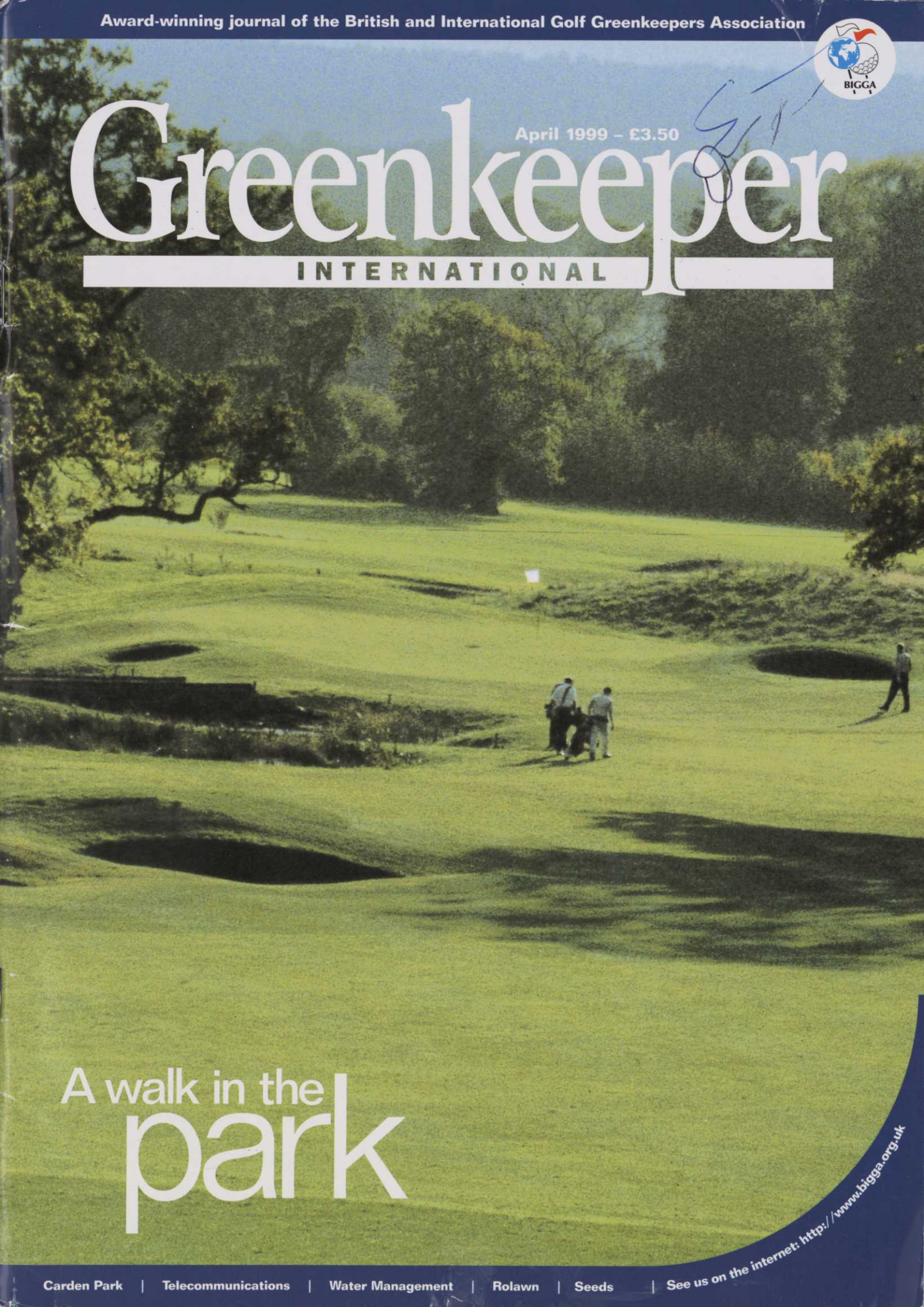




# Greenkeeper

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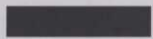
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Ken Richardson  
 E-mail: ken@bigga.co.uk

**Sales & Marketing Manager**

James McEvoy  
 E-mail: james@bigga.co.uk

**Membership Services Officer**

Tracey Maddison  
 E-mail: tracey@bigga.co.uk

**Contact us**

You can contact The British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association in any number of ways:

**Post:** BIGGA HOUSE, Aldwark, Alne, York, YO61 1UF

**Tel:** 01347 833800

**Fax:** 01347 833801

**E-mail:** reception@bigga.co.uk

**Internet:** www.bigga.org.uk

# Greenkeeper

INTERNATIONAL

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

**Editorial**

Editor: Scott MacCallum  
 Tel: 01347 833800 Fax: 01347 833801  
 E-mail: scott@bigga.co.uk

**Advertising**

Sales & Marketing Manager: James McEvoy  
 E-mail: james@bigga.co.uk

**Sales & Marketing Assistants:**

Jenny Panton, Cheryl Broomhead  
 Tel: 01347 833800 Fax: 01347 833802  
 E-mail: sales@bigga.co.uk

**Design**

Design & Production Editor: David Emery  
 Tel: 01347 833800 ISDN: 01347 830020  
 E-mail: david@bigga.co.uk

**Printing**

Hi-Tec Print, Units 9-10, Houghton Road, North Anston Trading Estate, North Anston, Sheffield S25 4JJ  
 Tel: 01909 568533 Fax: 01909 568206  
 ISDN: 01909 550561

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## April 1999

Your next issue of Greenkeeper International will be with you by May 7, 1999

### Regulars

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Helping you track down some of Greenkeeper International's previous articles

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Gordon Child looks back at another busy month

### Reader Reply Card

Use our post-paid reader reply card to obtain further information on the products and services advertised in this issue. Just state the company's Ad Ref numbers, post the card to us, and we'll arrange for further information to be sent direct to you.

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### 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, please contact BIGGA on 01347 833800



**Golden Key Circle Company Members**

Amazone Ground Care, Amenity Technology Products Ltd, Barenbrug, Bernhard and Company Ltd, Charterhouse Turf Machinery Ltd, Hayter Ltd, John Deere Ltd, Kubota UK Ltd, Mommersteeg International, Ocmis Irrigation UK Ltd, PGA European Tour, Rainbird, Rolawn, Rhone-Poulenc Amenity, Rigby Taylor Ltd, Scotts Turf and Amenity, Supaturf Products Ltd, Stylo Matchmakers, Textron Turf Care and Speciality Products, The Grass Roots Trading Company, The Toro Company

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Avoncrop Amenity Products, Ernest Doe & Sons, Lambert/Fenchurch UK Group Ltd, Sisis Equipment Ltd, Weed Free



Call Jenny now, on 01347 833800 to reserve your stand at BTME2000!



Photo: Alan Birch

23 A walk in the park: Carden Park feature



71 Win £50 with our Buyers' Guide quiz

# Has anyone else got webbed feet?

There have been times over the last few weeks that I found myself thinking that I had JR Ewing for a brother.

No, bear with me, there is a degree of logic to what at first glance might seem to be an outrageous suggestion. After all the only time I've been to Dallas I got no where South Fork but was stuck in the airport for a mind numbing four hours. But no. Who was JR's brother? Bobby. And who was Bobby? Patrick Duffy. And who was Patrick Duffy? The Man from Atlantis!

Yes, over the last couple of weeks I'm sure that, if I look closely, I can see the gaps in my toes joining up. You wouldn't believe it but I'm getting webbed feet.

Well, you should believe it because I live in the part of North Yorkshire which was badly hit by the flooding of the River Derwent. Fortunately our house was unaffected but my route to work was cut off and I had to set off in the wrong direction some time earlier than usual to get to BIGGA HOUSE.

It hadn't even been raining particularly heavily but the water table has been so high it didn't take too much to tip it over the edge.

With similar problems, if perhaps to lesser degrees, occurring all over the country it must be causing you all sorts of problems. I know here at Aldwark the golf course was closed for a while and it did result in some disconsolate golfers.

Multiply that around the country and there is an army of club golfers, who have brought clubs down from the attic, dusted them off and like coiled springs are ready to start their season. But they can't. They've got no outlet for their frustration... unless at the man who is "stopping them from playing".

Yes, unless you have a particularly enlightened membership, or work in one of the few areas to avoid record rainfall, you have no doubt been getting it in the neck.

It just brings it all home that you can be the best greenkeeper in the world but you are only as good as nature lets you be. Let's face it, it wasn't two years ago that I produced a Drought Special for the magazine and looked at the best ways to save and store rainfall. Since then, and I do accept the blame, it has barely stopped tipping it down. The new garden furniture we bought last year is damp, rusting and barely used.

All you can do is arm yourself with facts and statistics about rainfall levels to bombard the Green Committee, or anyone who traps you in the bar. They needn't be delivered in a defensive way but a 'You will just not believe how much rain we've had...' may be enough to nip any potential criticism in the bud.

In the meantime I've got to remember just what happened while I was in that shower. And who was it again who shot JR?

**Editor:**  
Scott MacCallum

# Greenkeeper

INTERNATIONAL

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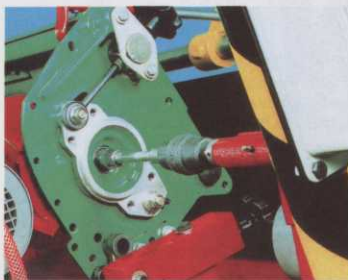
Philip Sharples talks about water conservation. Just because it isn't an issue today...

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55 Saving Water



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# New MD at Textron

Textron Inc. has announced the appointment of Harold C. Pinto as Managing Director of Textron Turf Care & Specialty Products-Europe. In this role, he has responsibility for manufacturing operations and sales facilities in England, Germany, France, Italy and Australia.

Textron Turf Care & Specialty Products includes a range of familiar names including Ransomes and Jacobsen turf care equipment and Cushman utility vehicles.

A native of Brazil, Harold, 47, has been promoted from Senior Vice President of Sales and Marketing at Textron Turf Care & Specialty Products Americas.

"Harold's extensive knowledge of the global turf care equipment market will be a great asset to our international operations as we continue to integrate our Jacobsen, Ransomes and Cushman product lines and increase the sales of these leading products worldwide," said Textron Golf, Turf Care & Specialty Products Group President, Carl Burtner.

Harold joined Textron in 1992 as Vice President of Sales of Jacobsen Textron. In 1994, he was promoted to Vice President of Sales and Marketing. In 1998, following Textron's acquisition of United Kingdom-based Ransomes PLC, Pinto was named Senior Vice President of Sales and Marketing of the expanded Textron Turf Care & Specialty Products -Americas.

Prior to joining Textron, from 1978 to 1989, he served in various management positions with Sperry New Holland in Brazil and Ford New Holland in Pennsylvania.

From 1989 to 1992, he was the Product Director of J.I. Case Company in Wisconsin (USA).

Textron Golf, Turf Care &



Specialty Products, part of Textron's Industrial segment, is a leading manufacturer and designer of golf cars, utility vehicles and turf care equipment, including such internationally recognised brands

as E-Z-GO, Cushman, Ransomes and Jacobsen.

Textron Inc. is a \$10 billion, global, multi-industry company with market-leading operations in Aircraft, Automotive, Industrial and Finance.

## Sisis acquire Huxleys

Over 120 years of home grown British experience in the manufacture of turf management equipment manufacturers have been combined with the news that Cheshire-based Sisis have acquired Huxleys.

The purchase by Sisis Equipment (Macclesfield) Ltd, who were founded in 1932, was completed by the beginning of March and includes Huxleys grass machinery manufacturing, sales, service and hire business.

Huxleys, which has been associated with the grass machinery business since 1946, are retaining the Huxley Golf Division, which specialises in the supply and installation of all-weather surfaces. Six employees, including the Huxley brothers, will continue in that business which will be conducted from the Huxley premises in New Alresford, Hampshire.

"Although in the past Sisis and Huxleys have been rivals in the market place we have always respected them as a company and have the highest regard for their products. We have every confidence that our acquisition of the Huxley grass machinery business will benefit customers of Sisis and Huxley alike," said Sisis Joint Managing Director, William Hargreaves.

Manufacturing of the Huxley range will be transferred from New Alresford and Broxburn, West Lothian, to Macclesfield in stages and Sisis wishes to assure all Huxley customers of continued after-sales service and support.

"Sisis are a fine British manufacturing company with a first class reputation in the specialist golf course and sports ground machinery business," said Paul Huxley.

"They are a bigger company than us, with greater engineering resources, and are well placed to develop the sales of our own high quality British equipment and maintain the Huxley reputation for after-sales service. We wish Sisis every success."



### Contact us

You can contact The British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association in any number of ways:

**Post:** BIGGA HOUSE, Aldwark, Alne, York, YO61 1UF

**Tel:** 01347 833800

**Fax:** 01347 833801

**E-mail:** reception@bigga.co.uk

**Internet:** www.bigga.org.uk

## John Deere scheme evaluated

A new service evaluation scheme has been introduced for all John Deere's commercial & consumer equipment (C&CE) dealers in the UK and Ireland, underlining the company's commitment to first class parts and service support for the full John Deere product range.

A total of 42 C&CE dealer service departments will have been evaluated by Spring 1999. Each can achieve a Gold, Silver or Bronze award, after being assessed on a range of important service features.

Areas under the spotlight number 16 in all, and include specialist equipment, workshop condition and size relative to the number of staff employed, service vehicle presentation, technical training, warranty procedure, marketing and service management.

Full dealer training on all aspects of parts and service support is

available at John Deere's new training centre at Langar, Nottingham. Upwards of 5000 training days are provided each year for dealer personnel, including around 3500 days for service technicians - all designed to ensure the best possible service to customers throughout the UK and Ireland.

"Our aim as a business is to provide the most advanced and reliable machines possible, backed by efficient and knowledgeable product support," says Managing Director Alec McKee.

"The John Deere brand name means quality, combined with industry leading investment in research and development, manufacturing facilities and spare parts distribution - all aimed at providing customer satisfaction and genuine value right across the product range."

[www.rpal.co.uk](http://www.rpal.co.uk)

Rhone-Poulenc Amenity has launched its all new website giving useful information about the company and its products.

Log onto [www.rpal.co.uk](http://www.rpal.co.uk) and you will be taken to the site which includes the award-winning technical manual on-line. It includes full details of the product range but also provides lots of other information together with reference pictures to help aid weed, pest and disease identification.

Links to a number of Rhone-Poulenc main distributor sites are also included so that customers can find out where and how to obtain the products they want.

ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

# Profile

ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

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:** Glyn Davies

**Club:** Chester GC

**Position:** First Assistant

**Age:** 30

**1. How long have you been a greenkeeper?**  
15 years

**2. What education are you currently undertaking?**  
None

**3. Which one task do you most enjoy doing?**  
Construction - tees, bunkers etc

**4. Which one task do you most dislike doing?**  
Bunker edging

**5. What job other than green-keeping might you have ended up doing?**  
Landscape gardener

**6. Who has been the biggest influence on your career?**  
Stuart McCall, Head Greenkeeper at Chester

**7. What would you do to improve the life of a greenkeeper?**  
Try to get committees to understand

**8. What are your hobbies?**  
Golf, rallying, gardening and keeping fit

**9. What do you get out of BIGGA?**  
Educational Seminars

**10. What do you hope to be doing in 10 years time?**  
Hopefully in charge of my own course

## Doing it by the book with Kubota

A free, pocket-sized guide to the safe use of tractors and their attachments has been produced by Kubota.

Although written primarily for owners and operators of compact tractors, much of the advice contained in the Kubota 'Tractor Safety Code' applies equally to those using larger tractors within farming, grounds and highways maintenance, construction and civil engineering.

The booklet begins by highlighting 10 basic rules of tractor safety before guiding the reader through the essential points which should be observed to ensure optimum safety during tractor operation. Areas covered include dress sense, operator training, tractor maintenance, safe working practices, driving on public roads and trac-

tor shutdown. There is also a section on the safe operation of common attachments and implements such as front loaders, rotary tillers, mowers and backhoes.

The Kubota 'Tractor Safety Code' can be obtained by phoning the Kubota literature request line on 01844 268169 or by e-mailing [tomb@kubota.co.uk](mailto:tomb@kubota.co.uk) or by faxing 01844 216685. The Kubota web site, which contains a wealth of information on the company, its product range and national dealer network, can be accessed at [www.kubota.co.uk](http://www.kubota.co.uk)



## Terry wins Depot Manager of the Year

The Rolawn Depot Manager of the Year award is made in recognition of the contribution made to the business by Rolawn's Depot Managers. This year it has been given to Terry Carter, depot manager at the Company's Bristol Depot.

Terry, a recent recruit to the business took over the running of the depot in October 1997 and handled its relocation in March 1998.

Terry is a native of the West Country and is married with two children. He lives in Winterbourne and is a keen Liverpool supporter.

Gift vouchers and a certificate of recognition were presented by Terry Ryan, Rolawn's Sales and Marketing Director, to Terry at the Company's head office in York.

"Rolawn has 15 turf depots throughout the UK, all manned by Rolawn employees. It is always a difficult decision to make but I am delighted to award it this year to Terry who has quickly established himself and the depot by building excellent relationships with our customers in the Bristol area," stated Terry Ryan.



## Claire's new job



Claire Andrews has been appointed Turf Administrator for Sovereign Turf Ltd.

Gibraltar-born Claire, who will be based in Suffolk, arrives in the turf industry from the leisure industry where she worked for a travel company and in hotels.

"I really enjoy the job and find it very rewarding," said Claire, whose responsibilities include taking orders, liaising with Sovereign's harvesters and logistics.



Sunningdale Golf Club has signed a five year exclusive partnership deal with Toro for turf machinery with the investment expected to be approximately £250,000.

## Sadly missed, Frederick Ten Hage

News has reached us that the popular Dutch greenkeeper Frederick Ten Hage has died suddenly. He was 50. Frederick, who was one of Holland's first rally drivers, was a regular at BTME in Harrogate most years although he was missing this year and will be sadly missed by his many friends in the industry.



Section Secretaries from all over the country converged on BIGGA HOUSE for a two day briefing session on the workings of and developments within the Association. They were subjected to intense lectures on everything from the new BIGGA Stylo work wear, accounting, Greenkeeper International, the Charterhouse/Scotts BIGGA Golf Championship; membership and education as well as having the opportunity to get their own back by grilling staff on any matter they wished.

## Mommersteeg catalogue out now!

The 1999 catalogue of MM amenity grass seeds mixtures has just been published, in a new, easy to use format. It is available free of charge by ringing the Mommersteeg Main Line number - 01529 302500.

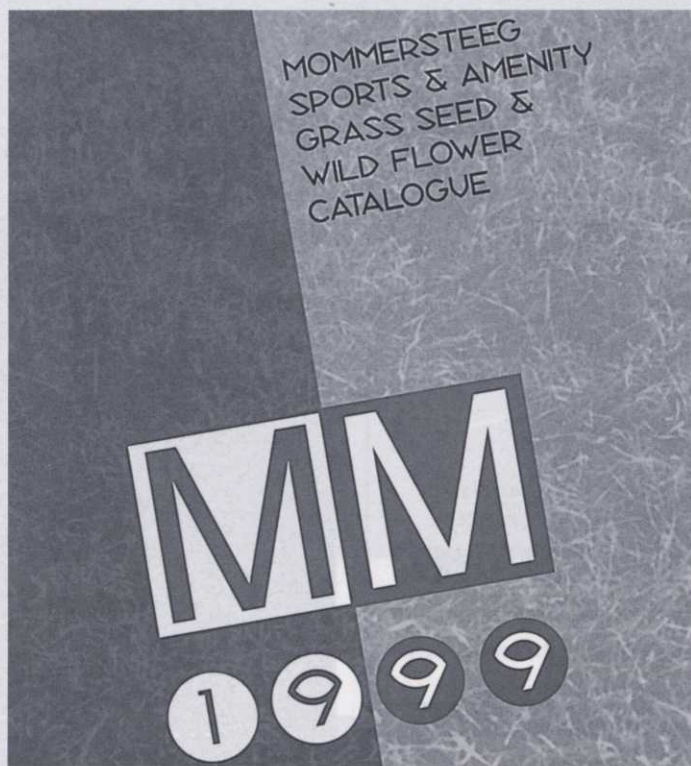
A table at the front of the booklet shows the range of Mommersteeg mixtures and quickly points the reader towards the right MM mixture for use on golf courses, on winter and summer sports grounds, and for landscape and other specialist situations.

For each mixture a clear graphic shows the percentage of each constituent cultivar.

For example, it shows that MMI I has 40% each of the Chewings Fescues, Enjoy and Waldorf, with ten per cent Sefton, six per cent Egmont and four per cent Tracenta, the last three being Brown Top Bents.

A concise summary accompanies the graphic for each mix highlighting its strong features and the ideal situation for its use.

Towards the back of the booklet is a section on mixtures to use on problem soils and sites such as areas of low fertility or high salinity. There is also a comprehensive listing of Mommersteeg's wildflower mixes.



## Sybron acquire Green Releaf

Green Releaf Biotech Inc has been bought by the American-based Sybron Chemicals Inc. Sybron had enjoyed a long-term relationship with Green Releaf as the supplier of microbes and as a technical advisor in the formulation and application of products.

"Sybron has always been a member of the Green Releaf team," said Ted Melnik, Vice President of Sybron's Biochemical business.

"We're simply stepping up to the plate to accelerate the benefits greenkeepers and superintendents can reap from the technology that we believe is the future of turf maintenance. Green Releaf's success in the field to date is the perfect foundation to build on."

Green Releaf products include microbial soil inoculants, plant nutrients, and natural amendments that stimulate plants and enhance plant vigour.

Sybron will immediately consolidate Green Releaf's manufacturing, research and development and administrative operations into its sales facility.

## Peter's two left feet?



Midland Regional Administrator, Peter Larter, has discovered that his daring deeds as an England and British Lions Second Row forward have not been forgotten.

In the wake of Jonny Wilkinson's fine kicking display in England's match against Scotland at Twickenham Frank Keating, sports writer for The Guardian, found himself looking back at previous left footed kicking performances.

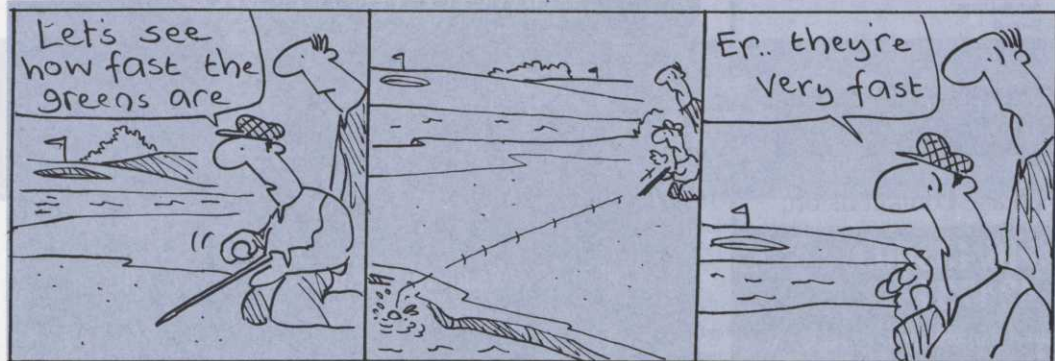
Low and behold the following appeared.

