



February 2000 – £3.50

Greenkeeper

INTERNATIONAL



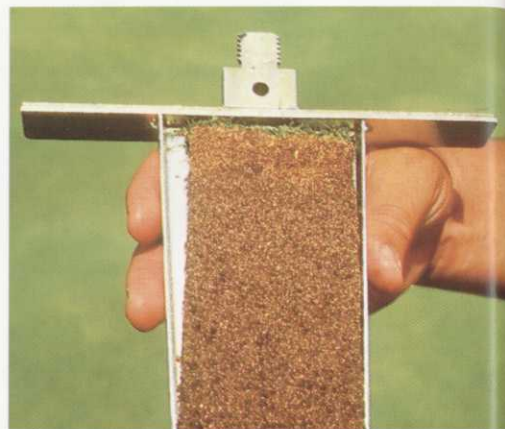
BEING THERE MEANT EVERYTHING





Poor soil structure results in recurring drainage problems, anaerobic conditions, weak root systems and thinning turf. Water doesn't drain, Air can't enter and Roots won't develop.

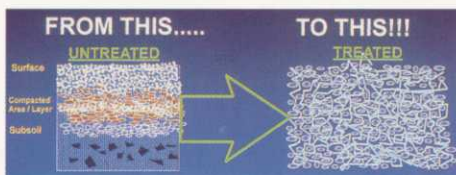
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Sir Michael
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BIGGA Board of Management
Chairman - Elliott Small
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Board Members
Richard Barker
Ian Semple
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Ian Holoran

Executive Director
Neil Thomas
E-mail: neil@bigga.co.uk

Administration Manager
John Pemberton
E-mail: john@bigga.co.uk

Sales & Marketing Manager
Steve Hardy
E-mail: steve@bigga.co.uk

Editorial Media
Scott MacCallum
E-mail: scott@bigga.co.uk

Education & Training Manager
Ken Richardson
E-mail: ken@bigga.co.uk

Membership Services Officer
Tracey Maddison
E-mail: tracey@bigga.co.uk

Contact us

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

Post: BIGGA HOUSE, Aldwark, Airedale, YO61 1UF

E-mail: reception@bigga.co.uk

Internet: www.bigga.org.uk

Tel: 01347 833800

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February 2000

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Greenkeeper INTERNATIONAL

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Editorial

Editor: Scott MacCallum
Tel: 01347 833800 Fax: 01347 833801
E-mail: scott@bigga.co.uk

Advertising

Sales & Marketing Officer: Jenny Panton
Tel: 01347 833800 Fax: 01347 833802
E-mail: jenny@bigga.co.uk

Sales & Marketing Assistants:
Cheryl Broomhead, Diane Bray
Tel: 01347 833800 Fax: 01347 833802
E-mail: sales@bigga.co.uk

Design

Design & Production Editor: David Emery
Tel: 01347 833800 ISDN: 01347 830020
E-mail: david@bigga.co.uk

Printing

Hi-Tec Print, Units 9-10, Houghton Road,
North Anston Trading Estate, North Anston,
Sheffield S25 4JJ ISDN: 01909 550561
Tel: 01909 568533 Fax: 01909 568206

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BTME2000 lived up to its billing

Well, the anticipation we all felt for months before BTME 2000 was certainly matched by the reality. And it's not often you can say that, now can you?

I don't think I bumped into anyone who didn't comment on it being the best Harrogate week ever.

The Learning Experience, in association with Textron, was a spectacular success incorporating a meaty Education Conference and fascinating workshops while the Seminar Sessions caught the imagination.

And the trade also had a bumper week. It's the first time I can recall us being accused of massaging attendance figures the wrong way! You can see their point. Everywhere you looked there were busy stands and to say business was brisk would be like saying the New Year gales were nothing but a brisk breeze.

One of the real highlights was Simon Weston's talk on Wednesday morning - for which many people had made a point of arriving early. Now you might ask what the connection is between a man who suffered horrific injuries during the Falklands War and greenkeepers?

The answer is simple. Life itself. Life is full of ups and downs and as individuals we find ourselves worrying about the slightest little things at home or at work. Simon Weston put all that into perspective. He has encountered problems the vast majority of us can only have nightmares about but through all the pain and anguish has come a great attitude to life. He doesn't worry about the little things that bother the rest of us any more. He has a positive outlook on life which puts us all to shame.

We were also lucky enough to welcome Sir Michael Bonallack, BIGGA's President to the Show. Sir Michael presented our Golden and Silver Key supporters with their plaques and badges before, later in the day, attending the AGM. This is a year where he is combining his role as BIGGA President with the Millennium Captaincy of the R&A, so we owe him a real debt of gratitude for being so accommodating with his valuable time.

Among our other visitors were Mark James, last year's Ryder Cup Captain, who popped in to look round the show and some of the top officials from the PGA European Tour. It really does seem that Harrogate week is becoming a firm date in the diary for more and more people and a place for the whole industry to meet up.

Elsewhere, I liked the tale of the sleepwalking greenkeeper who found himself locked out of his room and had to descend four floors to confront the Majestic Hotel's night porter wearing nothing but a pair of boxer shorts. Not so much a day dream as a nightmare.

You can be sure that we shall be working hard - we've already started - on build up on the success of BTME 2000 for next year and that from January 21-26, 2001, you will have another week to remember.

Editor:
Scott MacCallum

Greenkeeper INTERNATIONAL

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ESSAY
COMPETITION**

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Mycorrhizal structures associated with turf roots

Intelligent disease control

Harmless to beneficial turf fungi

Still effective against disease



Fusarium



Dollar Spot

Amazingly, some species of fungus are hugely beneficial to your turf.

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Rovral Green - it thinks for itself.



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MBE for Carnoustie's John Philp

John Philp, Golf Links Superintendent at Carnoustie, has been awarded the MBE in the New Year's Honours List in recognition of the tremendous work he put into preparing the course for its first Open Championship since 1975.

"It was a very nice gesture and a complete surprise," said John, speaking as he made yet more improvements to the course.

"It really is an honour and credit to the whole team here because you are only as good as your team. We must have done something right!"

During The Championship John was in the newspapers as much as some of the big name players who struggled to find a successful way of playing what is regarded as the toughest golf course on The Open rota. He fended off criticism of the height of the rough and the width of the fairways but, even from the complainants there was nothing but praise for the quality of the course conditioning.

As well as the complaints of some of the game's superstars the 1999 Open will be remembered for an amazing climax which saw Jean Van de Velde take seven down the last to drop into a play-off which was finally won by local hero, Paul Lawrie. Both have been back to Carnoustie since.

"Jean was back to film a commercial for a putter company to show how he would have got on using one of their putters to play the last. The first time he took nine but the second time he managed a six," explained John.

"He was super. He shouted over to the team 'Here I am back again boys,' and saw some of the changes we've since made to the right side of the 18th and said he'd rather play it now."

Van de Velde was referring to the fact the team had just put down around 15,000 metres of Rolawn turf on the right side of the 1st and 18th holes including Van de Velde corner.

Paul Lawrie returned when the



Hotel named one of its suites in his honour and took time to sign a few flags for John.

John has yet to learn whether he will go to Buckingham Palace to receive his honour or Holyrood Palace in Edinburgh.

"I'd really like to go to Buckingham Palace because you'd only do it once wouldn't you?" said John, who after The Championship received messages of congratulation from all over

the world including a telemesssage from HRH The Duke of York.

By coincidence John, who previously worked under Walter Woods at St Andrews, attended the presentation when Walter received the BEM from Lord Elgin.

Jimmy MacDonald, the recently retired Head Greenkeeper of Royal Lytham and St Annes Golf Club was the last greenkeeper to be honoured by the Queen.

Mike Canaway takes early retirement



After over 25 years service at the STRI Dr Mike Canaway, STRI Chief Executive has decided to take early retirement in the Spring.

