchored through every twist, turn and slippery slops players encounter yet treads lightly on greens' - is this the future of golfing footwear?



casted Cliff.

He is quite open when discussing the merits and demerits of Tred-Lite spikes, which under the overall MacNeill banner of Champ are being marketed as "Champ is getting soft".

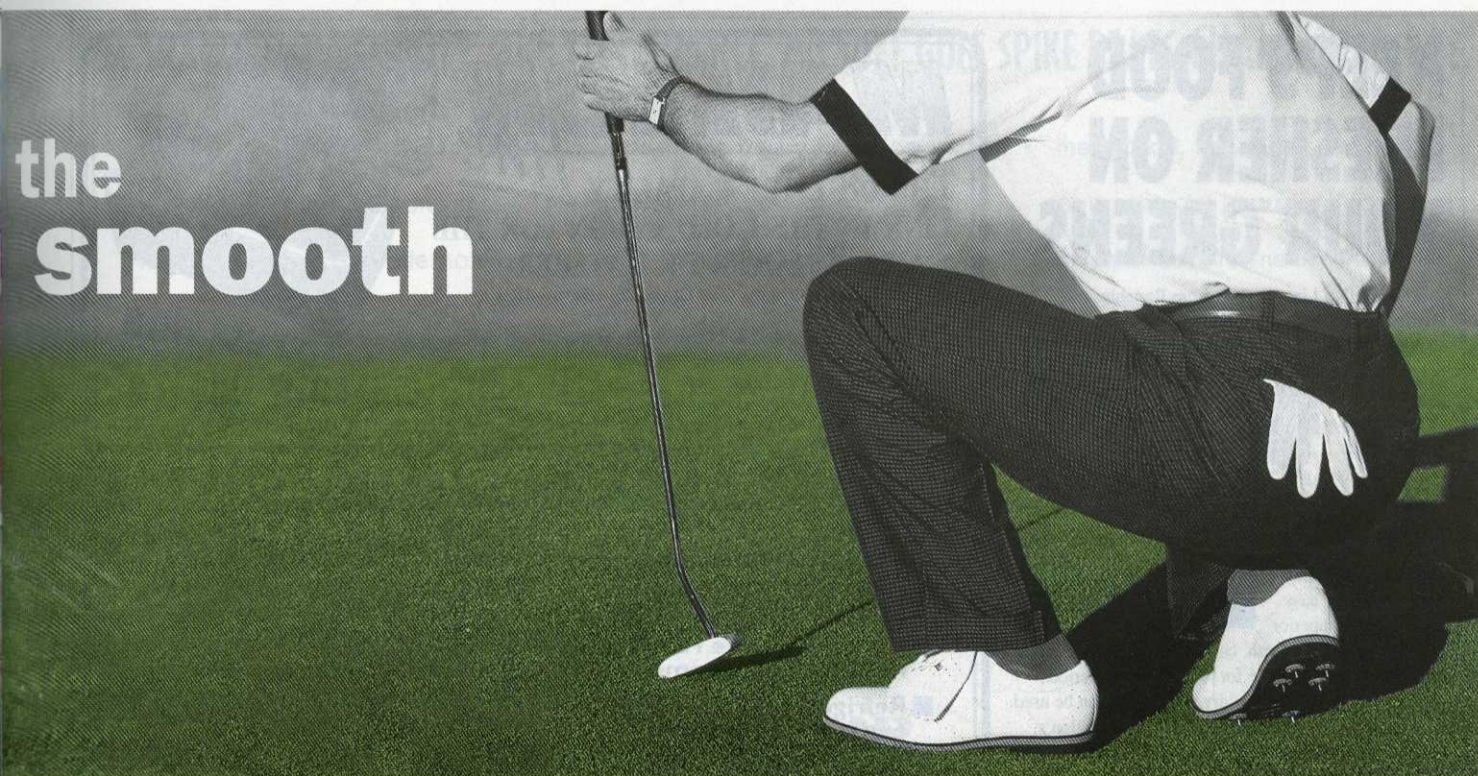
"There is no doubt that the traditional spike, at 8mm long, offers the best traction you can get. The top Tour pro may feel he needs the most stable base he can get and still use traditional spikes. The average handicapper, however, would probably not notice the difference," said Cliff.

The new alternative spike marks the first significant development in golfing footwear since the dimpled soled shoe launched

itself onto the market about 15 years ago.

"When they were launched greenkeepers said they were great and were delighted that spike marks were to become a thing of the past. What killed them off was that the dimples themselves created so many ripples on the greens that the ball bounced all over the place.

"Eventually people became disillusioned with the idea and they faded away. They now represent a very small percentage of the market. Are we going through the



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POINTLESS REVOLUTION

same phase with the alternative spikes?" mused Cliff, while at the same time adding that the traction on the new spike is significantly better than was offered with the dimpled sole.

In America shoe manufacturers are just beginning to sell golf shoes with the alternative spike already in the shoes but the majority are still offering traditional spikes in the shoes with a bag of alternatives spikes inside the shoes.

"Some of the manufacturers are worried that if courses go spikeless the next step would be that you don't need golf shoes. Any shoe manufacturer could come up with a shoe that has a sole full of dimples. I believe that is in the back of the manufacturers' minds."

One problem which Cliff can foresee is potential litigation if someone is compelled to change his or her spikes before playing a course and then slips and breaks an ankle.

"What's going to happen then?

He or she will sue the golf club on account of not being able to play the course without changing to alternative spikes. The golf club will sue the distributor and the distributor will sue us.

"That's why we do put a warning on the packaging to say they are not ideal for use on moist, slippery ground."

Another downside of the new spike is that, unlike the newest metal spikes which are made from tungsten, they wear out and need to be replaced.

"Our Tred-Lites last longer than most but because they have to be

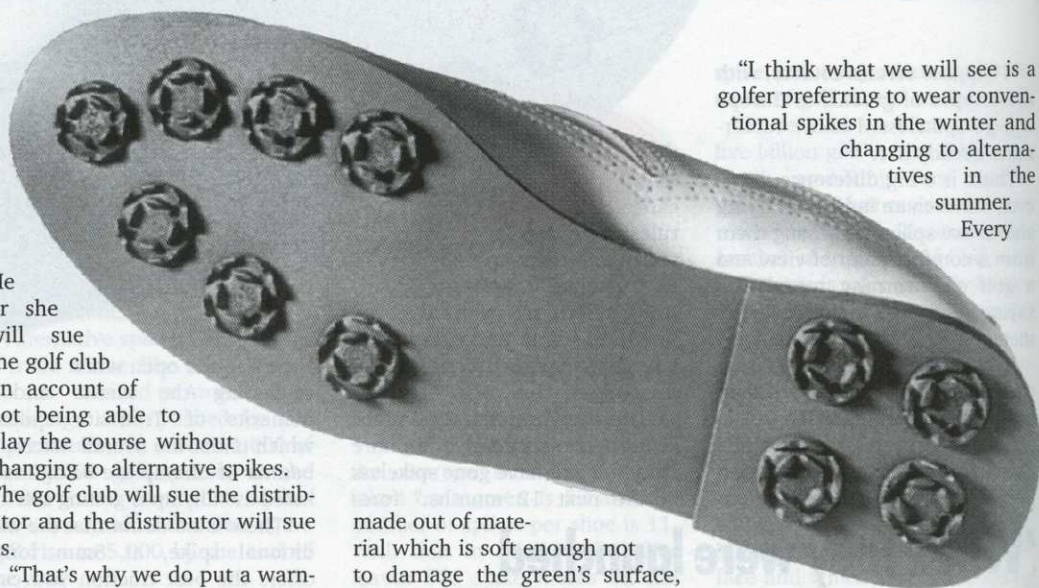
made out of material which is soft enough not to damage the green's surface, they need to be replaced. How quickly depends on the nature of the golf course."

From a business point of view the introduction of the alternative spike has been a huge boost to MacNeill Engineering which has now seen its production rise by 20% to cope with the new demand.

"I think what we will see is a golfer preferring to wear conventional spikes in the winter and changing to alternatives in the summer. Every

golfer will need two sets of spikes which is good for the industry," predicted Cliff.

■ If you have any views on alternative spikes please write to The Editor, Greenkeeper International, Aldwark Manor, Aldwark, Alne, Nr York, YO6 2NF



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This Code is established to promote and maintain the highest professional standards of service and conduct among the membership of BIGGA. Through adherence to this Code, members will gain for themselves recognition of individual integrity, responsibility and professionalism whilst enhancing generally the respect and good will for both their profession and Association.

As a member of the British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association, I accept this Code and pledge myself to:

1. Set standards of personal conduct which will enhance the stature of the profession of golf course management.
2. At all times carry out my duties and responsibilities in such a manner as to reflect

favourably on the profession and Association.

3. Seek to use every opportunity to broaden my professional expertise for both self-improvement and the good of the profession.
4. Follow, as a basic tenet, sound business and turf management principles in exercising the responsibilities of my post.
5. Observe the highest standards of personal integrity in my relationship with fellow greenkeepers as well as other associated individuals and at all times, as far as I am able, assist my fellow greenkeepers as required of me.
6. Pursue job advancement only where vacancies arise and not at the expense of a fellow greenkeeper and abstain from any action, comment or communication not founded on

truth which is likely to harm the professional reputation or practice of another greenkeeper.

7. Give endorsements of any kind only upon satisfactory personal experiences of the item identified.
8. Refrain from encouraging or accepting considerations of any value which might be deemed an inducement to find favour for a particular party or influence decisions in relation to that party and at all times avoid any exploitation of my Association, Industry or Profession.
9. Support at every opportunity the Association, its Regions and Sections in seeking to improve the public understanding and recognition of the profession of golf course management.
10. Report to the Association any evidence likely to be in violation of this Code of Ethics.

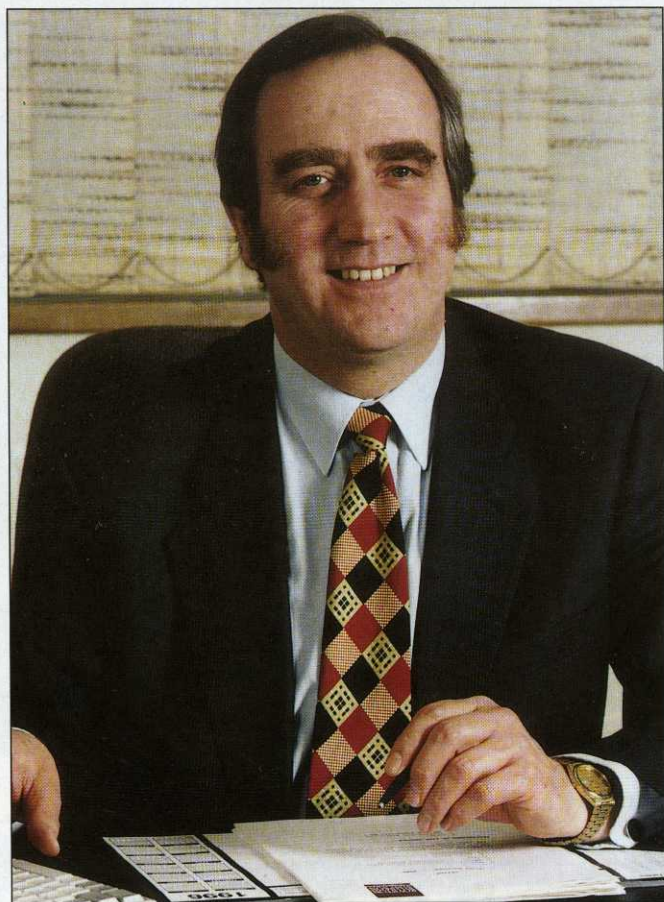
Appointment strengthens Toro support

The Toro Company has teamed up with golf agronomy consultant, Bruce Jamieson, as part of a commitment to providing high level support to customers. This arrangement will further increase Toro's policy of supporting educational establishments.

Mr Jamieson, 39, has over 20 years of experience in the golf industry and was Director of Agronomy for the PGA European Tour for six years. He operates his own consultancy, B Jamieson Golf Advisors, in Hook, Hampshire and will act as an independent consultant to Toro in the UK and throughout Europe.

In announcing the appointment, Toro's European director of sales, Bob Buckingham, said: "The appointment is an indication of our commitment to supply 'Total Solutions' support to our customers."

Initially, Bruce will be working with Toro to provide specialised training for Toro's European distribution network. On new golf course construction projects, he will provide agronomic advice.



At the AEA's Annual General Meeting at the Savoy Hotel in London, Kim Macfie, Sales and Marketing Director of Hayter Ltd, was elected as the 1997/98 Chairman of OPEC, the Outdoor Power Equipment Council.

Kim has been "south" of the border since 1981 as General Horticultural Manager for Cowies Eastern Tractors, before moving in 1984 to his current position with Hayter.

Kim will have a particular eye for this year's Open Golf Championship having retained his membership of the Royal Troon club throughout his years in the south.

Wait for the weather, urges expert

Greenkeepers planning to re-seed or grass new areas, should leave their seed in the bag until weather forecasts predict significant rainfall.