"Dodge's left foot logged one conversion and three penalties during his 32-cap run for England. Before him, the solitary left-footed penalty of his England career by the RAF basketball player, the bean-pole lock, Peter Larter (v the All Blacks in 1967) remains one of Twickenham's memorable one-off strikes."

Well done, Peter. But "bean-pole"?!

## Royal Inverdivot GC...

by Tony Husband



## Toro aim for home market

B&Q has reached a supply arrangement with Toro Wheel Horse to stock two of Toro's pedestrian Recycler mowers this season.

Toro is the largest brand of quality lawn mowers in the USA, but in the past, its Recycler mowers have only been available through specialist lawn mower dealers in the UK, however due to the Recycler mower's rapid increase in popularity, Toro will supply machines to B&Q warehouse stores and therefore make them more accessible to the general public.

## Scottish date

The BIGGA Scottish National Championship will take place this year at East Kilbride GC., Lanarkshire, of Wednesday June 16 by kind permission of the Captain and Committee.

Played over 18 holes the Championship is open to all BIGGA Scottish members. Cost is £16 and entry forms can be obtained by contacting Scottish Administrator Peter J. Boyd, 10 Meadowburn Avenue, Newton Mearns, Glasgow G77 6TA Tel/Fax: 0141 616 3440.

All entry forms will also be available at all Spring Sections meetings in the Scottish Region.

## How on earth could that happen?



Stanley Glover, of Wrotham Heath Golf Club, in Kent, and his colleagues were cutting down some leylandii on the course this winter when they came across half a golf ball inside one of the trees. "The trees had been planted around 1963 and the ball had obviously fallen between some branches and as the tree grew the branches got forced together to become fused into one trunk," explained Stanley.

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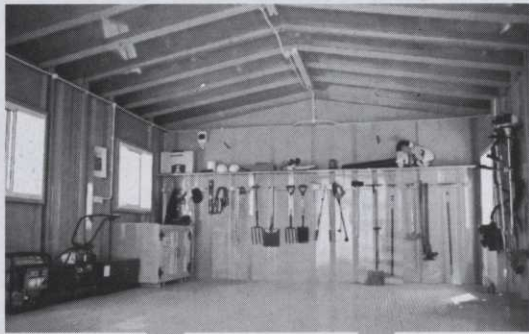
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Ad Ref 56

Austin Breakwell gives some helpful hints at managing projects and looks at the very first example of the art.

# PROJECT MANAGEMENT

The basic concept of project management is older than mankind itself. If you believe that God created the world then the extracts from The Bible would indicate that a seriously considered project management programme was used.

The seven day project was carefully ordered, no point in creating man before everything else was in place, create man before woman so a "complaints department" was established before the complainants arrived. Even "critical path" analysis was used to determine what could be created on the same day without leading to conflict or confusion. Because the elements favoured creation no time was lost, and as a result time allocated for contingencies was not needed. The project was completed one day ahead of schedule allowing the bonus of a rest day.

In its simplest form therefore, Project Management can be described as a "one-off" job which consists of a series of tasks, all of which must be completed before the project is finished. However the sequence in which they are completed has to be clearly defined. Some tasks may take place at the same time as others some cannot be started until one or more of the other tasks have been completed. The impact of not planning or managing a project correctly can vary from slight inconvenience to customers, or additional costs to you, to total financial or project disaster.

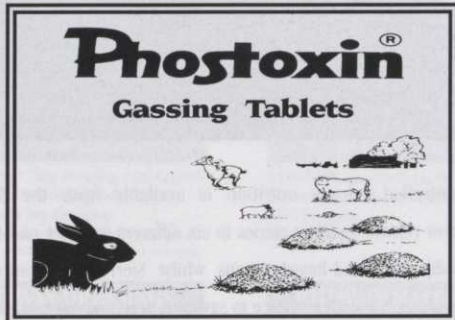
The problem is that project management is so much a part of everyday life, that no one seems to be fully aware of the point at which good planning is calculated rather than left to natural instinct. Most mornings a person will shower before putting on their clothes, there is no real need to write a plan defining the progression of events. Those who have just enjoyed a 'heavy' night are allowed to contest this philosophy. It is also understood that if you are constructing the channel tunnel one major plan with many integrated projects needs highly organised management.

It is those areas in between which need assessment. Too often a simple project such as creating several winter greens or re-organising the 17th are left to "natural ability" or experience. A slight delay or an inferior green are not catastrophic events, always assuming that The Open does not start this week, however, they still show a lack of professionalism in the job. This can be overcome by good project planning and management.

For further information on project management, health & safety and any other training issues, please contact Austin Breakwell on (01254) 679955 or Jean John on (01282) 831973.

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Ad Ref 189

**Neil Thomas examines the current situation surrounding the GTC and confirms BIGGA's willingness to make a positive contribution towards its review...**

# GTC: WHERE NOW?

We have attempted to keep readers informed of developments in relation to the GTC and in the last issue of Greenkeeper International we reported on the establishment of an independent review. A meeting of the GTC planned for 25th February was subsequently postponed and our Chairman made representations that this meeting be held as soon as possible to enable GTC members to discuss the setting up of the independent review.

A meeting was subsequently set for 19th March when it was understood that the findings of the review would be discussed having been circulated to the GTC members for consideration prior to that meeting. This seemed a wholly unrealistic timescale given that the review was only implemented as of 25th February and this was confirmed in a letter from the GTC of 5th March when it was decided that due to the tight timescale for the preparation of the report the meeting would now be moved to 15th April.

It is difficult to deal with facts in an increasingly confused situation but it can be revealed that the review is being carried out by LANTRA, the National Land-based Training Organisation. LANTRA is being commissioned to examine and make recommendations in respect of:-

1. GTC's role in overseeing Greenkeeper training and its cost effectiveness
2. GTC's capability to handle modern apprenticeships
3. Monitoring and reporting mechanisms
4. Financial auditing and checking procedures
5. Roles of Committee members and staff
6. Decision making procedures
7. Procedures for communication between funding partners, colleges,

assessors, internal verifiers and, where applicable, clubs and their students.

BIGGA remains deeply concerned that this review has moved ahead without formal approval by the GTC and without that Committee being given the opportunity to comment on the LANTRA brief. BIGGA would certainly wish to see the brief widened to include an examination of the college system and its effectiveness in relation to the workings of the GTC.

BIGGA also considers that the GTC's Constitution needs review to enable a future structure to be established which would include an effective input from Greenkeepers and experts in the field probably through the establishment of a technical panel.

So much to talk about then but, as yet no opportunity to talk!

We have genuine concerns about the scale of this review and the anticipated time it will take. The timescale seems very short and raises questions over the thoroughness of the consultations which will take place. Experience of such a review would indicate a timescale in the region of four to six months but this one seems to be six weeks from start to finish and has started without any reference to the Committee who will ultimately have to accept or reject it! Time will indeed tell.

I suspect that the reader will be left with a feeling of incredulity. Yet all this is so unnecessary. Accepting that such a review is appropriate after six years of the GTC operating on its current basis, this review should surely have been conducted from within the GTC with its findings circulated to the constituent member bodies. Instead, through the avoidable actions of one of those constituent member bodies, this

matter has now reached the public domain.

Suddenly there are many "experts" on greenkeeper education and training ready to go to press and much jockeying for position within any restructured GTC which may emerge from the findings of this review. GTC affairs become matter for public debate with all the stresses involved for GTC staff who had a right to expect any such review to be conducted within the confines of the GTC with input from the constituent bodies, to whom the findings of the review will ultimately be circulated, and such other persons as LANTRA should determine. BIGGA will certainly be mindful of this as the review process develops.

BIGGA has a responsibility to inform its members fully in respect of this review as much is at stake in terms of their future education and training. This we will do through the pages of Greenkeeper International but given the lack of consultation and until the GTC finally meets and the LANTRA findings are made available, the Association cannot determine its position.

Members can rest assured that our Chairman as our representative on the GTC will strongly defend and promote the interests of our members on all matters relative to greenkeeper education and training within the ambit of the GTC. We have no intention of being bypassed in the present manoeuvrings for position. BIGGA remains ready and willing to participate in and contribute to the review.

We remain hopeful that positive benefits will emerge from this review for the greenkeeping profession. For this to happen, however there needs to be a great deal more openness, consultation and adherence to democratic procedures than is evident at the present time.



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**Bruce Stanley looks at the best methods of keeping in touch with one another when you're spread across the length and breadth of the golf course**



# Can you hear me mother?

## ON THE RIGHT COURSE



Most Course Managers and Head Greenkeepers have a need to keep in close contact with the members of their team.

Knowing where staff are working on the golf course, how they are progressing and when they have completed a specific task are important elements in safe and efficient greenkeeping operations.

The ability to communicate instantly across the whole of a golf course not only eliminates wasted time but also enables problems to be dealt with quickly and new jobs to be allocated without one or both parties needing to return to the machinery sheds.

However, for many greenkeepers and Course Managers, keeping in touch with staff still involves driving around the golf course until you find the person with whom you want to speak. This is fine if you know where everyone is and you can be sure of finding them, but is not always a simple task on an area of 100 acres or more.

Today, with the continuing advances in mobile communication systems, there is no major reason why one should not be able to contact immediately another person working anywhere on a golf course.

Mention mobile communications and most people's thoughts turn to the mobile telephone. The companies who provide mobile phone services

boast about their excellent nationwide networks, quoting coverage figures in excess of 98% of the UK population. But there are still problems.

Mobile phones rely on repeater aerials to transmit signals across the countryside. Yet, each aerial has a limited range and it is not uncommon to lose contact suddenly and completely, particularly in lightly populated, more rural parts of the country. Mobile phones are fine if you happen to live or work near a major road, city or town, but step onto a golf course in the middle of the countryside and you may find the signal becomes very weak or disappears completely.

Then there are the running costs. Although mobile phone ownership is relatively inexpensive compared with five years ago, the basic annual charge made by a mobile service provider will rarely be less than £180. Exceed any "free" or "inclusive" talk time provided as part of the basic monthly contract, and the cost of communication quickly starts to escalate.

Although excellent in a one-to-one situation or when travelling extensively around the country, the mobile phone is not the most cost-effective solution when needing to keep in touch with several people at the same time within a clearly defined area.

Nor, for that matter, is a pager. Although inexpensive to own, they provide no voice to voice contact so

# Can you hear me mother?



are of little use where instantaneous reaction or response is wanted. The pager is best employed as a simple means of alerting or "calling in" another person, for example, in a hospital or within a factory or warehouse complex.

By far the best and most economical solution for anyone working in a golf course environment is the two-way, or professional, radio. Apart from the initial purchase cost, the only regular outgoing is the annual licence issued by the Department of Trade and Industry, a legal requirement for anyone using a two-way radio.

The cost of the licence varies according to the range of the equipment, the total number of handsets in use and how many operating frequencies have been allocated by the DTI.

For a golf course with eight handsets operating on a single frequency within a three km (1.8 mile) radius, the total annual licence cost would be £100 - with no additional costs such as call charges or connection fees.

According to Sue Preater, branch manager of Swindon-based telecommunications specialist, Lincom Communications, golf courses should avoid the simplest and cheapest forms of two-way radio, commonly known as "walkie-talkies".

"Such equipment normally costs up to £180 for each handset and is fine for domestic situations, weekend scout camps and residential homes," she explained. "However, they are not sufficiently robust or powerful for everyday professional use. Because they have pre-programmed frequencies, they will need to be

returned manually in the event of interference from another user trying to communicate on the same frequency."

The recommended entry-level two-way radio for everyday professional use is the single channel unit which has been allocated its own dedicated operating frequency by the DTI. Easy to use with a basic push button and talk operation, the radio provides instant two-way communication between handset and handset or handset and base unit, and vice versa. The purchase price of such radios is in the region of £250.

As many users have found, one of the major benefits of two-way radio can also lead to problems due to the exceptional portability of the handsets. It is not uncommon for radios to go "missing" just when they are needed.

To ensure that staff can always contact the office, and vice versa, it is well worthwhile investing in a mains-powered local base station as part of the system, at a cost of around £450. On hilly or undulating terrain, it may be necessary also to install an external mast antenna to enable the base station to communicate across the complete course.

For those who are regularly on the move, there are also units available for fitting permanently into vehicles, supplied complete with an integral speaker, palm microphone and antenna. Prices range from £260 to £300-plus, depending on the range of features.

With a basic single channel two-way radio, all communications take place across one dedicated frequency allocated by the DTI. As a result, everyone on the course equipped with a radio pre-set to the operating frequency can listen in to conversations between other users.

To overcome this, manufacturers offer two-way radios which operate on a single frequency split into 16 or more channels. By allocating different channels to different users, individual handsets can be called up separately. Cost of these radios range from around £370 for a simple unit with manual channel tuning to £450-plus for models with keypad dialing and an LCD display.

The additional circuitry within these more sophisticated radios means that users have available to them an added range of facilities including a voice-activated hands-free capability when used in conjunction with optional headsets.

There are also power level adjusters to give longer battery life and, with keypad models, the ability to store commonly-used contact numbers and



display the name of incoming callers. A useful safety feature is the lone worker alert which automatically puts the radio into emergency mode if the worker does not respond to a preset warning signal. Other users on the same frequency will then be alerted.

Although the DTI requires an operating licence for each frequency it allocates, it is possible to set up multi-channel radios to allow private conversations between individual handsets or a handset and base unit, as if talking on a different frequency.

This is achieved by the supplier pre-tuning the two items of equipment to a dedicated channel which cannot be accessed by any other user, giving similar security to using a completely separate frequency.

Such a feature can be useful where, for example, the course manager needs regular communication with another manager within a hotel and golf complex or during a tournament when totally separate communications may be required with the organisers' office and the greenstaff.

Two-way radios with keypads can also be programmed to allow three or more users to communicate simultaneously.

All of the above systems are designed to work over a radius of up to 3km where there are no major obsta-



cles in the way. For difficult terrain or where greater range is required, the supplier will normally recommend a more complex base unit, known as a base repeater station. Costing in the region of £2,000, such equipment needs to be positioned in a building at a high point on the course.

If all suitable buildings are low-lying, it will be necessary to install an external antenna mast higher than the rest of the course. The important point is the availability of an electricity supply to power the repeater station.

When the equipment is to be used over distances greater than 3km, a wide area licence will be required from the DTI. This costs £140 to cover a base unit and nine handsets operating on one frequency. Cost of a single frequency wide area licence for up to 25 handsets is £250.

If aerial positioning is difficult or one does not wish to go to the expense of a wide area licence, a lower cost alternative can be to rent space on the repeater mast of a supplier of communications equipment.

Positioned at high points around the UK, such masts give local coverage over distances averaging 25 miles, enabling individual handsets within the area to communicate with each other and a base station via the repeater mast.

Lincom charges a £10 rental fee per month per handset for use of its masts but there is no other charge because users are covered by Lincom's own telecommunications licence.

Moisture is one of the biggest enemies of mobile communications equipment. For optimum protection, Lincom's Sue Preater recommends the use of a leather rather than a nylon case.

Most cases come with a belt loop, but for totally security, especially during hands-free operation, a shoulder strap or body harness are advised.

"As an authorised Motorola dealer, we have access to probably the widest range of accessories on the market," commented Mrs Preater. "These include a range of headsets with boom mikes, the most sophisticated of which conform to statutory ear-defending standards.

"Other accessories available include batteries with a life of up to 14 hours before they need recharging, single and multiple recharging units and vehicle adaptors which enable a two-way radio to be used and recharged in a vehicle, in similar manner to a mobile phone."



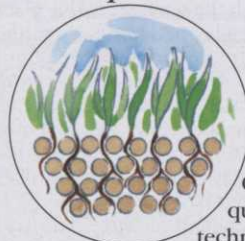
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**John Coleman, Toro Excellence in Greenkeeping Award winner, reports back from the American trip which formed part of his prize**

# One heck of a ● prize



The prospect of visiting Orlando during the dreary month of February was always appealing, but to be invited as guests of Toro and as the Excellence in Greenkeeping Award winner was the icing on the cake.

My Itinerary was split between attending educational seminars, attending the GCSAA show and some free time which I had pre-booked to include the Disney Parks and Universal Studios. This would conclude the first week of my trip, whereupon I would then fly up to Minneapolis and spend three days or so with Toro at their Headquarters.

The GCSAA Show lasts one full week with the seminars taking place from Monday to Thursday and the show itself from Friday until Sunday. The convention centre which hosted the show was over one million square feet in area and over a mile long in length. Yes it's depressingly true, everything does seem bigger over there!

The seminars I attended were either one day or two day's in length so they were fairly intense. I found the American Superintendents to be far more receptive to audience participation which helped break up the long hours spent in class. This benefited all attendees in that they learned as much from one another as from the lecturer. The longer sessions seemed to suit this format better and I for one feel this is something we should possibly consider for our annual conference.

Come Friday, I was looking forward to the show and arrived somewhat early, in my enthusiasm I failed to notice it didn't begin until 11am and felt rather stupid when I turned up at 9am on the dot!

However, when it finally opened I wasn't disappointed, the show was as good as I was led to believe and was quick to take advantage of the vast product range and new ideas on offer.

The thought of leaving Orlando with temperatures regularly exceeding 25°C was not appealing, especially when Minneapolis was



Above: John with Jack Copeland, his Chairman of Green

Above right: The other element of the prize was presented by Pete Mansfield, of Lely UK

minus 20°, but I was still looking forward to visiting Toro and off I went on the Sunday. I received my three day Itinerary which included a visit to the Toro Headquarters, the manufacturing plant and the production plant which was located about a three hour drive away, this was interspersed, as far as I could tell, with the eating of copious amounts of food – they really do know how to look after you!

My first visit was to The Toro Headquarters. This is where the research and development takes place, all administrative work is carried out and equipment testing is performed. This building is home to 1200 employees and has had some heavy investment (about seven million dollars) over the last couple of years.

While touring the design section of the building, it was explained to me how the new machines we use are developed. Ideas for new pieces of equipment are firstly designed on computer with the aid of technology developed initially for the aviation industry. Prototypes are then built using the latest laser profile cutting techniques. The machine will then be tested and sent out into the field, evaluated and a decision made as to its commercial value and practicality of build. If all these factors fit into place then a new machine may be put into production. It took me a full day to tour all these elements of

design, so you can imagine how much work is involved from the conception of a new machine to actual production.

On the second day I visited the manufacturing plant where all the component parts are made. This employs about 700 people and is not dissimilar to some of the factories I've visited here in Sheffield, the home of steel. Although very impressive with robotic welders, the latest CNC equipment, massive presses and all sorts of weird and wonderful machines this reinforced my opinion that I'm glad I work on a golf course.

My last day was spent at the production plant about 200 miles away in Wisconsin. This I felt was probably how a car plant would look with the bare bones of a machine at the start of a production line and the end product being driven off the end. All painting of the machines is also performed here with a state of the art electroplating dipping process being used. I must say I felt very envious seeing all these brand new machines stacked up and did try to convince them that they wouldn't miss a couple, but to no avail unfortunately.

Overall it was a great learning curve for me and I don't think I'll be quite as quick to complain when any of my machines break down in the future, well on second thoughts, maybe I will!

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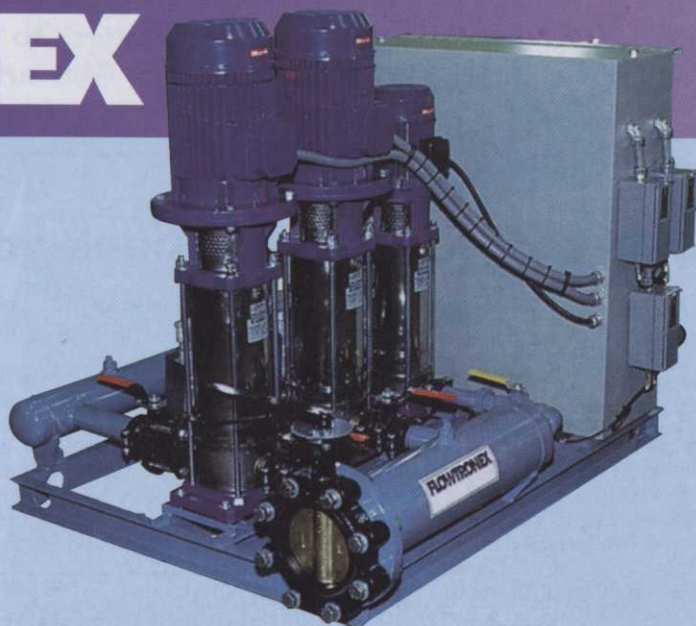
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## QQuest for perfect spelling

Being involved in the Computer business as we are, it is always a pleasure to see people spreading the gospel in terms of trying to convince doubters that computers are not just for kids or rocket scientists.

Pleasure aside, I do have one main criticism of Ken Richardson's "A second byte" article in the February issue of Greenkeeper International and this is that he seems to be having trouble with the spelling of QQUEST - not one misspelling but two!

While writing, I should like to point out that information on the QQUEST Maintenance Management Software can also be found on, and a demo programme can be downloaded from, our Internet site, <http://www.wessexsoftware.com>.

Guy R W Coleman, Partner,  
 Wessex Software Systems  
 Pulborough, West Sussex

## A Toro thank you

May I take this opportunity to thank all those concerned with organising my Toro sponsored trip to America. The organisation by Neil Thomas and his team at BIGGA Headquarters was second to none and all aspects of my trip ran smoothly and according to plan. I know from speaking with British Greenkeeper delegates who did not book through the association that most of them

experienced problems regarding seminars they had self booked.

Toro's organisation of the factory visitations and general hospitality was also fantastic and I feel I must thank Both Pete Mansfield and Darren Wennen for the part they played in making sure my stay was as interesting and enjoyable as possible, it certainly was.

Overall I had a great time and came

home with a much better appreciation of what's involved in the manufacturing industry of golf course equipment and will definitely be attending next years GCSAA Show in Orlando.

Again, many thanks and hope to see you all soon,

John Coleman  
 Abbeyle Golf Club

## Spanish help required

I am writing with regard to possible employment on Spanish golf courses.

Currently I am studying the Higher National Diploma in Golf Course Management at Elmwood College. From April to October I will be taking up employment as a seasonal greenkeeper at the Kildare Hotel and Country Club, Ireland. I also intend returning to Germany in April 2000 for full time employment.

I am seeking employment from

October 99 to April 2000 and will be grateful if you could put me in contact with Spanish golf courses. My Spanish is only basic and therefore it would be ideal if I could work together with English or German speaking greenkeepers.