"It is with much regret that I have received Mike Canaway's resignation having worked closely and harmoniously with him since we assumed our respective positions in 1995. His work as Chief Executive in steering us through a significant programme of modernisation and expansion deserves our warmest thanks," said STRI Chairman, Roger Robinson.

Dr Canaway commented "After over 25 years of service at STRI, and approaching five years as Chief Executive, I now feel that it is time to hand over the reins. In today's fast moving commercial environment there is a need for fresh ideas and new initiatives. I will be more than happy to continue to give support to STRI in its work."

CPD embraced by BIGGA

One of BIGGA's primary, and stated, aims is to advance the profession of greenkeeping through education and development.

Therefore in common with many organisations, including Central Government, BIGGA recognises that Education and Training should continue throughout one's working life and so to encourage greenkeepers to develop their full potential, it is introducing a Certificate of Continuing Development.

"Unlike most other professions greenkeeping has always been at the forefront of the education for life - the packed education sessions during Harrogate week bear testimony to that - and so it is right that we should look to put that on a more formal footing," said BIGGA Chairman, Elliott Small.

Greenkeepers will need to accumulate 20 credits in each calendar year (June to June) to be awarded a certificate. Certificates may be used as evidence for Master Greenkeeper, N/SVQ and as a guide for employers when recruiting.

Carraro offers a taste of Italy for visitors

A group of industry journalists visited the state-of-the-art Antonio Carraro factory in Padova, Italy, just before Christmas and saw at first hand the production of the unique tractors which are now being distributed in England, Wales and Ireland by Charterhouse Turf Machinery.

Carraro Tractors boast full chassis oscillation and have a driver position which can be rotated a full 180 degrees and the tractor driven forwards in both directions - this is particularly useful when deciding upon the attachments to use.

The company has also brought in several specialist technicians from Porsche to work with the established Carraro team on the assembly lines.

The newest member of the tractor family is the TTR 9400 which is aimed at the fine turf market.

The tractor boasts four equal wheel drive with low ground pressure and



wide tread and the chassis has 15 degrees of oscillation on each side which gives constant traction, stability and 50% balance on each of the front and rear. The gearbox has 64 speeds, 32 forward and 32 reverse

while the engine is a 87 horsepower diesel.

Further details of this and the other tractors in the Carraro range can be obtained from Colin Gregory, of Charterhouse Turf Machinery.

Volunteers required for the following events

Volvo PGA Championship, The Wentworth Club May 28-29, 2000

The Association will again be providing a team of 40 members for each of the above days (the third and fourth rounds). Each member will be allocated a match and will walk the course with the game, raking any bunkers found by the players.

You will be responsible for your own transport arrangements to the course and there is no provision for overnight accommodation. you may apply to help on either or both days. When applying please give details of your polo shirt size as this may be provided. Helping at this event will not prejudice your chances of a place on The Open Championship Support Team.

The Open Championship St Andrews July 20-23, 2000

The BIGGA Greenkeeping Support Team at The Open Championship will be involved in early morning course preparation; bunker raking, while matches are in play, and evening course repair. You must be available from Wednesday evening, July 19, through to the close of play on Sunday, July 23. While all transport, accommodation and meals will be provided between these dates it is the team member's responsibility from travel from home to the venue and return. When applying please give your polo shirt size.

Full BIGGA members only may apply in writing, for either or both of these events to: John Pemberton, BIGGA HOUSE, Aldwark Alne, York, YO61 1UF. Should you require any further information John can be contacted on 01347 833800 or via email: john@bigga.co.uk

The closing date for applications is Friday March 3, 2000

In the event of there being more applications than places available then a draw of names will take place.

Toro signs five year deal with Tour

Toro has secured five-year partnership deals with two of the world's leading golfing organisations.

The move sees Toro become the official supplier of turf maintenance equipment and irrigation products to both the PGA European Tour and PGA European Tour Courses. The latter owns and operates seven top golf course venues in the UK and Europe, five of which are used for the European Tour.

As part of the deal with PGA European Tour Courses, Toro has won an £800,000 contract to supply turf machinery and irrigation products for the four courses at the high-profile new Fleesensee golf resort, near Berlin, Germany, which opens in April 2000. The deal is one of the biggest of its kind in Europe, for what will also be a European Tour location.

The agreements were signed by The Toro Company, from Minneapolis, USA, at a special ceremony attended by all parties at the PGA European Tour headquarters at Wentworth, Surrey.

For the European Tour, Toro will supply each Tour venue with full tournament support covering both turf machinery and additional irrigation requirements. Additionally, there will be full technical support, back-up and training for operators as appropriate.



"One of the main reasons we selected Toro was that it offered irrigation expertise too. We have had some concerns about the standard of irrigation at tournament venues. But with Toro on board I am confident that we can solve these problems and keep the courses in top condition," said Director of Tour Operations, David Garland.

Meanwhile, PGA European Tour Courses has teamed up with The Toro Company to purchase turf maintenance machinery and irrigation products for its seven golf establishments in the UK and Europe. The company, which has a share holding in the PGA, owns and runs five courses on the European Tour including Woburn.



Who can you recognise from this old photograph taken at Elmwood College in 1981?

Raymond on the move



Raymond Hunt has left Marriott Forest of Arden to take up a fresh challenge in the Championship links of Pyle and Kenfig in South Wales - which is due to host the Amateur Championship in 2002.

Raymond spent 12 years with Whitbread during which time he was responsible for growing in two new courses and the preparation of the Arden Course for six European Tour events including four English Opens and two British Masters. Prior to that he worked on P&K's neighbouring course, Royal Porthcawl.

"I am looking forward to returning to Championship links golf to work with an excellent club and developing a fantastic links golf course," said Raymond.

R&A supports Environment Competition

The prestigious BIGGA Golf Environment Competition, which has identified the golf club which has done most to combine excellent environmental practice with good golf course management work, moves into a fourth year thanks to the support of the R&A.



The competition will enjoy the continued support of Amazone Ground Care, under the drive of Managing Director Rod Baker, who launched the competition in 1995 and which he ran successfully for two years before teaming up with BIGGA.

In 2000 the prize structure will change giving the overall winner a cheque for £4000 to be spent on environmental projects, a trophy and a plaque with the four Regional Winners each now receiving £500 for the same purposes and a plaque. All runners-up will receive certificates/ commendations. Also new for 2000 will be a prize for the club judged to have completed the best individual environmental project.

"We must thank Rod Baker for his continued and valued support of the competition he started and also the R&A whose support this year displays the importance placed on the competition by the game of golf in general," said Elliott Small, BIGGA Chairman.

Seminar a big hit at Pencoed College

The South Wales Seminar at Pencoed College recently proved a resounding success with over 50 people attending and hearing talks from Jim Clowes, of Turf Irrigation Services - who sponsored the event; Len Dixon, of Field Capacity; Barry Gregson, of the De Vere Hotel Group, Joe Turner, of Bernhard and Co, and David Shelton, of Shelton Sports Turf Drainage Solutions.

A presentation was also made to Peter Gillard, of Pencoed College, on behalf of the South Wales Section by Ken Richardson, in recognition of his dedication to greenkeeping and assistance to greenkeeping in the south Wales area.

Also pictured are Tony Webster, of TIS Ltd; Malcolm Davies, Chairman of Education; Dennis Archer, Course Manager at Whitchurch GC, and Peter Lacey of the South Wales Section.

Honour for Jim Arthur

Legendary agronomist, Jim Arthur, whose work on Britain's golf courses stretches back well into the last century has been awarded Honorary Membership of BIGGA.

It is only the fifth Honorary Membership ever granted by the Association and Jim joins the late Viscount Whitelaw, Jim Fry, Brian Gilbert and Fred Hawtree in the exclusive membership category.

"I was taken aback when I was told. I certainly hadn't expected it," said Jim, speaking from his home in Budleigh Salterton, North Devon.

