

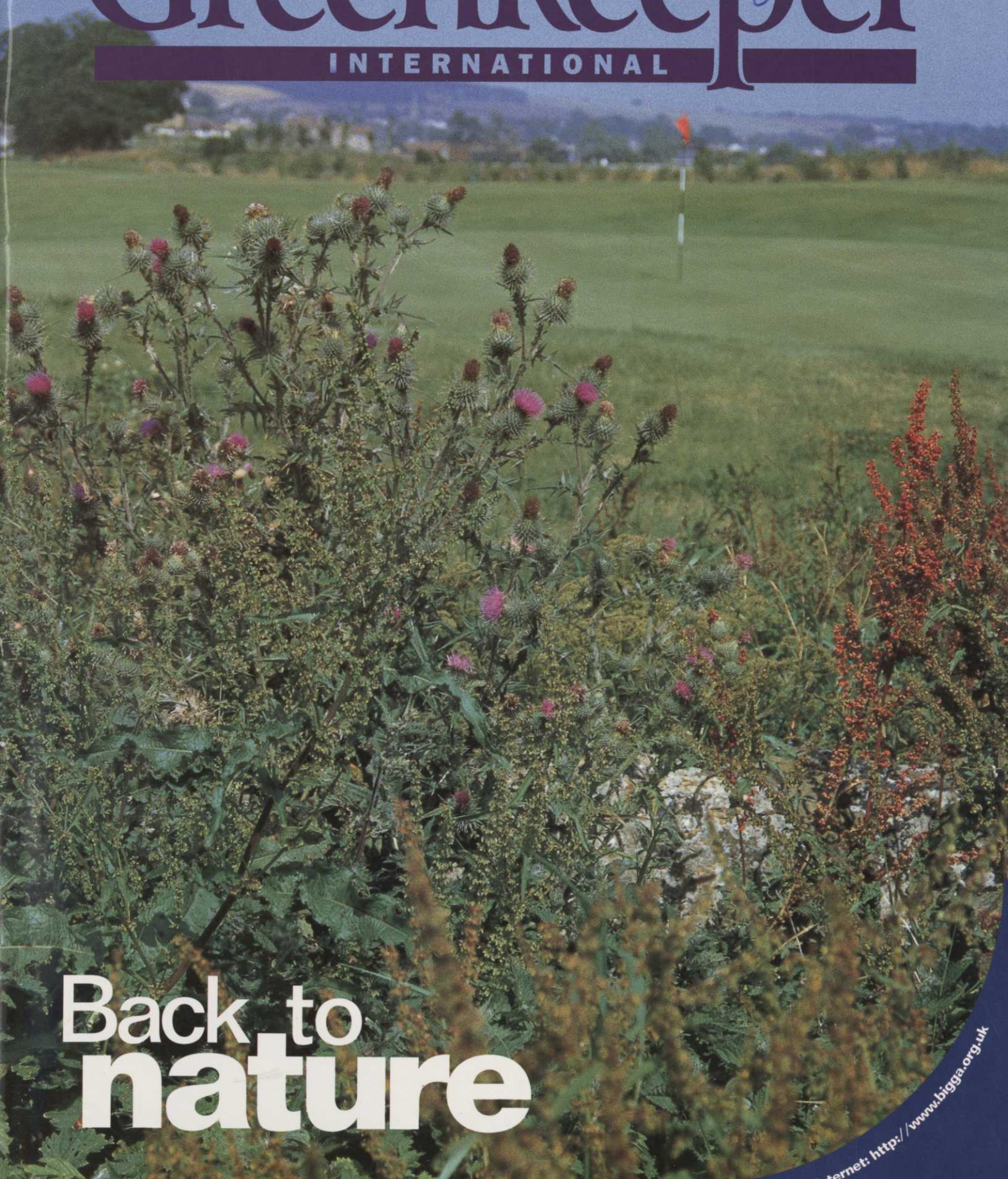
Award-winning journal of the British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association



September 1999 - £3.50

Greenkeeper

INTERNATIONAL



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British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association

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The Learning Experience

The Learning Experience, comprising the National Education Conference, Workshops and Seminar programmes, takes place every January in Harrogate, North Yorkshire. With Textron's sponsorship it has become the major golf greenkeeping Education and Training event in Europe. Attracting delegates from around the globe to hear world class speakers. Next January sees the Learning

Experience 2000, 'Past, Present and Future' which will be held from 17 to 21 January in the Majestic Hotel and Harrogate International Centre.



Education and Development Fund

Contributors to BIGGA's Education and Development Fund enable continued expansion in the range of Regional Training Courses.

Over five years, this high quality low cost training has boosted the skills and knowledge of more than 1000 greenkeepers on over 100 courses.

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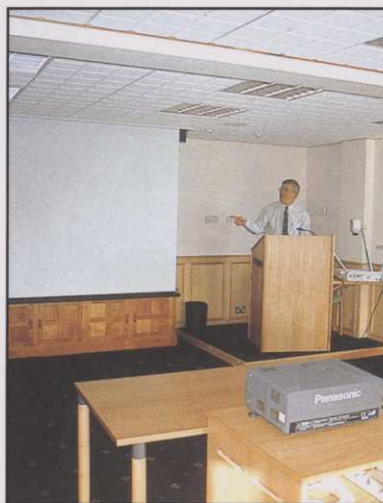
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BIGGA's training facility

BIGGA's purpose built, state-of-the-art training room is now the home of its five day management training courses. These cover managing people, resources and information as well as managing golf course development. More than 200 greenkeepers have been trained over 5 years. The KEY ROOM, which is available to hire, cost approximately £45,000 to build, and contains state-of-the-art visual presentation equipment.



Regular seminars

The Association's Regions and Sections hold seminars and conferences throughout the winter, meeting training needs locally.

BIGGA Golf Environment Competition

Thanks to our co-sponsors Amazone Ground Care and The Grass Roots Trading Company, BIGGA has reinforced its commitment to improving the environment through the BIGGA Golf Course Environment Competition.



Environmental action

The Association has, recently, produced a video, a book and a poster to help to train and educate all parts of the golf industry in the art of Environmental Management.

EDUCATION & TRAINING BALANCE 1995-

Income

Education and Development Fund
Sponsorship
General Fund (Education and Training)
HQ training courses
Local Courses

Expenditure

HQ Education and Training
The Learning Experience
Videos
Field Guides & Books
Local Training Courses
BIGGA House Courses
Posters
Key Room
Library
Grants
Career Guides
Greenkeeper International
Master Greenkeeper Certificate
Competitions

TO EDUCATION & TRAINING SPEND B

1995-

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ATION NING E SHEET 1999

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£70,000
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Resources £217,500
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£178,000
£76,000
£5,000
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£1,000
£10,000
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£148,000

TAL TION NING BIGGA

1999

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Toro Student of the Year competition



Support from the TORO Company enables BIGGA to run the TORO Student of the Year Competition. In addition to encouraging high standards of training in colleges, the winner receives a scholarship to the University of Massachusetts and runners-up attend the Learning Experience.

The Toro Award

TORO also support the Excellence in Greenkeeping Competition which is designed to reward the best Head Greenkeeper, his team and his golf club for excellence in golf course management.



Master Greenkeeper Certificate

The ultimate achievement for education, training, experience, skills and knowledge is the Master Greenkeeper Certificate. The award was introduced in 1990, and there are now 20 Master Greenkeepers, 14 in Britain, one in Mainland Europe and 5 in the USA.



BIGGA field guides



BIGGA has produced four field guides courtesy of the Education and Development Fund. These guides, which cover Pests and Diseases, Grass Identification, Trees and Shrubs and Damage caused by Birds and Mammals are all available from BIGGA HOUSE.



BIGGA training videos

Training videos are a useful addition to any on the job trainer's armoury. BIGGA videos cover the key subjects of Mowing, Spraying, Golf Course Preparation, Golf Green Reconstruction and Golf Course Ecology.



BIGGA Lending Library

The BIGGA Lending Library contains more than 650 books. Each member may borrow up to two books for a period of six weeks at no cost except return postage. The Library has developed thanks to a generous grant from the R&A.





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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Greenkeeper

INTERNATIONAL

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September 1999

Your next issue of Greenkeeper International will be with you by October 8, 1999

Regulars

News

Pages 7, 8, 9, 10

8 Assistant Profile

Richard Mullen of Swanston GC

12 New Products

13 Letters

15 The Learning Experience

Don't let the thatch grow beneath your feet. Ken Barber examines the thorny issue of thatch.

18 Education

BIGGA's Education and Training Manager, Ken Richardson, tees-up some of the Association's forthcoming educational initiatives.

20 Membership Update

20 Finance File

Trevor Downing, of J. Rothschild Assurance, begins a new series offering financial advice to BIGGA members.

32 Talking Heads

This month five Course Managers and Head Greenkeepers look at alternative spikes.

42-47 Around the Green

74 Features Listing

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

74 As I see it...

BIGGA Chairman, Gordon Child, returns from Carnoustie, gets involved with the Toro Student of the Year competition and passes on some news of a court case in Scotland with major implications for the industry.

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Advertiser	Ad Ref	Page
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Amenity Technology	431	76
Barenbrug UK Ltd	172	46-47
Bathgate Leisure	543	28
Bernhard & Co	535	50
Biotol	614	57
C & P Soilcare	641	52
Charterhouse	130	44-45
Cleveland Sitesafe	56	13
Club Car	583	28
Durasport	548	22
Eagle Promotions	549	17
Flowtronex	610	73
Eric Hunter	73	66
Even Products	609	38
Evergreens UK	526	13
Golf Mats UK	426	52
Grass Roots	479	54
Green-Releaf™	563	75
H2O Group Plc	619	38
ING Turfcare Finance	639	31
John Deere	103	27
John Deere Credit	640	10
Kawasaki	544	19, 28
Lely UK	61	36-37
Marlwood	501	42-43
Maxicrop	174	59
Mommersteeg	171	35
North Staffs Irrigation	217	48
Ocmis	360	21
Pitland Technology	189	10
Prestige Sport	514	60
Rhone Poulenc	59	5, 53
Rigby Taylor	127	2, 11
Rufford Soil Technology	5	51
Sharpes International	453	19
Sisis	176	6
Textron	9	14
The Roots Company	615	41
Ultraplant	473	60
Weed Free	504	35

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 heard?

You can save thousands of pounds by bidding for items in the BIGGA Silent Auction.



61 Win tickets to BTME2000



64 Win £50 with our Buyers' Guide quiz

Hold on to your socks!

This month your magazine should contain a copy of the Learning Experience 2000 brochure, detailing the delights that await you at the end of next January's annual pilgrimage to Harrogate.

Harrogate in January has many attractions but the bedrock of everything is education and thanks to the support of Textron Turf Care and Specialty Products the education programme just gets better and better.

This year a major revamp of the Education Conference, based on the feedback received from delegates at previous Conferences, has resulted in two days of intensive discussion on four main topics - Golf Green Construction, Water Management, Integrated Pest Management and Grasses for Golf Courses.

Papers will be delivered by some of the major authorities in their respective fields and with more time to develop themes and arguments it should result in some thought provoking debate.

Running parallel to these will be five workshops - on Computing for Greenkeepers; a follow-up to the successful recent Golf Course Design workshops, given by Howard Swan and Simon Gidman; Machinery Maintenance, given by Textron; Written and Verbal Communication, with Brin Bendon and Frank Newberry, and another, Golf Course Presentation, aimed at assistants, delivered by those two Doyens of the Industry, Walter Woods and George Brown.

Having completed the first part of the week the Seminar Sessions during BTME itself have the theme Past Present and Future, and again the speakers have been hand picked. A totally new addition will be the Careers' Advice Clinic, where Brin Bendon and Frank Newberry, will advise on CVs, application forms, interview techniques etc.

This element of the week will be kicked off by another Motivational talk - started so successfully last year by Frank Dick. This year it will be delivered by Simon Weston, a remarkable guy, whose current career only began after just surviving horrific injuries sustained in the Falklands War. His talk should be an inspiration to us all.

If you are already a regular visitor you can only imagine what a new improved Learning Experience will be like. If you have never been, make the effort next January. It will blow your socks off.

One welcome visitor to Harrogate next year might well be James McEvoy, who will be able to enjoy it all in a more relaxed frame of mind.

For the last three years James has worked hard, in his role as BIGGA's Sales and Marketing Manager, to expand and improve BTME and funnily enough the bigger and more successful the Show became the more grey hair he began to sport.

He leaves the Association to take up a marketing post with a telecommunications company before he could be mistaken for a clean shaven Santa Claus.

His enthusiasm, drive and commitment were infectious and I'm sure those same qualities will captivate everyone in his new business in just the same way.

I'm sure you will join me in wishing him all the best for the future. I will always have doubts about his dodgy putting stroke though...

Editor:
Scott MacCallum

Greenkeeper

INTERNATIONAL

Features

- 23 Bearing a Hallmark**
Scott MacCallum travels to Slaley Hall where the greenkeeping staff have had anything but an easy time of late.
- 29 Tyred and Tested**
Roland Taylor puts his jack to good use and examines the world of tyres.
- 34 Back to Nature**
Master Greenkeeper, John Quinn, describes the work that went into Elmwood College golf course receiving two environmental awards.
- 39 A Championship of Distinction**
The search to uncover BIGGA's Champion golfer will be ended at Carden Park at the beginning of next month. Even those who don't win will have a hell of a time.
- 49 Back in time**
Some years ago Walter Woods asked the late Ian Forbes to write a piece of the history of greenkeeping. The result was a well researched and beautifully written article.
- 55 Greener Greens**
Stella Inglethorpe takes this opportunity to explode some of the myths which have sprung up surrounding bio technology.



Cover photo: Nigel Rudd, Edinburgh College of Art

34 Back to Nature at Elmwood College



39 A Championship of Distinction



23 Bearing a Hallmark: Slaley Hall



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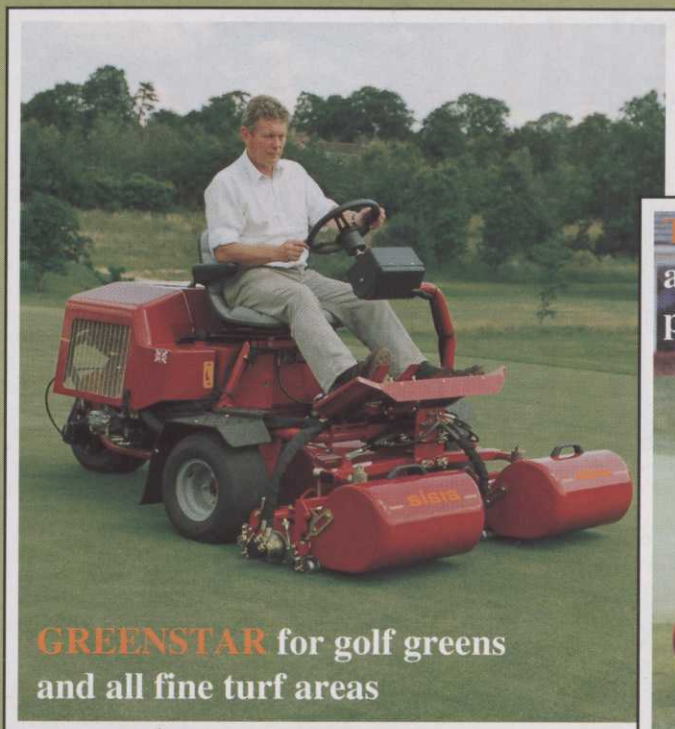
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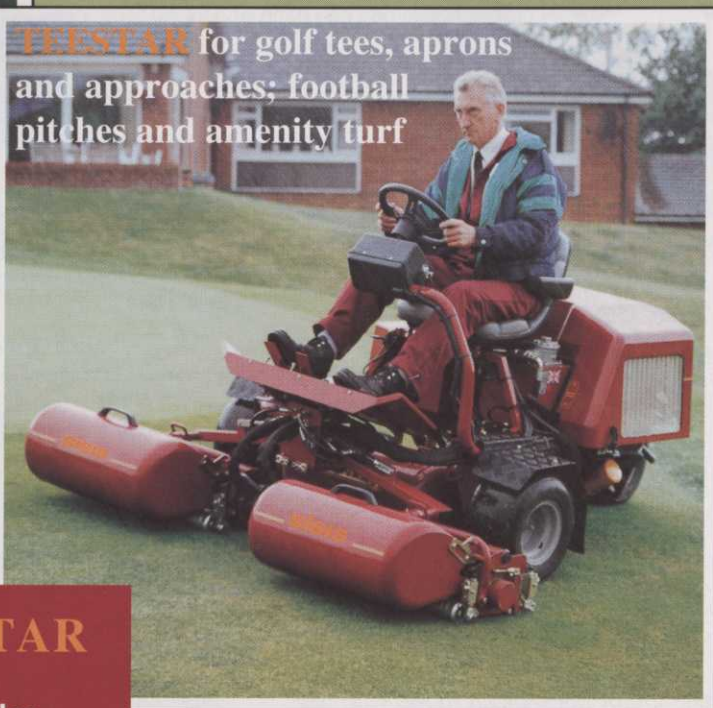
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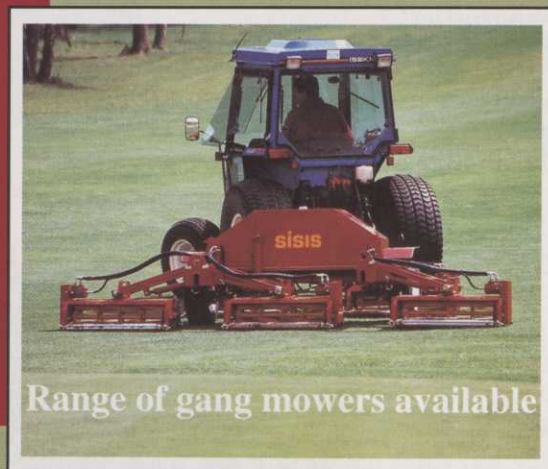
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Plenty of birdies at John O'Gaunt

Stephen Thompson, of John O'Gaunt Golf Club, who was featured in the magazine three years ago installing bird boxes on the course, has since seen them well used.

"The 'A' frame box was used almost straight away by Barn Owls but when it was checked later it the year two dead chicks were found," recalled Stephen.

"In the second year when it was checked it was just eggs that were found. Then last year Kestrels nested in it and raised three young and again this year Kestrels used it and raised four young."

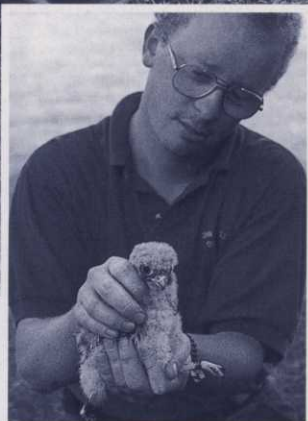
Ironically the open fronted box which was designed for Kestrels was not used for the first two years except for squirrels and in the third year in was used by Jackdaws and a Stock Dove. This year it has remained empty.

"We're aiming this winter to put up more boxes for some other birds that are to be found at John O'Gaunt like the Blue Tit, Great Tit, Robin and Spotter Flycatcher.

"Peter Wilkinson, from Birdlife International, and I took a walk round both courses last year with the intention of finding suitable places for nest boxes and compiled a list of suitable sites and the number of boxes required," said Stephen who does a regular article in the club newsletter on the birds and wildlife on the course.



"There has been a lot of interest in my articles from members who say they read them every month and often ask questions and report sightings to me."



A Hawkhurst retirement

Rex Baldock, 65, who has been the Head Greenkeeper at Hawkhurst since the course opened in 1968, has retired.

Rex started with the club two years before it opened when work first began to create a golf course at Hawkhurst.

He has been so dedicated to what he calls his as his personal garden, that back in the early days of the club, he could often be seen on his hands and knees weeding the greens. And when there was a Sprinkler and Watering Restrictions in the summer of 1976, the then secretary of the Kent Golfing Union wrote to the club congratulating the green staff on the magnificent greens, which, he stated, "were the best he had played on all summer".

On receiving this accolade Rex was asked how he had managed to keep

the greens in such good order. It turned out that unbeknown to anyone, he had gone out each night after midnight and hand watered the greens with a watering can commenting, "I'm not going to let the buggers spoil my greens."

Rex's retirement was marked with a Testimonial Competition, and presentation of cheques by the club's General Manager, Brian Morrison, and Veterans' Captain, Les Dadsell.

Sadly Rex's retirement has been totally overshadowed by the recent loss of his wife Naomi (known to most as Pat). He has two sons Philip and Stephen and a daughter Rachel.

He now intends to spend his time visiting relations at home and abroad and, of course, tending his own garden.



DTI support for overseas exhibitors

Through British Trade International, the ABA has been offered financial support from the DTI under the SESA programme (Support for Exhibitions and Seminars Abroad) for UK companies to exhibit at the GCSAA Trade Show in New Orleans 18-20 February 2000.

More than 700 exhibits will be in place for the annual GCSAA trade show, the largest of its kind in the

world. From blowers to drainage systems, to mowers and utility vehicles - everything to oversee the operation of a golf course.

To be eligible for the grant companies must be UK based and exhibiting goods and services of UK origin.

● Companies can claim back 60% of expenditure on stand space and stand construction up to a total of £2,300.

● A free First Time Exhibitors Package is available to all companies exhibiting with DTI support for the very first time in any market.

Further information and grant application forms are available from the ABA. Deadline for receipt of grant applications 15 November 1999. Tel: 01733 371381

Oliver Seeds invest in the future with new award

Oliver Seeds has been awarded 'Investor in People' accreditation after fulfilling the scheme, a comprehensive evaluation of its business and employee training and development programme.

The company currently employs 17 at its Lincoln head office and some 70 agents operating throughout the UK.

"Investor in People accreditation is excellent for the whole company and an important stage in its evolution. Such development is vital if we are to keep ahead of our competitors and for customers to be assured they are working with a professional company with personnel who are fully trained in responding to the needs and issues of their business," said Roger Peacock, Amenity Product Manager, who spearheaded the successful application for Investor in People.

ESGA and AFAG join forces to form new Euro association

The European Society of Golf Course Architects (ESGA) and the Association Francaise des Architectes de Golf (AFAG) met in Paris on July 10, and decided to merge into one association.