I look forward to hearing from you in the future.

Dirk Thelen, Roesrathersrt. 543A  
 51107, Cologne, Germany or  
 through Elmwood College

## Bettina Schrickel

Greenkeeper International would like to apologise to Bettina Schrickel, author of the "Course Closed" feature last month, for spelling her name incorrectly in the content's page. The error was compounded by the appearance of the words (Check Spelling) beside her name which was not removed at the production stage of the page. Sorry Bettina!

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## Rubigan warning

I am writing in response to a letter from Stephen Okula, of Tenerife, published on page 12 of your February edition headed 'McDivot1', as I don't want any greenkeepers in the UK and Ireland getting themselves into bother over the advice given.

The letter to which I refer concerns the legalities of applying agricultural products in sports and amenity turf. The letter recommends applying Rubigan for the control of Take All Patch. I have to stress that Rubigan has NO APPROVAL for either use on turf or for the control of Take All Patch in the UK or Ireland. This means that it would be illegal to apply Rubigan to sports turf.

If a greenkeeper did apply this product, not only would he/she be in breach of the Pesticides Legislation, but also if something 'went wrong', liability would rest with the user. It is also against the Pesticides Legislation to recommend or supply a product for use in a situation where that product is not approved.

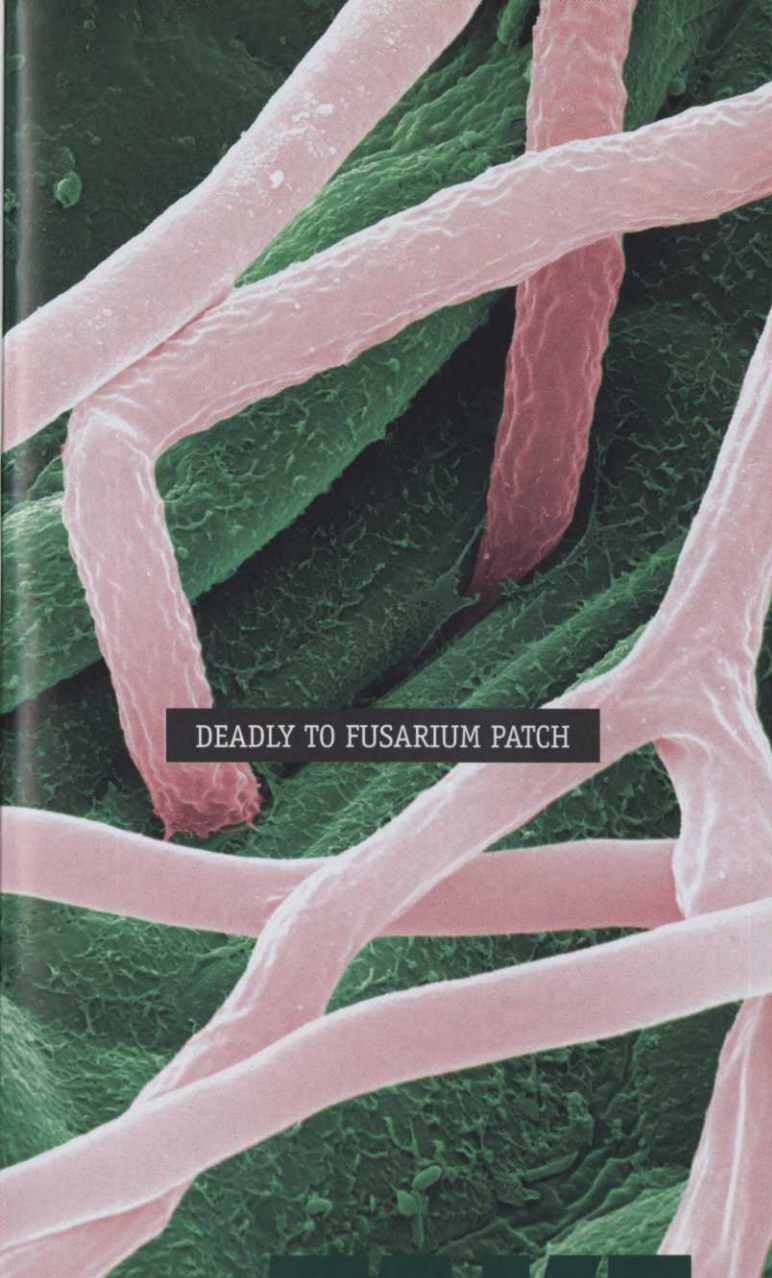
Research based pesticide manufacturers spend many millions of pounds discovering and developing pesticides for a range of uses, including use on turf grass. Products undergo rigorous tests to ensure that they are effective and

present minimum risk. The data produced in product development are subjected to critical examination by Regulatory Authorities before approval is granted. Dow AgroSciences does manufacture the fungicide Rimidin which has Full Approval for the control of Fusarium Patch, Dollar Spot and Red Thread on turf grass. There is no approval for Take-All Patch.

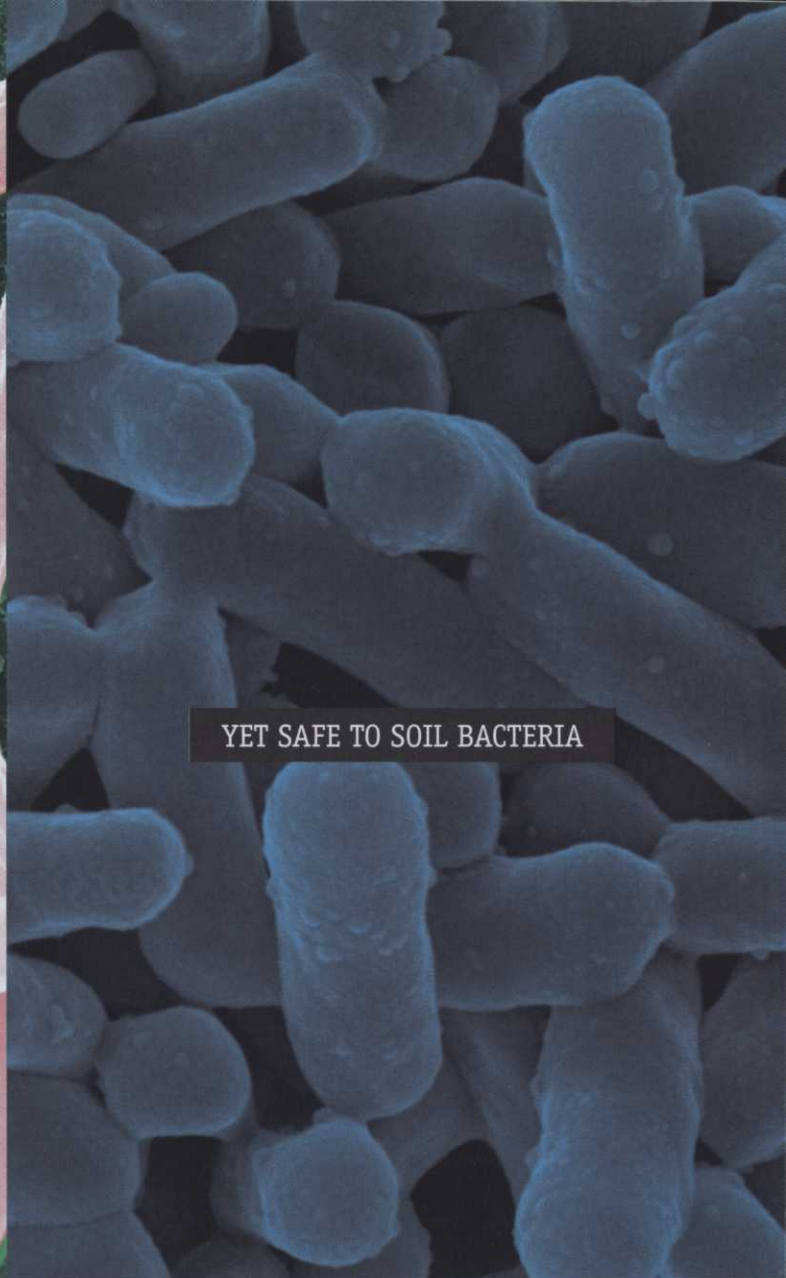
This brings me onto a second letter that I would like to reply on page 13 of the same issue. The letter 'McDivot 3' suggests that fungicides kill useful bacteria. As part of the extensive and exacting development work on the environmental fate of Rimidin, it was demonstrated that Rimidin is safe to beneficial soil bacteria. Trials not only looked at overall populations of bacteria, but also at the activity of specific bacteria such as Nitrobacter and Nitrosomonas.

In summary, please ensure that when using a pesticide the label is read and follow it carefully. If you follow these rules you will not only be keeping yourself on the right side of the law, but you will ensure that you have a valuable tool for modern greenkeeping in the future.

Andy Cawley  
 Country Manager, UK & Eire  
 Dow AgroSciences.



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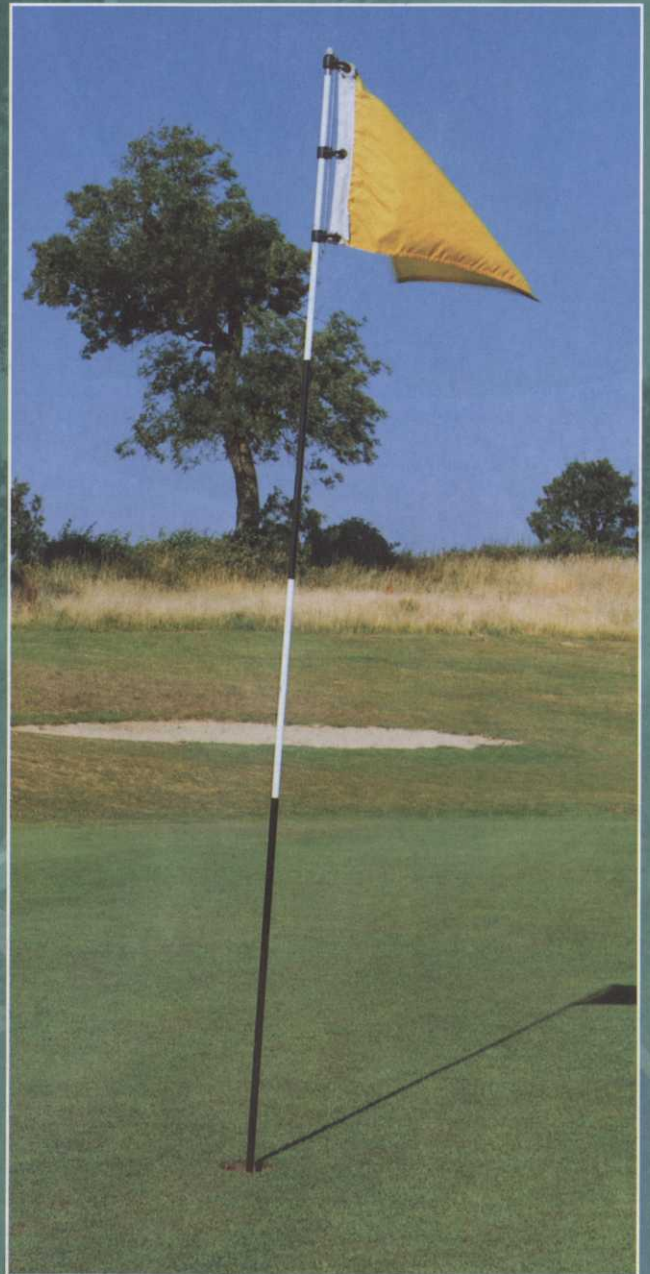
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**Andy Campbell shows Scott MacCallum round Carden Park, the venue for BIGGA's new golf Championship.**

# A walk in the *Park*



Course photos: Alan Birch

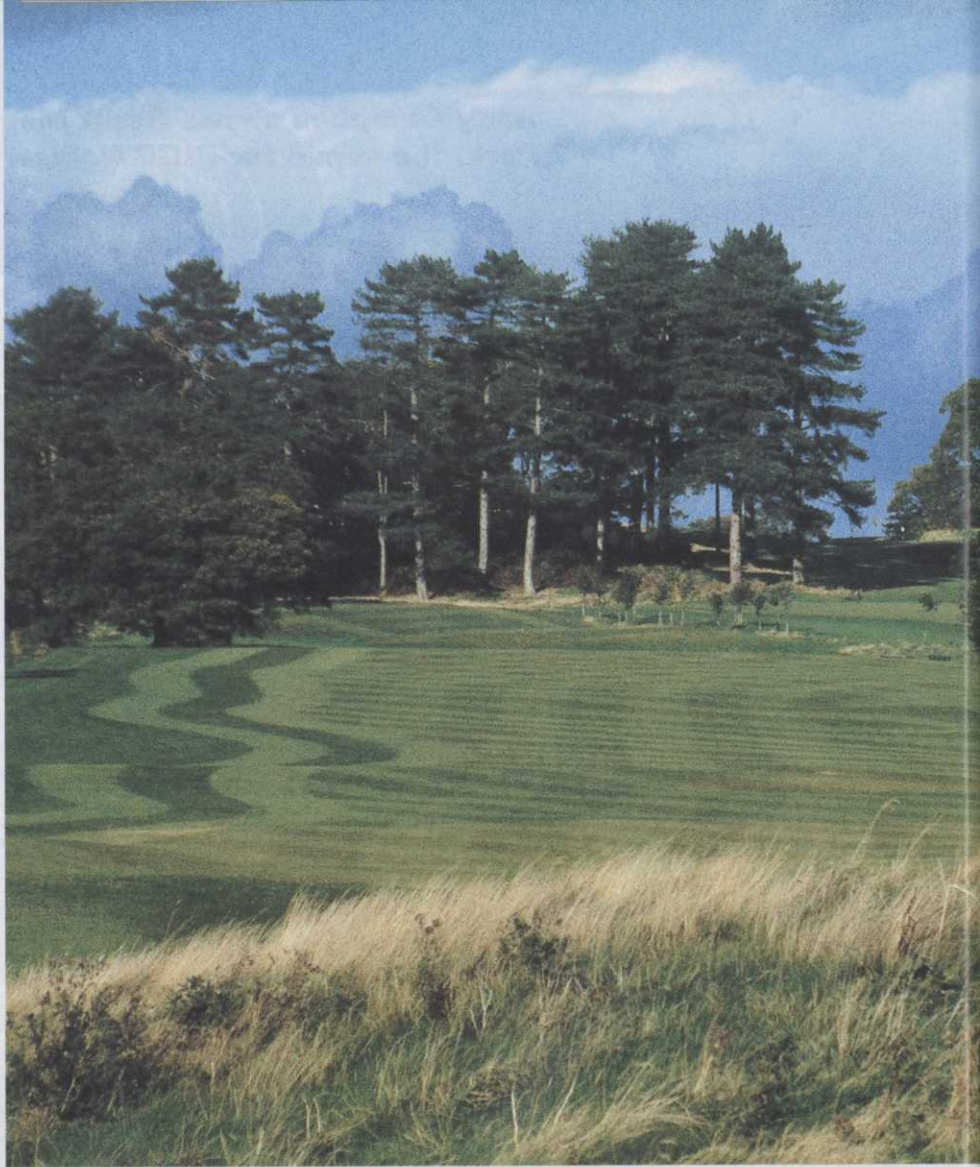
It's going to be great! That's the overriding feeling you get about the first Charterhouse/Scotts National Championship when you visit Carden Park, Golf Resort & Spa.

Being shown around by Courses Manager and Master Greenkeeper, Andy Campbell you can see why Carden Park is fast becoming one of the finest resort hotels in the country and to say that BIGGA is delighted to have secured the venue for the first three years of the new Championship would be understating the matter.

Let's face it, where else could you luxuriate in a wonderful four star hotel, complete with every facility you could possibly dream about, then walk out and have the pick of two magnificent golf courses - the Cheshire, which has been chosen by the European Tour to host one of its pre-qualifying schools this year, and the brand new Jack Nicklaus-designed Nicklaus course.

Oh yes, and there's a state-of-the-art practice facility and a nine-hole par-3 course, ideal if you've ever left with an idle 45 minutes.

# A walk in the Park



Andy is certainly looking forward to October when 110 greenkeepers arrive and get the chance to inspect the work he has put in over the last six years or so.

"It will be good for the staff to have so many greenkeepers from other clubs here as we're always looking to push things forward and anything we can pick up from the guys playing in the Championship will be useful," said Andy.

"Also, I've made so many friends in the industry over the last few years that it will be good to welcome many of them here," smiling, as his mind wandered back to Harrogate's past.

"We've got just the same problems as everyone else just, with 750 acres to look after, more of it. Just like the colleges who come here, everyone will get to see us warts and all. We're only as good as Mother Nature will allow us."

It is that sort of phlegmatic down to earth attitude which has helped Andy through a period which might have brought a few strong men to their knees but in which he has flourished.

He had returned to greenkeeping at Carden Park after a seven year spell when he ran his own landscaping business.

"The differences in greenkeeping in the time I'd been away were immense. The standards were so much higher. When I came here I didn't know what a groomer was because when I'd left greenkeeping

there were no such things as groomers. It was steep learning curve," he admitted.

Then he hadn't been at Carden too long before the receivers were called in, heralding several months of uncertainty.

However this has subsequently proved a small price to pay for what has happened since, with a committed new owner armed with huge plans for the Cheshire complex and the wherewithal to make it happen.

St David's Hotels, owned by Steve Morgan, the Chairman and Chief Executive of the Redrow Building Company, brought Jack Nicklaus in to design the second course and has invested heavily in the hotel and related facilities.

So what did Andy feel like when he discovered that he'd be working with the Golden Bear, the man with the most impressive record in the history of golf?

"I'm not phased by people's reputations, but as I golfer I admired what he had done," he explained.

"He is also a very knowledgeable guy and knows as much about grasses as most greenkeepers. He visited the site three times but took a very close interest in it from afar and every change was made with his say so.

"What I didn't expect, and what was a nice surprise, was that he was as friendly and open when he visited."

Before starting the project, the first

in Britain he designed with his son, Steve, Nicklaus had been given a strict brief.

"We didn't want mogul type mounding and we didn't want a lot of white sand on show - we went for more of the Braid-style bunkering and have planted 80,000 indigenous trees, shrubs, gorse, broom, pine and birch."

One benefit Andy has derived from the arrival of the Nicklaus Course - which was opened officially in the week of the Royal Birkdale Open last year with a match between Nicklaus himself and Ian Woosnam - is that he has had the opportunity to manage and compare two different styles of golf course.

"But being a believer of the old values - a fescue bent man - when I was asked about what I felt about creeping bent for the Nicklaus Course I didn't respond with 100% enthusiasm. Having said that I was keen to do something different but never having grown that type of grass before I wasn't wholly convinced that it would work. Equally it was an opportunity to learn."

It brought him into contact with Jon Scott, the agronomist assigned to the project, who has subsequently become Director of Agronomy for the US Tour.

"He has since become a very, very good friend," said Andy.

"At our first meeting I freely admitted that I wasn't a scientific



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greenkeeper and wasn't a guy who was hooked up on soil or leaf tissue analysis and Jon accepted it."

The two men have since learned from each other which perhaps shows that, while there is a great deal to be learned from the US approach, the information flow has just as much relevance when going the other way as well.

"He couldn't believe the regimes that we'd followed on the Cheshire Course and the surfaces that we'd achieved. So he learned something about taking grass to the edge and running it along austere lines.

"And I've done lots of things that three years ago I wouldn't have believed I would have done and which would make my old boss's eyes water. But we've got creeping bent cover, little poa in the sward to start with, although I'm not saying it's not coming in, but we have to be fairly radical in the way in which we control it. But that is necessary for the time of course, design and construction it is.

With two different style golf courses - they certainly aren't Carden Carbon copies (I just wanted to get that line in) - and two different maintenance regimes you might be forgiven for thinking that Andy suffers from a split personality - by morning nice Mr Traditional and by afternoon the slick Dr Modern - but it is not something he perceives as a problem.

"I don't have any difficulty in walking on a creeping bent surface and knowing what it needs and five minutes later being on a fescue bent surface. One thing I don't ever do is think what might work on one might work on the other. That is where you need a bit of discipline.

"The creeping bent surfaces demand more intensive management and you have to be more on the ball. There is less forgiveness if they get hungry or dry and you have to react a lot quicker. In the past we have happily watched fescue bent swards go brown in the knowledge that it comes back clean and green. We couldn't go that route with creeping bent... partly because of golfers' expectations.

"In terms of agronomic difficulties our worst is the Take-All Patch on the Nicklaus Course with which we have had a real battle. We have chosen to go down the cultural control route.

"Initially where we had the Take-All we had no grass but now it is zooming through the area without any killing the grass. The rings are getting bigger and bigger. It's as though it is looking for a weak plant but there is now enough antagonistic bacteria in there to see it off," explained Andy, who added that he no longer got involved in the debate about which was the better way.

The courses are also run by two separate teams - the Cheshire has

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# A walk in the Park



eight to nine staff and the Nicklaus 12-14 depending on the season - as well as an estate team. Each course has a Head Greenkeeper who is given an agronomic plan which they agree and with which they are familiar and comfortable.

"My job is to make sure they have the tools and resources to carry it out," said Andy

"Both courses are USGA spec, in the sense that the drainage parameters fall within those recommendations but probably the Nicklaus Course is the purer. It is a 80-20 sand/peat mix while the Cheshire is 70-30 sand/fen soil.

"The grass is where it really differs and the expectation that the golfer has from that grass. One is a foil for the other and we're not trying to turn the Cheshire Course into another Nicklaus course.

Both courses operate a spike ban which ties in nicely with the fact that the Championship is being supported by the Softspikes Company.

"It was something I pushed for at the beginning and it certainly makes a huge difference to the quality of the putting surfaces. Spikes are changed by the Caddie Master as part of his other duties," he explained.

"The nice thing is that we've had a lot of customers come and say they prefer the old way... but not as many as say they enjoy the Nicklaus Course."

The main differences are in presentation and in expectation.

"The expectation of the Nicklaus Course is that it is green. Both courses are striped, with the the Cheshire sometimes being black and tanned.

We hand cut tees and greens on both golf courses and hand cut approaches on both courses 90% of the time.

"To an extent we feed the fairways on both courses - the Cheshire tends to be the elemental things like sulphur and iron with a little bit of nitrogen while on the Nicklaus the regime is a little bit higher across the range. But even then we're not using an awful lot of phosphate."

In effect, Andy has gone from the equivalent of managing a corner shop to being in charge of one of the top department stores. How has he coped?

"My experiences before arriving at Carden helped and I've learned lessons as I've gone along, but I don't feel pressured or stressed out. It's an enjoyable job and it's easier to do a job when you're happy. Also my Master Greenkeeper status has helped my confidence and how I perceive myself and am perceived by others. It also helped to get my name and Carden's name better known."

