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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: George Mitchell

Club: Newmachar GC

Position: Deputy Head Greenkeeper

Age: 26

1. How long have you been a greenkeeper?

11 years

2. What education are you currently undertaking?

None

3. Which one task do you most enjoy doing?

Cutting Greens

4. Which one task do you most dislike doing?

Strimming ditches

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

Professional golfer

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

Dale Robertson, Head Greenkeeper at Newmachar and Sam Morrison, formerly of Royal Aberdeen but now of Bothwell Castle

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

I would make a club rule to penalise golfers who don't repair their divots or pitch marks.

8. What are your hobbies?

Golf, darts and gardening

9. What do you get out of BIGGA?

Golf outings, magazine and meeting other BIGGA members

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

Head Greenkeeper

John Deere in Wonderland

In an age when international companies supply equipment all over the world it is easy for dealers and customers to feel that they are a very small cog in a large wheel. This is often compounded when the brand name has a very high profile in another field.

One would suspect that John Deere might have been sensitive to this fact when they elected, for the first time, to introduce a new range of products in Europe - Disneyland Paris to be precise - prior to their launch in the United States. In addition, their latest LX and LTR lawn tractors have been specifically designed for Europe where Deere claim that 15% of their commercial and consumer equipment sales are made.

An interesting aspect of Deere's presentation was the company's willingness to show machines that will be launched within the next two of years. Three of these prototypes are of interest to the golf market.

When it came to designing the new 2500 professional triplex greens mower it was back to the drawing board. This type of machine is generally used for long periods at a time and requires a high degree of concentration by the operator. In this situation fatigue has to be kept to a minimum and this would appear to be a major factor in the design-brief for this mower.

Deere has incorporated an new command arm which is attached directly to the seat, so is automatically adjusted to suit each individual operator. All controls are within easy reach and a lever with an option of foot pedals controls the cutting units if preferred.

The mower configuration is offset with the rear unit to the left because research showed that operators could see it better in this position. This feature is designed to help cut down wear on the turf. By travelling in opposite directions each time a green is mown the tyres are in a different position thus giving the turf a chance to recover between cuts.

There will be the option of either 20hp John Deere 220 diesel, or 18.7hp Kawasaki liquid-cooled petrol engine. Other features include on-board diagnostics as standard and an optional hydraulic leakage detection system. The 2500 will be available during 1999.

In recent years, there has been an influx of utility vehicles for golf course applications and the new Turf General 2000 series is being introduced to cater for this market.

This heavy-duty unit carries two people plus load carrier and will have a 23.5hp diesel engine plus option of two or four wheel drive. Synchronised transmission provides five speeds up to 19mph and front and rear suspension



smooths out the ride.

In addition, there is the facility for unitising the unit's hydraulic and mechanical take-off systems to operate a wide range of attachments. These include sprayers; fertiliser spreaders, top dressers and other turf care equipment. A cab can also be fitted to provide all year round operator comfort.

Cutting up to 76 acres a day is what Deere are claiming their WF1655 wide-area rotary mower can achieve. Powered by a 51hp Yanmar diesel, the three heavy-duty rear discharge mowers have a cutting width of 3.35 metres and it is claimed that the unit has a top cutting speed of 8.5mph.

The WF1655 will be available commercially within the next two years.

For 1998, Deere is launching their 4000 series of compact tractors with Yanmar diesel engine from 20hp to 43hp.

There is a choice of gear or hydrostatic transmission on most models and standard features include oil cooled disc brakes hydrostatic power steering front wheel drive and differential lock. The dual gear pumps are said to ensure excellent hydraulic performance.

For operator comfort there is a contoured deluxe suspension seat and a choice of Roll guard protection or optional cab

The tractors will be available this autumn

In addition to the new products, Deere demonstrated a satellite (GPS) system they are working on for selective spraying of golf and turf applications.

All products shown are the result of a \$334million capital and R&D investment the company has made over the last three years.

For further information Tel: 01949 860491