That's the advice of Force Limagrain's Andrew Wallis, following the driest March for over 50 years and continued April drought.

"Even in dry conditions, Fusarium – a disease which is endemic in UK soils – will quickly infect untreated grass seeds," he explains. "And the longer this seed lies dormant, waiting for rain, the better the foothold the disease will gain."

"Once soil moisture finally stimulates seed germination, the fusarium can finish-off the weakened seed, leaving patchy establishment of weakened grasses."

"Problems will be worst in areas shielded from rain and where winds continue to dry out soil moisture reserves."

"Untreated grass seed which lies dormant for two to three weeks or more will suffer in this way with a less than satisfactory survival rate."

Treated seed will provide better emergence and can survive after six weeks of dry soil conditions, but here again, Mr Wallis suggests turf managers are patient and wait for the weather.

"We desperately need prolonged periods of penetrating rainfall," stresses Mr Wallis. "The worst case scenario would be to run into a period of light drizzle or showers followed by a further dry spell. Untreated seed would germinate, emerge and then die due to lack of moisture."

Test passed

A group of 12 STRI staff, including members of the agronomy team and plant pathology, undertook training for the BASIS Certificate in Crop Protection (Amenity Horticulture) and passed with flying colours.

Although BASIS certification is not obligatory, STRI felt it was an essential part of staff development with increasing concerns over use of pesticides and the changes to pesticides legislation.



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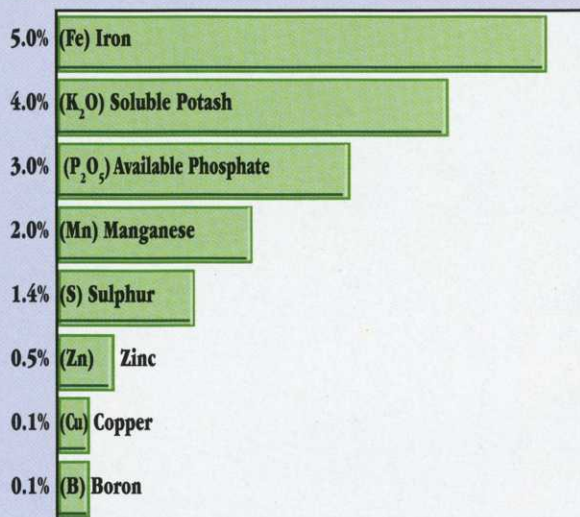
AMTEC™ TURF HEALTHCARE

123 Premix™

123 Premix™ is an easy to use pre-mixed formulation of three of the Amenity Technology micronutrient, biostimulant and wetting agent range. Contains 1 part AGRIplex™, 2 parts ironROOTS2™ and 3 parts NoburN™. Available in 10 lt. containers. Apply at 20 lts. per hectare every 4 weeks, or as Drencher 123 pellets for spot treatment of damaged areas.



AGRIplex™



AGRIplex™ Micronutrient for Greens and Tees

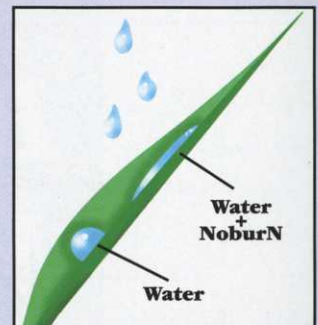
AGRIplex™ is a fully chelated micronutrient feed that provides specific, secondary and micronutrients necessary for the correction of nutrient deficiencies in turf plants. AGRIplex™ is designed to supplement all fertilizer programmes, especially on sand greens where nutrient leaching is a major problem. An application of 6 lts. per hectare every 4 weeks will provide all the necessary micronutrients for fine turf.

NoburN™

NoburN™ Natural Wetting Agent

NoburN™ natural wetting agent and soil penetrant is a non-scorching organic surfactant made with yucca plant extract. NoburN™ is used to increase water retention and percolation in dry, hydrophobic or compacted soils. NoburN™ will not burn or discolour turfgrass or plants, even when not watered in.

NoburN™ should be applied at 10 lts. per hectare every 4 weeks.



The effect of NoburN™ in reducing contact angle between a water droplet and a hydrophobic surface to improve surface wetting.

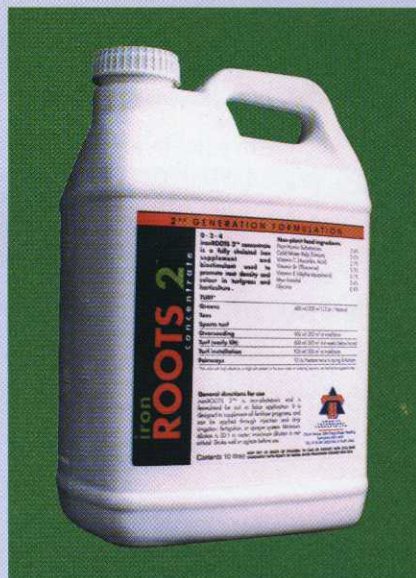


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ROOTS2™ and ironROOTS2™

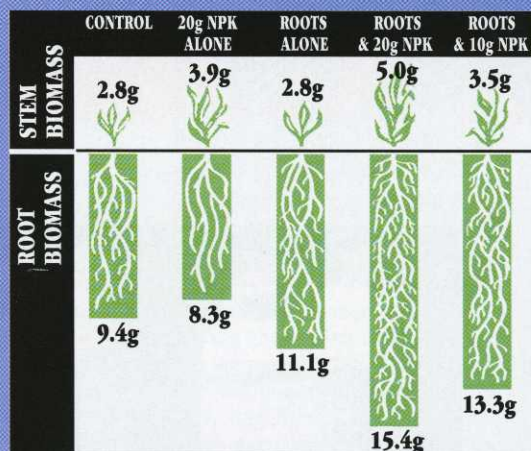
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- Choice of iron for added green up
- Over 10 years of university research and development

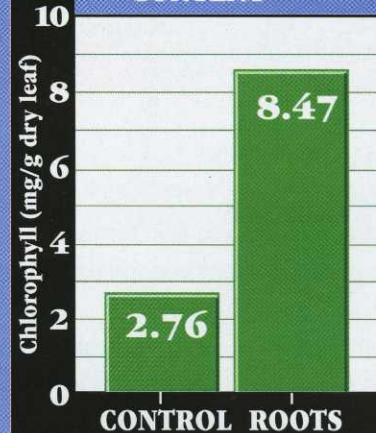


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The long cold autumn and winter months can leave sports turf looking pale and discoloured, especially if the sward contains a high percentage of annual meadow grass. The patented iron chelates and sulphur in the Amenity Technology range can help achieve a deep sustained green up of the playing surface, along with an increased hardness against disease and stress, until such time as spring feed can be applied. Designed for a quick response with a greener, longer lasting colour.

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SOLUplex™ soluble iron is available in 1 hectare bags. SOLUplex™ is extremely soluble and very economical to use, making it ideal for bulk spraying of fairways and outfields.



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LAWNplex™ and Fe8%™ offer advanced patented chelated iron formulas designed to give maximum iron uptake during reduced plant activity.

LAWNplex™ has been specially designed with sand greens in mind, with the inclusion of 2% nitrogen for increased nutrient iron uptake, along with all the advantages of 7% sulphur.

Fe8% and LAWNplex™ should be applied at 10-20 lts. per hectare for corrective treatment of iron deficiency, or at a maintenance rate of 10 lts. per hectare every 4 weeks.



Gary Grigg, Master Greenkeeper and past President of the Golf Course Superintendents of America, describes work at Royal Poincianas, Florida, during the month of May.

May in Florida


The month of May is our busiest month in terms of maintenance operations. Perhaps I should visit a little about our club, our turfgrasses and our area of the United States before telling you what our operations are in May.


Royal Poincianas is an equity owned 36 hole facility with 600 regular golfing members. We have 440 acres of land with no development anywhere on the property. 300 acres is what I consider golf course. It is typical Florida in it's flora with palms, slash pines and cypress the dominate trees. It has a wide diverse amount of native fauna also. We have 75 acres of water in 10 different lakes, as well as two streams.

Of the 300 acres of golf, 160 are irrigated turfgrasses. The course was built in 1968-69 and originally planted to Ormond Bermuda grass with native soil greens of Tifgreen or 328 Bermuda grass. The course was reconstructed and upgraded in 1995-96. During this period the greens were rebuilt to USGA specifications and re-grassed with Tifdwarf, a superior putting surface to the older 328. Tees and most of the fairways were re-grassed to Tifway or 419 Bermuda grass. We currently have a mix of the new 419 and the older Ormond, with plans to kill out the Ormond and replant to 419 so the fairways are uniform.

Our golf course exists as a second club for mostly retired members who live in the northern states and come to Florida to live as part year residences during the winter months. Most of our members belong to the best clubs in their resident cities up north. Our golf season gets underway in mid-October and comes to an end by May 1st.

Our climate coincides with the golf season. It begins to cool down in the middle of October to below 90 degrees F in the days and the humidity begins to lower as the rainy season comes to an end. The dry season gets underway in November and the temperature and humidity stay nice until the end of April. May again finds us over the 90 degree F mark, but it is hot and dry until July when the rains begin. We get an annual average rainfall of 65 inches of rain, with 55 inches of that in the rain season of July through September. In 1995 dur-

**A GREENKEEPER'S DIARY**
IN ASSOCIATION WITH
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ing reconstruction of the golf courses we received over 100 inches of rain. We can also have drier than normal conditions some years, and 1996 was one of those years.

The good news is that Bermuda grass loves hot, humid conditions and grows rapidly during the summer season so that we have regenerated a good playing turf

assistant in the office, a irrigation technician on each course, three material applications personnel, our grounds staff is four, we have three in the shop and eleven labours on each course. We also sub-contract out such things as pruning our 8,000 plus trees and aquatic weed control on our 75 acres of lakes.

In early May we fertilise every thing to get a surge of growth so that our turf will recover faster from our intense practices. The first Monday after Mothers Day in early May we totally verticut all the turfgrass and double sweep the thatch cuttings up and haul them to a site for burning. When I say we verticut, we remove all the grass and thatch all the way to the dirt. We then topdress the greens and tees and topdressing mix of 85% sand and 15% peat moss and we heavy topdress the fairways with straight sand. Heavy topdressing of the fairways requires 2,000 tons of sand. We hire out the verticutting and sweeping to an outside contractor who brings in around 6 verticutting-cutters and 8 sweepers. The entire operation for all 36 holes takes only one day, daylight to dark. We topdress with our own crew. Greens and tees take only a day but fairways take a week to ten days to do both golf courses. We use a Terra Topper on the greens, Toro brush units on the tees and a Tycrop 4 cu/yd fairway spinner unit on the fairways. It takes about two weeks for the Bermuda grass to recover and once again to be a good playing surface.

As a side note we aerify all fairways later in the summer with 3/4 inch tines and again topdress heavy with sand and drag it into the aerifier holes. Greens and tees are also aerified in late May and again in late September.

It is absolutely essential that we dethatch once per year. Bermuda grass is very aggressive with its stolons and the consequences of not dethatching will lead to declining health of the turf due to the excessive thatch layer which harbours insects, disease and

stops water penetration into the soil. Topdressing fairways however is an option not too many superintendents perform, due to the cost. We feel here at Royal Poinciana that it leads to the outstanding playing surface we produce for our fairways.

Also in May, after topdressing we broadcast Ronstar herbicide for summer weedgrass control. Crabgrasses, both soft and hard, are major problems in our area and pre-emergence control is a must. The herbicide you use however is a choice. The hot weather of May also brings a major hatch of mole crickets our number one problem insect and we begin a never ending battle with them that lasts all season but is less severe in the cooler months. Sod web worms also become a major problem, along with army worms and grubs, all must be controlled on a regular basis. Most of our disease pressure of the season also occurs with summer as most diseases of Bermuda grass are summer problems.

Towards the end of May when everything has recovered and is growing fast we begin a program of slowing down the growth so we can handle mowing the turf during the rainy season, when we have a hard time getting on the courses to mow. That program consists of holding back fertilisation and a monthly application of the growth regulator Primo. We treat fairways with 8 oz Primo/acre once a month through to October. We treat greens and tees with 2 oz Primo per acre every two weeks through October. The Primo allows us to raise the height of cut on the greens and still have reasonable speed. The Primo also makes the turf denser. The higher height of cut and increased density keeps the intense sunlight off the soil and reduces an algae problem we encounter during the hot humid months of summer. Algae... now there is a real problem on sand based greens. My e-mail is ggrigg@gate.net for those of you who can help me on this one.



'In early May we fertilise everything to get a surge of growing'

by the golf season in October. During the cooler, drier golf season we are very busy and most of our members like to ride golf cars, due to their age. Bermuda grass gets worn down from the intense traffic and does not regenerate well in the cooler months. Naples Florida is below the general frost line and we do not overseed the Bermuda grass in the winter months to cool season grasses as some clubs in the northern areas of the Bermuda grass zone do.