It is also a realisation of an ambition for Andy as, from the early days, he always wanted 36 holes.

"The Jack McMillans of this world were my heroes and I used to upset my colleagues a little because they thought I was talking a little above my station... but they smile now."

With a round on each of the two fine courses what can the entrants and qualifiers for the Charterhouse/Scotts National Championship expect to find?

"You can fly the ball into the Nicklaus greens and it will hold but the greens are more undulating. Jack's design philosophy is that the ball is gathered into the green while on the Cheshire the ball gets repelled. It's a bit more like the Dornoch style. That's where the shots go on the Cheshire. It's a more penal course than the Nicklaus."

The Cheshire will have had some major changes before the Championship with several holes being re-designed to make them more amenable.

"For example there was a par=5 with a blind third shot which we've altered and although there are still some quirky elements we've taken away those which are totally unfair," said Andy, who has masterminded the changes which also included revetting all the bunkering, in-house.

"You've got to know the old Scottish game and keep the ball low and run the ball in. To that end there are no forced carries in terms of bunkering and water. There is always a route in.

"That is fairly true of the Nicklaus, although the way the greens are orientated for certain pin positions you have to fly the ball in. There is no real signature hole but the trade mark, if you like, are the double option holes, the 7th, 13th and 15th which give you a choice of routes."

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 Mr John Bashford, Head Greenkeeper of the Green Hotel Golf Course, The Kinross Estate

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 Mr Derek Green, Head Greenkeeper, Royal Liverpool Golf Club

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# In the Shop



A mower has gone down at a critical time, the club has a major match planned for the next day, so the course has to be in pristine condition. You have contacted your local dealer's service department who said they will get someone out to you as soon as possible. It was, however, intimated that they were extremely busy, so cannot give a definite time when their man will arrive.

In such a scenario how you must wish you had the same facilities as the greenkeeper who sat next to you at the last BTME seminar. He had his own workshops and service technician to maintain and repair his equipment. He also had a lot of machinery so could justify the costs involved in setting up such an operation.

For many greenkeepers this type of full-blown operation is not a viable proposition. However, there are certain steps everyone can take to keep equipment in good working order. While not providing the opportunity for an in-house major overhaul, a regular servicing programme will contribute considerably to a smooth operation and reduce the risk of unwanted breakdowns.

To do the job properly may require some initial investment. An outside hard surface with some form of drainage is needed for cleaning down machinery. Mowers work in a hostile environment and a build-up of dust, grass clippings and mud can cause overheating of the machine's

engines and hydraulic drives. Performance and efficiency go out the window and the risk of trouble escalates very quickly. Cleaning down, has another advantage, it enables you to inspect the machine for any signs of damage or potential problems, such as fractured welds, chafing hoses, missing nuts and bolts or oil seepage.

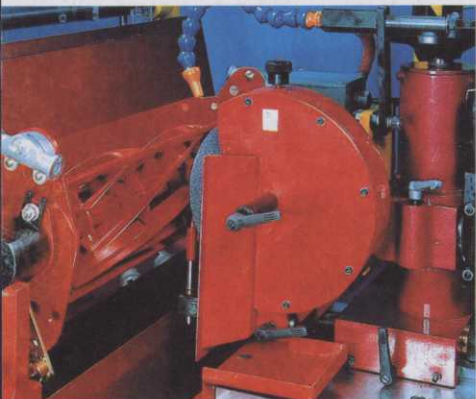
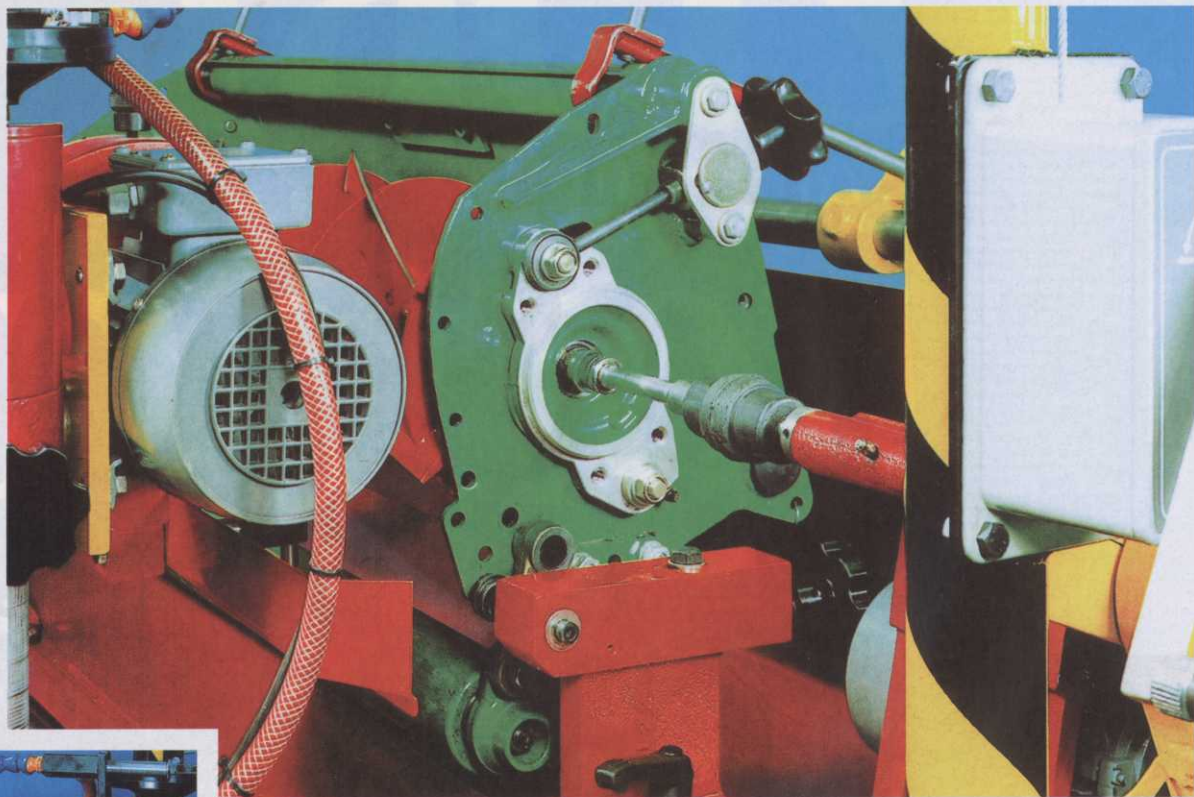
A pressure washer is ideal for carrying out the job fast, and there are plenty on the market to choose from. Electric motor, petrol and diesel models are available with prices ranging from approximately £400 up to £3500 for electrically powered, cold water versions. Petrol and diesel units are priced between £1200 - £4000.

An inside area should be specifically set-aside for carrying out maintenance, this could be a cordoned off part of the machinery store. There needs to be plenty of light and space to work round equipment. All the necessary tools and lubricants should be readily available.

Health & Safety and Fire Regulations need taking into account when setting up such a working area.

Although servicing can be carried out without one, some form of lifting workbench is worth the investment. Scrabbling around on a cold cement floor is no fun and getting to some parts of the machine will be difficult. It is far easier to

# In the shop



work on raised up equipment. The addition of a hydraulic workbench also eliminates the risk of back injury through having to lift smaller machines on to a static bench.

Other useful items are oil drainage trays, battery charger and a small compressor. When it comes to tools, having the right one to hand does help to speed up

the operation. A full set of spanners and sockets are a 'must' plus any special tools for a specific machine are well worth buying.

Naturally, keeping mowers sharp and correctly set is also part of the programme and the budget may not go to a cylinder and bottom bed grinders, so a specialist workshop has to be used.

Most modern ride-on mowers have the facility for back-lapping the cutting units. For machines where this is not available there are portable back-lappers. These are electrically-driven and the outlet drives are adjustable to suit most makes of mower. One of these will set you back between £750 to £1000 and it does mean you can quickly put a cutting edge back.

Another useful piece of equipment is a bottom blade facer. The front face of a mower's bottom blade is vulnerable to damage and wear. As a

result, the quality of the cut is affected. There are now units available that precision-grind a front edge in approximately one minute. They are priced from £299.

For those courses that have the resources, facilities and staff for an in-house cylinder and bottom blade grinder there are distinct advantages, especially relating to a machine's downtime. There are two systems to consider - spin or relief angle grinding. Each has its pros and cons, so before deciding it is worth having a demonstration. The price range will be in the region of £5250 to £11,750 depending on the model. It is worth keeping an eye out for second-hand units.

At the beginning we talked about setting up a maintenance programme. Details of each machine's requirements will be covered in the user's manual. As a rough guide the following will need carrying out:

#### Oil changes.

Cleaning or replacing air filters.

Checking hydraulic fluid levels.

Checking the tension of any chain or belt drives.

Resetting cutting units or backlapping if necessary.

Greasing where necessary.

Inspecting Hydraulic hoses for signs of leakage or chafing.

Safety guards for damage.

Plus any other requirements as laid down by the manufacturer.

Observation can avoid a lot of hassle later. By spotting a potential problem early, action can be taken to avoid a major one occurring.

Depending on how often the equipment is used will determine the servicing cycle. For mowers it will probably be once a week during the cutting season.

In addition, the engine oil and hydraulic fluid levels should be checked every time the machine is used.

Servicing can be assigned to a member of staff or the operator. Most suppliers will instruct those responsible for looking after equipment on the procedures, at the time of its delivery. For those that have full time mechanics there are manufacturers' service schools available.

Having a servicing area and operating a planned maintenance programme pays dividends. Well-maintained machinery is less likely to cause problems. It operates more cost effectively and produces a better performance, plus, when it comes to replacement, its residual value may well be higher.

From little acorns come mighty oaks - one day you might have a full in-house workshop like your neighbour at that BTME seminar.



# XRT 272™

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While competitive products have been engineered for other applications and then adapted for golf course use, the CLUB CAR XRT 272 vehicle was designed specifically for golf course professionals. "During golf course construction, tough ground conditions are often encountered. We have engineered a smarter, stronger, more versatile machine - one with power, stability, traction and stopping power to conquer trackless terrain and work harder in the field, where it counts," said Jerry Hanss, Regional Manager for Club Car Europe. By combining these advanced features, Club Car has created a utility vehicle that is without doubt the best in its class."

Ad Ref 583



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Ad Ref 535



# Education up

## Management Development Seminar - Carden Park 26 April 1999

As I indicated in my column last month, BIGGA will be presenting a FREE seminar, on The Golf Course Manager as a Leader and Motivator, at Carden Park on Monday 26 April 1999. Open to all greenkeepers, the Seminar will be led by Thomas Maloney, Senior Extension Associate in Human Resources at Cornell University with Duncan McGilvray providing the Course Managers point-of-view.

Full details of the Seminar content will be sent to all delegates. The Seminar, which will take place in the Clubhouse at Carden Park, will start at 12.45 and is expected to finish by 4.30. The Seminar is limited to 50 delegates so book your place now by phoning myself or Sami on 01347 833800. Delegates should note that smart dress is required ie no jeans, trainers, tee-shirts etc.

### Groundwater Regulations

Anyone who disposes of listed substances (including material which contains these substances) eg pesticides, onto land or into land should apply for an authorisation from their local Environment Agency Office if they want to continue with that disposal. Applications made before 7 April 1999 will be deemed granted until fully determined by the Agency and disposal may continue. Applications submitted on or after 7 April 1999 will need to be considered and a formal authorisation issued before any disposal can take place.

The substances to be controlled fall into two lists:

Authorisation is only required for

#### List 1.

These substances are the most toxic and must be prevented from entering ground water. They include pesticides, sheep dip, solvents, hydrocarbons, mercury, cadmium and cyanide.

#### List 2.

These substances are less dangerous but if disposed of in large amounts they could be harmful to ground water. They include some heavy metals and ammonia (which is present in sewage effluent, phosphorus and its compounds).

the disposal of substances onto or into land. Where pesticide washings are sprayed back onto crops (in accordance with the label requirements) then an authorisation is not required.

An authorisation is not required if disposal is already covered by an existing waste management licence.

After March 1999, it will be illegal to dispose of any listed substance, to land, without authorisation.

For further information on the Groundwater Regulations, in England and Wales telephone 0645 333111 and you will be connected to your local Environment Agency Office. In Scotland contact the Scottish Environment Protection Agency on 0131 4497296.

### TORO Excellence in Greenkeeping Competition

Nominations for the TORO Excellence in Greenkeeping Competition are pouring in to BIGGA HOUSE and entry forms are being sent to all those nominated. Remember, that all entries must be returned by 28 May 99. Please note: This competition is restricted to mainland Great Britain only.

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**Ken Richardson gives an update on forthcoming educational activities**

# date

## **TORO Student of the Year Competition**

The deadline is fast approaching for entries to this year's Student of the Year Competition. Have you been asked to enter? Is your college/training provider submitting an entry? This could be your chance to become the Student of the Year, win the TORO Scholarship and visit the GCSAA Conference and Show in New Orleans.

## **Computer Training**

I have had many requests for information on computer training over the past few months. All Section Secretaries have been asked to coordinate their Section requirements and let me know numbers and locations where we can arrange section based courses.

Contact your Section Secretary if you want to learn about computers and computing. Watch this column for more details.

## **The Learning Experience 2000**

Planning for the Learning Experience 2000 in association with Textron Turf Care and Specialty Products is well under way and the outline plan for the National Education Conference, Workshops and Seminar Programme is taking shape. There is, however, chance for you to have a say on who you would like to hear, what subjects you would like included and what entertainment you would like to see at the Banquet.

If you have any suggestions then please contact Sami or me at HQ.

## **The Millennium Bug**

Do you own a computer? Do you use a computer at work? Do you have a computer managed irrigation system? Do you have any equipment that contains embedded processors?

If the answer to any or all of the above questions is yes then you could be affected by the Millennium Bug.

Most people have heard of the Year 2000 (Y2K) problem but do not appreciate how it could affect electronic equipment. The problem is all to do with how computers and embedded processors store dates. Since the 'birth' of microcomputers, most computers have stored the year in two digits eg 10/03/99. This was done for two main reasons. Firstly, storing two digits instead of four saves on storage space and, secondly, no one really thought about what was going to happen when the two digits changed to 00. The Millennium is approaching fast and you need to check if the BUG could affect you. Watch out for more details in the next edition of Greenkeeper International.

My apologies to Wessex Software for misspelling the name of their course management software in the 'Second Byte' article in the February edition of Greenkeeper International. The correct spelling is QQUEST Maintenance Management Software.



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# WESTURF

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WESTPOINT

at

EXETER

BIGGA SOUTH WEST & SOUTH WALES REGION PROUDLY PRESENTS THEIR NEW LOOK WESTURF AT WESTPOINT THIS YEAR

- ◆ Under cover at the prestigious WESTPOINT centre, 2 mins from junction 30, M5 at Exeter
- ◆ Scheduled programme of seminars on water management, and machinery demonstrations
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- ◆ Gold Pro Simon Jefferies will be demonstrating the new revolutionary ZENO golf clubs. Simon will also be giving free advice on swings etc. Links Leisure have kindly loaned a practice net for you to use
- ◆ Take a glass of wine in the BIGGA hospitality stand and meet experts in all fields and also BIGGA Head Office personnel including the Chairman, Gordon Child
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Further details are available from: Paula Humphries Tel/fax: 01363 82777

This year, Westurf has moved to the prestigious custom-built exhibition site at Westpoint, Exeter. Organiser Paula Humphries urges you not to miss the new improved Westurf...

# Welcome to Westurf

WESTPOINT



EXETER



Westurf, which has become a permanent fixture in the diaries of South West and South Wales greenkeepers, has undergone a major metamorphosis for 1999.

It has moved from its regular venue of Long Ashton Golf Club, in Bristol, to the custom built exhibition facility at Westpoint, in Exeter.

The benefits this will bring to the show are many fold but high on the list is the fact that it is under cover and no longer will the success or failure depend upon vagaries of the British Spring weather.

As well as an increased number of exhibitors there are other attractions to keep the visitors entertained and informed during the course of the day - April 27 9am - 5pm.

"Westurf has been running successfully at Long Ashton for 10 years but we felt now was the time to give it a higher profile and move to a custom built venue like Westpoint," explained Exhibition Organiser and BIGGA South West and South Wales Regional Administrator, Paula Humphries.

With 70 exhibitors, many of them new to Westurf, it should prove to be an invaluable

day out for any visitor with an array of attractions to keep everyone interested.

Topping the bill are The Adams Axemen, a team of mighty axe wielders from the New Forest, who can demolish logs at a spectacular rate of knots. The team has been together since 1966... I would expect that some of the founder members have retired and that some of the current axemen are chips off the old blocks!

Golf pro, Simon Jefferies, will also hold a demonstration during the day while the educational needs of the visitors are satisfied by a programme of seminars on water management and machinery demonstrations. Included on the panel are Stephen Bernhard who will talk on "Better Turf for less money" and Helen Wakerley "Water Management on the Golf Course."

A courtesy bus has been organised to and from Exeter town centre if partners wish to accompany a visitor for the day.

Westpoint is one hour from Bristol, 40 minutes from Plymouth and three hours from London.



Full exhibitor listings overleaf...

# Welcome to Westurf

WESTPOINT  
EXETER



## Westurf Exhibitor List – Exhibitor and Stand Number

E. Allman & Co Ltd - 8  
 Amazone Ltd - 25a  
 Amenity Technology - C1  
 Avoncrop Amenity Products - 37  
 Barenbrug UK Ltd - 1/2/3  
 Bernhard & Co Ltd - 32  
 Better Methods Europe - E6  
 Bioflow & Ecoflow - F1  
 Bioseed Probiotics Ltd - F3  
 Border Golf Ltd - 26  
 Bowcom Ltd - A6  
 Britannic Garden Furniture - 33  
 British Seed Houses - F10  
 Burgess Agricultural Engineers Ltd - 20  
 Cannington College - G2  
 City Irrigation Ltd/Irrigation UK - 11  
 Complete Weed Control - E1  
 Course Care - E4 Electric Irrigation - E3  
 John Deere Golf & Turf South West - 14/16  
 Devon Garden Machinery - 28  
 Envigro (TEG Environmental) - A4/5  
 Field Capacity Ltd - 12  
 PJ Flegg Ltd - 18  
 Grass Roots Trading Company - 1/2/3  
 Hartpury College - G5  
 Headland Amenity Products - D2/3

Eric Hunter Grinders Ltd - 19  
 Green Relief (Europe) - 37  
 Huxley Golf - D6  
 IOG - G7  
 ISS Aquaturf Systems Ltd - C3/4  
 Simon Jefferies Golf Professional - Practice Net Outside  
 Landmec Ltd - 10  
 LBS Group - A2  
 Links Leisure - 27  
 Lloyds & Co Letchworth - 36  
 Longfords - F4  
 Lubrication Engineers Midwest - F6  
 Andrew MacWilliam - F7  
 Major Equipment Ltd - 15  
 Maxicrop Int Ltd - A1  
 Meadowside Machinery - 6  
 Medland Sanders & Twose - 24  
 Ocmis Irrigation - 34/35  
 Pencoed College - G3  
 Phoenix Irrigation Services - A3  
 Pipewise (UK) Ltd - 17  
 Pro-Seed Equipment Ltd - 23  
 Radmore & Tucker - 7  
 Rhone Poulenc Amenity - B4/5  
 Rigby Taylor Ltd - B1/2  
 Riko UK Ltd - 22

Roffey Bros - B6/C6  
 Ryetec - 5  
 Samson Outdoor Furniture - 12  
 Scotts UK Professional - 37  
 Sheerwater Leisure Ltd - F2  
 Sheltons Sportsturf Drainage Solutions - 21  
 Snoway International Ltd - 19  
 STRI - G4  
 South Wales Golfer - G1  
 Spaldings (UK) Ltd - C5  
 Sparsholt College - G6  
 Sovereign Turf Ltd - F8/9  
 Supaturf Products Ltd - 37  
 Stylo Matchmaker - C2  
 Swan Plant Services Ltd - F5  
 Symbio - 1/2/3  
 Synergie Products Ltd - 25  
 Tacit - 37  
 Terralift - 37  
 Tildenet Ltd - D1  
 TLS Southern - 4  
 Tonic Watering - E5  
 Tyre-Rite - D4  
 Vitax Ltd - D5  
 Wessex Software Systems - B3  
 Whitemoss Amenities - E2



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The seed industry has become increasingly sophisticated in recent years and keeping up with the new developments is a never ending task. This month we look at some of the Frequently Asked Questions greenkeepers fire at the seed companies while we also examine the re-emergence of Velvet Bent.

# Removing any seeds of doubt



## Seeds - THE FAQs.

Area Managers for seed companies spend much of their time travelling around the country, meeting greenkeepers and responding to enquiries about mixtures and cultivars.

Recently, three local representatives for one of these companies, BIGGA Golden Key Supporters Barenbrug, got together to compare notes on what people were commonly asking. What they found was that there is a common core of 10 to 20 queries which seemingly all greenkeepers want - indeed need - answered.

So, in keeping with a modern convention borrowed from the Internet, they have identified a list of greenkeepers' FAQs - or Frequently Asked Questions.

Ben Petitjean, Darren Wilding and Jayne Leyland have put together the salient facts to help get the most from your seed.

What if, for example, a greenkeeper wants to use a cultivar - but not in a mixture from a catalogue?

Well, many may be unaware that many companies have the facility to

tailor-make a mixture in order to find the right blend for the individual. A brochure is often no more than a recommended guide for different applications and certainly not set in stone.

Conversely, some have asked why they need to change cultivars which they have used quite happily for several years.

These may indeed have been adequate, but the development of new cultivars continues at a fast pace. Every year there are new cultivars with a greater tolerance to disease and drought, plus a corresponding increase in shoot density. It is seemingly a never-ending task for the turf manager to assess thoroughly his latest options.

Fortunately, by referring to the booklet produced by the STRI, greenkeepers can quickly and easily get up-to-date information on the top available cultivars. The STRI thoroughly trials them all, here in the UK, and publishes its findings.

The indispensable annual also helpfully segments the various grasses into categories for specific use.

## Removing any seeds of doubt

Many people have wondered where the various different cultivars have originated. Holland, France and the USA have usually been the main centres, but in many cases, the premier grass seeds available have increasingly been developed in, as well as for, the UK.

Each different area of the golf course is a rich source of discussion between greenkeepers and seed companies in the drive to find the right combination of seeds.

For example, given the wear tolerance of ryegrass, surely it follows that a 100% ryegrass mix is ideal for fairways? This is actually a question worth looking into in depth.

A total ryegrass mixture would not be recommended unless the fairways are suitably irrigated; ryegrass requires plenty of water for a good sward. It also needs to be remembered

that the plant must be well-fed with balanced fertiliser to keep it healthy. Then consider the appearance: a 100% ryegrass mixture would be coarser than a mixture containing fescues and bent grasses.

