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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



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Have you recovered from BTME99 yet? Well, the fun never stops, and at BIGGA HOUSE, we are already planning for the millennium!

Call Jenny now, on 01347 833834 to book your place at BTME2000!



66 As I see it...



15 The Learning Experience



55 Win £50 with our new Buyers' Guide quiz

The best ever

Until the Olympic Games in Atlanta in '96 it was customary for the International Olympic Committee President, Juan Antonio Samaranch, to declare each Games the "best ever" at the closing ceremony.

The fact that he didn't do so for the Atlanta Games was a bit of a kick in the teeth for the organisers. However, they would have been empty words had he maintained the tradition, what with the well documented traffic chaos and well meaning volunteers not up the task of ferrying athletes to their required destination on time... not to mention the horrible bombing.

As an aside, the first morning of the Hayter International Cup in Atlanta last year saw our bus driver get well and truly lost on the way to the golf club and add almost an hour to the journey. So, some things never change.

Anyway back to Mr Samaranch. I know he had other things on his plate around the time of BTME but had he found time to visit Harrogate he could have dusted down his famous phrase and announced that BTME'99 was the "best ever".

By most people's standards BTME'99 really did move on to another level. The Learning Experience, in association with Textron, provided genuine stimulation for those who attended and in Frank Dick, gave us a Key Note Speaker, who could motivate an army of ants onto even greater heights.

The Show itself attracted its highest every attendance - 6,093 people over the two and a half days - shattering the previous best. Of course, they were helped by the best weather in the show's history but they still had to make the effort to visit. From what I gather there was also some serious business done by some of the exhibitors which hints at the quality as well as the quantity of those who filled the halls.

The Thursday night banquet in Hall D had a changed format with Showaddywaddy, providing the entertainment and it provided the ideal opportunity for guests to showcase their nifty footwork and hip shaking talents. There may have been some spare room on the dance floor but I didn't see any.

It is extremely gratifying for all those involved in the organisation to see the months of preparation come to such a successful conclusion.

It does offer up a headache though. Next year Harrogate was always going to be a special occasion - the new Hall Q also seems to have caught the imagination - but now it will have to be extra special just to match this year.

Meetings to discuss BTME 2000 are just about to start at BIGGA HOUSE and you can be sure that everyone will be working hard to ensure that every element of Harrogate 2000 will be that little bit special.

Now that will give us a challenge when it comes to making sure BTME 2001 is "Best Ever".

But we'll cross that particular bridge when we come to it.

Editor:
Scott MacCallum



Greenkeeper

INTERNATIONAL

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64 Arabian Knight

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BIGGA Chairman to address IOG conference

BIGGA Chairman Gordon Child is among the speakers at a four day IOG Conference in Wakefield.

Other leading speakers during the event on March 27-30 include Stephen Studd, Chief Executive of SPRITO, the national training organisation for sport, recreation and allied organisations, and Ken Siems, Course Superintendent of Loch Lomond Golf Club.

Among a line-up of senior figures from the world of sports turf management and research will be Bob

Taylor, Senior Ecologist for the STRI.

Cricket will come under the microscope on the fourth day.

Other speakers during the conference include Peter Dury, sportsturf consultant, John Hacker of Professional Sportsturf Design, and Danny Thorogood, Senior Research Scientist of IGER, the grass research station backed by British Seed Houses. Mike Wattam, Course Manager of the East Sussex National Golf Club, will talk about

the control of turf grass pests and diseases, while Brian Robinson, sports and amenity consultant for Rigby Taylor, will talk on the future of sportsturf technology.

Study tours for delegates include a tour of the STRI headquarters at Bingley with Executive Director Mike Canaway and a visit to Headingley, headquarters of the Yorkshire County Cricket Club.

For more details of the event at the Cedar Court Hotel, Wakefield, call the IOG on 01908 312511.

Scottish Patron's awards

The traditional Scottish Region Patron's Award Lunch held in Stirling just before Christmas to honour the greenkeepers chosen as the year's Patrons' winners.

"We would like to thank all the Scottish Region Patrons as, if it wasn't for their help and input the awards would not be possible," said Chris Yeaman, Swanston GC Course Manager and Scottish Magazine Liaison Officer.

The winners each received a book and earned themselves a trip to BTME 99

The occasion was graced by the presence of a man who was once widely regarded as the Fastest Man in the World. Not Allan Wells, who won the 1980 Olympics, but George McNeil who many believe would have won the 1972 Olympics, had he been able to compete.

Unfortunately George was regarded as a professional having competed in the famous handicapped Powerhall Sprints and was



Picture: Chris Yeaman

thus unable to compete against the world's best on the greatest stage of all.

He is now a highly regarded after dinner speaker and Assistant Manager of Livingston FC (Who

have just knocked your Editor's team out of the Scottish Cup)

"I have to speak for everyone when I say he was absolutely superb and the best that I've heard," said Chris.

Expansion at Gem Professional

GEM Professional has significantly expanded its sales-team and has also appointed a new National Sales Manager to co-ordinate its activities.

The appointment of five new members - Tony Beaumont, David Orchard, Dean Stanton, Jim Nicholson and Richard Haynes provides the sales-team with a complement of ten full-time salesmen covering the British mainland.

Each member of the team has extensive knowledge of greenkeeping and groundsmanship and is able to provide full advice on GEM Professional's range of fertilisers, top-dressings, grass seeds and other turf care products and on the company's Diamond Partnership scheme.

Overseeing the operation of the sales-team is Clive Pearson who has been promoted to National Sales Manager after five years as Southern Area Sales Manager.



Volunteers required for the following events

Volvo PGA Championship, Wentworth May, 30-31, 1999

The Association will again be providing a team of 40 members for each of the above days. Each member will be allocated a match and will walk the course with the game, raking any bunkers found by the players. You will be responsible for your own transport arrangements to the course and there is no provision for overnight accommodation. You may apply to help on either or both days. When applying please give details of your polo shirt size as this may be provided.

The Open Championship Carnoustie July 15-18, 1999

The greenkeeping support team at the Open Championship will be involved in early morning course preparation, bunker raking while matches are in play and evening course repair. You must be available from Wednesday evening 14 July through to the close of play on Sunday 18 July. Whilst all transport, accommodation and meals will be provided between these dates it is the team member's responsibility for travel from home to the venue and return. When applying please give your polo shirt size and your golf shoe size as these may be provided.

Full BIGGA members only may apply, in writing, for either or both of these events to; John Pemberton, BIGGA HOUSE, Aldwark, Alne York YO61 1UF

Should you require any further information then John can be contacted on 01347 833800.

The closing date for applications is Friday, February 26, 1999

In the event of there being more applications than places available then a draw of names will take place. All applicants will be contacted mid-March.

CJ Collins success

CJ Collins Construction have had another successful year, having completed their biggest project ever by constructing a championship course at Killarney Golf & Fishing Club in Ireland which will open in the spring. This is Killarney Golf & Fishing Club's third course.

The Company are now embarking on their extremely busy Winter Schedule which includes the re-modelling of the 14th Greens and Tees on the Links Course at the Open Venue at Royal St Georges in Kent and major work at Walton Heath Golf Club to include Championship Tee, Bunker refurbishment and revetment on both Courses.

Further refurbishments include West Sussex, Littlehampton, Haywards Heath, Romford, Shooters Hill and Royal Wimbledon Golf Clubs.

Water storage Reservoirs and alterations are to be carried out at Bramley Golf Club and Buckingham Golf Club along with further works already in the pipeline for Dyrham Park, Cuddington and Corhampton Golf Clubs.

Fine Turf Agronomy

Greenkeeper International would like to apologise to Fine Turf Agronomy Ltd for a number of errors which occurred in the advert which appeared on Page 22 of the January issue. These were caused by a fault in the scanning equipment used to set the advert which has since been rectified.

Keith McKee

Greenkeeper International would like to apologise to Keith McKee Associates for incorrectly describing Keith as being an employee of Scotts in the article he wrote under the Learning Experience banner in the January issue of Greenkeeper International.

Keith, who was previously employed by Fisons and Levingtons, has enjoyed an active and practical involvement in the turf grass industry for over 30 years and has expertise in interpreting soil analysis and producing practical maintenance programmes for football, cricket, golf and tennis at venues across and beyond Europe.

Keith McKee Associates can offer advice on maintenance programmes, machinery, top dressings, health and safety, construction, drainage specifications, disease control, irrigation, fertiliser programmes and weed control.

Keith can be contacted at Miraflores, 78 The Street, Manuden, Bishop's Stortford, Herts, CM23 1DS Tel: 01279 813574 Fax: 01279 815191.

STRI launches new research

The new STRI Ecology Research Unit has launched a major research initiative funded by the R&A to assess the distribution and status of heather on UK golf courses. Initially the project will involve a comprehensive questionnaire to be circulated to every golf course in the UK. The questionnaire has been designed to determine heather distribution throughout the UK and management, as well as golfers perceptions of heather on the course. All clubs with or without heather are being asked to participate fully in this part of the project.

We urge all golf clubs to take the time and trouble to complete the questionnaires, as this heather survey provides an important opportunity

for golf to demonstrate its environmental role and responsibilities. The project presents a unique opportunity for the golf industry to work together with other national conservation bodies so contributing to the preservation of this important but declining habitat. Ecologically, heather is an important and unique habitat only found in North-West Europe. Approximately 20% of the European heather resource is found in the UK. It has been estimated that over the last 50 years the UK has lost 80% of its heather cover.

Golf as a sport is a major landscape user. There are over 2,500 golf courses in the UK occupying in the order of 130,000 hectares of land. Of these, 400 are estimated to support heather.

The STRI Ecology Research Unit believes that golf has a significant role to play in the conservation and management of heather but more detailed information is required. The heather research project is designed to provide this important information.

The work will be carried out over two years by Bob Taylor, STRI Senior Ecologist, and Jonathan Hart-Woods, Project Co-ordinator. The information collected in this first year will be used to determine sites for detailed survey work in year two.

If you require any further information on the heather survey research project or the work of the STRI Ecology Research unit please contact: Jonathan Hart-Woods on 01274 565131

Loch Lomond achieve new environmental status

Loch Lomond Golf Club has achieved designation as a 'Certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary' by the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary System (ACSS), the educational division of Audubon International, endorsed by the USGA.

Loch Lomond is the first golf club in Scotland, the second in Europe and the 154th course in the world to receive the honour, which recognises commitment to developing and maintaining an environmental programme. The other European course is Valderrama in Spain.

In 1996, Loch Lomond joined the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Programme for Golf Courses which provides information and guidance to golf courses to help them preserve and enhance wildlife habitat and protect natural resources.

"Loch Lomond Golf Club has shown a strong commitment to its environmental programme. They are to be commended for their efforts to provide a sanctuary for wildlife on the golf course property," said Joellen Zeh, Staff Ecologist for the Cooperative Sanctuary System.

"To reach certification, a course must demonstrate that they are maintaining a high degree of environmental quality in a number of areas. These categories include environmental planning, wildlife and habitat management, outreach and education, integrated pest management, water conservation, and water quality management," explained Zeh.

Commenting on their achievement, Abby Miller, Conservation Manager at Loch Lomond, said:

"Since we joined the programme in 1996, we have been working hard to put in place a number of environmental initiatives and it is great to receive such recognition for our efforts. With this award under our belt, we are ready to continue with looking at ways to further improve and develop our commitment to the wildlife and environment at Loch Lomond. Taking care of such a sensitive site requires dedication and, while delighted with what we have achieved so far, we believe this is really only the first stage in a long term programme of environmental management."

Loch Lomond were the Scottish Regional winners of the BIGGA Golf Environment Competition, in association with Amazone and Rhône-Poulenc.

John Fife Memorial Trust travel and study awards

The Trust was established in 1979 in memory of John Weir Fife, a well known member of the Scottish Nursery trade.

It provides awards to assist those involved in commercial or amenity horticulture or related work to broaden their knowledge and experience. Applicants should normally be

resident in Scotland and should preferably be under 30 years of age. Awards are usually intended to enable travel either in the UK or overseas, but other purposes may be considered if they contribute to career development.

The normal maximum award is £500 but the Trustees may accept up

to £1000 for proposals considered to have merit.

The Trustees invite applications for suitable candidates for awards to be used in 1999. Application forms are now available from: Mr T.P. Smith, 12 Bruntsfield Crescent, Edinburgh EH10 4AH Tel: 0131447 1035 and should be returned by March 15.

Royal Inverdivot GC...

by Tony Husband



BAGCC news

Jonathan Franks, Administrative Secretary to the British Association of Golf Course Constructors, is to retire at the Association's AGM later this month.

His successor will be journalist and PR consultant, David White, who will be responsible for the administration, media, public relations and all other matters pertinent to the promotion of the Association.

David can be contacted at The Dorny House, Cooden Beach Golf Club, Bexhill-on-Sea, East Sussex, TN39 4TR Tel: 01424 84238 Fax: 01424 843375 e-mail: writelinks@telinco.com.

Textron renew Iseki link

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

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

Iseki were represented by Mr. Fukatani, Executive Managing Director; Mr. Abe, Overseas Business Managing Director and Mr. Hamada, Director Iseki Europe.

The agreement was signed on behalf of Textron by Peter Bell, Marketing Director.

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

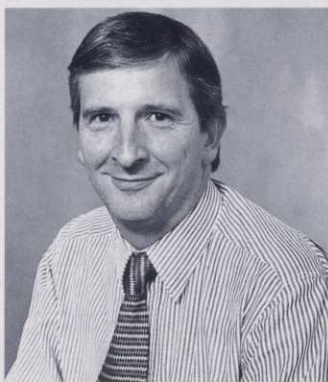
New appointment for John

Oliver Seeds has appointed John Hughes as Amenity Technical Manager with responsibility for Sales and Business Development in the North of England.

John has joined the company from British Seed Houses where he spent 10 years, most recently as Senior Technical Manager for Amenity Grasses. He has a degree in Applied Biology and has spent time working with the N.I.A.B., Welsh Plant

Breeding Station and as a lecturer.

"I am pleased to have joined a forward thinking and professional company that is committed to supplying quality amenity grass seeds to the industry. I am confident that with my experience I will be able to strengthen further their commitment to providing a first class level of support and advice to their Amenity Customers" commented John.



A GREAT ADDITION



Ian McMillan, winner of the '97 Toro Award for Excellence in Greenkeeping, gives a review of his main prize - a Toro 2300 - after a year in use.

Hankley Common Golf Club were delighted to be the recipient of the Toro Award for Excellence in Greenkeeping and the fabulous prize of the Toro 2300 has made our maintenance practices easier. "The quality of build of the new machine is superb and a worthy addition to the Toro stable. It also offers new features, such as back lapping, reel speed control as well as fully hydraulic drive. These features give this machine added refinements normally only found on

greens triples. This is also a measure of Toro's commitment to manufacturing market leading equipment

"The three wheel drive capabilities of this machine allow it to get gracefully to those steep areas around the course which require a finer cut. The fact that this facility can be engaged by the simple operation of a lever from the seat gives the operator full control in those sticky situations. The transport speed has allowed us to carry out the mowing of tees and surrounds

considerable quicker, therefore, keeping us ahead of early morning play. The construction, design and large volume of the grass boxes make for easier use and longer periods between empties.

All the operators of this machine have found it to be easy to use and set up. The quality of cut from the eight blade units is excellent. Coupled with the Toro links mounting system allows the units to hug the contours of the turf ensuring that top quality cut.

1998 winner



John Coleman is pictured astride his well-earned Toro Greensmaster 3200-D with the rest of the Abbeydale GC greenstaff, Chairman of Green, Jack Copeland (4th left), and Peter Mansfield of Lely UK Ltd (extreme right)



Sisis go online

Sisis Equipment (Macclesfield) Ltd, leading designers and manufacturers of turf maintenance equipment for sportsgrounds and golf courses now have a website. For details of the whole SISIS range, and topical news stories visit "www.sisis.com".

New BIGCA appointment

The British Institute of Golf Course Architects has appointed Sharon McGregor as Secretary.

She joins the Institute after the highly successful BIGCA International Conference held at Wentworth in November, which saw 110 delegates from all over the world attend the event, and the Conference Dinner.

The British Institute, now has 60 members including its Diploma Students, the third intake of whom are to commence their two-year programme at Merrist Wood College in February.

On the move

The Greenkeeper Supply Company has appointed Liam Galway to the position of National Sales Manager.

In addition Michael Fance, previously Course Manager at Stock Brook Manor Golf and Country Club, in Essex, has been appointed Southern Sales Representative and Richard Pull, previously an assistant at Knaresborough Golf Club has been appointed Northern Sales Representative.

Stalham win Kubota contract

Kubota (UK) Ltd has appointed Stalham Engineering as its exclusive dealer to cover the NR postcode area within the county of Norfolk.

Based at The Green, Stalham, Norfolk, the company is now providing comprehensive and professional sales, service and parts support for the full range of Kubota's market leading compact tractors and matching implements, ride-on mowers, power products and garden machinery. Customers include local authorities, golf and sports clubs, landscape contractors, farmers, growers, estate owners, equestrian centres, schools, colleges and domestic gardeners.

Stalham Engineering and its customers will receive full support on equipment sales, technical enquiries and demonstrations from Kubota's regional sales manager, David Roberts, backed by Kubota (UK) Ltd's sales, service and parts staff located at the company's Thame, Oxfordshire headquarters.

Ken Richardson was laid low during BTME but has compiled an excellent column from his sick bed...

Good planning is the key to your future

When I thought about the content of this column, I thought that I would be able to report on the successful outcome of the Learning Experience 1999, which thanks to the continuing support of Textron Turf Care and Specialty Products continues to gain momentum and prestige as the Premier Education and Training event for Golf Greenkeepers in Europe. However, all my plans came to nought as I have been laid low by a mysterious virus affecting my balance mechanism causing me to miss most of the week at Harrogate.

However, thanks to Sami and all the other members of staff who filled in during my absence, there didn't appear to be any problems. Sami tells me that all of our planning over the past 11 months paid off and things ran very smoothly and I am eagerly looking forward to viewing the videos of the Conference and Seminars. Don't forget that videos and written transcripts are available for all Conference Sessions and for all Seminars, contact HQ for details. I did manage to see some of the Seminars during my brief visit to Harrogate on Thursday and Friday and it was

encouraging to see that numbers of delegates were up from last year.

I was very pleased to hear that three more Master Greenkeeper candidates had been successful in the November examination. David Duke, David Hannam and John Quinn joining Syd Arrowsmith, who passed the examination in March, to collect their awards during the National Education Conference. We now have a total of 20 Master Greenkeepers, five in the USA, 14 in Britain and one on mainland Europe.

The planning for the Learning Experience 2000 has begun and the theme for next year is Past, Present and Future. The plan is to show what we can learn from our ancestors, the greenkeepers of the past, relate that to what is happening now, at the end of one century and at the start of the next and to see, if possible, what the future holds, not just for greenkeeping but also for golf in general. If you have any ideas on subject matter or speakers the please contact Sami or myself at HQ.

The Local Training season is almost at a close with the Spring courses ending on 24 February. We organised four

extra courses, than those advertised but we also had to cancel three courses due to lack of support. I have already been approached to run computing courses, health and safety, first aid and budget management courses for this Autumn and I will be looking at the hundreds of feed back sheets from 98/99 to assess what other courses are most needed. If you have any ideas on the type of course that should be run then contact us as soon as possible.

We ran seven courses in our new training room, the Key Room, at BIGGA HOUSE, last year. All delegates felt that we had designed and implemented an excellent training resource where delegates could learn without distractions. More courses are planned for 1999 and details will be published in March. The Key Room is available for hire and we are working with Aldwark Manor Country Club and Hotel on delegate rates. Watch out for details in future editions of Greenkeeper International.

Readers of this column may remember me giving detail of the BIGGA HQ bid to become Investors in People. This is a Government Standard that

recognises that a company is fulfilling a range of criteria to develop its most valuable resource, its people. We have had to work hard to produce the evidence to support our bid and we are about to enter the assessment phase.

The BIGGA Golf Course Environment Competition was re-launched at Harrogate.

The Competition will be sponsored, again by Amazone Ground Care and by the Grassroots Trading Company. Application forms will be sent to all golf clubs, in Britain, during February and entries need to be returned to BIGGA HOUSE by 3 May. Any golf club that entered in 1998 and wishes to enter in 1999 needs to complete those parts of their application form where major changes have occurred in the last year.

Watch out for details of this year's TORO Student of the Year and Excellence in Greenkeeping Competitions, which should be arriving at your golf club/training provider soon.

Entries have to be back at BIGGA HOUSE by the beginning of May so make sure that you send yours back as soon as possible.

This month, Geoff Steel gives advice to those looking for a financial advisor...

Standing up for your independence

Financial Advisers come in all shapes and sizes but they are divided into two types. They are either tied to one company or they are Independent.

All Financial Advisers are regulated by the authorities and must be qualified, but it is still essential to check the advice you are given.

Advisers who are representatives of a company can only advise on the products sold by that company. Independent Financial Advisers have a duty to offer advice based on the whole range of products available from every source.

It therefore makes sense to consult an Independent Financial Adviser.

If you are not sure of the status of the individual you are talking to check their business card. It will tell

you quite clearly if the adviser is independent.

Most Banks and Building Societies have their own Insurance Companies and only sell their own products. However many of these companies do have Independent Financial Advisers which you can see if you insist. The banks will not usually make it easy for you to gain access to the Independent Adviser. Why should this be? It's purely because they make more profit from selling their own products than they do by offering independent advice.

Many customers will accept advice given by the first company representative they see, believing there is little difference between various companies and their products. There can be huge differences in the

cost and effectiveness of different policies. Unfortunately the large companies that you see on the High Street can take advantage of customer loyalty. Personally I have recently seen policies from major well-known names, which cost almost double those available from more competitive companies.

It is important whoever you see to ensure that you compare costs and charges of different companies. Would you buy a car from the first person you saw without comparing prices?

To contact a financial adviser you can telephone IFA Promotion hot line on 0117 971 1177. They will give you the names of your nearest Independent Financial Advisers. Nearly all of them will offer a free

initial review of your requirements. Many people think it is expensive to see someone Independent. This is not correct. It is very often cheaper than seeing a tied company representative.

If you would like a quick comparison of any existing quotation or policy you may have, please telephone me on my freephone number, 0800 783 5132.

Geoff Steel is an Independent Financial Adviser with Walsh Lucas & Co and he welcomes comments from readers. His freephone telephone number is 0800 783 5132. Walsh Lucas & Co are regulated by the Personal Investment Authority.

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Address your letters to the Editor, Greenkeeper International, BIGGA HOUSE, Aldwark, Aine, York YO61 1UF. You can also fax them to 01347 833801, or e-mail them to reception@bigga.co.uk

Expanding horizons through the Dreer award

My name is Mieke Darnaske, a Senior Plant Science Major at Cornell University.

My field of interest is Golf Course Management. Currently, I am in the process of applying for the Dreer Scholarship for students in any Horticulture field of study.