We spend the golf season keeping the course in excellent conditions and the summer months getting ready for the next golf season. May and June become the two months when we have little play, good growing conditions, but are not into the rainy season yet. As you can guess these are very busy months for our crew. My year around staff is 42 for both golf and grounds. Besides myself I have two assistants, one on each course, an administrative

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Around the Green

Keeping in touch with news and comment from the regions

SCOTTISH REGION

Elliott Small
Tel: 01259 731445



The Annual Match between the Scottish Region and the Scottish Region of Club Secretaries on Monday April 1 at Lundin Links GC was played in sunny, if somewhat typical, East Coast links weather. A wee breeze as they say, blowing a gale to others! After the usual pre-match soup and sandwiches and plenty of inter-team chat the teams were led out by Jack Walker, Captain of the Secretaries, and Sam Morrison, Chairman of the Scottish Region, and a win to the Secretaries in this match seemed a bad omen. The next three pairs were wins for the greenkeepers but in the next five games the greenkeepers could only muster one and a half points and as on many past occasions it was 4 1/2 - 4 1/2 and all on the last match. The smiles on the faces of the two secretaries as they passed the window gave it all away and the secretaries had gained a rare and glorious win 5 1/2 - 4 1/2. It was a grand day enjoyed by all, the weather was good and the course was excellent thanks to Willie Swan and his merry men; the food first class, thanks to chef, John Rae, and, of course, the amber nectar revived the spirits of many. So who cares about the result?

Our thanks to Lundin Links for their hospitality and my thanks to Alex Berridge, the Secretary of the Secretaries Association for his organisation. We look forward to

next year gentlemen when we come to regain that trophy!
Elliott Small

North

There is a large influx of new members to welcome to the Section this month. From Downfield comes James Gowans, James Frearson and Colin Mullican from Craggan, Fergus Laing from Grantown-on-Spey, Graham Lornie from Newmacher and from Aigas Beaully Peter Masheter. Roy Becone joins us from Brechin, Kevin Scott, from Drumoig; Graham Mellis, from Muir of Ord; Brian Hunter, from Longside; Neil Young, from Kenney; Brian Scott, from Blairgowrie, and, last but not least, Ross Macleod from Forbes. The Section Secretary tells me there are still a few from last year that have not renewed, come on - what are you waiting for?

Last month I welcomed Neil Ballingall to Moray GC but failed to mention his predecessor. Some 20 years ago Mike Campbell volunteered to take on the job when Moray were struggling to get someone. A big chance for an ex-fisherman! History records what a good job he did and we wish him a long and happy retirement. Maybe we will see him playing golf at our outings. Come on Mike!

This month sees a big change in the North as Moray Tractors ceases to trade. We are sorry to lose our main dealer in the Highlands and hope all staff manage to find alternative employment. Thanks to them for all their sup-

port over the years. All is not lost though as Scottish Grass Machinery are going to bridge the gap with its range and will have full-time mechanics based in the area for quick response to breakdowns etc.

A word of caution to members with trainees at their course. If the Head Greenkeeper is D32/33 qualified there is no problem and your trainee can attend college for only five weeks instead of seven as you can assess him at the course on site while he is working. However if there is no D32/33 Assessor on your course and your club chooses to send the trainee to college for five weeks instead of seven remember to inform them that a D32/33 Assessor from a local college will have to come and assess your trainee in his workplace. This will cost £12 per hour plus 28p per mile travel expenses. So let them know this so as not to leave them thinking this service is free. Better still apply to get trained up yourself.

See you at Duff House this month for hopefully a great day out.
Iain Macleod

West

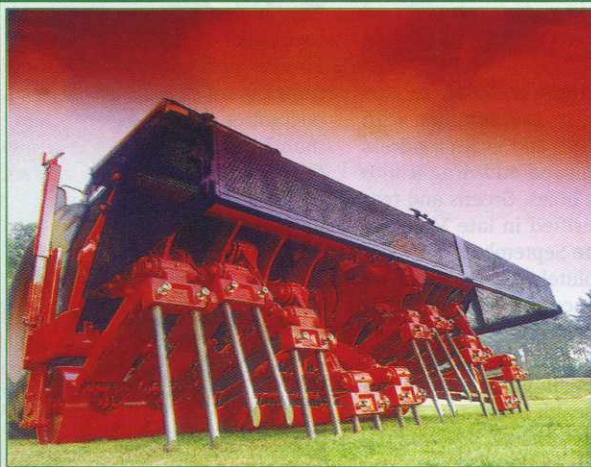
Welcome to summer, what great temperatures we've had and even growth - a big difference from last year. Long may it continue.

March was a fairly busy month so there are a few things to report. The Loch Lomond day visit was well attended with nearly 60 people turning up to be given an informative talk from Mike Watton and Ken Siems. The

itinerary involved a tour around the sheds and storage facilities followed by a walk of the course in the afternoon. All mod cons at Loch Lomond and the set up was first class even in the wash bay area. The Service Manager/Head Mechanic gave a very fruitful talk with many tips of the trade. Lunch followed and then it was out onto the course where the weather could have been kinder! A lot of discussion was raised with plenty to think over for our own situations, maybe some day the rest of us could emulate perfection as well. I hope everybody enjoyed themselves and if you are interested helping the Loch Lomond World Invitational support team then contact Cecil George.

The next day proved a cracker, beautiful sunshine, glorious golf and a lovely golf course. Kirkhill was the venue and the day was a Green Conveners/Head Greenkeepers Tournament which saw 17 teams compete. John Scott and his team are to be congratulated on the course presentation and condition, well done lads! The sponsors, Aitkens and Scottish Grass Machinery, are to be given a vote of thanks for their continued support for this event. This is very much appreciated by all in the Section. Richard Atken said a few words on the day which adds a nice personal touch to the event.

The eventual winners were East Kilbride on 40 points. Well done to them but winning is only part of the day, mixing and expressing views with committee men and fellow greenkeepers is



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the main goal. I hope everybody will enter next year and thanks to the people involved for organising the day. Sorry, I nearly forgot to mention, Gordon Kerr, Gled-doch House, won the booby prize with 29 points. John Scott said to be sure to put that bit in!

On the agenda the next football is against the Central Section in Stirling when you eventually find the place. Nothing to do with your directions John (Crawford), just me! I was on the correct road only to turn off 15 minutes late! A very entertaining game was well fought, well behaved and there was a well deserved victory for the West Section. 4-3 was the score with goals coming from Stevie McGechie, Brian Hillam disputed, Graeme Shearer and a toe bash from Gerry Bruen for the winner. Scoring wins matches, being there, mixing and playing is what counts – supporting the Section and creating a greater bond between Sections and greenkeepers alike.

Brian Hillam will be arranging a match against the East Section and Loch Lomond this summer so those interested please contact him on 0420 610160 or 01236 434323.

Last year we had 10 teams competing in the five-a-side tournament and this year we are hoping for 16. Those interested should contact me on 0141 942 5554. Teams can consist of up to seven players, two clubs can join forces but no ringers, strictly greenkeepers (with the exception of trade of course). The cost is £15 per team, entry forms will be sent to everybody but the closing date is June 30. Last year the weather was super and sandwiches were provided. All attending enjoyed the day, even the referees. The teams which took part last year were Winners:- Campsie/A M Russells, Runners-up:- East Kilbride/Pollock, Semi-Finalists:- Rigby Taylor and Clydebank/Windyhill. The other teams which competed were

Bishop Briggs/Lenzie, Hilton Park, Drumpellier, Douglas Park, Glasgow and Souters.

Any interesting information please phone on 0141 942 5554. Remember, this is your Section. Stewart Taylor

East

Firstly people on the move – Neil Ballingall, Assistant Course Manager at Muirfield GC, has moved after four years at the East Lothian course to become Head Greenkeeper at Moray GC, Lossiemouth, and Craig Gilholm has taken over as Assistant Course Manager at Muirfield where he was previously Assistant Greenkeeper.

The Section would like to wish them both best wishes for the future in their new jobs. Section membership has dropped over the last few months which we don't like to see. So if you know anyone who has not rejoined find out why, they can call any committee member to discuss any problems they may have with the Association as we would like to see them back in the Section. Also if anyone knows of any person that is not yet a member tell them the benefits of joining BIGGA. They can call our Secretary, Steve Dixon, at home on 0131 660 3965 or at work on 0131 443 0235 for a membership form or call Headquarters at Aldwark Manor.

The aim of the East Section is to have all greenkeepers in our area members of BIGGA and with your help we can do it, so come on, give it a try. The social committee have just completed a list of functions, outings etc for the Section. A fixture list and details of all the events will be with you shortly. Having spoken to people who attended the Scottish Conference they said it was an excellent day and congratulations go to the Central Section and the North Section who jointly organised this years conference. A small word from Steve Dixon,

who had two of his club officials at the Conference and they commented on the high calibre of the speakers, the professional way the Conference was run and that it was a very informative day. Well done to all. It was just a pity that I could not make it due to work commitments so roll on next year. So by the time you read this the good weather should be with us, hopefully it will not turn out like the Spring of '96 and we hope everyone has a good golfing season.

Don't forget if you have any photos of information for the magazine let me have them. You can contact me at home on my new number 01620 842037 or office 0131 445 7165 to discuss anything we could put in the magazine.

Chris Yeaman

Central

We start this month's news with the result from the football match played again the West Section at Forthbank Stadium, Stirling in March. Unfortunately we lost by four goals to three and this was after being three up at half time. The half time team talk in the visitor's dressing room certainly had its effect, but Andy O'Hara has assured me that he will change the tactics for the next game so that the training in the bar is done AFTER the game! By all accounts everyone enjoyed themselves during and after the match so if you want to be involved in the forthcoming matches get your forms back to me as soon as possible.

Our last mailshot was sent out to some 240 members and patrons and at the moment I have had 16 completed forms returned. Please give your committee some support. After all we are organising events for everyone's benefit. If you cannot take five minutes to complete and return a form then don't complain that BIGGA does nothing for you. Perhaps it may be the

other way round. Right, that's the moaning out of the way!

The Section was well represented, both on the programme and in the audience at the Scottish Conference in Perth and I am sure that everyone, including the National Chairman, Pat Murphy, who attended was impressed by the quality of all the speakers and the various topics on which they spoke.

We extend a warm welcome from the Section to Ronald Peat, from Dunfermline District Council, and Jim Ellis, of Glenbervie GC. Jim was always a familiar face at our golf tournaments and hopefully we will see him at many more now that he has rejoined.

On the form for the Inter-Club Tournament the format should have been Two Ball Foursome and not a Two Ball Better Ball as stated. This will be confirmed when the draw is circulated.

The Scottish Final of the Hayter Challenge Tournament is due to be hosted by the Central Section in 1998 so if you fancy having this prestigious tournament at your course please get in touch with me as soon as possible and I will start the ball rolling regarding arrangements.

Well, that's it for this month, not a lot I know but hopefully I will have more news for you next time!

John Crawford

NORTHERN REGION

Bob Lupton
Tel: 01782 750539

Northern

Our annual dinner dance was held at Bradford GC and what a superb evening it was. The food was excellent. Thank you to all the staff at the club for their hospitality and making it a very enjoyable event.

A total of 113 people attended the dinner which I believe is the best turnout to date. Many thanks to Dave Thackray and Mel Guy



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Comment From Walter Woods
St. Andrews Links Golf Course supervisor

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for their help in arranging the function and to everyone who contributed towards the raffle prizes. Plenty of effort went into the organising but I'm certain all who attended agreed it was worth while.

May I thank Pat Murphy, our National Chairman, and his wife, for attending in a year which I'm sure is exceptionally hectic. Thanks are extended also to Ian Holoran and his wife and Bob and Sara Lupton for coming.

An excellent event and I hope we have as much support from greenkeepers, trade and friends at future dinner dances. Finally thanks to you all for your support to the Section.

Entries are rapidly increasing for the Hayter qualifier at Wakefield GC. Some people will be disappointed for not booking earlier.

Tim Balcombe, Assistant at Scarthingwell GC, sadly left us to seek his fame and fortune in his native Canada. Best wishes to Tim and his family from all members who knew him. Hope he finds employment in greenkeeping over there, as he truly loved his work on the golf course.

Earlier this year Roy Spencer, a former Section Chairman, retired having reached the "required" figure of 65. Roy had been Head Greenkeeper at Hanging Heaton GC for the past eight years, previously at Fulneck GC for 14 years and Calverly GC for four years. Best wishes in your retirement Roy.

In June this year Adrian Robertshaw, a former Section Secretary, retires after nearly 50 years in greenkeeping. Having started at Bingley St Ives Research Station he then became an assistant at Shipley GC, First Assistant at Leicester GC, Head Greenkeeper at Otley GC and then to his final "resting place" at Ilkley GC as Head Greenkeeper for the past 28 years.

Retirement will not mean rest for Adrian, whose hobbies include gardening, golf, woodwork and walking. The latter involving the company of his wife Marlene and faithful friend Toby the dog. Best wishes in your retirement Adrian.

Forthcoming section golf events include:

President's Day, Wed, June 25, South Leeds GC. Tee off 1pm.