The legalities of this merger are presently being drafted and the new organisation is expected to be operational by the Autumn of 1999.

The Association will group 46 members representing eleven countries with first office in Vienna and will be called the "European Association of Golf Course Architects" (EAGA).

A previous attempt to amalgamate with the British Institute of Golf Course Architects (BIGCA) failed earlier this year, in March.

The EAGA is a truly European Association and will not pretend or have the presumption to dictate style. It will, however, promote high standards of construction and safety, especially in conjunction with the ever increasing legislation caused by escalating ecological constraints coupled with project viability.

The EAGA will maintain the strict entry requirements needed to join as a full member but will encourage a larger and more representative association by asking new members to join among the qualified architects operating in Europe which will hopefully and eventually also include the British Institute (BIGCA).

ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

Profile

Usually the spotlight falls on the Course Manager or Head Greenkeeper at a Club.

Now it is the turn of those whose work often goes unheralded to star.



Name: Richard Mullen

Club: Swanston GC

Position: Deputy Head Greenkeeper

Age: 24

1. How long have you been a greenkeeper?
8 and a half years

2. What education are you currently undertaking?
Just completed an HNC

3. Which one task do you most enjoy doing?
Cutting fairways

4. Which one task do you most dislike doing?
Patching fairways

5. What job other than greenkeeping might you have ended up doing?
Working in an office somewhere

6. Who has been the biggest influence on your career?
Jimmy Nielson, Scottish Chairman

7. What would you do to improve the life of a greenkeeper?
Better relations with the golf club

8. What are your hobbies?
Football and golf

9. What do you get out of BIGGA?
Outings and meeting people

10. What do you hope to be doing in 10 years time?
Course Manager

Textron support for Otley College

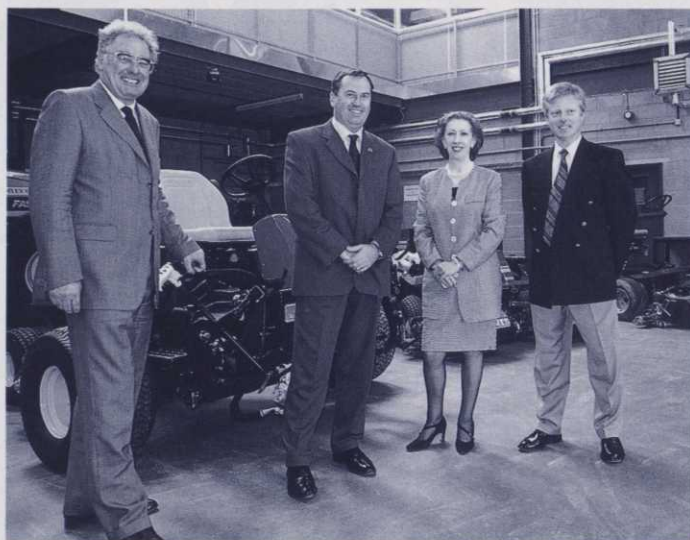
Textron Turf Care and Specialty Products have provided Otley College with one of their latest fairway mowers to assist with training for prospective engineers at their newly opened Centre of Excellence.

Leader of the House of Commons, the Rt. Hon. Margaret Beckett, M.P., on a recent visit accepted the Jacobsen LF3400 mower on behalf of the College.

Otley College of Agriculture and Horticulture is a recognised Centre of Excellence and recently secured a £1 million grant that enabled them to erect and equip a new building with high-tech electronic teaching equipment. The computer-based system enables engineering students to study electronics, pneumatics, hydraulics and electrics and can also be used for fault diagnosis.

The LF3400 will have faults introduced to its various systems by the lecturers and students will then use the equipment to initially diagnose the faults and then complete the relevant repair.

Ian Miller, Head of Resources/



Project Manager for the Centre of Excellence said, "We are extremely grateful for Textron's donation of the LF3400, as it is one of their latest machines and provides our

students with an excellent training aid. This will help us to maintain our status as a Centre of Excellence to the landbased engineering sector."



Re-surfacing undertaken at Valderrama

Rubaroc International, the worldwide manufacturer, supplier and installer of the rubber safety surfacing material Pro-Path, have recently completed the first phase of a major contract in southern Spain with Valderrama.

Valderrama, venue for the Ryder Cup in '97 and the venue for the European leg of the World Cup in November '99,

placed an order with Rubaroc International to re-lay the cart paths surrounding the magnificent 18-hole course.

Mr Ortiz-Patino, President of Valderrama, chose the product after seeing it installed at the Royal Melbourne. Over 2,000 square metres of Rubaroc were installed at the Royal Melbourne

in 1996, and they are still delighted at the durability. Mr. Ortiz-Patino was extremely impressed with the installed product. He felt that this would be the ideal solution to provide a permanent cover to the concrete cart paths and also to replace the indoor/outdoor surface to the main presentation area to the front of the clubhouse.

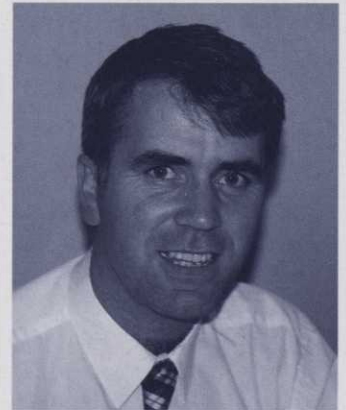
Familiar? But where are they now?

This photograph has been uncovered from the dim and distant past showing some "ken speckled" figures from the industry looking somewhat younger.

If you look closely at some of the figures and picture them with another 20 years of wrinkles and and carrying a more pounds you might recognised them as Walter Woods, Jimmy Nielson, Elliott Small, Alistair Connell, Chris Kennedy and Jimmy Kidd. They are seen here outside the R&A Clubhouse with colleagues from the GCSAA.



A fond farewell to James



BIGGA's Sales and Marketing Manager, James McEvoy, has left the Association to return to the telecommunication's industry in which he started his career.

"James had been with BIGGA for three years and in that time had become a well respected and popular figure within the fine turf industry," said Executive Director, Neil Thomas.

"We value the work he did while with the Association and wish him, and his wife Julie, every success in the future," he added.

Nairn invests in Toro for Centenary

Scotland's Nairn Dunbar Golf Club, near Inverness, has bought in a new Toro ride-on greens mower and fairway mower to ensure the 6,720 yards championship course looks its best for the club's centenary celebrations this year.

With 100 years of golfing history being celebrated throughout 1999 with an ambitious series of special tournaments, the delivery of a new Greensmaster 3200-D and Reelmaster 5200-D is helping make it a little easier for Head Greenkeeper Derek Roy and his greenkeeping team to keep on top of their hectic turf maintenance programme.

Festivities at the club began earlier in the year with a reenactment of the opening of the course in 1899, complete with figures in period costume using golf clubs and balls of the day.

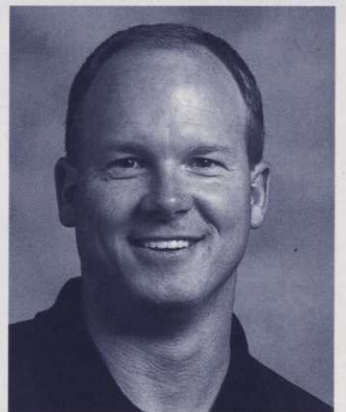
Club Secretary Scott Falconer is justifiably proud of his club, which opened a new £1.5 million clubhouse in 1997, and he said: "We've always received excellent back-up and support from



both Lely and their Scottish dealer AM Russell, and the two new Toro mowers

will guarantee our players the finest turf during this year's packed programme."

Tim joins Rain Bird's Golf Division



Rain Bird's Golf Division announces the addition of Tim Lambert to the sales department as a Regional Sales Manager.

Overseeing Rain Bird's golf business in the northwestern region, Tim will focus on building relationships with distributors and seeking opportunities in new course construction and renovation. Prior to joining Rain Bird, Lambert worked for Black & Decker where he served, most recently, as National Account Manager for power tools and accessories.

A native of Beaverton, Ore., Lambert is a graduate of Oregon State University. He holds a bachelor of science degree in exercise and sports management.

Gleneagles moves into the cyber age

Past employees of Gleneagles are now able to enjoy up to date resort news on-line at a new site designed specifically for their use.

Visitors to www.gleneagles-alumni.com have the opportunity to surf through details of exciting new developments, current staff news, job vacancies, and even e-mail present

employees at the world famous resort. A search facility also assists those interested in tracing old friends and colleagues. With a direct link to the resort's main web site, past employees can view many of the changes at the resort via 3600 photos.

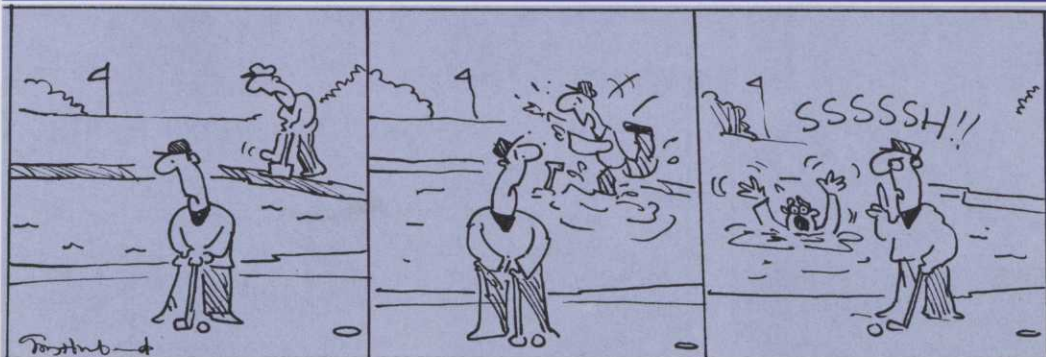
The creation of the alumni site is something Managing Director, Peter

Lederer, has been eager to pursue.

"The Internet provides us with a marvellous chance to keep in touch with colleagues and friends around the globe. Similarly there is the opportunity for them to refer new people who are looking for the level of training and career development they received while at Gleneagles."

Royal Inverdivot GC...

by Tony Husband



Textron appoint RS Bird as South and West Wales dealers

R S Bird Ltd of Cowbridge, in the Vale of Glamorgan, has been appointed as Textron Turf Care and Specialty Product's dealer for South and West Wales.

To celebrate this appointment an open day was held recently at the Royal Porthcawl Golf Club and attended by over 150 people including senior greenkeepers and Greens Committee Chairman from numerous clubs in the region.

Some of the products that were demonstrated from the Jacobsen Turfco range included the F1 5B Mete-R-Matic Pedestrian Top Dresser, Pro-Lite Turf Cutter and the F12 Mete-R-Matic which can be towed by a wide range of turf maintenance vehicles.

Roger Bird, the Chairman of R S Bird Ltd, commented,

"It was a beneficial two days which enabled us to introduce products from the Textron range. The open day was a tremendous success and we were delighted with the attendance from many senior turf care professionals."

Rigby Taylor on the move



Rigby Taylor has recently moved its southern region operation to new, larger premises on the Riverway Estate at Peasmarsh, Guildford, close by its previous site. The new depot has more than doubled the previous warehouse space to 22,500 sq ft complete with a new purpose built pesticide store. The newly furnished offices house the operation centre for the Company's extensive distribution network serving Southern England with a range of amenity products including their MASCOT portfolio. In addition to their normal delivery services the company invites customers to "Call and Collect" if this suits their particular business requirements.

Barenbrug's Southern distribution awarded to Avoncrop

Barenbrug UK has forged a new partnership in an effort to further enhance its service to customers in southern Britain. Avoncrop Amenity has been appointed as the distributor for this diverse region, which spans a significant area from Cornwall to Kent and from South Wales to Leicestershire.

Avoncrop is an established amenity distributor based in Sandford, near Weston-Super-Mare, with warehousing facilities both there and at its depot in Bracknell. Managing Director, Rod Feltham, heads up a team of ten Technical Area Managers, plus a Business Development Manager. Avoncrop also has its own delivery fleet, which will speed up Barenbrug's response time to client requests.

Alan Lomas, Sales & Marketing Manager for Barenbrug UK, points out that Avoncrop were preferred for their decade-long track record of achievement.

"We're always checking to see that our service is as efficient and courteous as it can possibly be. By linking up with Avoncrop, we're able to offer even higher standards of professionalism."

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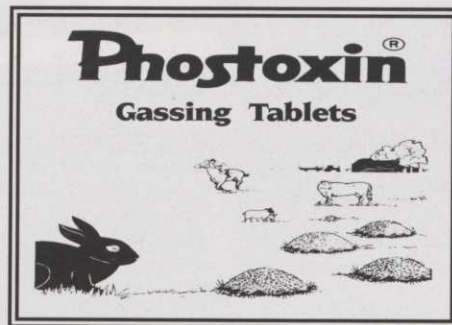
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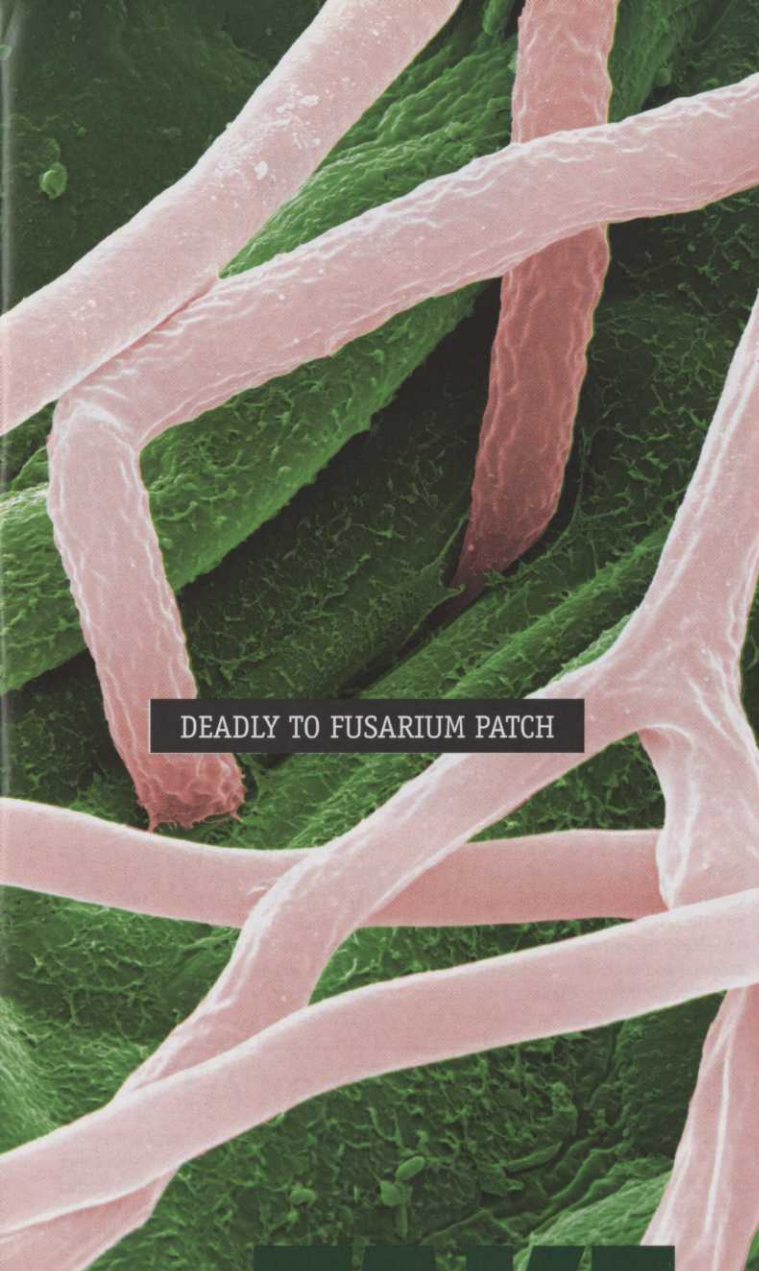
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Italian Grillo mowers are 'brillo' for Parkers

Introduced from Italy by Bernard Parker Marketing is a range of rotary mowers from Grillo of Italy. These are particularly suitable for amenity areas where high manoeuvrability is paramount. Two top of the range models, designated 'The Dragon' and 'Bee, Fly' are driven and steered hydrostatically by the front wheels with rear castoring wheels. This gives them zero radius turning, without tearing or scuffing of the turf.

Both of these machines have front mounted cutting decks giving the operator maximum vision of the operation, and a range of size, cutting and discharge options such as mulching and side discharge is offered. The collector on the 'Dragon' has a capacity of 1 cubic metre while the 'Bee Fly' can be equipped with 300 or 700 litre collectors. The machines are available with hydraulic high lift of 1.8m to enable them to discharge direct into vehicles or trailers. A turbine with case-hardened removable blades and oversize load pipe ensure the cut grass is transferred quickly and cleanly into the collector. 'The Rolly' which is a front wheel steered mower with a mid mounted twin (overlapped) blade deck is also hydrostatically driven but conventionally steered with an exceptional lock. It has a 300 litre collector which is filled directly through a large centre duct. A differential lock is available.

For further information Tel: 01305 853530.

New release from AmTec on go-slow

The TRI-Phase is a new range of slow release fertilisers from Amenity Technology. The slow release element of the new products is derived from methylene urea ensuring a consistent, phased release of nitrogen to the plant.

The range has been designed to supplement The Andersons range of phased release fertiliser and offers three analyses for the greenkeeper to choose from, with varying amounts of slow release nitrogen.

For further information Tel: 0118 931 1111.

Moore mower for your money

When Frank Moore was Sales Director of Howard Rotavator Company, one of his responsibilities was the marketing a range of American garden tractors

On retirement from the company, having owned and used these machines himself, he set about putting into practice all his ideas on what an ideal mower should be like.

First, Frank cleared his mind of all existing designs and preconceptions and then he wrote down all the desirable features, that he believed an experienced user would like to have on a riding mower. A number of prototypes were built and the design developed until Frank was satisfied that his "key points" had been achieved. In the process he developed a weight-transfer mechanism, which automatically increases traction on a slope, and this together with the "overarm dumping grass box which empties grass into a trailer on top of a heap in a few seconds, are two outstanding features included in the patent.

Subsequently other ideas have been



incorporated, including the use of a rear Slick tyred roller wheel to provide full width rolling and prevent rutting on soft ground. Also the ability to swing the mulching mower to either side, whilst mowing to avoid trees and shrubs.

Frank Moore says "When I set out to design this mower, it was because no

machine existed, able to fulfil the user needs I had identified and still there are none. The Moore Mower is not a "Me-Too" machine and I have been told that it can genuinely be regarded as unique".

Moore Mowers Ltd have been incorporated to manufacture and market the machine.

Bradshaw to distribute Clubcar ATV

John Bradshaw is to distribute the Carryall ATV from Clubcar (USA), one of the most versatile ATVs to be offered to the UK market.

John Bradshaw, Chief Executive of Bradshaws, comments, "This new ATV is not only more flexible than other ATVs but will be supported by the Bradshaw manufacturing organisation.

"This vehicle is much more than rapid personnel transport. Its carrying capacity is exceptional and can accommodate

detachable spraying and spreading equipment; 800 lbs loads or even a couple of sheep, depending on the configuration chosen."

The new ATV is an 11 hp, 351 cc powered two-seat, four-wheeler, with differential lock and nearly 29 cm (11.4 ins) overall ground clearance (17 cm to differential) together with an exceptional 363Kg (800 lbs) rated load capacity on a flatbed measuring 1 238 x 1 264 mm (49 x 50 ins approx) in area.

Standard features include all-aluminium chassis, heavy duty 4-ply tyres, high-back bucket seats, differential guard, 4-wheel hydraulic brakes plus handbrake, full lighting, ABS diff-lock and heavy duty plastic bumpers.

Options include tipping body, towing brackets windscreen, winch, front and side bars, additional lighting and heavy duty floor protection.

For further information, tel 01780 782621.

Allett Mowers launch Aztec

Allett Mowers has launch, the Aztec Professional Cylinder onto the UK market.

David Allett, Director for Allen Mowers, commented, "research and development for this machine has been ongoing. We have produced this machine after seeing a requirement in the market for a machine with all of the qualities of the Aztec and we are confident that this machine will meet and exceed all its expectations."

The machine has a number of key features which make it unique in the Professional Cylinder Mowers market including: The only floating head machine with interchangeable attachments also incorporating a rear roller.

The only pedestrian cylinder mower with a choice of either 20" or 24" attachments The Aztec is constructed to maintain heavy wear and tear, is easy to maintain, use and is very operator friendly. Fined with either plain or grooved front



rollers and available as a 20" or 24" machine it will provide excellent stripping on lawns, pitches and any other area of fine turf.

With a variable height of cut adjustment ranging from 2.4mm to 19mm long grass can be cut down to 2.4mm with ease and quickly as the 10 bladed cylinder will cut 252 cuts per metre and the 6 bladed cylinder will cut 121 cuts per

metre. Although fully floating it still has a number of interchangeable attachments one of which is a scarifier attachment that will quickly remove thatch, the daily task of maintaining an undulating area of fine turf can be completed to an excellent standard with ease. A number of additional units are planned.

For further information tel: 01241 873841.

Unfair criticism

Could somebody come down hard on the primadonnas that moaned about Carnoustie last week! My point is that everybody listens to those with money, (however vacuous) but the greenkeepers have no voice and are disregarded. Most unfair do you agree? The pros must know that the greenkeepers have no right of reply, but still complain about their course (which is their pride and joy) and try as might, the staff will react to criticism, and treat them as a soft target to be criticised with no comeback. They seem to have learnt well from our MPs in parliament!

Perhaps BIGGA could help by educating the golfing public/media on the subject of course preparation for an Open championship.

A lot of work and planning goes into The Open and for it to be criticised by people who only ever play on perfect courses (ie:- American courses) must be galling. Especially as these people are there for only a few short days and couldn't care less about the course during the rest of the year!

(or until they come back)

Paul Bertenshaw.

A member of BIGGA since 1979.

Via e-mail

A BIGGA thank you

I have just graduated from a three year HND in Golf Course Management at Cannington College in Somerset and I was delighted to be awarded with the BIGGA South West and South Wales Trophy, for the 'Best Student, plus best Major Project, and a pass at Distinction.