The Dreer Award allows for one student from Cornell University to spend at least one year in a foreign country, studying a field of interest to them. The student must design a programme citing work or internship arrangements, travel expenses and most importantly the reason for travelling to the intended country(s).

Travelling to the United Kingdom to study the different aspects of Golf Course Management will allow me to have a better understanding

of the history of golf. As my family recently built an 18 hole course in Upstate New York, it is important to develop a strong appreciation for management in foreign countries, as well as in the United States.

I have worked on all aspects of golf course construction, as well as standard mowing operations, flower garden design and installation and have acted as assistant club house manager. The Dreer Award will give me the opportunity to enhance my knowledge and experience upon returning to my family's course.

Along with my academic studies, this spring I will be working to certify the Cornell University Golf Course with the International Audubon Society. The certification process will be a learning experience not only for me, but also for the

Superintendent, David Hicks, and the University.

This will not be the first time I have spent time in a foreign country. During 1994-1995, I spent one year in Wageningen, the Netherlands as a Rotary Foreign Exchange Student. I believe my language skills and international experience will be an asset to me if I am awarded this scholarship. I feel my experiences both on and off the golf course will also benefit you and your course.

The interests which I seek to expand on through this scholarship are:

- Clubhouse management
- Golf course maintenance and restoration
- Golf course horticulture and flower bed designs

I seek both paid and non-paid internships at up to four courses over the period of one year. If there is interest from your course to work together with me, or if you may know of a interested course or company, contact me at:

Mieke A. Damaske 7067 Boughton Rd. Victor NY 14564 United States
 Tel:-1(716)-657-7867 Fax-1(716)-657-6735
 e-mail-damgolf@hotmail.com

Thank you for your time.

Mieke Damaske,
 Victor, New York

McDivot 1



As a member in good standing of BIGGA, I take exception to the article in the January issue of Greenkeeper International entitled "Sand Green Destruction" by "Sandy McDivot".

I have always enjoyed the author's articles in the past. He has an admirable flair for the written word, and his astute observations on the state of our industry and outspoken opinions (albeit under a pseudonym) are a much desired breath of fresh air in the otherwise stifled atmosphere of golf politics.

In his past articles, Sandy McDivot always had a firm grasp of his subject matter, and seemed to me to be someone speaking from an informed position. In the case of "Sand Green Destruction" however I can forthrightly state that any demonstrable knowledge of sand green maintenance is sadly lacking. I base this on my own 15 years of building and managing sand based greens.

To begin, McDivot complains of greens that puddle up and a "huge splat of a pitch mark". The only way that happens on a USGA green is if you are throwing out way too much water. Likewise the Poa annua infestation, excessive spiking, black layer and Fusarium that McDivot describes in the article are all symptoms of chronic over watering. Any turf school graduate could point that out.

Try field capacity, Sandy, and not saturation.

McDivot would do well to read the USGA literature on the desired level of irrigation.

Then the author says he was forced to apply "obscene quantities of fertiliser", and even worse - he had to do it in the autumn! Well, when exactly do you fertilise bentgrass? High summer? And just what is an "obscene" amount? A half an ounce a thousand? Two tons an acre? Further, what fertiliser is he applying? Ammonium nitrate? Cow manure? We are left to wonder.

Regarding fertility levels, one constructive suggestion I could make to anyone with sand greens is to "spoon feed", applying small amounts, (ie 0.5oz N/M, depending on soil analysis) at frequent intervals, even weekly. This will avoid nitrogen-induced disease incidence and the surge of green growth McDivot describes.

I have never seen a case of the described thatch build up when the correct management procedures of aeration, verticutting and top dressing were applied. This latter practice isn't mentioned at all in the article. Here's a clue, Sandy: Regular, light top dressing has been proven to reduce thatch, improve disease resistance, improve ball holding capability, reduce grain and smooth those old spike and ball marks. Try it!

If it's Take All Patch that you're worried about. I've obtained 100% control with alternating applications of Bayleton (2.5

kg/ha) and Rubigan (3.0 l/ha) supplemented with ammonium sulphate at 30.0 kg/ha, all on seven day intervals. It took about three months to disappear completely, not so many years as McDivot says, and the total cost didn't exceed £2,000, hardly exorbitant in this day and age. This may not work in all situations, but it certainly cleared up the problem for me.

Speaking of heavy play, we are presently doing over 200 rounds a day on a public course where the soft spike policy is cheerfully ignored and no golfer takes particular care to pick up his feet or repair his pitch marks. We change holes three times a week, or about every 450 golfers on average. This is on sand greens which don't even meet USGA specifications, and they remain both playable and attractive.

We are managing "Pennlinks" creeping bentgrass in a sub-tropical climate for which the species is entirely unsuited. We mow at five mm, the greens roll nine feet on the Stimpmeter and, oh yes, they are absolutely free of Poa (which does grow here) or any other weeds for that matter without an ounce of herbicide.

For decades the USGA Green Section has worked diligently through scientific research to develop the best possible growing medium for golf greens. This is meant to benefit both the Course Manager and the golfer. I spend a

considerable amount of time and effort to convince the powers that be to the necessary expense in constructing USGA greens, and it dismays me to see my arguments undermined by ignorance.

I believe it is irresponsible to publish articles, which contradict the fundamentals of sound agronomic principles by an individual who is either uninformed or incompetent. I find it distressing that a professional and reputable publication would carry such misinformation. Printing anecdotal evidence - moreover from an anonymous source - that flies in the face of proven industry standards is a disservice to this organisation.

I understand why the author wishes to remain anonymous, but he could do himself and everyone else in golf a favour by consulting with someone who truly understands USGA golf greens. I am acquainted with several knowledgeable people in the UK who I would be happy to recommend.

Alternatively, I invite the author to visit us here in the Canaries, to observe first hand, the successful management of sand based bentgrass greens.

After all, it's better to light a candle than curse the darkness.

Stephen Okula
 Golf Course Superintendent,
 Golf Las Americas, Tenerife,
 Spain

McDivot 2

I refer to the article in January edition of Greenkeeper International, Sand Green Destruction, by Mr Sandy McDivot. I would like now to make a few comments of my own about his views.

My first point is Mr McDivot. I don't understand why you have to be anonymous when writing in a magazine such as ours. Is it that you feel more secure and therefore more able to criticise your fellow colleagues in greenkeeping? I am unclear as to the intention of your article. Is it that you hate all modern constructed greens and therefore

you would have us all revert back to the old turn of the century standards?

Your comments were not without some merit as you did your best to highlight some of the problems that the modern day greenkeeper has to contend with but I am of the opinion that your condescending style of communication was ill thought out and unhelpful. This was the case particularly with your recommendations, however lighthearted, about the use of illegal mercury based fungicide and alcohol.

To Scott and the team. We have an

excellent magazine so let's keep its content at the fore front of our industry and not resort to this kind of destructive unnamed twaddle.

I have a final message to Mr McDivot.

You had a golden opportunity to teach us something and therefore enrich our life as a greenkeeper, but you missed the mark by a mile.

Billy McMillan
 (and proud to say it)
 Wildwood Country Club

McDivot 3

After reading "Sandy McDivot's" hatchet job on sand based greens, I felt I had to write to level things up.

After all it is only right to read both sides of the story, especially when one side is so full of generalisations. It makes me think that "Sandy" is no greenkeeper but a fully paid up member of the tabloid press.

I am the first to admit that there are many sand based greens in the UK which have failed for many reasons;

1. Poor quality root zone.
2. The incompatibility of root zone/blinding layer.
3. The incompatibility of blinding layer/drainage carpet.
4. Greens constructed with improper machinery.
5. Greens constructed during difficult weather conditions.

Many of these can be put down to a dilution of specification, for whatever reason (usually financial).

We then move on to management practices. We as Course Managers/Greenkeepers have always had to be adaptable and never more so with the maintenance of free-draining sand based greens.

Fertiliser applications should be little and often. The same can be said for Verti-cutting, top-dressing. A sympathetic cutting height (5/16") should be used for a full season at least, after all we are dealing with a young plant. The use of triple greens mowers should be avoided at all costs due to the weight of these machines and the quick appearance of

triplex rings.

Communication with the members/players is vital to educate the golfers as to why you are doing these things.

Aeration should be carried out as normal but a move to micro-tining would be of great benefit. Over-seeding should be carried out as normal to re-introduce the original seed/turf cultivars.

Pin positions should be changed more often to limit wear. Fertiliser selection is crucial.

No Phosphates and regular use of organic liquids or seaweed from day one should be a matter of course.

Fungicide use should be strictly limited or better still don't use them at all. Why kill millions of useful bacteria when you have spent time and effort building them up. I have not used fungicide for nine years.

It can be done with careful/thoughtful management.

As for spike/divot marks, if you reach a situation where your sward has thinned out these blemishes will obviously become more noticeable.

The STRI uses a wear machine to imitate spike marks, so the league tables for cultivars do reflect a grasses resistance to wear and tear. There are many courses who are thinking of reconstruction due to drainage limitation, small putting surfaces or just plain bad greens.

So why should they re-build and use the old turf as a putting surface when better species are available. True, the old turf will get up to speed quicker but we

shouldn't be looking short term, after all the greens will still be there in 50/60 years if built properly in the first place.

At the moment there are many Greenkeepers who are in the process of trying to persuade their Golf club/committee to start a reconstruction programme. "Sandy McDivot's" (his real name would have been nice) article will have made their job even harder or maybe impossible.

I talk from personal experience when I say sand based greens can be a great success. They have to be constructed using the finest consistent materials available, (not built down to a price) when weather conditions are favourable.

The golfers/members must understand the task that lies ahead and must not pressure the greenkeeper for a quick fix. Finally the greenkeeper/manager must be able to adapt his management practices from green to green.

After all he may end up with 12 soil/6 sand greens and they will never behave the same way. This is something "Sandy McDivot" is obviously incapable of doing.

Maybe he should move aside and let the "village idiot" take over.

Mark Jones
 (real name)
 Preston Golf Club
 (real golf club)

McDivot 4

I am writing to ask you to pass on my heartiest congratulations to Sandy McDivot, of Sludgecombe Pay and Play, on his superb article in the January edition of Greenkeeper International.

I am sure anyone who has had anything to do with sand greens will have had similar experiences and will find it very easy to relate to.

Sandy seems to have this ability to weigh these situations up and when putting pen to paper his thoughts hit the bullseye.

Richard Heaslip
 Chigwell, Essex

Help needed with wind information

To all Scottish members. If you have any stories or photographs of damage caused during the January 1999 storms that hit the U.K. please let me hear about them, as I think there will be some interesting bits of information to tell our members. So if you have got anything to tell, drop me a line and any photographs. This would be much appreciated and we could put them in a future issue of Greenkeeper International.

Chris Yeaman
 Scottish Region Magazine
 Liaison Officer, 74 Muirfield
 Drive, Gullane, East Lothian,
 EH31 2HJ

Congrats to the mighty Quinn

I write in a personal capacity to congratulate John Quinn, Course Manager at Elmwood for his recent achievements of being runner up in the Toro Excellence in Greenkeeping Award, together, with gaining Master Greenkeeper status. John is an enthusiast and an inspiration to all of us who work with him.

Colin Mackay
 Assistant Course Manager,
 Elmwood GC, Cupar



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You can never have too much advice which helps you live a little more bearably in the dark winter months

Customer *satisfaction*



For any greenkeeper worth his salt, the start of a new season is always laced with excitement for what lies ahead, while providing time to reflect on the year that has passed, to learn from (sometimes bitter) experiences and to formulate plans for combating the upcoming player onslaught.

Certainly, 1998 will go down as the year of "The Big Soak", with Mother Nature emptying more rain upon us than in recent living history, or so it seemed. Into 1999, the rain continues unabated, the hard lesson learned by many being that water still refuses to flow uphill, while for those unfortunate courses situated "below sea level", there's a lesson to be learned from the Dutch, who know a thing or two about draining lowlands, with their ingenious use of Archimedean screw pumps.

Rain-sodden courses have indeed caused many golfers to be thoroughly grumpy, especially those seven-day-a-week seniors, who like a bad whine (sic) often get bitter with age. And who do they blame for course closures, temporary greens, or tees moved a few yards away in order to protect from destructive forces? Why, it's the poor old greenkeeper, who has the nerve to fail to control the elements!

All of this greatly focuses the mind on keeping the customer satisfied, which is itself as much a skill - a learning experience, if you like - as maintaining course machinery to a required high degree of efficiency. Writing this in January, there's a gale lashing in from the east, it's pouring (again), the course is waterlogged (again), while the Sunday Telegraph

Customer satisfaction



has just published a doom and gloom article concerning no less than 90 golf courses being up for sale at knock-down prices, apparently an albatross around the necks of their present owners.

Just yesterday, though it rained too hard to play, there were a few stalwarts hanging around the clubhouse. Having first solved the world's economic problems, they rounded on me to explain, with 200,000 new players having entered the game in the past five years, why golf course casualties are so high.

"Aren't there too many courses?" they asked. Well, some clearly were built in the wrong place and certainly many spent too much, yet today more rounds are being played by more golfers than ever before, with that trend continuing on an upward spiral. New courses are still being built, and indeed doing very nicely, thank you, while very many others are undergoing more than superficial facelifts, so there aren't too many dead ones, just some that are poorly run by people who don't really want to run a golf course, just own one.

We should not be worrying about golf in decline. If a plateau is perceived, well, these things often happen before the next boom. The cold facts are that some golf courses don't

deserve to succeed; with Owner/Managers making the assumption that golfers will put up with anything just to get a game. Not anymore, they won't, for while most golfers may be hooked, they are not barmy. Like some of these clubs with FOR SALE boards out; they have fine facilities, but often are poorly managed, usually by uppity accountants. When grey-suit management enters meltdown, the cycle shows a drop in business, a cut in prices and a cut in maintenance. If that doesn't work, slash prices again and virtually eliminate maintenance. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to work this out as a recipe for disaster. Golfers have figured it out.

What they've figured out also is that they now have a very wide choice of places to play. Well-run and well-maintained courses can still charge a decent sum, and get no objections.

A poorly run facility though, be it corporate, public or member-owned, will often look for a scapegoat, with the greenkeeper the one whose head is placed on the chopping block.

Here's one worthwhile tip. By recording every single work command, including every course of action (and every reaction), you can often rescue the day. The saving grace, of course, is that poorly run golf facilities rarely get

ploughed up. Once in place, they stay; with one man's folly becoming another man's good deal. Assuming your work has been conducted with patient efficiency, continue greenkeeping, albeit with a new owner.

Before your members awaken to spring, when again they'll start those unrealistic demands for the course to mirror Augusta National, take a further look at the history of 1998. Learning from it, now might be the time to get lines of communication with the members well and truly open. You might begin by explaining exactly what a cold, raw, wet season does for the growth of the sward, explaining that April is still a winter month.

With spring and summer remaining as distant dreams, this is the time to tell players about soil temperatures, and that even you cannot force Nature to warm up before she's ready. Use bulletin boards and newsletters and never miss an opportunity to explain your views in person with any new committee incumbent, even if you view the latest committee re-shuffle as akin to re-arranging the deck chairs on the Titanic. Keep pessimistic views to yourself, but colour optimism with a large slice of realism. It won't hurt.

These first early months should also present a good opportunity to look at traffic management. You'll know the path of least resistance your members take, how they enter and exit greens and tees and how their movement effects wear. To institute traffic control measures now, by spreading the load over a wider area, rather than waiting until turf is injured beyond simple remedy in the growing season, will pay dividends, even if only 50% of your members fall in and co-operate. By simple mathematics, 50% compliance means 50% less wear.

Some greenkeepers look at bad weather as a grand opportunity to undertake some tasks best hidden from prying eyes. For example, the best cure for poor circulation around greens with too many overhanging trees is, by common consent, use of the aptly-titled chainsaw twosome: "Thunder" and "Lightning", though this year there's a new one that might take some beating - tree root wet rot!

Don't lose heart, tackle each task according to its level of irritation. While the nature of greenkeeping quite properly is to exercise patience, never forget the prayer of golfers -

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Environment competition aims for ecological excellence

The 1999 BIGGA Golf Environment Competition, won in 1998 by Lindrick Golf Club, has a new co-sponsor unveiled at a press conference during the show. Amazone Ground Care will continue as a co-sponsor which was started by Amazone Managing Director, Rod Baker, in the mid 90s but will be joined this year by The Grass Roots Trading Company who replace Rhône-Poulenc Amenity who co-sponsored the event for the last two years. "Since its inception the Golf Environment Competition has really caught the imagination of the country's golf clubs and the

quality of entry has risen steadily. This is particularly gratifying because it is a measure of the increasing importance golf clubs are placing on environmental and ecological issues," said BIGGA Chairman, Gordon Child.

"I would like to pay tribute to Rod Baker, of Amazone, for his undoubted commitment to the cause of golf environmental matters and to Rhône Poulenc who supported the competition in '97 and '98. I would also like to welcome Jamie Bennett, and the Grass Roots Trading Company, for joining as a co-sponsor and feel confident that the BIGGA



GRASS ROOTS
— TRADING COMPANY —

Golf Environment Competition, in association with Amazone Ground Care and the Grass Roots Trading Company, will go from strength to strength," said Gordon. Rod Baker instigated the Amazone Golf Environment Competition in 1995 and has been a driving force behind the co-sponsored event since it began in '97. "I'm delighted with the success of the competition which was highlighted when the winning golf clubs received their awards from HRH The Duke of York at a presentation last year. It was a proud moment for me and a fitting tribute to the golf clubs who do such a great deal to preserve and maintain their environment," said Rod. Jamie Bennett is delighted that his company has the opportunity to put something back into the game of golf. "We jumped at the opportunity to become a co-sponsor because, as a company which is well aware of the environmental responsibilities of golf, we feel the this competition plays a major role in highlighting the excellent work undertaken by golf clubs," said Jamie. As in previous years the competition will be judged by STRI Ecology Officer, Bob Taylor, and English Nature.

Competition launched for architecture students

The importance of the role played by golf course architects in the creation and maintenance of quality courses round the world is being recognised in a new national award scheme.

The British Institute of Golf Course Architects (BIGGA) and worldwide turf machinery and irrigation products manufacturer The Toro Company, have teamed up to produce 'The Toro Student Golf Course Architect Award'. Announcing the new initiative at BTME, BIGGA's President Howard Swan said that the award would be competed for by students studying on a two-year post-graduate diploma course in golf course architecture at Merrist Wood College.

He said that the course, set up by BIGGA, is unique in the world and produced its first graduates last April. It is an international course, with five students in the current intake coming from the USA, Japan, Germany and Scandinavia. New international students joining in February will come from as far afield as Chile and South Africa, as well as emerging golf nations such as Slovenia and Croatia. "I'm delighted that this unique course for our profession is being recognised by a company of the worldwide stature of Toro. I know that our students will benefit greatly from this award and the experience it will give them," said Howard.

Rex Hansen, International Marketing Manager for Irrigation Products, said: "Toro is supporting this award as part of its commitment to education and training in the golf industry. As with our support for greenkeepers and Course Managers, we believe it's important for us to be working with architects."

Bob Buckingham, Toro's European Sales Manager, said: "Golf course architects are key people in the industry. They are responsible for the development of new courses and we want them to understand the use of irrigation systems and turf maintenance machinery." The first recipient of the new award will be chosen from students who will complete their course in January 2000. An expert judging panel made up of representatives of BIGGA and Toro, with the course's educational manager, will assess the young golf course architects on their academic achievement on the course, the standard of their presentation and project dissertation and by personal interview. For the winning student, there's the career-enhancing kudos of becoming 'The Toro Student Golf Course Architect' and prize of an all-expenses-paid visit to Toro's impressive worldwide headquarters in Minneapolis and its irrigation division in Riverside, California, USA. There also will be visits to famous golf venues such as the Los Angeles Golf & Country Club and the Olympic Club, in San Francisco.



New supporters go for gold



BIGGA announce five new Golden Key Supporters at the show and they were presented with their plaques by key note speaker Frank Dick at the Chairman's Lunch in the Majestic Hotel.

Joining the existing group of Golden Key Companies are Stylo Matchmaker, Rolawn, Bernhard and Co Ltd, Amenity Technology and The Grass Roots Trading Company.

"It is thanks to the support of key companies within the industry that BIGGA has a healthy Education and Development Fund and I am delighted to welcome the five Golden Key Supporters into the BIGGA family," said Executive Director, Neil Thomas.

"It is only through the support of these companies that BIGGA can fund its many educational initiatives which include the production of books and videos, as well as ensuring that the many excellent training courses at regional and national level can be run at a cost to the individual far lower than would otherwise be the case," added Neil.

Four of the new Golden Key Companies will be profiled within the pages of Greenkeeper International over the next few months while Stylo Matchmaker, who have just launched a range of work and leisure wear under the BIGGA banner, appear in the current issue of the magazine.

The complete list of Golden Key Companies is as follows:- Amazone Ground Care, Amenity Technology, Barenbrug, Bernhard and Co Ltd, Charterhouse Turf Machinery Ltd, Grass Roots Trading Company, Hayter Ltd, John Deere Ltd, Kubota UK Ltd, Mommersteeg International, Ocmis Irrigation UK Ltd, PGA European Tour, Rainbird, Rhône-Poulenc Amenity, Rigby Taylor Ltd, Rolawn, Scotts, Stylo Matchmaker, Supaturf Products Ltd, Textron Turf Care and Specialty Products, The Toro Company. The Silver Key Companies are:- Avoncrop Amenity Products, Ernest Doe & Sons, Lambert/Fenchurch, Sisis Equipment Ltd and Weed Free.

Hayter dinner

The annual Hayter dinner held in the George Hotel on the Tuesday of Harrogate week saw Gibsons Machinery Sales crowned Dealer of the Year for the third year in succession. Stuart Mercer accepted the award. The Outstanding Dealer of the Year was BS Mowers of Bristol, with Steve George accepted the award. Overseas Partner of Distinction was Commonwealth War Graves Commission with Derek Parker, Director of Horticulture accepted the award. Salesman of the Year was Alistair Rowell, of Carrs Agriculture in Hexham. Tony Hazard, Hayter's Divisional Director from Tomkins presented the awards while Geoffrey Fletcher, of Drake & Fletcher, in Kent gave the vote of thanks.

Mastering their profession

BIGGA'S elite band of Master Greenkeepers has been swollen to 20 thanks to its biggest ever single intake, with four new greenkeepers entitled to carry the letters MG after their name.



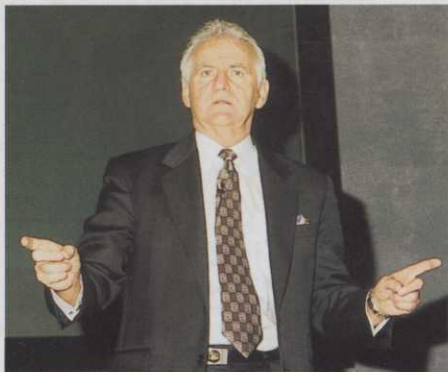
Sid Arrowsmith, of Frilford Heath Golf Club; David Duke of Seddinersee Golf and Country Club, Germany; John Quinn, of Elmwood College Golf Club, and David Hannam, of Royal Eastbourne Golf Club, each received a plaque and a Master Greenkeeper blazer badge from BIGGA Chairman Gordon Child during the National Education Conference in

the Majestic Hotel.