"Throughout my career I tried to push the professionalism of the greenkeeper and this award is a reflection of the work of a great many people. I have always regarded the advisor as being just one part of a team when he visited a golf course with everyone an equal part of that team effort," he explained.

Jim will be presented with his certificate later in the year.

Thanks to Scottish Patrons



The annual Scottish Region Patrons' Lunch was held in Stirling recently to honour the winners of the 1999 Patrons' Awards.

The day was a great success as usual with all the Award winners and a large turnout of the Scottish Patrons in attendance.

Each winner received a book and a trip to BTME 2000.

The After Dinner Speaker was Ian MacPherson from East Kilbride and

I must say I thought last year's was good but this year Ian was even better.

On behalf of the Scottish Region we would like to thank the Scottish Patrons for their continued support because if it was not for their help and all the work they do these awards would not be able to be given.

So once again thanks from all of us in Scotland.

Chris Yeaman

Expansion for Toro Excellence Competition

This year sees the expansion of the acclaimed TORO Award for Excellence in Greenkeeping Competition which now includes Ireland who previously held their own competition run in conjunction with the GCSAI. The new format ensures a real Home International flavour with each of the four home countries sending a representative to BIGGA HOUSE in October for the grand final. BIGGA Course Managers and GCSAI Superintendents stand equal chance of winning the first prize, a TORO



Workman 2100 Utility vehicle plus an all expenses paid trip to the GCSAA Conference and Show in Dallas in 2001, a trophy and a TORO jacket. The winner's own greenkeeping team will receive a cheque for £250 while the runners up each receive a TORO Reelmaster 1000, a trophy and a TORO jacket.

The Panel of judges, led by Walter Woods, will select four finalists ie one from each country, England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales for the National Final which will be held at BIGGA HOUSE in October 2000.

"I believe the new format creates even more interest among Course Managers and Head Greenkeepers, as well as the GCSAI Superintendents, as we go about identifying the outstanding greenkeeper of the year," said BIGGA Chairman, Elliott Small.

The Toro Excellence in Greenkeeping Award Final will run alongside the existing Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Final. Nomination forms will be sent to all golf clubs in Britain and Ireland during February.

Decade for Avoncrop



Recently joined BIGGA Golden Key members, Avoncrop Amenity Products, celebrated 10 years in the industry with a party recently and a cake ably sliced by partners David O'neils and Rod Feltham.

Kay collects bunker prize

The fifth winner of the annual Great BIGGA Bunker Competition for the world's media held during The Open Championship was presented with her prize - a fabulous Hayter Harrier mower - just before Christmas.

Kay Smart, who together with her husband, Chris, cover many golf events at home and abroad for the Mid Glamorgan Press Agency, was the closest in her estimation of how many bunkers the world's greatest golfers would find during The Open Championship at Carnoustie in July.

Kay's guess of 1398 was closest to the final figure of 1474 and was a fine achievement when the vast majority guessed far too low. Carnoustie has 115 bunkers and only Royal Lytham with 185 bunkers has had a higher total in the five years the statistics have been kept. Kay was presented with her £700 lawn mower, courtesy of Hayter Ltd, by Kim Macfie at Celtic Manor just before Christmas.

Obviously delighted to have won the first prize of her life she did admit to not actually having a lawn!



Royal Inverdivot GC...

by Tony Husband



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

Effingham facing a spiky problem in winter

I am writing to express my concerns regarding the introduction of more and more soft spiked golf shoes onto our golf courses.

Here at Effingham Golf Club we have a policy that whenever the course is open, then the greens are always in play ie. no frost holes etc. This has never caused us any serious problems in the past yet during this and the previous winter, the spike damage that has been occurring around the hole cups has increased tremendously. This happens

especially during frosty conditions. The problem I have found, is that the frost/ice builds up on the soft plastic spikes more readily than the metal spikes, the plastic spikes resemble a 'football type' stud after only a short time of walking across frosty greens, then damage to the putting surfaces soon becomes apparent.

At Effingham we are now actively encouraging our members to return to using the traditional metal spikes during the winter months. Although this is causing a problem as now the vast majority

of new golf shoes are sold fitted with soft spikes.

I look forward to hearing from other Course Managers who have experienced similar problems or vice versa as I feel that the introduction of these soft spikes are now as much damage to the traditional British Golf Courses as the misuse of the electric trolleys has done so over the past decade

Peter Broadbent, Course Manager, Effingham Golf Club

A cautionary tale: Getting mobile got me in a real flap

Now that the "Twelve Days of Christmas" are well and truly behind us, I wondered if you could make use of the following cautionary tale although it has little to do with serious greenkeeping.

Several days ago I happened to be working near to the lake on our Avening Course when my attention was distracted by the sight of a magnificent white swan swooping low across the course. As I watched, spell-bound, it made a majestic landing on the lake. I stood there in awe, thinking just how lucky I was to have witnessed this, and how glad I was not

to be cooped up in an office etc etc, when my reverie was broken by the jarring tones of my mobile phone. (Not a rhythmic Brr Brr, but more a sort of biddle-liddle beep, biddle-liddle beep.) Unfortunately this alien noise seemed to enrage the swan causing it come marauding from the water flapping its wings and hissing menacingly.

So there I am in full retreat trying to keep a respectable distance between us, and, for some reason, trying to field the phone call. On the other end of the phone is an even bigger menace — Sonia, from Alpha-Line Paints

(name changed). By the time I could get the receiver anywhere near my ear, Sonia, bless her, is well into her sale's spiel and I can hear disjointed phrases such as "another two boxes before Christmas" and "ten percent discount".

I managed to blurt into the phone, "I'm terribly sorry, I'm terribly sorry, I'm out on the course at the moment and I'm having a bit of trouble with a swan."

"A swan" she said — "oh no - what is it?"

"It's a stonking great white thing with a wing at each corner and at the

moment it's running across the grass towards me," I panted hoarsely hastily looking round for somewhere to hide.

"My God" said Sonia sounding quite concerned, "You want to be careful, they're strong enough to break your arm."

"I couldn't care less about my arm" I screamed, "It's certain other parts of my anatomy I'm more worried about at the moment".

And she hung up - Some people!

Paul Worster, Course Manager Minchenhampton GC, Glous

Elliott Small: National Chairman of BIGGA

I must congratulate Elliott Small in becoming our new Chairman for 2000, a great honour indeed. Unfortunately at the BTME Banquet it was made quite clear that Neil Thomas thought Elliott was the Scottish Chairman of BIGGA by asking all the Scottish contingent to be upstanding and welcome their new Chairman. I wonder if next year when Clive Osgood is Chairman you will ask

all the English to be upstanding to welcome their new Chairman.

The general feeling among the rest of the members is that Neil made an error of judgement on such a special occasion. I hope this matter can be rectified by Neil in our magazine.

Brian Turner, Course Manager Sunningdale Golf Club.

Neil Thomas replies: My intentions were merely to raise a real Scottish welcome for one of Scotland's sons in a relaxed social atmosphere. Elliott is essentially the National Chairman of BIGGA, heading a National Association. I thought at the time that my unrehearsed introduction was in keeping with the spirit of the occasion.

BTME tops

After just returning from an excellent three days at the BTME 2000 at Harrogate I would like, through the pages of the magazine, to thank everyone involved. I was one of the lucky winners of the Patrons' Awards in the Ayrshire Section. It being my first year at Harrogate I was made to feel so welcome by everyone.

I also made a lot of new friends through the social side of the exhibition.

To all I thank you very much.

Roland Blackburn, Southernness GC

A Yankee Doodle thank you for BTME

If you could afford me a little space in the magazine I would like to comment on my perspective of the BTME 2000.

First and foremost "Thank You" seems like an understatement for all the hospitality that was extended to both myself and my wife by the entire BIGGA staff, the Chairman and each and every member I was fortunate to spend time with in Harrogate. For an American to feel so welcome and included in the activities at BTME leaves me at a loss for a way to express how much I value the friends I have made through my association with BIGGA.

