

Damages paid to Greenkeeper

A Hertfordshire greenkeeper who saw his own job advertised in Greenkeeper International has won damages of £14,440 after using the BIGGA Legal Helpline to take action against his golf club.

The 62 year old, who had worked, often single handed on the course, for four and a half years, saw the job of Head Greenkeeper Designate for his own golf club advertised, although no discussions had ever taken place about the possibility of a new appointment.

A short time later the greenkeeper was first suspended by the recently appointed man, at which time he contacted the Hambro Legal Helpline who put him in touch with the Association's solicitors, Kirbys.

"We wrote to the club asking for reasons for his suspension and enquiring whether or not it was intended to pursue any disciplinary proceedings," said solicitor, David Burton of Kirbys.

"Having received no response from the club we wrote to the owner once again indicating that unless we received a substantive response to our previous letter our client would be returning to work."

"We then received a fax from the club saying that due to the recent

change in circumstances at the club our client's services were no longer required. Unfortunately we therefore have to make him redundant from today's date."

"This is certainly the first time in all the years that we have dealt with employment work that somebody has first found out that they have been dismissed via a communication to their solicitor," said Mr Burton.

"We immediately issued Industrial Tribunal proceedings, following consultation with Hambro."

Prior to the Tribunal the club threatened that unless a modest sum of compensation was accepted the club would be put into liquidation and during the Tribunal the club argued that the greenkeeper had been offered and turned down another position and that he was suffering illness and would have been dismissed in any event.

"Perhaps not surprisingly neither argument prevailed upon the Tribunal and our client was ultimately awarded the maximum compensatory award which, together with wages in lieu of notice and his basic award for unfair dismissal, totalled £14,440," said Mr Burton.

Commenting on the award, BIGGA's

Executive Director Neil Thomas said, "This is an excellent example of Hambro and Kirbys working jointly to protect the interests of a member, albeit in the distressing circumstances of dismissal."

"It is important also that members are alert to the services that can be provided before a case reaches dismissal stage and in appropriate circumstances members can be provided with legal support at an early point in any dispute or disciplinary proceedings e.g. a summons to appear before the Green Committee."

"In this way the Association aims to assist in preventing disciplinary proceedings moving on to an advanced and possibly terminal stage."

"While other Associations provide support following dismissal and through Industrial Tribunals, I believe BIGGA is unique in the assistance it can give to members in a supportive and preventative capacity at the onset of a dispute or disciplinary proceedings."

It goes without saying that this service is a very considerable membership benefit."

New challenge for Steve



Rigby Taylor has appointed Steve Hall to the position of Marketing Manager and he will be responsible for the marketing of the company's full range of products and services including the Mascot brand. He will be based in the company's Guildford office.

His experience in the amenity market began as Product Manager with ICI Professional Products where he was responsible for the management and marketing of the amenity range.

He was involved in the changes of identity to Zeneca, Miracle and finally to Scotts, from where he joins Rigby Taylor.

SSSI status conferred on Thorpeness GC

Thorpeness Golf Club has been designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest by English Nature, due to the work carried out by the green staff on bracken, bramble removal and gorse regeneration which has caused the Woodlark and Nightjar population to increase to above the national average.

"In 1997, the number of nesting sites of the Nightjar was recorded on the entire area, including the Aldringham Walks and the golf course, as 10 and Woodlark nest sites as 42. Now the

golf course can boast at least 10-15 Woodlark nest sites in its own right which makes the course a SSSI," said Course Manager Ian Willett.

"On the same day as we were informed about the SSSI the club learned that it had been given a Countryside Stewardship Award for habitat creation in areas of the course that are out of play and usually left. As Course Manager I have been working with Brenda Williamson, from the Suffolk Wildlife Trust, and Steven

Curtis, from the Suffolk Sandlings Project, to show that golf and conservation can mix and complement one another," explained Ian.