As a member of your organisation I just wanted to say thank you very much for putting up the award for 'Best Student', as not only was this one of the proudest moments of my life so far, but also of my parents.

Although many condemn awards, I have to say that I was very flattered to receive the trophies, and had no idea before my graduation that I had been awarded with these prizes. To this end, I was wondering if you may be able to give my achievement a mention in a future issue of your Greenkeeping International magazine. It has always been my ambition to have my name printed in your magazine, and it would seal the top of a very proud occasion for both myself and my family. Not to men-

tion the college lecturers and class mates who have all been so helpful in the last three years!

I believe it can only be a positive thing, to publish winners of awards (especially those put up by BIGGA), as it can serve as a catalyst to other aspiring candidates. Certainly this has been the case for me, as I hold great ambition to one day compete for the Toro award for Excellence in Greenkeeping, an ambition I have gained purely from reading about past winners in your magazine.

I would also like to thank all the people involved within BIGGA for supporting colleges and students, certainly throughout my HND you have all been of great help and done all you can to offer advice and information.

Once again thank you for all your support, and I look forward to continuing a long and enjoyable membership within BIGGA throughout my career.

William Bowden
 Exmouth, East Devon

Contact us



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

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

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Ken Barber puts thatch under the microscope and comes up with some ideas to minimise its effects.



Thatching a plot



Above: A core sample taken from a predominately sand based green, which over the last five years, has received little thatch management

Thatch accumulation is one of the most common turf related problems experienced by today's Course Managers, yet this is not something new. However, because of the ever increasing demands placed on golf courses throughout the year, effective thatch management is essential. Without this, there is a point whereby the long term quality of greens suffer, especially if committees within a club demand that management programmes such as hollow coring or top-dressing greens are carried out early spring or late autumn when the benefits are minimal.

The hard facts are - if thatch is not correctly managed, clubs can expect to play on temporary greens at some point during the winter, and not just because they are covered in frost, but because they retain excessive moisture and are more suited to growing rice than turf!

Thatch is more often the result of poor turf management than a problem that must be managed. If thatch levels are allowed to get out of control, putting surfaces can quickly deteriorate. Members then demand to know why they have to play on temporary greens most or part of the winter. Then at the first signs of summer, the greens turn brown, usually as a result of dry-patch, and the irrigation is turned on to keep them alive. This ineffectual form of management only increases expenditure and will certainly not decrease thatch.

Methods of controlling thatch will vary from one Head Greenkeeper to the next and this is not just dependent on the structure of the greens. However, it is important to have a

clear understanding of the basic components of thatch - what causes it, the effects on turf health and vigour as well as methods of control.

What is thatch? Thatch is the accumulation of organic residuals, consisting of, and intermingled with, dead, living or partly decomposed roots, stems and shoots, which develop between the soil surface and the actively growing green vegetation. Thatch only becomes a problem when its density causes grass plants to grow on top of the thatch layer rather than on the soil surface.

What is mat? Thatch intermingled with mineral matter, usually as a result of topdressing. Around six millimetres of mat is advantageous as it promotes weed free, drought tolerant, free draining turf, which provides a cushion against the daily wear and tear caused by golf and maintenance traffic.

What causes excessive thatch? Thatch increases when the rate of shoot production exceeds the rate of decomposition.

There are several influential factors which will contribute or accelerate an increase in thatch levels and consequently management practices will vary from club to club, depending on resources, cultural practices and, ultimately, the knowledge and experience of the Head Greenkeeper. One or several of these factors may be linked i.e. soil characteristics, grass species, soil pH, fertility input, irrigation practices, even microbial populations.

The characteristics of a soil will, no doubt, have some influence. For example high percent sand greens, by

their very nature have low CEC (cation exchange capacity), and more often than not, low microbial populations essential in thatch decomposition. However, the benefits may compensate for the negatives with this method of construction, which is being favoured more and more throughout Europe. The operating costs of high percentage sand greens may be a little higher, but if built correctly and sound management practices are implemented, those costs can be redeemed through a full contented membership and maximising premium green-fee rates as the greens are free draining and playable throughout the winter.

Soil greens retain nutrients longer, generally have higher CEC and microbial counts, but are still vulnerable to thatch accumulation, although this is more likely as a result of compaction, reduced oxygen supply to the roots, or excessive fertility input.

The type of grass species and cultivars will effect a management regime, based upon the growth habit and aggressiveness of the desirable grass species. Bents, in particular the creeping bents, have a vigorous growth habit and the new varieties of creeping bent such as A-4 or G-6 are reputed to be so aggressive they out-compete annual meadow grass.

At the other end of the scale there are the less aggressive growing species, such as the fine fescues, which can produce significant thatch layers due to their leaves, nodes and crowns being extremely resistant (high lignin content) to decomposition. Although, with fine fescues, thatch levels take longer to accumulate than do other more vigorous growing grass species, their recovery rate is slow and therefore any mechanical de-thatching operation should be less severe than with other grasses.

The soil pH can have an adverse effect on thatch development and as the pH decreases thatch is likely to increase - this is primarily due to acid soils having a negative effect on

microbial populations, thus reducing the potential for decomposition.

High application of nitrogenous fertilisers will promote excessive thatch through the production of lush, succulent shoot growth. The application of fertilisers containing the ammonium form of nitrogen, for example, sulphate of ammonium, are likely to increase acidity, while nitrate containing fertilisers such as potassium nitrate may cause the soil to become more alkaline.

Excessive irrigation practices can cause soils to become waterlogged, resulting in reduced oxygen levels and thus inhibit microbial populations. There is also the potential of plant nutrients being lost through leaching.

What effects will thatch have on turf quality? Excessive thatch will decrease the vigour of turf grasses by restricting the movement of water, gas exchange, nutrient availability, cold and drought stress tolerance, pesticide movement and degradation, and is likely to increase pest and disease incidence.

Soft, spongy greens can quickly become saturated, while the soil immediately below, can, in some cases, remain dry. An increase in thatch levels will reduce root depth and as a result grasses become more susceptible to changes in temperature. This can contribute to causing a hydrophobic condition ("dry patch"), whereby soils may not necessarily be compacted but are hard to re-wet. This is thought to be associated with certain disease pathogens producing a waxy coating or secretion surrounding soil particles or thatch, thus preventing water penetration.

Thatch will have a negative effect on diffusion, the exchange of gases, oxygen (O₂) and carbon dioxide (CO₂) between the soil air spaces and the atmosphere, which will ultimately effect root development - with a reduction in oxygen and possibly an increase in carbon dioxide (CO₂ toxicity) root tips will die and older roots can become non-functional.

Thatch can effect the movement of nutrients by preventing penetration through to the soil. Water soluble nitrogen sources are more likely to be lost to volatilisation, while non-mobile fertilisers, such as phosphorus may not penetrate the thatch layer.

Excessive nitrogen levels will induce rapid, succulent shoot growth, which is prone to scalping by mowing equipment and is frequently more of a problem on heavily thatched greens. Root growth, disease resistance, temperature, drought and wear tolerance is reduced as nitrogen levels are increased.

The fate and efficiency of pesticides can be effected by excessive thatch which can act as a second canopy layer through which pesticides must pass and which can physically bind the pesticide, reducing its ability to reach the target area. This could possibly

reduce leach loss but may also reduce pesticide efficiency. Once a thatch becomes hydrophobic it can reduce pesticide efficiency by inhibiting penetration or causing runoff.

Thatch will harbour many types of disease pathogens waiting for environmental conditions suited to their active growth. They survive as resting structures or as saprophytes (organisms which live on dead organic matter) in thatch. For many turf grass pathogens thatch provides the perfect moist environment, but some say that most turf grass pathogens are air-borne and therefore thatch cannot necessarily increase disease incidence. However, evidence proves that excessive thatch reduces turf grass health and vigour and therefore must surely increase disease incidence.

Options to control thatch. The prevention of excessive thatch is managed by cultural practices through either mechanical or biological means.

Biological control is linked to maintaining a healthy environment in order for micro-organisms to decompose thatch. It is important to remember that thatch accumulates over a period of time and the more vigorous species such as bent grass may produce excessive thatch in just two or three growing seasons. So from the early days of establishment, it is important to understand the growth habit of the grasses you are managing, as this will dictate the kind of management regime you implement. If you inherit a thatch related problem, then it is advisable not to attempt eradicating the problem in one season, but to programme a series of operations over a period of one or two years, ensuring that any operation is carried out when environmental conditions favour thatch removal ie. grasses are actively growing, thatch is moist and temperatures are adequate to support active growth and a rapid recovery.

As previously mentioned, thatch can be produced through various physical or environmental conditions, and the resulting characteristics of the thatch can alter from soft and holding water, like a sponge, to dense and tightly bound, preventing moisture penetration. Totally different management programmes may be required.

However, increasing the oxygen to the soil environment will go a long way towards solving the problem. Fifty percent of thatch related problems could be resolved simply by aeration. Unfortunately however, the more disruptive the form of aeration, the better the results.

Hollow coring is undoubtedly the quickest and most beneficial way in which to reduce excessive thatch, as this not only physically removes organic matter, but permits gas exchange, vital in maintaining a healthy microbial environment. Necessary in thatch decomposition. It

Right: A change in the management regime can be clearly seen with recent hollow coring and top-dressing. Note the new white roots growing beyond the tine hole.

Below: Hollow coring a green with one of the many aerating machines which simplify this important task



also assists with the movement of pesticides, nutrients and water through to the soil layer - how many times have you seen healthy white roots growing in tine holes or slits? Because hollow coring is disruptive to putting surfaces and subsequently upsetting to golfers, we tend to restrict this operation to one or two occasions per year. However, although not quite as effective, there are other forms of aeration which can also be beneficial in thatch reduction. These include the use of solid, chisel and slit tines, designed more to relieve compaction and permit air and water movement than physically remove thatch. Slit tines (thin bladed knives) can be used on a regular basis, not only for the benefits already mentioned, but also pruning tillers, yet causing minimal surface disruption.

Consideration for the long term quality and condition of the golf course must always come first, and this means course maintenance programmes should not be dictated by club competitions - ideally the reverse should happen. Hollow coring greens at the end of March or October will be far less beneficial in reducing thatch and recovery time will be slow, rather than when actively growing in April, May or September (this will naturally vary according to the part of the country you are working).

If well informed and given the choice, it is likely that members would rather have two weeks of disruption during the growing season than two months or so of playing competitions on temporary greens during the winter. Communication to members/visitors via the club diary and noticeboard that, subject to weather, the greens are to be hollow tined during the first week of May and the last week of September (earlier in the north of the country) then competitions and society bookings can be planned accordingly - "To be pre-warned, is to be prepared."

Top-dressing greens, either as a separate programme or in conjunction with a coring programme, will dilute thatch and assist in producing an environment more conducive to plant growth. The number of occasions greens are top-dressed is dependent on the growth habit of your particular grasses. Assuming that the underlying soils are of the desired specification, it is important that the top-dressing material is compatible (similar size and composition) with the root zone to avoid layering.

Irrigation management is reliant on the ability of water movement from



the surface through to the root zone effectively and for moisture to be retained in the macro and micro-pore spaces. Irrigate when there is least wind, preferably early morning. The aim should be to wet the soils without exceeding infiltration and percolation rates. Research shows that roots do not "go in search of water." However, roots only grow in moist soil and continually grow into new areas that have not yet dried out. So, in practice, this means that if only the upper layers of the root zone remain moist, roots will be confined to these areas. If, by probing into the soil, it is revealed that the soil is dry a few centimetres below the surface, this will largely be due to root uptake and the root system will continue to shrink as it removes the moisture. By assessing the moisture content within the first 15 - 20 centimetres of the soil profile using a soil probe, will ensure adequate moisture for healthy root development.

Fertility regimes will vary from course to course and will be dependent on the Head Greenkeeper's ideals and philosophies. However, it is important to avoid excessive applications of nitrogen and monitor nutrient availability and pH reading via soil tests.

Controlling thatch is essential to maintaining healthy turf and problems relating to thatch accumulation can be avoided if sound management programmes are implemented - REMEMBER - Be pro-active rather than re-active and "don't let the thatch grow beneath your feet."

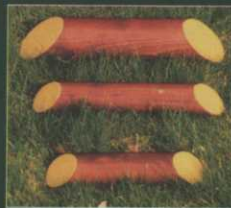
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BIGGA HOUSE and Local Training Courses are filling up fast! BIGGA's Education & Training Manager, Ken Richardson gives details of the last few available places.

EDUCATION UPDATE

The BIGGA Golf Course Environment Competition in Association with Amazon Ground Care and Grass Roots Trading Company

Bob Taylor, from STRI, and Dr Keith Duff, from English Nature, are reaching the final stages of judging for this Competition. The Regional Winners and the National Winner will be informed as soon as possible.

The Learning Experience 2000 sponsored by Textron Turfcare and Speciality Products

The Programme and booking form for the Learning Experience 2000 are included with this magazine. The National Education Conference, which is structured differently for 2000, will run alongside five Workshops followed by the BTME Seminars. We will also be running a course for Chairman of Green and Golf Club Secretaries, jointly, with the STRI, on Running Golf Courses in the 21st Century. Places are selling out fast with many delegates booking their place before the brochure was printed. To be sure of your place at Harrogate in January 2000, ensure that you complete and return your booking form as soon as possible. For further information on the Learning Experience or for advice on completing your booking form, please contact Sami on the Learning Experience Hot Line 01347 833833.

BIGGA HOUSE and Local Training Courses

Applications for both Regional Training Courses and BIGGA House Courses are arriving at HQ at a steady rate, with two courses almost full. Contact either Ken Richardson or Sami on 01347 833800 to check current availability.

Education courses Full or nearly full

Budgeting, Bournemouth 11-12 October	Full
Budgeting, Maidstone 3-4 November	1 place left
Health & Safety 1, Cambridge 9 November	1 place left
Health & Safety 2, Crawley 10 November	Full
Soil Science, Hatfield 23 November	3 places left
Essential Management Skills Leicester, 24-25 Nov	Full
Soil Science Bigga House 30 November	1 place left
Health & Safety 2, Crawley 3 February	2 places left
Essential Management, Falkirk 7-8 February	4 places left
Essential management, Brighton 28-29 Feb	Full
Essential Management, Brighton, 1-2 March	Full

The Scottish Golf Course Advisory Group Golf Bag Project

The Scottish Golf Course Advisory Group has been working hard over a number of years to improve the environmental quality of Scottish Golf Courses. This important objective has been supported by the introduction of 'Golf Bags' to more than 50 sites throughout Scotland. The Golf Bags do not contain clubs, balls or clothing, rather, they contain a wealth of information on environmental management and environmentally aware golf course design, including books, videos, leaflets and case studies.

Each Golf Bag is looked after by a Bag Manager who is responsible for the dispatch and return of all items in the bag. Golf Clubs may borrow items from the bag or may buy items if they wish to hold onto them permanently. Golf Bags contain information on birds, bird boxes, nests, bracken, walls, hedges, dunes, heathland, moorland, lowlands, woodlands and waterways, to name but a few, giving information that greenkeepers, club officials, golf club members, architects and constructors could all find useful.

In his foreword to the Golf Bag Handbook, Colin Montgomerie says that a golf course that has been sensitively designed and managed in a way that works with nature is normally more interesting and challenging. The information provided in the Golf Bag

proves that golf and the environment can work together providing a respite from outside pressures and ensuring that golf courses and the areas that surround them will be available for our descendants to enjoy.

The Golf Bag is an excellent idea giving a mass of easy to follow information on golf course ecological management. It would be pleasing to see such Golf Bags available to all golf clubs in Britain and throughout Europe.

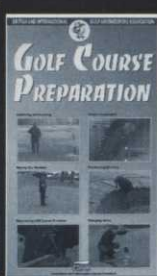
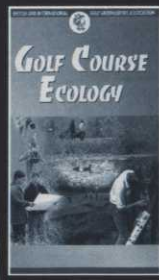
More information on the Golf Bags, including the location of your nearest Golf Bag Manager and general advice on all aspects of conservation on golf courses can be obtained from the Scottish Golf Course Wildlife Advisor, c/o Scottish Natural Heritage, 2 Anderson Place, Leith, Edinburgh, EH6 5NP, 0131 5549797.

Full details of the education and training options available at BTME2000 are included in 'The Learning Experience' brochure, distributed free with this edition of Greenkeeper International.

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During July, BIGGA's Membership Services Officer, Tracey Maddison welcomed over 65 new members to the Association. Read on to find out about another service offered to you through your membership to BIGGA.

As Autumn approaches you may be looking to kit yourself out with some new work wear. Before you look any further check out the exciting range of clothing and footwear from the BIGGA Collection from Stylo Matchmakers.

Stylo, who are also a Golden Key Supporter of the Association, have developed a range of BIGGA work wear which is competitively priced and designed to fulfil the needs of anyone working in the greenkeeping profession. All the clothing available is made to the highest specification in durable materials - offering working comfort as well as practicality. All items subtly feature the BIGGA logo.

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

Did you see the special offers?

Both the July and August editions of Greenkeeper International carried special offers on the current 1999 range. In July, if you bought a Hurricane Waterproof Jacket, you received a FREE workshirt, worth £14.95, which is made from 100% brushed cotton and is ideal to wear in all weather conditions. Also, there was a special value deal, pay only £25, when you purchased a pair of poly/cotton trousers AND a sweatshirt, and save over £6. The offers didn't end there! Look at your

August edition of Greenkeeper International for special 2 for 1 offers. In other words the Lister and Owen Knitshirts were available at an unmissable bargain offer of buy one and get one FREE, as were the workshirts. Finally, the Basket Weave Slipovers were available with £5 off the brochure price, ideal as we approach the unpredictable autumn months.

Also, check out the excellent waterproof/breathable rainsuit, available in navy blue colour at a competitive price of £49.95. The matching jacket and trousers have zip and popper fastening to ensure complete protection from the rain. To compliment the range, there is an extremely useful full zip fleece available, ideally suited for both work and leisure use. Made from Teflon material, which ensures that rain will 'run-off', the garment is quick drying and very practical. Although I am told by greenkeepers who already have one of these, they have had to keep an eye on it as their wives like the look of them and have tried claiming them for themselves! However, at a giveaway price of just £29.95 it won't break the bank. Available in Medium, Large and Extra Large sizes.

For a copy of the full brochure contact the Membership Department at HQ on 01347 833800 and we will only be too happy to send you one.

BIGGA welcomes...

Scotland

Alexander Donaghy, West
Maurice Hadden, North
Colin William Riddoch, North
Alastair Scott, North
Steven James Simpson, North

Northern

Adam Kellett, North West
Paul Ernest Lander, North West
David Lowe, Sheffield
Gordon Mackintosh, North West
Wayne John Robinson, North West
James Wardman, Northern

Midland

Roger Clitherow, BB&O
Clive John Fisher, Midland
John James Frankham, BB&O
Steven James Gardner, BB&O
Ryun Mark Holden, East Midland
Christopher John Jackson, Midland
Wayne Jackson, Mid Anglia
Michael Jones, BB&O
Richard Terence Lowe, Midland
Gary Paul McEvans, BB&O
Michael Andrew Parker, Midland
K J Pickaver, Midland
Keith Preece, BB&O
David James Richardson, Midland
Mark James Sherrington, BB&O
Alex James Shore, BB&O
Brian Kenneth Slater, East of England
Daniel James Wheatley, East Midland

South East

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Terry Edward Burton, Essex
Michael James Collyer, Surrey
Jonathan Day, Surrey
Timothy Simon Duncton, Surrey
Anthony Bernard Field, Surrey
Gerry Grant, Surrey

Paul Knapp, London
Paul John Laight, East Anglia
Andy Peter Long, Surrey
Gary Mills, Kent
Aaron Percival, London
Keith Charles Rowley, London
Neil Albert Sewell, Surrey
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Mark Stopps, Essex
Paul William Varley, Surrey

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Craig Gibson, south West
Ken Hodgkiss, South West
Craig Richardson, South West
Paul Thomas Slade, South West

Northern Ireland

Paul John Mathieson, South East

Rep of Ireland

Lance Evans, Rep of Ireland

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Goran Ivarsson, Sweden
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Mark Ernest Lawson, USA

Associate

Nicholas Leefe, Northern
S Phipps, North West
Raymond Wigley, BB&O
Darren Paul Smith, East Anglia
S Everett, South Coast

Check out October's edition for August's new members!

Next month: Our International membership column visits the USA



Trevor Downing of J Rothschild Assurance introduces the first in a series of articles on protection, investment, pensions and mortgage planning which we believe will be of much benefit to BIGGA members.

Are you paying too much for your mortgage?

As we are all aware, interest rates are extremely low at the moment, having reached levels not seen since the middle 60s. How long they will remain this low is anybody's guess. Many commentators are suggesting that they will actually go lower, aligning more with European rates.

This is bad news for individuals relying on their investment income from deposits, but good news for anyone with a mortgage. Mortgage rates have not been this low for around 30 years or more!

As an investor, this is causing people to review where they put their money, particularly long-term money.

On the other hand, if you are a borrower, the news could not be better. However, many are still paying rates that are much higher than they need to be. This is simply throwing money down the drain.

Everyone with a mortgage set up

more than six months ago should review it, and if it is appropriate, remortgage with a new lender.

For example, if an individual with a current loan of £100,000 is able to reduce the rate of interest they are paying by 1%, this will save them £1,000 per annum, £83.33 per month.

Clearly, this saving could be used to help meet the cost of some other financial needs, such as further pension provision or life assurance. The problem we all face is the inevitable fact that the State will increasingly ensure that we all have to pay more for our own financial well being. Any opportunity that exists to ease or fund this burden should be looked at very closely.

Of course, it may also be used to simply enhance your lifestyle, such as putting it towards a holiday, school fees or going out to your favourite

local restaurant once a month!

If you have a mortgage already and are thinking of moving your mortgage to another lender, there are some key points that you should bear in mind. You should look at any fees that may be payable, such as valuation fees and legal costs. Many lenders will make a significant contribution to these, perhaps even paying them all.

Will you incur any penalties by moving your mortgage? If you are paying a fixed rate of interest, you are very likely to have to pay a redemption penalty that will eat into any cost savings you might make. This may make the move unwise, but in many cases you will still be better taking the redemption penalty.