The title "Master Greenkeeper" is a sign of someone at the top of the profession and can only be bestowed once he has completed 10 years as a Course Manager or Head Greenkeeper; collected 200 credits, achieved by acquiring qualifications, attending educational seminars; had his golf course inspected by another Master Greenkeeper and passed a rigorous written exam.

Of the new intake, David Duke is the first based in continental Europe and is a protégé of another Master Greenkeeper, David Whitaker, of The Wisley; while last October, John Quinn was a runner-up in the Toro Award for Excellence in Greenkeeping.

The 20 current Master Greenkeepers include five from the United States, one is from Germany with the other 14 from the United Kingdom.



Above: The many faces of Frank Dick.



Above: An audience held spellbound by Frank Dick's performance



Left: The week was graced by the presence of Carl Burtner, President - Worldwide of Textron Turf Care and Specialty Products who paid a flying visit. Andrew Sunaway, Sales Director, Gordon Child, Carl Burtner and Peter Bell, Marketing Director

Sunday January 17

Can this really be our 11th exhibition? It surely is and time to hit the road again for Harrogate. For me it is a very short journey but I am mindful of all those already on the road from distant parts. The weather seems set fair but on past experience I take nothing for granted. Already my Education and Training Manager has taken to his sick bed and I know we are going to miss Ken this week with five days of continuous educational programmes. Still, on with conference registration which seems to run more smoothly than ever thanks to Sami. The early comers are already well bedded in and many heading for the swimming pool. Tonight is informal and an enjoyable dinner is followed for many by the traditional late night at the bar - just building up for the week ahead.

Monday January 18

With Ken absent I suddenly find myself in conference mode checking that all is in order. A new Chairman, this year in Dr Mike Canaway, and we agree on the need to keep the programme running to time - this always contributes to the professionalism of the event. Mike proves to be an excellent Chairman giving his expert opinion when the need arises. I determine to make sure that he is reinvented for BTME 2000. The speakers present a varied programme and again one is impressed with the presentations of our own members. The highlight for me is the presentation of the Master Greenkeeper Certificates to David Hannam, David Duke, Sidney Arrowsmith and John Quinn. Our Master Greenkeepers now total 20 since the incep-

tion of the scheme in 1990. The workshop programme is proceeding well and the lunch break confirms yet again the quality of the food at the Majestic. With many of the bedrooms having been refurbished all is well at the hotel now under the control of a new group. Thankfully Frank Flaherty is still in charge and he knows only too well what greenkeepers like...! If the food and accommodation are good, then my worries are far less! This certainly applies at the Majestic and I believe at the other hotels we use. So to one of the highlights of the week, the Conference Dinner. Our after dinner speaker Ian Shuttleworth, the solicitor from Ilkley, proves a great hit - getting it just right for our particular audience. We welcome Andrew Sunaway and Peter Bell from Textron mindful of the fact our Learning Experience programme would just not happen without the company's great support. It is then the second late night of our stamina-sapping programme. It is telling on the staff as well before the exhibition has even got underway. Tony is flat on his back and won't be in this week. Two down.

Tuesday January 19

Conference and workshops continue. Down at the halls it is getting very busy but Jenny is taking the flak and keeping cool. The conference ends with a lively question and answer session. Short Board of Management meeting to elect Chairman and Vice Chairman. It is no change. Gordon has enjoyed his year so much that he offers to stand for another and is unanimously re-

elected as is Elliott as Vice Chairman. We all rush off to see Hall Q which will welcome our exhibitors and visitors in 2000. Parties are shown around while beer and burritos are consumed. Early impressions are that Hall Q is being favourably received judging by the queue of potential exhibitors jostling for Jenny and Cheryl's attention (or are they handing out signed photographs?). A quick change and off to the sixth Hayter Dinner in the George Hotel ably hosted as usual by Kim Macfie and Barbara Garton. Meanwhile the Past Chairmen's Dinner is conducted in its normal lively style but, I am assured, in slightly lower key than the previous year's event which was rather exciting by all accounts!

Wednesday January 20

We are ready for the off at 9am when the Chairman cuts the ribbon. This year we have reintroduced the Keynote Speaker session and the event has received maximum publicity. Frank Dick proves to be quite brilliant in front of a large audience. If people aren't motivated by this session then they never will be. It is clear that videos of the session are going to be in great demand. We'll put this one down as a success! Off to the Chairman's Luncheon which finishes in record time at 1.45pm. I am always conscious that, while enjoying a pleasant lunch, our company representatives are naturally keen to get back to their stands with as little delay as possible. Frank Dick makes the Golden and Silver Key company presentations. Back to the halls which are busy and a great atmosphere. Time to prepare for the AGM. This

goes smoothly and is enlivened with the new customary contribution from Cecil George. Jim Fry receives his Honorary Membership plaque. The Chairman welcomes Kerran Daly to the Board of Management in place of Robin Greaves and also Mark Dobell, Financial Secretary at the R & A, as our new Guardian. I am not finished yet as I have a final FEGGA Board meeting to attend. I have been providing back-up support to FEGGA since its inception in March 1996 and now with the basis of its administration in place it is time for me to cease my direct involvement. I shall miss the company of Dean, Per-Olof, Elise, Claus, Roland and Tommy but I guess I will continue to meet up with them on the greenkeeping circuit.

Thursday January 21

Ken reappears - excellent news - or does he just want to come to see Showwaddy? No BTME Steering Committee meeting over breakfast by popular vote but I am up early anyway preparing for the day ahead. The sun has got his hat on - quite the best weather at any BTME - I can't quite believe it! Off to the FEGGA AGM. Per-Olof Ljung elected Chairman with Claus Detlef Ratjen elected as Vice Chairman. Roland Favrat remains a Board member and is joined by Jean Michel Herrissé from AGREF and Jo Bedford from GCSAI. Tommy Lindelof is appointed Honorary Administrator and Dean Cleaver Honorary PR Officer. Mid-afternoon brings a press briefing where Scott announces our major competitions and awards for 1999. Then I link up with Sami to ensure that preparations for

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Above: Showaddywaddy gain a new recruit in the shape of BIGGA's very own, Sarah Sowerby

Right: The Banquet sponsors, Stylo Matchmaker line up for a photo call



the great social event of the year are complete, the BTME banquet. The sense of anticipation has been growing throughout the day. This year is a rock 'n' roll theme and the setting looks good with pictures of James Dean, Elvis Presley, Marilyn Monroe et al adorning the walls. The jukebox is keeping the workers happy as they set up for the evening ahead while in reception guests will be welcomed by the front and back ends of a Chevrolet and 1950's traffic lights. It is surely going to be a fun night! 6.30pm and a brief visit to the Chairman's pre-banquet reception for VIP guests. Then a final check on banquet arrangements. At 8pm it is underway and just before 10pm I introduce the Chairman to say a few words having for my part already declined to undertake a repeat performance of the ding-a-ling song!

On time at 10pm Showaddywaddy duly appear with a full blast of the dam busters march as they tune their instruments. They haven't found the secret of eternal youth since their heyday in the 70s but their professionalism abounds in a great performance. Within minutes the dance floor is engulfed and yours truly does not sit down again until the performance ends. I note the number of ladies dancing the night away and reflect on the ever-increasing female presence at the BTME - a most welcome development and a far cry from the early days when they could be counted on one hand. The exhibitionists (if you see what I mean!) are in full flow and I fear for the safety of one or two of my staff! Welcomed back for an encore, the final number is Mony Mony and lo and behold my PA, Sarah, is up there with them strum-

ming a guitar and joining in the vocals. Truly a night to remember and thanks to Stylo and particularly Managing Director Trevor Walker for their much appreciated sponsorship of the banquet. Not a night for going to bed either unless you are staff on duty next morning. I give in at 2am.

Friday January 22

The pace is slower particularly among those who have been there since Sunday. Friday morning I always find quite enjoyable. Less traffic in the halls, a sense of "end of term" and more time to talk informally with visitors. I always think that those attending on the Friday get to see who they want a little quicker and probably succeed in getting done the business they set out to do. It is winding down at 1pm and goodbyes are said for another year. It has been a great start to 1999 and already there is much talk of BTME 2000. At 2.30pm I meet with staff for a quick debrief. Exhaustion has set in and I think most will sleep for the weekend. Thanks to everyone who supported BTME this year and particularly to our exhibitors.

And finally...

It's the Monday after and we are already thinking about BTME 2000. With an expanded exhibition and our educational theme of 'Greenkeeping Past, Present and Future' it is going to be a very special event. Come for the week, 17 to 21 January. I look forward to seeing you there. By the way, any ideas for our banquet entertainment next time around...?





Top: Groovin' greenkeepers!

Above: Rebecca, Christine and Sami got into the swing of things

Left: Under the Moon of Love with Showaddywaddy

Below: The latest Master Greenkeepers receive their awards from Gordon Child. From left, David Hannon, David Duke, Sid Arrowsmith and John Quinn

Below right: BIGGA's new Guardian Mark Dobell of the R&A





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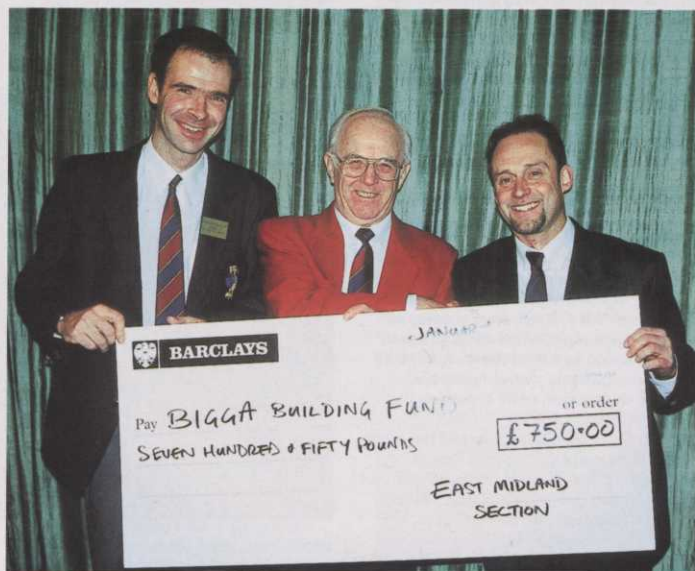
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Above top: Jim Fry receives his Honorary Membership certificate from Gordon Child

Above middle: The Building Fund was boosted by this sizeable cheque from the East Midlands Section. Richard Barker and the Section Chairman, David Leatherland made the presentation

Above (directly): Andy Campbell, of Carden Park, receives his £600 cheque as winner of the Membership introduction competition



John Deere's new Turf General 2030 utility vehicle

John Deere's new Turf General 2030 utility vehicle can be used as a general materials transporter or with specialist turf maintenance equipment for a wide range of applications in the golf & turf and commercial grounds care markets. It was previewed at BTME99, before being officially launched in the UK and Ireland in the autumn.

The standard tipping cargo box has a capacity of 876kg, and towing capacity at the rear hitch is 680kg. Overall capacity with driver, passenger and loaded attachment is 1203kg, while unladen weight is 841kg.

In addition to the cargo box, it can be fitted with a range of different attachments utilising the vehicle's hydraulic services and mechanical pto. These include sprayers, spreaders, top dressers, materials collection systems and adapter kits for other turf maintenance equipment.

The new 180A walk-behind greens mower made its first ever appearance in Europe at the show. This is an 18in version of the established 22in 220A model.

It has been introduced to the John Deere range as a result of customer feedback, and provides an alternative choice for greenkeepers working on undulating greens, where the narrower configuration provides better contour following and reduces the risk of scalping.

The 180A mower incorporates an 11-blade, 46cm reel, delivering a high quality cut at up to 3.4mph, with adjustable cutting height.

Dual aluminium traction rollers are fitted, covering the entire length of the bedknife. An external differential drive splits power to both the rollers, allowing straight tracking and easy turning.

Toro launched a new subsurface injector at BTME99 is designed to save greenkeepers' time and money in controlling soil-borne pests and diseases, as well as being safer and more environmentally friendly.

The unit employs a sprayer with a 160-gallon tank hooked up to a coulter blade system, and is towed behind a tractor. There are 16 blades and spraying is carried out at low pressure up to 200psi to a depth of up to one inch.

This also can mean savings on chemicals through reduced application rates and frequency of treatments - while putting chemicals directly into the ground eliminates drift and run-off.

Toro Commercial Products' UK distributor, Lely, expects a lot of initial interest from greenkeepers as the product has some unique features.

The new Toro Reelmaster 5400-D four-wheel-drive fairway mower introduced at BTME is designed to offer a more powerful alternative to the company's Reelmaster 5200-D launched last summer. Both machines are Toro's response to customer calls for a competitively-priced and more simply-engineered fairway mower

with a lower specification and less-sophisticated features.

But whereas the 25hp 5200-D is designed particularly for links and heathland courses where grass growth rates are lower, the new 5400-D is fitted with a Kubota turbo-charged 32hp engine for customers who want extra horsepower for more-severe cutting conditions.

The Reelmaster 5400-D 4WD costs £29,155 ex VAT.

UK greenkeepers were the first to get a look at Toro's new generation triple mower the Reelmaster 3100-D Sidewinder - when a prototype of the revolutionary machine made its world debut at BTME98. Now the final production version was on show at BTME99 and the first models of this unique mower will appear on the golf course this season.

What makes the Sidewinder an industry first is that its three cutting units can be moved left or right.

Toro is also offering the Reelmaster 3100-D without Sidewinder and this machine shares the same high power-to-weight ratio and unrivalled traction for hillside working.



Toro's new subsurface injector

Barenbrug UK's new amenity grass seed catalogue features a number of recommended mixtures and varieties made them worth extra investigation at this year's BTME.

Bar Extreme has an improved formula for 1999, combining heavy-duty perennial ryegrass with remarkable fine turf characteristics. It is perfect for golf tees and fairways; wherever extreme wear tolerance must be balanced with a fine appearance.

The new, very fine leafed perennial ryegrass Bareine gives this mixture its good looks. Extensive trials have shown its

excellent tolerance to close mowing. Bar Fairway is a new addition to the Bar range, containing some outstanding cultivars. Offering the best resistance to disease and withstanding drought well, Bar Fairway gives a fine, quality sward. There are also two new hard fescue cultivars to look out for, which are ideal in low maintenance areas, particularly in dry or infertile conditions. Barreppo has fine, mid green leaves and develops into good dense turf which resists red thread and tolerates frequent mowing. Bardur has dark green leaves, which are even more resistant to red thread. High shoot density makes it an interesting component of fine turf mixtures and it can tolerate mowing down to 7mm. Like Barreppo, it has good tolerance to drought and low fertility conditions.

Companion is the unique microbial turf inoculate, new from **Amenity Technology**.

It contains the active ingredient *Bacillus subtilis* GB03 and other beneficial microbes that backed up with over three decades of research. *Bacillus subtilis* GB03 is a beneficial microorganism that quickly colonises in the soil, crowding out invading pathogen and producing a natural antibiotic as it grows. Companion has been shown to dramatically reduce the occurrence of a large number of diseases including Fusarium Patch and Anthracnos. Unlike most other microbial inoculates Essential is a 100% natural organic soil conditioner and rooting biostimulant. As part of the holistic approach to plant care, it feeds soil microorganisms, improves the soil structure and supplies nutrients not available in N-P-K fertilisers. Essential's rich carbon based solution decomposes in the soil, acting as a food source for beneficial microorganisms. Active humic acid reduces compaction, while improving the cation exchange capacity.

Amenity Technology also launched the new Bayco European range of Golf Course Accessories. The range features six and eight feet flag pins complete with UK ferules, UK hole cups and tie on flags.

Hydraulic frame for the 'H' models has been simplified and now runs on four small low ground pressure transport wheels reducing ground compaction and the price.

The central quick adjustment lever for ease of adjustment of the tine angle has already proven itself with the 7212 and 7316 models. Now this special feature has been built into these bigger machines. Maintenance free self lubricated sealed bearings on all pivot points. This innovation saves the operator many hours greasing. Only the crank shaft and rollers retain their grease nipples.

All models are supplied with a standard rear roller. These not only provide the customer with an extra facility but also acts as a storage stand too. Both front and rear rollers have integral scraper bars.

A standard tool box is integrated in the Verti-Drains, containing the manuals and a combi-tool.

Turf Fingers are optional. These can be used when working with weak turf and helps to keep the turf in position while verti-draining.



The new generation of Verti-Drains from Redexim Charterhouse

Textron Turf Care and Specialty Products launched new products under the Jacobsen, Ransomes and Izeki names. Jacobsen has added two all-new light-weight fairway mowers to its range of high performance turf-care machinery. Labelled the LF 3400/LF-3800, the five unit mowers combine durability and productivity whilst retaining low ground pressure.

Available with two- or four-wheel hydrostatic drive, the new LF models are powered by 34hp (LF-3400) and 36 hp (LF-3800) water cooled diesel engines, producing a maximum working speed of 7.5 mph (12 km/hr). Power steering, tiltable steering column and an hydraulic oil monitor with horn alarm, all are standard.

The five cutting units span 8ft 4in and use Jacobsen's well-proven FlashAttach reel-mount system for fast, easy maintenance, adjustment and changeover to verti-cut reels, available as an option. The reel diameters are 7-blade 5in for the LF-3400 and 11 blade 7 inch for the LF-3800.

The operator's platform offers clear, uncluttered access from either side and the controls are ergonomically placed to one side of the driver. All regular service points are easily accessible. Both models are supplied with an integral roll-bar. Price of the LF-3400 begins at £25,640.00 + VAT (4-wheel drive £29,215.00 + VAT), and the LF-3800 at £33,150.00 + VAT. The Ransomes G-Plex 11 supersedes the acclaimed Greensplex 160.

Containing a host of features designed to enhance performance, productivity and ease of servicing, the G-Plex 11 is available with a choice of high-efficiency 18hp

Nearly two years after the introduction of the new smaller Verti-Drain Models 7212 and 7316, **Redexim Charterhouse** has introduced of the new generation bigger models of Verti-Drains. The machines were in fact ready for launch last autumn but Redexim, the Dutch Company who supplies the Verti-Drain, wanted them tested in extremely tough conditions throughout the autumn and prior to their debut at the BTME.

The machines have a rounder more appealing appearance but the real differences are technical and are summarised in the following points:



Shortcut contains the new active ingredient trinexapac-ethyl, and has been the subject of an exhaustive series of UK trials over more than three years. The development work on Shortcut has involved research work at Scotts Levington Research Station as well as "in use" trials at a number of prestigious venues around the UK, including Wentworth and Loch Lomond Golf Courses.

Consistently, Shortcut has successfully reduced mowing requirements by 50% on fairways and tees, freeing up labour at times of peak demand for mowing and other cultural activity. Crucially, turf responds positively to treatment with Shortcut, with trial sites also reporting enhanced colour, thickening of the sward and improved root development following application.

It works by restricting the lengthening of leaves and internodes over a period of four to six weeks. Because of this mode of action, Shortcut is able to reduce mowing requirements by 50% without sacrificing sward vigour and wear resistance. Scotts UK Professional launched a new, improved turf wetting agent at the BTME exhibition this month.

Aquanova replaces the old Levington Aquamaster and offers greenkeepers and groundsman a better performance in use and improved value for money. Aquanova is designed to improve water penetration in turf areas, reducing surface water, encouraging deeper rooting and combating dry patch.

Importantly in this market, given recent publicity, Scotts Aquanova does not contain environmental oestrogens.

Aquanova is available through the Scotts Master Distributor network in 10 litre packs, two to an outer.

petrol or 18.8hp diesel engines. Tandem hydrostatic transmission and reel pumps are direct driven by the engine, eliminating the need for belts and pulleys, reducing sound levels, vibration and maintenance.

A notable feature of the G-Plex 11 is its patented centre reel which pivots sideways clear of the mower for convenient adjustment and servicing. In work, an automatic time delay lowers and raises the centre reel after the front two units to maintain an in-line finish at the perimeter of the green.

It also has a number of design points which help enhance mowing performance and ease of use. These include a patented stabiliser linkage which levels the cutting units parallel to the ground during lifting and lowering, ensuring an even, level cut on undulating terrain and eliminating unit bounce in transport.

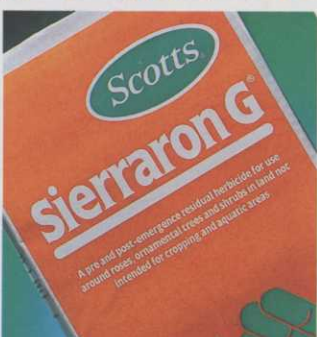
Two new ride-on rotary mowers were introduced by Iseki for the 1999 grass-cutting season.

Known as the SF200 and SF230, the new mowers are powered by 20hp and 22.5hp water-cooled diesel engines respectively. Both have two pedal hydrostatic transmission offering infinitely variable forward and reverse travel up to a maximum speed of 8.4 mph.

Maximum cutting performance is assured by rugged, shaft-driven Iseki mower decks available in 48in and 54in working widths. An hydraulic weight transfer system between the deck and power unit maintains maximum traction at the driving wheels while helping minimise grass damage.

The Iseki SF200 and SF230 ride-on front mowers are proved from £7325.00 + VAT (SF 200) & £8890.00 + VAT (SF 230).

Scotts UK Professional launched an exciting new product at BTME which can halve the amount of time grounds and greenkeeping staff need to spend mowing grass freeing up valuable man hours for deployment on more meaningful tasks. The product is Scotts Shortcut, a grass growth control agent which, unique among currently available growth regulators, reduces grass growth without sacrificing sward vigour and appearance.



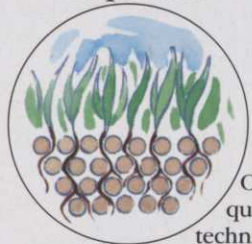
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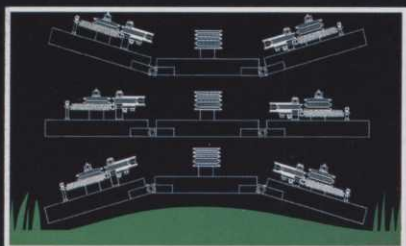
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Guardian of the Dictionary, Roland Taylor, reveals the definitions behind some of the words and phrases which surround modern day grass cutting machinery.

Cutting remarks

Golf Course Equipment has changed considerably over the last two decades and with this has come new names for components or features. These can sometimes be confusing and leave one wondering what are the benefits. Understanding the role they play and how they work not only adds to knowledge, it often can help to ensure they are used to their full potential and maintained correctly.

One of the biggest changes in grass cutting machinery has been the introduction of hydraulic powered (fluid power) drive systems.

Cutting remarks

Hydraulic Power

This is a controlled circulation system of a pressurised liquid (in this case oil) to a motor which converts it to a mechanical output that will work under load.