A red fescue in the mixture tends to be recommended, thus increasing the survival rate of the sward and improving its appearance. Fescues are excellent in drought situations and do not need to be constantly fed. Creeping varieties help to bind the sward together and

### How does the greenkeeper makes his tees and fairways look their best in the face of serious wear and tear?

provide a quicker repair rate for golfer-inflicted damage.

In summary, a ryegrass/fescue mixture with perhaps a 10% bent grass component is often advised.

In contrast, the traditional green mix is often 80% fescue/20% bent and some have asked why this is so. Actually, these percentages refer to weight not the number of seeds. The true proportion should be 1,500 fescue seeds per gram and 15,000 bent seeds per gram.

Others have enquired whether it is possible to mow greens under 5mm. It is possible, according to the grass seed mixture present. A browntop bent mixture allows mowing slightly lower than 5mm, withstanding such treatment better than fescues. The traditional fescue/bent mixture mentioned above, however, should not really be mown that low, except occasionally for competition purposes, say.

Quite simply, it cannot be guaranteed that the resistance down to 5mm will extend beyond that point.

To answer another frequent question, browntop bent - better for resisting close mowing - is more expensive than other species because it is more difficult to produce and clean.

How does the greenkeeper makes his tees and fairways look their best in the face of serious wear and tear?

In repairing divots and renovating tees, everyone seems to understand that perennial ryegrass is necessary. But often guidance is requested as precisely how to balance the advantages of heavy-duty cultivars with the desire for a finer appearance.

Understandably, customers ask for reassurance that they can rely on good purity and germination from the products they choose.

### Is it possible to mow greens under 5mm?

### Is a 100% ryegrass mix ideal for fairways?

All seeds are rigorously tested for purity and germination so that they comply with the relevant statutory and voluntary standards.

Thanks to Barenbrug UK for their assistance in putting this feature together.



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An unprecedented level of interest in velvet bents (*Agrostis canina*) at this year's BTME took even amenity specialists British Seed Houses by surprise. Now that the variety Avalon has proven itself on UK greens for the first time, Danny Thorogood of IGER looks at the species' suitability to a market so dominated by browntop bents (*Agrostis capillaris*).

# Argostis *capillaris*

## Velvet Bent – a Turfgrass species re-examined?

Velvet bent is a common grass, widely distributed, and ideally suited to climatic conditions in the UK, often becoming dominant in damp or

wet places. This makes it an ideal candidate for greenkeepers who should consider exploiting its well-documented attributes.



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# Argostis capillaris

The tremendous shoot density shown by Velvets comes from a combination of stoloniferous growth and rapid tillering. The stolons are very slender, producing tufts of fine leafy shoots that knit together in a close turf. It is easily distinguished from creeping bent (*Agrostis stolonifera* L.) by its prominent long pointed ligule at the junction of the leaf sheath and blade.

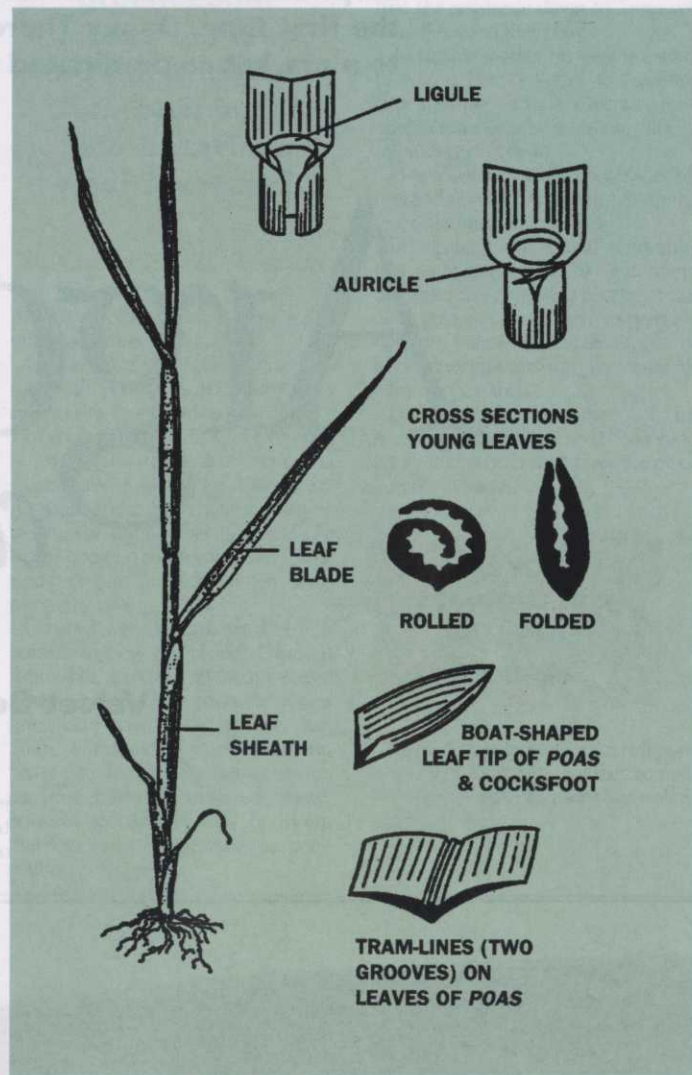
The velvet bent is stronger-growing than creeping bent, so it might need feeding little and often, although overall nutrient levels are probably the same, or lower. It produces the highest quality turf of any species under close, frequent mowing and has better low temperature, shade and drought tolerance than other bents.

So velvet varieties could provide the boost in grass quality greenkeepers need. Their shoot density and adaptability to environmental stresses mean that quality greens, playable over an extended season, can be produced.

Poorly managed velvet bents will produce thatch - a build up of undegraded lignified tissues at the soil-grass interface. Up to 5mm of thatch will cushion ball bounce and increase wear tolerance. It also insulates the soil against temperature extremes.

To maintain a high turf quality, groundsmen should cultivate conditions that favour aerobic microbes. Frequent top-dressing with a loam-based material increases the microbial population and ensures good contact between plant and soil. Liming may also help by raising pH, and coring and spiking will help by producing a free-draining, well-aerated soil.

If thatch has been allowed to develop, it can be rectified by thorough scarification in late summer



when there is active grass regrowth and less chance of weeds moving in. If necessary, top dressing, cultivations, and liming should then be practised to avoid a recurrence.

Velvet bents are not new to the industry and their ability to produce a stunningly attractive surface was known in the early 1900s. Yet none have been marketed since

Kingstown in 1963. The breeders and developers of Avalon clearly see its potential as an alternative to browntop/fescue mixes on greens.

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**Scottish Region**  
Peter Boyd  
Tel/Fax 0141 616 3440

**North**

Entries for the Spring outing will be out shortly. We visit Inverness GC on Tuesday May 18. Head Greenkeeper Brian Fraser and his staff will have the course in great condition as always, so get your entry form returned quickly to ensure participation. The first four draws of the 200 Club will be made on the day, so please send back your money for that as well.

No new members to report this month, just a temporary lull though. The Scottish Conference was a great success last month in Dunfermline with several North members present as usual. This venue is very good and well placed for people coming from all directions, so hopefully we can use it again.

My trip to the GCSAA Show in Orlando Florida was an amazing experience and one I would recommend to all members. My talk went well, and I would like to thank the BIGGA staff, and Chairman Gordon Child, for getting up early to attend and give me moral support. The hall had seating for 1600! With about 750 people in attendance, which at 7.30am is not bad.

I told them that at Harrogate some guys are just going to bed when the pre-programme breakfast was starting at 6am! My interview for 'Par For the Course' on the Golf Channel went okay but I await the tape to see how it actually came out.

One of many highlights was undoubtedly meeting Arnold Palmer at his golf club in Orlando. I was really surprised that so many Brits were there and some seem to go often. I hope I convinced a lot of people to come to the North of Scotland for their golfing holidays this summer.

It's April now and hopefully the weather is dry, warm and even sunny. We need a good Spring to aid recovery on our saturated courses and give us something to work with for the coming season. Let's hope for a good Summer and happy golfers if that is possible!

I A Macleod.

**West**

Question. How on earth has the Glasgow area managed to miss all the snowfalls seen recently on national TV and in newspaper publications?

Alas, latterly the rainfall has been determined, I think, to make up for the lack of white stuff. Let's hope that the rainfall doesn't cause too much misery by delaying winter programmes and work schedules and that we all have a sympathetic Committee and tolerant membership for the '99 season! Did I hear laughter out there?

The latest Committee meeting took

place at Claremont Bowling Green, matters arising included the introduction of a '100 Club'.

Tickets are on sale at £5 each and available from your Committee members. The first draw for £100 will take place at the Spring outing, the second draw again £100 at the Autumn outing and the third will be at the AGM/Games night for £50. One final reminder of the Spring outing being held at Bothwell Castle GC on 29 April. Check your mail for application forms!

The games night at Claremont Bowling Club went ahead as planned on the evening of Thursday 18 February. Not a large turn out by all accounts but enjoyable nonetheless. The results are as follows: Victors were John Scott Jnr and his partner. Need I really mention his name as this has become rather habit forming for him - as usual Stuart Taylor. Well done guys. Stuart, I think perhaps a handicapping system be introduced for you, what do you say to one arm up your back, blindfolded?

I understand that it was a fairly close contest with the final result from the outcome of one game, nail biting stuff! We thank Claremont Bowling Green for use of their facilities, thanks also to the bar staff for keeping the boys well lubricated throughout the evening and, as ever, thanks to John Scott for providing the pies. As a final thank you we would like to thank Naim Brown for sponsoring the raffle prize of £50 won by George Nesbet of Killermont GC.

On 24 February, Rigby Taylor held a one day seminar at the Ibrox Stadium. Unfortunately I was unable to attend although I have been informed that it was a very informative and enjoyable day.

Having attended the Education Conference at Lauder College on Tuesday 2 March I can only tell you what an informative and enlightening day it was. Anyone who attended would certainly return with plenty of food for thought (certainly bacterial or fungal). A most interesting selection of speakers with subjects on - COSHH, latest legislation, Architecture, Golf Course Design, Archeology, That's what I said, Ian McMillan, of Hankley Common, Soil Bacteria, an excellent subject highly technical, Sir Michael Bonallack and last but not least Supaturf on the subject of Wetting Agents.

The facilities at Lauder College were second to none with countless cups of coffee, if required, and an excellent choice of lunches. Very tasty too. Well done to all who organised and helped make the day the success that it was.

Stuart Taylor has informed me that two football matches are currently being arranged, one against the East Section and the other against the North Section, hopefully to be played some time in April. Anyone interested should contact Stuart on 0141 942 5554.

I have no other news to offer you

this month so I shall end it all here.

As usual, if you have any stories or snippets of information that you feel are worthy of mention, then give me a call at H. 0141 776 1532 or M. 07050 173080.

Gavin Jarvis.

**Central**

Another eight new members join us this month and they are Richard McLuckie and Iain Marshall, from West Lothian GC; Darren McKenna and Nikki Riddel, from Drumoig GC; Andrew Fraser and Alasdair Collier, from Stirling GC; Barry Monie, from Muthill GC and Blair Samuel, from Ladybank GC. We extend a warm welcome to them from everyone in the Section and hope to see them at some of our future events. I keep extending this invitation to everyone but very few take up the office and miss out on the chance of meeting fellow members.

Past Section Chairman, Jimmy Lees, has not been too well lately and has spent some time in hospital recovering from an operation.

Best wishes for a speedy recovery are sent to Jimmy from everyone in the section. Hopefully it won't be too long before he is back to full fitness again.

Best wishes for the future go to Alastair Philip, from Comrie Golf Club, and his new wife, who were married at Crieff Golf Club recently. (Sorry, I don't know your wife's name Alastair!)

Kenny Stirling is on the move from the Dukes Course at St Andrews to the new course at Kingsbarns, which is just along the road from St Andrews. Hope everything goes well for you in your new employment Kenny!

Belated congratulations are also due to Alex Robertson on his appointment as Head Greenkeeper at Grangemouth. Alex is that quiet bloke who attends and supports every BIGGA event, no matter where it is in the country and the surprising thing is that he doesn't even have a car. Wish there were more members like you Alex!

It was gratifying to see a good number of Section members at the Scottish Conference at Dunfermline last month, but it was disappointing to note that none of the local clubs were represented. I will probably be able to give you an explanation next month. For those of you who were unable to attend, you missed a great day and congratulations are due to Peter Boyd for organising such an excellent conference on our behalf.

REMEMBER! The closing date for the Spring Tournament is the 24 March and this is your chance to qualify for the National Championship at Carden Park, Cheshire in October. Two members from each Section qualify for this event and when you add the value of qualifying to the value of the section prizes, you will be competing for

prizes worth in the region of a £1000, and that's before you get to Carden Park! Changed days from when you won a £5 voucher to spend in the pro shop! Just another of the benefits you get when you are a member of BIGGA.

I'll give you the final update on the Section's Past Chairmen next month. John Crawford.

**Ayrshire**

By the time this is published Easter will have come and gone so let's hope Spring is well and truly in the air.

As intimated last month our Spring Tournament will be at Ballochmyle Golf Club, 6 May 1999, with the afternoon medal rounds, best gross and nett scores, qualifying for the new National Tournament. The morning will be reduced to an optional 9 hole event of a to be arranged format. Your entry forms will be with you soon along with details of the doubles knockout tournament so get your team arranged, fill out your entry form and return it to our secretary, Derek Wilson.

I was too pre-occupied with work commitments to attend the recent Scottish Conference in Dunfermline. The array of speakers and subjects looked very appealing and any reports I've heard was that it was an excellent and informative day. On behalf of our members thanks to Regional Administrator Peter Boyd for all his work in organising this successful day.

After receiving the support of my club committee, I was delighted to confirm my acceptance to be Duncan Gray's Vice Chairman. My feelings at the time were there were other experienced and deserving greenkeepers more worthy of this position than myself but most seem uninterested with the administration of our Section. There are presently vacancies within our committee so anyone interested in helping out or progressing to committee please step forward.

Committee members please note



**Northern Region**  
Douglas Bell  
Tel: 0151 431 0433

that our next meeting will be on 19 April 1999 at 7.30pm with the Parkstone Hotel as our venue. See you next month.

**North East**

On February 25 we had another successful Winter talk given by Scotts. Our thanks to Richard Walton on providing an interesting evening. Word must be getting around as there was an excellent turnout of 50 greenkeepers present plus one or two committee members, even travelling from as far away as Warkworth.

I reckon that the likes of Steve Cram, of Slaley Hall, deserve a mention as he is the man responsible for arranging these talks. If anyone has

any ideas for talks next winter have a word with Steve as we are always looking for new subjects.

Congratulations to Ian Hutton, formerly of Slaley Hall, on being appointed Head Greenkeeper at Garesfield G.C.

Anyone got a problem with moles? Try giving Steve Pope a ring as he is qualified to do something about it.

Future golf dates: August 5 at Beamish Park, match against Cleveland Section.

Early July we are hoping to have a summer comp. at Garesfield.

No doubt the next Section news will provide more moves from within the Section as there seems to be a few vacancies.

Jimmy Richardson.

### Cleveland

A very good lecture was held at Darlington GC on Thursday 18 February. The speaker was Phil Braithwaite, from First Response, who talked on Health & Safety. The meeting was attended by 19 greenkeepers, a good turn out. A very special thanks must go to the Steward, of Darlington GC, for putting on an excellent supper at very short notice.

We have four new members to the Section. They are Robert (Nobby) Massa, Assistant at Richmond GC; Neil Rogers and Mathew Robbins, both from Dinsorle Spa GC; Jonathan Eggelestone, from Brancepeth Castle GC.

Dress rules - I know I keep going on but Head Greenkeepers must inform younger members of staff that when attending lectures etc, shirt, ties and jackets are mandatory. I do not want to discourage younger members of the Section, but rules are there to be obeyed. Association ties are not that expensive.

Last but not least, Golf Day at Seaton Carew on 20 April 1999. Please have your membership cards with you and if you cannot play, please let Barry Walker or any of the lads in the section newsletter know in good time as this is a popular venue.

Kevin (Scoop) Heslop.

### Sheffield

Firstly, may I apologise for the lack of news in the recent editorial, this mainly being down to the Royal Mail and breakdown in communications.

This is a bit late but Happy New Year to you all!

On 30 November we held our Christmas Competition (which now seems a long time ago!) at Rotherham Golf Club, who I would like to thank for the courtesy of the course and facilities once again!

It was a fairly pleasant day for golfing and the day was enjoyed by everyone who played. Rotherham was in excellent condition and our thanks go to Dave Chappell and his staff. Well done Dave! Thanks also go to the catering staff for an excellent meal. Thanks go to our main sponsors of the day who were Rigby Taylors and Brian Booth. I think this was probably one, if not the best, prize table we have ever had with 28 prizes. Thanks also to other trade members including, Aitkens, Henton and Chattells, Purdys and Steve Burrough.

May I thank all our trade members for the support they gave us all year round with the prize tables and raffles. Some very good golf was played but, the winner with a very! very! good score was Alan Samson with 31 pts. Well done Alan.

1. A. Samson 31 pts; 2. W. Cooke 26 pts; 3. J. Dorach 26 pts

Finally a very belated congratulations go to Steve Hulme on his appointment as Deputy Head Greenkeeper at Murrayfield Golf Club; Steve moved from Wortley Golf Club. Good luck Steve, even though by now you've probably settled in very well.

John Lax

### North West

I start this month's Section news, sadly reporting the sudden death of Neil Elwell a N/W greenkeeper. Neil was Head Greenkeeper at Hale Golf Club in Cheshire, and although I do not have all the details, I understand that he died in his sleep due to a massive brain haemorrhage. Neil was only 38 years old, and had been at Hale

Golf Club for some years. Our thoughts are with his family.

On a brighter note Chris Sheehan, Head Greenkeeper at West Derby GC, is happy he visited the BTME this year. He entered a competition on the Oliver Seeds stand, and had his winning ticket drawn out. He wins a trip for two to Amsterdam. I wonder what he stood in on arrival at Harrogate.

I hope you have registered for the Spring Tournament by now, if not you only have until Tuesday 13 April. There will be plenty to play for: eg best gross and best nett scores qualify for a free entry to the National Championship, to be played at Carden Park on 3 - 5 October saving you £95 in registration fees. Also the best six scores will qualify to play for the N/W team in the regional final at Macclesfield GC on Wednesday 25 August, which is being sponsored by R.J. & J. Campey. All this beside an excellent day with a good prize table, and a great course to play on.

If you are late to register contact Bill Merritt on 0151 284 4416. While preparing the fixture list for the year, I had to meet Peter Jefford a couple of times at the Tillcon quarry where Rufford make their top dressing. Rufford sponsored the fixture lists this year, and I was taken down the quarry, and shown the whole process of how the top dressing is completed. I feel some of you might like to be taken on a guided tour of the quarry, and if so ring me, so that I can make arrangements. I think you will find it very interesting.

For the members in the far northern reaches of the N/W section, we have the Cumbria Cup competition to be played at Penrith G.C. on Wednesday 12 May. This is sponsored by Course Care, and is by invitation only. That seems to have covered it for now, but any queries or news please contact me on 0151 724 5412.

Bert Cross.

### North Wales

March 4, two weeks till spring, the qualifying competitions have started, my course is closed. I look out of my

window and yes, its snowing! Isn't life great, NOT!

The annual greenkeeping technical seminar was held at the WGH in February and was attended by over 80 people including 11 trade stands. All the staff of my club attended including the secretary and Chairman of Greens who found it a very useful day indeed. When this event is organised we try to cover every aspect of the industry so there is something for everyone. The reaction sheets handed out at the end showed that the delegates are very positive about the event, not just criticising but making useful comment and suggestions, all of which will be discussed at the next liaison panel meeting, especially the PA. My Chairman wrote a full report on the day to show our executive committee what an excellent day it was. I would also like to thank the trade for supporting this event. I hope it was a success for you too.

Still at the college, the NVQ courses finish this month, coming to a successful conclusion with five students nearing completion of their Level 4. The college is also taking delivery of the machinery package from Textron which includes the electric grassmower so now the students will have state of the art equipment to use, again more partnerships forged!

Our Section is going from strength to strength. I would like to welcome these new members, Timothy Coombs, David Wrennall, Caldycott GC; Russell Weston, View Cross GC; Darren Moore, David Smith, Northop Golf & Country Club; Bryn Edwards, Maesdu G C; Dale Butterworth, Heswall G C, and James Bebbington, Eaton GC. Welcome to our Section, I look forward to meeting you at future events.

Section Secretary, Gary Edwards, informs me that a lot of clubs are interested in hosting our golf events, a couple are even Royals. The distribution of the clubs also covers the whole of our Section, so hopefully no one will feel left out. I'll give you names as the dates are officially fixed. Remember Llarynynech on 2 April (National Championship Qualifier).

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I've approached Jerry Hughes, of Llanvöllan GC, to ask whether he would serve on our committee. I'm glad to say that he accepted. (He's still trying to get his arm back to normal). Only joking, I feel that Jeremy is a good addition to our committee with his enthusiasm for every aspect of the game. Thanks for taking up the offer.

Our Education Officer, Phil Davies, recently suffered a rather nasty viral infection of the spinal cord, which laid him low for a few weeks. However, I'm glad to report that he has made a good recovery and I'm sure most of you will see him on his travels. Take it easy Phil.

Here's to a dry warm Spring, now where's me snow drop. See ya.

Dave Goodridge.

### East Midlands

The Section, for the first time on 11 February, held a Go-Kart evening at Wymeswold. This attracted 14 members who thoroughly enjoyed a great and competitive evening of races. After some close fought racing and one minor collision between Richard Barker & Kevin Kinzer, the eventual winner was Paul Bertenshaw, with Adie Porter taking second place. This, after 14 races, two semi-finals and a grand final.

I would like to thank all members who supported the evening, especially our two reps Mike Shepherd, of Vitax, and Kevin Kinzer, of E T Breakwells. Also thanks should go to Gavin Robson who organised this most enjoyable evening. Another Go-Kart night may be organised later in the year so if anybody else is interested and would like to see if they can become the East Midlands champion, please let Gavin or myself know. If anybody has any other ideas for social outings, could you please forward them to the committee.

On behalf of BIGGA and Kirby Muxloe G C, I would like to congratulate Mark Bindley on completing 20 years service at Kirby Muxloe G C. Marked joined Kirby Muxloe straight from school and is a well respected member of the Section.

Congratulations should go to Chris Bates, of Kirby Muxloe, and his wife

Jane, for the latest addition to their family, a healthy daughter named Lucy. Antony Bindley.



Midland Region

Peter Larter

Tel: 01480 437507

### Midland

The fixture list and various informative letters should have reached you. I hope you will be able to support your section and be able to attend the majority of educational trips and golf events that have been organised for your benefit as members to the section. There has been in the past very little support for the educational trips so please make the most of the opportunities and if you have any ideas please contact me on 01562 861434.