Whatever you do, make sure that your mortgage will be repaid in the event of a major catastrophe. Most of us will have covered our loans with

suitable life assurance to ensure that we leave our families a home, not a debt.

Nowadays more and more clients are making sure that their mortgage is also cleared if they suffer one of the many illnesses that can strike at any time, heart attack, cancer, a stroke, MS etc.

Recent statistics show that the chances of surviving many illnesses are greater now than ever before. While this may mean that someone suffering a heart attack will live longer than previously, the number of new sufferers has not reduced. So the need for financial protection is also greater.

I would be very happy to discuss your mortgage with you to see if you can benefit from today's lower interest rates.

For further information contact Trevor Downing on Tel: 01959 500427.

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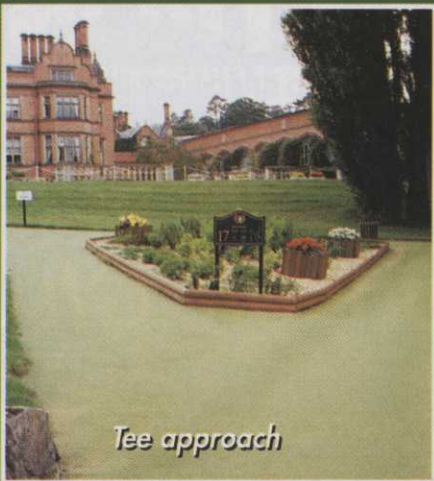
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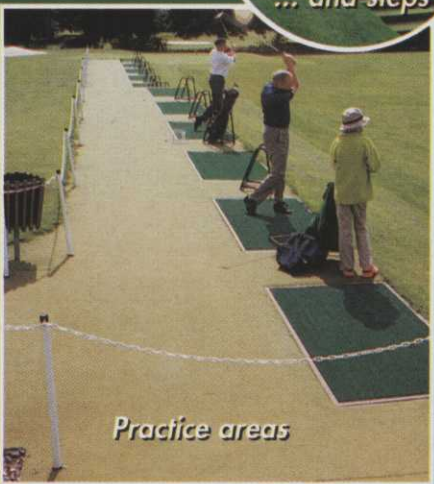
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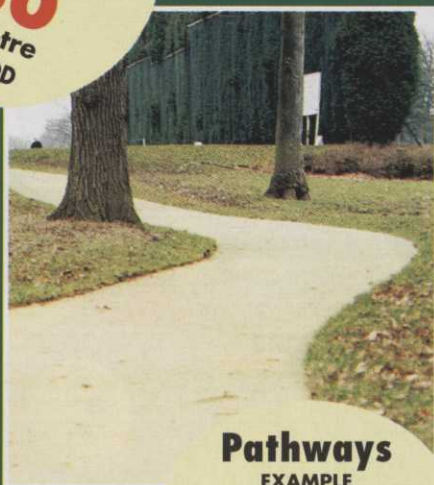
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Scott MacCallum catches up with a Course Manager and Greenkeeping team who could all do with a long lie down in a darkened room after a year and a bit under the spotlight...

Bearing a Hallmark



The signature 9th hole on the Hunting Course

When England football Captain, Alan Shearer, arrived to replace Slaley Hall's Course Manager, Steve Cram, on the back nine of the exhibition match to announce the official opening of the new Priestman Course it must have come as something of a relief.

After all, such has been the hectic nature of life at Slaley Hall over the

last 14 months, the prospect of a rest instead of having to play the last nine holes would have been quite appealing.

Steve had played the opening nine in the company of former European Number One and Ryder Cup player, Ronan Rafferty, rising European Tour star, David Howell, and Slaley's Golf Operations Manager, Mark Stencer,

also a professional, in front of a gallery of press and photographers.

"It was quite an honour for me to be involved and I certainly didn't expect it," explained Steve, the day after the event.

"I'd grown in the course for the last two years and really thought that my role in the opening was over, so it was a thrill to be called up to play," said



Above: Steve Cram

Below: Steve in conversation with Simon Peters of MJ Abbott on the new third green



the 29 year-old five handicapper. "Once we finished the front nine I dropped out and Alan Shearer took over after we'd had a little barbecue on the 10th tee. Not a bad stand in!" said Steve of one of Slaley's newer members.

If Steve's moment in the limelight was a reward for the work he and his team have put in over the last 18 months it could not have been more deserved because Slaley's greenkeeping staff have been through the mill since June of last year.

Remember June of last year? Steve can't get it out of his mind.

That was the occasion when Slaley Hall entered the history books as the

venue for the '98 Compaq European Grand Prix, the first European Tour event ever not to reach a conclusion and produce a Champion.

"It was the worst time of my working career," recalled Steve ruefully. "We had eight inches of rain in 10 days. I don't think any course in the country could have taken the amount of rain we had."

It had started two weeks before the event and never really stopped.

"We had asked Tour agronomist Richard Stillwell if an event had ever been cancelled before because we knew how bad it was. We were trying to cut fairways but mud was flying up.

"We then got a couple of drier days and Richard said we'd be laughing about it in a few years time when we'd enjoyed a successful event. After that it started again and never really stopped."

The only golf that was played was the pro-am on the Wednesday, nine holes of Thursday's first round, a full 18 on the Friday thanks to moving tees forward and turning par-5s into par-4s and par-4s into par-3s and that was that - it fell short of the 36 holes needed to complete an event.

"On Saturday it just poured and come Sunday there was no chance. I remember being in the sheds at 4am on Sunday knowing there was no chance of play."

The decision was finally taken by Tournament Director, Mike Stewart, a few hours later after the players had started to gather wanting either to play or go home.

"It is difficult to describe our feelings. We've got a great set of lads and



they're always really boisterous but they were so down. Guys were sitting looking at a paper but not really reading it, staring at the TV but not really watching it.

"The course didn't open for another week but morale was still suffering for about a month after the event. You'd try and put it out of your mind and then you'd meet someone you'd not seen since before it happened and they'd mention it," explained Steve, again reliving the nightmare for the benefit of Greenkeeper International readers.

"Even yesterday, with the opening of the second course, they showed pictures of the washout on TV."

Having endured such a horrific experience, through no fault of their own, it would have been fair to expect that this year's event, two weeks later in the calendar, would have gone without a hitch.

Reading about the fairy tale victory of newcomer David Park, in newspapers devoid of any greenkeeping related stories, might have led one to suggest that hitchless it



had been. However, the lack of such stories merely highlighted the success Steve and the team had in recovering from another potential disaster not the fact that one didn't exist.

"After last year the guys were right up for it and wanted to make it a success but all winter we'd been struggling with our 7th green and in the run-up to the Compaq it began to give us real concern," said Steve, of a green which was in shade, drained badly and offered up few pin positions on its three tiers.

"Richard Stillwell visited 12 weeks before the event and said that it was so bad we'd have to relay it."

It presented Steve with the problem of finding turf which was cut to green height.

In the end they had to buy turf which was about 20 mil in height.

"We relaid it, taking away one of the tiers, always knowing that it was going to be a temporary job."

Unfortunately it didn't take and it started thinning out before, overnight, bare patches started to appear.

"I was on the phone to Richard ever, day but the more we did to improve the situation the worse it got. Everything I tried that I had been taught greenkeeping wise, would have the opposite effect.

"Every other green on the course was the best it had ever been except this one and the first thing I'd do when I came into work every morning was go and look at it."

Two weeks before the event Martin O'Rawe, one of the Tours greenkeepers, arrived and after looking at it was quite confident that it could be turned around.

"We were trying to bring it on with liquid feed because we thought we'd get a quick response but the Tour suggested ammonium sulphate. They were confident that the next day we'd get a response, but there was nothing."

Richard Stillwell arrived at Slaley a week before the event was due to start and announced the need for some drastic action.

"He said we were going to have to relay it with a green from the second

course which had only just been opened to the public to play. We suggested using the chipping green which was the same fescue bent construction as the new course greens but Richard said the problem with that would be that the players would immediately think there was a big problem because they wouldn't have anywhere to practice and it would set their alarm bells ringing."

After measuring up the respective greens it was found that the 1st on the Priestman course was the closest in size to the Hunting Course's 7th and they set to work.

"We did the whole job in 10 hours... There were the three guys from the Tour, Roger and Richard Stillwell, Martin and all 18 of us (12 full-time and six casual staff). As we were taking the old turf away guys were lifting turf off the 1st and transporting it across in Gators where it was being relaid on boards - watered and whacked, watered and whacked before being lightly toppedressed."

The new green took up most of their attention during the days before

play started and eventually it was cut to five millimetres for the tournament.

"We could see some of the lines so we went back the next day and lifted some areas and joined them a bit better then added a bit of green dye. The old greens are 95% poa while the new one was about 80% bent so it looked different but it putted well if a little slower than the other 17.

"I think it was stimping about eight while the others were about 10. We relaid it across the line of play on a diagonal so that as you walked towards it you wouldn't see the joins and the cameras couldn't pick up them up.

"The idea came from Richard again because he said that half the problem with the players is that they see something that looks awful before they even get to it so it's going to be a big problem. If they get up and it looks reasonable they'll think it's not too bad," said Steve, adding that he checked the scores and there didn't appear to have been too many three putts on the green.

Bearing a Hallmark

Machinery Inventory

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- One John Deere F11145 rotary rough cutter
- One John Deere 755 rotary rough mower
- Four John Deere 2653 tees/approach mowers
- One John Deere 2500 greens mower
- Three John Deere 2243 greens mowers (one with vibratory rollers)
- Six John Deere 220 pedestrian mowers
- One John Deere 1200 bunker rake
- Four John Deere diesel gators
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- One Kawasaki mule
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- One tractor mounted Hardi sprayer
- One Turfmech multi-trailer
- One Marshall trailer
- Six Flymos
- Six strimmers



Above: A view across the new Priestman Course

"The good news is that we hardly heard any complaints about it, certainly nothing directly critical."

As soon as the tournament finished the turf was removed from the chipping green and replaced on the 1st green and the chipping green was resown.

Below: The 7th green which caused all the problems



Since then M.J. Abbotts have arrived to carry out extensive drainage work and the opportunity has been taken to look at the two problem greens, the aforementioned 7th and the 3rd which is very small.

"Dave Thomas, who designed the course originally, has come up and re-done the two greens and we've started with the 3rd and will move on to the 7th in a couple of weeks," explained Steve.

Looking back at the problems on the 7th Steve believes it was a combination of cold weather and poor construction which conspired to cause the problems. Indeed Slaley is 1000 feet above sea level and north facing and the temperature is two degrees lower than Hexham which is only a few miles away.

"It was very cold and we had little sunlight and when we relaid the green we didn't go right down into the depth of the green construction. We've dug the green up since and where the gravel bed was supposed to be was all choked up with silt and rubbish and not allowing water through."

De Vere Hotels has already invested quite a bit of money in its north east jewel, with £200,000 spent on the new course and around £300,000 worth of John Deere kit. Another quarter of a million is being spent on the drainage work and redoing the two greens.

As part of the Group, Steve finds himself having regular monthly meetings with the other De Vere Course Managers.

"We're currently trying to grade all courses into about four levels so we can look at staffing and budgeting levels. The Belfry, because of the Ryder Cup, is top, and we're on a similar level, but courses which can host or have hosted ladies or senior events or regional events are also given a level."

It's an exciting time for the man who has been at Slaley all his working life but he will have every right to expect the next 14 months to be slightly less daunting than the last...unless of course, in the spirit of reciprocation, he's called upon to replace Alan Shearer at half time in a World Cup match at Wembley.

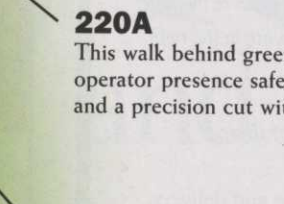
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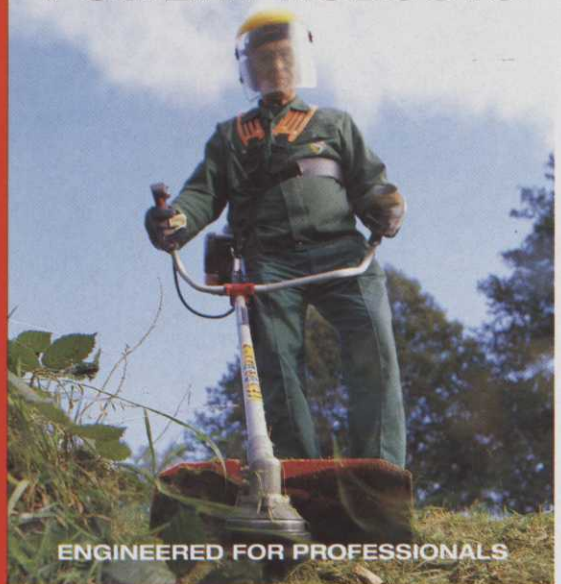
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Roland Taylor works out how to use his jack and takes a look at tyres...

Tyred and tested



The story of tyres began in the 1840's when a Scottish engineer, Robert William Thompson filed a patent for a pneumatic tyre. It states that the invention consisted of fitting elastic bearings to the wheels of carriages. This would lessen the power required to draw them; make the motion easier and reduce the noise the wheels made. Unfortunately his invention was not taken up commercially.

Ten years earlier a bankrupt hardware merchant from Philadelphia, Charles Goodyear, was taking a considerable interest in rubber. What had started out as a wonderful new substance was proving to be disastrous.

Goods manufactured from rubber were appearing in vast numbers on the market, but the public soon discovered it was unstable as the items turned into a sticky mess in summer and froze hard in the winter. As a result the bottom fell out of the market and many investors lost considerable sums of money.

Between spells in jail for debt Goodyear began experiments to find a way of removing the stickiness. Initially he tried magnesia and quicklime and had some success. Then, like so many discoveries, an accident gave him the answer. He used some nitric acid to remove bronze paint from a piece of rubber. The result was a

smooth surface completely dry. Unfortunately, this was not the total solution - underneath the surface there was still a sticky mess. It took another five hard years before, again through an accident, he resolved the problem. By then sulphur had been added to the mixture and one day, in a rage, Goodyear threw the rubber sample onto a stove. Instead of melting he discovered it had transformed into a completely new substance. He carried on experimenting and found that by using pressurised steam at 270 degrees Fahrenheit the best results were produced.

One of Goodyear's samples found its way into the hands of Thomas

Tyred and tested

Hancock, an English pioneer of rubber. He noticed the yellow sulphur bloom on the surface and immediately set about reinventing vulcanised rubber, something Goodyear had achieved years earlier. By the time Goodyear got round to filing a patent he found Hancock had beaten him to it and he died virtually penniless.

Whilst all this was happening on the other side of the Atlantic, back here another Scotsman, John Boyd Dunlop, was busy reinventing the pneumatic tyre. This time, both the product and timing was right, and it took off. Steam-powered vehicles were found to be too heavy to have tyres fitted but the motor car had arrived and this new invention was ideal for them. In 1895, the Michelin brothers won the Paris to Bordeaux car race in a motor fitted with pneumatic tyres and the resulting publicity gave this

French firm a competitive edge in the automobile industry.

Companies producing tyres began springing up around the world. Most had geared their production for either bicycles or cars. One manufacturer, in the city of Trelleborg in Sweden (they took the name from the city) realised there were other opportunities, in agriculture, forestry and much later the turfcare markets.

A tractor tyre was required to produce plenty of traction for hauling heavy machinery. While this was ideal for arable cultivation those engaged in forestry were experiencing problems. They required the traction but not the damage that occurred to the trees' surface root structure. In addition, the rough terrain caused a plethora of punctures and repairing these wasted a lot of valuable time. A further problem was that the ruts cre-

ated in soft areas meant that the tractors became easily and quickly bogged down. An answer was needed. This materialised in the form of a wide section tyre, which could support a load at a low air pressure and reduce soil and root damage. The farmers also realised that this was beneficial to them and it was not long before the turf care industry also followed suit. Another plus was that tractors and machinery fitted with low ground pressure tyres could be used on wet and soggy ground without losing traction or making ruts. In the past it had been virtually impossible to use equipment in these conditions.

The introduction of more sophisticated self-powered turfcare machinery plus greater numbers of people taking up golf increased the worry over compaction. Greenkeepers were not the only ones with this headache. In France, winegrowers were concerned about the damage tractors were doing to the vines' shallow root system. Research was carried out and it was found that by changing the tyre's pattern, less damage occurred. While rounded shouldered tyres are ideal there is still the need for traction and this is achieved by using a cross bar tread.

It should be borne in mind that low ground pressure tyres do not completely eliminate soil compaction but help to minimise it.

Buying the correct tyre for your particular requirements is important. The ones that arrive on the machine are not necessarily always right for you. To ensure performance at its optimum with minimal damage to the turf it is worth consulting a tyre expert. He will be able to advise on the most suitable tyres and tread configurations.

In addition to the powered equipment in the fleet, trailers and any other towed machinery on pneumatics should be taken into consideration. A loaded trailer for instance, with the wrong tyres fitted can cause considerable damage to the soil structure.



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October 5, 1999



Maintenance

When it comes to maintenance, tyres are one of those items that tend to be overlooked until they go flat. Incorrect operating pressures can seriously affect a machine's performance as well as being a possible safety hazard.

Over inflation could cause:

- loss of traction
- excessive soil compaction
- rapid wear both on grass and hard surfaces
- higher fuel consumption
- lower performances
- an uncomfortable ride

Under inflation can lead to:

- side wall damage
- poor ride
- beading coming unseated
- increased wear

Like the other components of a machine, tyres need to be regularly checked.

- Inflation pressures should be checked at least every fortnight.
- The pressure must be correct for the load and the operations that are being carried out.
- Valve caps should always be in place
- Inspect the tread and side walls for signs of damage, wear or bulges
- Remove foreign bodies from the tread such as stones and repair any deep cuts.
- Where equipment is not used regularly the tyres need to be rested. To do this the whole unit can be raised up on jacks or blocks.
- Store any tyres or wheels with them fitted, in a dark place away from oil, petrol or chemicals. They should also be kept away from electric motors, which give off ozone that over a time will break down the rubber.

For the best performance and smoothest ride check your tyres regularly.



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TALKING

This month, Greenkeeper International's bi-monthly series featuring Course Managers and Head Greenkeepers from every Region, looks at alternative spikes.

Alternative Spikes

Compiled by Malcolm Huntington MBE



Name: Elliott Small
Course: Tulliallan GC
Region: Scotland
Course Type: Parkland and some heathland
Staff: Head Greenkeeper, plus five



Name: John Huntington
Course: Ilkley GC
Region: Northern
Course Type: Parkland
Staff: Head Greenkeeper, plus five



Name: Richard Barker
Course: Kirby Muxloe GC
Region: Midland
Course Type: Parkland
Number of Holes:
Staff: Head Greenkeeper, plus five and a part-time gardener



Name: Richard Whyman
Course: Bude and North Cornwall GC
Region: South West and South Wales
Course Type: Links
Staff: Head Greenkeeper, plus two, plus part-time assistant



Name: Ian Semple
Course: Old Fold Manor GC
Region: South East
Course Type: Heathland
Staff: Course Manager, plus four

1. What was your initial reaction when you heard about a new alternative to metal spikes?

That it would be interesting to see the experiment but that I couldn't see soft spikes taking over from metal spikes.

Soft spikes could be better for greens as there is less spiking up and so obviously this will be a help to greenkeepers.

It was no great surprise. I have worn soft spikes for about 18 months and find them comfortable to walk on, particularly on concrete paths and round clubhouse areas.

Sceptical. I felt it could be a gimmick.

Because of the problems with wear and tear, I welcomed the introduction of soft spikes and I have certainly seen an improvement on the course.

HEADS

2. To what extent have your views changed since then?

Probably 100%. I have four pairs of shoes three with soft spikes which I now use all the time. I find them comfortable and they don't mark the greens.

I have only worn them in good golfing conditions so far and the greens remain good and as true as ever. They don't mark the greens.

My views haven't changed. I find no appreciable difference on our greens which are basically annual meadow grass but I appreciate they might have an effect on bent grass greens.

Since using them I have found them very comfortable. Our fairways have been very firm and with soft spikes you get a bit more spring and comfort. They also have a good grip.

Not at all. My feelings have remained the same and I am very happy with the condition of the course.

3. What is your feeling on alternative spikes and their agronomic benefits or otherwise?

The main advantage is that greens now don't get spiked up as much as they did with only metal spikes.

Metal spikes give you slight aeration of greens and soft spikes don't. I did notice when playing in Tenerife earlier this year that the very heavily watered greens did mark with soft spikes. The agronomic benefit generally speaking on our course would be less marking.

I am happy with metal or soft spikes, whatever the weather. Having studied the situation I haven't found a scrap of difference.

The jury is still out on this issue. They don't spike up the greens as much as metal, so to that extent it has a agronomic benefit.

Soft spikes don't give you any aeration and metal spikes do give you a little. Because we've got such good results I would say that the advantages of soft spikes outweigh the disadvantages of loss of aeration.

4. Having worn the recently introduced Black Widow spikes, how do you rate a) their traction and b) their effect on the putting surface?

I find the traction every bit as good as with metal. I haven't slipped at any time. We have no problems with the putting surfaces and I am happy with the soft spikes.

Black Widow spikes give you a very good grip, but again I have only used them in good firm conditions. I have not seen any marking on our greens at Ilkley from the use of soft spikes, but the greens have been firm during the trial period.

The traction is fine - spot on. I haven't slipped. The Black Widow spikes have no different effect on the greens.

Excellent traction, but I have mixed views on their effect on the putting surface.

I have three pairs of shoes, each with a different soft spike, but the Black Widow is easily the best. They don't scuff the greens. The traction is excellent and the putting surface remains good.

5. Does your club have, or is it thinking of introducing, an alternative spike (soft spike) policy?

We don't have a soft spike policy and have no plans to introduce one.

Ilkley doesn't have an alternative spike policy at the moment and I understand there are no plans to bring one in.

No, and I not aware of any policy to bring one in. I can see the benefits for some clubs with high quality greens but I haven't seen enough benefit for me to recommend then to our greens committee. As I said, I am happy with either type of spike.

Not at present. The subject has not been discussed by our green committee.

Our members have been asked to change and many have done so, but we don't insist. If someone slipped wearing soft spikes they may take legal action. We are a members club but the public can play there two days a week and some of them may not like having to pay £6 or £7 to change from metal to soft.