Hydraulics is the science of fluids in motion and has been harnessed by man for centuries, but it was not until 1650 that French scientist, Pascal, and Swiss physicist Bernoluli, formulated the laws on which today's hydraulic-power is based.

During the next 200 years it was only possible to use the velocities and pressures produced by nature. With the advent of the pump in the 19th century this all changed and in 1882 the City of London had a hydraulic system that delivered pressurised water through the street mains for driving machinery in factories and lifting bridges and hoists.

The next milestone occurred in 1906 when an oil hydraulic system was installed in "USS Virginia" for controlling and raising the guns.

During the 1920's, a self-contained hydraulic unit appeared on the market and opened the way for a host of applications. The rest is history.

The major benefits of hydraulic power is its flexibility and the fact that it produces more output than mechanical and electrical units of an equivalent size. It also responds rapidly and accurately to controls.

Two types of motor are used - linear and rotational.

The linear unit consists of a piston within a cylinder. The energy from the oil is transferred via a piston rod to a mechanical operation such as lifting or lowering. As well as being used on mowers and turf machinery, these hydraulic rams are found extensively in agriculture, aviation and automobiles.

In the case of rotational motors, the pressurised fluid, which is supplied by a hydraulic pump, acts on vanes, gears or pistons within the motor to create a force that produces torque (rotation) to an

output shaft.

From this it can be seen that a modern ride-on fairway mower has linear motors to lift or lower cutting units and to provide power steering. The reels and transmission are driven using rotary motors.

There are a number of important factors relating to the care of a hydraulic drive system if it is to work satisfactorily.

The oil flows under considerable pressure, so a lot of heat is generated which needs to be dissipated. A cooling unit is part of the system and this only operates effectively if cold air gets through to it. If the ducting or fins become blocked by dried grass or dust then the oil will overheat and major problems can occur.

The tank has a reservoir to ensure that the correct volume of oil is maintained throughout the system. This level needs to be checked periodically to ensure there is ample oil available.

Bearing in mind that the machin-

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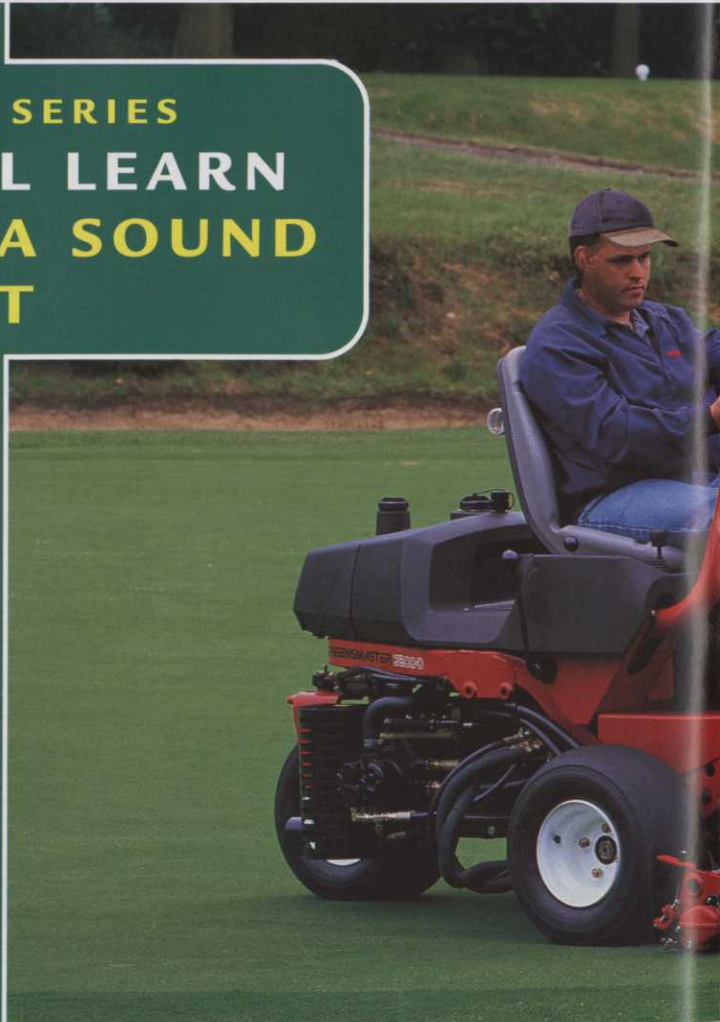
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ery is often used in a hostile environment, cleanliness is vital to a hydraulic system. Contamination of the oil by water or dirt will have disastrous results with the likelihood of hefty bills.

Other areas to watch are the hoses and especially their couplings. Check to ensure these are secure. It is not much fun being drenched in hot hydraulic fluid, so also make sure that hoses are not chafing against the frame. At any sign of a leakage or damage, replace with new components - the greens are not going to respond very well to a dose of oil, even if it is biodegradable.

Ergonomic design

Another phrase that has appeared in leaflets over the last few years, is 'ergonomic design' - sounds impressive, but exactly what does it mean?

One dictionary describes it as human engineering. In other words the operator's well-being is considered as an integral part of the

overall design of a piece of equipment. All the aspects relating to the role he will play are taken into consideration. This is an area that is increasingly important, especially as turfcare machinery becomes more sophisticated and higher productivity is expected.

Ergonomics covers practicalities, efficiency and safety through the careful selection of displays, control layouts, work environment and operator comfort.

The type of features that show a company is using ergonomics as parts of their design are:

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- Driving position with all-round visibility
- Low vibration and noise

In a nutshell what ergonomic design really means is that the operator will feel comfortable using the equipment and fatigue will be reduced to a minimum; as a result, the machine's optimum performance will be achieved.

Ergonomics are now very much a part of modern design, not just a fancy phrase in promotional literature. When it comes to buying equipment, find out exactly the benefits that are on offer under this heading.

Power-to-weight ratio

This is a phrase that is often found in literature on hand-held equipment such as brushcutters and chainsaws. It is the amount of power an engine produces in relation to how heavy it is.

To reduce weight and increase engine output without sacrificing quality is not easy, but with modern materials and changes in design an engine that is lightweight with plenty of power is achievable. Where

hand-held equipment is going to be used for long periods at a time power-to-weight together with exhaust emissions, vibration and noise levels need to be taken into account.

Over the last two decades lots of beneficial changes have taken place to improve golf course machinery and the greenkeeper has had to adapt to using a new breed of equipment and become accustomed to the appropriate jargon. Technology is moving fast - already computers are becoming part of a greenkeeper's equipment, especially in the field of irrigation. Diagnostic modules are appearing on machines and engine management systems will soon be the norm. There are probably a host of new introductions about to appear in the next millennium.

The learning curve could be enormous, so it is up to each and every one of us to seek out any information that keeps us abreast of developments and the modern language that is likely to go with it.



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TEES TURF

Euan Grant has come a long way in four and a half years and now has one of the most interesting and diverse jobs possible.

G Ahead of the Game



Above: The course is carved from a wonderful piece of land

Below: Euan Grant with Westerham Head Greenkeeper, Chris Moor



In the Assistant's Profiles which appear regularly in Greenkeeper International the final question, "What do you expect to be doing in 10 year's time?" invariably produces the response "Be a Head Greenkeeper or Course Manager at a top club," although occasionally someone says "Spending my lottery millions."

Euan Grant, the 1994 Toro Student of the Year, is well ahead of schedule... and some. Unfortunately for him he is not enjoying the fruits of successfully picking the same six numbers as those thrown up by Lancelot one Saturday night but that, a mere four and a half years after becoming top student, he is in

charge of his own 18 hole course. Oh, and he's also the man in charge of another 18 holer just about to open; Head Groundsman at two football training grounds and an advisor for two football league grounds. In total he has around 20 people under his charge.

When Euan first came to the green-keeping world's notice he was working at Effingham Golf Club but it was not long before he moved to take up the Deputy Head Greenkeeper's job at Royal Jersey, a links course which, as part of his master plan, was supposed to open the door eventually to him working at an Open venue.

He then received the telephone call

which was to drag him back to the mainland, amend his ultimate goal, and give him the sort of opportunity many more experienced greenkeepers would give their eye teeth for.

"I was in the Mess Room and someone handed my a mobile phone. The voice on the other end said 'It's Ron Noades here. I know you're coming over to Harrogate next week. Can you come and see me?' said Euan who admitted that, being a rugby man, he had no idea he was speaking to the famous Crystal Palace Chairman, and the man who after famously selling the club to Mark Goldberg, is now Chairman/Manager of Brentford.

"I mouthed the name 'Ron Noades'

Ahead of the Game

to the boys and when I came off the phone they, being football fans, asked if it was THE Ron Noades. I said I didn't know but that I was to meet him at Selhurst Park."

That meeting was to see him installed as Head man at the still to be opened Westerham Golf Club, near Biggin Hill, in Kent, and subsequently to be Clerk of Works and the man responsible for the successful growing in of the new and spectacular Happy Valley Golf Club, in Caterham, Surrey, developing the Crystal Palace Training Ground at Streete Court in Godstone, assisting with Brentford's training ground at Griffin Park, and Brentford's stadium.

Far right: A beautiful vista of Westerham Golf Club and beyond

Below: The Westerham greenkeeping team with Lossie, the extra member



When Euan started in 1996 he joined Chris Moor, then Deputy and now Head Greenkeeper, as half of a staff of two.

"I met Chris on site and had a discussion about how things were going and what we were going to do," explained Euan, 28.

"I had pages of A4 notes with questions I hadn't, at that point, been able to get answers to and we went through them all," recalled Chris, whose duties had included carrying bags of fertiliser on foot for up to a mile, returning for more, and then going round the green with a hopper.

"The two biggest hurdles we had to overcome was staff and money. We had no staff and no money. So we put a plan together and took it to Ron and told him that we needed to spend £250,000 straight away or he wasn't going to have his course open in a year from then.

"Ron is a very fair and reasonable man and although it took him by surprise he gave us the money and gave us the staffing," said Euan, who also appreciates the benefits of working for a football man for whom a quarter of a million represents the fee for a reserve goalkeeper.

They then head hunted some good greenkeepers, persuading them that Westerham would be a good move for them. The club started selling memberships and as it looked like a golf course, and a fine one at that prior to opening, 1000 were sold in about six weeks.

The course is cut from heavy

woodland, assisted by the great storm of 1987 when a lot of mature trees were blown down, and was planned out using aerial photographs and ordinance survey maps.

"There was a lot of natural regeneration over the 242 acres and we've done an awful lot of thinning of trees which were just six inches apart," explained Euan.

With Westerham on the right track, the excellent new clubhouse is nearing completion, attention was turned towards Streete Court, and Crystal Palace's training ground.

"We developed Streete Court which has five Premier League standard training pitches and six acres of formal gardens which we maintain.

"The pitches are sand construction with full irrigation, dwarf rye which we've over sown with fescue and it has established well. The first year was bliss, but then the players came down and anyone involved with football training will know what damage 70 people training seven days a week - because they've also got a School of Excellence at the weekend - can do."

Being involved in both greenkeeping and groundsmanship has given Euan an insight into what is required to achieve success in each.

"The general skills of turf maintenance are the same but the headaches are completely different. I do lots of aeration during the summer period on the golf courses, normally the final aeration we do is about October and we won't do any more until we start vertidrainage the

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fairways in March. That is pretty much the same with the football.

"The only time we have a worry is when we get a bit of compaction on the football grounds and we then choose the driest day to get out there and open the surface up."

With Streete Court on track, attention was then turned to the construction of Happy Valley Golf Club which if Euan and Ron are to be believed is on an even finer piece of golfing land than Westerham.

"It has been designed by David Williams who also did Westerham, and where Westerham is shorter and tighter Happy Valley is long and open. They're both going to be real tests of golf."

Euan was the Clerk of Works of the Happy Valley site ensuring that all decisions and plans were followed through and he ensured that greenkeeping staff were employed from an early stage.

"That meant when something was done we were straight on top of it to assist with the finishing off."

With three main sites in Caterham, Godstone and Westerham Euan spends quite a bit of time behind the wheel but it also has resulted in the employment of a mechanic, Trevor Tuppen, to work between all three sites. There is a workshop at each venue, and a driver, who works closely with the mechanic to transport machinery from site to site.

Euan is quick to attribute his success to education. He already had a degree in Sports and Leisure

Management when he moved into greenkeeping and is keen to promote the benefits of education to his team.

"I spend a lot of time looking into greenkeeper education. I do believe that the NVQ system is the way to go but feel that after Level 2 there isn't a great deal of scientific knowledge. I don't want to put a 19 year old lad on to Level 3, because I don't think he's either ready for it or needs the type of information that is being taught at that stage in his career."

Euan is therefore investing in more practical courses, covering among others First Aid, Chainsaws and spraying.

"We have a fairly formal education plan on site which takes the Black Book a stage further for the guys who have got Level 2. Chris, Mark Thornton (Head Greenkeeper at Happy Valley) and myself will get them to do not just what the Black Book says but how we want it done as well."

With regard to his own education, bearing in mind his role is more administrative and the time spent out on the course working is limited, it is perhaps surprising that he sees soil science rather than budgeting and managerial skills as the way he wants to go.

"The majority of my job is looking for ways to make the company as efficient as possible and it is not possible to do that without agronomic greenkeeping knowledge. I'm responsible to the accountant and to Ron and I'd really love to get them to some



BIGGA meetings to give them a bit of knowledge. They could then see where the money is being spent."

As far as the future is concerned Happy Valley opens later this year and Euan's job, which has just grown and grown since he started, will just

keep on getting bigger.

"Four and a half years ago I'd have been looking to have definitely been a Head Greenkeeper, or perhaps a Deputy at a top club," he said.

As I said at the beginning. He's ahead of schedule.

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Scottish Region
Peter Boyd
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North

Several new members to welcome this month. John Russell, Inverurie; Fraser Downie and Barry Edmonds, Hazlehead; Paul Robertson, Duff House Royal, and last but not least, James Brown, from the Strathmore Golf Centre. We hope to see you at Section events this year.

We welcome Willy Cummings as a Retired Member. He retired from Royal Dornoch last year but still wants to be involved with the Section. Congratulations to Gordon McKie, St Andrews, on winning second prize in the magazine competition for trips to BTME last month.

I really enjoyed the Patrons' Christmas Lunch in Stirling in December. It was nice to meet and chat with our friends from the Trade and thank them for their help in the past and, hopefully, the future. The ten lucky Section winners of the Patrons' Awards were present to receive part of their prize, a book and, of course, were at BTME last month as the rest of their award. If you want to be one of the lucky ten this year, all you need to do is support your Association as much as you can and you never know. "It could be you."

Well, it's that time again! You should be receiving your 200 Club tickets shortly (if not already). Please help the Section by purchasing one or two and help us to run the Section well. It's money from this fund-raiser that helps to keep costs down for our events. If for any reason you do not want your ticket, then please, please send it back straight away so it can be resold to someone as we must sell all tickets before the first draw at our Spring outing at Inverness Golf Club in May. We are grateful to Tom Brannan and "Greentech" for sponsoring this year's 200 Club.

I. A. Macleod

Central

The news front is rather quiet at the moment, what with everyone getting over the holidays and attending Harrogate. If anything newsworthy happened at the BTME, I will let you know about it next month.

Another two members join us this month, David McNeil and Billy Easton, who are both from Dullatur Golf Club, and we extend a warm welcome to them from everyone in the Section.

The proposed visit to Parkhead Stadium last month, again failed to happen, for reasons outwith our control, so all I can do is apologise once again and hopefully it can be rearranged for some time in the future.

If you wish to enter a team in this year's Inter Club Tournament you can still do so by forwarding the entry

form (remember! that's one of those pieces of paper you received last year and put in a safe place) to me by the end of this month.

Forms for the Spring Tournament at Lundin Golf Club on Thursday 29 April will be arriving with you soon, so if you wish to play on this superb course, please return them to me as soon as possible.

I was going through the Section Minute Book the other day and since the Section was inaugurated on 20 November 1980 there have been 13 Chairmen so I thought it would be interesting to see where they all are now. You will probably think this is a useless piece of information, but I will start by giving you the first five this month and the remainder over the next few months. I told you I was struggling for news this month!

80/1 Joe Oliver who was at Glenberrie GC and now at Pitreavie GC; 81/2 Jimmy Lees, was Grangemouth GC, now retired; 82/3 Bobby Fleming, was Dullatur GC, still Dullatur GC; 83/4 John Crawford, was Dunfermline GC, now Stirling GC; 84/5 Sandy Brown, was Crieff GC, now Australia.

John Crawford

Ayrshire

It is very quiet just after the festive period, no news reported last month. I've enjoyed the break by working a rota over the holidays, but it is back to the grindstone now and the first task will be the storm and flooding clear up.

We have lost a couple of mature trees, one of which I'm sure will have been well over 100 years old which is completely irreplaceable. But I'm sure there will be many worse cases than my own, having viewed the terrible damage around the countryside.

The Patrons' Christmas Luncheon took place at The Terraces Hotel, Stirling. The meal and entertainment, from after dinner speaker, former sprint champion, George McNeil, was first class. A big thanks to Peter Boyd for a superbly organised event. Derek Wilson and Marshall Sloss received their award with the other Section winners and congratulations to them all. The patrons were thanked for their continued support which make this event and awards possible.

It's off to Harrogate next and I look forward to meeting the Patrons' Award winners along with friends old and new.

If the magazine is published before Monday 8 February then all committee members are reminded of the committee meeting in the Parkstone Hotel at 7.30pm. Any news - call me on 01505 683278.

Iain Barr

West of Scotland

This month, members, very little has occurred but there are a few things to put in the diary.

In February a games night has been arranged for the 18th of the month at

the Claremont Bowling Club. Once again all are welcome. Early March is the Scottish Education Conference, again at Lauder College, Dunfermline, and if the last couple of years are anything to go by then they will be great talks. Later in that month the conveners match due to be played at Cawdor, but a date has still to be set.

A couple of other things to inform members about: last month I mentioned Scott Ballantyne and his wife were expecting a new arrival. A little girl was born two days after I wrote the article, Emma, and she was 7lb 6ozs. Best wishes from everybody. Another arrival: this time a trade member, Alistair Smith, of Vitax, has to be congratulated on the birth of a baby girl, Alice. Once again best wishes from the section to father, mother and baby.

Finally the Patrons' Awards were given this year to Charlie Goodall and Brian Hillen, both of whom were presented with their awards at The Terraces Hotel in Stirling just before Christmas. As part of the award they will attend BTME, so I hope they enjoy their trip, and hope they will contribute an article for next month. Finally, I say farewell as from now on Gavin Jarvis, of Lenzie Golf Club, will be writing the articles. Any information should be forwarded to him or any other committee member.

Thanks for all the help given over the years.

P.S. A game of football arranged for January will be reported on next month.

Stuart Taylor

East

Welcome to this month's column. As we are at a quiet time of the year there is not a lot of news going around so that is why it is a short column this month. The Section held its annual dinner dance at the beginning of December and what a great night it was. All 77 members and guests enjoyed themselves and danced into the small hours. Some people have already booked tickets and rooms for this year's event and we haven't arranged the date yet. There is space for more people this year so we hope to see you there and make it an even bigger success. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the people who sold the raffle tickets on the night, the dance organisers, the patrons, trade members and members who donated raffle prizes, also Raymond Binnie and all his staff at the Kilspindle House Hotel. We hope to see you all next year.

P.S. Date of dance, tickets and accommodation for this year's event will be available soon. Watch this space!

The Section are playing the west section on Sunday 10 February in a football match at Almondvale Stadium (West Lothian Courier Stadium as it is now known) Livingston, so there will be a match report and photographs next month. I hope the bruises will have gone by the

time we go to BTME a week later. Joking apart, it should be a good game in the first meeting of the Sections. If you are going to Harrogate, I hope to see you there; if you're not able to make it this year, there will be news, views and gossip from this year's show in next month's magazine. I hope everyone's courses are recovering from the horrendous storms we had at the beginning of the year and there is not too much damage, as if 1998 wasn't a bad year. Hopefully this year we will get a hot dry summer which might help our courses to dry after the last 12 months. Here's hoping!

If anyone has any interesting stories or photographs from the storms in January please drop me a line and we will publish them in the magazine. You don't have to be just in the East Section, you can be from any Section, so let's hear your stories, to the usual address, thanks. Well that's it all for this month; next month dates for outings, social events and any other news. Cheers.

Chris Yeaman.



Northern Region
Douglas Bell
Tel: 0151 431 0433

North East

December 3, was the day of our AGM, held again at South Moor G.C. Our thanks to the committee for giving us the courtesy of club and the course. The usual turn out of approx. 25 members all enjoyed themselves. It's a pity a lot more people were not present as we have over 100 members. Just shows who are interested in the running of the Section.

Well, the AGM went through quickly (no one had any questions on the balance sheet), that was until we asked for nominees for the Section committee. Unfortunately only three people put their name forward so the original committee stayed on and the new members are as follows - Steve Pope, Craig Parkinson. My thanks to Doug Bell, the R.A., for giving us an insight on what he has been up to in the North East and the extra benefits we can get now.

Russell Black asked members if they would show their appreciation to Richard Creane who has been the Chairman of the Section for the past 16 years and now has decided to call it a day. The section will appoint a new Chairman at the next meeting.

Just a reminder that the February seminar will be at Tyneside Golf Club on the 25th starting 7.30. A buffet will be laid on free of charge.

Also thanks to Tony Chambers, the President, on presenting the year's trophies again and I hope he will return to South Moor in 1999.

Andrew Gunn, formerly at Hexham, has moved over to Matfen Hall as First Assistant. We wish him well and expect him to join as a member this year.



On a lighter note, I hope everyone had a good Christmas. I know we at Hexham did. All I will say is Hexham - 4, Ryton - 0. Can Pop Robinson remember what we are on about?

Don't forget the Spring Competition is at Seahouses in April.
Jimmy Richardson

North East

As you know the Spring Comp. is at Seahouses and all members received a time table for the year, but there has been a change of date for Autumn Comp. It is still at Carlisle but on Monday September 20.

The Carburol Knock Out will be only £5 to enter instead of £10 per couple. Anyone interested in playing give David Cuthbertson of Slaley Hall GC a ring, entries close at the Spring Comp.

Changes have been made to the section committee. Firstly Richard Creane has stepped down as Chairman as he decided that after holding this position for 16 years it was about time someone else took over. The committee and I would like to thank Richard for all the hard work he has done if it were not for him and other earlier committee members we would not be where we are today, considering that when we took over in 1982 we had only 20 odd members now today the number is around 120, but we still have a lot of non members out there.

The new Chairman is Steve Cram, of Slaley Hall; Secretary, Jimmy Richardson, of Hexham GC; Treasurer, Craig Parkinson, of Matfen Hall; Vice Chairman, Russ Black, of Westerhope GC. Another new member to the committee is Robbie Williams, of Slaley Hall GC. Some members might think that there are quite a few members from Slaley Hall but they are keen to help as we had little response from the AGM.

Another position that's been taken on is Captain of the Section. Brian Hughes, of Whickham GC has agreed to do this for 1999 we wish him well in his year of office.