Invitation Day, Wed, September 3, Sipton GC. Tee off 1pm

Autumn Tournament, Wed, October 8, Brid' Links GC. Tee off 10.30am

Winter Tournament, Wed, December 10, Scarcroft GC. Tee off 10.30am

Anyone wishing to book a place for any of the above events please send your deposit to: 1 Cockley

Around the Green



Meadows, Kirkheaton, Huddersfield, HD5 0LA. Or ring me on 01484 - 519829 to book a place, then send the deposit to the above address.

Simon Heppenstall

North West

The North West Seminar, at Mere Golf and Country Club, was once again well attended after a slow start to the applications coming in. We started the day with a well presented talk from Graeme Francis, Marketing Manager of Toro Irrigation, explaining the advantages of having your own water supply from a borehole and the management of your irrigation system. Graeme only had 45 minutes to attempt to cover a vast subject and was only able to briefly touch on the red tape involved in getting permission to carry out the sinking of your own borehole. If you wish to receive further information Graeme can be contacted on 01425 476261.

Derek Green, Course Manager at Royal Liverpool GC, followed with a very interesting and knowledgeable talk on bunker construction. This is a never ending job on the golf course, either links or parkland. Derek also showed the BIGGA video on bunker construction in which he starred, and if you wish to purchase the video, it can be bought from BIGGA Headquarters.

The afternoon spot was to be filled by Guy Longshaw and Paul Hartley from Symbio. Unfortunately Guy Longshaw was taken ill on the morning of the seminar making a hurried change to the programme. Martin Ward, the Executive Director of Symbio, briefed us on the way he started the Company with his knowledge of Biology. He was followed by Stella, one of his technical team, who covered the highly technical chemistry side of the Company. Paul Hartley was the final speaker and he covered the practical side of the Company in the North West.

I would like to thank all the sponsors for sharing their time and knowledge with us, Mere Golf and Country Club for allowing us the use of their superb facilities and the four companies who supported us by paying to advertise their products. These were SISIS, Rolawn, British Seed Houses and Burrows GM.

I have been asked by Les Kernott, past Head Greenkeeper of

Warrington GC and a very respected member of BIGGA, to make a statement on his behalf. Les would like it to be known that he retired from Warrington GC on the grounds of ill health by mutual agreement with the golf club. Les has suffered from angina for the last 12 months and on the advice of his Doctor asked for early retirement from the club which the club agreed to and pensioned him off.

Longridge GC, Preston is the venue for the summer meeting on Wednesday June 25. Applications including the payment of £15 must reach Bill Merritt, 225 Utting Avenue, Clubmore, Liverpool, L4 9RB no later than June 18. Lunch will be served between 12 noon and 1pm. The tee off time is from 1.30 pm and tee times will be allocated on the day. An evening meal and presentation of prizes will follow in the evening. Please note that proper dress is essential.

Any news, views or otherwise then please contact me on 0151 724 5412.

Bert Cross

Cleveland

The early March Spring weather is enabling work outdoors to progress provoking the questions will the ground be firm enough for the machinery and is this our normal false start or is it an early spring? Time will tell!

The March meeting was postponed because of a double booking at Darlington GC, however the Toro event will be rearranged for next winter's programme. We did have an enjoyable talk held at Darlington GC though from Mark Hunt from Scotts Fertilisers.

The Spring Tournament will be held at Bedale GC on May 8 starting at 9.30 am. The Beast of Bedale is looking for revenge following his poor showing at Wynyard Hall!

Thirsk and Northallerton GC will open their new nine holes on July 13. The full 18 hole course will be 6600 yards long, SS71, Par 72. Bill Rank and his staff are working very hard on the preparation and we wish them well.

Bruce Burnell

Sheffield

On March 6 we held our winter lecture at Rotherham GC. Our thanks go to Phil Davies, from Mommersteeg, who gave a very interesting lecture on grass seed, which was enjoyed by a good number of our members.

On April 3 we held our final winter lecture again at Rotherham GC. On behalf of the Section I would like to thank Rotherham GC for letting us use their facilities again this winter.

Our final lecture was given by Mr Mike Franklin and Mr Danny Godfrey from Boughton Loam Ltd. Our thanks go to Mike who gave a very interesting lecture on Rootzones and Top Dressings and our thanks also to Danny who gave a very interesting lecture on grass seed and grass seed mixtures. The two lectures were enjoyed by the members who were present but unfortunately there wasn't our usual good turnout.

Just two new members this month. They are John Fowler, from Roundwood GC, and Paul Hude, from Hickleton GC.

John Lax

North East

Tom Harrison, Head Greenkeeper at Stocksfield GC, would like to wish one of his assistants, Clifford Bunn, well on his recent move to nearby Hexham GC. The questionnaire we sent out was well received and only a handful failed to send them back. On looking them over the committee can decide what you the members are looking for. May I remind all those persons who said that they would send Section news in to get cracking.

One definite suggestion which will be going ahead with was the most popular time and that was between 7pm-9pm.

Plans will be going ahead on looking for various companies and golf clubs to hold the seminars during the coming months.

Other suggestions to come out were to have a winter target golf competition, and a quiz was mentioned several times.

Golf days are to remain the same except that we are going to have a Christmas comp, followed by a Christmas dinner, then on to an AGM and a prize giving. A golf club venue has been suggested and hopefully we will hold it at the start of December.

Jimmy Richardson

Editor's Note: A special mention for Jimmy who is the first member to send his Section Notes in by E-mail.

MIDLAND REGION

Peter Larter
Tel: 01480 437507

East Midlands

This year's pairs competition took on a different format with the trial of a better ball Stableford tournament in an attempt to attract more members. Unfortunately this did not work out as only six pairs entered. However all those who participated enjoyed an excellent day sponsored by Scotts UK and ALS. The results were: 1. A Bindley & M Bindley, Kirby Muxloe, 40 pts; 2.



D Leatherland & P Tatlow, Kedleston Park, 40 pts; 3. P Forshaw & R Fletcher, Ramsdale Park, 36 pts.

Thanks go to Lingdale GC for hosting the Tournament and to Gavin Robson and his staff for setting up a fine course. Also thanks should go to the Steward, Barry Dunstan, for an excellent meal.

It was a great honour for the Section to be joined on the day by Eric Taylor, Greens Chairman of Lingdale GC who presented our prizes at the evening presentation. Finally I would like to thank Scotts UK and ALS for the generous sponsorship and to appeal to more members to participate in next year's event.

This year's Regional Seminar sees a change in venue from Sketchley Grange to Northampton Rugby Club on November 19. For this year a high calibre of speakers have been chosen so it is hoped that as many members as possible will be able to attend. For further details contact our Regional Administrator, Peter Larter.

At the Longcliffe Quiz Night the Section was represented by three members, Richard Barker, Mark Bindley and myself and also the former President of the Golf Club, Roger Barker. Under the title of BIGGA & Better the team, after leading the first two rounds,

Around the Green



eventually slipped down into third place.

Antony Bindley

BB & O

Hopefully by the time this article goes to print you will all have received the entry forms for the first golf event of the season at Castle Royle on May 13. If there is anybody still not receiving post then please contact myself as soon as possible.

I am personally looking forward to the first event as it doubles as the Hayter Qualifier so plenty of incentive to get some practice in. If you are successful at qualifying through to the Regional Final a day at The Warwickshire awaits. In all, the years of this event I don't think as a Section we have had much success, in fact we normally compete for the wooden spoon! I think it's about time we sent a team capable of winning the event, we certainly have enough good golfers in the Section.

The second of the winter lectures took place at Warren Farm

back in March. this was an evening with Martin Jones of The Oxfordshire on the subject of tournament preparation. I was unable to attend myself but the reports were all positive. The expectations of the professionals on tour are frightening with nothing short of perfection acceptable. Is perfection attainable I wonder? Thanks again to the College for putting on this evening. I am sure everybody looks forward to next winter's programme with anticipation.

Moving on nicely to the next item, Martin is looking for volunteers to assist in course preparation prior to this years Benson and Hedges Tournament which kicks off on May 8. I was involved with the work party last year and found it quite enjoyable to be involved for such a prestigious event. There are a couple of incentives for any volunteers taking part ie free passes to view the tournament and the possibility of the Oxfordshire hosting one of our golf days in 1998. If anybody wants to help out then please contact myself as soon as possible.

I would like to thank GEM Products for sponsoring our fixture card. Once again this was due to the stern efforts of Bernie Wall. I am sure you will all agree he is a gem, cheers Bernie!

One last point, the last two golf

events were oversubscribed last season so please send your entries in as soon as possible to avoid disappointment.

Lindsay Anderson

Midland

Let me start by clearing up a misunderstanding. In the report for the March issue I listed our new members and one of them had the name Steve Blakeman and many of you thought Steve Blakeman, of Rigby Taylor, had made a return to our membership. In fact he had never left and this Steve Blakeman was genuinely a new member. Sorry to you both.

The trips to Championship courses which I have mentioned in previous reports are now fully booked and are in the final stages of preparation. Thank you for your support. On the Education side Andrew Smith, from the North Warwickshire, has some ideas for future events, such as a mechanics' day about which I will give you information in future reports. I would like to remind you again to get your entries for the summer tournament in early as we are getting lots of interest for our tournaments. So first come first served. This tournament will be held on July 7 which is a Monday, at the Worcestershire GC.

It would be a great help to me if anyone with news or ideas can

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contact me – Tel: 01384 292396 – so I can put them into the report. I can only report things which I personally hear and would like to put things in which you also know or have news on which you think is of interest.

Let me leave you with this. When you get this report you will probably have or being involved in lots of arguments with members about the condition of Augusta and why your course is not like that. This is just the Annual Augusta Blues. A post Augusta Disorder!
Jonathan Wood

East of England

The first competition of the season was held at Thorney Lakes GC, a new course with plenty of water hazard (hence the name). Thanks to Head Greenkeeper Sid and his staff for an excellent course under the demanding conditions.

The turnout was extremely good for the first competition of the year and hopefully you will show the same support for the rest of the events. All standards of golfers play, so new members are always welcome.

The Thorney competition was sponsored by Peterborough Garden Machinery and it was nice to see sponsor, Alister get off his sick bed to come and support the

event. Other sponsors were Fieldcare, Atkins, Rigby Taylors, Barenburg and Purdys, with some wine from Roy Harrison.

It was also nice to have the Regional Administrator, Peter Larter, supporting our event. Peter outlined some forthcoming events and donated some raffle prizes.

Results: (Order of Merit for BIGGA Blazer Points in brackets)

1. David Welberry, Kirton Holme GC, 37 Pts (10 Pts); 2. Peter Larter, Reg Administrator, 36 Pts; 3. Richard Smith, Immingham GC, 34 Pts, (8 Pts); 4. Graeme Macdonald, Ryston Park GC, 33 Pts, (6 Pts); 5. George Venable, Hemingford GC, 33 pts, (4 Pts); 6. Kevin Hodges, Cambs Lakes GC, 33 Pts, (2 Pts)

Nearest the Pin: Richard Owen, Boston West, 6 metres

Best wishes to Charlie Macdonald, of Newark GC, who has been appointed the new Course Manager of Crieff GC. Charlie has been a great supporter of the East of England and will be sadly missed.

Graeme Macdonald

SOUTH EAST REGION

Derek Farrington
Tel: 01903 260956

South East Region

The inaugural Regional Challenge



Around the Green



Shield was held at Princes Golf Club, Sandwich, on Maundy Thursday. Perhaps an unfortunate choice of date as London, Essex and Kent Sections were unable to raise a team to challenge for this Shield being so close to Easter. East Anglia, Surrey and Sussex however each raised a team of 11 members together with a team made up from trade and guests and enjoyed a marvellous day at this classic links venue.

The event was the brainchild of Chris Allen, Lewes, who is keen that all the Sections within the Region should get to know each other and what better way than a golf match! It is hoped that with a more suitable date this event will become a regular fixture in the Region's calendar.

Generous sponsorship by John Deere and Avoncrop Amenity Products provided a fine array of prizes, John Deere donating a Princes Club Chrystal Decanter to each of the 11 members of the winning team with other prize winners picking up prizes courtesy of Avoncrop Amenity Products.

The Regional Challenge Shield and decanters for the team competition was decided on a Stableford with the best ten scores in each team to count with Surrey winning with 301 points.

Best Individual Scores were: 1. Gavin Kyle, 37 pts; 2. Matt Allen, 36 pts; 3. Danny O'Rourke 35 pts; 4. Mark Day, 34 pts. The two nearest the pin prizes were won by Roger Tydeman and Terry Bent. Guest Prize winner, Mike Smith.

The Region's thanks are due to, not only Chris Allen for organising the event, but to the teams who supported it – particularly East Anglia who travelled such a distance to be there – and last but not least to Princes Golf Club for providing such a wonderful links golf course, bar and catering. Derek Farrington

Essex

I recently enjoyed a day at Walton Heath GC for the Gentlemen's Dinner. The course was in good condition and the organisation was first class as usual. I didn't see many Essex winners, only me! I won the putting competition so thanks to SISIS for the prize.