The National Education Conference was excellently planned and carried out. The Trade Show was bigger and better than ever. The talks were superbly done in a variety of subjects and the banquet was the best I have ever attended in any country. My compliments to the Staff and all the speakers.

Prior to our departure from Harrogate, I told my wife that it seems more difficult each time to say goodbye to all the friends we have made over the years in our visits to the UK. I have experienced what few people here in the States would understand.

To have made friends from around the world and have such legends in the business as Walter Woods and Jack McMillan know you by name, makes one feel honoured and proud to be a member of BIGGA and part of BTME.

In closing I would like to thank Neil Thomas, the staff of BIGGA, the Chairman and all the attendees of BTME who made us feel so welcome at the Conference and gave us such wonderful memories to take home.

William P. Montague MG, CGCS USA.
 Via email



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Committed to Green and Valderrama Declaration

I was disappointed to see last month's articles by Neil Thomas and Gordon Child, which gave a very distorted picture of the Committed to Green programme and in particular the golf-environment summit held at Valderrama last November. The event had originally been planned as a joint meeting between the USGA Turfgrass and Environmental Research Committee and the ecology officers of the different national golf federations here in Europe, along with a number of other researchers and specialists. The main purpose was to review progress on both sides of the Atlantic in terms of environmental research and application programmes (such as Committed to Green and the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program), to discuss technical aspects of biodiversity conservation, watershed management and recognition systems, and to look at future initiatives.

As the summit programme came together we also found we had the opportunity to bring together the top officials from the golf authorities and from the major environmental bodies. This led to the idea of producing the Valderrama Declaration, a statement on golf, the environment and sustainability, which could be jointly signed by these key organisations.

On the day we had the Presidents of the USGA and EGA, the Secretary of the R&A along with the Director Generals of the World Wide Fund for Nature International and European Commission Environment Directorate. Supporting statements were sent by the International Olympic Committee

and United Nations Environment Programme. You do not often have the chance to get such a gathering in one place, and it was a unique opportunity not to be missed.

All parties shared a common platform, spoke of the importance of the golf-environment relationship and the need for a positive, collaborative way forward. The signing of the Declaration demonstrates that the golf authorities recognise the importance of environment in the development and management of golf, and likewise that the environmental authorities accept that golf is a serious player in the field of sustainability and environmental stewardship. That is a remarkable coalition of support for what we are doing and it represents a major step forward for golf and for all those working in this field.

We fully appreciated the need for greenkeeping organisations to be represented at the summit and we went to considerable effort to ensure that there were two FEGGA delegates in attendance, as there were also from the GCSAA. The next step was to invite other interested organisations to offer their support and endorsement of the Valderrama Declaration, to give it further weight and momentum.

The declaration makes five essential points: (i) golf is intimately associated with nature; (ii) the growth of the modern game has exposed golf to a wide range of environmental challenges, (iii) the popular appeal of golf gives it scope to be a major force for promoting environmental care; (iv) the golf authorities recognise the importance of environmental issues

and have already been doing much work in scientific research, education and conservation programmes; and (v) golf is committed to continuing its efforts in this field through specific, tangible programmes " i.e. Audubon and Committed to Green.

The Declaration places the traditional values of golf and respect for its natural heritage firmly to the fore. There is nothing here which I can see being objectionable to greenkeepers anywhere. It is certainly not American-biased, nor was the summit, and to suggest otherwise is a gross distortion.

This is doubly unfortunate as we risk taking our eye off the real ball, when we have so much in common. The new Committed to Green Foundation shares many of the goals of the greenkeeping profession and we are certainly keen to work more closely together. I ask FEGGA and its constituent organisations to look again at the Valderrama Declaration, to consider how we can cooperate on the Committed to Green programme, and to add their support to this positive and constructive initiative.

Despite these current problems and misunderstandings I am glad to note that Greenkeeper International wishes to open a running debate on Committed to Green and environmental issues generally. Together, I am sure we can work towards a more positive understanding and achieve mutual goals.

**David Stubbs, Executive Director
 Committed to Green Foundation**

Committed to Green: Lack of interest?

I write in response to the comments made with regard to the apparent lack of greenkeeping interest shown by the Committed to Green foundation in Greenkeeper International - January edition.

I am sure that everyone expressing an interest in golf will widely accept that the concept of Committed to Green, i.e. to provide a platform and standard for European Golf Clubs to demonstrate objectively their environmental performance, is to be commended.

The Committed to Green initiative, once fully operational, will provide a very positive way in which individual clubs and the golfing industry can show true environmental commitment. Given this, it is essential that we all work to the same end, this will involve a sharing of information, of problems, practical difficulties and solutions.

There is clearly a need for greater greenkeeper representation throughout the development stages of Committed to Green. To date greenkeeping interests have largely been covered by two European representatives on the Technical Working Panel, both have greenkeeping experience, and by myself and Jonathan Smith, who, when working closely with greenkeepers on a day-to-day basis do ensure that the greenkeeping interests are being considered. I did, prior to the Valderrama summit, stress to BIGGA that I would highlight the deficiencies and make the Panel aware of the need to give greater reference to the greenkeeping body. This I did and was applauded for it by Ron Dobson, of the USGA Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Programme. The Federation of European Golf Greenkeeping Associations (FEGGA)

were also represented at the summit part of their role must surely be to pass information back down to ground level.

Now that the foundation and infrastructure of Committed to Green have been put into place, it is time to consider practical issues and in particular practical solutions to a number of difficult problems. Grass clippings and grass waste disposal springs to mind and this was a case I made clear at the Valderrama summit. The newly formed Committed to Green Foundation will I hope offer a new opportunity to which greater greenkeeping representation can be built in and I do hope that personalities aside, we can all work together to promote what must be a very positive step forward for the European Golfing Industry.

**Robert S. Taylor, B.Sc. (Hons),
 MBPR, Senior Ecologist, STRI**

FEGGA's key role

Having recently received a copy of the January edition of *Greenkeeper International*, I must say how disappointed I was with the reporting of the recent Valderrama and FEGGA Conferences, and the implications of this on the future involvement of golf in environmental management.

The Scottish Golf Course Wildlife Group contributed to both Conferences which were equally constructive in different ways. The Valderrama Conference established Committed to Green as the most influential and important tool that golf in Europe has as a means of pulling together and disseminating its environmental concern.

At the FEGGA Conference there was a great deal of support for the principles of Committed to Green, and an endorsement of how it can be broken down to Clubs and made achievable through national projects such as our own. Indeed there was a more positive reaction to Committed to Green from the delegates than either of the articles suggested.

Obviously there are some issues to be ironed out, but I think this can be achieved if FEGGA get the correct representation on the new Committed to Green Foundation. FEGGA are a vital body in this because they can coordinate the communication with national Greenkeeping Associations and ultimately help unlock much interest and enthusiasm from greenkeepers. At present it is through FEGGA that the various national Greenkeeper Associations have their voice on the Committed to Green Foundation. FEGGA have been represented on the former European Golf Association Ecology Unit for some time. It is up to FEGGA to demonstrate that they have the ability to carry out their projected role of coordinator and disseminator of information to national Greenkeeper Associations.

I suppose there may well have been some opportunities missed in terms of maximising the effectiveness of debate with national Greenkeeper Associations, but these are things which can be discussed and put right. The key issue is that FEGGA have had representation. I question whether such strong terms as those used are the best way to progress, particularly when such strong terms could undermine the positive situation that many people,

including greenkeepers, have worked hard to establish.

These comments take us back to a period of suspicion and mistrust which distract us from the greenkeeping profession's substantial efforts to learn and adapt to environmental issues.