Elmwood College's 18 Hole golf course has recently achieved a unique environmental double. Earlier this year the course became the first UK golf course to receive the ISO 14001-environment award and at the same time was awarded the Scottish Golf Course Wildlife Charter. Master Greenkeeper John Quinn, who is Director of Elmwood Golf Developments, explains what makes the Elmwood course special.

Back to nature



Above: John Quinn

It would have been easy for me to go through the long list of management objectives and environmental projects that go to make an ISO14001 award, but it would not make very enjoyable reading. In any case to do that would be to miss the point of the award entirely. ISO14001 is awarded in recognition of a well-planned, facility wide, integrated approach to environmental management. The management system is far more valuable to the environment, the customers and employees of the facility than the sum of its constituent parts would be. The most important thing to bear in mind at all times is that we did not set out to achieve an award, we set out to bring environmental awareness into everything we do at Elmwood College and Elmwood Golf Developments.

The Golf Course

Elmwood golf course was constructed in 1995/96 and opened for play in August 1997. It is an 18-hole course built on ex-arable and pastureland and includes full USGA Specification greens. The course was built primarily as a training resource for Elmwood's 450 or so greenkeeping and golf course management students who attend the college annually. However, the learning experience is made even more realistic for the students by the fact that the course is a fully operational commercial golf course with 700 paying season ticket holders. The course will typically see around 30,000 rounds annually, and is open on full greens and tees for the whole 12 months of the year.

The course is maintained by a full time greenkeeping team of six and has a state of the art machinery fleet and PC controlled irrigation system both supplied by Toro. Some of the environmentally sensitive management practices, which have helped the course towards ISO 14001, are as follows:

IPM

Integrated Pest Management, although the buzz term of today, describes a method of turf management that many UK greenkeepers have always used, they just haven't written it down in a formal management programme. At Elmwood we take a very long-term view of turf management and how it effects the overall environment of the course and its surroundings. IPM means managing your turf for the long haul and not just looking for results for the next big event or members medal competition. This means assessing the turf condition and then doing

what is required to make it, or keep it, healthy. We are not anti-pesticides, but there are no pesticides on the market that do turf or soil any good. All pesticides cure the symptoms, not the root problem. Plants and beneficial soil fungi interact in symbiotic relationships, which help the plant to obtain the nutrition it needs. Broad-spectrum preventative fungicides are not selective in which fungi they kill; they are by definition effective on all fungi. The same can be said for most pesticides.

Even at Elmwood, however, there is a place for pesticides. We do use some herbicides, mainly totals on paths or new construction areas and occasionally selectives applied by spot treatment to problem weed areas on fine turf. We have never applied an insecticide, but we did have to spot treat greens with a curative fungicide in February 1996.

This low pesticide input has not occurred by accident; everything we do is geared to maintaining a healthy soil/plant relationship. Cultural practices are to the fore. On our USGA greens we topdress as lightly as we can set the machine, every 14 days during the main growing season. These applications are so light that they disappear with one pass of the brush and the effect on play is hardly noticed. Thatch build up is controlled by this continuous dilution with rootzone material.

During the summer we spoon feed





greens and tees with liquid fertilisers (16.0.9 NPK fertiliser with trace elements and with a seaweed supplement added) every 10 days. In autumn and winter a granular fertiliser (3.0.22 NPK) is applied once a month. Total nitrogen input on greens is 220 kg/Ha per annum. Soil phosphate is adequate, so there is no need to add more. Potassium inputs reflect the sandy nature and low CEC of the rootzone. On USGA spec rootzones the CEC is generally low and spoon-feeding programmes work to supply the plant with the nutrients it needs when it needs them.

In dry weather, irrigation follows the maxim of 'Deeply not Daily' and the roots go all the way down to the bottom of the rootzone. Hand watering of hotspots conserves water and prevents the greens from losing their firm and smooth surface.

Greens are mowed at 5mm in summer and 7mm in winter. This generally amounts to five cuts with pedestrian mowers and two by triple mower per week. This helps to minimise perimeter wear and tear. If dry patches appear we hydroject and apply a wetting agent with the hand watering applications. Hydrojecting also goes on throughout the season on walk off areas and any other compaction black spots.

Conservation

Conservation was prominent also right from the start of the project,

with an Integrated Golf and Conservation Management plan being drawn up before a sod was turned. This was a prescriptive plan following the Scottish Natural Heritage format. Some of the projects arising from the plan have included planting eight hectares of rough, indigenous grasses such as sheep's fescue, hard fescue and highland bentgrass. These areas have been managed by mowing and removing clippings twice or three times per year in an effort to reduce the fertility of the rich agricultural land they are planted on. This programme is now beginning to show results and the roughs will now be left to regenerate naturally with only one cut per year. On the more impoverished areas we will begin planting wild flower plugs this autumn with plantings of gorse and broom also contributing to the overall conservation value of the site.

Over 25,000 trees and hedgerow plants have been planted as part of the project and these have been drawn from a short list of native species also. These are primarily as follows: Scots pine, birch, ash, rowan, hawthorn and dog rose. Most of the trees were planted as saplings and are supported through the Forestry Authority Woodland Grant Scheme, while Scottish Enterprise, through the Contract Grow Scheme, has supplied all the trees on the course.

Dry-stone walls have been left in place wherever possible to reflect the

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Back to nature

course's previous use as farmland. We leave the course boundaries and out of play roughs to regenerate naturally with no management input and

this has paid dividends in the number of species present on the course. Elmwood came second in Scotland in the Bird Watching Ryder Cup in

1998 with 56 species spotted, not bad for a newly-opened course built on previously barren arable land.

Among those species were four 'top of the food chain' raptors; buzzard, sparrowhawk, kestrel and barn owl which are a good sign that the entire eco-system is in a healthy, thriving state.

This autumn will see the completion of our first five-year plan and the start of the next one, which will have many more measurable conservation and environmental objectives.

Of course we did not achieve the ISO award through the work on the golf course alone. The ISO 14001 recognition is a facility wide award and includes the clubhouse, maintenance facility, offices and everything else that makes the business tick. Some of the initiatives here include recycling; used oils (engine and cooking), filters, grass clippings, pesticide containers, paper, glass and aluminium cans. Energy conservation is very important also, consider energy saving lights, regular machinery servicing and buildings insulation



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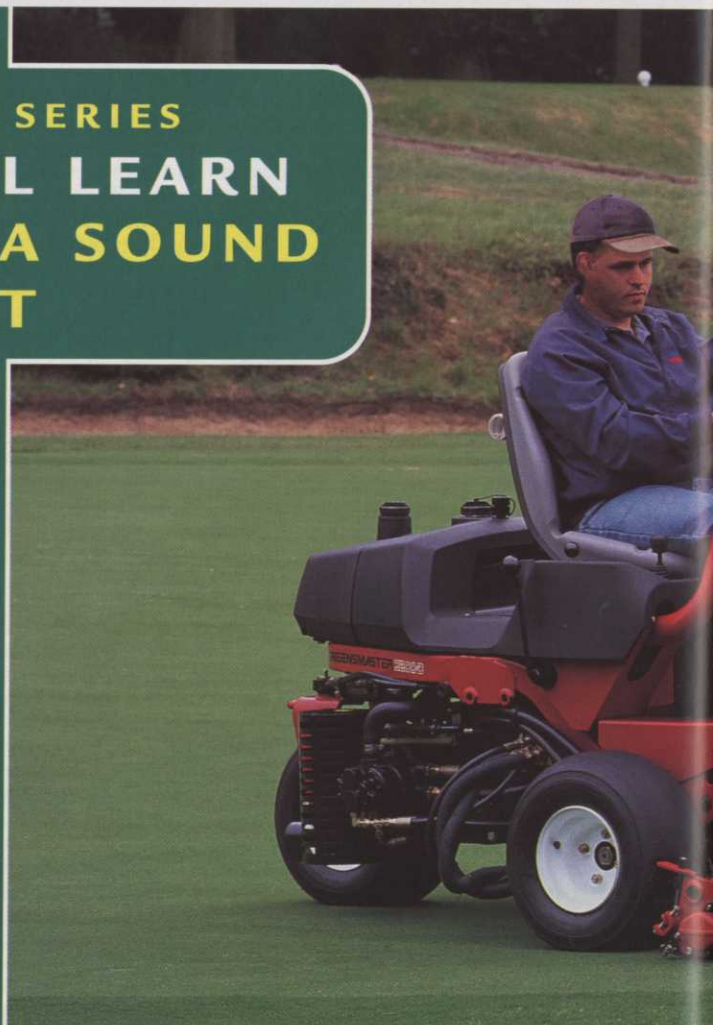
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and glazing. Staff members are encouraged to switch off lights and appliances when not required. Don't leave your PC switched on all day (take care with irrigation computers!) and switch off lights when leaving a building or area.

So what is the next stage? Well, although we didn't set out to win awards, they are a useful focus to help achieve targets and goals in this type of work. The next obvious step is to try to achieve the pan-European Committed to Green Award and we are working diligently on this project at the moment. I would encourage all Course Managers, Head Greenkeepers and club officials to do likewise. Golf courses are the green lungs of many otherwise concrete cities, they can be important wildlife sanctuaries and they are an insurance policy against the land they occupy being developed for industry or housing. A minority of golf courses have given the entire golf course industry in Britain a poor environmental image, which it does not deserve, so let's show the sceptics that we are all committed to green.

The Elmwood environmental initiative is a team effort and thanks are due to Stuart Macdonald, Team Leader for Conservation Elmwood College, John Salter Environment

Officer Elmwood College, Jonathan Smith Scottish Golf Course Wildlife Adviser and the entire Elmwood Golf Developments team.



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The preliminaries have now been completed and the scene set to identify BIGGA's Champion Golfer for 1999 in the new Charterhouse/Scotts National Championship

A Championship of distinction

Charterhouse/Scotts National Championship 3-5 October 1999



The Section events have now been completed and the successful qualifiers for the first Charterhouse/Scotts National Championship for the BIGGA Challenge Trophy are honing their games in preparation for a wonderful occasion at the magnificent Carden Park, near Chester.

Yes, if the quality of the golf can

match the quality of the surroundings - with a round each over the Cheshire and fabulous new Jack Nicklaus-designed course - we shall be in for a thrilling few days.

BIGGA Challenge Trophy, formerly the News of the World Trophy, will be presented to the winner of the Nett competition over the 36 holes with

the Gross winner receiving the BIGGA Challenge Cup. Teams comprising members of the relevant Sections will play for the Regional Team Cup.

The Championship is being supported by the Softspike company and as Carden Park is a "Softspike" course Softspikes will be supplied to all competitors who require a set.

A Championship of distinction

Qualifiers from the BIGGA regions

William McMeikan	Ayrshire
Keith McCartney	Ayrshire
Shaun McMillan	Central Scotland
Kenneth Stirling	Central Scotland
Craig Pennyquick	East Scotland
Kenneth Mail	East Scotland
Scott Williams	North Scotland
Mike Wilson	North Scotland
John Brown	West Scotland
Doug McIntosh	West Scotland
Dave Cuthbertson	North East
Kenneth Rutherford	North East
Richard Castle	North West
Michael Nolan	North West
Dave Collins	Northern
Roger Bielby	Northern
Andrew Wood	Cleveland
Anthony Burge	Cleveland
Andrew Lomas	Sheffield
Paul Neve	Sheffield
John Humphreys	North Wales
Robert Lewis	North Wales
Dave Leatherland	East Midland
Stephen Tolley	East Midland
Graham Wallace	Midland
Paul Loffman	Midland
Graeme Macdonald	East of England
Robert White	East of England
Ross Wilson	Berks, Bucks & Oxon
Tony French	Berks, Bucks & Oxon
Mark Whittle	Mid Anglia
Simon Clark	Mid Anglia
Brian Turner	Surrey
Gareth Rogers	Surrey
Neil Gilham	Kent
Duncan Kelso	Kent
Tony Bremer	Sussex
George Barr	Sussex
Ian Semple	London
Larry Eden	London
Terry Moreton	East Anglia
Nicholas Brewster	East Anglia
Steve Cox	Essex
Chris Ward	Essex
Anthony Knight	South West
John Hamlet	South West
Simon Ridland	South Coast
Mark Grogan	South Coast
Alan Gawman	Devon & Cornwall
Anthony James	Devon & Cornwall
Gary Johnstone	South Wales
Steven Lloyd	South Wales
Alison Sloan	North East Northern Ireland
Nick Webber	North East Northern Ireland
Joel Crawford	South East Northern Ireland
Eamonn Crawford	South East Northern Ireland



Itinerary

Sunday 3 October

Practice day. Register at desk in hotel.

12.30 - 18.00 tee times available (to be booked direct with Carden Park)

19.30 Dinner

Monday 4 October

7.00 - 9.00 Breakfast

8.00 - 15.30 Golf on Cheshire Course

11.30 - 15.00 Lunch

19.30 for 20.00 Gala Dinner
After Dinner Speaker, John Simonett

Tuesday 5 October

7.00 - 9.00 Breakfast

8.00 - 15.30 Golf on Nicklaus Course

11.30 - 15.00 Lunch

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Keeping in touch with news and comment from the Sections



Scottish Region
Peter Boyd
Tel/Fax 0141 616 3440

Ayrshire

There have been a couple of vacant columns during the summer months because there has been absolutely no news or views and really nothing much has changed.

The autumn outing is scheduled for the Pines Golf Centre in Dumfries where our Chairman, Duncan Gray, will welcome us to his course. This is on Thursday 30th September with the usual format for our golf outings. Secretary, Derek Wilson, will have letters out soon with all the arrangements and an entry form so get it returned in plenty of time to let him confirm the numbers with the Pines for tee times and caterers etc. News has reached me of one member on the move, Michael Byrne is leaving West Kilbride to join the turfing industry with local company Total Turfing. Our best wishes go to Michael with his new job.

Any news or views call me on 01505 68278 (evenings)
Iain Barr

North

More new members to welcome to the Section this month, numbers are now standing at 257 for this year. Rejoining us and now working at Peterhead is Steve Simpson, and new members are Greg Smith, Fortrose; Maurice Haddon, Brechin; Alistair Scott, Longside, and Colin Riddoch from Strathlone. Just in case it was missed last month, as I sent it in late, Andy Wilson has left Carmouistie to become Head Greenkeeper at Brechin, where I believe he started his career. We wish him every success.

The Open, back in our area again, was a great event with the course set up, in my humble opinion, just right to test the World's top golfers. It was interesting to note that the ones at the top of the leaderboard on the Sunday had just got on with the job and not moaned about the course.

It was a credit to John Philp and his staff and fitting that a North man, used to playing in the wind at Aberdeen, came out on top. Apologies to Scott Ligertwood, Montrose for not mentioning him in an earlier report of North members in the Support

Team. The Saturday night football match was finally won by the Scots, with a crushing 14-4 victory against the auld enemy, and the player we gave you to even up the sides was not a ringer, honest! despite his missed penalty and own goal. He really is that bad.

The two lucky winners of the Patrons award will be announced in next month's article, so if you have been a regular at Section and Region events over the last year it could be you. Also next month there will be a report on the Norrie Whytock Trophy at Craigie Hill, we are on home ground so let's hope we can do the business.

I look forward to welcoming as many Section members as possible at the 50th anniversary celebrations at Downfield this month. Rest assured no one will go home empty handed!

Iain Macleod

Central

How long did you search for last months news? There is never a lot to report at this time of the year, with everybody too busy on their course or on holiday, hence the reason for the blank month. Members keep promising to send me "snippets" for the Section news but I'm still waiting on them to arrive, so you will just have to put up with my rambling on. No comments please!

Forms for the Autumn Tournament at Balbirnie Park, Markinch, have been circulated, along with your allocation of tickets for "Club 2000". It is important that every member supports this venture in order for it to be successful, so please try and sell your tickets. If anyone requires extra tickets please just get in touch with me and I will send them out to you. There is a deliberate mistake on the "Club 2000" letter, that's my story and I'm sticking to it! So the first person to sell their tickets and write to me with this mistake will receive a mystery prize.

The proposed football match against the West Section failed to take place for a couple of reasons, but it will be organised for later in the year. Speaking of football, has anyone seen A. O'H, you know who as he has missed the last two Section committee meetings and there have been reports of him being spotted in Blackpool, I am led to believe, by another member of the Leven Links Sporting Club, he of the caravanning fame, that he has taken up "synchronised swimming". Maybe that's why he was in Blackpool!

Congratulations go to Ian MacMillan on

his appointment as Course Manager at Murrayshall in Perthshire. Every success for the future Ian. Hope everything goes well for you.

Andy Fraser has left Stirling for pastures new, and we wish him well for the future.

Former Section committee member, John Bashford, from Kinross, has not been keeping too well lately and has spent some time in hospital. Best wishes for a speedy recovery go to John from everyone in the Section.

Section Chairman, Archie Dunn, spent a week in America working at Pinehurst during the US Open and from all accounts it was an experience that he will never forget. I'm trying to get him to give a talk about it at a seminar sometime in the near future.

The winners of last year's Inter Club Tournament are Leven Links 'B' team, who have been awarded the tie as they won the first leg, and their opponents Tulliallan 'A' team failed to agree on a date for the second leg.

Next month sees the National Tournament, at Carden Park, and we send best wishes to our two representatives, Kenny Stirling and Sean McMillan for a successful tournament and hopefully they will come home with some silverware, if not, I am sure they will have a great time. Next year qualifying will be based on scores from both the Spring and Autumn Tournaments.

John Crawford

East

We are running a Section prize draw at our annual dance on the 4th of December at the Kilspondie House Hotel. Tickets are on sale now and we need you to sell them for us. There are some very good prizes available so hopefully we (members of the East Section) friends, family, etc can sell all some before the draw in December. So come on it's you, the member, and the Section who will benefit from the money raised.

The tickets are available from Craig Pennyquick on (mobile) 07979 452 097 (work) 01368 865 349 (home) 0131 654 2913.

As I have already mentioned the annual dance is at the Kilspondie House Hotel, more details will be available shortly or details can be obtained from our social convenor, Stuart Crawford, on (home) 01620 893 103 (work) 01620 893 765.

People on the move this month are Gordon Trotter who is leaving Glencorse to take up

an appointment in Canada at the Royal Toronto Golf Club. Gordon has been a member of the East Section for a number of years, so the committee and the rest of your friends in the Section would like to wish yourself, your wife, Nicole, and son, Blair, all the best for the future and don't forget to drop me a line if you come across anything of interest let me know or you could send me an e-mail when I get my modem working correctly.

The Section presented Gordon with an engraved quail to remind him of all his friends in Scotland when he is in Canada.

Other people on the move are Frank Forrester who has joined my team at Swanston as assistant Greenkeeper. Frank joined us from a temporary position at Newbattle. All the best to him.

When you read this you will have received your entry forms for the Willie Woods tournament at Glencorse and the autumn tournament Newbattle at the end of September. Get them back before the closing date as no entries will be accepted after these dates. You have been warned.

Also, don't forget BIGGA code of dress must be adhered to at all times while attending these tournaments.

Chris Yeaman.



Northern Region
Douglas Bell
Tel: 0151 431 0433

North West

I have recently returned from The Open and what an eventful time it was. The course had been set up beautifully and was a credit to John Philp and his staff. It was tough with narrow fairways, and plenty of rough, but had been set up to test the best professional golfers, and it certainly did that. Some of the pros whinged about the rough but they had thousands of ball spotters lining the fairways, so they should not have had any problems.

The Frenchman gave us all a laugh with his antics in the water, (I think he should have taken out a bucket and spade, instead of a set of clubs) but the winner Paul Lawrie showed them how to play the final holes with two magnificent birdies.

The Support Team all enjoyed their involvement even though this year we were not required to send in an early team, or a



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divoting team in the evening. I would like to thank all the Support Team for being punctual at the 1st tee, making my job easier.

On September 9th we have the Autumn Tournament at West Lancashire and if you have not already registered give me a ring and I will see if I can fit you in. September 15th is the Cumbria Cup at Penrith sponsored by Course Care, and is by invitation. The match against the Golf Club Stewards is at Burnley on 27th September and I need a team of 16 for what is always a great day. That seems to be it in the NW because nobody has got married, had babies, changed their job or won the lottery, at least if they have, they have not told me, but if anything like that happens to you, give me a ring on 0151 7245412.

Bert Cross

North Wales

Hey, I've got something to write about. The Open, John Philp and team, R&A Championship Committee and the 'Beast' herself. That showed 'em, real golf and they don't like it, that was the best tournament we've seen in 25 years in the game, hats off to the Scots they organised it, prepared it and won it.

John Philp did greenkeeping proud with his comments in the press and the R&A gave him their full backing. How many of you reading this get the same from your committee? Nuff said.

Our Education Officer, Phil Davies, is in the process of organising our series of Autumn-Winter lectures. Subject matter will include, Research and Development in the Chemical industry; Noise Pollution; Rules of Golf and the Greenkeeper; Soil Science and Management, and CDA. Sprayers on the Golf Course. These will take place between September-April and the full list will be sent when dates and venues have been confirmed. If any of you out there would like certain subjects to be covered please ring Phil on 01745 886547 or 0966 466731 and he will do his best to organise it.

Dates to remember, the Autumn meeting is at Nefyn GC on 13 October, entry forms will be sent to you shortly. If, for any reason, you don't receive one please get in touch with me on 0410 896837 or 01745 814931, Gary Edwards on 01492 593646 or 0961 806519 Stuart McCall on 0151 6524692 or 0378040843 or Trevor Johnston on 0151 3366675.

The Christmas meeting is at Royal St

Davids, Harlech on 7th December which will also be our .GM.

Congratulations to Steve Jones, of Pwllheli, on his D32-33.

Gary Edwards

Cleveland

At last we have had a bit of sun. Here at Brancepeth we are running around like bronze gods.

I think we should congratulate two greenkeepers from Wearside, Phil Hargrave, Assistant Student of the Year at Houghall and Martine Wood has been nominated for Toro Student of the Year. Very well done.

Apart from that the Section is quiet. If anyone would like to take over the Section news please see the Secretary as I am stepping down in December.

On a final note David Jobey, Deputy Head Greenkeeper at Brancepeth, had the snip done and was very proud to show off his very swollen bits to anyone, male or female, who wanted to look.