The Section held a seminar at Writtle College on March 18 when, at very short notice, Edward Clarkson gave a talk on Symbio. Thanks for stepping into

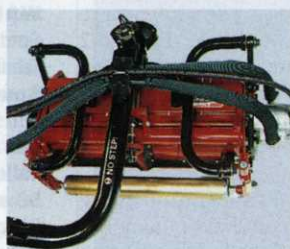
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the breech Edward. Twenty five members were present and we retired to the bar for a few beers. The prize winner of the sponsored questionnaire was Robert Williams of Gosfield Lakes. We received 54 completed entries. Thank you Graham for your work in collating the replies, the results will be available after May 14.

Martin Hucklesby, of Five Lakes, gave a career talk to sixth formers and further education students at Southend Leisure Centre to help promote the industry in our area and show how professional we all are.

Anyone interested in playing in a summer golf league should contact Mike Fance at Stockbrook Manor GC, Billericay.

It was good to hear from Douglas Parmenter who tells me he is a Jim Arthur fan and at 77 years of age is still reading *Greenkeeper International*, a wonderful magazine. Thanks for your good wishes and keep reading the magazine Douglas.

We have a few movers and shakers this last couple of months. Martin Dumbrell has moved from Rochford Hundred GC to a course in Austria, as Head Greenkeeper, to be nearer his fiancée. Steve Lawrence has moved from Channels to Suffolk G and CC as Head Greenkeeper. Keith Chinnery, Head Greenkeeper at Colchester GC was married on March 7, congratulations!

We have our first golf meeting on April 22 at Chigwell. This is the Hayter Qualifier. Our next meeting at Writtle College is on May 14 when we have two speakers, Roger Levitt, of Johnson's Seeds, talking on the Life Cycle of the Grass Plant and Andy Cawley, of Dow Elanco talking on Fungicide Functions.

That's all for this month, don't let the grass grow too long under your feet!
Dave Wells

East Anglia

Milton College, Cambridge, was the venue for an Education Seminar on March 19. Some 30 people attended the lectures and all heard something of interest to them. Mike Franklin, from Boughton Loam, gave an insight into the companies operating procedures from the types of top dressings and rootzones they supply through to the screening, grading and distribution. The importance of the correct types and use of grass species was the subject of Andrew Hodgekiss, from Johnsons Seeds. With the use of slides showing various trial plots and full planting schemes, a good presentation

Around the Green



was given and certainly left all those attending with something to think about the next time they have reason to seed a particular area of their course.

After a good lunch was had by all Lyndon Upham, Course Manager of Gog Magog GC, made a presentation taking us through the various stages of the construction of the new 18 hole course at Gogs. With some splendid slides we were shown the work from the initial removal of the top soil through the laying of the greens, tees and fairways and on to the irrigation installation. We were then taken through the maintenance which has brought the course up to the highest standard. John Beck, from Miracle Professional, finished the day with an interesting look at some fertiliser surveys. John gave some explanations to the statistics which in some instances threw up some surprises.

March 27 saw the first South East Region team challenge match. Four of the regions sections managed to raise an 11-man team at quite short notice and had the honour of playing Princes GC at Sandwich in Kent. This true links course with not a tree, gorse bush or sprig of heather was certainly a challenge for all playing on the day and a fair breeze blew which meant the narrow fairways became even harder to hit. The East Anglia team came fourth out of four teams, but only just! This did not matter too much as I am sure for many it was their first taste of links golf and this taking place at the club where Gene Sarazen won the 1932 Open Championship. Surrey came through as the winners and it is hoped the competition can be played as an annual event.

April 9 was a beautiful spring day and 31 competitors took full advantage of the balmy weather and played a medal round at Fynn Valley GC to see who would be progressing through to the South East regional final of the Hayter Challenge. The course was in superb condition and all credit to Tony and his greenstaff for making it so. The prizes were presented by Ron Sargent, the Fynn Valley Captain. Results:- 1. T Russell, nett 68; 2. M Mison, nett 69; 3. S Millard, nett 70. Qualifiers

through to Ham Manor on June 27 are:- 1-9 - P Howard, A Carter, M Keysell, R Boyce. 10-18 - S Millard, J Timms, M Virley, D Childs. 19-28 - T Russell, M Mison, T Huddleston, J Holliday.

Anyone who is unable to attend on this date please contact Ian Willet as soon as possible so a reserve can be contacted.

The loo seat (!) trophy went to T. Tyrrel for his 17 on the first hole. The best trade score was nett 75 by Brian Richardson. This, he tells us, is the first prize he has ever won at golf. He seemed to be reasonably happy with his prize which was a golf trolley and visions sprang to mind of Brian riding it like a cowboy, travelling west towards the setting sun! John Humphreys came second also with a nett 75.

Thanks once again to all the greenstaff, bar staff and kitchen staff at Fynn Valley GC who made the day so enjoyable, not forgetting the trade who supported us so well. They were CMW Equipment, Colliers, Hayter, Pattisons, Rhone Poulenc, Rushbrook and Sons, SISIS and Turf Actant. Apologies for anyone I have left out!

The next golf meeting will be at Felixstowe Ferry GC on Wednesday June 25. There will also be an education seminar to be held at Milton College, Cambridge in June, details to follow in the near future.

Finally, many thanks to Ian Willett who this year started the difficult and demanding job of Section Secretary in such a fine and enthusiastic manner. I trust all members will show their gratitude to him by attending the golf competitions and seminars when possible.
Stephen Millard

SOUTH WEST AND SOUTH WALES REGION

Gordon Child
Tel: 01803 844056

South Coast

On Thursday March 6 we had our final winter lecture at Crane Valley GC where between 40 and 50 members were present. Bob Scott and Alan Sinclair of British Seed Houses gave us a very interesting talk on the British Seed Houses set up. They touched on the new seeds that are being produced and the genetic engineering that is involved in producing these seeds and also spoke about the new creeping bent grass, providence. Providence has been sown on some new golf courses and is giving good results. The talk was very well illustrated with some very good slides. We



enjoyed a splendid lunch courtesy of British Seed Houses and on behalf of the Section I would like to thank Bob and Alan for an excellent presentation and a very nice meal.

After lunch we played 9 holes and I would like to thank Crane Valley GC for allowing us the use of their clubhouse and courtesy of the course. Thanks to Martin Summers and his staff for presenting the course in pristine condition. The day went very well and was well attended so thank you to all of you who were there.

For all of you who have qualified for the Hayter Regional Tournament please ensure that you are there on the day. If you cannot make it let Mark Webb know in plenty of time so he can get replacements. We want a winning team this year however a winning team cannot be achieved without a complete team. The venue this year is Burnham and Berrow GC on June 11. Good luck!
Ken Lodge

Devon and Cornwall

I would like to start my report this month by welcoming the Region's new Administrator, Paula Humphries, to her post within our Association. I am sure Paula will prove to be an excellent Administrator for the Region continuing on from Gordon and Marion's splendid work.

The Section's last meeting of the winter programme was held at Honiton GC on Thursday March 20. With the sun on their backs our golfing members played over the excellently prepared course for the Supaturf & Rhone Poulenc Trophies. This was also the Section's qualifier for the Hayter Tournament with qualifiers going forward to the Regional Final which will be held at Burnham and Berrow GC on June 11.

Our non-golfing members were joined for the course walk by our guest speaker, David Everett. We would like to thank John for guiding members around the course and sheds.

After a superb lunch our President John Palfrey presented the prizes on the behalf of Supaturf and Paul Clifton presented the prizes for the Rhone Poulenc Trophy.

Supaturf Trophy for Head Greenkeepers and Trade:- 1. Buster Lewer (Daignton), 41 pts; 2. Tony Gooch (Torrington), 40 pts on back 9; 3. Tony Ramsden (Budock Vean), 40 pts.

Rhone Poulenc Trophy for Assistants:- 1. Steve Worrall (Stover), 44 pts; 2. Tony James (Tehidy), 41 pts on back 9; 3.

Peter Gross (Ashbury), 41 pts.

Hayter Qualifiers:- 0-9 Category - C Bland, R Daly, T Gooch, T Ramsden, C Rawlings; 10-18 Category - M Child, B Lewer, D Manley, M Parrish, S Worrall; 19-28 Category - T Clark, P Gross, T James, S Saunders, N Turner. Our congratulations are extended to all who have qualified for the Regional Final.

Our afternoon educational talk rounded off an excellent day with Dave Everett, Head Greenkeeper at Lyme Regis, presenting an excellent talk on the effects of chemical vandalism to his course and the steps and decisions he has had to take on the long road to recovery. The Section would like to thank Dave for his superb talk.

Also the Section would like to thank Supaturf and Paul Clifton, of Rhône Poulenc, for their continued support and to Honiton GC and all their staff who made our day run so smoothly, with special thanks to Trevor Pipe and his crew who had the course in excellent condition.

Richard Whyman

South West

With no tournaments to report on this month now is the time to say a few words about education and other events in the pipeline.

In the last few months we have held a first aid course, a PA6 and a PA1 spraying course. All have been fairly well attended and resulted in everyone achieving their desired qualifications thanks to the likes of Noel Stevens, our regular tutor, for pesticide application. These courses are held when sufficient numbers are available so please if anyone is interested let me know by giving me a ring on 01380 828380. As well as being held locally and with other greenkeepers they provide a small revenue for the area's funds, all of which help to subsidise other events, so your support is very much appreciated.

The PA2 courses and tests will be held throughout the next few months on a very local basis. I will be contacting people whose names are on my list and trying to arrange them at the candidate's home club or, if possible, get them arranged at a neighbouring club so as to keep the costs down. Either way it is only two candidates per spraying machine and so will be done on a very low candidate to tutor ratio. Once again if you are not sure if you are already on my list give me a ring and I will start to get things sorted out.

Numbers on the chainsaw waiting list are growing to the point where we have sufficient to

run a course. However, after some discussion it was felt we should leave this until the early autumn when greenkeepers will have a bit more time and it is more relevant to the type of work we will be doing.

I am indebted to my friend and colleague Mark Ford, from Kingsdown GC, for enquiring about the possibility of running a course for abrasive wheels, their use and maintenance. I am sure practically every club has one but unless you are qualified you are not allowed to change an abrasive wheel. You can use it, but it can only be changed by someone who is qualified to do so. So it should be of great benefit to Course Managers, mechanics and First Assistants to attend such a course which we will be running when we have sufficient numbers. Once again give me a ring and we will get one going, probably at Chippenham College, but other venues may be possible.

Anyone interested in becoming an NVQ assessor should ring Kevin Green on 01179 793127. Kevin has asked me to point out, however, that the courses now being run are only open to Course Managers who have a candidate waiting to be assessed on their staff. If there are any questions regarding this then do not hesitate to give Kevin a ring. He normally gets home from work before 10pm.

The GA Greensomes is coming to Chippenham GC on May 21, so get your names down for that. I have been doing some industrial espionage and can confirm that Chris Sealey's greens are so sickeningly good it should be worth looking forward to. The next event will be the match against the Secretaries at Long Ashton. Please put your name down for this crucial match and try to keep your handicaps as high as possible. Remember that if you have, or intend, to put your name down for these matches you must make yourself available on the day. There is nothing worse for our secretary and team captain than having desperately to find a team at the last minute after being let down.

My apologies for omitting the preview for Westurf in last month's article. I can only put it down to youthful inexperience.

Last, but not least, can I congratulate Robin Greaves on his election to the Board of Management at Headquarters. Having shared a room at Harrogate with Robin I feel sure that his enthusiasm and abilities as a communicator will contribute a great deal to the progress of the Association.

Marc Haring

WET...

