



Golden Key Mini Profile

# Rigby Taylor



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**\* What is the nature of your business?**

Established in 1919 (80th anniversary in 1999) Rigby Taylor has since the 1930's been a producer and supplier of turf management products to the sports and amenity sectors. We are a direct sell organisation operating throughout the UK and parts of Europe. Initially specialising in fertilizers our Mascot range now covers all the major turf requirements including chemicals for weed and disease control and specialties like wetting agents, iron tonics and microbial stimulants. We supply grass seeds and growing medium/top dressing and we also supply line-marking materials and sporting equipment for golf courses and sports fields generally. We also specialise in weed control for hard surfaces and amenity areas to councils and contractors.

**\* What major changes have you seen in your sector of the industry over the last 10 years?**

In our view the key change in our sector has been the growth of technically advanced products reflecting greater research into soil and turf science. This has been largely driven by the commercial opportunities offered by the growth sports generally. Secondly would be the increased regulatory requirements.

**\* How do you believe the industry as a whole has changed over the same period?**

The turf management industry is now seen as more of a cohesive trade rather than a collection of separate niches. It has become much more high profile with the general public driven largely in our view by the impact of television which has increasingly promoted sports such as golf and football. This has created major commercial impetus into bringing a far more scientific base to soil and turf management.

**\* Looking into your crystal ball what major developments do you envisage during the next 10 years in your sector?**

We envisage increasing research into products, particularly chemicals. For instance turf is no longer regarded as a "Cinderella" industry by the major chemical companies who would previously have considered possible applications for existing agricultural products on turf. Nowadays they are building turf into initial screening activities during the development phase. We certainly envisage an increasing amount of regulation and probably fewer companies supplying because of the difficulty of complying with an increasing regulatory load. We also envisage that the relationship

between distributors and their customers will become more and more advisory based. We intend as a Company to remain at the forefront of developments in our sector. Over the last eighty years we have seen many changes and this year (1999) sees us adopt a new logo designed to portray our view of ourselves as forward thinking and modern but with a strong tradition.

**\* And in the industry as a whole?**

We imagine that TV will continue to exert a major influence on the development of sport as entertainment, leading to an increased commercialisation of the sporting industry. Not having a crystal ball it is difficult to know the answer but an interesting question would be "will the balance between private and commercial golf clubs change in the UK in the future?" Will members clubs increasingly find themselves selling out to commercial operations? We imagine that customers will become fewer but larger and the profit motive will become an increasingly important factor in their management.

**\* What contribution do you believe BIGGA has made to the industry since the Association was formed?**

BIGGA has played a major part in raising the profile of the turf industry as a whole by successfully focusing attention on the vital

input of greenkeepers to the quality of the game of golf. In terms of greenkeepers specifically, BIGGA has largely been responsible for building a career structure with professional status.

**\* Why are you pleased to be associated with BIGGA?**

Because our association with BIGGA allows us to support our customers in a visible and effective way. By contributing to the Education Fund through the Golden Key we are able to contribute to development of greenkeeping standards and ultimately to support golf clubs as a result.

**\* What do you believe to have been your company's greatest contribution to the fine turf industry?**

Undoubtedly we have broadened customer choice. In our view, we have successfully introduced innovative products to the market place by our policy of direct sell. We work extremely closely with our customers and are therefore well placed to understand the products they need. We also have strong relationship with innovative research companies and are able to assist them in developing their products specifically for this market place. A good example is our partnership with Dow AgroSciences in introducing Rimidin Fungicide.

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