This year we are going to run competitions during the summer months, probably June, July and August, but not teeing off till late afternoon. If anyone is interested in playing either let me know or see us at Seahouses in April.

Jimmy Richardson

Northern

Firstly, may I take this opportunity to apologise for there not being a magazine insert in last month's Greenkeeper International. I did write one out, but forgot to send it in. Sorry.

The 1998 Winter Golf Tournament was held this year at Keighley Golf Club. The weather had not been too good on the days leading up to the event, but it wasn't too bad on the day.

On behalf of all the competitors, may I thank the joint sponsors who were Pattissons & The Greenkeeping Supply Company. Everyone who played went home with a prize, most-

ly in the form of an alcoholic beverage! Thanks to Phil Palmer and the lads for their efforts in preparing the course and also to the caterers for the excellent Christmas fayre served up after the golf.

The 1998 AGM took place after the meal with 28 members attending. The meeting went relatively smoothly, with a few views being aired that it is hoped were not taken in the wrong manner. The main issue was that people who wish to participate in the golfing events must forward both their names and full payment to the secretary at least one week prior to the event otherwise they will not be allowed to take part. To enable events to be properly organised and run smoothly on the day, this must be enforced.

The committee elected for 1999 was as follows: President, Melvin Guy; Chairman, John Waite; Vice Chairman, David Thackray; Secretary/Treasurer, Simon Heppenstall; Members, Telford Jarvis, Dennis Cockburn, Richard Gamble, Gary Potter, Phil Mitchell and Richard Smith.

Events for 1999 have been arranged as follows: Annual Dinner Dance (Tickets are on sale from committee members), Bradford GC, Sat 13 March: Spring Tournament; Hornsea GC, Wed 14 April: President's Day; South Leeds GC, Wed 9 June: Roses Match, Howley Hall GC, Wed 18 August: Invitation Day, Shipley GC, Wed 8 September: Autumn Tournament, Bradford GC, Wed 20 October: Winter Golf, Fulford GC, Wed 8 December. Book early, as some of the events have limited places.

Anyone with any information from within the section please contact me at 1 Cockley Meadows, Kirkheaton, Huddersfield, HD5 0LA or phone on 01484 317813.

Simon Heppenstall.

North Wales

A Committee meeting was held on December 22 to discuss various items that arose at the AGM. All members will be sent forms for the spring meeting which is provisionally booked for Llanymynech on April 28. You will be asked if you are interested in the golf events that are organised. Please return your forms as we need to know who wants to play golf and who doesn't. Even if you don't wish to play in April but are interested in future events, return your form stating as such. We need this information so we can operate efficiently. If you are not interested in any golf events ever, then a form not returned will be treated as such. Please help your committee to help you. If you are unsure as to what I mean, please ring me on 01824 71093 or 0410 896837.

We still need courses to hold our golf events. Anyone interested, please get in touch.

A number of issues came from the Prestatyn meeting which should never happen again. Own drink being consumed, dress code and behaviour.

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Prestatyn have always been very good to us. We are supposed to be a professional Association and items of basic good etiquette were abused. My apologies go to the captain and members of Prestatyn and also to Dave Parry. Any member in future found abusing their privilege will be asked to leave the event.

One final thing with regard to guests. All guests must be golf related, ie. from the industry itself. Again, any queries please phone me.

There will be a lecture held in the college on water management and soil science one afternoon in March starting at 2.30. The date hasn't been finalised as I write, but everyone will be informed beforehand. Please, if you can, do attend and remember the seminar on February 17.

I'm sorry I can't give any of you assessors out there any info on the NVQ's as it is all up in the air and no information has come to me. When I hear, you'll hear.

At our meeting on December 22, our Competition Secretary, Terry Evans, resigned. If anyone out there is interested in committee work, please get in touch and we'll see about co-opting on. I would just like to thank Terry for all the work he has done for this Section over the years.

Dave Goodridge.

North West

I am sitting in front of the computer pondering how to start the Section news. Glancing back at the news from previous months, the weather appears to be the starting point and because greenkeeping is so much governed by weather conditions, 1998 has probably been the worst year for many years. Today is January 1 and I hope that this year the weather will improve and give us one of the old fashioned summers to cope with.

One of our members, John Berry, appears to have had enough of the British weather as John and his wife Jeanette are off to start a new life in Australia. We wish them all the best in their new venture and John has promised to keep in touch with me, so I will hopefully be able to report on his progress in the future.

I have just completed the dates and venues for the three main golf tournaments for 1999 and they are: Spring Tournament, Fairhaven GC, Tuesday, 20 April. Summer Tournament, Longridge GC, Thursday, 17 June. Autumn Tournament, West Lancs GC, Thursday, 9 September. The date for the Mere Seminar is Tuesday, 23 March, and this promises to be an excellent seminar with a full programme for the day. Fixture lists for the N/W Section events will soon be with you and I hope you will all support the seminar and the golf plus any other events throughout the year. I hope you all had a merry Christmas and all your wishes are realised in 1999. Any news or views, ring 0151 724 5412.

Bert Cross



Midland Region
Peter Larter
Tel: 01480 437507

East Midlands

This year's Christmas Tournament was hosted by Charnwood Forest G.C. on 10 December. The format for the day being a 18 hole singles Stableford. Despite the weather turning wet later in the day, some good scores were posted.

Category 1. 1. R. Barker, Kirby Muxloe, 35 pts; 2.. P. Bertenshaw, Willesley Park, 32 pts; 3. A. Porter, Greatham Valley, 29 pts. Category 2, 1. G. Robson, Lingdale, 29 pts; 2. J. James, Scraftoft, 28 pts; 3. S. Heap, Forest Hills, 28 pts. Trade & Associate: Winner - G. Thurman, Charnwood Forest, 31pts.

I would like to thank Charnwood Forest G.C. for courtesy of their fine course and also to congratulate Tim Allard and his staff for presenting an excellent course in such difficult weather conditions.

Thanks should also go to the stewardess for a really great meal and to our very generous sponsor, Rigby Taylor. I would also like to thank all committee members who help to run this day's event, especially Steven Heap as starter. May I take this opportunity to remind members that if they wish to attend any Section event, their forms must be returned before the closing date and having done this, please make every effort to arrive on the day in good time. Although nobody was Bindleyed in the day's golf, not to be outdone, the quiz was won by guess who? A. Bindley & B. Booth. Thanks to D. Leatherland & M. Bindley for organising the quiz.

I would like to welcome the following new members to our Section all from Greatham Valley, Guy Boyd, Alex Wren & Daniel Wren.

Having missed out our Autumn Tournament sponsors in the December issue, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Bank's Amenity Products for their continued support.

Antony Bindley

Midland

The Christmas tournament was played at Copt Heath Golf Club and turned out to be a great success. The weather was not kind to us but the course was in great condition and many thanks go to all the greenkeeping staff and to all the club house staff who were very hospitable to us.

I would like to thank Ruffords, Rigby Taylor, County Crops and Tacit for their support. The winners of the Texas Scramble was the team of myself, Andrew Corns, Alan Kite and Dave Gibbons. The AGM was held on the same evening and the committee members are as follows: Peter Richmond - Chairman, Alan Kite - President, and myself as Secretary.

Other committee members include: Tony Cheese as Treasurer, Rhys Thomas, Andrew Smith, Eddie Stant and Peter Holtham.

On behalf of Grass Roots Trading and Abbey Mowers I would like to thank everyone who attended the go-carting in December, sponsored by the above companies. It was a great success and it is hoped to arrange this again in the future.

We are hoping to arrange a trip to Rhône Poulenc in the near future and details of this will be sent to you with your fixture cards for the year.

It just remains for me to introduce some more new members and they are: Adrian Myatt, Trevor Simpson, Richard Tompkin, Stephen Skidmore, Christopher Young and Robin Bryson.

Jonathan Wood

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Mid Anglia

The Midland Regional Seminar was held in November at Mentmore Golf & Country Club, with a good range of speakers lined up for the day. Billy McMillan gave an excellent talk on "A Golf Course from Seed to Green", as did Eddie Seaward, Head Groundsman at Wimbledon, on the preparation for Wimbledon fortnight. Other speakers' topics included

"Bacteria in the soil", "Water Management" and "Risk Assessments." Bearing in mind the excellent programme, it was disappointing to note so few attending from the Section. Our thanks to Mentmore Golf club for kindly letting us use their excellent facilities free of charge. It is planned to use the club again for next year's event.

Our last golf event of the year, the

annual Texas Scramble competition, took place at Ashridge Golf Club in early December. Twenty six teams of four entered and had a great day's golf, followed by an excellent meal. Our thanks to Ashridge Golf Club, to Jim Cassidy and his staff for the course and to Colin White, of Avoncrop, for sponsoring the event once again. Colin is leaving our region shortly, so I would like to wish him good luck in

his new position and to thank him for his support of the Section over a number of years.

Thanks also to all the other Trade members, particularly Turners Groundscare, who kindly sponsored our "Golfer of the Year" award. The results of the golf were as follows:

1. J. Hatton, J. Moorhouse, L. Cant, D. Wright, 57; 2. R. Pearce, K. KcKie, J. Jenkins, P. Goodchild, 57.3; 3. D.



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Mugford, T. Adams, L. Chapman, G. Lyme, 58.3; Nearest the Pin: L. Cant. Longest Drive: Paul Goodchild.

The "Golfer of the Year" which is based on best finishes in the three major tournaments plus the Lodgeway Four Ball, was presented to Steve Mason, of Mount Pleasant Golf Club.

Events for 1999 include an "Open Forum" discussion event on Tuesday 23 February 'venue to be confirmed'. Topics suggested are "Annual meadow grass", "Better methods" and "Conservation." Please come along and have your say; the event begins at 2pm.

Alwickbury Golf club will be the venue for the Spring Tournament 'date to be confirmed'.

Paul Lockett.



**South West
and South Wales**
Paula Humphries
Tel: 01363 82777

South West

Chipping Sodbury was the venue for the Christmas tournament held on December 10. For many members in the Section, this was the first time they had played the course and there were a number of very favourable comments about its layout and condition. The course has clearly undergone a number of improvements including lake construction and better fairway drainage. Many people expressed a desire to play the course again, though possibly in a more favourable time of the year.

The tournament itself was an extended Fourball Stableford, and the results were as follows: 1. Kevin Green & Wayne Vincent, 39 points; 2. Anthony Knight & Geoffrey Ford, 37 points; Kevin James & Mark Ford, 34 points.

Thanks go to Clive Richards and his greenkeeping staff for getting the course into remarkable shape; Doug Bird the Secretary, for allowing us to play; the clubhouse staff for providing us with an excellent Christmas dinner, and also Phil Greenway and Roffey Brothers for sponsoring the event. Thanks also to all the local companies which provided the prizes for the mammoth raffle which followed the dinner.

The day itself was marred by some atrocious weather that clearly took its toll on the golfers. Indeed 1998 has been an unlucky year for BIGGA events with the Summer Tournament at Filton and the Autumn Tournament at Saltford being virtual washouts. The only event that I can recall stripping down to a tee-shirt and slapping on the suntan lotion was the Winter Tournament held at Bath GC on a sizzling hot day in February!

Lets hope for some good weather for the first event of 1999, which will be held at Lansdown GC on February 25. The weather can be quite blustery at

the best of times at Lansdown, so make sure you bring full thermal underwear protection and a flask of brandy.

Now, turning to education and training, there seems to be some confusion and uncertainty over the courses being run by the South West Section. Therefore I have drawn up an information page listing all the courses which we can provide to the members. This will include contents of each course as well as an approximate price. If you see a course you are interested in or just need some more information, telephone me on 01249-783382. Once we have enough numbers, we can then run the course. Hopefully, you should now have a copy of the course lists.

If you are thinking about a chainsaw course, we can run a one week course on chainsaw maintenance, cross cutting and tree felling. If you are not experienced in chainsaw use however, it is advisable to take a separate course on tree felling, as you will need as much time and practice as possible in learning the various felling techniques.

If you have any other ideas for education and training, please don't hesitate to ask.

Paul Cunningham.

South Wales

Apologies for no January notes, so it's very late but I'm sure you all had a fantastic Christmas and will have a great new year with us working towards the millennium.

The Christmas Golf Day and AGM was again a success at the Pyle and Kenfig Golf Club. Thanks to Mr P. Robinson and his staff for the excellent condition of the course. Thanks also to the Secretary and the Captain for the use of the club's facilities and not forgetting the caterers for the food. This also goes to all the trade for their continued support. K. Jones won the Golf Competition during the day; well done.

The 1999 Committee which was decided on the day is Chairman, David Ward; Vice Chairman, Mike Jones; Secretary, Peter Lacey; Golf/Social Sub Committee, M. Davis, A. Macleod, R. Hatcher, R. Paterson and D. Ward.

Our evening lectures at Pencoed College started in January with Richard Dixon from the Welsh Golf Union. This month's evening lecture on Wednesday, 10 February, by John Mosedale is all about quantity and quality and control measures of water.

In March we look forward to Derek Edwards, from Inturf, on Wednesday 17, and on Wednesday 14, April, us versus the IOG in our fun packed annual quiz. Please attend the evenings that are run for your benefit, with the bar at the college being open serving soft and alcoholic drinks; so take it in turn to drive.

Lastly, I'll bring you up to date with the BTME next month.

Richard Hatcher

Devon & Cornwall

Our P.J. Flegg Christmas meeting was held once again at Okehampton Golf club on Wednesday, 9 December. The day started with a slight hiccup as a few members arrived late, which meant that several pairings had to be changed for the greensome format P.J. Flegg Trophy. Our non-golfing members were as usual treated to the guided course walk by Head Greenkeeper, Richard Wisdom.

Both golfing and non-golfing were delighted to see once again the P.J. Flegg refreshment tent by the 6th green, inside Patrick and his staff treated members to snacks and drinks which set the Christmas atmosphere for the day. After an excellent Christmas lunch, the day continued with the morning's golf prizes for the P.J. Flegg Trophy being presented by Patrick Flegg to, 1., C. Rawlings, Padbrook, & S. Harris, Ashbury, 41pts; 2. A.. Parker, Crediton, & N. Rourke, The Warren, 40 pts; 3. R Parker, Ilfracombe, and T. Martin, Torquay, 39 pts.

A special prize was donated by Laurence Davis, Deputy Head at Okehampton, for the best triers and was presented by Patrick to C. Earnshaw & J. Farkins.

Our afternoon entertainment followed the prize presentation with the raffles concluding the day. The first raffle was for a free place on the Region's trip to BTME and was won by Andy Parker. Our second raffle was for two Christmas hampers kindly donated by Avoncrop and Peter Andrewartha with our final raffle of the day consisting of more than 40 prizes donated by members and trade.

The Section would like to thank Okehampton and all their staff who made our day so special, with a special mention to Richard Wisdom and his staff who as always had the course in superb condition. A big thank you to Patrick Flegg, and P.J. Flegg Ltd, for sponsoring the day and providing the wonderful snacks and drinks on the course. Also thanks to our new President, Martin Samuel, who supplied the wine at lunch. Also, to all of you who donated prizes for the day.

Dates for your diary, Avoncrop meeting, Wednesday 24 February, venue St Enodoc G.C., Rhone Poulenc & Supaturf meeting, Wednesday 24 March, venue Dartmouth G.C. Westurf Trade show at Westpoint Exeter on Tuesday, 27 April.

Richard Whyman

South Coast

Our Christmas Turkey Trot was once again held at Royal Winchester Golf Club on Monday 7 December. The overall winner was Trevor Smith, with 40 points. Category One winner was Bob Walker, with 36 points. Category Two winner was D. Northney with 34 points. Category Three winner was A. Doolan, with 32 points. Congratulations to all the winners

This was followed by Christmas Dinner, the Prize Giving and the

Raffle. At this point the draw was made for the free ticket to BTME. The lucky man was Peter Dudgeon, from Poultons Golf Centre. If you have not been to BTME before, I am sure you will not be disappointed.

On completion of the meal we had the AGM. The only changes to the committee was John York who stood down, and Ed McCabe who rejoined the committee. I would like to thank John for his input to the committee. The raffles he has organised at various events have helped the Section no end. With no financial input from Head Office, we have got to think of more ways to keep our Section solvent. Raffles at our events are a good source of income.

A presentation was made to Jim Fry, our President, who was made an Honorary Member of BIGGA. Jim is only the second person to be made an Honorary Member. I am sure the Section would like to give our heartfelt congratulations to Jim. If any man deserves this award Jim does.

Neil Thomas attended our AGM and gave us a complete update on what is going on at Headquarters. He covered a number of subjects. I am sure that our members are much more aware of what is going on within BIGGA. Thank you Neil.

Looking back through my records our first visit to Royal Winchester for our Turkey Trots was December 1988. Since then all our turkey trots and AGMs have been held there. I am sure that the Section would like to thank the Captain, Committee members and Staff who made us so welcome over the years. Their hospitality has been second to none. As usual the course was in superb condition and well presented by Phil Hanks and his staff. Thank you Phil. Thank you to the catering staff who made sure we were well fed and watered at the end of the day. Last but not least, thanks to our sponsors for the day. They were Sheerwater Leisure represented by Mark Wilton, New Forrest Farm Machinery, John Deere represented by Nick Clarke and Amenity Technology represented by Stuart Ashworth.

Those of you who have not returned your forms to Jef Drake for the Section Seminar, there is still time. As you can see some very good speakers are coming along. It looks like being a very successful day. The venue is Sparsholt and the date is 23 February 1999.

On 4 March 1999 our Educational and Golf Meeting will be held at Crane Valley Golf Club. Our speaker will be from Envirogreen Products. Proceedings will start at 10 am. This will be followed by lunch and 9 holes of golf. The day is being sponsored by Envirogreen Products. Everyone is welcome.

Our immediate Past Chairman of the Section, Alan Mitchel, has retired from the GTC. He has still not completely recovered from his illness. I am sure that the Section would like to pass on our best wishes to Alan. We all

hope that he continues to make good progress.

Another reminder for Westurf. As I said in last month's report, Westurf is moving to Westpoint near Exeter this year. Westpoint is a purpose built exhibition site. Because of this a lot more facilities will be made available. It should give Westurf a big surge forward. Paula, our Regional Administrator has put a lot of work into moving Westurf to Westpoint. It is now up to us as members to give our total support. A sponsored coach will be laid on for all of you attending Westurf. Please let Jef, our Secretary, or myself or any member of the committee know if you are attending. We can then arrange pick up points. For those of you who wish to make their own way, I am told there will be ample parking space.

Ken Lodge



South East
Derek Farrington
Tel: 01903 260956

London

The "Turkey Trot" for the London Section was held on 17 November at Hanbury Manor Golf and Country Club. Unfortunately the weather brought a heavy frost and play was limited to a maximum of 13 holes.

However, there was a good turn out for such a prestigious course and while everyone was disappointed that the whole course could not be played, everyone made the most of it and had a thoroughly enjoyable day.

The scores were pretty close but the overall winner was Kenny (plus two) Mackay, Course Manager at Hanbury, and our host for the day, so that was nice. Second place was taken by Ian Semple, of Old Fold Manor Golf Club, just one shot behind! (which I think was the reverse of the result at the Buckinghamshire in the summer). Third place was secured by J. Haynes. Thanks must be given to Kenny for arranging the venue and also to General Manager, Alan Williams and Mark Newey, Hanbury's Director of Golf, for their very kind hospitality.

Congratulations to Ted Carley, of Harpenden Golf Club, and his wife Kathy on the birth of Daniel, who weighed in at 8lb 2 oz.

On a very sad note, condolences from all in the London Section to Dave Delderfield, of Grasshoppers Club, whose wife passed away after a long illness.

Work started in December on the construction of two new tees at Old Fold Manor Golf Club, the 4th and 8th, and also reshaping work will take place at the back of the 7th Green. The design work was carried out by Ian and his team.

News from Wyke Green Golf Club is that Roger Mace, formerly of Northolt Golf Club, is to join Tony Dyke and his team on the greenkeeping staff. A lot of you will know Tony Dyke for his ever

present wide smile and despite a very tough year, it's never slipped. Tony's wife, Pat, was diagnosed with a serious illness at the start of 1998 and has been undergoing gruelling treatment since last February. Pat has faced up to this with great courage and good humour and fingers crossed, her condition is improving. Tony and their children, Andrew, Lee and Amanda send Pat all their love and I am sure all in the Section will wish Pat good luck and good health in 1999.

Venues for the Golf Days have yet to be finalised as we are trying to get some new venues for the coming season. Hopefully by next month, we will be able to give you firm dates.

As you read this the BTME at Harrogate will have taken place and hopefully the event will generate some news and gossip for this column. Any tidbits gratefully received on 01494 782334 or 0860 618281.

Peter Hopkinson.

East Anglia

Christmas came and went. Hope you enjoyed it. I did, I think!

Our AGM went with the efficiency of a Swiss watch and the speed of the bullet train or should that be the Willitt (two t's) train. One of these days we will turn up, Ian will say "All those in favour say aye. Meeting Closed." Brilliant.

Old Greenkeeping Proverb: "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." I wonder if the Greens Committees have heard that one. Mine have, several times.

Our section is going from strength to strength, thanks largely to Ian and Steve. Apparently ourselves and Essex are the two largest Sections of the lot, with us being the better organised, naturally!

Over 60 of us turned up at the Thorpeness Turkey Bash. "Bash" being the operative word. Sponsored by CMW we played a Texas Scramble on a wet but well prepared course, thanks to Ian (two T's) and his team.

First prize went to Ian (two T's) golf team. His party consisted of Thorpeness Managing Director, Tim Rowan-Robinson and Thorpeness Captain, Eric Duckworth with a net 61.7.

Greg McHugh and the Cowboys came second with a 62.1. There were four Nearest the Pin prizes on the 2nd, 7th, 10th and 16th which were won by A. Elliot, Steve Curtis, Peter Howard and Derek Farrington. They were sponsored by Rushbrooks, Sisis, Rhone Poulenc and Toro.

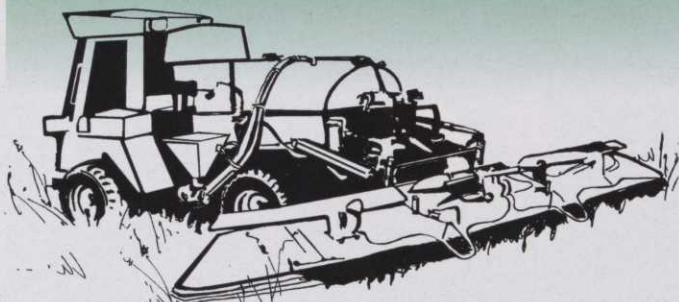
The Longest Drive on the 1st, and 17th were won by the same man, S. Bartram. I don't drive that far for my holidays!

Other sponsors were CMW, Rigby Taylor, Willmott Pertwee, Bartram Mowers, Ben Burgess, Consultant Clarkson, Pattisons and Colliers. Our thanks once again to all the trade lads, without them we could be struggling.