On behalf of the Section I would like to thank Peter McCrainger, of Carburul, for his help and commitment to getting the letters and fixture list printed and posted.

I have one piece of news regarding the committee; Nigel Couchman has been co-opted onto the committee and will serve for the year. Finally I would like to introduce some more new members; they are as follows - Adrian Moss, Michael Taylor, Steven Harris, Robert Barrs, Robert Surgey, Simon White, Robert Cook, Richard Drudge, Kevin Gibney.

Jonathan Wood.

### Bucks, Berks and Oxon

The first golf event of the season takes place at Beaconsfield Golf Club on Tuesday 20 April. This event is also the qualifier for the new National Championship to be held at Carden Park in October. There are two qualifying places up for grabs within the Section and these are for the best gross and best nett. Full details will be given on the day with regards to competition rules. If you have not already entered this event please phone me

as there may be a cancellation slot available.

On a personal note I travelled up to Headquarters last month to attend a Secretaries' meeting, giving me an opportunity to see at first hand the new building. The building is very impressive, money well spent, as this represents our profession. It has great training facilities using the latest technology to assist with lectures and presentations. Anybody attending future training courses will be impressed with the set up. Despite the three hour drive it was worth the journey, it gave me the chance to put faces to the people I have dealt with on the phone.

In the coming months the Oxfordshire are going to be looking for some volunteers to assist with daily bunker raking during the Benson & Hedges tournaments. If you have not taken part before then I would recommend you apply to help out. It gives us an opportunity to watch at first hand the intense preparation required in setting up a golf course for a European Tour event. I am sure David Gower would welcome a few extra helpers this year.

Finally, as from next month, Ross Wilson, from Donnington Grove, will be taking over the article writing (good luck Ross). If you can provide any information to assist Ross I am sure he would be grateful.

Lindsay T Anderson.

### East of England

Sorry for the lack of reports in the magazine recently, but it has been quiet around the Section this year so far. The AGM took place at Belton Woods and the same committee was elected. Do you think that nobody wants to stand or are we getting it right for you at Section level?

The Fieldcare Texas scramble at Belton was won by Phil Wilkinson's team and the course was in great shape thanks to the hard work of Sheamus Cogan and

his staff. BTME has passed and I hope you all had a chance to see the new products on show or take in some of the education seminars.

I have just come back from the new BIGGA headquarters and was very impressed by the design and layout, much more professional than the previous building.

Ken Richardson, Education and Training Manager, would be willing to run training courses if we can get enough numbers in our Section, i.e. computer training, health & safety etc, so let me know if you have any ideas.

The fixture cards are at the printers and should be with you shortly. The cards this year are being sponsored by Barenbrug Seeds and Aitkens, thanks to Ben Petitjean and Peter Fell. We have some fantastic venues this year and hope we get better support for all the events organised.

Let me know if you have any information or ideas. That's all for now.

Graeme Macdonald.

### Mid Anglia

An 'open forum' discussion was held in February at South Beds Golf club on the following subjects: Annual Meadow Grass, Better Methods and Conservation. Ten people attended, contributing to an interesting afternoon's debate on topics which are relevant to all greenkeepers.

The Spring Tournament is to be held on Thursday 29 April (not the 28th as published in last month's magazine) at Aldwickbury Golf Club. Entries are by the appropriate form, enclosing a cheque for £23 made payable to Richard Saunders, Fixtures Secretary. This event is the qualifier for the new Charterhouse/Scotts National Championship, the final of which is to be played on 4 and 5 October at Carden Park, Cheshire.

The Lodgeway Fourball will be made at Aldwickbury, so please make sure you bring along your entry form. Alternatively, you may post it to

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## Keeping in touch with news and comment from the Sections

Steve Mason if you wish to enter.

Finally, I would like to welcome the following new members to the Section.

Paul Cook, Buckingham Golf Club; Glen White, Brampton Park; Paul Herbert, Aylesbury Park; Russell Elms, Chesfield Downs; Mathew Ruff, Windmill Hill; Paul Coles, Brampton Heath; Alistair Sword, Redbourn; Phillip Hutchings, Beadlow Manor and Peter Dear, Brocket Hall.

Paul Lockett.



**South East**  
Derek Farrington  
Tel: 01903 260956

### Essex

It's Spring time, with the first quarter of the year flown by. As we are now fast approaching the hectic golfing calendar, let's hope the cutting season is kinder to us during 1999 than last year, with 'stress' put not only on the machinery side but all our staff as well.

Our Secretary attended a meeting held at BIGGA House on 25 and 26 February along with all the Regional Administrators, Section Secretaries and Staff from H.Q.

to discuss the future of the Association.

Items on the agenda included the new "Stylo" Leisure and Work Wear range which are both of good quality and reasonably priced and which you will be able to see for yourselves at our section events. The 'Magazine' where Scott MacCallum, the Editor, is interested in any of your views - ask Sandy McDivot. The all new National Championship which will be an exciting tournament, held at an outstanding venue and for those who have entered you will not be disappointed. Also looked at Membership, Education and BTME 2000. Martin said the meeting was very productive for all the staff at H.Q. not only for their professionalism but for all their hard work to make our Association so successful.

On the Membership front we would like to welcome our new members: Michael Franklin, Ilford GC; Terry Edmonds, Braintree GC; William Bywaters, Basildon GC; Michael Oakes, Rochford Hundred GC. This brings our membership total in Essex up to 175. Let's make a big effort to reach 200 by the year 2000 with us all encouraging other greenkeepers to join the Association and inform them

of all the benefits that are open to them.

On the education front, we would have held our second evening lecture at Writtle College, with Jon Albutt as our guest speaker, sponsored by Grass Roots. For those who are still interested in attending the Autumn/Winter courses either on computers or management skills contact Martin on 01245 603131, who will give you more information or add your name to the list.

Hope to see you at Burnham-on-Crouch G.C. for our Spring Tournament, one not to miss, where there are two prizes up for grabs for entry to the National Championship at Carden Park 3 - 5 October.

Dave Wells 01702 522202.

### Kent

There have been several requests for a list of the new and current committee members, so they are as follows. H Morgan, Secretary/Treasurer, T. Hindmarsh, Chairman, G Debenham Vice-Chairman, K Diamond Committee Members and J Francis supporting attendance. The last meeting was held on 3 March 1999 at Wilderness GC. This went very smoothly and shows signs of a promising year ahead.

The fixture list will be mailed out in early April to those who replied to the mail shot. If any new members join the section during the year and would like a copy of the fixture list, then contact either myself or H. Morgan on 0403 207622.

The fixture list is as follows; Chart Hills 24 May, Broke Hill 26 July, Tandridge 4 October and Darenth Valley 1 December.

The price of the golf days will be a consistent £22 at all of the venues and all the events will be on a first come first served basis as we are expecting a busy schedule. The date for the AGM will be brought forward this year to November time, date clarified nearer the time.

I would like to thank all of the companies who have supported our section this coming year with their sponsorship.

If anybody has any news or recommendations then please contact me on 01474 879200, as I would rather make this a more interesting article. The only news I have for you is that B. Farnham has left the LGC since the last edition, he has returned to the construction trade and we would all like to wish him the best in the future.

Kneale Diamond.

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**South West  
and South Wales**  
Paula Humphries  
Tel: 01288 352194

The new contact address for Paula is: Riverview, 2 Granville Terrace, Bude, Cornwall.

### South West

There were two sad events which occurred during the month of February in this region. The first was the death of Jamie Brunton-Reed, who had been working at my club, Cumberwell Park Golf Club, for the past four months. Jamie, who was only 20, suffered from a rare genetic blood disorder, and had been ill for some time. Jamie had also been studying on a part-time greenkeeping course. He will be sadly missed by everyone at the club.

The second sad event was the tragic death of John Thomas, from Lansdown Golf Club. John had given 18 years of hardworking and loyal service to the club and will be deeply missed by all those connected with the club. He leaves behind a wife and two children.

The death of John left an air of sadness as greenkeepers gathered

for the Winter Tournament held at Lansdown on 25 February. Despite the trauma of the previous week, Head Greenkeeper Steve Pell and his staff got the course into immaculate condition for the event, with particular praise being given for the "quite remarkable greens." The results of the tournament were as follows:

1. Steve Mitchell - 38 points; 2. Dave King - 37 points; 3. Nick Wilson - 35 points

Nearest the pin was won by Nick Perkins, and the trade prize went to Phil Greenway from Roffey Bros. The event was sponsored by Lawson Products, so many thanks to George Sinker for his support. Thanks also go again to Steve Pell and his team, Rachel and Gary in the catering department and also the secretary of Lansdown for allowing us the use of the course.

Following the golf and meal, a collection was made from the members to go to the family of John Thomas. This was swelled further by money generated from the Nearest the Pin competition.

Among the golfers who took part in this tournament was Dan Dobie, Head greenkeeper at Marlborough Golf Club. Dan retired on 26 February, so we wish him good luck and a happy retirement.

The next event is just a few weeks away with Wells Golf Club hosting the Spring Tournament on Thursday 22 April. You still have just enough time to get your name down for this one. There's not much time left either for Westurf, which is taking place on April 27, so for further information, telephone Paula Humphries on 01363 82777.

I am still receiving requests to reserve spaces on the training and education courses that we run. I am still building up a list of names, but as soon as I have enough names, the course can then be organised and the applicants will be contacted with the necessary information.

For any other enquiries, please write to me or telephone on 01249 783382.

Paul Cunningham.

### South Coast

The Section Seminar was held at Sparsholt on Tuesday 23 February, and it was well attended with 70 delegates in attendance. It was very encouraging to see so many members there. The Speakers, as always, were of a very high calibre and we are indeed very grateful to them for giving us their time to talk to us.

However, it did not go unnoticed that there was a good representa-

tion from North of the Border!

Thanks to Jef, our Secretary, who did a grand job in organising the event. Also thanks to all those who helped out on the day. We must not forget our Sponsors for the day, they were: Gem Professional, Grass Roots Trading Company Ltd, Huxleys Grass Machinery of Alresford and Winchester Garden Machinery. Thanks to you all for supporting us and helping to make the day go so well. Last but not least, thank you to Sparsholt College who provided us with lunch, the hall and all the little extras that were required.

This is the last call for Westurf, Jef has had a few calls about seats on the coach. However, at the time of writing this report there are still seats available, the coach is being sponsored by Rigby Taylor.

If you haven't already done so, phone Jef on 01635 846575 without delay. Paula has done a lot of work in moving Westurf to Westpoint. It is now up to us to give her and the members of the trade our support. I am told the stand space has more than doubled. This means more members of the trade in attendance, more machinery, and more people to see.

See you all on the coach - The Day - Tuesday 27 April 1999 - The



Place - Westpoint

Our Spring tournament will be held at Canford Magna Golf Club on Tuesday 4 May. Play will consist of a 27 holes medal, please ensure that all trophies are at Canford Magna on the day. It is up to all of you who won last year to see that the trophies are returned. The cost of the day is £16.00; this is to include lunch and the evening meal. All entries complete with current handicaps, names, addresses and cheques for £16.00 to be sent to: Fred Deamon, Golf Club Bungalow, Alton Golf Club, Old Odiham Road, ALTON, Hants, GU34 4BU. Tel: 01420 86679. Numbers are limited to 50, so get your entries in as soon as possible. Fred has taken over as the Tournament Organiser, Trevor Smith has stood down from the committee. We would like to thank Trevor for all the work he has done in the past in organising the previous tournaments.

Lastly, the players with the best gross score and the best nett scores will go forward to the Charterhouse/Scotts National Championship. This will be held later in the year. Good Luck to Everyone!

Ken Lodge.

Devon & Cornwall

Eighty members attended the Section's Avoncrop-sponsored meeting held at St Enodoc Golf Club on Wednesday 24 February. Many members had to travel through heavy rain and a lot of road works to arrive at St Enodoc GC, but on their arrival the weather cleared to give them perfect conditions to compete for the Avoncrop Trophy over St Enodoc's superbly presented Church and Holywell courses which are a credit to Stuart Dymond and his crew.

As usual our non golfing members had a guided tour of the course which included a look at the club's recently constructed irrigation lake and pumping station by Course Manager Stuart Dymond.

After a superb lunch, John Palfrey representing the day's sponsors, Avoncrop, presented the Avoncrop Trophy and prizes on behalf of Avoncrop Amenity;

Church Course 0 - 23 handicap.  
1. T. Gooch, Torrington; 2. B. Ridgeway, Fingle Glen; 3. R. Daly, Exeter.

Holywell Course 24 - 28 handicap.  
1. H. Roberts, Crediton; 2. M. Samuel, Rigby Taylor.

Our educational talk presented by Tim Earley on "Are microbes really necessary" completed an excellent day. The Section would like to thank St Enodoc Golf Club and all their staff who made our day so special, with a special mention to Stuart Dymond and his staff who, as always, had the course in excellent condition. A big thank you to Avoncrop for sponsoring the day.

Your attendance is required at this year's Westurf at Westpoint, Exeter on 27 April. For the first time ever all the trade stands have been taken, so you'll be able to view all the latest machinery and products available. Also, this year, the region has put on a seminar programme starting at 9.30am and you can watch the Adams Axe men perform their tree felling act.

Richard Whyman.

South Wales

Summer is just around the corner after our mainly wet Winter. Shortly, or by now, the irrigation systems will be primed ready for a hot spell, if there is ever such a thing. On the subject of water, the meeting on Wednesday 10 February was by John Mosedale, of the Environment Agency.

John's presentation on where, how much and what abstracting water can entail was and will be of benefit to those who attended the lecture. Thank you to John and also our friends from the IOG who also came along to a very interesting evening.

This month is our last evening meeting and in conjunction with the IOG it is our annual quiz of

general knowledge and a couple of greenkeeping questions thrown in. To be held at Pencoed College on Wednesday 14 April, it's a great night of our own humour and entertainment, so please come along.

On the 27 April at its new location at Westpoint in Exeter, is WESTURF. This is a day that must not be missed. Standing out in the rain is now a thing of the past as we are under cover. You can also bring your wife along so she can shop in the nearby Exeter town centre. This year the day will be dry now we are under cover, but every eventuality has been thought of and there will also be outdoor demonstrations to see.

You all by now should have received a fixture list for this year's golf tournaments, but if not, our first day is to be held at Southerndown Golf Club on 5 May. That date rings a bell with me, yes that's right, I'm on my honeymoon. Anyone with any information please contact me on 01656 742761.

Richard Hatcher.

North East

A few events just taken place here this month. First, an evening held at Greenacres GC and sponsored by J E Coulter.

Coulter's Service Manager, Martin, gave us a very entertaining talk on machinery servicing and some of the rare things he had seen over the years. Second, an evening held at Greenmount College with Eric Hunter on cylinder and bottom blade grinding. This was an ideal opportunity to see close up the technique involved in the grinding of cylinders. This evening was so much of a success that we will have to run a few more.

Thanks to Eric Hunter for taking the time to come over and give this demonstration. Congratulations to Mark Farrell, Stakis Park Golf Club, who has just finished his Greenkeeper training at Elmwood College, Mark now has an

Northern  
Ireland

S.N.V.Q.II qualification and maybe now we will see some work instead of running away to Scotland every couple of months. Good luck Mark.

Finally congratulations to Mark Cassidy and his wife Kathy on the birth of their second child, a baby girl. You will have to work very hard now to earn brownie points to get a night out.

Eamonn Farrell

South East

On Wednesday 3 March an evening event was held with a presentation from Martin Hinch, J E Coulters Ltd, introducing us to the TEXTRON Company and its many facets, also some of Coulters own workshop techniques. The evening was rounded off with a quiz where our team: T. Crawford, J. McCabe, K. Henderson and P. Johnston, white-washed the opposition although some of the questions set by Neil McLaughlin would have been more at home on University Challenge.

Thanks to Greenacres Golf Club for the use of the facility and indeed to Martin Hinch from J E Coulters Ltd for his presentation. Jonathan McCabe.

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Ad Ref 103

Welcome to the inaugural BIGGA workwear and casual clothing range. Late last year, BIGGA and Stylo joined forces to bring you this exciting range of clothing and footwear for 1999.

Included in the range is the first ever BIGGA approved golf shoe, the Duo - a technologically advanced shoe designed to provide the ultimate combination of on-course comfort and functionality. This shoe accommodates both softspikes or traditional spikes - both with the revolutionary quick-fit Q-Lok system.

All the clothing featured here is manufactured to the highest specifications in durable materials - offering working comfort as well as practicability. All items subtly feature the BIGGA logo.

While all the garments and footwear featured represent exceptional value for money - they have also been designed to be practical and stylish for general leisure as well as for work use.



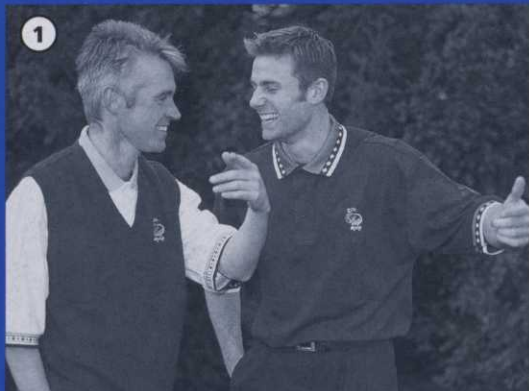
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1

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2

### Thornproof Gloves

These offer a special covering that protects against thorns and brambles.  
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One size fits all

### Pimple Palm Gloves

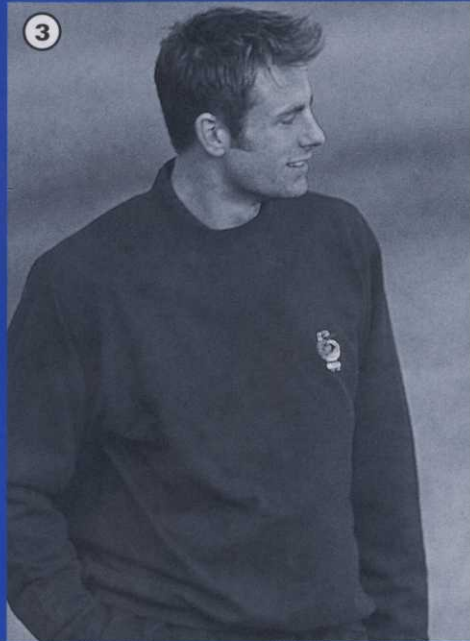
These gloves are pimpled on the palm to provide extra grip.  
BGP 108 GRN Green £2.25  
One size fits all



3

### Sweatshirt

Plain, quality cotton sweatshirt with BIGGA logo.  
SWT 105 NAVY Navy £13.49  
Sizes M, L, XL



4

### Basket Weave Slipover

A practical cotton and acrylic basket weave slipover.  
BSWS 550 BLK Black £22.95  
BSWS 550 NAVY Navy £22.95  
BSWS 550 BTL Bottle £22.92  
Sizes M, L, XL



### Owen Knitshirt

This is a plain coloured polyester/cotton short sleeve shirt. It has a flat knit colour and features the BIGGA logo.  
BKSH 910 BTL Bottle £14.95  
BKSH 910 NAV Navy £14.95  
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### Trousers

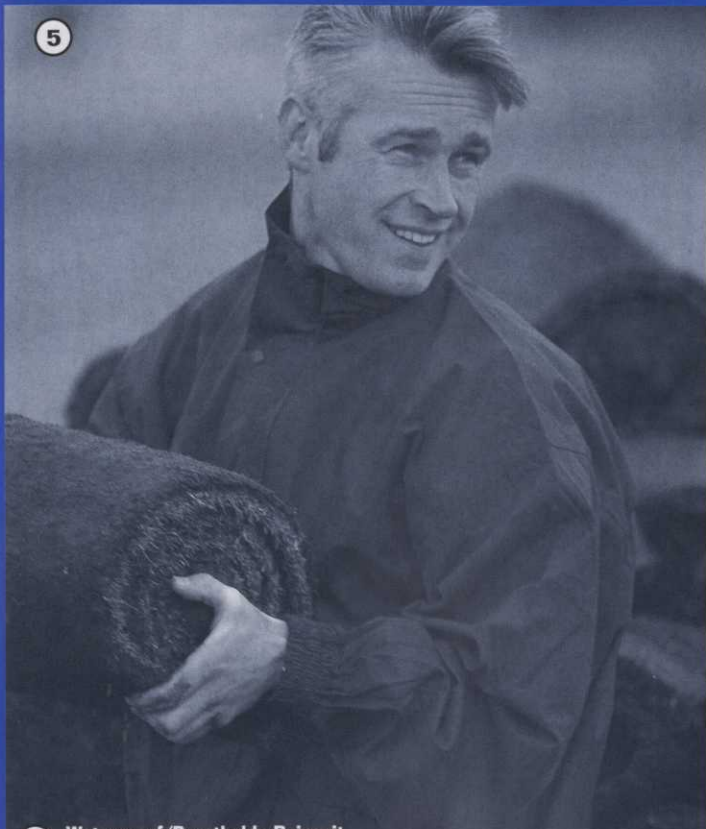
Poly/cotton trousers with 2 side slant pockets and 2 rear pockets.  
TRS 104 NAVY Navy £17.95 (reg leg)  
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Sizes 32, 34, 36, 38, 40, 42

### Full Zip Fleece

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## RAINWEAR

5



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6



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7



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Men's sizes 6-11 including half sizes and 12  
Women's sizes 3-8 including half sizes

8

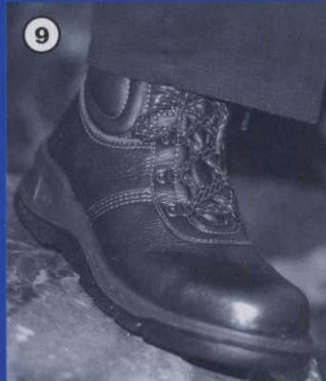


**8 Safemasta Steel Toe Capped Wellington Boot**  
Durable all-purpose Wellington with thick moulded sole and heel grip for easy removal.  
SFT 01 BK Black £18.95  
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9

**9 Stavanga Steel Toe Capped Ankle Boot**  
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Ad Ref 408

54 Greenkeeper International April 1999



Philip Sharples takes a look at what can be achieved today with the help of modern technology, knowledge and water

# Water<sup>saving</sup>



## Where does water come from?

Water, there is only so much of it and nature is not making new supplies, only recycling a portion of it. In fact, much of the world's water supply - in excess of 99% - is unavailable for man's most important uses - drinking, manufacturing, sanitation, recreation and irrigation because it is tied up in the world's oceans and polar ice caps.

The amount of water on earth is essentially non-destructible and fixed. Certain types of volcanic eruptions add small amounts of new water, but it is insignificant in the

overall scheme. World wide, some 80,000 to 85,000 cubic miles of water evaporate from the oceans each year.