Kevin (Scoop)Heslop

Northern

There has not been much happening this month. Probably due to everyone being so busy at work. The weather during July has been extremely hot and dry, testing out even the most efficient of irrigation systems.

Dave Bottomley has moved to Acom. Equipment as their 'mobile' sales representative. Acom are a well established company in other areas, but are new to Yorkshire and the surrounding parts. Most of you will remember Dave as the equipment rep for Rigby Taylor.

Scotts have been enquiring within the Section to see if greenkeepers would be interested in a day trip to their fertiliser manufacturing plant. If there is sufficient interest, then a trip may be arranged for later in the year. Travel and food would be provided by Scotts.

Anyone wishing to book places in the two remaining golf events must do so quickly as places are running out. The Autumn Tournament is to be held at Bradford (Hawksworth) on 20 October and the Winter Golf at Fulford on 8 December. Bookings will only be accepted with payment of £15, no later than two weeks prior to the event date.

If anyone has any news from within the Section, please contact me at I Cockley

Meadows, Kirkheaton, Huddersfield HD5 0LA or telephone on either 01484 317813 or 07788 442755.

Simon Heppenstall



Midland Region
Peter Larter
Tel: 01480 437507

The 1999 Midland Region Seminar will be held once again at Mentmore, an excellent venue, on 17 November. Frank Newbury will be speaking along with Cedric Gough, Course Manager, Broadway Golf Club and former Greenkeeper of the Year; Denis Nutter, Golf Rules Expert and former PGA Regional Secretary, Jonathan Carr, Amenity Land Services, and a BIGGA Headquarters representative. Application forms for attendance at the Seminar are inside this issue of Greenkeeper International, and can also be obtained from the Midland Regional Administrator, Peter Larter 01480 437507. Members of the Midland Region, please make an effort to attend what promises to be a very interesting day.

Peter Larter

Midland

The summer tournament took place on 8 July. We seem to be blessed with very good weather conditions for our summer tournament and this day was no exemption, very hot and the 18 holes felt like 36!

Many thanks on behalf of the Section to all the greenkeeping staff at Patshull Park who provided us with a good test of golf and well presented course. Many thanks also to the catering staff who provided the evening meal.

The winners were as follows: 1. Gross T. Cheese; 1. Nett D Fellows; 2. Nett A. Roberts; 3. N. Bird; 4. M. Hughes; 5. R. Thomas; 6. M. Jones.

Best Trade: 1. Peter McCrainger; 2. N. Webb. Nearest Pin: Peter Richmond. Longest Drive: M. Cutler.

Thank you also to our main sponsors Rolawn, Graham A. Mace. Prizes and wine, John Minims, of Superturf.

Our next tournament will be held at Ross-On-Wye on 15 September.

If there is anyone who has any news or information please contact me on 01562 861 434 and I can get it put into this article and

make more interesting reports with the information that you the members require to hear and see.

Jonathan Wood.

East of England

David Hornsey, of Woodhall Spa, had a day to remember at Lincoln, Torksey. David took home the main prize, the longest drive and the nearest the pin.

Dale Gazda, from Kenwick Park, and Graeme Macdonald, Newark, both lost on countback to David, also on 33 points.

The competition was sponsored by Burdens Groundcare and it was nice to see Norman Burden playing and presenting some superb prizes. Other sponsors on the day were Greenpride, who sponsored the nearest the pin. Also Rigby Taylor, Tower Sports which were Tower Chemicals, Roy Harrison, Bob Hewitt and Graham Bell, John Deere.

It was a pity that Head Greenkeeper Derek could not make the dinner, but it was his 60th birthday! But his work colleagues Adi and Andy Lou, Lou and Greens Chairman Keith Whaley were praised by all who played. Graeme Macdonald



South East
Derek Farrington
Tel: 01903 260956

Essex

For those of you who have had their holidays hope you had a relaxing, stress free time away from work and for anyone with their holidays still to come, lets keep our fingers crossed that the weather holds out for you.

This month's report is dominated by a hectic golfing period. During July we saw the annual Essex Captains v Greenkeepers match held at Romford. For the first time in many a year the greenkeeping team were victorious. Well done all who attended. Individual greenkeeping prize: 1. Paul Copey, Burnham, 45 pts; 2. John Jackson, South East, 38 pts; 3. Andy Sheehan, Bentley, 35 pts; 4. Richard Pride, Thorndon, 33 pts.

On behalf of all the attending greenkeepers I would like to thank Romford Golf Club and staff, the Essex Captains for their kind generosity and Barrie Brown and his staff for having the course in excellent condition.

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Keeping in touch with news and comment from the Sections

The month of August saw the Section hold its Autumn tournament at Thorndon Park Golf Club on the 4th. The sponsor the day was Driving Force Leisure and our thanks goes to Richard Lewis and the company for donating the prizes.

Our thanks go to Thorndon Park for providing the venue, their staff for their help throughout the day and on an excellent meal. Not forgetting "Sir Richard and his merry men" for, as usual, providing a first class course. Winners: Overall: Chris Ward 38 pts., 0-9: 1. Steve Townsend 35 pts; 2. Richard Pride 34 pts; 3. Tony Kirwan 31 pts. 10-22: 1. John Selwood 37 pts; 2. Ray Clark 32 pts; 3. Larry Coyte 29 pts. 23-28: 1. Ian Mitchell 37 pts; 2. Mark Stopps 33 pts. 3. Keith Chinney 28 pts. Trade: Richard Lewis 33 pts. Longest Drive: Steve Crosdale. Nearest The Pin: Jeff Robinson. Both kindly sponsored by Greenkeeping Supply Company. The following companies, our thanks for the raffle prizes, Gem, Banks, Grass Roots, Rigby Taylor, Tuckwells, Avoncrop, U.A.P. and Doe's.

Our next golf competition is on the 19th October to be held at Wanstead golf club.

Please do not forget the south east regional seminar at Writtle College November 16th, details will be sent out shortly.

We would like to welcome our newest member to date, from Toot Hill Golf Club, Terry Burton. Nice to hear Derek Farrington is now back on his feet recovering from his operation. Hope to see you at Wanstead Derek. We will have a glass of red wine on chill for you.

Dave Wells

Surrey

As some of our members are aware, Cuddington have for many years had a problem during winter with extremely wet greens. This was apparently caused by their original construction being on a clay base, fine when there was very little winter play but unacceptable now that club members want to play all year round. Stuart Sheppard, the Course Manager, informed me that work would start on removing the old greens on August 2 to be replaced with new greens built to USPGA specification and that the turf was already being grown in Lincolnshire.

The expected completion date is to be early November and this includes a new irrigation system to tees, greens and approaches. There will be 20 new greens and play is estimated to start June 2000. Stuart would be pleased to show his fellow greenkeepers the course as work progresses.

On 5 August, Surrey Section played the annual competition at Sunningdale for the McMillan Tankard. We all thank Sunningdale for courtesy of the course, the artisans for the use of their clubhouse and an excellent buffet, but special thanks to Brian Turner for presenting the Old Course in such magnificent condition. The results were 1. John Rose 39 pts; 2. Brian Turner 38 pts; 3. David Murdoch 38 pts; 4th Nigel Colley 37 pts. Thanks to Jack McMillan for presenting the prizes and to Ted Stiles for starting and chairing the day. Sponsored by Grass Roots Ltd. The next golf competition will be at Royal Mid Surrey on 14 September. Cost £16, followed by the Autumn Tournament at Richmond on 17 September. Remember to contact Ian Sellars if you have not received an application form for both days. 0978 709146.

Brian Willmott

East Anglia

On August 10 61 members descended on Bury St Edmunds for our Autumn Meeting. The Secretary, John Sayer, made us most welcome and Steve Millard, the Head Greenkeeper, and his staff had worked hard to provide us with a very testing and well presented golf course. Thanks for the pin placements Martin. May I take this opportunity to thank John Sayer, John Cook the Club Captain, all the Clubhouse staff and Steve Millard and his greenkeeping staff for an excellent days golf, thank you all.

Larry Pearman and Eddie Seale, from Toro, were our main Sponsors for the day and they supplied a splendid prize table, again our thanks go out to you for sponsoring the day and the event on an annual basis.

I think I can speak for everyone when I say that we all had a very enjoyable day and it was nice to see some old friends Chris Crimmin Captain from Thetford and Pat Swinn the new Head Greenkeeper from Rushmere who joined us for the first time.

I also would like to thank Bury's Captain, John Cook, for his company on the course and, during the proceedings of the meal and the speeches, he helped make the day.

Results as follows: 0-9 Handicap 1. N. Brewster 36 pts; 2. T. Morton 35 pts; 3. P. Howard 29 pts. 10-18 Handicap 1. G. Nash 41 pts; 2. I. Willett 38 pts; 3. G. McHugh 35 pts. 19-28 Handicap 1. G. Rayfield 38 pts; 2. A. Tyrrell 34 pts; 3. A. Hollins 33 pts. Trade and Guest Prize, 1. P. Remnant Captain of Royal Cromer with 40 points on countback; 2. J. Cook, 40 points; 3. J. Sayer, 38 points. Winner of the Captain and Greenkeeper Shield - S. Millard & J. Cook, of Bury St. Edmunds Golf Club, with 74 points, runner's up E. Hart & P. Remnant, of Royal Cromer Golf Club, with 72 points. Longest Drive - S. Curtis, Nearest the Pin - B. Dunn. The Toilet Seat went to Ian Willett who won it for trying to protect his handicap. Thank you very much John. I would like to thank the other trade members who supplied prizes for the raffle, Rushbrooks & Son, Rhone Poulenc, SISIS, Rigby Taylor, Pattison, Grass Roots Trading Company Ltd, Turf Care, Atterton & Ellis Limited, Consultant Clarkson, K. B. Leach, Tomlinson Groundcare, Adnams Ales and John Sayer.

We had Mike Taylor, a trade member from Tomlinson Groundcare, turn up to his first golf meeting, it was his first 18 holes and he never lost a ball and scored a creditable 11 points. On to a sad note. The golf ball that Bob Chesham has used since 1963 has finally fallen apart, it had been out of shape for a few years and Bob had become quite an expert at putting, allowing at least two yards either side of the hole so it could arc its way to the cup. After telling his tale to a friend he was given a new ball, which has given him another problem, his putting has gone down hill and he says it will take at least six months of running-in the new ball before he will be back to his old self. In November the Essex Section will be holding the Regional Seminar at Writtle College. Could we have a good turnout from the Section for this event.

I have received a letter from Derek Farrington thanking us all for the get well card and he sends us all his best, he says he is well on the mend and will see us at our next meeting, which will be held at Rookery Park on 13 October. See you all there.

Ian Willett

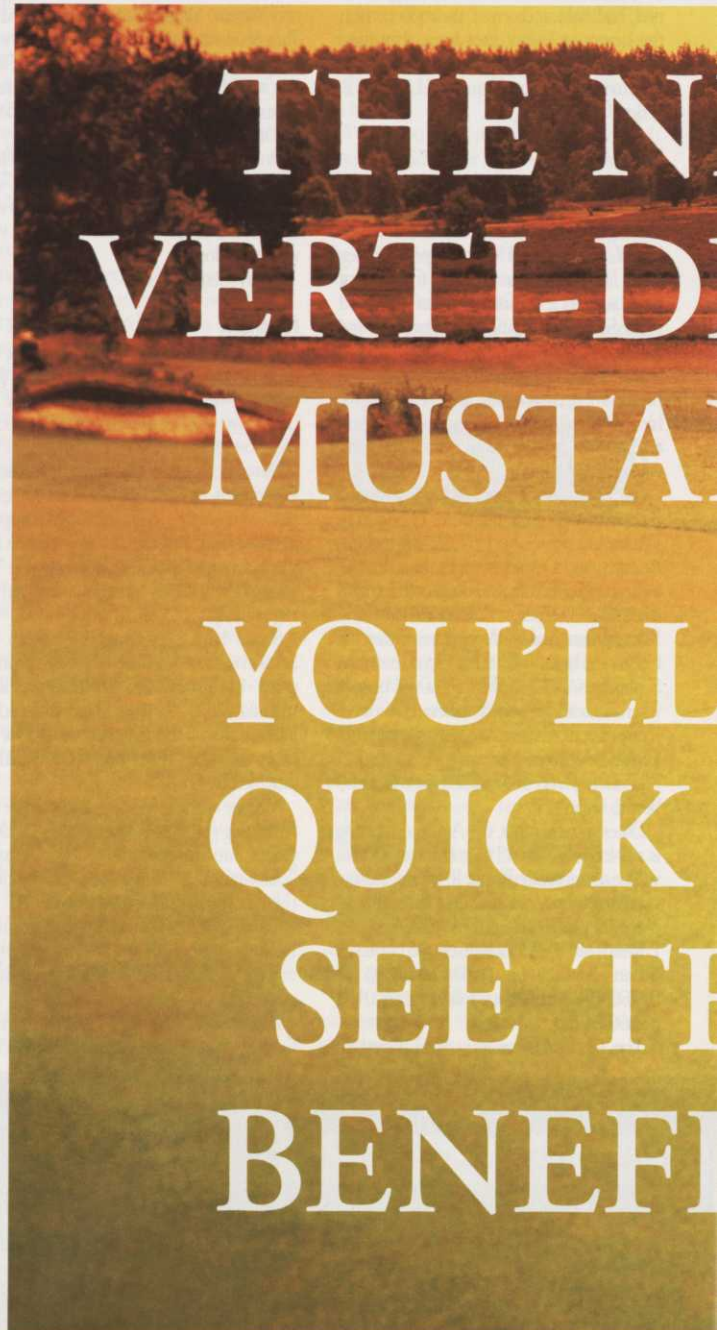


Devon & Cornwall

I am writing this report at the end of July with the weather very hot and the golf course looking dry, July 1999 has been the driest

month I have recorded since 1994 with only 12mm of rainfall which was all at the start of the month, I hope you all have been able to cope with the hot weather and have got a good tan.

But the summer is only so long and is now slowly drawing to a close which means autumn is once again around the corner and with it the start of our Autumn and Winter meeting programme which will start this year at Trethorne on 20 October.



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The morning's golf competition will be a single's Stableford competition for the D.O. Hunt Trophy, for our non playing members there will be the usual course walk which will leave the clubhouse at approximately 10.30 am, lunch will be from 1pm followed by our afternoon educational talk by Bernhard & Co on keeping your edge all year round.

Golfing members please note entry details for our forthcoming meetings: After receipt

of your completed entry form which will have been sent out to you or your course manager - Golfing members to receive starting times before meeting with a draw for partners being introduced, pairings will be accepted for our foursome and greensome competitions - A levy of £2 will be added to each entry received after the closing date - As some members have problems paying before meetings, they will be able to continue to pay on the day without being levied as long as the entry has

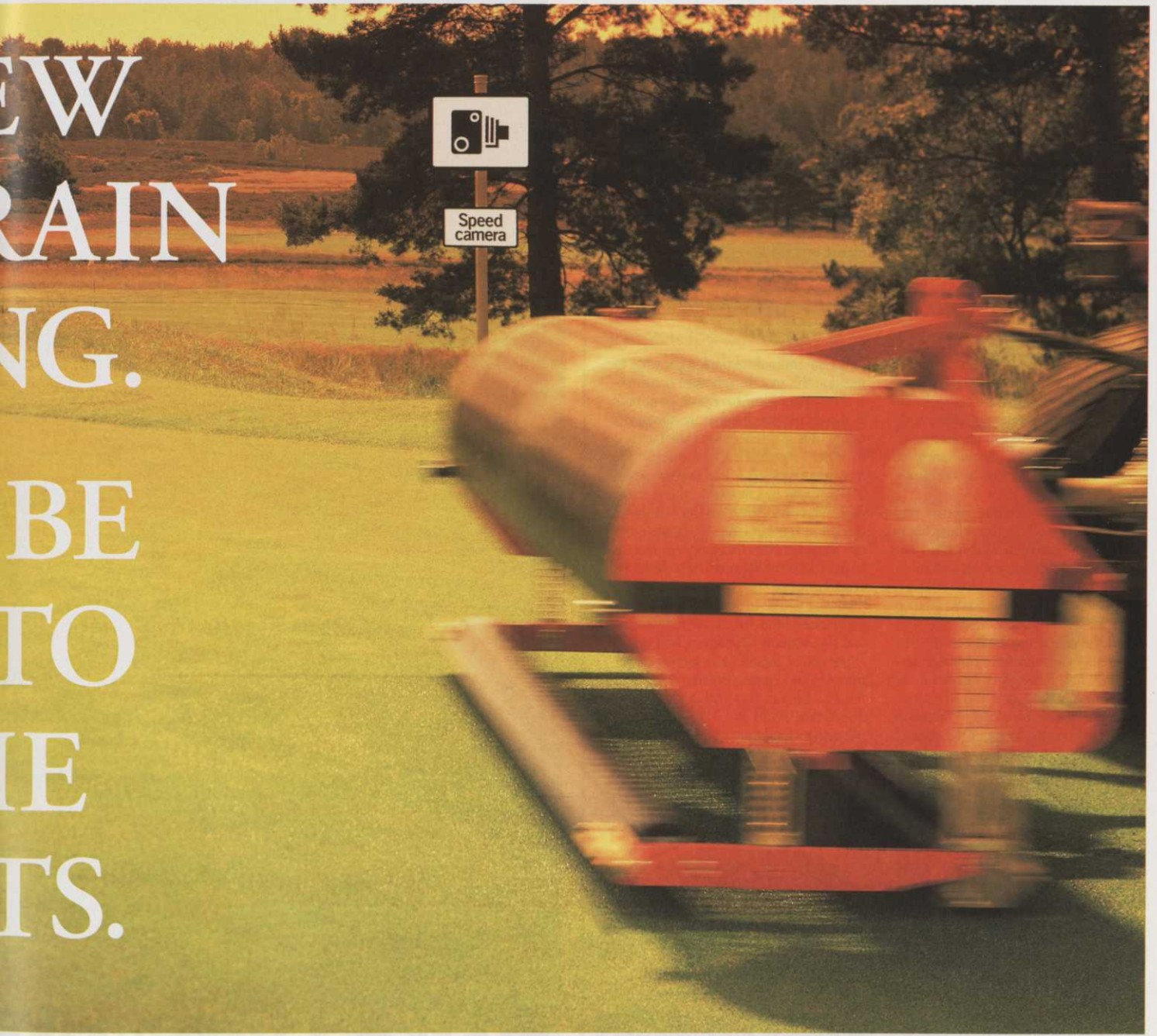
been received before the closing date, any member who doesn't attend after entering will be invoiced if no payment is received.

Regional educational dates to note, 24 November Regional Seminar to be held at Cannington College, 18-21 January, Regions trip to BTME at Harrogate. For more details on regional events contact Paula Humphries. You should have received your new fixture card which has this year been kindly sponsored by Rigby Taylor, the fixture card has

dates of all our forthcoming events, if you haven't received yours yet please let me know. Richard Whyman

South Coast

Another reminder for our Autumn Tournament. It is to be held at Shanklin and Sandown on the Isle of Wight. The date, 14 October. All details were in the August report. What we ask for more than anything, is that all those wishing to play contact Fred



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Deamen as soon as possible as there is a lot of work in organising this particular tournament.

Our Summer tournament was held at Rowlands Castle on 22 July. The weather was great, the course was in superb condition, the food was good and the hospitality was second to none. The results were as follows: 1. Eddie Fox and T Curtis who were awarded the John Deere Trophy; 2. Matt Blake and N Cousins; 3. was Chris Sturgess and J Carn. The longest drive went to Cameron McMillan.

We would like to thank the Captain, Committee and members of Rowlands Castle for allowing us the courtesy of their superb golf course. Thanks to Bill Davies and his staff for producing the course in pristine condition. A big thank you to the catering staff who provided everyone with a splendid meal and kept us well watered during the day. Last but not least we must give a big thank you to our sponsor for the day, namely Sisis and Rigby Taylor. They provided us with an excellent prize table which was much appreciated. The last person who has got to be worth a mention is Fred Deamen, our Tournament organiser. Fred has done a grand job since taking on this mammoth task.

Ken Lodge.

South West

A magnificent total of 49 section members turned up for the Summer Tournament held at Lilley Brook on July 22. On arrival at the club many of us were struck by the superb appearance of the course and the wonderful variety of trees which were enhanced by the sunny weather.

The competitors were sent on their way off the first tee by Paula Humphries, along with Martin Townsend who handed out Scotts caps, which became very useful in the glare of the sun.

The actual playing of the course lived up to its initial appearance. Everyone who played the course was in agreement that the greens were in excellent condition and extremely fast. Indeed the club captain of Lilley Brook, Mike Allcot was so worried about the many favourable comments which were coming in about the state of the course, he thought that Head Greenkeeper, Paul Jenkins, might try and demand a big pay rise. There were two big surprises when the results of the competition were announced following the excellent meal. Firstly, Chris Sealey was declared the winner of the Head Greenkeeper competition and secondly, Nobby Knight could only manage second place in the Assistants' competition.

The results in full are as follows: Head Greenkeepers' Prizes: 1. Chris Sealey 69 pts; 2. Paul Worster 74 pts; 3. Gary Cook 75 pts. Assistant Greenkeepers Prizes: 1. John Hamlet 66 pts; 2. Nobby Knight 69 pts; 3. James Braithwaite 70pts.

The overall winner of the event was John Hamlet. John, who is married with children, took a gamble and left his old job to go on a full time greenkeeping course at Hartpury College a year ago. He recently started his greenkeeping employment at Cirencester Golf Course at the beginning of July, so well done and congratulations.

Therefore the qualifiers of the summer tournament who will go on to represent the



South West at the National Championship sponsored by Scotts and Charterhouse will be John Hamlet and Anthony "Nobby" Knight. The nearest the pin competition in two shots on a par-4, was won by Tim Needham. This raised £41 for the Captain's Charity which was CLIC. The day itself was an enormous success, with special thanks going to Scotts for their vital support and sponsorship of the prizes. Thanks must also go to Paul Jenkins and his team for getting the course into superb shape and also to Rob and Jane of the Lilley Brook catering department for their kindness and hospitality. The next event on the calendar is the match against South Wales at St. Pierre on October 6. This is followed by the Autumn Tournament at Bristol & Clifton on November 11. The Fixture's Secretary, Terry Humphrey is looking into the possibility of organising matches for the over 50's in this Region. If you're old enough and would be interested in taking part in such events, please give Terry a ring on 01454 778871.

