

Feature listing from February '96

February '96; Newbury Race Course GC; Health and Safety; Machinery Maintenance; Sprayers; Trees

March '96; Industrial Tribunals; Irrigation; Health and Safety; Seed Technology; The Dukes Course, St Andrews; Temple Golf Club; Grass Cutting Technology

April '96; Brush Cutters; Ear Defenders; Forest of Arden Golf & Country Club; Golf in Asia; Turf Production; Environment

May '96; Aeration; Lingdale GC; Pumps; Security and Vandalism; Furniture and Fittings; Risk Assessment

June '96; Compaction; Seacroft GC; Education; Health and Safety; Architecture - East Herts GC; Fighting Annual Meadow Grass

July '96; Loaders, diggers and excavators; Royal Lytham GC; Protective Clothing; Modern Apprenticeships; Irrigation

August '96; Turf Tissue Analysis; Environmental Communication; Assessors; Tee Mats

September '96; Budgeting; Greenkeeping in Finland; Kings Acre GC; Grinding; Role of Training Providers; Blowers

October '96; Drainage; The Wentworth Club

November '96; Irrigation Equipment; St Andrews; The Oaks GC; Engines

December '96; Maintenance Facilities; History of the Mower; Mentmore Golf and Country Club

January '97; Trees; Tenby GC; Communication; Addressing the imbalance in Sports Turf; Hiring Equipment

February '97; Attending to the Details; Computers; Fertilisers; Rudding Park

March '97; Making Machinery Last; Computers; Irrigation; Musselburgh Old Links; STRI; Defining Playing Performance; Compact Tractors

April '97; Turf Quality; The London Club; Computers; Electric Greens Mower; Course Accessories; Ecology; Aerators

May '97; Data Tagging; Naunton Downs GC; Alternative Spikes; Suspended Water Table Greens; Shallow Aerators; Working in Germany

June '97; Drought Survival; Cooden Beach; Monitoring the Weather; Slitters

July '97; Royal Troon GC; Speed of Putting Surfaces; Mowers

August '97; Maintenance Facilities; Heather Management; Bunker Rakes; Workshops; Architecture; Kedleston Park GC

September '97; Accident Reporting; Greens Mowers; Valderrama GC; Links Courses

October '97; Environment; Recruitment; Abbeddale GC; Rough Mowers; Soil Analysis

November '97; Environment Competition; Bank Cutting; Risk Assessment; Pumps

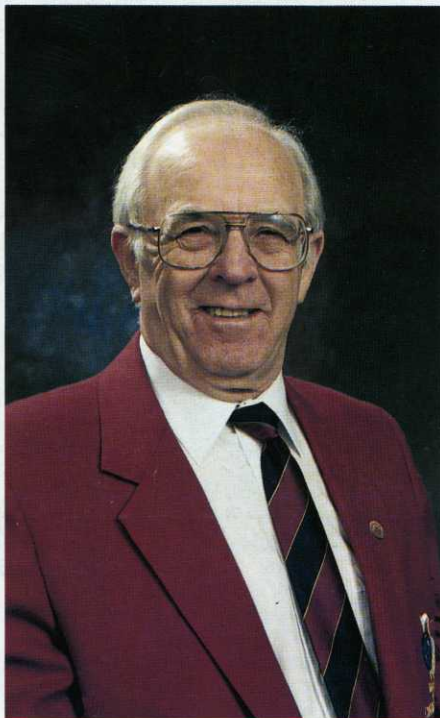
December '97; Seed Development; Longhirst Hall GC; Toro Awards; Fertiliser Spreaders; Communication

January '98; FEGGA Conference; Buying Power Equipment; Elmwood GC; Mobile Phones; Traffic Management; Spraying; Environment

February '98; BTME Review; Overseeding; Royal Mid Surrey GC; Drainage; Thatch



A view of. America



One of the highlights of my visit to the GCSAA International Golf Course Conference and Show in Anaheim was the refreshing comments on course construction and maintenance, along with the fact that in some ways greenkeeper education in the USA is behind that in Britain.

US PGA Tour veteran Peter Jacobsen in his keynote speech made it clear why in his opinion the American Ryder Cup team keep getting stuffed - his words not mine - by the Europeans. It's because in America they build courses that only call for the game to be played through the air, not on the ground. If golf were meant to be played in the air so that the ball stops dead as soon as it lands they would have made it like a bean bag.

He then turned his attention to design and maintenance with a call to build simpler courses with less water and hazards, returning to the more traditional golf courses. On the maintenance side he called for a halt in the never ending search for lightning fast greens. He believes that if you have to have fast greens they should be flat, and not full of

undulations which make putting almost impossible, and he called Augusta a joke, something the club golfer would do well to remember. Then he referred to over watering, which happens all too often, as a waste of money and good turf. It certainly made a change to hear a top Tour player saying what we have been saying for years.

On education, the BIGGA stand had a steady stream of Superintendents wanting to take up our Master Greenkeeper Certificate saying it is a step up from the top level of certification available in the United States. In Canada a media release on national validation

process is down the same lines as our NVQ and SNVQ. Also Australia are looking at the same sort of system for their greenkeepers. So when you look back over the week it was a big plus for BIGGA, our education and traditional British greenkeeping. How this week would have pleased my old friend Jim Arthur, had he been there, just to know all his practical advice over half a century has stood the test of time, and now coming back into fashion even on the other side of the pond. I just had to give him a call on my return.

The only damper on our time in Los Angeles was the rain. We were supposed to leave all that - behind, instead it was much wetter there than at home, but at least the worst of the rain fell at night or when we were in the show, which was quite lucky because many on the trip were without waterproofs. Talking about clothing I only wish more of our members took the same pride as the Americans in wearing their Association merchandise. There was a large warehouse full of clothing with the GCSAA logo and name on. It was almost sold out after the

three days. I know some will say "Yes, but the Americans get far more money than we do" That is not true. The average pay packet in the States is, in fact, very little more than in the UK. Sure, some of the top men earn more but they are in a minority. No, the reason is all down to pride, which is a pity when you consider what we get for our money. I doubt there is a single greenkeeper in the UK who can honestly say that BIGGA has done nothing for them.

Just stop and consider our profile, wages, and the opportunities available in education and comradeship, not to mention help lines, insurance and golf. Yes, we should all be proud of BIGGA. Even the hardest critics of five or 10 years ago must now give credit, even if grudgingly, to the Association's success. I believe we should all take a leaf out of the Americans book and instead of saying what's in it for me, we should be saying what can we do to help and at the same time help ourselves.

On the golf course greenkeepers will all be busy preparing for the coming season, taking every dry day opportunity to get as much mechanical work done as possible and finishing off their winter work programmes. This is the time of year I miss the practical side of greenkeeping more than any other. It always seemed to give me renewed interest and motivation for the year ahead. I must admit however, I have got used to getting out of bed a little later these days, but after 49 years working on golf courses you do tend to miss the satisfaction derived from preparing for the coming season.

Before you all start feeling sorry for me, I can assure you I am enjoying retirement and being your Chairman.

Gordon Child