So now we know a little about this resource do you think we should begin to save, reuse or recycle the water available to us? When applied to turf grass management, it boils down to some very fundamental, down-to-earth changes in habits and practices.

## Water Conservation

Every turf grass manager, in the entire world, surely must begin (if not already) to plan and implement a

programme of water conservation and wise management of this finite resource. The immediate results will be savings in cost. Less water will be consumed, which will result in a reduction of the pound spent for the water and the cost to pump and transport it.

But more importantly, far more importantly, it will help the turf manager prepare for the day when it will become necessary for him/her to function with less water. Perhaps the water simply will not be there, physically, (save this year!) in the current quantities or because some bureaucratic or legislative authority will

have diverted it to a purpose considered more politically important.

There are six basic steps that will lead to water conservation and improved management. These often receive far too little attention and respect.

1. Establish watering priorities. Give the highest priority to the most intensively managed areas.

2. Improve irrigation scheduling. Follow sound irrigation practices. Irrigate when there is the best combination of reduced wind, low temperature and high humidity.

3. Reduce, or avoid where possible, other causes of stress. Make certain there is adequate internal soil drainage to ensure maximum root growth. Most importantly avoid root zone saturation.

4. Alter cultivation practices. Test for soil fertility. Raising the height of cut for all areas by as little as 1mm can have a significant effect on the ability of the grass to tolerate stress and make more efficient use of soil moisture. Increase the frequency of soil cultivation to trap moisture and hold it in the vicinity of the root system.

5. Expand the use of mulches.  
6. Erect wind barriers on large expanses of open space.

### Water Management

It is thought that many involved with the turf management business are guilty of misusing water, to a less-

er degree on golf courses. Yet golf courses do not take full advantage of the many technical accomplishments of the irrigation industry. We must integrate the art of water management and the science of water management. The consequences of not applying what is now known and available in these areas is that we are borrowing a major source of water from the future and missing an opportunity to become leaders as water conservation authorities.

We need to learn more about such things as drought tolerance and rooting characteristics of grasses, water requirements, watering techniques, water conservation, soil-air-water relationships, leaching, weeds and their ecological relationship to the turf grass environment.

As you have read, there are many factors and variables involved with effective irrigation. I would like now to concentrate on one aspect, Irrigation scheduling and application.

### Irrigation scheduling and application

Irrigation scheduling technology (computer aided) has developed rapidly and now assists in reducing; water run-off, leaching, salt accumulation, excess evapotranspiration (ET) as well as, monitoring system effectiveness, storing all data and setting application timing, in the field and/or in the office.

The decision to irrigate turf should be made on an "informed" basis. Too frequently irrigation practices fail because they have been established by habit or calendar reference dates. Actually, good irrigation practices are dictated on a day-to-day basis by specific turf grass needs, soil characteristics, projected weather conditions and the purpose and function of the area to be irrigated. Thus, the criteria affecting the decision-making process concerning irrigation involve a dynamic, ever changing set of conditions which all must be assessed by a Course Manager with intimate knowledge of the criteria.

A responsible Course Manager will consider the temperature, atmospheric relative humidity, cloud cover and wind conditions effecting the evapotranspiration rate, plus the anticipated rainfall for the next few days. Finally, an assessment must be made as to the capabilities and weaknesses of the irrigation system in relation to supplying the needed amount of water within a specific

amount of time. (PC operated systems do this for you automatically!) Based on these evaluations only, decisions are made as to when to water and how much water to apply.

This decision is made even more complicated because soil moisture content will vary at different locations on the golf course. Some sites may tend toward perpetual wetness, while others rapid drying. Consequently, the irrigation programme must be adjusted for the variable soil and drainage conditions.

Technological tools assisting irrigation scheduling practices, recording plant growing days and cataloguing fluctuations in rainfall and temperatures (environmental monitoring equipment) also play a vital role, there are three main types utilised:

1. Soil based, to monitor soil water status these include, soil moisture sensors, tensiometers and infiltrometers

2. Plant based, to monitor plant temperatures and water status, the best available technique here (at this moment in time) being visually watching for wilt. I am sure one day chromatography - infra-red mapping of canopy temperature - will be a viable technique.

3. Atmospheric, to monitor atmospheric conditions that influence ET rates, these include, wind speed monitors, temperature gauges and evaporimeters.

All the above used and recorded daily through a weather station and software support will help ensure Best Management Practices are adhered to and utilised.





Packages are available that are specifically designed and developed to assist the turf professional and can advise on all the aforementioned.

All the pre-mentioned, what we will call a "modern system", allows irrigation according to evapotranspiration and soil conditions in a condensed amount of time. A shorter irrigation cycle not only saves money and general wear but starts the system later at night, giving more time for rain and reduced irrigation time reduces inconvenience and irritation to golfing memberships.

#### In Summary

Installation of a state-of-the-art computer operated irrigation system, or modernisation of the existing can only achieve optimum irrigation scheduling and application.

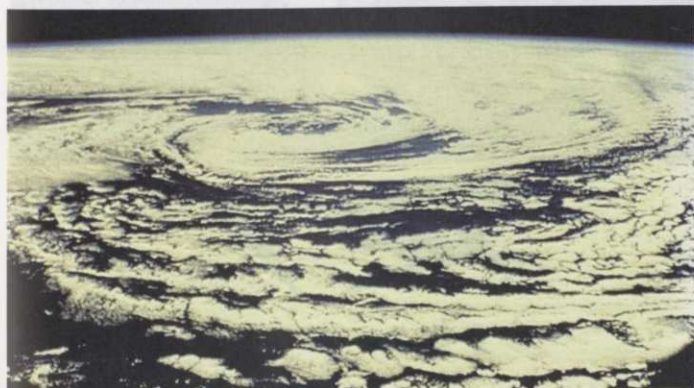
Significant reductions in pesticide usage, fertiliser applications, electricity costs, water usage and even manpower can be achieved by applying best management practices. A

computer efficient, low-pressure irrigation system (low-pressure water is less effected by wind) and site-specific heads allows for low water use and maximum coverage. Optimum water usage means to the turf manager a decrease in:

- \* Soil compaction.
- \* Fertiliser leaching
- \* Salt accumulation
- \* Disease susceptibility
- \* Wear and tear and pumps and irrigation systems
- \* Weed population
- \* Insect population

But, perhaps most important of all, it shows the world that the turf grass managers are in fact very environmentally friendly and aware. What do you think?

Philip Sharples works for Cosmos Control Systems.  
Tel/Fax: (Sales) 01253 829464  
E-mail: sales@cosmoscontrols.com  
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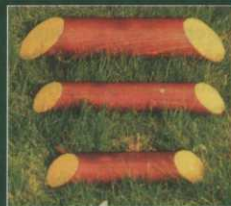
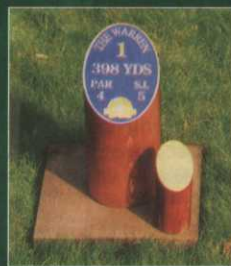


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**Carol Dutton, herself a well known face in the industry, speaks with four women who prove that there is a place for the distaff side in what is a male dominated business**

# Twomen Top

Lynne Green

Carol Dutton, herself a well known face in the industry, speaks with four women who prove that there is a place for the distaff side in what is a male dominated business

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Alison Brace

Carol Dutton, herself a well known face in the industry, speaks with four women who prove that there is a place for the distaff side in what is a male dominated business

Despite Sally Doherty's triumph as Toro Student of the Year competitor last year, the professional turf industry is still a man's world.

Both BIGGA and the IOG report approximately 10 lady members each, out of a total of 6,600 greenkeepers and 4,500 groundsmen.

Saltex last year hosted over 400 companies exhibiting at Windsor, two of which gave women's contact names in the official catalogue, and this year's BTME did little better, with two of the 178 exhibitors sporting women at the helm.

What makes a woman consider entering such a traditional male bastion? How does she cope when she gets there? And are there any signs that attitudes are changing as we move towards the Millennium? I spoke to four brave females who by their very presence in the industry are defying the norm - two at the top of their respective companies, one deputy head groundsperson, and a young student greenkeeper, to gauge their experiences.

Sarah Turner, who at 22 is the youngest of the four, and is studying for her National Diploma in Horticulture while working at Woking Golf Club, has had the smoothest career path so far. Although her parents wanted her to go to art school, she stuck to her guns and took her National Certificate in Horticulture at Sparsholt College while doing voluntary work at Weybrook Park Golf

Club. Having shelved early plans to be a vet, Sarah, who always liked sport, was determined to work out doors, and approached a variety of sports venues for work experience. Weybrook Park accepted her, and led to her present position at Woking.

Sarah's main problem on arrival at the club, was shyness. Course Manager Sandy McKechnie, who has spent 24 years in the profession, with 18 as Course Manager remembers.

"It took her six months to settle in, and she was very shy with all the men." Nevertheless, after that first year as a temporary placement, the club decided to keep her on, paying the course fees themselves Sandy, who has never worked with female staff before, now regards his latest protegee as a full member of the team.

"We would like to keep her when she has finished her course, the only problem I can see is that once she's qualified she is going to want twice the salary she is on now. I don't know if the club can afford it."

Sarah would be happy to stay. "The lads have been great. You get the odd joke but you just join in. I think a few more women are doing male dominated jobs now and as long as we're given the opportunity and are willing to do the work we'll be OK. Some of the work here is very physical and that's quite hard but you just have to cope," she said.

# Top women



Lucy Dalrymple

Alison Brace, Deputy Head Groundsperson at Brighton College, did not have such a simple start to her working life. Born an only child of office working parents, she was actively discouraged from attending agricultural college. After travelling for a year when she left school, Alison joined the Countryside Rangers which reinforced her belief that she wanted an outside job.

Alone at home, reading the local paper, while her parents were on holiday, Alison found the advertisement for a trainee groundsperson which launched her career. "There was no-one to say that I couldn't do it, so I wrote off straight away."

The job was with Brighton College, and Alison, who was laughing at herself when I spoke to her, for wearing a mohair jumper while scarring a cricket square, left her interview thinking "I can do that" and has remained ever since.

Now, six years later, and engaged on an NVQ Level 2 course in Turf Care, she insists that she has never encountered any hostility.

"I have never felt victimised, and being a woman can be an advantage. I was on a course two weeks ago, and it was the first time that I had not been the only female. If you are



Sarah Turner

the only woman present, you always get to know the lecturer. They tend to remember you and this can help your studies."

Alison admits that the job has become easier now that she has proved her worth.

"When I first started I had to work doubly hard to get the same respect as a man. In some ways, the doubt is always there. I suppose my parents have said that because I'm a girl I can't do this, and I still feel I have to prove myself."

Lucy Dalrymple, Managing Director of Arbor Eater, suffered no parental misgivings as she was born into the business. Her father was a tree surgeon who invented the original Arbor Eater wood chipping machine, and built one for himself before going into production. What is unusual is the fact that although she is the eldest of four children, Lucy's father chose her, rather than either of her two brothers, to join him in the business five years ago.

Starting in sales and progressing to the technical side, Lucy, who thinks that the key to her success is her obvious enjoyment of the job, her pride in both the Arbor Eater machines and the fact that she is able to continue the family name, admits that at first her technical knowledge and ability to diagnose faults over the phone took some customers by surprise.

"Certain types of men, who tend to be the older chaps, don't like being told by a woman, over the phone, how to fix a machine, especially if they have been trying to do it themselves for two days."

Lucy, who is not technically qualified, is certainly dedicated to both her customers and the machines.

"When the phone starts ringing, usually after 5pm people want answers quickly, and I try to avoid advising them to spend lots of money. If someone has ordered four fusible plugs, then I know that there must be a problem with the machine and I will send one of our engineers round. Our machines are like family. If you look after them, they'll look after you."

As Managing Director, since her

father's retirement last March, Lucy realises that she still has a lot to learn.

"I still have to phone Dad for advice when I don't know what to do, but I think he gets quite upset because I don't need him so much anymore."

Lucy's working history - secretarial qualifications gained after leaving school, which led to magazine production and an editorial job, before she joined an engineering company, gives only slight clues to her eventual career destination.

While co-ordinating engineering staff employed on oil rigs, she found a mistake on a technical drawing, which had escaped the attention of a group of highly qualified men.

"They had been studying the plan for some time, before I wandered over and spotted that a staircase had been drawn with the risers and treads reversed."

With her extraordinarily selective memory, which always remembers solutions to technical faults, (Lucy freely confesses that she forgets other things), and the fact that the family firm provided the opportunity to develop her innate skills, perhaps Lucy's rise to her present position is not so unlikely.

There is nothing in Lynda Green's family background or previous employment to suggest that she would become a Director of C. & P. Soilcare Ltd., but her love of machinery can be detected almost from the start.

Casting her mind back to one of her first jobs, after leaving school, Lynda remembers that the company, Lonnet Aviation, based at Ipswich Airport, was where she was deeply involved with aircraft. Later she worked for Suffolk Light Aircraft Maintenance.

"I spent hours in the aircraft hangar, doing anything and everything - stripping down aircraft fabric, putting wings on, helping to change spare parts, I couldn't keep away. Maybe flying from the age of 12 had something to do with it."

A series of administrative posts led her to the position of secretary to the Financial Director at Ransomes



Lynda Green

Simms and Jeffries between 1982 and 1984, where she became fascinated with the manufacturing process, and was often found in the foundry, watching the machinery being made. In 1991, Lynda arrived at her present company as Administrator, and, due to a sublime twist of fate became a Director and Company Secretary 13 months later.

Extremely dry weather conditions during the first summer following Lynda's appointment had been bad for business, all staff were about to be made redundant, and the company was to return to its former owner, Colin Pryce.

Lynda, who had fallen in love with the Terralift, was convinced that the company was worth saving. She talked to the bank and her husband, re-mortgaged the house, and with a third person, arranged to buy shares in C & P Soilcare Ltd.

The following Autumn, the company introduced the Deep Drill, and despite a serious theft in November 1994, which robbed the company of the majority of its equipment, including spare parts, the new management team have not looked back.

When I spoke to Lynda, she was one of the few people who had enjoyed last year's wet summer, as it produced the ideal working conditions for the Terralift, which had been working non stop.

"We are expanding" she said, "like my waistline," and confided that her husband, who is very supportive, was busy designing and constructing a new version of the Terralift, which promises to be faster, easier to handle and a prototype for Terralifts of the new Millennium.

On the subject of surviving as a woman in a man's world, Lynda says she's gotten away with murder.

"Sometimes I'll surprise customers by admitting I don't know the answer, and I'll give them the number for the STRI, BIGGA or the IOG. They always accept it. It's best to be honest, and both greenkeepers and groundsmen are happy to call these numbers."

Lynda's relaxed attitude, showing a security which allows her to admit

occasional ignorance, clearly breaks down barriers which could exist between two men, who feel that personal pride is at stake. She laughs at the memory of her first solo outing with the Deep Drill on one of the courses at The Essex Golf Club.

"There was no-one else free to do the job, and rather than let them down, I asked if they would mind if I did it. I couldn't make the machine perform in straight lines, and after the first day, Nick Warren, the Courses Manager, kindly suggested a better way of lining up the machine. He was right. It was much easier and far more immediate."

It would seem, if the experiences of our four ladies are anything to go by, that there is little to stop any woman joining the industry. She should be prepared to spend most of her working life surrounded by male colleagues but can expect little or no hostility, even when she is the first female employee at her work place, or the only woman on an educational course. Enthusiasm counts for a lot, and she may find that she needs to work harder than her male equivalent at the beginning of her career to prove to others, and sometimes, more importantly, to herself, that she is capable of fulfilling her ambitions.

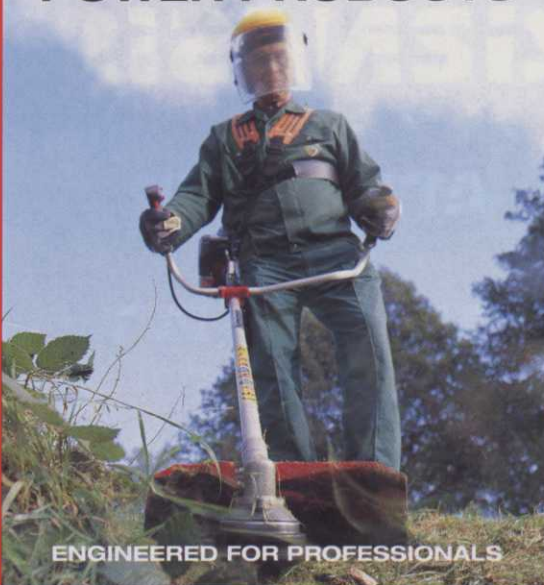
The advantages of being in the minority, appear to far outweigh the disadvantages - more attention from college lecturers, fatherly guidance from male superiors, more fun, and closer relationships with customers.

Of course, our four examples are all exceptions to the rule, and as such, almost certainly possess above average ability, force of character, and an iron will to succeed. Nevertheless it is heartening to realise that the traditional female nurturing traits have translated so well, not only to the welfare of people as customers, but also to machines and turf.

One thing is certain, if a woman is destined for a career in the fine turf industry, no matter how many wrong turns she takes, or how often she is persuaded against it, by either herself, or others, eventually she will arrive.

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# GENESIS

## ATTACKER

## ATTACKER PVT

# GENESIS ATTACKER ATTACKER PVT

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When any disease appears which damages the plant, vitamins in Attacker help the grass produce Phytoalexins, a plant's natural defence mechanism to fight against infection and disease.

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### FAST ACTING

Attacker works within eight hours.  
It may be applied at the first sign of disease to further boost the plant defences.

### STRENGTHENS THE SWARD

Attacker PVT is a preventative treatment.  
Applied monthly it strengthens the sward building the plant's resistance to turf diseases.

### SELECTIVE

Only helps the plant defend itself against fungi that damage the plant, when used at recommended dosage levels.

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# GENESIS ATTACKER ATTACKER PVT

## APPLICATION

Dilute 1 litre in 20 litres of clean water and apply to 500sq m. Half fill the tank with Symbio Attacker PVT (preventative) and Symbio Attacker.

Apply Attacker PVT once per month as a preventative.

Apply Attacker immediately if disease appears.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Attacker is derived from extracts of citrus fruits and is non-toxic to humans at recommended dosage rates.

Contents: Vitamin C, Vitamin P, sugars, fruit acids, triglycerides, yucca schidera, carieda, called in Glycerine USP.

A systemic additive for promoting growth in plants. Contains fruit acids, yucca extract, organic acids, triglycerides and vitamin P.

Contact action on pathogenic fungi: it is non mutagenic therefore it is less likely that a resistance will be created.

Acts systemically as an exoelictor, the vitamin in Attacker helps keep the biosynthesis of phytoalexins production.

When it is applied preventively, the phytoalexins show their presence in the system and the plant can control more rapidly fungi and bacterial attack.

Curatively, by rupturing the fungi membranes, the polysaccharide fragments are endoelictors, increasing even more phytoalexins and the natural control is even more effective.

The product penetrates the plant from the bottom up and is transported within live tissue of the plant.

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# GENESIS

## ATTACKER

## ATTACKER PVT

Attacker has a unique positive 4-way action to help grass plants fight off fusarium and other fungal pathogens.

**1**

When any disease appears which damages the plant, the vitamins in Attacker help the grass produce Phytoalexins, a plants natural defence mechanism to fight against infection and disease.

**2**

The yucca wetting agent helps remove dew preventing the damp conditions ideal for winter diseases.

**3**

The fruit acids temporarily lower the pH to a level inhospitable to fusarium.

**4**

As a systemic additive it helps promote plant growth. Contact action on pathogenic fungi acts by rupturing the fungi membranes. It is non-mutagenic and therefore less likely that resistance will build up.

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Greenkeeper International

## Tungsten tips for new verticut units



The new THATCH-AWAY 480T Verticutting unit fits most common greens triple mowers and incorporates a wide range of new features designed to overcome the various problems traditionally associated with verticutting.

The most obvious feature is the unique FAN-FORCE blade design which not only has Tungsten Tipped teeth that cut exceptionally cleanly and resist wear, but also incorporates six fan paddles on each blade to create a strong draught which blows the cuttings right into

the grassbox. In addition a larger throw plate which fits closer to the blades helps to ensure that the cuttings fill the boxes full without dropping back onto the green.

Full width rollers and micro height adjusters enable these units to be used for very light regular grooming. However, the close spacing of the FAN-FORCE blades and the hooked profile of their teeth also allows them to cut deeper when required to remove heavy build ups of thatch and prune the tillers to stimulate vigorous new growth.

## Farmura's new spraying system

The F25 Spraying System from Farmura, successful in the bowling market has also been taken up by Golf Clubs with great enthusiasm. The new Farmura F25 Mark II reflects a number of improvements suggested by users including an extra bracket to the 1.5 metre spray boom, fold-down handlebars for easier transport and storage and a bolted frame for easy maintenance.

Together with its instant start/stop spraying action, rechargeable battery and unique pivot tank the F25 Mark II is all set to continue its success story.

Also available is a Hand Lance for working around trees, spot treatment an landscaped areas and a Pocket Bleeper to ensure accurate spraying.

For further information Tel: 01233 756 241

# Huxley's all-weather solution

Hampshire-based firm, Huxleys, has established a specialist division dedicated to the professional supply and installation of premier quality all-weather turf surfaces for golf courses - see Sisis/Huxley story.

Known as Huxley Golf, the new division has been formed in the wake of a highly successful 18 months during which Huxleys have supplied and installed all-weather synthetic turf surfaces at public and private golf clubs nation-wide and been selected by the English Golf Union as an official supplier to The National Golf Centre at Woodhall Spa.

Huxley Golf surfaces installed at The National Golf Centre comprise three practice tees and a putting green, enabling golf practice and teaching to continue at Woodhall Spa throughout the year irrespec-

tive of conditions underfoot or the level of use.

The principal application for the range of all-weather synthetic turf surfaces being supplied and installed by Huxley Golf is as a premier quality replacement for natural turf used on golf tees, practice tees, paths, cartways, putting greens and golf greens.

"Customers have looked to our specialist team to solve a variety of problems with natural turf caused by high levels of use, bad weather and poor growing conditions or high maintenance and repair costs," explained director, Paul Huxley.

"Our experience has shown that proper advice and expert installation are the keys to providing an alternative surface which looks, feels and reacts just like the real thing. We also offer technical assis-



tance and maintenance advice to ensure that the surface remains in first-class condition."

For further information on the capabilities of the premier all-weather synthetic surfaces available

from Huxley Golf, and a customer list, please contact Paul or Barry Huxley, Huxley Golf, The Dean, New Alresford, Hampshire SO24 9BL, UK. Tel: 01962 733222. Fax: 01962 734702.

## Flowtronex hotwires the market

FLOWTRONEX PSI has unveiled a new product designed to immediately and accurately alert pumping system users to potential system problems.