With regard to the current level of advice available within the golfing sector, golf is in a stronger position as a result of having its own, internal advisers, who without exception are finding a huge amount of enthusiasm from Clubs, Local Authorities and Greenkeepers. However, it should not be assumed that this limited resource is sufficient to allow golf to become inward looking in relation to the environment. One of the most important things golf can continue to do in the future is maintain discussion with environmental groups at European, National and Local level to ensure all good work receives recognition. Indeed, a key strength of our Scottish Initiative is that we have widespread support and contact from across the golfing and environmental sectors, including funding from the Scottish Golf Union, R&A, Scottish Natural Heritage and the Scottish Greenbelt Foundation. This is proving to be an excellent platform for constructive dialogue, which includes input from greenkeeping organisations and greenkeepers. Such positive debate is benefiting clubs when they approach environmental organisations locally.

No doubt the outgoing Chairman of BIGGA wanted to leave an impression and stimulate thought, but it is perhaps unfortunate that in so doing he has partly undermined BIGGA's, a large number of greenkeeper's and many others excellent work relating to the environment. I only hope that greenkeepers throughout the country appreciate that their efforts are well valued, and increasingly recognised by the environmental sector, and that the best thing they can do is to continue to seek advice, learn about the environment, increase their understanding, plan their ideas and then take action. This will ensure that golf continues to command respect as one of the UK's most enlightened and environmentally sound land-uses.

Jonathan Smith
Senior Golf Course Adviser
Scottish Golf Course Wildlife Group

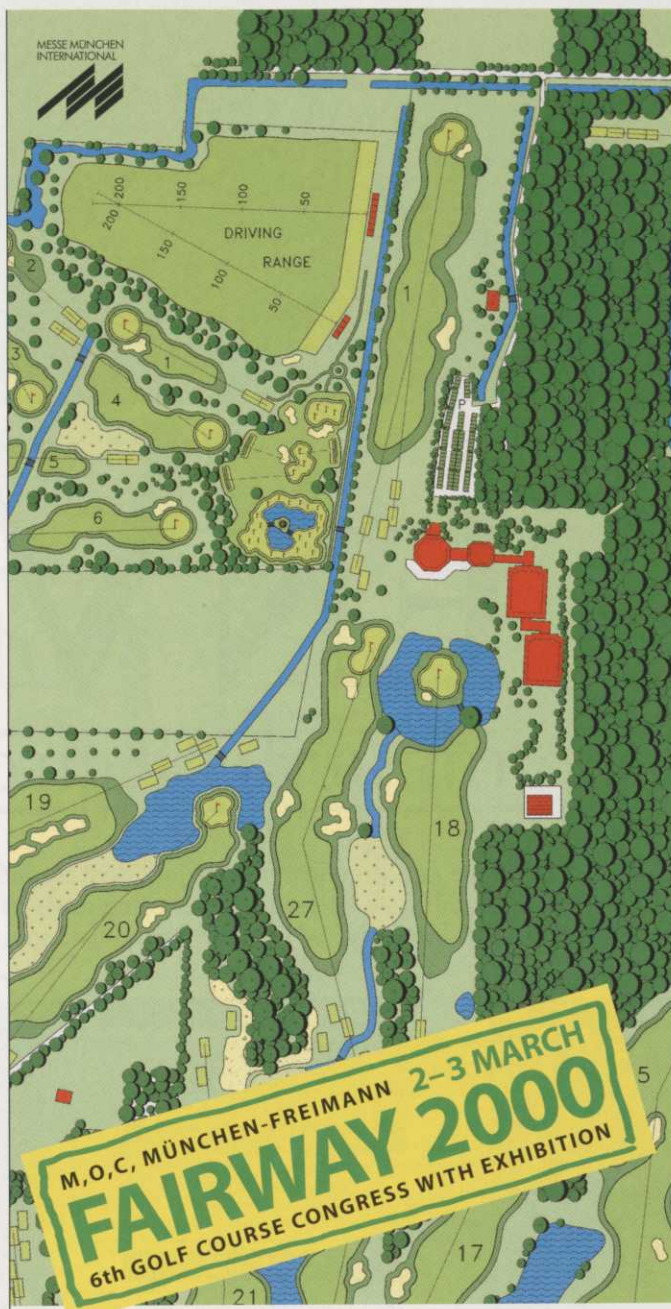
Praise for BTME2000

May I take this opportunity to thank everyone who was involved in making my week at both the education conference and BTME such a memorable one. With the invaluable sponsorship from Textron and the hard work from both the BIGGA staff and the speakers it is easy to see how the week seems to get better and better every year, long may it continue! On a personal note may I thank Frank Newberry and Brin Bendon for a superb two day workshop and an excellent careers clinic. Anyone

who has not attended any of Frank and Brin's workshops have missed out on a great opportunity to develop themselves into modern managers. It is easy to see why Frank and Brin are leaders in their field as their enthusiasm in moulding us into modern managers made the workshop an unforgettable two days.

Once again many thanks, here's to 2001.
Alex McCombie, Deputy Course Manager, Parkstone Golf Club

Via email



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Caversham Heath Golf Club is a new venture that is being developed on 250 acres of the Mapledurham Estate near Reading in Berkshire. Robert Clive, General Manager, and Jon Scoones, Head Greenkeeper, provide an insight into the construction of the course from the design phase through the growing-in period to completion and final preparation prior to opening in spring 2000.



From design to play



Bunkers at the turn of the dogleg on the par 5, 4th hole with the green in the distance. Note the mature woodland to the right of the fairway

Once outline planning permission had been granted to build a golf course, practice facilities and a large Clubhouse, Mapledurham Estate set about creating their long wished for golf course on 250 acres of land. The site had previously been arable farmland with ancient woodland located centrally and around the borders.

The Estates' first decision was to appoint Barreldfield Golf Ltd to project manage the operation "from design to play" and beyond. David Williams was invited to design a heathland-style Championship length, quality 18-hole golf course. The topography of the area features land that is gently rolling without

being hilly or flat and therefore he had many natural features and contours to work with. The main requirements from a design viewpoint were to create a challenging course while catering for the needs of golfers of all abilities. David created a course that is 7100 yards from the Championship tees, 6500 yards from

the social and 6000 yards from the ladies. Whitnell Contracts Ltd was appointed to build the course, with the comprehensive irrigation system sub-contracted to Ocmis.

The course build started in June 1998. All the USGA greens were built and seeded in the autumn of 1998, as were all the tee complexes. The fairways, bunker surrounds, approaches and rough, which required the stone removal were all seeded early in spring 1999. When the course opens in April, the fairways and rough will have been seeded for about 13 months and the tees and greens for 20 months.

Below: Stone burying and levelling on the 14th and 15th fairway

Right: Head Greenkeeper, Jon Scoones undertaking an early cut of the double 6th/16th green



The first step of the construction process was to strip the top soil from the whole site. This involved moving in the region of 300,000 square metres of soil. Once stripped, the sub-soil which had been exposed was shaped to David Williams' detailed plans. The earth moving involved construction of some 100 bunkers, 18 grass hollows and two lined lakes. The top soil that had been stripped off had all the larger stones (15mm and bigger) removed. Two methods were used, vibration screening and mechanical stone picking. This removed 4,500 tonnes of stone, but left sufficient small stones to ensure



that structure and drainage were not adversely affected. After the picked soil was returned, it was then stone buried to leave three to five inches of stone free soil on which to seed.

In tandem with the subsoil shaping and top soil stone removal, a fully comprehensive irrigation system was laid by Ocmis Irrigation. This is a fully computerised, state of the art system with over 500 rainbird sprinkler heads enabling the watering of all tees, greens, approaches and fairways with the twin row system. Approximately 18 miles of piping has been laid under the course.

Although constructed on a naturally free draining soil, a 9.5 mile drainage system was laid. With the heavy recent rains, this has been fully tested and is working well. The course management are confident that it will take exceptionally heavy rains to enforce a course closure.