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The growth of **SWT**

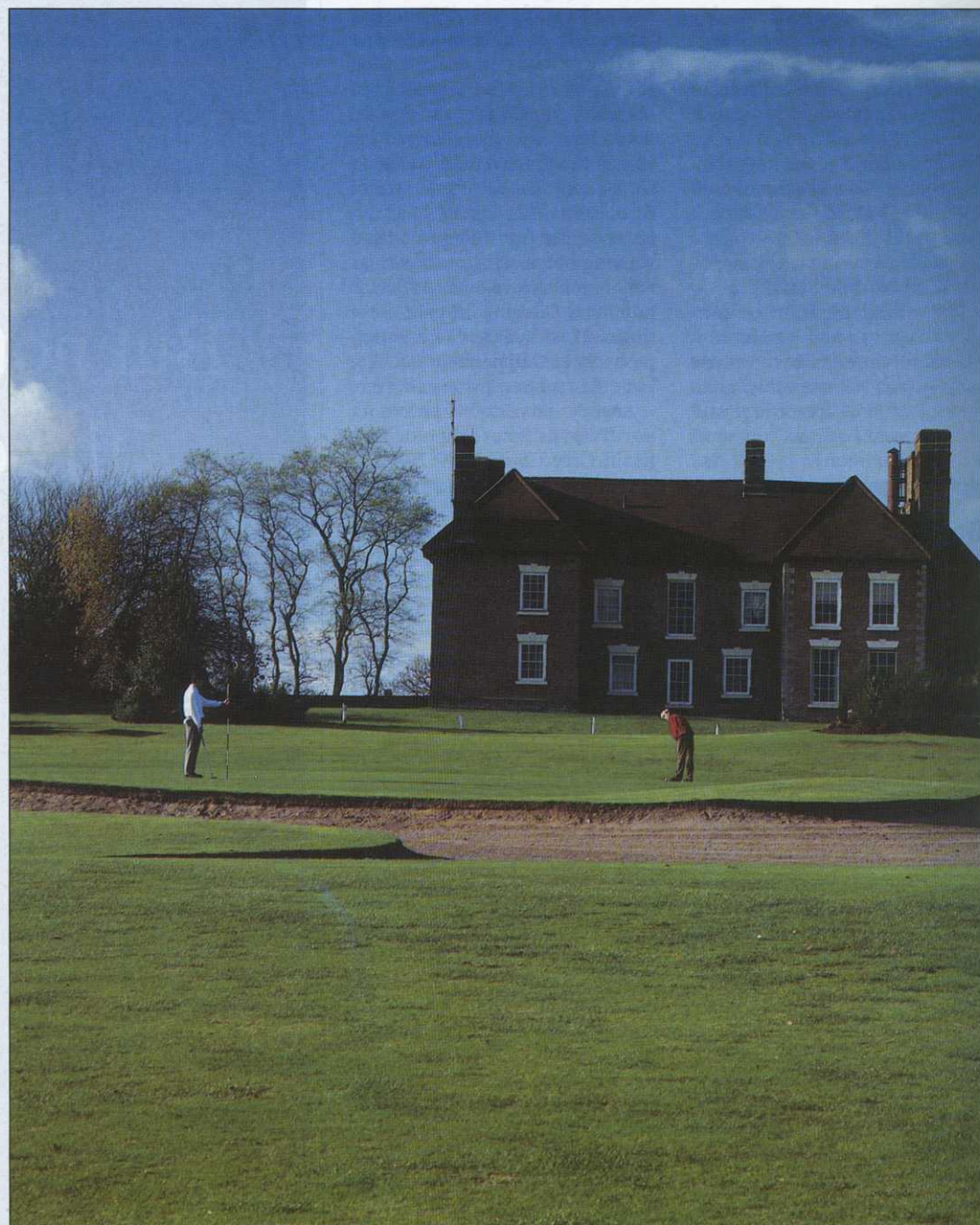
Bryan Griffiths, Chairman of Golfconsult International Ltd, looks back at the introduction of a new style of green construction.

In the early 1970s most golfing folk had never heard of the acronym 'SWT'. A few thought it meant "sea-washed turf". It took years for the truth to sink in – that it was a very different thing and a revolutionary step forward. We are discussing the now better known "Suspended Water Table" (SWT) putting green specification. In the beginning there was ill informed scepticism among the British "experts" which was well aired in the golf press.

SWT first hit Europe from America in the 1960s and Britain in the early 1970s. The first three British courses incorporating the earliest version of SWT, all designed by the author, were Staverton Park, in Northants (1976), Dougalston, near Glasgow (1977) and Telford Moat House, in Shropshire (1978). A recent review of their performance in the interim shows that between them they have taken about 2 1/2 million rounds of golf – with no serious problems nor any use of winter greens.

This was not achieved without some initial difficulties for the greenkeepers tending the unfamiliar; inevitably mistakes were made. Happily, to their credit, the greenkeepers then responsible – the three are still there – soon mastered the arts of keeping SWT in superb condition over the next 20 odd years – the oldest in Britain. After this long experience in mature operation and many more since the late 1980s, the burden of proving that SWT is in any way inappropriate for Britain rests with those sceptics mentioned earlier.

With one exception there was a lag of some years before the next generation of SWT greens appeared. That was at Shifnal Golf Club (1929). Being close to Telford, members could try them and were sufficiently impressed to convert their own greens to SWT under the guidance of agronomist Martyn Jones of Myerscough College between 1983 and 1988. He was the first well-informed agronomist advo-



cate of SWT in Britain. With long experience, he has now created SWT test beds for experimental purposes at Myerscough College.

In the early 1990s a veritable surge of new SWT construction began, perhaps sparked off by the so-called "signature" courses by big-name professionals. However, if strict SWT criteria is applied some claims would prove false – such as "sand greens"; US greens and others. There is only one authentic version – built precisely to the USGA (or British equivalent) SWT specification in every

small detail. However creating SWT greens is a major (and expensive) construction management challenge. Without the tightest day by day close monitoring of the materials and work, failure is a high risk.

It should be pointed out in fairness that the critics of yesterday have come round to accepting SWT. There is now also a British version – not exactly re-inventing the wheel; more a valid claim for an equal substitute. For those concerned with new (or replacement) greens it would be prudent

to do their homework very carefully.

Although there have inevitably been minor modifications along the way to the original USGA SWT specification of the 1960s, the basic formula remains of:

- slit plastic pipe herring bone drainage
 - 100 mm gravel raft
 - 50 mm coarse sand filter layer
 - 300 mm rootzone mix
- all to a depth tolerance of plus or minus 10 mm maximum and to strict material specification.

There has always been, as

in Britain

greenkeepers know all too well, the problem of rootzone aeration. Over the years an industry has evolved supplying machinery to slit, spike, verti-drain and otherwise assault putting surfaces, in its simplest form, to get oxygen into the rootzone. Some older greens would hardly survive without this twice yearly brutal assault!

For the fortunate (or perceptive) owners of SWT greens, and more importantly their greenkeepers (which too many owners forget), an innovative and effective solution to deep aeration of SWT greens is at hand. Invented in the US and first used at the Augusta National, the drainage aeration system is here to stay. Unfortunately, older traditional greens are not suitable.

This new system enables air (and oxygen) to be forced through the rootzone, either by pumping in, or extraction via equipment attached to the drainage outlet. Thus it not only oxygenates but also removes the toxic gases so harmful to high quality putting turfgrass.

This perhaps is a clue to the quality of those infamous Augusta greens. According to some published reports, those greens are the famous golf course's last line of defence against today's powerhouse golf game, and the 300 yards plus drives with the new long range golf cannons. The impact of which is both astonishing and even disturbing at the same time. In 1995, young Tiger Woods drove 320 yards on the Par 4 11th of 455 yards, needing only a sand wedge to the green. On the Par 5s 2nd and 8th at 555 yards and 535 yards respectively his second shots were with 5 and 2 irons. No wonder those greens are a critical factor.

But readers can appreciate from all this that British golfers can now play SWT greens at home and for the price of a current green fee. Nor should we forget incidentally that the British amateur Gary Wolstenholme beat Tiger Woods in the last Walker Cup at Royal Porthcawl.

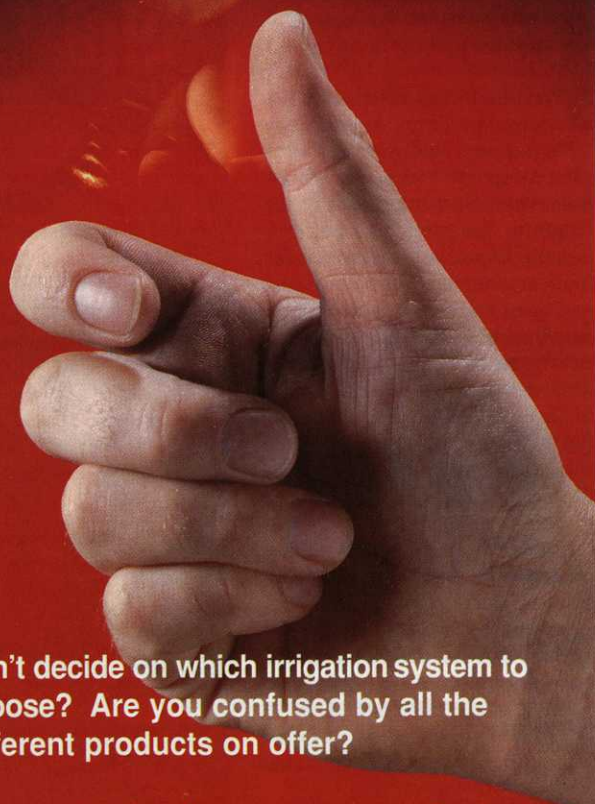
Several demonstrations in Britain of the SubAir SWT greens aeration equipment have taken place in the recent months on 25 modern construction greens in

various conditions and circumstances and the general findings reflect a pattern of performance. Typically the bottom 50 - 100 mm of the rootzone were in a saturated state. The application of a vacuum on the drainage system removes this saturation, stimulating increased infiltration from the upper level of the profile and induction of fresh atmosphere through the surface. Essentially the system is an acceleration of the natural process of the movement of air and water through soil by means of gravity and atmospheric pressure. An initial complete air exchange within a green, as measured with an electronic soil gas analyser, takes anywhere between 15 minutes and two hours depending on conditions. Subsequent treatment time will vary according to seasonal growth conditions and treatment interval. A marked warming of the upper 50 mm of the rootzone was also evident when operating the system in the warmer conditions of the early Spring weather this year.

Nowadays we live with continuous change - in golf no less. This latest innovation, either in permanent installation or mobile form, will enhance the largely high quality and all weather characteristics of SWT greens to produce the finest putting surfaces available. There is however one important caveat. The end results are subject to continuous and effective greens maintenance. SWT is otherwise a waste of money without greenkeeper's expertise.

Which is where the experienced greenkeeper makes his entry on the stage - preceding pampered pros and cossetted club members lucky enough to play these superior greens. This is emphatically not to say, by any means, that superb putting surfaces are not produced by greenkeepers on many, older, traditional greens. How they do it is a mystery to most golfers - amounting to almost disguised genius in some cases. And perhaps this is the reason why, for so long, the unsung greenkeepers, too often with inadequate managerial support, are not as highly valued - and paid - as they undoubtedly deserve.

Selecting your irrigation needs?



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REAL WORLD TEST

Shallow Aerators

GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL

Hugh Tilley continues his look at aeration, this month concentrating on shallow aeration.

The condition of turf is dictated in large measure by what happens below ground. Aeration is a vital element of the greenkeeper's work allowing air to get to the roots, and perhaps equally important, surface water to clear. Keeping the top levels of soil open and free of compaction usually requires regular mechanical treatment, this also helps remove thatch.

There are many machines on the market, tractor mounted or self propelled, ride-on or pedestrian – as well as drum type machines which seldom feature on the golf course – and all are offered with a choice of tines and heads. Of course aeration is a total concept and most greenkeepers use a series of machines and programmes in order to achieve their objective thus it would be wrong to view any one machine or programme in isolation.

While most machines use tines worked by cranks to give a vertical motion, there is the Toro Hydroject which uses a water jet to blast holes in the green, and this has the advantage of not leaving debris on the surface. Most of these machines have attachments to row or swath cores so that picking them up is easier, but some manufacturers, such as Ransomes, market their own collecting system. Aeration and coring is inevitably linked to topdressing, often with the top dressing being brushed into the core holes. This may allow the greenkeeper to change the composition of the root zone of the greens – and may even be the prime idea thus more important to some than simply aerating the green. All the machines considered here offered a range of tines, such as coring, solid and slitting, and flexibility over spacing, although to vary lateral spacing it may be necessary to change tine holders. How tines are held into the machine varies, but no-one said that he had trouble keeping tines in. Nor did anyone report difficulty changing tines, most are held in by a pinch bolt, but some



Dennis Ayling and the Sisis Technicore

use a set stud. As no one was trying to work at greater depth than about four inches (100mm) – imperial measure is the norm – there were few problems of tine breakages or bending. However as all were working on mainly greens there should be few stones. Most greenkeepers also used their aerators on tees and approaches. Several mentioned the fact that vibration is inherent in the process and that vibration

could be “a killer” (of the machine) but only one reported this as problem which needed attention, ie regular application of spanners to check tightness.

Changes in distribution have caused Multi-core Aerators to have its own machine made in UK. This totally new model incorporates Ian Waddington's past experience in this field, and includes several features which he considers to be improvements

on the machines which he sold in the past. Two widths are available and both are tractor mounted. While the standard spacing is 61mm, several options are offered and include slitter and mini tine heads. Unfortunately because the machines are so new, Course Managers contacted felt unable to comment and so it has not been possible to include Multi-core in this feature. Incidentally the company has changed the livery and moved headquarters to Wetherby.

Sisis Technicore, at Rowlands Castle Golf Club in Hampshire

“Versatile” was a one word answer to why Rowlands Castle have a Technicore. Dennis Ayling, Course Manager, is extremely pleased with the machine which is run behind an Iseki 320 compact tractor. The club has had the machine for two years and bought it after consideration of several rival, which Dennis commented were “tinny”. He has also had satisfactory past experience with Sisis.

Experience with the machine has been that it is fast and gives all the depth needed. The fact that it has a positive action – punching the tines into the ground, and that it is British were plus factors.

There have been no mechanical problems and only tines have needed replacing. The greens are on original soil, and tees are also treated occasionally. Dennis said that in his experience because the underlying subsoil of clay with flint it is essential to work down to the full depth of four inches over a series of uses. Early use trying to attain full depth had resulted in some bent tines. Having used the machine for two years it is now easy to get this full depth – and quicker, treating all greens now takes about a day.

The club has a range of tines including slitting and pencils and as well as using the coring tines in spring and autumn, the pencil tines are used to open up the turf and allow water to penetrate quickly.