"I have the backing of the club from the Managing Director, Tim Rowan-Robinson, Secretary, Neville Griffin and Frank Hill, the club Professional, the committee and members but last, but by no means least, my excellent team of greenkeepers. In working towards the stewardship award, this shows that team work plays off."

A cry for help from across the pond

Wanted! Information in any amount of detail about slit-tining. I am currently working in the USA in western Colorado and am trying to convince our Superintendent that deep slitting our greens may help in developing a root system deeper than the one inch we are presently having to manage. The greens are almost entirely Poa,

very heavily watered in the summer, mown at 3mm in the mid-season and played extensively. Active leaf growth ceases during mid-November and resumes during March.

I have explained the success which I have achieved in the past on both courses I have been responsible for in England and Germany and would

like to relay the experiences, methods and theories about increasing rooting depth from other greenkeepers, agronomists and manufacturers of equipment. Thank you to any of you who may like to help me.

My address is as follows and I will reimburse postage costs. Paul Davies, PO Box 1524, Palisade, Colorado, 81526, USA.

Hell of a facelift for infamous bunker

One of the most notorious and infamous bunkers in the world is undergoing a facelift.

Around 150 railway sleepers have been lined up around the highest parts of Hell Bunker on the 14th hole on the Old Course to stabilise the face. The sleepers will be revetted with stacks of turf built up so when complete the sleepers will not be visible.

At around 1500 square yards Hell Bunkers is one of the largest on the course and at 10 feet deep is one of the most difficult from which to escape. This was highlighted in the 1995 Open when Jack Nicklaus took four attempts to free himself of its clutches.

"We usually have to revet bunkers every five years and this is the first time we have used sleepers. They

will help to stabilise the surroundings and provide a template for future reconstruction and repairs. The bunker is now back to its pre-1995 size," explained Old Course Head Greenkeeper Eddie Adams.

The Old Course has 112 bunkers and several have names and historic associations. Next in line for revetting is Shell Bunker in front of the 7th green.

Carden Park's icy discovery

Evidence of an Ice Age settlement has been discovered at Carden Park, near Chester.

Suggestions are that the discoveries, which include tools fashioned from flint, may have belonged to the later Upper Palaeolithic - Old Stone Age between 11,000 - 9,000 BC. This was the time when people first returned to Britain after the end of the Ice Age.

The site, in caves between the 8th and 9th holes of the Cheshire Course, does have more recent, but still historic past as a hermit, John Harris, lived in the cave between 1744 and 1765.

"The site has caused quite a bit of interest and we have had quite a number of students from Chester Archaeology and Liverpool University studying it," said Courses Manager, Andy Campbell.

New venue for Westurf

The popular South West and South Wales Regional show is moving from its traditional home to the purpose built exhibition centre of Westpoint in Exeter.

"I believe the new venue will be a huge boost for the show and I look forward to welcoming all our regular exhibitions and guests as well as many new ones," said Regional Administrator, Paula Humphries.

Paula can be contacted on 01363 82777.

Assistant Greenkeeper Assistant 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: Chris Hutchinson

Club: Newark, Notts

Position: First Assistant

Age: 19

1. How long have you been a greenkeeper?

I started full-time employment in July 1997, after college

2. What education are you currently undertaking?

Preparing for PA1, 2 and 6 certificates

3. Which one task do you most enjoy doing?

Course construction and improvement

4. Which one task do you most dislike doing?

Repairing divots

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

Always wanted to do Course Management/Greenkeeping. Saloon car racing would be good, but it's difficult to get the sponsorship

6. Who has been the biggest influence on your career?

Charlie MacDonald, now Course Manager at Crieff, and everyone at Witney Lakes

7. What would you do to improve the life of a greenkeeper?

Later tee-off times for players - so we can get on with the job!

8. What are your hobbies?

Go-karting, golf, playing drums, basketball, squash, kick-boxing

9. What do you get out of BIGGA?

I've borrowed training videos and enjoy GI's up-to-date product, course and career information

10. What do you hope to be doing in 10 years time?

Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper at Newark. The Lottery win will have come in very handy!