A special mention at the AGM was made for Colin Rushbrook who has been quite ill lately and it was good to see him out and about again, and Ernie Hart. These two guys have been spread-

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ing the East Anglian gospel. There was another award presented and nominated by Ernie to the Greenkeeper who goes about his job professionally and is a role model for all greenkeepers to follow. This award will be presented annually and as it has no official name, I think "The Ernie Hart Ambassador for Greenkeeping Award" will do nicely. Who won it? I hear you cry. Roger Eade, from Stowmarket, a very popular choice too I might add.

There are two new faces on the committee, Mark Broughton, who replaces Michael Peters and Quick Draw McGraw, sorry, Greg McHugh will attend Regional Meetings instead of Steve Millard.

That's all folks, except to say thank you again Thorpeness Golf Club, Hello Frank and see you in the spring.

Mick Lathrope

Surrey

Surrey Section held their 1998 Turkey Trot and AGM on 10 December at Clandon Regis Golf Club, near Guildford, and it was a pleasure to see such an excellent turn out. The weather was kind and only a few of the later starters enjoyed the slight rainfall of late afternoon.

Our Thanks and warm welcome to Steve Swanson the new Course Manager, for presenting the course in such good condition, bearing in mind the very wet weather all golf courses have had to contend with over the last year. The Turkey went to a noble winner, the First Assistant at Betchworth Park, Andy Gatland, and although his head-gear had a Mexican flavour, his 41 point win was most deserved as is his now reduced handicap.

The AGM was dealt with in a most efficient manner. The committee was re-elected with the exception of Mike Kirkham, our retiring Chairman, who we thank very sincerely for his commitment over the past years. Dave Delderfield and Ian Sellers are our two new committee members and we warmly welcome them to many years of service. Our last committee meeting took place on 11 January and all the latest information will appear in the March edition.

Chris Webb is now the First Assistant at Burhill Golf Club ably attending to the whims of the new Course Manager, Martin Smith, who has returned to Surrey Section after many years in the Midlands.

Although not strictly a Surrey Section club, Fulwell is so local that we thought the friendly thing to do was welcome Andy Johnston the new boss, and his four legged friend Tosh, into the area.

A belated but very happy New Year to all in Surrey Section.

Brian Willmott

Essex

By the time you receive this month's Greenkeeper International our first function of 1999, an evening lecture at Writtle College, will have been held. Thanks to our new Education Officer John Sinclair. A review will appear in next month's issue.

By the end of the month you all should receive your 1999 Fixture List Card, sponsored by P Tuckwell Ltd. Our thanks once again to Neil Peachey. Any problems telephone Martin Forrester 01245 603131.

As in 1998, we have a full programme of events, with record numbers of people supporting our Section. So, if you have not attended before, make an effort in 1999 and meet new friends who all work in the same harsh, sometimes lonely, environment.

During 1999 we are looking to hold further Educational Day Seminars, one being a two day computer course and the other, once again, a Management type course including negotiation skills and employment contracts and rights. These courses are a bargain price, for your benefit, to further our own individual skills in our ever growing demanding world. Your support will only make them viable to continue so look out for details in the post or contact Martin Forrester.

The format for this year's knock-out competition will be changed from a doubles event to singles. This is due to the problems occurring with organising matches last time around and hopefully, with fewer people arranging dates between each other, there will be no problems playing matches by the specified dates set by the competition

secretary, Richard Pride, 01268 752281. Details are in the post.

Finally I would like to mention the Industrial Advisory Panel of Turf Management and Greenkeeping which was held at Writtle College on 16 December. This is an important link in education for both Writtle College and us in the turf industry to try and set out future plans for what is needed regarding educational requirements.

Not quite finished. I'd like to wish both Martin Huckesbury, who has left Five Lakes to join up with Nigel Mansell, and Michael Fance, ex-Stock Brook Manor, now working for the Greenkeepers Supply Company, all the best in the new jobs.

Dave Wells. 01702 522202

Sussex

Sussex were indeed lucky with the weather once again. With courses closed and waterlogged all around them they were able to play their Christmas meeting at Littlehampton Golf Club on a day without wind or rain. Just fog!

David Wood had again prepared a super course for the Section, this being the eighth consecutive year that the event had been held there and the staff, under the direction of Secretary, Keith Palmer, always make us most welcome.

The results of the Texas Scramble are unimportant. It is a well known fact in Sussex that the Team Prize always goes to George Barr and his team, but on this occasion they did play well, winning it by two clear shots. No one begrudges George his victory. It is small recompense for the days he spends on "booze cruises" buying half of the French wine industries production in order that everyone attending wins at least one bottle of something. Even members of the non-winning teams walk out clutching several bottles of wine!

As mentioned earlier, the fog was a 'hazard' of the day. Being a links course, the tee-shots to the fairways were discernible by the hillocks on either side, but for the last hour or so of play, each team needed to send a 'scout' ahead to establish the general direction and a rough idea of the distance to the green. All in all a most interesting days golf which I think can be summed up in the

words of a guest overheard in the bar to say "It was probably the best day I have ever spent on a golf course!"

Derek Farrington

Northern Ireland

North East

Recently the GTC in the form of David Golding and Sue Gudgeon came over to see us and to train a few more assessors. We now have 25 assessors in Northern Ireland. The GTC are hoping that within the next five years there will be an assessor on every golf course in Northern Ireland. This is a major step forward in our industry. In conjunction with Greenmount College all students undertaking training will have their own work-place assessors. We believe that this is the way all training should be carried out in all industries. Greenmount College with Brian Corr and Neill McLaughlin has pioneered a new form of assessing students and monitoring their progress in conjunction with their work-place assessors. "This system is an example to all training providers and I would like to see this in operation at all colleges," said David Golding. Also now in place are three Internal Verifiers who will help to police the system. If any assessor has any problems please feel free to get in touch with the verifiers. They are Emmett Curran, Henry Farrell and Eamonn Farrell.

Congratulations to Larry Martin who moves from Vesta Irrigation to the Greenkeeping team at Stakis Park. Last but not least, best wishes to David Laird who has left J.E. Coulter to take up the Kubota Dealership now sited at Randalstown. Hope it all goes well for you Davy.

Eamonn Farrell

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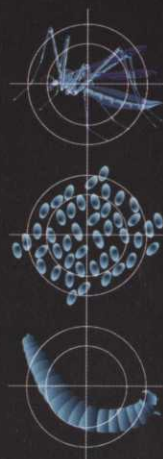


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Elise Jarvenen, Past Chairman of the Finnish Greenkeepers Association, describes life working on golf courses in northern Europe.

● Breaking the ICE

Finland is known as "The Land of The Thousand Lakes" but has less than one hundred golf courses. Not quite all of them overlook lakes; some of them are on river banks or by the sea.

Finland is on the same latitude as Alaska, which means that the winters are severely cold and the ground freezes solidly.

The Finnish summer is light and very beautiful but always far too short. The length of the growing season is about two months shorter in the north than in the south. In the south one can play golf for up to eight months of the year and in

the north for about five. On average the playing season lasts six months and the maintenance season goes on for ten months. But even midwinter does not give the greenkeeper a full holiday, as vigil watch against solid ice forming on the greens has to be kept and all changes in the snow structure must be duly observed.

Although the summer is short, the days are long and light. In the north this means three months of continuous daylight and in the south one and a half months. Just think what this means for the golf course grass! They grow "like crazy" and, accordingly, the teeing grounds and fairways have to be mown three times a week. The cost of maintaining a golf course in Finland is therefore quite high because of the large number of people hired to run the mowers.

Even in the spring the surface can remain soaked for a long period of time before the thaw sets in and the soil dries in earnest. Given the growing conditions we have in Finland the best results

for obtaining high class greens of even quality are achieved by using creeping bent or annual meadow grass.

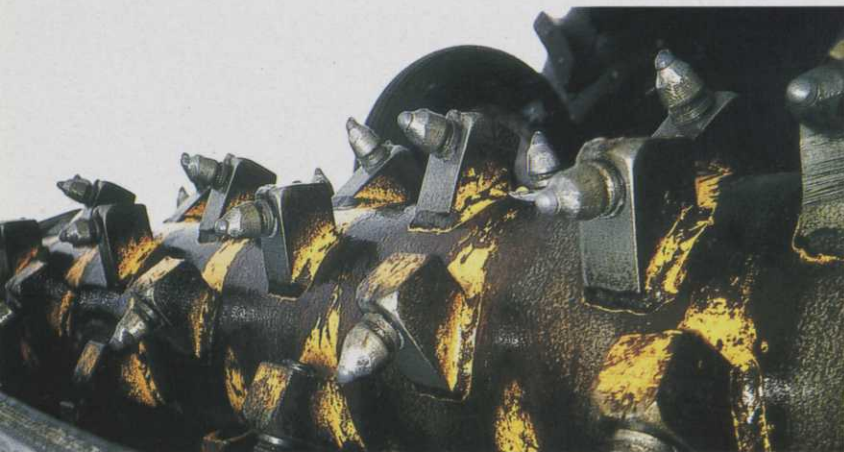
No doubt, we will have to wait for another couple of hundred years of flourishing greenhouse effects before we can expect bermuda grass to survive the Finnish winter. Even so, it is not always easy for the greenkeeper to explain to the most exacting players coming here from courses situated in a more southerly climate that bermuda grass simply does not survive and cannot grow in Finland no matter what you do.

A blend of meadow grass, chewings - and red fescues is used quite extensively for fairways, teeing grounds and rough areas.

Poa supina has also gained popularity for teeing grounds as it grows fast to cover divots and is able to



You won't see many of these in the UK!





withstand our winter climate and a low cutting height extremely well. It is, however, too aggressive to be used on greens because of a far too fast growing rate in the prolonged daylight conditions of the Finnish summer.

How do we maintain the golf course in real winter conditions?

The very idea of maintaining a golf course in the middle of the winter sounds ridiculous but there are jobs that must be undertaken specifically because of the winter. Furthermore, there are tasks that, if completed during the winter season, will reduce work in the summer. This is vital as the summer is short and is the hectic season for both playing and maintenance when courses are packed with players and machinery all at the same time.

The arrival of winter escapes any

forecasting. No two years are the same. Normally the frost sets in in October-November upon which the soil freezes solid down to a depth of 0.5 - 1.5 metres and will remain so for four to six months. Usually the snow arrives a little later but most winters will see an all-covering and lasting carpet of snow before Christmas. Sometimes the first snow comes early, when the soil is still soft. If this initial snow cover is thick and stays on, the soil might not freeze at all during the winter.

This, however, might result in the emergence of snow mildew and other forms of winter fungi, especially so as the effects of the fungicides we use do not last for such a prolonged period of time. Ideally, the soil should be dry and frozen before the snow comes. A dry and thick layer of snow is good for the wintering of the grass sur-

faces, as this will protect the grass against the cold and prevent the soil from freezing too deep down. In the eastern and northern parts of Finland the snow layer usually builds up to a thickness of 0.7 - 1.5 metres and will cover the land for an average of four months or 120 days. (plus or minus 30 days depending on where you are in Finland).

The problem is that the snow carpet does not stay dry and airy. If the temperature rises above zero the snow gets soaked and wet and even more so if the falling snow changes into sleet or rain. In such an event the water penetrates to the bottom of the snow carpet and when it freezes again the vegetation is suffocated.

In some cases greenkeepers clear the slush from the greens before it can freeze on the grass again. So far

this practice has produced quite good results, but experiences gained are still limited and the drawback is that it requires staff all around the year. Alternatively, wet snow can be dried by ploughing furrows in the snow carpet to lead the unwanted water away from the area. This method works particularly well for the fairways and makes them dry faster and gets them in full playing condition earlier in the spring.

Nearer to the coast the winter weather is more unsettled and there are more problems with icing. The ice layer can regularly attain a thickness from a few centimetres up to more than 10 centimetres. There are recorded cases of greenkeepers being taken by surprise by layers of up to 40 centimetres of crystal clear ice. Ice even collects on the descents and slopes when

• Breaking the ICE



Coping with the elements to produce quality putting surfaces (above)

the ground is frozen and the air is so cold that rain water cannot run but freezes on the spot.

Clear, solid ice is crushed with the aid of large bog rotovators fitted with spikes of hard metal. As the crushed ice is cleared from the course a considerable amount of water is removed from the surface. The clearing process should start about two months after the ice cover appears, but certainly not later than when

the vegetation begins to develop a smell. The greens must never be cleared bare of protection in temperatures which are down to -25°C . And if so, the weather must remain mild for several days ahead.

Top dressing the snow carpet

Top dressing the snow carpet with sand is one of the routine jobs undertaken when winter is about to turn into spring. As the ground is still frozen even heavy tractors will not make damaging tracks, and, as the grass is still fully protected by snow, it doesn't even matter if you use chains on the tyres. In addition to improving the structure of the grass, the dressing will speed up the melting of the snow and the drying of the fairways. The heat of the sun will be absorbed by the dark sand and the snow will practically melt away before your eyes.

Covers, electricity and checking for winter diseases

During the last ten years the use of



covers has become more and more common on golf course greens. They help to protect grass which has been exposed too early in the spring from drying and to promote earlier growing. *Poa annua* greens, in particular, seem to benefit from an accelerated start to their growth when covers have been used. Without them the *poa* trails behind the bentgrass greens by two to three weeks so the use of covers evens out the handicap.

At some golf courses electrical heating has been installed in the ground under the greens. The installation and running costs are very high therefore it is not practical. The problem from the point of view of running a course is that even if the greens are kept clear you cannot play if there is snow on the fairways.

The protection of vegetation is one of the most important maintenance jobs in the autumn whereas the monitoring of winter diseases caused by fungi goes on throughout the winter. The winter diseases based on fungi that cause most damage are called pink snow mold *Fusarium nivale* and grey snow mold *Typhula incarnata*.

Maintenance in the summer

As the ground and air eventually heat up after the winter, all growth and all development in nature set in at a phenomenal speed. The basic rule is that the course and the greens, in particular, have to be in prime condition by midsummer. In other words the course has to be put in shape within one and a half months no matter how extensive the winter damage has been. After midsummer the daylight conditions settle down and the growth of the greens gradually slows down.

Most courses possess their own assorted range of fairly good maintenance equipment even though it represents quite a lot of money. A great concern

here is that the machines work reliably. The short season affords no time off for machine repair and maintenance.

During the peak season mowing often has to begin as early as 3 to 4am on the busier courses and for the rest it is normal to start at 5 o'clock.

During mid-season the courses are kept in tournament shape for as long as possible as the courses are really packed; the average would amount to some 250 (or even a record 300) rounds a day. There are about 7,000 players a month and during a whole season this means 25,000 - 30,000 rounds of golf.

Due to the continental climate in Finland, the temperatures in June and July can reach heatwave figures and rainy days are mainly concentrated in the spring and autumn. Consequently, irrigation becomes the principal task for the greenkeeper in the hot mid-season, even though this summer (1998) produced a record amount of rainfall; up to twice the normal rate and in some places even three times above the average.

Poa annua's start of growth has always proved quite reliable but even so a new cultivation is seeded every year. This saves the greenkeepers from a lot of work in the spring and even though the *Poa* greens are a little late in becoming playable a greenkeeper can rely on *Poa* despite what bentgrass fans think.

To summarise, it would be fair to say that golf courses in Finland are maintained to the same exacting level as they are on the international circuit. The greenkeepers have learned to adjust their course maintenance and techniques according to the growing conditions and the prevailing climate. Among the greenkeepers there is a good spirit of mutual assistance, which helps us solve any problem and colleagues are never left in trouble.

So all in all, irrespective of the rigours of our winter, golf course maintenance in Finland remains an attractive and thoroughly educational occupation.







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1998 Golf Environment Competition winner, Urdrick CC, Sheffield. Photo: Eric Hipworth



In June last year, an R&A survey aimed at identifying research priorities for golf courses was conducted through BIGGA members. Dr Stephen Baker of the STRI now collates the views of the Greenkeeping profession...

...and now for the results

Introduction

In the June 1998 issue of *Greenkeeper International*, a questionnaire was circulated to give greenkeeping staff an opportunity to indicate the principal problems occurring on their courses. This formed part of an R&A strategy to identify research priorities. The results are important because if research on golf course management is to be properly focused, the views of different groups are needed and in particular greenkeeping staff are aware of problems at first hand.

In total 124 completed questionnaires were returned, with 90 from greenkeepers and course managers in England, 23 from Scotland, six from Ireland, four from Wales and one from Sweden.

Questionnaire results

Table 1 gives the overall response for each of the problems identified in the questionnaire. To establish perceived priorities for golf course research, a weightings system was applied to the questionnaire results. Five marks were awarded for each response of a severe problem, three for a moderate problem, one for a minor problem and no

points for any factor not considered to be a problem. Cumulative scores are given in Table 1, with the five most important problems relating to annual meadow-grass, traffic management/winter wear, earthworms, rabbits and golf trolleys.

Clearly the perception of problems may also be influenced by other factors most notably the weather. Thus for instance irrigation requirements may have featured more prominently had the summer of 1998 not been so wet. In addition factors such as heather management may be an issue only on a limited number of courses with specific habitats.

No major differences in patterns of response could be seen on a regional basis but there were indications that perceived problems varied between course types. Only the categories of parkland, heathland, links and converted agricultural land had more than ten cases so analysis was restricted to these course types, but the most conspicuous variations in the reporting of severe problems were as follows:

(a) Annual meadow grass control - a response of 28% and 24% with severe problems on converted agri-

cultural and parkland respectively compared with only an 8% response on heathland courses.

(b) Earthworms and casting control - for converted agricultural land 41% of responses indicated severe problems compared to 18% on links courses and only 8% on heathland areas.

(c) Irrigation management - the greatest problems were reported on links courses (27% indicated severe problems) compared to only 4% on converted agricultural land.

(d) Level of resources - greatest problems were reported on converted agricultural land (21% indicated severe problems) compared to a zero response for links courses.

(e) Rabbit control - problems greatest on links and heathland courses (46% and 45% respectively indicated severe problems) compared with a 17% response for parkland courses.

(f) Traffic management/winter wear - greatest problems on parkland courses (37% indicated severe problems) compared to a zero response on links courses.

(g) Wear by golf trolleys - greatest on parkland courses (33% severe problem) compared to a 10% and 8% respectively for links and heath-

...and now for the results

A number of additional areas for possible research were also suggested and these are given in Table 2. In some cases they overlapped with items included on the main section of the questionnaire. Issues such as the composition on the Green Committee and the mind of the golfer were specifically excluded,

although several people listed these as important factors in golf course management!

Research needs

The R&A is already funding major research projects at the STRI on earthworm control and green construction and work on heather

management is just starting. In addition the USGA is funding a project at Bingley to examine particle migration and moisture profiles in greens as influenced by the rootzone, intermediate and drainage layers. Under the STRI's own resources we have been examining drainage and moisture retention of

different rootzone materials. Furthermore the STRI's grass cultivar testing programme, that culminates in Turfgrass Seed, continually supplies new information on the performance of grasses for the golf course including indications of disease susceptibility. All this research is invaluable for providing

Table 1

Problem area	Severe	Moderate	Minor	No problem	Total score
Annual meadow grass: Control and management	30	48	29	9	323
Traffic management/winter wear	28	44	21	16	293
Earthworm and casting control	31	33	32	14	286
Rabbit control	30	33	26	31	275
Wear by golf trolleys	24	42	21	23	267
Fusarium control	22	38	28	22	252
Dry patch/superficial fairy rings	17	36	44	13	237
Levels of resources for golf course management	15	30	38	22	203
Micro-organism supplements and feeds	14	28	29	36	183
Tree management	10	35	28	32	183
Irrigation management and water supply problems	15	22	35	37	176
Bunker sand selection and refurbishment	7	38	25	36	174
Disease forecasting	7	32	35	28	166
Soft spikes and footwear selection	12	19	33	44	150
Fairy ring control	9	23	32	42	146
Thatch fungi	8	24	34	43	146
Anthraxnose control	12	18	29	46	143
Wildlife management	8	20	39	38	139
Mechanical treatments for greens	4	21	32	50	115
Grass selection for greens	4	18	40	45	114
Use of seaweed products	5	16	37	48	110
Effect of rollers on triple mower and ride-on units on green speed	3	19	37	42	109
Black layer control	2	18	35	47	99
Perennial ryegrass control on greens	5	15	20	67	90
Autumn/winter feeding	1	19	24	59	86
Grass selection for tees	1	14	37	52	84
Mowing height for golf greens	2	14	30	58	82
Yorkshire fog control	4	7	28	69	69
Heather management	2	7	7	79	38

Overall response for the severity of different management problems on golf courses (perceived severity was calculated on basis that: Severe problem = 5 points, Moderate problem = 3 points, Minor problem = 1 point and No problem = 0 points)

information on the performance of different products and materials and improves our understanding of mechanisms influencing the quality of golf courses. Our aim is always to publish the most important findings, both in scientific journals and in more popular magazines such as Greenkeeper International, so that

the results can be incorporated into future management decisions by greenkeeping staff.

The questionnaire has provided useful additional information on priorities for research funding and our thanks go to all the greenkeepers who took time to complete the questionnaire.

Table 2

List of additional items that were considered to warrant research

- Benefits of a closed season in January and February
- Bird damage
- Chafer beetles
- Clubhouse surrounds
- Disease problems of newly established greens
- Drainage problems on fairways, bunkers, rough
- Effectiveness of fungicides
- Environmentally friendly alternatives to chemical control
- Fertility of newly constructed greens
- Fever fly
- Grass clipping disposal
- Growth retardants
- Health and Safety
- Integrated pest management
- Long term effects of wetting agents
- Maintenance of USGA greens
- National Survey of fungal disease problems
- Overseeding
- Quality of irrigation water and effects on turf quality
- Storage of irrigation water
- Thatch removal
- Tree Planting
- Use of peat and organic materials in rootzones and top dressing

Dr Stephen Baker is Head of Soils and Sports Surface Science at the Sports Turf Research Institute based at Bingley, West Yorkshire



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Ad Ref 009

Bernhard & Co Ltd. has traded for almost 25 years as the export arm of Atterton and Ellis Ltd. In December 1997 Bernhard's (BCo) bought Atterton's and the newly expanded company has now become BIGGA's latest Golden Key supporter. Scott MacCallum spoke with Managing Director Stephen Bernhard...

Life at the sharp end



Atterton's grinders, play a pivotal role in supporting an increasing number of greenkeepers in their efforts to produce superb playing conditions - ensuring that the cutting units he uses are razor sharp at all times.

Ask any group of golfers what a greenkeeper does and you won't lose money by betting that cutting grass will appear in the first couple of answers.

Of course we all know there's more to it than that, but grass cutting, rather like a policeman on the beat, is the visible bit and grass quality is the basis upon which they are judged. Produce a nice striped fairway or help an old lady across the road and "Boy you're doing a good job."

Stephen Bernhard, Managing Director of Bernhard & Co, aware of this, knows that producing the best possible cut, with the sharpest possible blades, results in benefits far greater than the merely aesthetic.

