

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

Thank you

Could you please express our sincere thanks to Toro for the generous prize both Paul (Shelley) and I received having won the runners-up places at the Toro Student of the Year Awards last year.



STUDENT OF THE YEAR

We both enjoyed a full week at BTME, courtesy of Toro/BIGGA, which included valuable placements on the workshop programme and full participation during the seminars.

It was a fantastic week, both educationally and socially, and we both made many new friends.

Steven Myers
 Bridge of Cally, Perthshire

Training responsibilities

There is no doubt that over the past 25 years greenkeeping has made great strides in course management, environmental management and greenkeeper training, with the introduction of City & Guilds phase 1, 2 and 3, and the HND, HNC courses and now with the National Vocational Qualifications being pushed by The Government.

It was with great regret that I read the press release from the EGU in the January issue of Greenkeeper International. I am sure that some members of the golfing fraternity do not understand the present greenkeeper training that is offered at the various colleges around the country.

I know that there are one or two greenkeepers that have gained qualifications by working at their golf clubs but this does not mean that their education is lacking in any way, everyone is working towards a nationally recognised standard and all have to be assessed by work based assessors with the D32 and D33 qualifications, who in turn had

to work for the qualification through the GTC or the colleges.

Long gone are the days of touching ones forelock on bended knee as members pass by. Golf clubs are demanding higher standards of their staff both inside and out and in return, the staff demand better training and conditions. I do not say that the present training is perfect, but everything must have a beginning, and the NVQ system has given our industry a very good start.

With any training six points should be worked towards:

1. Identify learning needs of your trainee;
2. Design training sessions for your trainee;
3. Teach training sessions;
4. Assessing trainees;
5. Evaluate training sessions you taught;
6. Evaluate and develop your own practice.

While all points are very important, points 5 and 6 are to me, key elements, by evaluating the training sessions you can improve the sessions and the information that you are imparting, then by evaluating your own skills and practice you can

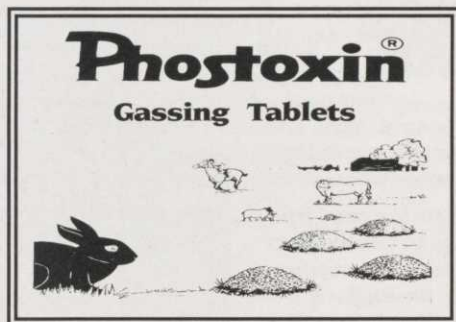
improve your teaching ability. In short from identifying learners needs through to evaluating your own practice it is possible to move full circle allowing training to progress.

I do not think that our industry needs another set of qualifications. The NVQ awards will progress and improve, as will the training and the trainees. We have a nationally recognised set of standards and we should all be working towards the same goal, and with the help of the GTC, City & Guilds, BIGGA and other affiliated bodies, we can make the present training programme work. It is every course manager's duty to improve his abilities and those of his staff by attending colleges and seminars throughout their careers and it is the Golf Club's duty to provide time and money for training of all its staff.

Ian Willett
 Course Manager, Thorpeness Golf Club & Hotel Ltd

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Winners v Losers

The following appears on the Mess Room Wall of Loch Lomond Golf Club. The sentiments are very similar to the Mountain and Valley people whom Frank Dick talked about during his magnificent Keynote Speech at BTME99.

Winners v Losers

When a winner makes a mistake he says, "I was wrong."
 When a loser makes a mistake, he says, "It wasn't my fault."

A winner works harder than a loser and has more time;
 A loser is always too busy to do what is necessary.

A winner goes through a problem;
 A loser goes around it, and never gets past it.

A winner makes commitments
 A loser makes promises.

A winner says, "I'm good, but not as good as I ought to be,"
 A loser says, "I'm not as bad as a lot of people."

A winner listens;
 A loser just waits his turn to talk.

A winner respects those who are superior to him and tries to learn something from them;
 A loser resents those who are superior to him and tries to find a chink in their armour.

A winner feels responsible for more than his job;
 A loser says, "I only work here."

A winner says, "There ought to be a better way to do it"
 A loser says, "That's the way it's always been done here".

Turf Machinery Ltd

I would like to take this opportunity to inform readers of Greenkeeper International that Turf Machinery Ltd, Morrision House, 3A Monument Way, West Woking, Surrey, is in no way associated, or wish to be connected, with another company of the same name which is offering a similar service and targeting the same potential customers.

Gerald Brookes, Director, Turf Machinery Ltd

Help required?

I am writing to ask for some help in finding me a paid or unpaid position at a Golf Club in the UK. I have been fortunate enough to win a four week scholarship to the UK. Any help the Association could provide me would be most appreciated.

Stephen Heskett, Federal Golf Club Australia, 59 "Melrose Mews," Medley Street, Chifley, A.C.T. Australia, 2606. shesket@atrax.net.au

With regard to the Sandy McDivot article 'Sand Green Destruction' which was published in January this year, and the comments in last month's letters page, Sandy has read all of your comments, and will be giving his reply in next month's magazine.

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