

# EDUCATION UPDATE

Sami and I would like to wish all our readers a very Happy, Prosperous and Educational New Year

## **English Golf Union Press Release**

The Press Release from the English Golf Union, reference greenkeeper training is published elsewhere in this magazine. I have had many calls from greenkeepers expressing their concern at the changes which may occur in greenkeeper training following the EGU's decision to withdraw from the Greenkeepers Training Committee. Unfortunately, there are, currently, few details on how the directive should be interpreted or what effects it may have on the future training of greenkeepers.

On a personal level, I feel that the greenkeeping industry now has a full set of qualifications to suit, not only trainees and assistants but those in positions of management and those wishing to pursue a more academic route.

The current system of qualifications, which are recognised by the Government, attract funding and meet National Standards are working and are producing quality greenkeepers. Employers also gain significant benefits by sending their staff on recognised training courses.

## **Greenkeepers Pay and Conditions of Service**

I have had several calls from greenkeepers expressing concern at the "BIGGA" pay rates for 1999. Some suggesting that BIGGA should seek inputs from golf club secretaries and golf owners and some that are concerned that they are not "qualified" and, are not receiving the higher level of salary.

I can give only general answers in this column but if anybody has a specific query then please give me a call.

1. The Standing Committee for Greenkeepers Pay and Conditions of Service comprises representatives from the Association of Golf Club Secretaries, the Golf Club Owners and from BIGGA. Therefore, the recommendations are not BIGGA recommendations and inputs are received from secretaries and owners.

2. The Recommendations are, as

the name suggests, recommendations of the minimum starting salary that should be paid depending on qualifications and experience.

The Standing Committee do not expect every assistant greenkeeper, first assistant, head greenkeeper or course manager to be on the same salary, as they realise that there are regional variations and that some people have more qualifications and experience than others.

The Committee feel that no greenkeeper should get less than the recommended minimum rate and that levels above the rate are open to negotiation between employee and employer.

3. The Standing Committee believe that all greenkeepers should be qualified to do their job or be working towards a qualification. It introduced a qualified rate for assistant greenkeepers in its 1998 recommendations and a qualified rate for all other levels of greenkeeper in its 1999 recommendations.

Qualified means that the person holds a formal qualification which relates to the job being done, eg. work based qualifications such as National/Scottish Vocational Qualifications and work related qualifications such as National Certificate and National Diploma, City and Guilds Phases 1,2,3 and 4 plus relevant experience.

Competent means that the person can do and, perhaps has been doing the job for a number of years, but may not hold a certificate.

Therefore, to gain the "extra" 10% recommended by the Standing Committee, these people need to become "qualified".

They can achieve a vocational qualification by proving to an assessor (usually an experienced greenkeeper) that they are competent to do the job. The key words here are "competence" and "proof".

The majority, if not all, of proof of competence ie skills and knowledge can be shown by providing evidence to book a place on the National Education Conference or Workshops.

However, you can book places on Seminars, on the day, at Harrogate. Anyone wishing to book a place on their choice of Seminar, should contact Sami Collins on the Seminar Registration Desk in the Royal Hall. Thanks to the continued support of

Textron Turf Care and Specialty Products, the Learning Experience 1999 has something for everyone at very affordable prices. Don't forget to attend Remember, training and education should continue throughout your career. Better trained greenkeepers leads to better golf courses and to an improvement in the Status of the Industry.

Don't forget that Frank Dick OBE, the world renowned athletics coach and motivational speaker will be given a keynote speech on Wednesday 20 January at 11.00 am. Admission is free for this not-to-be-missed talk.

## **Working Time Directive**

The Working Time Directive came into force from 1 October 1998. Most employers will need to keep some form of records to show that they comply with the Law, whether employees work for more than 48 hours per week or not.

The key points of the directive are:

**The average working time is 48 hours per week**

**(Unless individuals opt to work for longer periods)**

**The average night working limit is eight hours per day.**

**A rest period of 11 consecutive hours, between shifts, for day workers.**

**A daily rest period of 20 minutes when daily working time is more than six hours.**

**Paid annual leave of at least three weeks.**

For further details contact HQ or contact the Workright hotline on 0845 6000925.

## **Safety Signs**

Golf Clubs had until 24 December 1998 to ensure that all safety signs conform to the Health and Safety(Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996.

## **Risk Assessment**

The HSE has published a leaflet "Five Steps to Risk Assessment" which is available free from HSE Books 01787 881165 ref INDG163 (rev1).