Paul Cunningham

South Wales

As I am sitting here thinking of what to mention this month, a thought occurred - Is the weather going to cool down or not? It amazes me to think that the summer is nearly over and this Around the Green is to cover September. How quickly the months are going by. July saw the return of The Open to Carnoustie after a break of 24 years and what an Open it was. I tried to see him but I wonder if anyone saw our Secretary, Peter Lacey, on television as he was part of the Support Team. Well done Peter, I am sure you had a good time.

I'll bring you up-to-date with the Summer Tournament and fixtures during August and the Autumn tournament held on 30 September at Swansea Bay in the next edition. Up and coming events; 6 October, Match v BIGGA South West at St. Pierre. Tee off time 12.30 pm. The Rigby Taylor Matchplay Finals are to be held on 27 October at Royal Porthcawl. Also watch this space for the date of our up and coming Seminar.

Richard Hatcher



South-East

The Section's summer competition was held at Bangor on Thursday 8th July. The competition was very generously sponsored by Derek Keenan of Ards Metal Fabrications.

Derek had provided a tremendous array of prizes and this combined with the weather resulted in an excellent turn out on the day. The Section would like to thank members of the North East Section, who travelled a considerable distance to play in the competition - from as far as Portstewart.

Ian Harrison, Course Manager at Bangor, and his team had the course in excellent condition on the day.

Unfortunately many of the players struggled in the intense heat, but a few managed to put together respectable scores.

Nick Webber, from Portstewart, had a fine gross of 72 to give him 40 points and claim the visitors prize. The South East Section first prize was a colour TV, which went to Paul Lapin with 35 points; second

prize a portable CD sound system went to Terry Crawford with 31 points; Ian Harrison claimed 3rd prize, a radio cassette player.

Once again thanks to Derek for providing excellent prizes. Derek specialises in all types of metal fabrication and engineering work, such as railings, gates, grills, modifications and fabrication work to order, for many of the local clubs. He can be contacted on 02891 471703 or 07801



109074. Thanks also to Bangor for the courtesy of the course on a most enjoyable day. The Section would like to welcome some new members, Paul Mathison, Head Greenkeeper at Holywood; James Harkness, Malone; David Wilson, Conway Murphy and Michael Haughian, all from Silverwood.

Due to members lack of response the August BBQ was cancelled.

Jonathan McCabe

North East

Stanley Emerson held his North versus South Golf Greenkeepers match at Stakis Park in July for the "Stanley Emerson Trophy". The match finished in a three all draw with the Southern Greenkeepers winning the tie-hole. There were also a number of four ball matches, best score was by Joe McBride with 37 points, second was Mark Cassidy with 34 points. The weather was glorious and the day was finished with

a few drinks and a very enjoyable meal. Emerson's would like to thank all the Greenkeepers who turned up, many of them travelled a distance to take part. Thanks also to Stakis Park for hosting the event and all the Green staff for having the course in such good order. Many who played said it is an excellent course with first class facilities.

Special thanks to the Course Manager Frank Ainsworth and Joe English for organ-

ising the event and making everything run so smoothly.

Eamonn Farrell

See you all next month!



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BOB ANDREWS

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Ad Ref 126

A few years ago Stewarts of Edinburgh, Company of Seedsmen Ltd, celebrated their 100th Anniversary. A company which has served the greenkeeping and horticulture industry. One man in particular, Mr Ian Forbes, will always be remembered in his quest to assist the greenkeepers with their educational pursuits by often giving lectures which would develop or enhance their educational career. Many years ago he was asked if he would write down some of his memories on the experiences or growth of the Greenkeeping Association, which he did and passed one to me at St Andrews. This fine gentleman has now passed away leaving the company, Stewarts of Edinburgh to be run in the good hands of his son Graeme Forbes, who is following exactly in his support to Scottish and North of England greenkeepers. A few months ago the document saw daylight after laying dormant, but I would like the readers of BIGGA to read it as it will be of interest.

Walter Woods

• Back in time

Dear Walter,

Some time ago, Graeme told me you would like to have my views on the status and training of Golf Greenkeepers over the years. At the time, I had to attend two conferences away from home, and in effecting my retirement from business at Stewarts and elsewhere. I hope, therefore, my delay in acceding to your request has not caused you any inconvenience.

It is my view that, for a variety of reasons, the history of Golf Greenkeeping could be said to fall into a number of very distinct periods. Unfortunately, sources of information have turned out to be very scarce, and in order to do a really good job, one would require to contact a large number of clubs who might be willing to furnish details for their records as to numbers employed, wages and status in the club, eg, honorary membership etc.

My sources are the few remnants of Stewarts records, these are very sketchy as during the 1939-45 war, part of our premises were taken over as a fire watching post and the records stored therein, destroyed.

Two copies 1920 and 1929 of the British Golf Greenkeepers Journal,

and a few books, one written by a greenkeeper, being all I have at Stewarts, except for a photograph or two.

I have spent some days at the National Library of Scotland, but they do not have records of the BGGGA Journal, which is a pity as they would be most helpful. I did find that the library had copies of the Golfers Handbook from its original publication in 1903 onwards, however, after consulting a number, although not all of these publications, I found that the records of Head Greenkeepers, even when this was given, was by no means complete, even the R&A holders of this office were not always shown.

Much of what follows is therefore just my own opinion, based on what little I have found and supported by a none too reliable memory.

The first phase of the Greenkeeping profession would surely be the period from around 1750 to 1876. During this time the number of golf courses was very restricted and they were mostly situated in the East of Scotland, on sandy links or heathland. This was probably the only areas golf could have been played on,

owing to the problem of mowing grass which grew to any height. I recall my father had a letter dated around the early 1900's describing the work of an East Lothian Greenkeeper who concluded after describing how he constructed drains, ditches and sleeper faced bunkers, by writing that he scythed the greens and the rabbits kept the rest.

Up until 1886, the number of new golf courses appears to have been only a few each year, five being the largest number recorded and only in the period from 1875. I think it would be fair to conclude that during this period, the only exchange of greenkeeping experiences would be between the various Fife and East Lothian men, and that most of the other courses in operation at that time would have had a greenkeeper who came from these areas or had a connection with them. A possible exception might be where a man from a cricket or bowling club took over the office of Head Greenkeeper.

1887 saw the start of a boom in golf course construction which was really astonishing, and is attributed in the

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Back in time

I recall my father had a letter dated around the early 1900's describing the work of an East Lothian Greenkeeper who concluded after describing how he constructed drains, ditches and sleeper faced bunkers, by writing that he scythed the greens and the rabbits kept the rest.

Golfers Handbook to the advent of railways, and the visiting of Scotland by people who before did not travel to golfing areas.

1887 saw the number of new courses rise to double figures, 1888 - 20 new courses were built, and 1889 - 30. From then to the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, between 22 to 55 new courses were opened every year except for the period of the Boer War, when the numbers opened fell to around 12 to 15 courses opened each year.

This astonishing increase in golf courses must have required a very large number of greenkeepers. The invention of the lawn mower would have played a big part in making golf possible, and the arrival of the gang mower, even though horse drawn, would enable fairways to be cut.

It is probable that a good number of gardeners became greenkeepers. At this time in Scotland, the landed estates usually took young men into the "bothy" system where a number of apprentices and journeymen sometimes in considerable numbers, were housed at or near the gardens of the large estates.

As promotion to a house became possible only with the status of foreman having been obtained, there was at times a surplus of trained gardeners.

Stewarts among other firms, ran an employment bureau whereby head gardeners would write in asking for details of men available and also those of men looking for jobs. Stewarts' operated this service for greenkeepers sometime around that period, especially when they were emigrating to the USA or Europe.

The term Gullane Greenkeeper was at one time often used, and I can

recall letters using these precise words being received as, East Lothian produced a lot of trained gardeners as well as greenkeepers.

During this pre World War I phase, companies such as Suttons and Stewarts, along with others, used to prove information and booklets on greenkeeping practices, some greenkeepers wrote articles and books. In 1908 the Scottish Greenkeepers held an outing at which my father acted as Secretary. I think this was the first meeting the greenkeepers had held, but was more of a golf occasion than an educational one, but in some cases lectures were given to greenkeepers at the outings.

The use of fertilisers, worm killers and seed mixtures was common before 1900, and many greenkeepers were already knowledgeable as to the uses and practices of greenkeeping. Others probably entered the profession because they were good golfers and the office of Greenkeeper Professional was not uncommon. As far as I know the Head Greenkeeper was at that time ranked in most clubs above the professional as far as status is concerned.

In 1914 the boom in golf came to an end and from then until 1919 few golf courses were built. The BGGGA Journal of 1920 states that 90% of its membership served with HM Forces during the war years and a number were decorated for distinguished service. The membership of the association was just over a hundred, which must have been a very small proportion of the total number of greenkeepers as the Golfers Handbook of that time states there were around 1000.

By 1920 the BGGGA Journal was again being published and new cours-

The use of fertilisers, worm killers and seed mixtures was common before 1900, and many greenkeepers were already knowledgeable as to the uses and practices of greenkeeping.

es were opening, but never again on the scale of the pre First World War period. During the between war years, the development of greenkeeping went ahead rapidly, the hand mower had superseded the scythe on the greens and tees, the horse drawn mower was replaced by tractor drawn equipment and the rapid development of motor mowers for greens proceeded.

There were regular lectures in many areas of the country and some agricultural colleges ran evening classes in greenkeeping. In 1929 the Board of Greenkeeping Research was opened at Bingley.

I remember discussions around this time, that it would be a good thing to have a greenkeeping certificate available. It was proposed that, after a period of around three years, men who their Head Greenkeeper thought able, should proceed to spend a month or so at two or three other clubs whose Head Greenkeepers were held in high regard.

These greenkeepers were to write a report and if the applicant received three good reports, a certificate would be awarded. However, as far as I know, this scheme never got past the talking stage.

The main difficulty as always was the wide spread of greenkeepers in relatively small numbers, the difficulties of transport and no real facilities for education of greenkeepers existed.

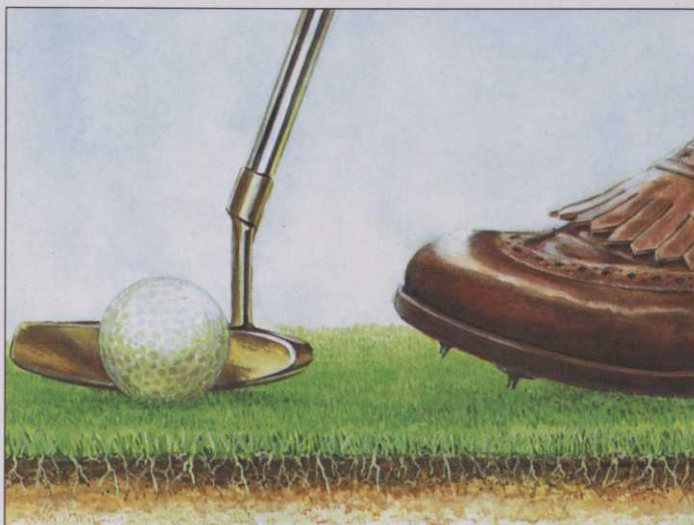
There were always a few wise heads crying for something to be done, but they got little support in many cases and golfers as a whole were not very interested. Occasionally a Head Greenkeeper would be given honorary membership of his club, where the professional was still not allowed

into the club house, but in general, by the 1930's the professionals were taking large steps up the status ladder, led by players such as the late Sir T H Cotton, and owing to this and the depression which reigned at the time, it was not easy for greenkeepers to improve their lot.

1939 saw the start of the Second World War and again golf and greenkeeping went very nearly out of existence. There was a call for food production and parts of some courses were ploughed up. I was abroad for most of the war and have no first hand experience, but understand that there were no fertilisers allowed for clubs unless they kept grazing animals and even then it was also severely rationed. Equipment and supplies of all sorts were difficult, and according to the Golfers Handbook, wooden balls were at one time not uncommon. Greenkeepers were mostly on military service or in other national service occupations. Unlike the recovery in 1920 after the First World War, which was fairly rapid, the years from the end of hostilities in 1945 were very restricted. Rationing of almost everything continued and golf courses got very few supplies including petrol, for some years. This was allied to a lack of transport, the supply of vehicles which was very small and almost every item of equipment difficult to come by.

Golf gradually revived, but the Americans were not supporting the Open Championship to any great extent and it was not until the arrival of Arnold Palmer and mass TV which brought about the second great boom in golfing history.

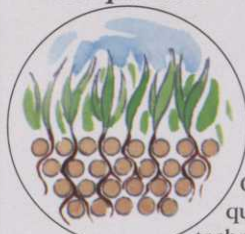
I well remember a Head Greenkeeper in Ayrshire telling me in



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Back in time

Occasionally a Head Greenkeeper would be given honorary membership of his club, where the professional was still not allowed into the club house, but in general, by the 1930's the professionals were taking large steps up the status ladder, led by players such as the late Sir TH Cotton, and owing to this and the depression which reigned at the time, it was not easy for greenkeepers to improve their lot.

As far as I know the Head Greenkeeper was at that time ranked in most clubs above the professional as far as status is concerned.

the 50's that he thought the occupation had gone from the best paid artisan to the worst paid in a period of ten years, and I think it is fair to say that golf and golf greenkeepers went through a very trying period between 1945 and 1960.

Nonetheless, the Board of Greenkeeping Research, which became the Sports Turf Research Institute, was providing the authority on greenkeeping practices in addition to an advisory service and training courses. The companies specialising in Turf Culture Supplies had increased considerably in number and research on grass cultivars was increasing. New developments in fertilisers, fungicides and compost manufacture were being introduced.

Education in the form of lectures carried on during the winter months, and a wide range of subjects were covered. Among others, I gave talks usually illustrated, for many years to various sections of the Scottish Greenkeepers Association and the Northern section of the BIGGA, those were in the main well attended by 20 to 50 greenkeepers at a time.

In conclusion, I would like to say that there cannot be many professions which in a 100 years has had so many ups and downs, especially when one considers how difficult it has been to build up an organisation or provide opportunities for education.

The system of green committees has never seemed a good one to me.

These committees with honourable exceptions have often consisted of people who knew little or nothing about greenkeeping, and had no wish to learn. But then the general public would subscribe to the view, "everyone knows how easy it is to grow grass".

I hope this rather rambling letter is of some use to you, and if I can be of any further help, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me.

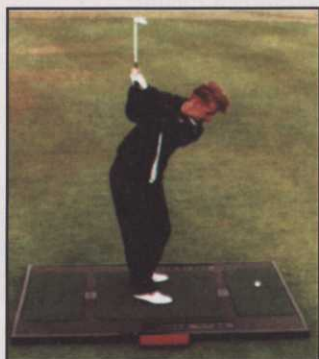
Meantime, all good wishes for Christmas and the New Year.

With kindest regards,

Yours sincerely,
Ian Forbes



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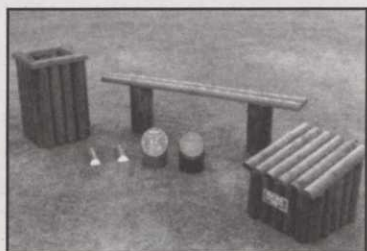


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In sports turf, mycorrhiza fungi populations are very low or non-existent due to sterile rootzones, pesticide use and modern seed and sod production methods. The result is a weakened sward which suffers more from drought stress, nutrient leaching and disease and is quickly dominated by *Poa annua* which relies less on mycorrhiza for its survival in sportsturf environments than perennial grasses such as Bent, Fescue and Rye.

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Stella Inglethorpe gives the low down on how modern micro-biology can aid golf course maintenance...



Microbes, biostimulants, antagonists, mycorrhiza – the greenkeeping world has definitely gone mad! On a recent course visit to a club which shall remain nameless, I was told in no uncertain terms that if I was going to talk about microbes I could leave now! And I sympathise totally! Just as wetting agents were all the rage a few years back, all of a sudden it's 'biologicals' that are BIG news. A confusing array of products has flooded the market, many claiming to be all singing, all dancing, would probably even make you a cup of tea!



“ Research has shown that there are only about 1% of the number of microbes in a typical golf green compared to what you would expect to find in unmanaged turf ”

Unsurprisingly, this has led to a lot of scepticism and wariness about these type of products which is a great shame as given the right advice, technical support and analysis, they can and will work very effectively!

The Hard Truth

The fact of the matter is - there is no miracle cure to all your problems (except perhaps a very thick skin and a huge budget!). Good cultural practices are even more vital in this day and age with expectations of 365 days of golf a year, averaging over 30,000 rounds. With golf clubs springing out of the woodwork left, right and centre the government are looking to bring us into line with the rest of Europe with a Pesticide Tax. Use of pesticides on amenity land is already being taxed in Denmark and Sweden with Spain, France, Italy, Belgium and the Netherlands looking to follow suit in the near future.

Production of carbendazim, the last remaining worm control (and a fungicide) is to cease at the end of the year and MAFF are looking carefully at other chemicals on the market. So greenkeepers are being forced to consider alternatives rather than relying solely on chemical control, which is where biological products play an important part. However there is a feeling of fear of change - the biological concept is relatively new to the sports turf industry and so there is still a lack of understanding as to what and how to use them...

Microbes Make the World Go Round

Biotechnology really doesn't have

to be rocket science - it's all about harnessing Mother Nature to work in your favour. And let's face it, if you are being asked to produce Augusta every day all year round with golfers coming out of your ears, you need to use all the weapons in your armoury! It has been common practice to use physical (mechanical eg aeration) and chemical (eg fertiliser, wetting agent and fungicide) methods but the biological approach is an often overlooked, but extremely important part of successful turf management - the final piece to the jigsaw puzzle.

Microbes (that includes bacteria and fungi) literally make the world go around... they are responsible for nutrient cycling and degrading waste and just as importantly making beer! We have used them for years in other industries, for example sewage plants rely on them for degrading organic waste. The Forestry Commission has used mycorrhiza fungi for many years to improve tree establishment on poor sites and in horticulture/agriculture, fungi have been used as agents to control aphids in greenhouses and maggots in fruit orchards.

Microbes in the Sports Turf Environment

It is a common misconception that microbes are solely for disease suppression in sportsturf. Their importance to healthy grass growth is several fold - eg assisting with nutrient and water uptake, producing plant growth hormones, increasing root growth besides producing antibiotics against common turf diseases such as *Fusarium* (*Microdochium*

nivale) and *Take-All Patch* (*Gaeumannomyces graminis*). Have you ever put a slow release fertiliser on a new sand green and been disappointed with the response? This is often due to the lack of microbes which are responsible for converting your fertiliser into a usable form that the grass plant can take up (mainly ammonia and nitrate).

The results of a trial conducted on a USGA spec turf nursery at a golf club in Hertfordshire show that the areas treated with a cocktail of 14 bacteria and six fungi had significantly longer root growth compared to the untreated controls.

Research has shown that there are only about 1% of the number of microbes in a typical golf green compared to what you would expect to find in unmanaged turf. This is due to several reasons - past and present use of chemicals, sterile root zone material, low organic matter, compaction, etc, etc.

Turf health and resilience to wear and tear can be improved by boosting the level of beneficial microbes in the root zone. There are two options available to you:- Feed your existing microbes and/or inoculate the soil with specific species that are known to be beneficial to plant health.

The problem with the first option alone is that you may not have a lot of microbes in the soil to work with. Secondly, microbial feeds (also known as biostimulants) are not specific to feeding the beneficial microbes and can provide a food source for whatever is sitting in the soil. Therefore timing is crucial to their success. Inoculating the soil

The Forestry Commission has used mycorrhiza fungi for many years to improve tree establishment on poor sites

with specific microbes can be very effective, particularly when combined with the right microbial nutrition but the success of any biological approach requires integrated management.

It is very easy to dismiss 'biologicals' as unsuccessful on your course, if the other management practices are not modified to get the best from them - they need to be given a fair trial. After all, you can hardly expect the poor buggers to thrive in a heavy soil green which spends most of its time waterlogged, little aeration and is suffering from chemical toxicity in the form of iron and sulphur based fertiliser, wetting agents and fungicides!

The KISS Principle

Personally, I firmly believe in the KISS (Keep it Simple, Silly) principle! I would advise the following guidelines to integrate microbial management successfully into your programme:-

1) Go Back to Basics

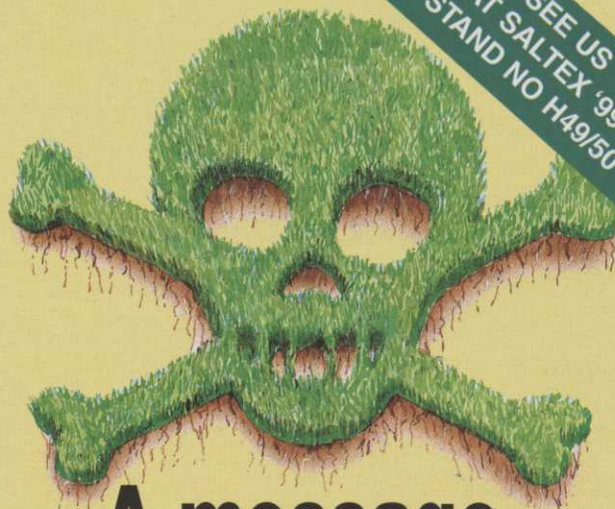
It is very difficult to monitor the success of any product if you are using a large number of different things. Generally staff and time are in short supply in the summer months to even keep on top of the grass growth, let alone do anything else. Therefore, simplify your programme to make time management easier (something that I'm pretty bad at, as those that know me can testify!) I would advocate that if you don't have time for anything else, keep up a good aeration programme, particularly on thatchy, heavy soil greens. Winter

aeration is fine for keeping the water moving through the profile and relieving compaction, however, it will do little to improve your thatch levels as there isn't sufficient temperatures for the microbes responsible for degrading this organic matter to work very rapidly.