Jon Scoones, Head Greenkeeper, takes up the story:

The first major task on the course was to establish the sward on the greens. When I arrived in March 1999, the greens had been rolled three or four times and had just received their first cut. The greens had suffered from lack of nutrition and Damping Off had been present in some of them, so these we sprayed with a contact fungicide and overseeded at 5gm with Bent and Fescue before building nutrition levels up to

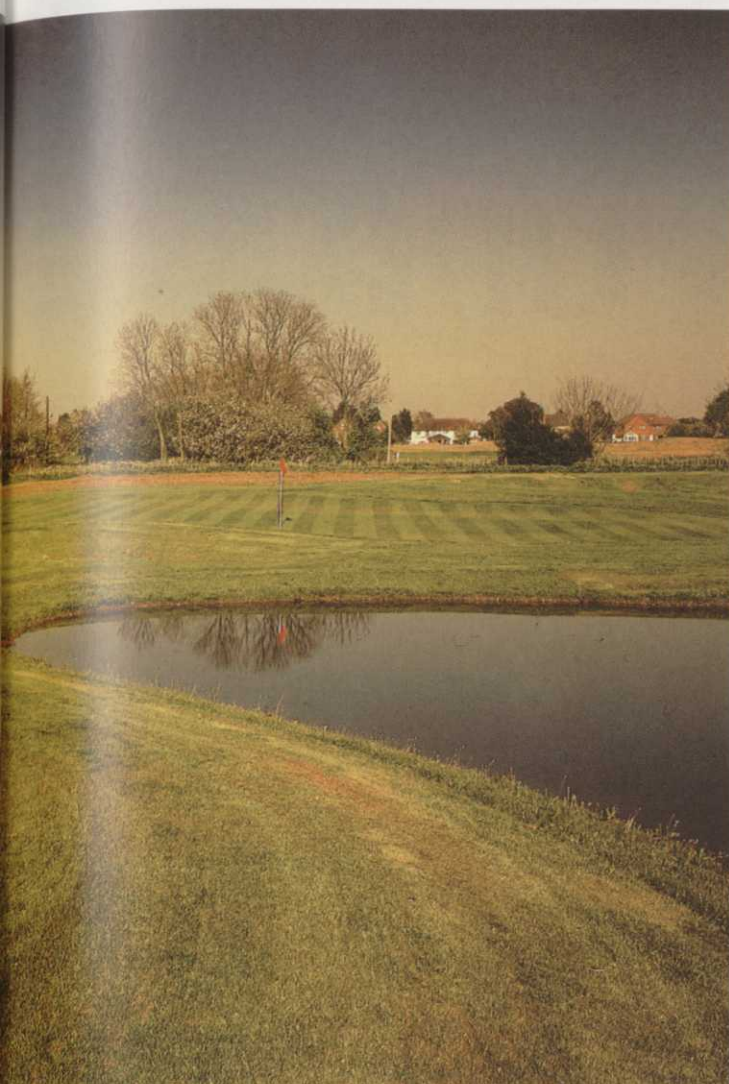
an acceptable amount. This quickly established sward density as well as promoting root growth deep into the rootzone.

The tees were in a similar condition to the greens and the fairways and semi were still being stone buried and prepared for seeding.

The next decision that had to be taken was the selection of the machinery required for the upkeep and maintenance of the course. We chose the local Textron dealers TH White Ltd as our major supplier and with the help of their Sales Manager Alun Wright and Paul Wright of Barrellfield, we specified the machinery that would be best suited to the course. At the time the only equipment we had were an Iseki 538 tractor, 2 Hayter Harrier pedestrian rotary mowers and an Allett Gazelle cylinder mower used for cutting greens. We decided on two Ransomes AR250s to mow fairways and semi-rough with the idea that the mulching decks would help to thicken the sward as well as building up a fibre layer over stony soil. This worked exceptionally well and we quickly established an excellent covering.

For the greens we chose three Greens Super 50 pedestrian greens mowers as well as having two G-Plex II's - one for the greens, one for the tees. When the machines were demonstrated to us I found them very easy to work on, especially the





G-Plex's with the swing out middle unit. We also purchased an Iseki SF300 compact out-front rotary with flail attachment, a 4 wheel Cushman Turf-Truckster with a Hardi Boss Sprayer, a Jacobsen topdresser, one Jacobsen Sand Scorpion electric bunker rake, an MF1020 compact tractor with front loader and grab plus one Ransomes Marquis cylinder mower.

By May the earlier seeded areas were starting to establish rapidly and were being topped with AR250's at a height of 50mm.

We appointed Trevor Humphrey as Deputy Head Greenkeeper and Peter McFadden as First Assistant and took on two trainees. We also kept on two experienced Whitnells staff to help with the extensive mowing required in June and July.

The fairways were shaped out during August when the growth slowed down and we were able to bring the height of cut down to 20mm leaving semi-rough at 50mm. The shaping of the fairways was determined by a number of factors; firstly the architect had his design, which we kept to religiously, only altering it to marry in with the semi-rough around bunkers and surrounds, while at the same time fitting in with the irrigation coverage.

By September the height of cut had been brought down to 18mm with semi-rough and surrounds at 40mm.

Winter was soon upon us and we concentrated our work on adding to the 1000m of paths that were put in initially by the contractors.

We have a four year wood management programme which started this winter; this includes taking out many dead elm trees as well as scrub clearance in the ancient woodland.

Through autumn and winter, phase 2 of planting progressed with more gorse, mature hardwood trees and shrubs going in, taking total planting to in excess of 60,000.

The philosophy behind the club from the very start has been "quality". The course has been designed and built to the highest standards. The same can be said for the clubhouse that is due for completion in March. It is a magnificent building that blends with the surrounding countryside and is located to maximise the wonderful views over the golf course and surrounding woods and farmland.

Naturally, putting such an emphasis on quality doesn't come cheap and there has been considerable capital outlay in the lead up to the spring opening. The members that have joined the club and who will join the club do so because they have seen that the quality of site, design, build and maintenance on the course and clubhouse are of the very highest standards. Corners have not been cut, we have been patient and it shows.

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This month, BIGGA's Education and Training Manager, Ken Richardson, answers some commonly asked questions

EDUCATION UPDATE

UPDATE

Watch out for news of this year's TORO Excellence in Greenkeeping Competition and TORO Student of the Year Competition in future editions of Greenkeeper International. Excellence in Greenkeeping leaflets will be delivered to all golf clubs in the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland soon and Student of the Year Competition leaflets to all training providers shortly.

Thanks to the continued sponsorship of Amazone Ground Care and support from the R&A, the BIGGA Golf Environment Competition will run again this year. Full details will be sent to all golf clubs in Great Britain.

Launched at BTME, the BIGGA Essay Competition is open to entries from Course Managers/Head Greenkeepers and their deputies, Assistant Greenkeepers/Students over the age of 25 and Assistant Greenkeepers/Students under the age of 25. The prize winner in each category wins £500. The theme for this year is "Managing without chemicals" (Is it possible, is it viable, is it necessary). Watch out for further details in future editions of this magazine.

The BTME 2000 presentation made by Bettina Schrickel, "Is the grass really greener on the other side?" was unfortunately omitted from the Video Order Form for BTME 2000. The presentation is available for sale, please contact BIGGA House for an updated Order Form.

Writing this article reminds me of the visit my wife and I made, to the recording of a Carol concert some three weeks before Christmas, when we had to imagine that it was 8.05 am on Christmas morning. My wife thought it ever so odd that clergymen could mislead the general public so easily.

I hope that I will not mislead you in the following notes, which I have written to answer some of the questions raised during the recent survey carried by BIGGA HQ. It would take me a very long time to answer each question individually and, as many of them ask the same or similar questions, they can easily be answered together.

Q. Is there a demo disk for Epani?

A. At the time the question was asked, a demo disk was not available.

However, if you visited BTME then you should have been able to get information from the Epani stand. If you still need further information then please contact me again.