Hardi Coremaster 12, at Sonning Golf Club, Berkshire

The Coremaster has been on the course for over two years and



Mark Cheesman aboard the Hardi Coremaster

was supplied by Risborough Turf – and Course Manager Mark Cheesman commented that the back-up from both Risborough and Hardi has been excellent. In fact the machine has given no problems. One of the primary reasons for the purchase of this particular machine is its system of automatic lubrication – to the main bearings, it uses a pumped oil system which has a visible pressure gauge.

Mark said that it was routine to check the system twice a day, particularly for blockages – which are readily spotted, however no problems have been encountered, nor have oil lines split, and there has been no oil on the grass.

The club has a range of tines, hollow and solid, and quadruple holders with close spaced pencil tines. Normal procedure is to hollow core in autumn, following this with over sowing and top-dressing, and to repeat this cor-

ing in the spring. Cores are collected manually. In addition tees and approaches are cored at this time prior to application of a slow release fertiliser. "Quadrating" – using the pencil tines is practised monthly in summer mainly to minimise surface compaction. Mark also stated that this exercise allowed water to penetrate better. He considered that climatic changes over the past years has made this more important than ever before.

Greens are soil based but have no stones to complicate the operation of aeration. Tees and approaches are tined with solid tines in autumn, and the club also undertook some deep tine aeration. Greens are slit weekly in winter.

The club does not have a "set time" machinery replacement policy, thus Mark expects the Coremaster will continue to be operated until it ceases to be eco-

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nomic to repair. However there is no sign of this occurring in the near future. He said that the club keeps detailed records on machinery costs, and has a greenkeeper/mechanic thus it can control repair costs.

Groundsman Industries, at Harpenden Golf Course

This pedestrian operated machine is, according to Stewart Boyes, very efficient and user friendly. He considers tractor mounted machines too heavy and damaging to greens turf and thus keeps them off. He also likes the fact that the Groundsman is self-contained and this allows it to be taken out at a moment's notice – without all the hassle of having to get a tractor free and attach it. As a result the club spreads its use of the machine rather than trying to do all greens at a single session.

The course was built in 1931 on heavy red clay, thus keeping

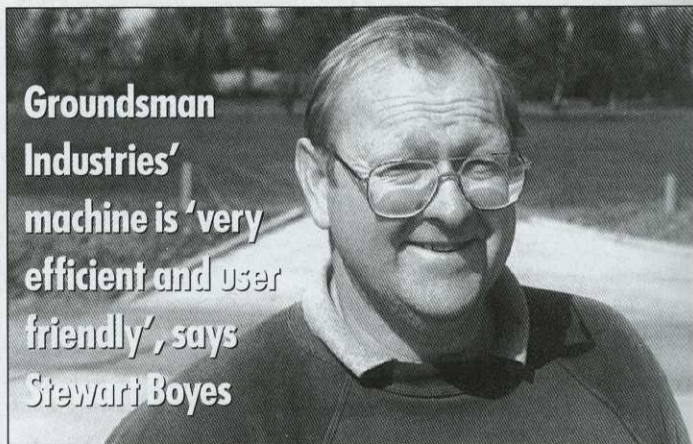
the surface open for drainage is particular important.

Harpenden's machine is now four years old and has just been thoroughly overhauled and updated by the manufacturer in Ireland. This resulted in several detail improvements. Service support has been extremely good, Stewart commenting that Groundsman Industries was only a phone call away – and usually on-site within a day to attend to the machine.

Ironically on the day Stewart was visited the machine had just broken down – a problem attributed to the flexible coupling on the main shaft – thus it was not able to be taken out for a photograph! In the past it had proved very reliable.

The club has several types of tine, from one inch upwards, in hollow, solid and chisel forms. Hollow coring takes place in spring and autumn, doing six

Groundsman Industries' machine is 'very efficient and user friendly', says Stewart Boyes



greens over two days per week, this way the number of greens out of play or effected at any one time is minimised. This operation is followed by topdressing using a 70/30 mix and overseeding with bent. Tees and approaches are also cored, but slightly more deeply. Dethatching is seen as the major role in the aeration programme, with the tines only being allowed to penetrate some one inch plus to two inch.

During the summer the greens are treated to slitting using the one inch chisel tines to a three inch depth and this versatility is seen as one of the great advantages of this machine. Another not inconsiderable plus is that it is not an expensive machine, to purchase, maintain nor to run.

Cores are swathed and picked up manually.

Maintenance is very simple, greasing round each time the machine is used, as well as checking engine oil. The Kubota GH250 engine has proved reliable and a good starter. A major result of the recent upgrade has been to further reduce the vibration naturally produced by the operation.

John Deere Aercore 1000, at Wernddu Golf Centre, Abergavenny.

Now in its second season the Aercore is used only for greens and has had a remarkable effect on the speed at which water soaks into them. "It has made irrigation so much more effective that wet-

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ter is not now being used. He also reported that aeration had given a great all round improvement of the greens," said Head Greenkeeper, Haydn Woods.

The important reasons for buying the Aercore were its build quality and the service back-up – supplying dealer is Frank Sutton of Raglan. Several competing machines were demonstrated but their build quality had not appeared as impressive.

Keeping the centre open during the winter is vital to the economics of the business and as a result the Aercore is used regularly throughout the winter. Coring is carried out in spring and early autumn. Three quarter inch solid and pencil tines are also used and Haydn commented that tines were not expensive. Cores are collected manually – then sieved so that the soil can be used on the tees.

The machine has suffered no

mechanical breakdowns, it is very quiet and it is fairly quick and easy to fit to the hydraulic linkage and pto – on a JD 855 compact tractor.

Jacobsen Aero King T1224, at Cradoc Golf Club, near Brecon

One of the most picturesque of all courses but one with a chequered past since its 1968/9 establishment. Cradoc is now a private par 72 club with over 700 members. It is on redstone clay and is heavily contoured with some very interesting drives. Head Greenkeeper, Malcolm Davis, is extremely proud of the course and the improvements that have been made to it.

The club buys its machinery from a range of suppliers and the Aero King was bought at an exceptionally good price from the local dealer. It is a 4ft wide pedestrian controlled self propelled machine. However as an ex-demo



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Malcolm Davis with his Jacobsen Aero King T1224



buy it has not been without its problems, some of which were corrected under warranty. Since then club policy has changed to buying new – but Malcolm is happy that he would re-buy Jacobsen should the need to replace arise.

Early problems included replacing four ball joints, a choke cable, safety switches and a gearbox shaft, however once these problems were sorted and the machine became established on the course's machinery list it has proved totally reliable – and the Honda engine has never caused any concern.

The machine is used as an integral part of the club aeration programme which includes slitting using trailed slitters and Verti draining, a machine for the latter being routinely hired in August, with the course shut for two days while it is carried out.

The staff includes four full time greenkeepers plus a part time greenkeeper/mechanic, the latter being responsible for most servicing of the equipment on the

course. Parts supply has been satisfactory. Malcolm recognised that the task the machine does results in an exceptional degree of vibration, thus he accepts that this must take its toll in terms of wear and tear.

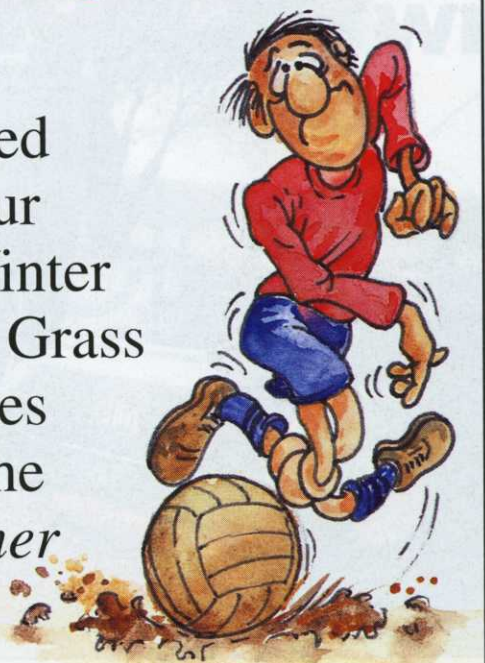
Ransomes Ryan GA30, at Bristol & Clifton Golf Club

Head Greenkeeper, John Barr, placed manoeuvrability as the most important feature for the Ryan GA30 at Bristol, but in addition he said it was a fast machine which could comfortably treat 18 greens in a day. This particular machine, supplied by T H White, is now in its second season with no mechanical problems. John said that initially there was some tufting – but it was just a matter of reading the operator manual and adjusting the settings – since then it has been perfect. The club carries out its own servicing.

Soil on Bristol Down – the club is close to the Westurf venue – is sandy limestone, and while drainage is little problem, thatch can build up and there can be surface compaction. As well as greens the machine is used for tees. Some greens and tees have steep bank surrounds and these require exceptional manoeuvrability. John said that the Ryan GA30 scored on this because it could turn so well, and this probably meant a large time saving which gave it an overall work rate to equal any tractor mounted machine.

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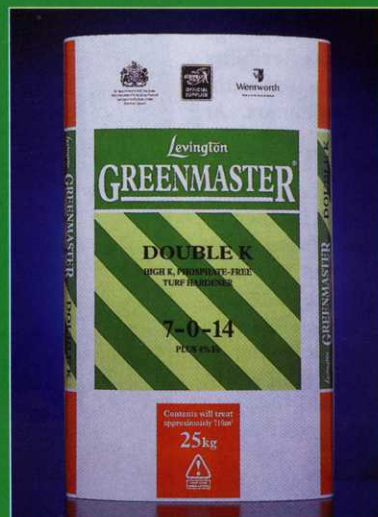
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REAL WORLD TEST
Shallow Aerators
 GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL

Another significant advantage of the machine was its flexibility to reduce the tine spacings without the need for spanners. At Bristol both hollow and solid tines are used, mostly at spacings of around two inch and three inch. Operating depth is down to four inches but this was wear dependent, with about two sets being used per season, but this was not regarded as excessive.

Maintenance and servicing is "quite easy" with guarding easily swung aside. John said that setting up the rockers correctly was particularly important.

Last year the club hired a Shattermaster which improved drainage so that it is virtually certain that one will be hired again or even purchased this year.

Toro Hydroject, at Walton Heath Golf Club, Tadworth

Clive Osgood, Course Manager at Walton Heath, stressed that the



Clive Osgood, right, with the Toro Hydroject

hydroject should not be seen as a complete answer, but simply an additional and complementary option to other methods. At Tadworth, with two courses, they have a range of equipment including a deep tine aerator as

well as slitters.

The principle use is to reduce surface capping on greens, however the machine is also used to treat areas of high wear and trafficking. The most significant advantage of the machine is that it leaves a clean surface which can be played over immediately.

Although the name Walton Heath implies light sandy conditions, in fact the native soil is acidic heavy clay which needs regular opening up. Having two heavily used and prestigious courses makes it possible to justify the Hydroject, but Clive admitted that it was not a cheap machine to buy. Nevertheless running costs

are not high, there have been no repairs and minimal maintenance, and water usage is not heavy. Clive considered that the provision of a trolley to carry the hose (behind the machine) between holes would add to its attractiveness as would a lower price.

At Walton Heath they have no problem in getting the jet to penetrate down to 10". The machine is now in its fourth season and was first bought because the concept looked right to Clive. Certainly the fact that play is only interrupted while the machine is on the green gives it a significant advantage over most other forms of aeration.