A new man at Whitby

Thanks to the NVQ system Whitby Golf Club discovered a "new man" amid their existing staff.

Two years ago, Robin Evans saw the benefits that could be gained by going down the road of NVQ.

Prior to this decision he had been finding it hard to proceed through the normal system because he found, as many do, it difficult to express his ideas on paper. The NVQ system seemed to be the answer, offering a practical hands on way of proving his technical ability.

Robin took it upon himself to finance his way forward and prove himself by means of the NVQ System.

Within a week or so, in the capable hands of Head Greenkeeper, Ian Lavelle, the golf club noticed a big change in, not only the attitude, but also the once hidden talents of their, now it seems revitalised, greenkeeper.

"Robin's whole outlook has changed. He has begun to display a renewed personal motivation in his job, pride in his work was evident and his previously subdued skills were now coming to light once more," said Ian.

The delight of Whitby Golf Club in his new attitude spurred Robin on and he constantly looked for new ways to improve his new standards.



Robin states, "All I knew about the job was down to Ian's training and the time he made for me to learn the required skills. However, I thought it was about time I achieved a formal qualification in my own right and sought out details of the NVQ Course

Robin's assessor, Andrew Boyd, Head Greenkeeper of Bridlington Golf Club, was delighted with his response, especially now Whitby Golf Club could see the worth of the NVQ way forward.

"What is most rewarding to me as Robin's Assessor is to see the system in place and working to produce a professional man with a whole new outlook and motivation. Added to this is of course the valuable help

given to both Assessor and Candidate in the skilful hands of the G.T.C. and support throughout the two years of hard work."

Geoff Cooling, Whitby's Greens Chairman said, "The Committee is delighted at Robin's success. At a time when a man of his practical experience might reasonably be expected to rest on his laurels, it is pleasing to see that he has made this tremendous effort to improve his knowledge. Both he and the Club must benefit in the long term."

Ian Lavelle added, "Robin has served Whitby loyally for many years and I and the other members of my staff are delighted at his achievement."

Practical Greenkeeping given a boost

Following the decision re-print Practical Golf by Jim Arthur, R&A Secretary Sir Michael Bonallack, has written to all greenkeeping colleges explaining that the book promotes sensible greenkeeping practices and should be made available to students.

"It is an excellent book and we have agreed to a re-print and I wrote to all the colleges to let them know of its availability," explained Sir Michael.

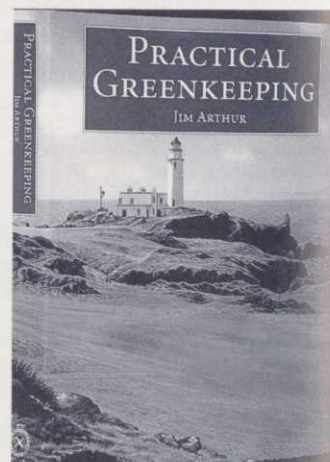
"Jim Arthur's book promotes sound greenkeeping practices and the colleges should use it as part of their teaching tools," he added.

While carrying Jim Arthur's name the book, in addition to containing

Jim Arthur's philosophies on greenkeeping gathered and honed from a lifetime in the industry, is a collection of views and writing from acknowledged experts in many different fields of the game including Donald Steel, Neil Baldwin, Barry Cooper, John Allbut and Jim's own son, Richard Arthur.