A horticulturist from the landscape industry, Stephen makes sure his company is run by people who know about growing grass and who appreciate information greenkeepers feed back to them after using mowers sharpened by Bernhard's machines.

"We believe the horticultural influ-

ence should always be paramount in our thinking," explained Stephen.

To highlight an example, he recounted how, years ago, Breckenridge Golf Club, in Colorado, had asked him to visit a year or so after buying a set of Express Dual and Anglemaster grinders, to discuss why snow mould diseases had been significantly reduced. Having being voted "best looking greens in the Rockies" their Superintendent said much of this was down to using the grinders, coupled with changes in his maintenance routines.

Sharpening was rescheduled to the autumn, when the grass was stressed by frequent play, drought and high temperatures. Rescheduling meant that mowers cutting during the last months of the season would be super sharp. This significantly reduced the damage to the grass blade tips thus reducing the susceptibility to fungal attack. The crew noticed lower demand for nitrogen and instead they encouraged root growth and plant development.

The grass seemed to be stronger and healthier through winter and as the Spring season began, they used the same mowers, sharpened in autumn, to mow through worm casts and accumulated winter debris. Only

then, after all rough work was completed, they re-sharpened the mowers, ensuring the turf would be mown cleanly to be at its best when the golfers came back to play - and to judge the conditions.

"By analysing this sort of experience, we constantly learn about implications of sharpening and programmes which could reduce costs," explained Stephen, who talks with great zeal about the grass research in which he and his team

are involved with a number of US turf research institutes and universities.

"We have developed a superb Cost Analysis Programme which evaluates the potential savings a course can enjoy by modifying its approach to sharpening. There are huge savings to be made from improved environmental practices and from understanding the practical implications in both agronomic and mechanical terms." Sharing this information with many organisations, colleges and mechanic associations has made Stephen a popular speaker at seminars and workshops all over the world.

Bernhard and Co arrived in the sharpening business because of what Stephen learned when in the family landscape company in the 70s. His father, Jeffrey, began his business in the early 1940's in the Midlands and he opened the first ever Garden Centre in the UK.

Stephen studied at Pershore Institute and then traveled extensively, working for landscapers in England, Holland, Germany France and in the USA, adding to his knowledge.

Returning to the family firm, he initially headed up the design side of the business and later took over the grass maintenance division.

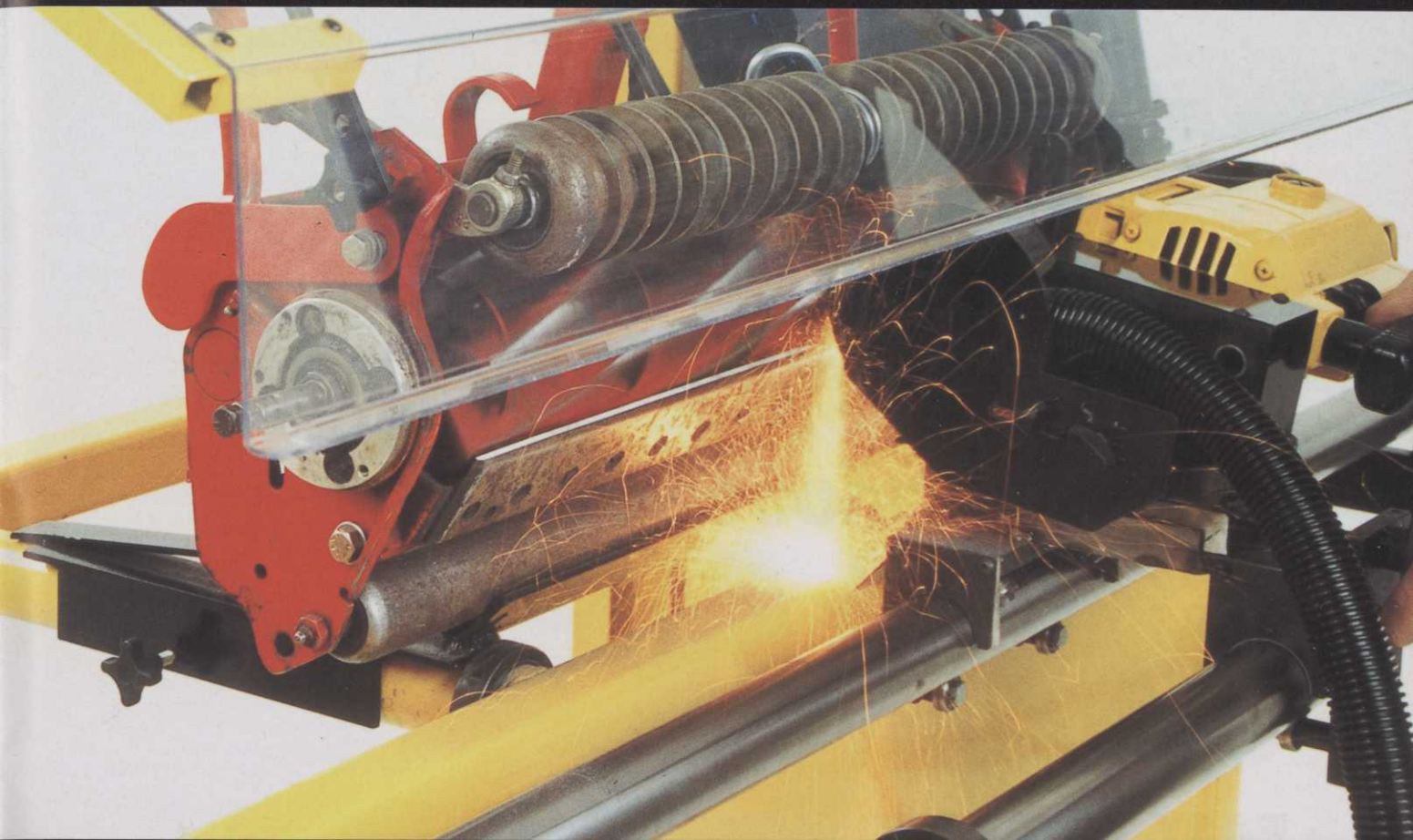
"To reduce mower problems we embarked upon several tests that demonstrated how different techniques of sharpening could significantly improve the mower's performance and reduce our costs."

The company then invested in sharpening equipment and soon became involved with Atterton and Ellis, who had made the first cylinder



"We believe the horticultural influence should always be paramount in our thinking," explained Stephen.





grinders for Ransomes back in the 1800s.

"Going through old records and working with Ken Boardman, the then MD of Atterton's, I learned a lot about the actual construction of a cylinder and bottom blade," recalled Stephen. "It was fascinating discovering original developments of the mower and how they were designed and built back then, in the early 1800's."

On the strength of that, Bernhard's and Atterton's began developing machines which adopted a whole new approach to sharpening.

"The new grinders were fast and simple to use. Grass areas cut with these sharpened mowers looked greener, healthier and our costs reduced dramatically. We never looked back."

Other European landscapers and maintenance contractors, keen to reduce their own costs, soon started to buy these new sharpening machines from Bernhard's who, in 1972, formed a new sales and marketing company, Bernhard Rugby Export Services.

Jacobsen's Sales and Marketing Director met Stephen at a show in Paris and asked him to meet their service people at their US factory in Racine.

"We already had good links to Ransomes and soon found ourselves working with Toro in Minneapolis too."

While visiting US manufacturers and dealers, it was surprising to discover how sharpening techniques there were so different to those in Europe.

"We began selling our machines

which, in those days retailed for about \$12,000 while in the States machines they used were costing as little as \$2,000."

Using these cheaper machines in the USA almost invariably involved operators having to backlap afterwards to make mowers cut. This made it necessary to thin the blades, making them more fragile. (This is the process they call relief grinding). The whole process often took over two hours.

"On the other hand, using Express Dual and Anglemaster grinders, they were able to sharpen greens mowers in only 20 minutes, floor to floor - including the cylinder and bottom blade."

This huge step forward made these British machines very attractive to the Americans, particularly as they were so much more user friendly and required less skill. The dealers were excited by the prospect of this speed and their increased profits.

Sales took off in the USA and since that breakthrough there are now something in excess of 10,000 in the States and over 14,000 worldwide.

Over the last few years the Express Dual has changed a lot. Now there is no need to remove the bottom blade to grind the cylinder, a big advantage. Sharpening takes under five minutes. Machines are almost fully automatic, electronics are incorporated and the use of hydraulic lifts enables one operator to raise mowers automatically onto the work table.

One aspect which has delighted Stephen and his team is the positive way the company is treated by its customers.

"Our users are all like members of a

family. Whenever we exhibit we get top Superintendents coming to our stand to tell their success stories and pass on information to whoever will listen. It's great for our sense of pride," he said.

In July 1997 Bernhard & Co Ltd. was the proud recipient of the prestigious "Small Business of the Year National Export Award" from the Department of Trade and Industry. This award recognises significant contributions that companies with fewer than 300

employees, make to the UK's exports. Over 80% of Bernhard's production goes to overseas markets.

BCo has two locations, the central office and marketing base with its team of 20 in Rugby and the factory in Haverhill Suffolk where the machines are produced.

"We continue to trade in England as Atterton and Ellis Ltd," explained Stephen, "as it is the name that started the grinder business in 1856, and we are very proud of our roots."

The company is very progressive. Part of the philosophy is to encourage all the employees to think of the business as their own. This leads to excellent quality and product reliability. Consequently BCo is able to offer a unique 10 year warranty. It is something which Stephen always makes a point of emphasising when talking with his team.

"We actually exchanged an eight year old machine with a brand new one, free of charge. It was showing signs of metal fatigue

having sharpened 1600 fairway mowers every year," he told me.

"With the amalgamation of Bernhard's

and Atterton's, we try to ensure that key employees who make and assemble machines and our Research and Development people, go out and work with machines on site, to learn what it's like to be a mechanic on the shop floor at a golf course.

We need to build machines that are easy and fast to use, simple, reliable and cost effective. We're not interested in bells and whistles - they complicate maintenance and are often counterproductive."

Hands-on quality control is led by BCo's Managing Director.

"I try to spend almost half my time at golf courses, frequently working on our machines. Our users are the people who influence the business most. It's essential to hear what they say and be guided by them," Stephen maintains.

Bernhard's and Atterton's are delighted to join BIGGA as a Golden Key Supporter.

"We want to become a really effective partner of BIGGA, contributing to its membership by helping to develop understanding of what goes on when you have a cylinder and bottom blade that sort of try to murder the grass!" Education has been an important part of Bernhard's success around the world.

"Mowing is the last thing done to the grass every day before customers are let loose on the golf course. Our job is to make that mowing job easier, more cost effective and to produce a superb result that pleases players and Greenskeeping staff alike."

Sounds like a life at the sharp end.

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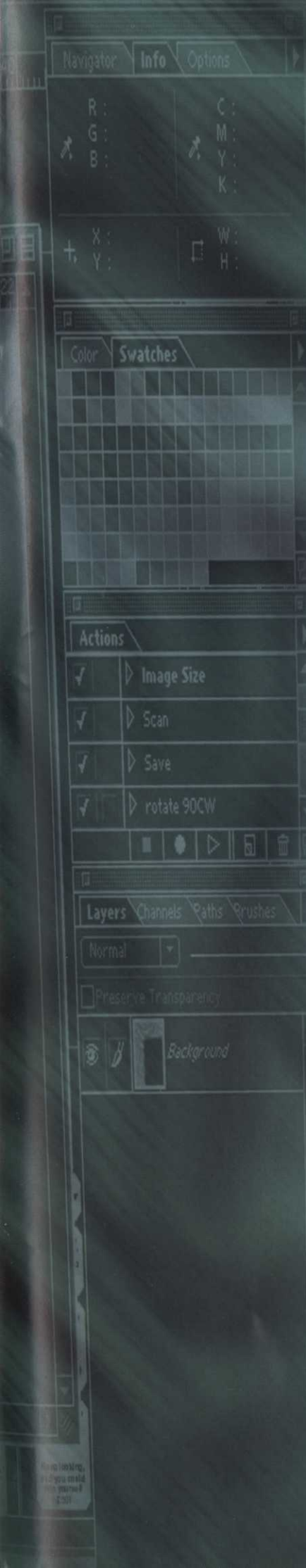
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Two years on from his last Greenkeeper International series on computers and computing Ken Richardson catches up on the many developments in a fast moving and exciting industry.

A second byte

In the two years since my last series of articles on digital computers and their software, computer technology has continued to advance with more and more applications being developed, more hardware being provided for lower prices and operating systems becoming easier to use. Some golf clubs and some greenkeepers still seem to be reluctant to introduce this type of technology but from the feedback that I receive, it is clear that greenkeepers are beginning to see how computers can be used as useful tools in greenkeeping management. In this article, I will try to update some of the information that was written in 1997 and explain how changes in hardware and software have made computers cheaper, more flexible and easier to operate.

Computer Hardware

Computer hardware is all of the hard items that comprise a computer as opposed to Software which comprises the instructions that make the computer work. There are two main types of computer that can be used in the office. These are the PC clones and the Apple Mac. The popularity of the Apple Mac has waxed and waned but many offices, including BIGGA HQ, still use them. However, the lower cost computers are mainly PC clones and the majority of software, including golf course management software is designed to run on PCs. All digital computers are made

from four basic components; input devices, such as keyboards, mouse, microphone and joystick, output devices, such as monitor (screen, VDU), printers and loudspeakers, a central processing unit (CPU) and Memory (Storage).

Let's now look at each of the four components in more detail.

Input devices

Digital computers can use a number of input devices but I will only consider the Keyboard and mouse in this article

Keyboards

There are many types of keyboard, each with slightly different keys. However, all keyboards have keys that are common.

Most keyboard use the QWERTY layout for alphabetical and numeric keys, a series of function keys, cursor and screen control keys and a numeric keypad. There are some other 'special' keys that you may have to use. The use of these and other keys will become clear as you begin to use your computer.

To conform with the Heath and Safety at Work Act, keyboards should be height adjustable and be capable of movement around the desktop to ensure a comfortable working position and to minimise the risk of repetitive strain injury.

Mouse

There are several types of mouse that come in different shapes, however they all operate in the same way.

Externally, the mouse consists of

two buttons and a roller ball. Note, to prevent excessive wear and a build up of dirt and or static, it is always advisable to use a mouse mat. The mouse can be used to perform three operations. These are Point, Click and Drag.

Output Devices

Digital computers can use numerous output devices including monitors (screens, VDUs), loudspeakers and printers.

Monitors

Monitors come in different screen sizes, however, the usual office/home computer comes with minimum screen size of 14 inches and 17 inch screens are becoming the norm. Today's technology provides excellent quality with full colour and the option of a flat screen.

Printers

There are many types of printer but the usual types found in homes and offices are dot matrix, bubble (ink) jet and laser printers. Bubble jet printers can be used to print in black and white and colour and can give good quality results at a reasonable price. However, if you are considering printing a large amount of material then the cost of ink cartridges can be quite high. The fastest high quality print comes from laser printers but the cost can be high. Colour laser printers are very expensive for the average office or home.

Central Processing Unit

The Central Processing Unit (CPU) is the heart (or brain) of a digital computer. This unit contains the processor which is, usually, a Pentium, or equivalent, memory devices, control circuitry and devices to perform calculations and logical functions. Advances in technology mean that processors are much faster and can complete more operation in a given time.

Memory

There are several types of memory or storage devices. These are; random access memory (RAM) which is short term memory, Read only memory (ROM) which allows you only to read information ie take information out, it will not allow you, the user, to write (store, put in) information, compact disk ROM which is also preprogrammed by the manufacturer and can hold large amounts of data on interchangeable disks, floppy disks, used to "back up" work, and hard disks which are similar to floppy disks but hold much larger amounts of data.

Once the various components of a computer system are connected together and the power is switched on software is needed to make the computer perform its various tasks.

Software

Software is the name for the instructions that make a computer do what the operator wants. The two main types of software are Operating Systems and Applications.

Operating Systems

Operating systems tell the computer what to do and when to do it. A built in operating system (BIOS) starts to operate when power is applied and 'boots up' the computer, including launching the Operating System. The usual operating system for small offices and home use is Windows 98, although older computers may still run under Windows 3.1, Windows 3.11 or, even under DOS. Windows 98 supplied with most PC type computers and is an upgrade to Windows 95. Windows 95 simplified the method of operation and used an icon (picture) based system. This allows the operator to point the mouse pointer at a picture, click the mouse button and access a selection of "menus". Windows 98 has added several extra features. These are:

a. Faster performance and load times, improved plug and play

hardware detection and improved power management.

b. Configuration improvements such as display settings and Accessibility Wizard.

c. An improved Help system.

d. New Utilities such as the Maintenance Wizard and improvements to existing utilities.

e. New multimedia features.

f. New Internet and communication tools.

You can learn to handle Windows 98 by:

a. Trial and error, using Windows help.

b. By using an appropriate text book eg "Teach Yourself Windows 98" or the Idiots Guide to Windows 98" both available from the BIGGA Library.

c. Attending a BIGGA training course.

d. Attending a college computer course.

Applications software

There is a long list of applications software from games to education courses and office tools to software development tools. However, there are several software packages that are very useful office suites and other packages that can help in the management of the golf course. These include:

Microsoft Works

This is a simple package that contains word processing, spreadsheet and database software. Ideal for beginners, it lacks the sophistication and flexibility of other packages.

Microsoft Office

This package also contains word processing, spreadsheet and database software but also includes Powerpoint, a presentation package and can link to the Internet. Office is a very flexible package that includes a wide range of useful features and is becoming a standard package in many offices.

Claris Works

This package is similar to Microsoft Works but also includes a draw package and a paintbox package.

Lotus Smartsuite

This package is similar to Microsoft Office

TRIMS

TRIMS is a software package designed to help with the manage-

ment of golf courses. It comprises an interactive set of functions which cover machinery, staff records, budgets, fertiliser and pesticide records, weather, irrigation, spares etc. Produced in the USA, TRIMS has been available for approximately ten years and is available, through BIGGA.

Qquest

A similar package to TRIMS with slightly fewer facilities but at a lower price. Quest is available from Wessex Software Systems telephone 01798 831020, fax 01798 831381.

Turf Way

A very simple, but cheap option is produced in Canada and costs \$350 ie approximately £210. Full details on the software can be found on the Internet www.edm.shaw.ca/~pds and you can order a demo disk from Franz Hasenhundl at fhasenhu@trm.intrawest.com. Alternatively, you can obtain a demo disk and further details by faxing Precision Data Services on 001 403 4637176.

On Course

Produced in Sweden by Epani systems, this package sold well in Sweden, Holland and Germany. Epani are, currently considering a British version of their software and BIGGA are involved in this development.

I have tried to give an idea of how computer technology has advanced in the past two years. Rereading this article and those produced in 1997 show that progress has been rapid in terms of hardware and software and that prices have tumbled. However, computers are not easy to handle, they need you to understand a special language and to have an ability to type. Voice recognition is, already available on some systems and is being introduced into quality cars and aircraft. What the next two years brings is anybody's guess. If you know what the future holds then please let me know and we can both make our fortunes. For further advice on hardware, software and training please contact me at BIGGA HQ.

Next month Ken will advise on what to buy and where to buy it.

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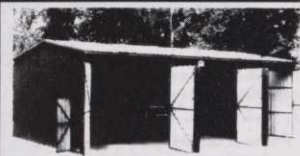
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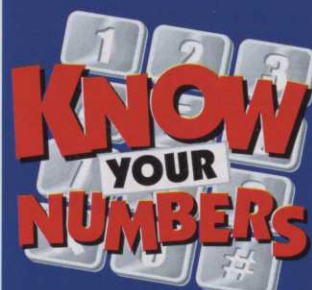
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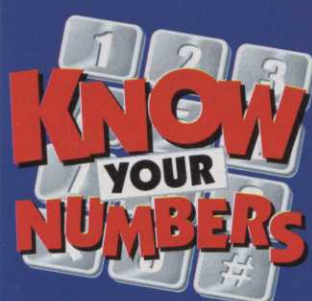
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Last month, Jeremy Eastwood of Woodsome Hall GC, certainly knew his numbers when he correctly identified all three telephone numbers.

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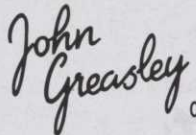
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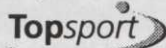
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STOCKPORT GOLF CLUB

ASSISTANT COURSE MANAGER/ HEAD GREENKEEPER

Stockport, a private members club established in 1908, is an 18 hole parkland course, which will host the regional qualifying competition for the Open Championship for the years 1999 - 2003.

Applications are invited for this position reporting to the Course Manager. The successful applicant will be qualified to NVQ Level 3, PA1, PA2 and PA6 spraying certificates and have a minimum of 5 years experience on a course with high standards. Management and motivation of a small team of greens staff is important as is the knowledge of machinery and irrigation systems.

Salary is in accordance with Standing Committee rates.
No accommodation is available.

Closing date 26 February, 1999

Applications to: J E Flanagan, Secretary, Stockport Golf Club Limited,
Offerton Road, Offerton, Stockport, Cheshire SK2 5HL
Tel: 0161 427 8369

SCRAPTOFT GOLF CLUB

Applications are invited for the position of

HEAD GREENKEEPER

Scraptoft Golf Club was established in 1927 as a members owned club.
Facilities include a 20 hole parkland golf course set in the heart of Leicestershire.

The successful applicant will be suitably qualified to NVQ Level 3 or equivalent, PA1A, PA2 AND PA6 preferred, and have practical knowledge of modern machinery and irrigation systems.

The position requires a hands on working Head Greenkeeper and the successful applicant will lead by example, be hard working, self motivated with a keen and positive attitude towards their work, show good man management and supervisory skills leading a team of five whilst working within agreed budgets.

Salary negotiable

Accommodation not available

Apply in writing with full C.V. to

Secretary/Manager, Scraptoft Golf Club,
Beeby Road, Scraptoft, Leicestershire, LE7 9SJ

Telephone: 0116 2418863

Closing date: 5th March 1999

HOEBRIDGE GOLF CENTRE

Require an

ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

Busy established golf complex with three courses and driving range is currently looking for a Greenkeeper to join our existing team.

Ideally the applicant should possess greenkeeping/landscape experience and be able to work on their own initiative. The Company are committed to a full training programme for the successful applicant to progress in this career.

Apply in writing with full C.V. to:-

The Centre Manager, Hoebridge Golf Centre,
Old Woking Road, Old Woking, Surrey, GU22 8JH

ILFORD GOLF CLUB

DEPUTY HEAD GREENKEEPER

We require an ambitious, enthusiastic and highly motivated person to join this established but developing club.

You will be qualified to Level II and possess PA1 and PA2A spraying certificate with a minimum of 5 years practical experience.

We also seek to appoint an Assistant Greenkeeper.

Please apply in writing with CV to:

Jeff Robinson, Course Manager, Ilford Golf Club,
291 Wanstead Park Road, Ilford, Essex IG1 3TR

HORNE PARK GOLF CLUB

has a vacancy for an

ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

must be experienced and enthusiastic,
willing to join a hard-working and happy team
on a high standard 9 Hole Par 34 (66 Acres)
Pay and Play Course

Apply in writing with full C.V.