Q. Where can I get information on training courses?

A. In this magazine, on the Internet, from colleges, from leaflets distributed by BIGGA, in the Developing Your Potential booklet, at BTME, at Scotsturf, at Westurf, at Saltext, from your Regional Administrator.

Q. Do BIGGA run management training courses?

A. Yes. At BIGGA House during October and November and around the regions during autumn and spring. Leaflets distributed to all golf clubs in May/June.

Q. Why don't you run more specialist courses?

A. We try to run courses to meet demand but if do not attract sufficient delegates, ie. at least six, then they have to be cancelled.

Q. Why can't BIGGA feed money back to Sections to help youngsters go to college?

A. It is the responsibility of all employers to train their staff. However, BIGGA recognises that some clubs cannot afford to send their staff to training while others prefer to spend their money elsewhere.

Therefore, BIGGA launched a refund of fees scheme some two years ago, which, thanks to the Education and Development Fund, awards refunds of up to £250 per year to those members who have to pay their own fees.

Q. Does BIGGA sell a CD ROM which contains information on greenkeeping.

A. No, but we do sell Jim Arthur's book "Practical Greenkeeping".

Moreover, the National Education Conference and BTME Seminar Transcripts for 2000 are available on CD priced £25 each.

Q. How do my City and Guilds qualifications compare with N/SVQ?

A. There is no direct comparison as the pre 1990 City and Guilds qualifications were knowledge based and N/SVQs are competence (ability to do the job) based. However, a City and Guilds Phase 2 qualification with appropriate experience may be equivalent to an N/SVQ Level 2. A City and Guilds Phase 3 plus appropriate experience may be equivalent to an N/SVQ Level 3 but some people may need top up training to meet the National Standards.

Q. How many days holiday am I entitled to?

A. A minimum of 20 days paid holiday. Unfortunately, as the law currently stands, employers may include eight public holidays within this 20 days.

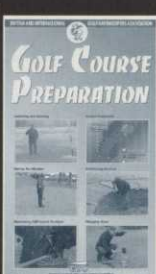
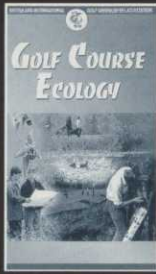
Q. Where can I get information on pesticide spraying qualifications?

A. Most colleges run pesticide training courses. BIGGA will organise courses if sufficient numbers are willing to attend (ie six delegates).

Q. What level are the current BIGGA computer courses.

A. Basic introductory level. Intermediate and advanced courses may follow as demand increases. Remember that many colleges offer Computer Literacy and Information Technology Courses (CLAIT) courses and TEC/LECS have schemes such as technology buses etc.

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Over 100 new members were welcomed to the Association in December 1999 by BIGGA's Membership Services Officer Tracey Maddison...

It could be you!

Will you be BIGGA's 7,000th member? Whether you are joining BIGGA or renewing your membership you could be the 7,000th member. Watch this space for further details.

Many of you will be due to renew your membership at the end of this month. Don't forget, if you pay for your own subscriptions, you can take advantage of paying by direct debit and spreading the cost over 10 equal monthly payments. 25% of members are already taking advantage of this service, why don't you?

If you are retiring from greenkeeping at the end of this month, congratulations! However, your BIGGA membership doesn't have to retire with you. Why not apply for retired membership of BIGGA and keep in touch with your friends and the industry? Contact Tracey or Kirstie in the membership department for further details.

Once you have returned your completed renewal form, together with payment, we will send you a new 2000 Membership Renewal Pack, containing useful information and telephone numbers regarding the many benefits and services available to you as a valued member of BIGGA. Read it and keep it for future reference - one day you may be glad you did!

If you have any queries or any general enquiries regarding membership services or benefits, please contact Tracey or Kirstie on 01347 833800.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of Kirstie and myself to say how nice it was to meet and chat with all those who were able to call onto the Membership Services Stand at BTME 2000 last month.



BIGGA welcomes...

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William P Bell, Central
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Brian W Duguid, East
Paul Hay, East
Kenneth A Henderson, North
Qin Junning, Central
Steven Lamb, East
Shaun P MacDonald, North
Stuart Muir, Central
Duncan J Wright, Central
Xu Xiao, Central
Haung Ziaofeng, Central

Northern Region

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Andrew Billings, Sheffield
Keith D Blaylock, North East
Gareth Bullock, Northern
David R Creaser, Sheffield
Andrew Fenn, Sheffield
Scott Greaves, North West
Alan D Jackson, North West
Adam P Kendall, Sheffield
Richard Knowles, North West
John A Longcake, North West
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Paul Redford, North West
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Nicholas W Clarke, Midland
Michael T Fowkes, Midland

Peter Gibbins, BB&O

Scott Glover, Midland
Gavin T Heath, Midland
Peter A Jenkin, E of England
Andrew D Jones, Midland
Andrew Laing, Midland
Stephen Massingham, E of England
Russell D Moody, E of England
Andrew Pearson, Midland
John M Smith, E of England
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Gavin Cranness, East Anglia
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Wayne C Eyres, Surrey
Brian Gillespie, Surrey
Andrew M Guy, Kent
Andrew J P Haskell, Surrey
Barry D Hawkes, East Anglia
Rodney Hensby, Surrey
Ian S Kendrick, Kent
Christos J Kyriazis, Kent
Ewan D McCabe, East Anglia
James Morris, London
Eddy Oliver, Surrey
Mark Pisani, Surrey
Matthew Pratt, East Anglia
Michael J Scarr, East Anglia
Glyn P Taylor, East Anglia
Gareth Upham, East Anglia
Michael Walsh, Essex
Gareth P Weekes, Surrey
Ben D Whelton, Surrey
Stephen R Whitwell, E Anglia
Andrew M Winter, East Anglia
Gareth D Winter, East Anglia

S West & S Wales Region

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Christopher Ball, South West
Simon P Bell Tye, S Coast
Duncan Brown, South Coast
Paul J Downham, S Coast
Alan J Jacobsen, South Coast
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Colin Revill, South West
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Check out
March's
edition for
January's
new members!

Maxi or mini? Trevor Downing of J Rothschild Assurance gives some useful advice on ISAs

Individual Savings Accounts – Know your limits

The introduction of the Individual Savings Account in April was accompanied by a great deal of advertising and press coverage. Since then you have doubtless been inundated by countless messages selling the virtues of the various options available. This may have left you a little uncertain as to which of these options is most appropriate for your needs.

Choosing the right ISA is critical. With the choice of 'maxi' or 'mini' plans, incorporating 'stocks and shares', 'insurance' and 'cash' elements, investors have never had such choice. However, these choices have added to the complication and confusion currently associated with ISAs. This uncertainty will no doubt be exacerbated by the reductions to the ISA

subscription limits that will take effect from April 2000.

Obviously, if you are looking to take full advantage of the increased limits during this tax year then you will need to act fast by maximising your ISA contributions before April 5, 2000 therefore the option available to you is simple, use it or lose it!

The St James's Place ISA deliberately

focuses on the 'stocks and shares' elements (both maxi and mini) and builds on the successful approach of the St James's Place PEP offered in previous years.

If you have yet to utilise this tax year's high (maximum £7,000) allowance or would simply like to find out more about ISAs as a form of tax-efficient saving, please contact Trevor Downing on 01959 500427.

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Ad Ref 126

Scott MacCallum travels to England's easterly most point to meet a man who eats, drinks and breathes his golf

Through and through



Slice John Beamish through the middle and the drinkers among you may be a little disappointed. Instead of finding copious quantities of the black liquid with which he shares a name you are more likely to discover the words Rookery Park Golf Club. Because John Beamish is Rookery Park through and through.

He has worked for the Lowestoft club since 1964, been Head Greenkeeper since 1984 and when the the course

relocated to its present site to make way for a housing development John bought one of the houses.

"I live on the 4th tee. I know that because the tree that overlooked the tee is still there," laughed John, who is very open about the place the golf club holds in his life.