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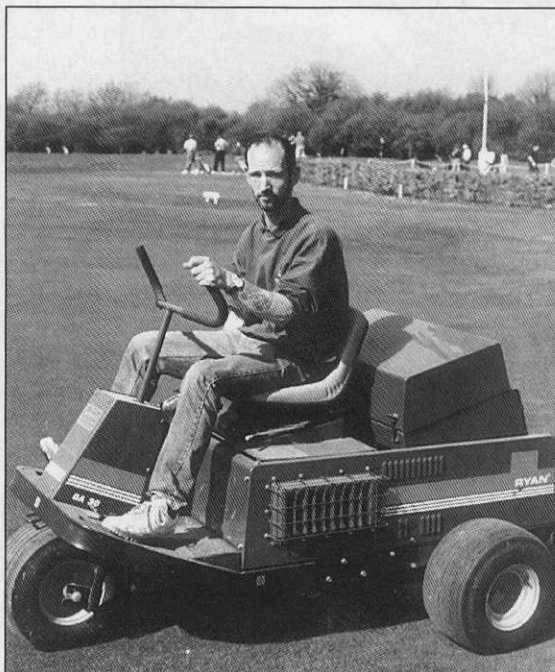
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John Barr
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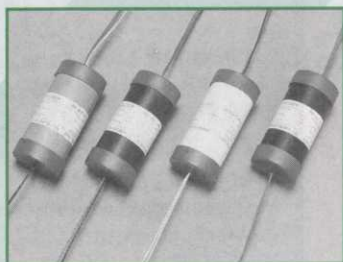
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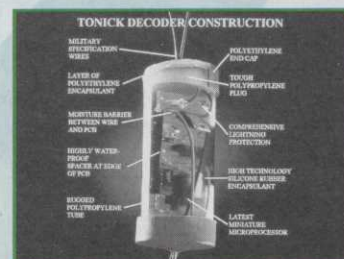
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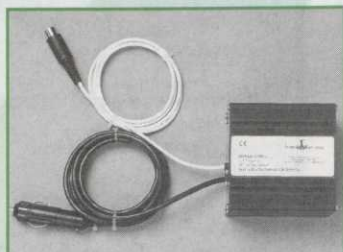
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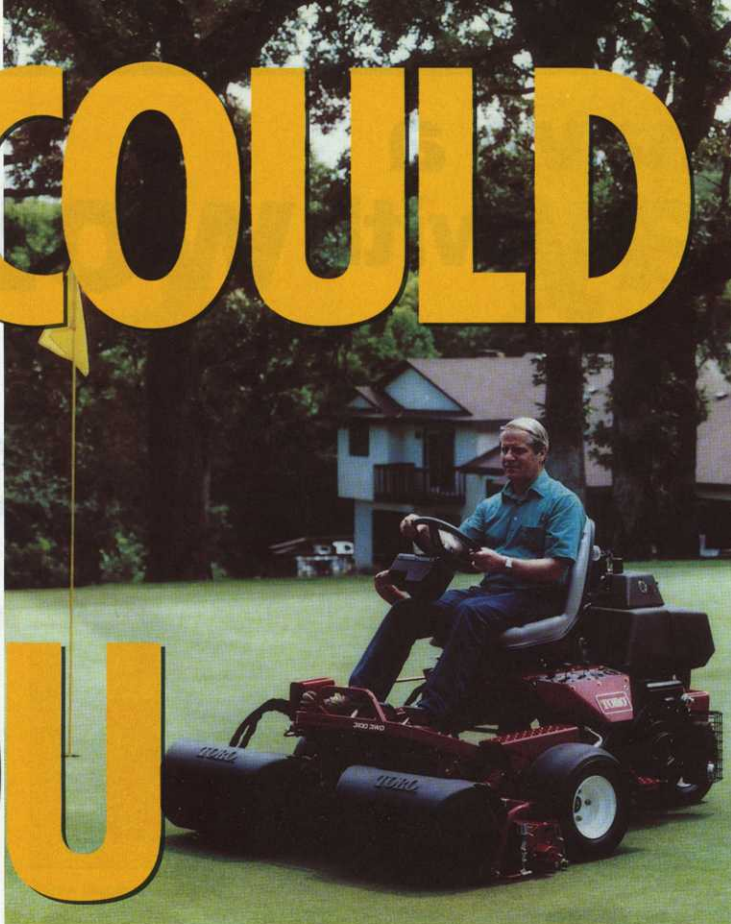
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There is still time to enter, or nominate someone, for the Toro Award for Excellence in Greenkeeping. **May 30** is the closing date for entries.

ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER Profile

Usually the spotlight falls on the Course Manager or Head Greenkeeper at a Club. Now it is the turn of those whose work often goes unheralded to star...



Name: **Gary Nimmo**
Club: **Oundle**
Position: **Assistant Greenkeeper**
Age: **37**

1. How long have you been a greenkeeper?
Six years

2. What education are you currently undertaking?
NVQ Level III Sportsturf

3. Which one task do you most enjoy doing?
Handmowing greens in the early morning

4. Which one task do you most dislike doing?
Lifting cores after hollow coring

5. What job other than greenkeeping might you have ended up doing?
Landscape gardener

6. Who has been the biggest influence on your career?
My wife, Jayne, who has given me constant support

7. What would you do to improve the life of a greenkeeper?
Encourage improvements in communication between golfers, committee and greenstaff

8. What are your hobbies?
Golf, cycling, walking and gardening

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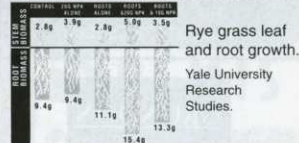


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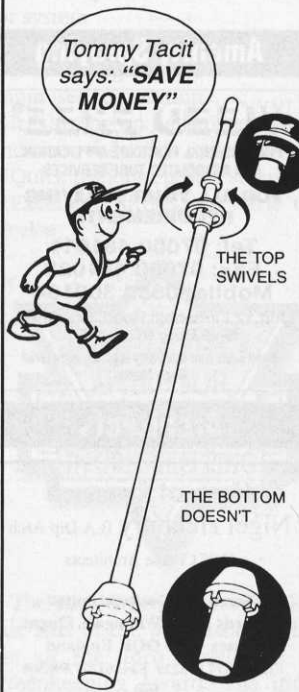
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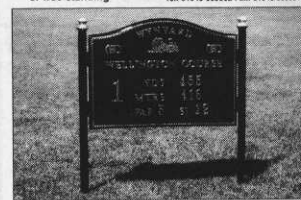
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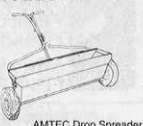
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All applications will be treated in the strictest confidence.

Applications, in writing with full CV, by 21st May to:

**The Secretary/Manager
Newark Golf Club, Coddington, Newark, Notts NG24 2QX**

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Applications with C.V. by 31 May 1997 to:

**Box No. BN 05/97
Greenkeeper International, Aldwark Manor,
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The Manor House Golf Club at Castle Combe

Applications are invited for the position of

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Applications in writing with full CV
and at least two references to:

Paul Bishop, Course Manager, The Manor House Golf Club,
Castle Combe, Wiltshire SN14 7PL



Alresford Golf Club

Applications are invited for the position of

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at this 18 hole private members club in a
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Applicants will possess:

- Phase 4 Greenkeeping qualifications minimum
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- Maintenance of health and safety requirements

Salary negotiable. Accommodation is not available.

Applications in writing with full CV to be submitted
by 30th May 1997 to:

The Secretary, Alresford Golf Club,
Cheriton Road, Tichborne Down,
Alresford, Hampshire SO24 0PN



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The above are an 18 and 9 hole municipal golf course respectively. Both posts require an individual experienced in all aspects of greenkeeping/horticultural work with a sound knowledge of modern maintenance equipment. The Head Greenkeeper post also requires an individual who is skilled and experienced in supervising and motivating a small team to achieve a high quality service. No accommodation is available with these posts and salary will be commensurate with experience. The Council is committed to providing, where appropriate, training and development for its staff.

Application forms and further details are available by telephoning the Personnel Unit on 01753 676287 (24-hour answerphone) or by writing to the Personnel Officer, South Bucks District Council, Council Offices, Windsor Road, Slough SL1 2HN. The closing date for receipt of applications is 27th May 1997.

Stockley Park Golf Club Ltd requires an

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Applications, together with full CV in writing, to:

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Closing date for applications: 30 May.

Applications with full CV to:

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Applicants must be experienced and hold recognised qualifications including PA1 and PA2 spraying certificates.

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Waltham Windmill Golf Club

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Waltham Windmill is an outstanding 18 hole golf club situated near Grimsby. The course was built to a very high standard with greens and tees built to USGA specification. Accommodation is not available.

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Cathkin Braes Golf Club, founded in 1888, is a moorland course lying on an escarpment to the South of Glasgow, overlooking the city and adjacent to East Kilbride. The 18 hole course, one of the best in greater Glasgow area, has a private membership of 900, plus visiting parties.

Applications are invited for the position of Head Greenkeeper. A thorough knowledge of modern greenkeeping practices is required, with appropriate current qualifications, together with a wide experience of equipment, machinery and irrigation systems. Management responsibilities will include leading a team of experienced employees, controlling budgets and initiating any changes necessary to take the course into the next millennium.

The attractive salary is negotiable.

**Applications with CV to:
The Secretary, Cathkin Braes Golf Club, Cathkin Road,
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requires a

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Applicants must be fully experienced in all aspects of greenkeeping and be prepared to work with the team on the course.

The successful applicant will need practical knowledge of modern machinery, PC controlled irrigation systems, sand based greens, and have the ability to motivate staff.

Salary will be in accordance with BIGGA rates.

Applications in writing to the General Manager.



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The grass isn't always greener

The idea of working abroad has many attractions but the reality can be somewhat different. Two greenkeepers with experience of working in Germany explain some of the pitfalls.

For many years an accepted way of making a bit of money was to work abroad. Spending a few years on the continent involved coping with a foreign culture and a foreign language and a bit of homesickness but after that, unless you had decided to stay and make your life as an ex-pat, you would have enough experience to land a good job back home and enough money to make your old friends a tinge jealous.

That was perhaps the case a few years ago but now, particularly in Germany, times are hard and seeing a wanderlust well

rewarded is the exception rather than the rule.

Jeffrey Heath and Iain Douglas both work in Germany and have done for a number of years – long enough to have seen the difference the dismantling of the Berlin Wall has done for the united Germany's economy and the fortunes of British greenkeepers working in the country.

"If a young guy wants to take a chance and go over to Germany and maybe marry a German girl then fine. But taking a wife and family to Germany is fraught with difficulties," explained Jeffrey, who has been in Germany for 20 years and has indeed married a German.

Iain, and his Scottish wife, experienced some of those problems when they moved to Germany ten years ago and it was only their tenacity which saw them through the initial bad times.

"I had a good job in Scotland and was quite happy when the President of one golf club called and asked if I was interested. My wife and I were flown over, put up in a posh hotel and given first class treatment.

"The course had just been seeded and we saw it as something new, an adventure and a chance to bring in a new golf course. But they didn't tell me the truth about the golf course. They told me the greens were made of a sand soil mix but they were actually black ash from the base to the surface and I found out later that the course had not been seeded by a professional company," explained Iain.

"I liked what I saw when I went out originally so I went for it but when I got there I realised that all the greens were covered in fairway grass and some of the black ash had come to the surface. The greens were rock solid. Coupled with that the machinery that had been promised to me never came."

Another problem which Iain encountered was his salary.

"The high wage I'd been promised was cut by the high taxes in Germany and the high rents. All these things add up.

"I went to the committee and told them the wages I'd been promised were not working out and they said they'd solve my problems. They got my wife a job in a factory punching nails. This was to make up my wage and we fell for it because we are in a different system and by the time we'd been drawn in we had no choice," said Iain.

"For a couple of years my wife and I were worse off than we would have been at home but we decided to make a go of it and stayed."

He moved on to a few other clubs before ending up at a very good course where there is money to spend and the club is prepared to invest.

"Any married British greenkeeper who is well established in Britain but who thinks he's going to be better off in Germany has got to think very carefully," cautioned Jeffrey.

"You can be taken in by the salary but as much as 55% comes

up in tax and insurances and you have got to allow for high rents."

Jeffrey explained that in many cases the better jobs are already taken by Germans or established British greenkeepers. The clubs with the real money tend to go to greenkeepers they know.

"Often what happens is that a British greenkeeper is taken on for a short time to run the golf course and train up the local greenkeepers before being kicked off. Make sure your contract is in English so you can check it thoroughly."

Another pitfall occurs when a greenkeeper is given his budget and salary and is made responsible for paying his own taxes and medical insurance.

"When he gets a lump sum there is a great temptation to go out and spend it but if he gets found out by the German Government he gets thrown out of the country or sent to prison for tax evasion. I know examples of this happening," said Jeffrey.

The Government is extremely strong at the moment as it needs the money after reunification.

"I meet greenkeepers who have just arrived and they say they are in Germany just for the money and I meet them again six months later and they are beginning to get downhearted. What they do save they use to fly home and it's difficult for their wives to get jobs," said Iain.

"What we are trying to say is that life is not that good in Germany. Since the wall came down the country has been destroyed. Every time I go the filling station petrol is up in price."

Jeffrey and Iain would not discourage anyone from making the move if they are going as a stepping stone into mainland Europe and Italy, Spain or Austria and are prepared to accept whatever comes along.

"Just don't do it to make a lot of money and for a better way of living," is their warning.

There is one thing about which Jeffrey is adamant however.

"The best greenkeepers come from Britain because we can adapt to conditions so well. We fly the British flag abroad and are proud of the job we do abroad."

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DRENCHER LIQUID
PRIMER 604
CONTROL

PIC 1

TIME 0.0 sec

SURFACE
HYDROPHOBIC
SOIL

PIC 2

TIME 0.9 sec

Both Drencher &
Primer 604 have
penetrated the soil

PIC 3

TIME 2.8 sec

Ultraflo enters soil

PIC 4

TIME 600 sec

(10 minutes)
After 10 minutes
neither the Control
or Permeate have
entered the soil
profile

Average penetration time (seconds) of each treatment tested on hydrophobic soil.

TREATMENT	1	2	3	4	5	Average Penetration Times (seconds) per replicate:	Treatment means (seconds)
HYDRATED CONTROL	>600	>600	>600	>600	>600	>600	>600 ^c
DRENCHER LIQUID	1.0	0.9	0.9	1.0	0.9	0.9	0.9 ^a
PRIMER 604	1.6	0.9	0.4	1.0	0.5	0.9	0.9 ^a
ULTRAFLO	1.6	4.3	2.5	4.0	1.8	2.85	2.85
PERMEATE	>600	>600	>600	>600	>600	>600	>600 ^c

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