

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.

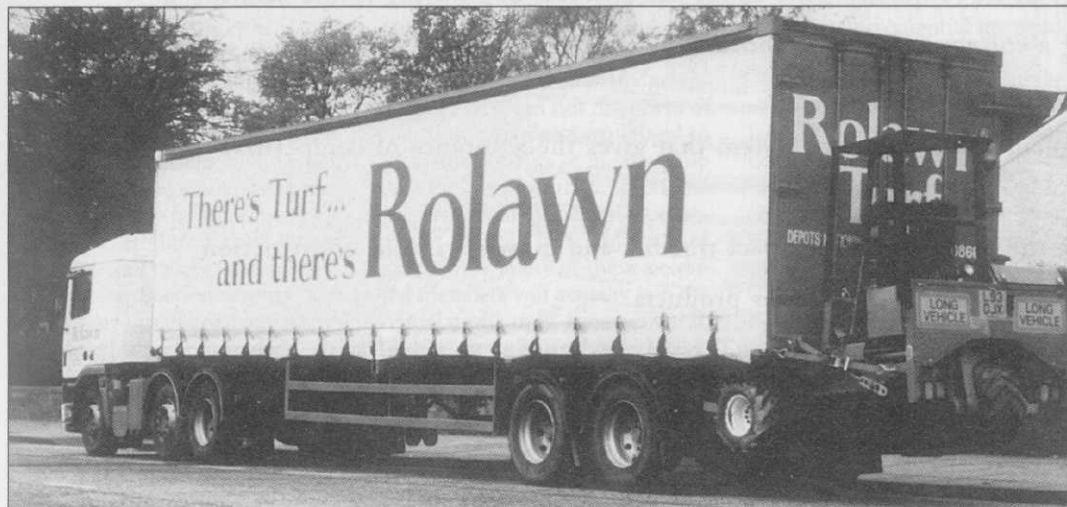
■ Sisis has appointed three more Sisis Direct service engineers. They are Mark Rodman, West Country and South Wales, Lyndon Weeks, Surrey and South West London and Chris Goodchild, London and South East Home Counties.

■ 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 Mountry 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.