TO: Managing Director, Robin Gardner, Horne Park Golf Academy
Limited, Croydonbarn Lane, Horne, South Godstone, Surrey RH9 8JP

New Zealand Golf Club

Requires

Qualified Greenkeeper

Applicants must be qualified to NVQ Level 2.

Salary and conditions are negotiable
but no accommodation.

Please apply in writing, enclosing a full CV to:

The Secretary, New Zealand Golf Club,
Woodham Lane, Addlestone, Surrey KT15 3QD

RUSHMERE GOLF CLUB

Applications are invited for the post of

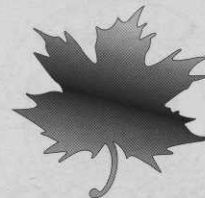
HEAD GREENKEEPER

At this 18 hole Heathland Course situated on Common Land on the outskirts of Ipswich. We seek an experienced person to be a working leader of a team of four.

Salary negotiable. No accommodation

Please apply in writing with full C.V. to:

The Secretary, Rushmere Golf Club,
Rushmere Heath, Ipswich, Suffolk IP4 5QQ



CAVERSHAM HEATH GOLF CLUB

Applications are invited for the position of

HEAD GREENKEEPER

Caversham Heath is a new 18 hole, 7,100 yard course set in 240 acres of the Mapledurham Estate near Reading.

The successful applicant will be suitably qualified to NVQ level 3 or equivalent, PA1A, PA2 and PA6 preferred, and have practical knowledge of modern machinery and irrigation systems. Experience in the growing in and management of sand based greens is desirable but not essential.

This position requires a hands-on working Head Greenkeeper and the successful applicant will lead by example, be hard working and self-motivated with a keen and positive attitude towards their work, show good man management and supervisory skills and have the ability to organise and carry out work programmes within an agreed budget.

Salary is negotiable (based on Standing Committee rates).

Apply in writing with full CV to:

Robert Clive, General Manager, Caversham Heath Golf Club,
C/o Mapledurham Estate Office, Reading RG4 7TR
Tel: 0118 947 8600 Fax: 0118 947 8700

RAVENSWORTH GOLF CLUB

Ravenworth Golf Club invites applications for the position of

Assistant Head Greenkeeper

Applicants must have a minimum of NVQ Level 2 and a clean driving licence. Spraying certificates would be an advantage. A sound knowledge of modern machinery maintenance and irrigation systems is essential.

Applications in writing to the Secretary with full C.V.

Closing date 26 February 1999.

Ravenworth Golf Club Limited,
Moss Heaps, Wrekenton, Gateshead, Tyne & Wear, NE9 7UU

HARLEYFORD GOLF CLUB

Invite applications for the position of

Assistant Greenkeeper

Applicants must be qualified to NVQ Level 2/Phase II

Salary and conditions negotiable but no accommodation.

Please reply in writing with full CV to:

The Head Greenkeeper, Harleyford Golf Club,
Henley Road, Marlow, Bucks SL7 2DX.

WORTLEY GOLF CLUB

Applications are invited for the position of

Deputy Head Greenkeeper

Applicants should be experienced and qualified in all aspects of greenkeeping. A practical knowledge of turf management, machinery maintenance and irrigation is essential.

Management skills and experience and a keen interest in course improvement and development would be an advantage.

Salary commensurate with the position.

Please apply in writing with CV by March 1, 1999.

Interviews to be held in mid March for early appointment.

Applications to:

The Hon Secretary, Wortley Golf Club,
Hermit Hill Lane, Wortley, Sheffield S35 7DF

HARLEYFORD GOLF CLUB

Invite applications for the position of

Assistant Greenkeeper

Applicants must be qualified to NVQ Level 2/Phase II

Salary and conditions negotiable but no accommodation.

Please reply in writing with full CV to:

The Head Greenkeeper, Harleyford Golf Club,
Henley Road, Marlow, Bucks SL7 2DX.

THE Park Golf Course AVINGTON

QUALIFIED GREENKEEPER

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Applications, CV and references in writing to;

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WALTON HEATH GOLF CLUB

has a vacancy for an

ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

to join our expanding team on the two Championship Courses.

A keen interest in golf and a desire to develop a Greenkeeping Career are essential attributes.

Accommodation available.

Please apply in writing to;

Clive Osgood, Course Manager, Walton Heath Golf Club,
Deans Lane, Tadworth, Surrey KT20 7TP



PUMPHERSTON GOLF CLUB

HEAD GREENKEEPER

The Pumpherston Golf Club is in the process of extending its course to 18 holes. Applicants must be qualified Greenkeepers and have experience at either head or assistant level. The candidate must have the ability to lead and motivate staff, organise work programmes and maintain Health and Safety requirements. Close liaison with the nominated contractor through the course of extension works is expected and in this context also a working knowledge of grow-in technique on new construction would be seen as an added advantage.

Salary Negotiable but will not include accommodation.

Closing date for applications: 26 February, 1999

Apply in writing with CV and references to:

The Secretary, Pumpherston Golf Club,
Drumshoreland Road, Pumpherston, EH53 0LH



DONNINGTON GROVE Golf & Country Club

Require a

DEPUTY COURSE MANAGER

Donnington Grove is now 6 years old, situated in Western Berkshire (Kennet Valley). Dave Thomas designed Par 72 Championship Golf Course. USGA spec. We require a strongly motivated person to fill this challenging position.

The requirements of the Deputy Course Manager are:-

- Minimum of 8 years experience
- Holder of relevant qualifications
- Able to manage and motivate staff to precise working practices
- Able to work alongside junior staff, coaching and training to set our objectives
- To be able to produce work of the highest standard
- To be an excellent team leader, preferably holding management qualifications
- Able to deputise in Course Manager's absence

Salary commensurate with Standing Committee rates.

Closing date for applications 28th February, 1999.

Please apply in writing enclosing a CV to:

Ross Wilson, Donnington Grove Golf and Country Club,
Donnington Grove House, Donnington, Newbury, Berkshire, England RG14 2LA

ST ANDREWS LINKS TRUST

QUALIFIED GREENKEEPER

OLD COURSE

A qualified greenkeeper is required to work on the Old Course. The successful candidate will be expected to demonstrate that they have the full skills and knowledge to meet this demanding role and be able to join an established team who are working towards the Millennium Open. Time will also require to be spent assisting with the Trust's turf nursery. A recognised greenkeeping qualification is a necessity. A 40 hour week is in operation and benefits include a contributory pension scheme.

Projected start date - April 1999. Closing date for applications - 26 February 1999.

Applications with full CV to:

Brian Collin, Personnel Supervisor, St Andrews Links Trust,
Pilmour Cottage, St Andrews KY16 9SF.

OBERHESSISCHER GOLF CLUB, GERMANY

Require a Head Greenkeeper to start as soon as possible at this 9 hole complex (18 in the near future).

Salary is negotiable subject to qualifications, and help in finding accommodation will be given. Knowledge of the German language is not necessary, but the successful applicant must be willing to try.

This club still retains a friendly, family atmosphere. Applications to arrive before 1 March 1999. Please send your CVs and job applications to:

Mr T J Rigby, c/o 55 Foxglove Court,
Shawclough, Rochdale, Lancs OL12 6XF

LARGS GOLF CLUB

Applications are invited for the position of

DEPUTY HEAD GREENKEEPER

Applicants with appropriate qualifications and experience for the above position should forward a written application, together with a curriculum vitae including references to:

The Secretary, Largs Golf Club, Irvine Road, Largs, Ayrshire KA30 8EU
Closing date, 26 February 1999

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The successful applicant will have knowledge of the golf and sportsturf industry and will have excellent communication and organisational skills.

Please apply in writing with full CV to; The Managing Director,
Lindum Seeded Turf Ltd, West Grange, Thorganby, York YO19 6DJ

CHORLTON-CUM-HARDY GOLF CLUB

A mature 18 hole Golf Course in South Manchester -
A Private Members Club invite applications for the vacant position of:

HEAD GREENKEEPER

We are looking for a Head Greenkeeper with the proven technical, organisational and supervisory skills to take this Golf Club into the Millennium and our Centenary year in 2002.

The successful candidate will demonstrate a full understanding of golf course management and maintenance, supported by qualifications and relevant history.

Salary negotiable. There is no accommodation available.

Applicants should apply with full CV to:

The Secretary, Chorlton-cum-Hardy Golf Club,
Barlow Hall, Barlow Hall Road, Chorlton-cum-Hardy
Manchester M21 7JJ



THE GOG MAGOG GOLF CLUB

invites applications for the post of

COURSE MANAGER

Over the past three years this well known private members' Club has developed a second 18 hole course, to be opened in June 1999. The 36 hole complex occupies some 140 ha of the Gog Magog Hills, part of which is designated as an SSSI.

Under a revised management structure the position of Course Manager has been created. The post will be filled by an experienced Head Greenkeeper or Course Manager seeking a new challenge.

The Course Manager will be responsible for all matters relating to managing the complex, including staff, finance, equipment, irrigation and ecology. Applicants should have proven leadership, management and communication skills, with appropriate formal qualifications. Experience with suspended water table greens would be desirable but not essential, as would a reasonable standard of computer literacy. Salary and benefits are negotiable; accommodation is available.

Applications, accompanied by a full CV should be made in writing by 1st March 1999 to:

The Secretary, Gog Magog Golf Club, Shelford Bottom, Cambridge CB2 4AE.

GERRARDS CROSS GOLF CLUB

This highly regarded 18 hole wooded parkland course established in 1922, requires an

ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

to join our enthusiastic team.

Experience preferred, training available.

Salary in accordance with Standing Committee rates, with incentive bonus scheme.

Applications in writing with CV to:

The Secretary, Gerrards Cross Golf Club,
Chalfont Park, Gerrards Cross, Bucks SL9 0QA
Applications to arrive no later than 26th February, 1999.

Salzburg
**Two Placement
College Greenkeepers**
required for
Jack Nicklaus Course in Salzburg Austria.
Contract to run from May 15 until October 15 1999.
Flight, accommodation, remuneration package
for successful applicants
Please send CV and photo to:-
Fairway Sportanlagen BetriebsgesmbH,
Annagasse 1, 1010 Vienna Austria

SONNING GOLF CLUB

EST.1911

Applications are invited for the position of

DEPUTY COURSE MANAGER

The Post - To deputise for the Course Manager and to take full responsibility for running this Wooded Parkland Course in the Course Manager's absence.

The Facility - Sonning is a mature 18 hole course, a challenging test of Golf and a busy Club.

The Person - The successful candidate should be competent in all aspects of greenkeeping, have experience of implementing and developing work schedules, have the ability to motivate and manage a hard working experienced team, to be used to working to high standards and preferably be qualified to NVQ Level 3 with NPTC PA1, 2A and 6A.

Salary in accordance with Standing Committee rates, but no accommodation available.

Please apply in writing enclosing C.V. to:-

The Secretary, Sonning Golf Club Ltd., Duffield Road, Sonning, Reading, Berks RG6 4GJ

HEAD GREENKEEPER

REQUIRED FOR CLASSIC & HISTORIC LINKS ON ISLAY

Rare opportunity to play a leading role in both preserving and enhancing this traditional links in its magical setting and in preparing it for the growing band of admirers. Applicants should have a minimum of 5 years previous experience in a senior assistant's role and shall have City & Guilds or NVQ equivalent. PA1, 2 and 6 spraying certificates essential.

Terms by negotiation.

Please send CV to;

S Henney, Machrie Hotel & Golf Links,
Port Ellen, Isle of Islay PA42 7AN

Tel: 01496 302310 Fax: 01496 302404

Gordon Child dressed up as an Arab, became acquainted with a camel, discussed poa annua and thoroughly enjoyed his trip to the European Tour's 1998 Greenkeeper Conference in Dubai.

ARABIAN Knight

Just before Christmas the European Tour invited me to join them for their Greenkeepers' Conference in Dubai. Now, up to then my knowledge of Dubai was limited to knowing where it was on the map, watching the Dubai World Cup Horse Race, and the Desert Classic Golf Tournament on TV, so I was totally unprepared for what turned out to be an exciting adventure.

On our arrival at Dubai Airport, which in itself could pass as a palace, we were taken by coach to the Jebel Ali Hotel which is about 20 kms from the centre of the city, and where the Conference was to take place. The hotel was also to be our home for the week. Jebel Ali Hotel and Golf Resort is a holiday complex of its own, where you can swim in one of many pools or in the sea from the hotel beach.

There is also a sailing beach and a nine hole golf course, soon to be extended to eighteen holes which to my surprise is looked after by an old acquaintance of mine, Nick Weller and his staff. Nick who will be well known to greenkeepers in the south west from his days at High Post and North Devon, is doing a superb job out there. He was involved in the construction before taking on the growing in and maintenance. Playing round, it was hard to find even a

weed or a divot out of place anywhere, and the surface on fairways, tees and greens were excellent.

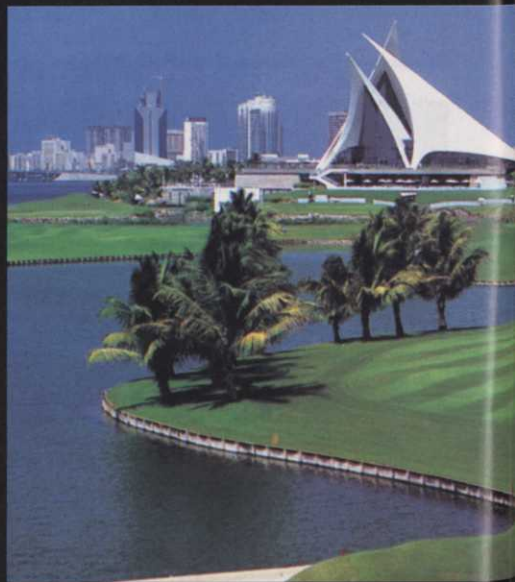
The Conference was over three days, with visits to golf courses laid on for the second day. The theme was poa annua. Do we fight it or should we manage it? The papers were given by greenkeepers, designers, the Tour Agronomist, plus talks from Scotts and Textron, who helped sponsor the week, and from the European Tour. Many of these talks were excellent.

One thing that came out loud and clear was that things don't change much over the years. There are still opposed views in the way to manage grass, but one statement which sticks in my mind was that the pro golfer does not worry about the grass species, providing the playing surface is to their liking. However, there was a good debate but I can't help thinking I have heard it all before somewhere.

I was a bit surprised when reading the Tour guidelines that the height of cut for greens should be as low as 2.6mm so that speeds of 9.5 to 10.5ft could be achieved. Surely grasses such as fescue cannot survive this cutting regime for very long. Speeds of 10 ft can be gained by other methods i.e. by verticutting and regular top dressing, and if necessary the use of rollers.

The third day we visited the Emirates and Dubai Creek Golf and Yacht Club courses where Ken Glover, who has overall responsibility, gave us a very interesting talk on how the courses were constructed and his maintenance regime. Ken is such a good speaker you could listen to him all day without getting bored. His knowledge of course management in such difficult conditions was obvious as he answered the many questions.

Surprisingly, the one thing you would think was in plentiful supply was sand, but this has to be shipped from Saudi Arabia because the sand in Dubai is totally the wrong texture for golf courses. On the other hand he has plenty of water and it is free. It all





comes from the local desalination plant and is distributed round each course by 750 computerised pop ups.

There are two courses at the Emirates Golf Club, Majlis and the Wadi. The Majlis course is a 7,101 yards par 72, and was the first grass golf course to be built in the middle east. The Wadi course measures

7,100 yards and is also a par 72. Both courses were designed by Karl Litten who has combined the natural rolling desert terrain with water hazards and well placed bunkers to produce a fine test of golf, and - at the same time allows the handicapped golfer enjoyment.

During the construction the grasses were flown in from Tifton, Georgia, in the form of millions of sprigs. Once the greens had been laid they had to be watered and regularly fed to quickly establish the sward. At the same time thousands of palm trees and washingtonians were planted and had to be frequently watered. The result is two golf courses of the highest quality.

Turning from the courses to the luxurious club house designed and built to look like a group of desert tents with every facility you could imagine. After looking around the club house and having an ice cold

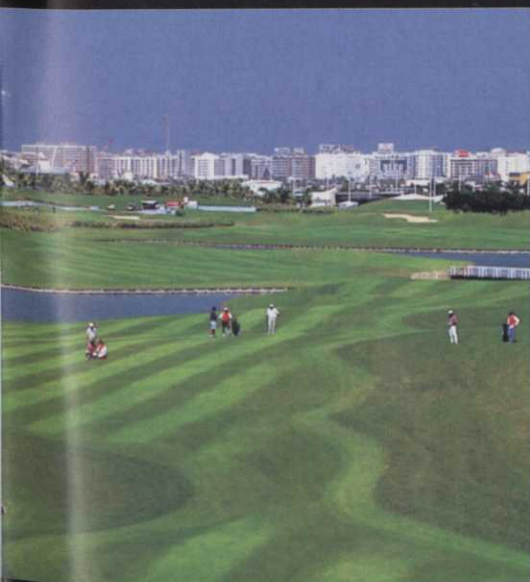
drink it was time to move on to the Dubai Creek Golf and Yacht Club. Once again you are struck immediately by the magnificent club house designed mirroring the sails of the traditional Arab dhow, and has become a landmark photographed by all who visit. The Creek Golf and Yacht Club is Dubai's sporting oasis, a golf and leisure haven surrounded by the city. The club's 18 hole par 72 course of 6,839 yards was also designed by Karl Litten. The fairways at the Creek Club are lined with date and coconut palms that gives the whole place a tropical air, and visitors playing a round on this superb course, who wish to extend their golf into the night can do so on the floodlit 9 hole par 3 course, or on the three practice holes which are also under flood-lights.

The following day we had time off to do some shopping and later met at the Dubai Golf and Racing Club to play nine holes on the club's 18 hole fully floodlit course, which has a par 71 and measures 6,428 yards. The front nine is built inside the racecourse at Nad Al Sheba, the home of the \$4 million Dubai World Cup Horse Race. The back nine are quite unusual as all nine holes are played from elevated tees which gives an excellent view of each hole. The course has a look of links about it even down to the pot bunkers

around the greens, and is a very enjoyable and friendly experience.

The social side of the whole week was out of this world and thanks must go to the European Tour and the two sponsors, Scotts and Textron, who provided us with two excellent nights at their dinner and barbecue respectively. The last night, however, needs a special mention. We were all dressed up as Arabs for a night out in a desert setting, on cushions in a Bedouin tent, with wonderful food and probably too much to drink. We were entertained by a belly dancer, and we were also able to ride a camel. It was a perfect way to end the most wonderful week in Dubai, and one I will never forget.

To sum up the week the Conference was good and stimulated the mind for debate. The chance to visit and play on courses with the unique combination of golfing excellence and variety was a great privilege. There can be few places in the world that can compare with Dubai for a golfing experience and indeed for a holiday. The Jebel Ali Hotel I would recommend to anyone. For me personally it was a wonderful time meeting many old friends and hopefully making new ones. It was a great pleasure to be in their company, and finally to David Garland and Sarah Palmer, whose planning and organisation could not be faulted.



Feature listing from January '97

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

February '97: Attending to the Details; Computers; Fertilisers; Ridding Park

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

October '97: Environment; Recruitment; 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 review, 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, Ramside 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, Lyshott Heath GC, Worm Research, Stylo Matchmaker profile, Temporary Greens



A positive benefit



I am just recovering from Christmas and the New Year, and preparing for the BTME, National Conference, and the AGM at Harrogate. It is not easy trying to take in a year which has gone by so quickly yet so much has happened. I personally cannot remember a year when I travelled so much, but it is hard to think of any one trip which stands out from the rest.

I believe the main reason for that is wherever I have been it's been in the company of greenkeepers, and everyone seems to have a story to tell which I, like you all, can relate to and understand. I know of no other profession where you find top men such as Walter Woods, Jack McMillan and many others talking eagerly to the young ones who are just starting out in greenkeeping, passing on their experience and advice. Not being sure why this is except that greenkeepers in general have a camaraderie second to none. That is why wherever I have been I have come away with a warm feeling of enjoyment and that is what our Association is all about, talking to people and communicating.

While on the subject of communi-

cation, I was recently sat in an airport lounge talking to a well-known member, and he tells me he is constantly being asked the same question, "What do I get from being a member of BIGGA apart from my card and magazine?"

So I had to start going through all the benefits available to members, and I was very surprised to learn that he was unaware of all the contents of our membership package. How many

members don't know what their entitlements are? You need to look at personal accident insurance very closely to realise the extent of cover. For instance, £35 per week is paid for the first 12 weeks to correspond with national health benefits, but for the remainder of the 104 weeks maximum, £45 per week will be paid by your membership cover, right up to £7,500 for permanent disability such as a loss of a limb.

We know that there are people who do not claim by the numbers registered. Don't forget that this cover is applicable for accidents at home or at work. The Legal Helpline is another area which members don't seem to fully understand. You can ask for advice on any matter and this covers the whole family and not just you. Another benefit new this year is discounts on household and car insurance. You can get 10% reduction on any quote by using BIGGA's insurance. I could go on and fill a book on why your membership is a snip, but you should make sure you read all about it in your package instead of just taking your cards out and binning the rest.

Head Greenkeepers and Course

Managers should encourage all their staff to become members, and at the same time be able to tell them exactly what the benefits are. The membership is growing but not as fast as it should be, the increase for last year was only 143. I just cannot understand any greenkeepers who is interested in his or her career, not wanting to become a member of BIGGA. Of course, no one ever gets full benefit out of anything unless they take part, it's almost like owning a car and never driving it. The Section Secretaries put a lot of hard work in arranging events for us, and it must be disheartening when on occasions only a few turn up.

So come on greenkeepers everywhere, take part and help yourself, and at the same time help BIGGA to raise your status even more.

I will climb down from my soapbox now and do my packing for Harrogate, and at the same time wish you all a trouble free season in 1999. I look forward to the opportunity of seeing many of you through the coming year.

Gordon Child



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2) Members may enter the competition on a first come, first served basis at a cost of only £95 (inclusive of VAT) as the championship has been substantially subsidised by Charterhouse and Scotts. Included is entry into the championship, a practice round and two nights hotel accommodation at Carden Park with all meals provided. Entries will be limited to 55.

Members are strongly advised to enter immediately rather than await the outcome of section qualifiers. If successful at section level individuals whose entries have been accepted will receive a refund of the £95 entry fee and members on the reserve list for entry will then be promoted into the championship in a strict priority order in accordance with the date application was received.

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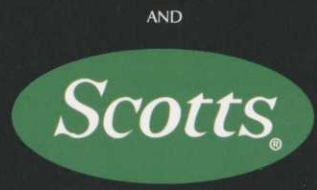
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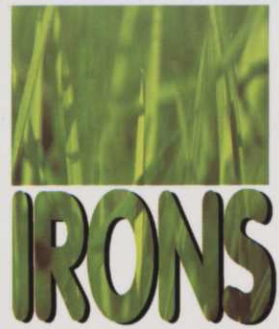
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