"The pumping system is the heart of the irrigation system. It's the first critical place on a golf course. If a significant problem develops, you want to know exactly what the problem is right now," said Jon Williams, FLOWTRONEX PSI Product Development Engineer.

The device, called HotWire, is the only auto-dialer on the market that informs the user of the specific problem through a paging system.

With HotWire, the customer monitors up to four specific functions, such as a power failure or a hard fault, by assigning each a 1-5 digit code. If a problem occurs, it picks up the phone, dials the pager service and punches in the code to appear on the end-user's pager.



Tri-Ag Ltd of Wymondham in Norfolk has introduced the TM40 Trailed Rotary Cutter, a robust, high capacity unit with its own engine and one metre (40in) cutting width.

Suitable for use behind an ATV, the relatively narrow width of the TM40 enables it to operate virtually anywhere an ATV can go.

Of equal importance, the one metre cut width is ideal for paths and bridleways and is also narrow enough to pass through restricted access gateways.

Exceptionally robust, the TM40 features a tubular steel chassis and rugged steel deck. It can also be towed behind any vehicle with a tow hitch, and runs on 400x8 pneumatic tyres suitable for high transport speeds.

Designed to tackle long grass and



light scrub, the TM40 is powered by a choice of Honda GXV 270 8.5hp or Kawasaki FC290V 9hp engines. Height of cut is adjustable between

18 and 2cm (7 to 3/4in). Prices from £1,650.

Further information Tel: 01472 240869

## www.rpal.co.uk

Rhone-Poulenc Amenity has launched an end-user promotion on SUPERTOXTM 30, the respected selective herbicide that controls over 22 weeds in established turf. This promotion coincides with the change of active ingredient from mecoprop to mecoprop-P which reduces the environmental impact of SUPERTOXTM 30 without compromising its performance.

For further information Tel: 01277 301115 or visit their website at [www.rpal.co.uk](http://www.rpal.co.uk).

## Biotal products

Biotal Industrial Products has developed a range of microbial and natural treatments for its Restore the Balance programme aimed at the Professional Sports and Leisure Turf Market. The programme consists of Microbalance, which, when used as part of a managed programme for fine turf, will help prevent fungal problems, enhance nutrient utilisation and improve soil health: Biofeed to stimulate plant growth and Microbooster to enhance the natural soil microbial population.

For further information Tel: 0113 250 0747.

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- Encourages root development
- Dissolves hardpan conditions
- Helps restore effective aeration

... Result, a desirable environment for growing vibrant, healthy turfgrass.

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**Scott MacCallum didn't have far to go to visit Rolawn, BIGGA's newest and nearest Golden Key Supporter**

# Turf's up



Rolawn's turf is collected via a miracle of modern machinery

As a measure of the progress made by a company, not to say an entire industry, it is interesting to hear the story told by Ken Dawson, Chairman of Rolawn, BIGGA's latest Golden Key Company.

In the mid-70s, not long after Rolawn was founded, Ken was visiting a 10-acre field. But this wasn't just any field. No, this was the field which contained an entire year's worth of production for the company.

When he pulled the gate shut and walked away, the enormity of what was facing the company began to hit home. Just how exactly were they going to sell that much turf?

Now that 10-acre field doesn't represent one morning's work for Rolawn.

As I said. Graphic indicators of just how far a company has come in that short time don't come much better.

"Now we have 800 hectares - 2000

acres - of land in production at any one time," revealed Sales and Marketing Director, Terry Ryan.

Nowadays all the turf is grown in the Vale of York, within easy distance of the Elvington-based Headquarters and not far from BIGGA HOUSE, but that wasn't always the case. The company roots belong to an area which is better known for oil rather than turf production.

Rolawn, which is now the largest turf company in Europe, was originally started on the Aberdeenshire Estate of Lord Forbes, the company's founding Chairman. However, as you might expect for the area around Aberdeen, which is affectionately known as the Granite City, the soil was granity and not ideal for growing turf.

Detailed soil surveys earmarked the Vale of York as the ideal location and the company moved south, although

its registered office has always been retained in Scotland.

"A number of factors have contributed to the successful relocation not least the availability of sufficient quantities of ideal land. Farmers have also become more comfortable with the fact that responsible turf growers do not strip the land and we do actually improve the fertility of the land... We also pay our bills," said Terry.

In addition to the growth of the turf growing industry in terms of size it has also come on leaps and bounds in terms of sophistication.

"Seed mixtures have moved on. Even in the short time I've been in the industry I've seen a huge difference. The quality of the grass sward just gets better and better," said Terry, a man whose ready wit and enthusiasm is known throughout the entire turf industry.

# Turf's<sup>up</sup>

For You



Hang out your washed turf, with Rolawn's wash and go turf

"We took a decision a few years ago not just to publish the cultivars we use but also to show the sown percentages. We print 100% of what we sow."

The arrival into the big time for Rolawn came in 1977 when a well known lawn tennis club ordered turf for several of their courts.

"Up until then the basic concept of high quality cultivated turf wasn't accepted in the UK. It was the pivotal point for us," said Terry.

"At that time there was little in the way of competition in the quality end of the market. There was a turf market involving meadow turf but not an industry as such. It was a very low quality product."

When people discovered what could be done with good quality turf sales rocketed.

"People could see that they could have a domestic lawn, or, in the golf market, a green or tee in play much sooner, much quicker and be much surer of the outcome."

With its Scottish roots, and having started in the golf sector, the Royal and Ancient game has always played a big part in the company's thinking although nowadays it represents only around 15% of its business.

"It is fair to say that every famous golf course in the country has used

Rolawn at some stage or other. We recently supplied 25,000 square metres to Carnoustie while we also sold some washed turf to St Andrews."

"In fact during the last three years we have seen an increasing demand for washed turf and we are responding to this by commissioning a brand new turf washing plant that is due to come into production this spring. We will be able to produce more washed turf than anyone else in the market in both standard and large roll formats."

Rolawn's activities in the golf course sector have helped create business in some of the other bigger markets.

"It is helpful if you are sitting with someone for a housing company, seeking specifications, and you can say you supply Wentworth, St Andrews and Carnoustie. They sit up and take notice. On the back of the golf course market you can push into other markets."

One of these areas is gardening and Rolawn has benefited greatly from the fact that television programmes, like Groundforce and Home Front in the Garden, have brought gardening to the masses - people who would not perhaps have watched the likes of Gardener's World.

With mention of Groundforce, Terry produced a signed photograph of Alan Titchmarsh and the Groundforce team. The one disappointing element of which was the fact that the two most prominent features in it were Charlie Dymock's muddy knees. But that's another matter.

"Charlie came here to see us," he announced with justified pride.

"She was on the back of a turf harvester. You can imagine the tractor driver. We nearly lost him in a ditch! But seriously, the day after garden programmes air the Rolawn phone lines light up."

Most of the gardening programmes get in touch with Rolawn from time to time. "We have a policy of co-operating with them and while we don't get a straight name check we always appear on the fact sheets that accompany the programmes."

The company also sponsors the Family Garden at the Royal Horticultural Society grounds at Wisley.

In addition they supply football grounds in the UK and Holland, including the famous Ajax stadium with its retractable roof, in Amsterdam, and northern France.

The Elvington base - when it's not featuring in the National news as a result of horrendous flooding - is ideally situated for Hull and the ferry services to northern Europe. Incidentally, during the flooding, much of the worst of which was less than a mile from the Head Office, they kept harvesting every day.

"It is a logistical real challenge when you have to send 25 wagons in a two day period on the ferry. You have to sit down and plan it because turf is a highly perishable product and will die if it doesn't get where it's going on schedule. We've discovered ferry services no-one even knew existed," said Terry, who added that ironically it is cheaper to ship turf to Holland than it is to get it back to its ancestral home in Aberdeen.

While there are other markets which are more lucrative in terms of volume it is to the golf sector that Terry naturally gravitates.

"We have exhibited at Hampton Court and Chelsea Flower Show but when people ask me which of the shows is my favourite I always say BTME... and not just because I happen to live in Harrogate.

"That's because I'm not talking to people who think I'm talking Chinese. Greenkeepers talk the same language. If I mention to a greenkeeper that Aberelf, the number one cultivar in the STRI listings, is in our turf for '99 he'll appreciate that fact because he's educated to look for that sort of thing."

Rolawn were one of the first

exhibitors at BTME and Terry has noticed a change in the habits of visitors to the show.

"We still take the odd order at exhibitions but we used to take orders of thousands and thousands of metres at shows. I believe that is a sign of a mature industry because there is more competition, people have more choice and they want more time to think about what they are doing before placing an order."

While they are delighted when they get a an order to cover an entire new golf course many sales come as a result of a no minimum order policy which means if a golf club wants 50 metres for a new tee they'll supply. Anything indeed down to one square metre.

"It is sometimes difficult getting this through to greenkeepers who tend to think that we're a big turf company so we only deal in huge orders. Our bread and butter is small amounts."

A significant event in the history of Rolawn occurred on February 12th '98 when a successful management buy-out was completed with the support of Lloyds Development capital.

"It means we are now a lot more flexible and can move a lot quicker," explained Terry, who is one of the shareholders.

"It's been a hard 12 months but a good 12 months. We've hit the budgets we set ourselves and a little bit more," he said, speaking on the day which marked the end of the first financial year under the new regime.

One change that has been seen within the company is the willingness to look at products outside of the pure turf which was always their sole product.

"We are now evaluating new products all the time and have our first coming out next month. It is a turf and seed establishment fertiliser called Groright which we've aimed at the trade rather than retail market."

Future plans for the company include expanding further into the European mainland and strengthening their brand name.

"In the industry Rolawn is a well respected name and a well known name and we'd like that to be true for beyond our industry. We want to achieve wider recognition within the UK, even You wouldn't bet against them because you can be sure Rolawn won't let the turf grow under their feet.

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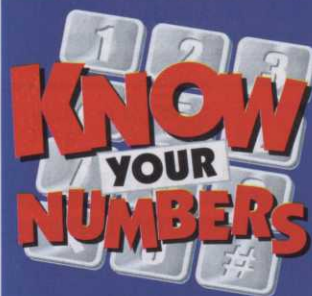
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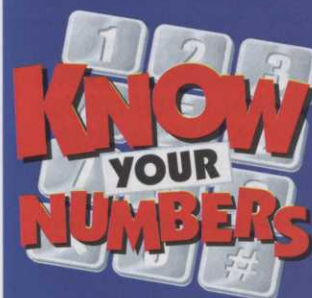
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Entries to reach us no later than Wednesday, April 14, 1999. The first correct entry drawn will receive a cheque for £50!

The judges decision is final. No correspondence will be entered into. This competition is not open to BIGGA staff or non-members.

Last month, Mr G Arnold of Erewash Valley GC, certainly knew his numbers when he correctly identified all three telephone numbers.

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**Sandy McDivot responds to the flood of letters which appeared after his January article on Sand Based Greens**

# Drawing a line in the sand

Oh dear! I seem to have caused a bit of disturbance with my January article. Now I know how Glenn Hoddle must feel.

Firstly, can I say I quite obviously miscalculated somewhat on this particular article and I apologise to anyone who took exception to my words.

Please believe me when I say that no offence was ever intended. But in my defence can I point out that it has never been my intention for the articles to be taken as a statement of fact.

I have in the past written the odd one or two articles under my own name but on answering the general

As in my previous articles, this one was so over the top that I wrongly, as it happened, believed no one would accept it as completely factual. Rightly or wrongly I believe that it is sometimes good to have a bit of a laugh at oneself. My style may be condescending but it is also self-deprecating. Look at the great TV comedies we have in this country for instance. Fawlty Towers, Father Ted, Rising Damp or Home Front for example. Do they not painfully parody the worst aspects of us as a society? Are they not self-mocking but at the same time made all the more hilarious because there is a recognisable element of truth in

the facts get in the way of a good story. Sure there are huge generalisations in the article but I believed the readership would be able to decipher fact from fiction.

What I perhaps should have called the article was "Sand based and mainly non USGA specification greens at hugely underfunded, understaffed and colossal overplayed golf courses in Britain with typical British weather". Somehow though it did not quite have the same ring.

However I do still believe there are inherent weaknesses in sand based greens that can lead to problems particularly given our climatic conditions.

■ They do, initially at least, all suffer from a low CEC that will require additional feeding.

■ Spike and pitch marks are far more of a problem compared with good soil based greens regardless of the water that is applied to them. As a matter of interest I applied a maximum of one minute per sprinkler to my greens per night last year during a couple of weeks in August.

■ Given average playing levels and a realistic operating budget Poa annua invasion is almost inevitable and can end up dominating the sward in the long term. Initial poa annua invasion is by the annual form (poa annua annua) which always looks unsightly and greatly affects the quality of the surface.

■ Tolerance to wear is lower than that of a good soil based green. This is a point highlighted by Mark Jones in his response when he said that pin positions should be changed more often to limit wear and that the use of triplex mowers should be

**What I perhaps should have called the article was "Sand based and mainly non USGA specification greens at hugely underfunded, understaffed and colossal overplayed golf courses in Britain with typical British weather". Somehow though it did not quite have the same ring.**

call from the magazine for more articles by greenkeepers, I decided to submit a few under the pseudonym of Sandy McDivot from Sludgecombe Pay and Play. I did this as the articles were of a light-hearted nature and chose this particular name so as no one would take them too seriously. Obviously in this respect, I did miss the mark by a mile. They are, at the end of the day, meant as a bit of light relief and are quite correctly placed at the end of the magazine after the more informative articles.

what they portray?

Of course I can in no way compare my simple offerings to these comic classics but I believe they do give balance to the magazine and are enjoyed by at least one person (thank you Richard Heaslip).

I must admit that in this last article and all the others that preceded it I have been guilty of writing the odd terminological inexactitude, as a politician may say. But as I am now a fully paid up member of the tabloid press may I borrow their motto and say you should never let

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avoided at all costs. This would be impossible in my position as I have 1.5 hectares of greens spread out over 200 acres, myself and three staff to hand mow and 20 year old mowers to do the job. When you add the fact that saturation golf, starting at around 7 am, is the norm you will appreciate my predicament. Neither my extremely hard working staff, or myself would relish the prospect of significantly adding to our standard 11-hour working day that we presently do for several months in the summer.

■ They are, to start with, very low in microbial activity and this can lead to specific disease problems due to the lack of antagonists and competition to pathogenic organisms.

■ As pointed out by Mark Jones, there are a mass of potential mistakes at the construction stage that can and will lead to additional problems later on.

■ Sand based greens are expensive and time consuming to construct.

But it is not only me that is having problems with their greens (although I must point out, I did greatly exaggerate the symptoms in the article). If there is one thing I can do it is observe. As I visit other courses I see the same problems replicated, especially when they are under resourced and over played. I was recently told of a very highly regarded Course Manager, and I mean one of the very best, state to a large audience that he had rebuilt two greens on his course recently. One was of sand based construction while the other used local soil. He stated that it was the one built with local soil that was performing the best.

Maybe I could be accused of mak-

ing life difficult for greenkeepers who are looking to reconstruct, although I seriously doubt that any committee members or owners would take someone called Sandy McDivot seriously.

On the other hand, maybe I am encouraging greenkeepers to take a closer look at the problems that they may encounter should they embark on the sand based route. I have seen this route followed at other clubs for no other reason than it appeared to be the done thing to do even though their original greens were of a very high quality. The result has been an unmitigated disaster of frightening proportions. Promises of perfection were made and after about a hundred grand has been spent, the result has been a big drop in standards, a totally demoralised work force and a membership that is baying for blood.

Of course, I am not saying that such greens should never be built. They can and are of tremendous value in the right circumstance. However I will stick my neck out and say that a well maintained, established soil based green in this country is as good a green you will find day in and day out anywhere in the world, so why change a winning formula.

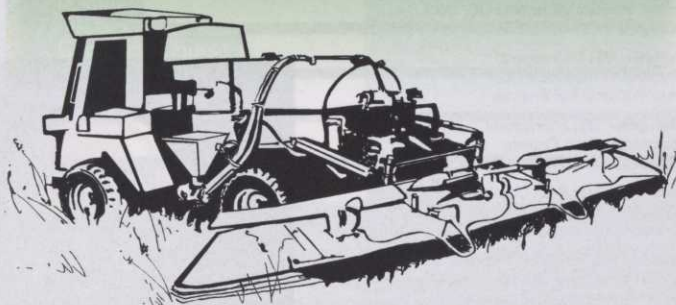
Once again I must apologise for leaving myself so open to misinterpretation in this article. It was poor judgment on my behalf.

Finally in response to Stephen Okula from Tenerife. Thank you very much for inviting me over to visit you. Shall we say two weeks in May and would it be alright to bring the wife and kids?

Sandy McDivot,  
Sludgecombe Pay and Play.

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## Feature listing from April '97

**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; Abbeydale 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

**March '98:** Trees, Golf Course Accessories, News from GCSAA, Leamington & County GC, Trevor Smith's BTME Talk

**April '98:** Gleneagles Hotel, Compact Tractors, Environment, Protective clothing, Rain bird, Internet

**May '98:** Greens Mowers, Suspended Water Table Greens, Seeds, Letham Grange Resort, Charterhouse profile, Security and BIGGA's Fund Raising Campaign

**June '98:** Interview with Nick Park, Earthworm special, ATVs, Royal Porthcawl, Grinding

**July '98:** Aeration, Royal Birkdale preview, The importance of research, Architecture

**August '98:** Mill Ride, Fescue, Blowers, Textron, Open Review, Nematodes, Training

**September '98:** Nine holers - Tolladine and Fingle Glen, Turf, Steve Clement profile, Drainage, World Scientific Congress report

**October '98:** Saltex Review, BIGGA Retrospective, Stirling GC, Toro Awards Preview, Tree grants

**November '98:** Royal Opening, Ramsdale Hall GC, Gang Mowers, Hayter International report, Irrigation Systems

**December '98:** Toro Awards, Environment Awards, The Appliance of Science, Engines, Architects, BTME Preview

**January '99:** Pesticide Usage, Life in Colorado, Lyschott Heath GC, Worm Research, Stylo Matchmaker profile, Temporary Greens

**February '99:** Westerham GC; R&A questionnaire results; Finland; grass cutting; BTME99 Review; Bernhard and Co

**March '99:** Loch Lomond, Worm update, GrassRoots, Softspikes, Maintenance facilities, Environment review, Architecture



# An eventful month



Marion and I have just arrived home from spending a week in Canada at the invitation of the Canadian Golf Superintendents Association, where I was asked to present a paper at the Turfgrass Conference and Trade Show in Toronto - on "Basic Principles of Greenkeeping in the UK."

On arrival in Toronto the sun was shining which made a change from the weather back home, but I soon realised that the sun gave a false impression as the temperature was recorded at 9 degrees below, but the weather apart we were given a warm welcome wherever we went.

This just illustrates the camaraderie that exists among greenkeepers worldwide. We met so many nice people and they gave us the feeling we had known them for years. My time during the day was taken up mostly by the conference and show, but we were taken to see the Niagara Falls by Pelino Scenna and then had lunch at the Burlington Golf and Country Club where Pelino is Superintendent. My wife Marion, however, was able to take in the companion's programme with the other ladies, which she thoroughly enjoyed.

We came together in the evenings for the excellent social programme, the first of which was the President's Reception held at the top of the CN Tower, which is the tallest building in the world... and has a glass floor!

The conference was very well attended with an interesting array of speakers and as the week

progressed it became more and more obvious that greenkeeping in Canada was much closer to methods used in the UK than most other overseas countries. This is largely due to the fact that they are dealing with cool climate grasses, the same as here.

I feel that a closer working relationship with the Canadians could benefit both our associations and our greenkeepers and I would like to see such a relationship develop. The Canadians brought a party of 23 to the BTME in 1999 and maybe we could take a party to their conference and exhibition in year 2000. The cost of such a package will be looked into, so those who would be interested, watch this space.

You will have heard much about the GTC over the last few months, some of it is fact and some just gossip. Until all the facts are available, we cannot speculate the outcome. I do, however, feel it could and should have been handled differently. We, like other parties on the GTC Committee have been kept in the dark. Why, I do not know, but we will keep you up to date as soon as possible.

On the greenkeeping front I can never remember such a wet summer

followed by such a wet winter, and talking to greenkeepers everywhere, it has certainly been a struggle to get the essential work done before the start of the season and has certainly given no chance of picking up on extra work which is normal at this time of year.

The only thing which makes it feel a little better is that everyone is in the same boat. This of course is little comfort when your members start to grumble about early season conditions.

This brings me to my pet subject that somehow we must find a way of helping the golfers to understand more about the turf they play on. If only to make them aware that golf is the only sport played on turf all year round. They may then have a better feel for the greenkeeper's concerns and problems in trying to provide good playing conditions without a closed season when the grasses are normally dormant and therefore more susceptible to wear and damage.

Gordon Child

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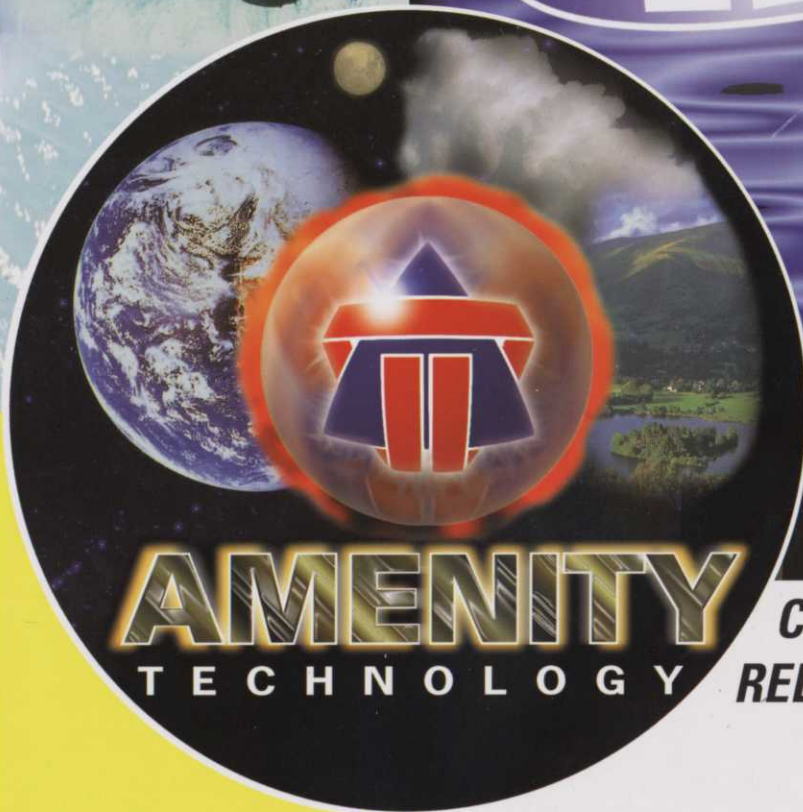
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