In summer, the soil temperatures are right but the golfers moan like hell about having holes in their greens - they think you've got a personal vendetta against them! ('Why do we have to have it when Joe Bloggs down the road hasn't?') This is where integrating 'biologicals' into your programme can help - in the form of thatch-degrading microbes. You won't be able to reduce the amount of aeration you do - in fact the more the better as these microbes will degrade thatch 10x faster with air than without it. What you can do is perhaps swap a hollow-tining (which distresses the golfers no end and only removes 5% of the thatch, generally leaving an uneven surface!) in favour of regular pencil-tining/ sarrell rolling.

2. Know what you are working with

This applies to knowing your turf environment but also knowing what's in the products so you can choose the right combination for the job. Identify the problems to target e.g. excessive disease, thatch and drainage problems or conversely overly free-draining causing problems with leaching of nutrients and drying out. Treat the Causes not the Symptoms. Use technology to your advantage to help take some of the guesswork out of turf management.



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Using a single species is like putting all your eggs in one basket - if it likes the conditions in your greens then great but if not then it's money down the drain.

”

For instance, regular soil and tissue analysis will help pinpoint which nutrients are being leached more quickly are too high and what is actually being taken up into the plant from the soil. This kind of information enables you to tailor your grasses nutrient requirements more precisely and can pre-empt diseases such as Anthracnose (encouraged by nitrogen/potassium deficiency) and Fusarium (encouraged by excess nutrient creating 'soft' growth.)

Choosing the right product for the task is probably the hardest part to

use up the available oxygen in the soil and make matters worse.

Similarly, it is important to choose the right biological product for the job and use it to its best advantage. With a microbial inoculant, you need to know what microbes are in it and what they do. Will they survive in your conditions e.g. pH, high sand content, etc. There is no one species of bacteria or fungi that can do everything! They work in conjunction with one another, for example it takes several different species to fully degrade organic matter into its component parts. Using a single species is like putting all your eggs in one basket - if it likes the conditions in your greens then great but if not then it's money down the drain.

Once applied, are the microbes surviving? Brand new sand greens are extremely hostile environments for a soil microbe. They are generally low in organic matter which is their food source, moisture levels can vary dramatically and sand grains don't make very good sites to attach to. Adding microbes to new greens can be a very effective way of avoiding the initial problems experienced such as high leaching and Take-All Patch. However, the above problems must be addressed to get success - using a liquid formulation of microbes alone will have a very short life-span in the root zone if other factors are not considered.

In old soil greens, introduced microbes have different problems to face - poor drainage and insufficient air are very common. Although they can survive these conditions, their activity is much reduced. Old soil greens also have their own resident

population of microbes (not necessarily very useful ones!) which will compete with the newcomers and again the success of the introduced species will depend on their suitability to your particular environment. Symbio biofixed have overcome these problems to a great extent as the microbes are freeze-dried into a zeolite (a porous mineral carrier) which acts as a survival suit, protecting them from chemicals and giving them a competitive edge. In fact, you can pass bleach solution across them without wiping them out!

With my pearls of wisdom, I've managed to make greenkeeping sound easy! (Well according to golfers, greenkeepers only cut the grass, right?) When I have all the answers, I'll be advising from the decks of my yacht sailing somewhere in the Caribbean!

Stella Inglethorpe BSc(Hons),
Grass Roots Trading Co.

“ Adding microbes to new greens can be a very effective way of avoiding the initial problems experienced such as high leaching and Take-All Patch. ”

do as it requires knowledge of what exactly is in a product and good advice. For instance to get the best fertiliser for any particular conditions you will need to know the form of the nutrients as well as the NPK analysis. If a soil is suffering from anaerobic conditions, avoid fertiliser containing sulphur and iron which are the main components of black layer. Similarly, complex slow-release fertilisers or organic products (derived from animal or plant e.g. hoof and horn, seaweed) will be of no benefit either as both require microbial activity and oxygen to breakdown and therefore they tend

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The show provides the opportunity to catch up on all of the events of the past year and highlights new and exciting products about to be launched. All of which being quite appropriate, seeing as though the theme for the 2000 show is 'Past, Present and Future.'

SO, HOW DOES A FREE TRIP TO BTME2000 SOUND?

Interested?

Well, all you have to do to stand a chance of winning one of our three fantastic BTME package prizes is to answer six simple questions. - Two in this issue, two more in October and the final two in November. When you have completed all the answers, fill in the entry form, printed in the November edition of Greenkeeper International and you could be on your way to Harrogate on an all expenses paid mini-break to BTME 2000.

SEPTEMBER QUESTIONS:

1. What is the number of the BIGGA stand at BTME2000?
2. What is the theme of "The Learning Experience" in 2000?

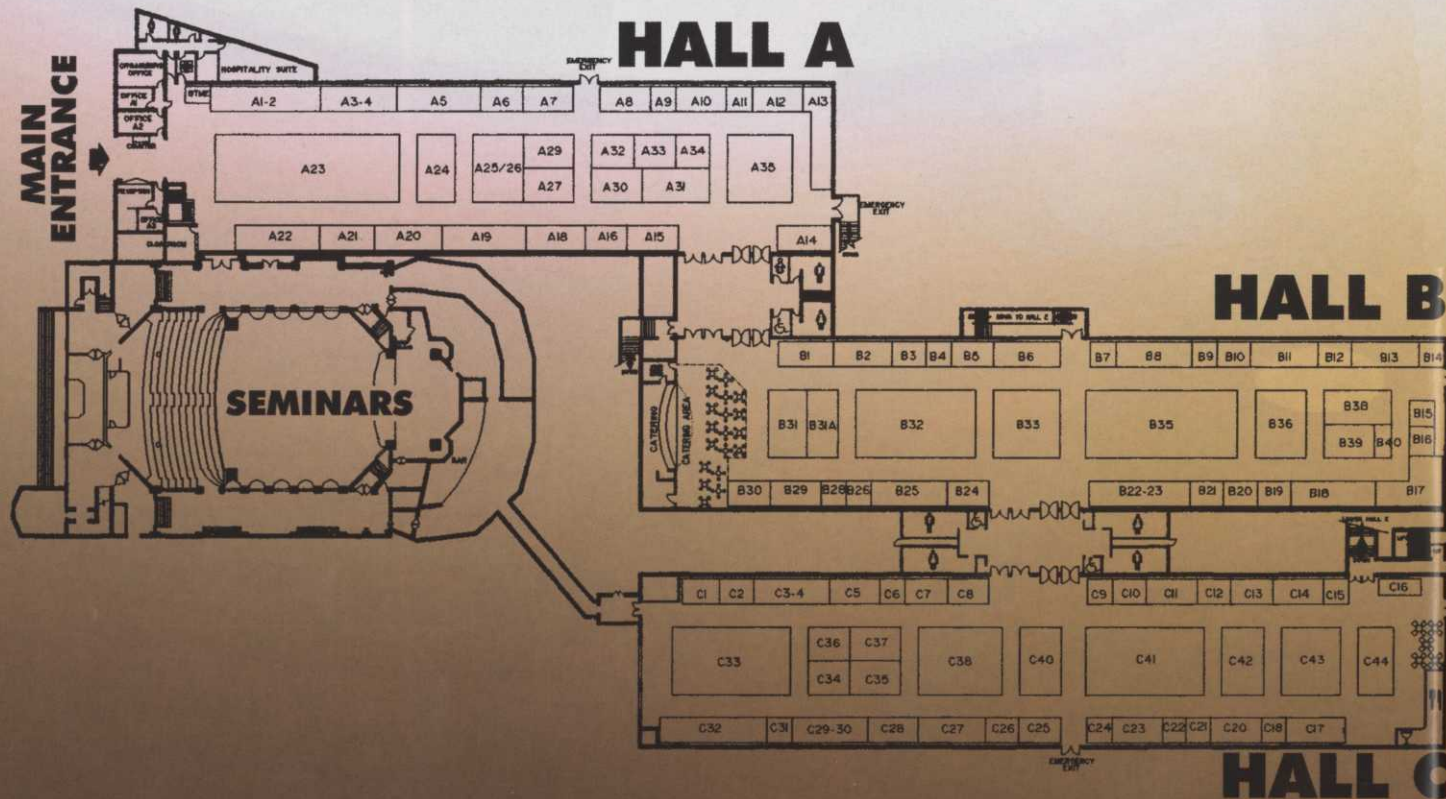
Remember, Don't send in your answers yet, keep them safe until you receive the entry form, printed in your November edition of Greenkeeper International.

First Prize: Return rail travel from anywhere in the UK plus three nights accommodation at a top hotel in Harrogate with entry into the exhibition and all the education seminar sessions.

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HALL A

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 A3-A4 Tower Chemicals
 A5 Ocmis Irrigation (UK) Ltd
 A6 Allett Mowers
 A7 Alginure Products
 A8 Amenity Land Services
 A9 PSD Agronomy
 A10 Grundfos Pumps Ltd
 A11 Totrax
 A12 Countax
 A13 Kubota (UK) Ltd
 A14 Turfmehc
 A15 Farmura (Environmental)
 A16 Johnsons Seeds
 A18 Even Products
 A19 Eagle Promotions
 A20 Barenbrug
 A21 Simon Tullett Machinery
 A22 Allen Power Equipment
 A23 Textron
 A24 Rolawn (Turf Growers) Ltd

A25 Wiedenmann Ltd
 A26 Wiedenmann Ltd
 A27 Supaturf Products
 A29 Risboro Turf
 A30 Aitkens
 A31 Inturf Ltd
 A32 Vitax Ltd
 A33 Lewis Equipment
 A34 Boyd Golf Course Associates
 A35 Kubota (UK) Ltd

HALL B

B1 Tacit
 B2 Rufford Top Dressing
 B3 Flowtronex PSI
 B4 Scotts UK
 B5 Lindum Seeded Turf
 B6 Avoncrop Amenity
 B7 York & Martin
 B8 UAP Amenity
 B9 Thorpe Trees
 B10 Green Tech

B11 Trelleborg
 B12 Talbot
 B13 Major Equipment Ltd
 B14 Gannon Oils
 B15 LBS Amenity
 B16
 B17
 B18 Saxon Industries
 B19 Symbio
 B20 Whitemoss Amenity
 B21 Garfitts
 B22-B23 Kawasaki
 B24 Logic Irrigation
 B25 Irrigation Control
 B26 Golf Sign Company
 B28 Better Methods Europe
 B29 Lloyds & Co Letchworth
 B30 Standard Golf
 B31 Bernhard & Co
 B31a Groundsman Industries
 B32 Charterhouse Turf Machinery Ltd

B33 The Scotts Company
 B35 Toro Commercial Products
 B36 Toro Irrigation Limited
 B38 Amazone
 B39 Par 4 Irrigation Ltd
 B40 Bowcom Ltd

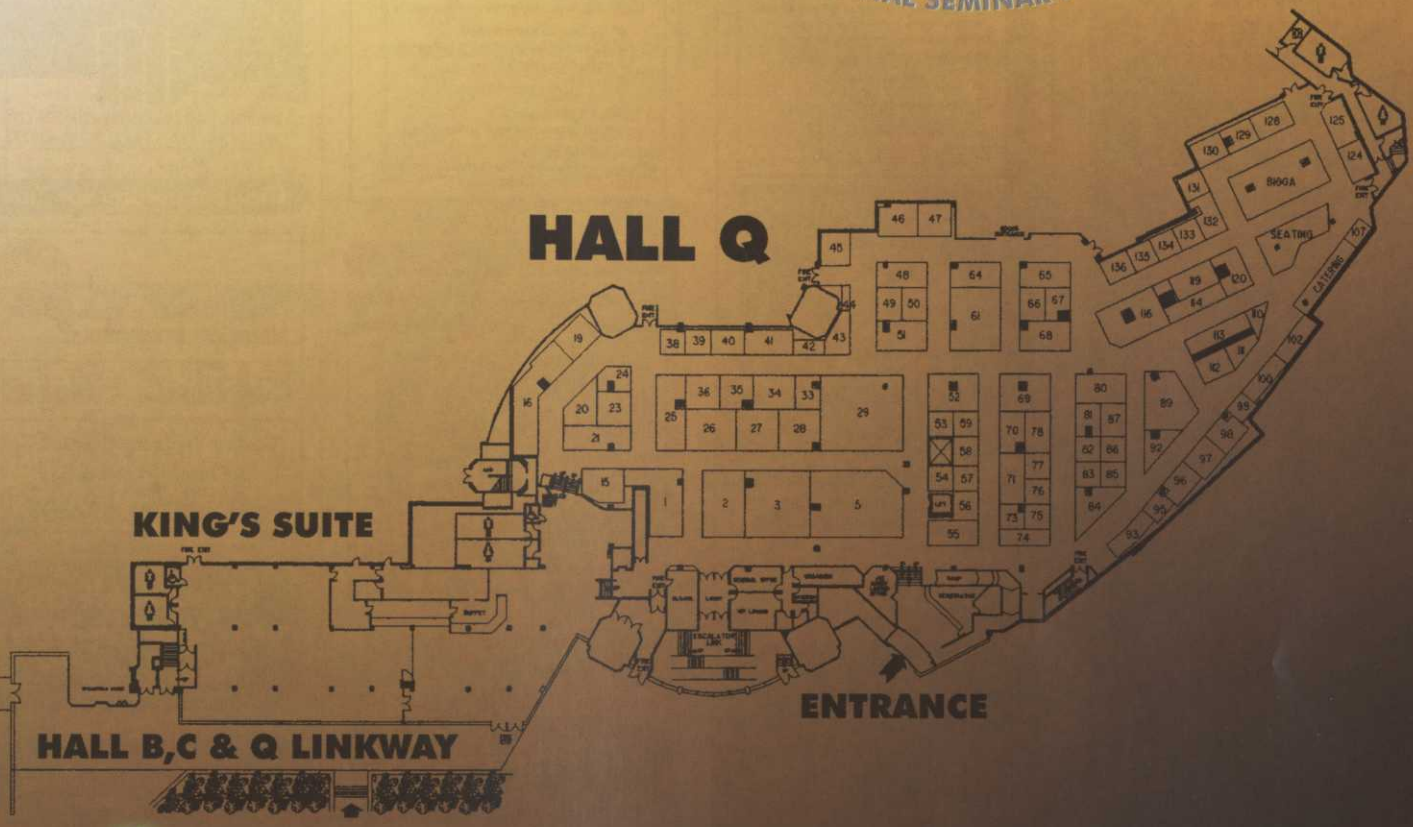
HALL C

C1 Swan Plant Services
 C2 Verde Sports
 C3-4 Advanta Seeds
 C5 IPU Groundscare Ltd
 C6 Caprari Pumps
 C7 MJ Abbott
 C8 Olivers Seeds Ltd
 C9 White Horse Contractors
 C10
 C11 Eric Hunter Grinders
 C12 Links Leisure
 C13 Green Releaf
 C14 Maxxis International
 C15 Golf Business Comms

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 C26 Maxicrop International Ltd
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 C28 Humate International
 C29-30 Clubcar plc
 C31 Tonick Watering
 C32 John Deere Ltd
 C33 John Deere Ltd
 C34 Blec Ltd
 C35 DW Tomlin
 C36 Boughton Loom
 C37 Tarmac
 C38 New Holland UK Ltd

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- C41 Hayter Ltd
- C42 H Pattison & Co
- C43 Etesia UK Ltd
- C44 Spraytech

HALL Q

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- Q2 Rhone Poulenc
- Q3 Silent Auction Site
- Q5 Sisis
- Q15 Greenlink International
- Q16 Amenity Technology
- Q19 Greenkeeping Supply Co
- Q20 British Seed Houses
- Q21 Ryetec
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- Q27 Richard Campey
- Q28 Nickerson UK

- Q29 Rigby Taylor
- Q33 Weedfree
- Q34
- Q35
- Q36 Bowley Hinton Associates
- Q38 Eamonn Wall
- Q39 Ultra Plant
- Q40 TT Pro Turf
- Q41 Hallmarket
- Q42 Heron Electric
- Q43 ET Breakwell Ltd
- Q44 HMG Partnership
- Q45 Seating
- Q46/47 Coffee Bar
- Q48
- Q49
- Q50
- Q51 Vitagrow
- Q52 PBI Professional Products
- Q53 Golf Course News
- Q54 Angus Horticulture
- Q55 Sovereign Turf

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- Q57 Arden Lea Irrigation
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- Q99 Reaseheath College
- Q100 Cannington College
- Q102 Elmwood College
- Q104 Catering
- Q108 Catering/Seating
- Q110 KSM Safer Surface Tiles
- Q111 BIGGA North
- Q112 North Staffs Irrigation
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- Q114 Fife Silica Sands Ltd
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- Q119 STRI
- Q120
- Q121 BIGGA
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- Q125
- Q128
- Q129
- Q130 Stylo Matchmaker
- Q131 Epani
- Q132 GTC
- Q133&134 British Inst. GC
Architects
- Q135 European Turfgrass
Laboratories
- Q136 Bioseed

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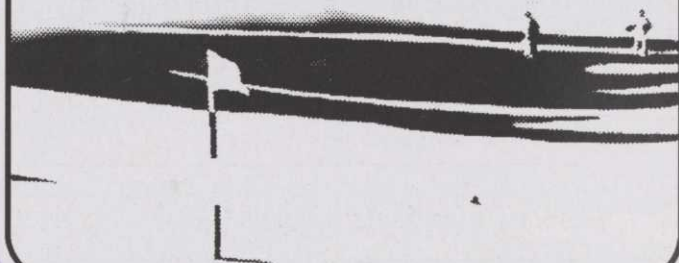
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September '97: Accident Reporting; Greens Mowers; Valderrama GC; Links Courses

October '97: Environment; Recruitment; Abbeydale GC; Rough Mowers; Soil Analysis

November '97: Environment Competition; Bank Cutting; Risk Assessment; Pumps

December '97: Seed Development; Longhirst Hall GC; Toro Awards; Fertiliser Spreaders; Communication

January '98: FEGGA Conference; Buying Power Equipment; Elmwood GC; Mobile Phones; Traffic Management; Spraying; Environment

February '98: BTME Review; Overseeding; Royal Mid Surrey GC; Drainage; Thatch

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

November '98: Royal Opening, 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

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

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

April '99: Carden Park, Telecommunications, Water Management, Rolawn, Seeds

May '99: Security, Bude and North Cornwall GC, Spraying Regulations, Jim Arthur, The Acid Theory, Amenity Technology profile

June '99: Thorpeness GC, Millennium Bug Busting, Irrigation, Scotts profile, Company adaptability

July '99: Carnoustie, Golf Course Furniture, Spike Research, Toro profile, BIGGA Silent Auction

August '99: Viscount Whitelaw tribute; Open review; Merrist Wood; Saltex preview; Turf; Trees; Grass Cutting; BIGGA Golf Day review; Redexim profile



A month to remember



I returned home from the Open Championship at Carnoustie in mid July to take stock of one of the most eventful Opens for a long time. It started with far too much unfair criticism of the way the course was set up. Rough too long, fairways too narrow bore the brunt of adverse topics from players and media alike.

Yes it was tough, but they are supposed to be the best golfers in the world, not 18 handicappers. Maybe they have got to used to playing on courses with wall-to-wall mowing. The unfairness of it all in my view was that it took away some of the praise which was rightly due to John Philp and his staff. The course condition was superb, greens were fast and true, the fairways were so good that I have seen worse greens than they were, and tees and bunkers were the best I've seen anywhere. I personally would like to thank John and his team for the wonderful advert they are for the greenkeeping profession.

The BIGGA Support Team was another success story. They were all on time, did an excellent job, and conducted themselves professionally at all times: Thank you all, you were a credit to the association and yourselves and I was proud to be with you. I would also like to thank the staff for the organisation. I don't know who it was down to, but the marquee was in an excellent position and we had lots of visitors. Everything went smoothly and we all had a great week.

I was back home trying to put pen to paper when I received a call from Jim Paton, Chairman of our Education Committee, asking me if I could fill in for him on some of the Toro Student of the Year interviews with Ken Richardson. It's always a pleasure to talk and listen to young students just starting their careers in greenkeeping, and finding out how much and what they are learning at different colleges. The standards do seem to vary from college to college and I feel there is a lot of work to be done to improve this both by ourselves and the GTC.

Having said that, I think the general standard is improving.

I have just completed my visits for the Toro Award for Excellence in Greenkeeping as part of the National Award. All the finalists will be visited again by Walter Woods, then on to the interviews at BIGGA HOUSE later in the year. This Toro Award is an excellent competition and we have much to thank Toro for, because I believe it is helping to raise the standards and awareness of our profession. I have seen a big rise in quality of entries this year and it's a credit to everyone who took part.

Like all competitions there can only be one winner which does seem a shame when so much effort has been put in by all the nominees. I would personally like to thank all the golf clubs and greenkeepers for making me so welcome on my visits and I wish them all the very best of luck. Win or not, you all deserve a pat on the back.

We hear all sorts of stories about golfers in relation to greenkeeping, but I was faxed a copy of a newspaper article a few days ago about a lady golfer who is suing a greenkeeper for £200,000. The lady in question lost the sight in one eye after the ball hit a stone hidden in the rough and rebounded into her face. Her case is based on the theory that it is the greenkeepers responsibility to make the course as safe as possible. She first attempted to sue the golf club but abandoned the case after it was point-

ed out that as a member of a private club, she would effectively be suing herself. While we must all sympathise with her in this unfortunate accident, because that is exactly what it was, I can't even start to imagine the consequences for greenkeepers everywhere if the court found in her favour. Surely no greenkeeper can be expected to pick up every stone or object on the golf course before allowing play to start.

Many golf course are built on stony ground and plants such as heather, broom and gorse grow naturally in stony areas. Can you imagine if we were to stone pick golf courses we would need an army of staff, and even then there would be very little golf played. For the greenkeeper concerned, Dougal Duguid, it must be a very worrying time. It is however pleasing to see that his club are supporting him, and the case is being handled by the club's solicitors.

On behalf of greenkeepers everywhere, I wish Dougal every success and a speedy end to this case. Dougal is well known by his Scottish peers and is a fine supporter of BIGGA. Many will have met him at BTME where he is always in attendance and a very popular member.

On the home front, when I arrived home from my Toro travels our family had increased by three. Marion had taken in three fourlegged grass cutters in the shape of Shetland ponies. She said that as I was never home to cut the grass she had to do something. As grasscutters they are unique, as they cut and fertilise as they go. If anyone wants some good old fashioned muck, you know where to come.

Gordon Child

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