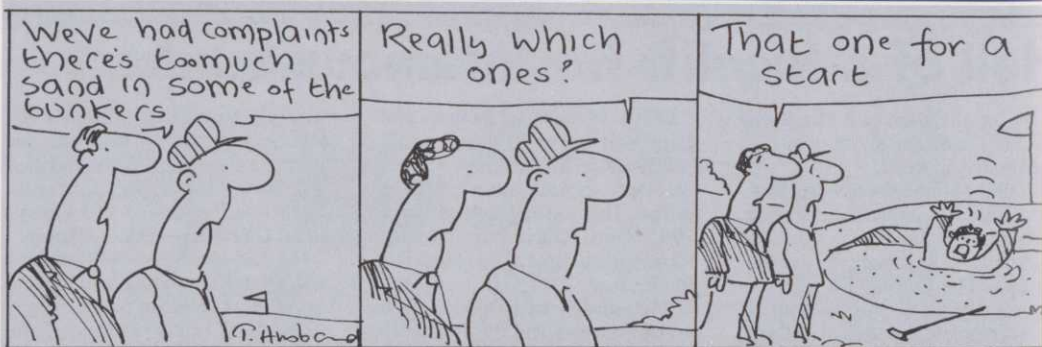
"The original idea for the book came from current BIGGA Chairman, Gordon Child, and it has become a compendium of views from top experts in their respective fields," said Jim.

Autographed copies of the book are available from BIGGA HOUSE priced £29.95 plus £3 p&p.



Royal Inverdivot GC...

by Tony Husband



Peter Wilson leaves industry

A reorganisation within Textron Turf Care and Specialty Products has seen President Peter Wilson promoted to another Textron company out-with the fine turf industry and Paul Hollingworth become Managing Director of Textron Turf Care & Specialty Products Europe.

Peter, previously Chief Executive of Ransomes plc, will now become President of Textron Fastening Systems Europe where his responsibilities will cover the 23 operations across Europe, a total of 5500 staff and revenue exceeding \$700 million.

Paul Hollingworth commented, "We congratulate Peter on his new appointment and promotion and we wish him every success with his new responsibilities. I have benefited from working closely with Peter over a number of years and can confirm that it will be very much business as usual in the Turf Care Group within Europe."

Concurrent with this announcement, a new Group is formed headed by Carl Burtner, who becomes Chief Executive Officer of Textron



Golf, Turf Care & Specialty Products Group, that now incorporates the E-Z-GO company with the Turf Care Group.

Carl will be supported by Bob Grenhart, who becomes Vice

President Finance Textron Golf, Turf Care & Specialty Products Group.

Carl and Bob will be based at Elgin, Illinois, USA.

The new appointments take effect from January 1.

Iseki renew Textron link

Representatives of Japanese tractor manufacturers Iseki recently renewed an agreement with Textron Turf Care in Ipswich for Textron to continue to act as Iseki's UK agents.

Jacobsen Textron had previously marketed Iseki from their base in Kettering. The new five year deal is set to take the relationship between the two companies well into the 21st century.

Iseki were represented by Mr Fukatani, Executive Managing Director; Mr Abe, Overseas Business Managing Director and Mr Hamada, Director Iseki Europe. The agreement was signed on behalf of Textron by Peter Bell, Marketing Director.

Speaking after the signing, Peter Bell said, "Jacobsen have had an excellent relationship with Iseki and their tractors have built up a tremendous reputation in the UK for both quality and performance. Textron is delighted to continue the partnership and we regard Iseki as a fundamental part of our strategy to provide the strongest possible choice of products for our customers to meet all applications both now and in the future."

Record sales of BAR2 for Barenbrug

Steve Lawrence, Head Greenkeeper at The Suffolk Golf And Country Club, took delivery of the landmark 2000th bag of BAR 2 making it today's most successful mixture on golf greens and Barenbrug UK's best selling. The significance of the occasion was reinforced by the presence of Michel Mulder, Managing Director of Barenbrug UK. The supply of 2000 bags represents 50,000 kg of BAR 2 grass seed: enough to reseed at least 200,000 greens across the UK.



Five Lakes Greenkeeper tees off to pastures new

Five Lakes Greenkeeper, Martin Hucklesby, is moving on to Nigel Mansell's Woodbury Park, as Head Greenkeeper after four successful years working on the Links and Lakes courses at Five Lakes.

Commenting on his appointment, Five Lakes General Manager Noel Byrne said, "We are delighted that Martin's hard work has paid off with such a prestigious move for him. He leaves his successor with a tough act to follow."

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