"I'm married to the golf course," he says and it is not said a boast, just as a matter of fact statement.

And it is obviously a happy union

because John is held in such high regard that the Club Manager, David Kelly, nominated him for last year's Toro Award for Excellence in Greenkeeping and a Highly Recommended plaque now hangs in the clubhouse lounge.

"Mr Kelly kept it quite that he was nominating me and I only found out about it when he presented me with the forms. To tell you the truth I was apprehensive about the thought of being judged but I was really delight-

Through and through

"The team is good because of everybody in it not because of any one person"

"At the moment I don't know whether it is a bit like the King's clothes and we're being sold something we can't see... although I'm sure eventually it will be the way we've got to go."



ed, particularly that I was also backed by the committee."

Eric James conducted the course visit and once he'd completed the form filling revealed to John just how impressed he had been with the set-up at Rookery Park.

"It is a real feather in my cap and I certainly didn't expect it," said John, as he sat in the clubhouse overlooking the course.

John started work as an 18 year-old in 1964 having attended horticultural college in Leatherhead, Surrey and it fulfilled his desire to work outside.

"Basically I heard about the job, went to see the Captain and was lucky enough to get it. In those days it wasn't much more than a grass cutting job. If we saw 40 people on the course a day, 20 even through the week we were doing well. Now we've got 1000 members and most days the course is full."



John worked under four or five Head Greenkeepers before landing the top job himself.

"I'd applied a couple of times but, you know how it is, you're told that you already work here so we've got the value of you anyway. But in 1984 I got the chance and I've never looked back."

John, and his team of five soon to be six, have their work cut out because as well as the 6,700 plus yard course spread out over 360 acres there is also a nine hole par-3 course.

"We have a very stable team. The last man in arrived three years ago and some have been with me for ten years. The team is good because of everybody in it, not because of any one person," said John who possesses a nice line in self deprecating humour.

"We try and keep the par-3 to the same standard as the main course but obviously the main course will always come first."

"We really are a grass factory because in the summer every part of the course has to be cut every week - and that's without throwing fertiliser about."

John has a voracious thirst for knowledge and he is a regular attendee of Harrogate - BTME 2000 was his eighth - and he will travel far to attend seminars he thinks will help him improve.

"I love Harrogate. I love the idea of it and it has helped me through my career through what I've learned."

"Sometimes, over breakfast, you learn more than you do in any seminar but I do sign up for all the seminars, especially the ones about health and safety. I also do a lot of reading. That's the only way to pick up knowledge. You can't stick your head in the sand as when the Health and Safety man

comes around you might have a problem," said John.

"I'll do anything to cover up weaknesses or better still to turn weaknesses into strengths. I often phone up the health and safety executive and ask advice. If you have a problem you are as well going to the people who make the decisions as anyone else. They can help you to develop what you've got rather than walk in afterwards and change everything. That's the theory and I believe it works," said John, who speaks as a man who has two Health and Safety Officers who regularly play the course.

The golf course is a tough test, perhaps suited to the longer hitters while a decision was taken recently to reduce the height of the rough to help speed up play.

"We are also heavily involved in a bunker and fairway drainage programme. The course is built on clay and we lie wet for about three months of the year."

The on-going work has been laid down in a five year policy document to ensure that a continuity of development is maintained.

"We can add to it but it is very much a framework which can't be changed. A copy of this is given to new committee members so they don't come in blind and know exactly where we are heading."

"This is a professional business now, it's one of the main changes I've seen since I started. Everything we do has got to be done properly and to the ultimate standard."

The examination of that standard was thorough when Rookery Park played host to an East Anglia Section event last year and 60 greenkeepers converged on the course.



"I was a bit apprehensive but it was a good day for greenkeepers and a good day for our course. In fact they want to come back again this year. I do believe if you are pleased with your course in the season you should be pleased to show it off."

John is currently trying to get away from the use of fungicides and he is looking at the biological methods.

"At the moment I don't know whether it is a bit like the King's clothes and we're being sold something we can't see... although I'm sure eventually it will be the way we've got to go."

"As it stands you've got to commit a certain amount of money to a programme which you must stick to, whereas with fungicide you only use what you feel you need. Having said that, I do think it's the way to go and I will keep track of it."

It is a pragmatic approach borne out of experience.

"Years ago I'd look at the latest machine, think it's wonderful, go for it and sometimes catch a cold so my philosophy is now to be a year to 16 months behind. I'll let others be the trail blazers."

On the construction front the team is currently working on a tee replacement programme - three per year.

"With so much play we need wider tees so that is what we are doing. All work is done in-house unless we need specialist skills or equipment," he explained.

Speaking with John Beamish it is easy to forget that he has 35 years in the industry as his enthusiasm and genuine love for what he is doing, and where he is going, shines through.



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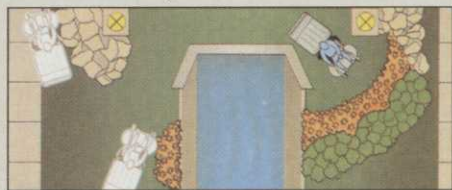
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FAST, EASY, BEAUTIFUL MOWING

It is hard to imagine running a modern golf course without the internal combustion engine, yet it is less than fifty years ago since the first greensmowers were introduced and even less time for the ride-on triples. Roland Taylor investigates...

New for old



I remember a greenkeeper telling me that he started in the profession working with his three brothers for their father on a course in Scotland. Each of the sons had a push Certes and was expected to cut six greens before he had breakfast. Anyone who has experienced pushing a multi-bladed mower will know just how hard this is, and I am sure that the introduction of power was a great relief for many. The introduction of petrol and diesel engines not only made the task easier, it also saved considerable time and money. Certainly petrol engines had been on mowers since the beginning

of the century, but these were often heavy cumbersome beasts so one suspects there was a reluctance to put any of them on those hallowed greens. In all probability, no manufacturer considered it a viable proposition to include a powered multi-bladed greens mower in their range. Even in the 1920's, records show that in general there was very little engine-powered equipment being used on courses. The capital outlay involved may have been a major contributing factor in these cases.

One problem was the size and weight of an engine in relationship to

its output. The advent of new materials such as aluminium and advancements in engine technology saw the introduction of lightweight units. These were easier to start and more reliable at punching out greater horsepower for their size. Designers of grass cutting and turf care equipment welcomed them and they were soon included in their new introductions. Diesel engines took longer to reach the stage of diminished dimensions and the ability to recover quickly when placed under load. Technology soon found the answers and the small diesel unit was born. This type of unit is now

New for old

common place on most courses.

Unfortunately storm clouds were on the horizon for engine manufacturers and users, as scientists started talking about greenhouse affects and ozone layers. Legislators took up the theme especially in the United States. It was back to the drawing board for engine manufacturers as stringent reduction levels of pollutants especially carbon monoxide (CO₂) from the combustion engine were scheduled for introduction. Whilst very little legislation on this subject has occurred here in the UK to-date, it is only a matter of time before we will see some something on the statutory books. However, the new engines we find on equipment today



are compliant with USA regulations on air pollution as well as meeting noise level constraints.

The engine is such a vital component, its performance, as well as being environmental friendly, is critical to the efficiency of any piece of equipment. For this reason it needs to be carefully monitored. A engine never lasts forever and whilst it may start well over time, wear and tear will take its toll - output levels drop, more fuel and oil is consumed and emission and noise levels increase. In addition the chances of breakdowns are escalated.

Where an engine is showing signs of deterioration or becoming problematic there are three choices available; a repair, short engine block or a new engine.

Repair

This is usually the first course of action. The fault may be easily rectified, but it may be the first symptoms of trouble ahead so it should be taken seriously and obviously the repairer should be able to advise. In the case of serious overhaul being required there are two alternatives available. If the machine is showing signs of other problems relating to drives or cutting systems this would be the time to consider a complete replacement.

Short engine (Short block)

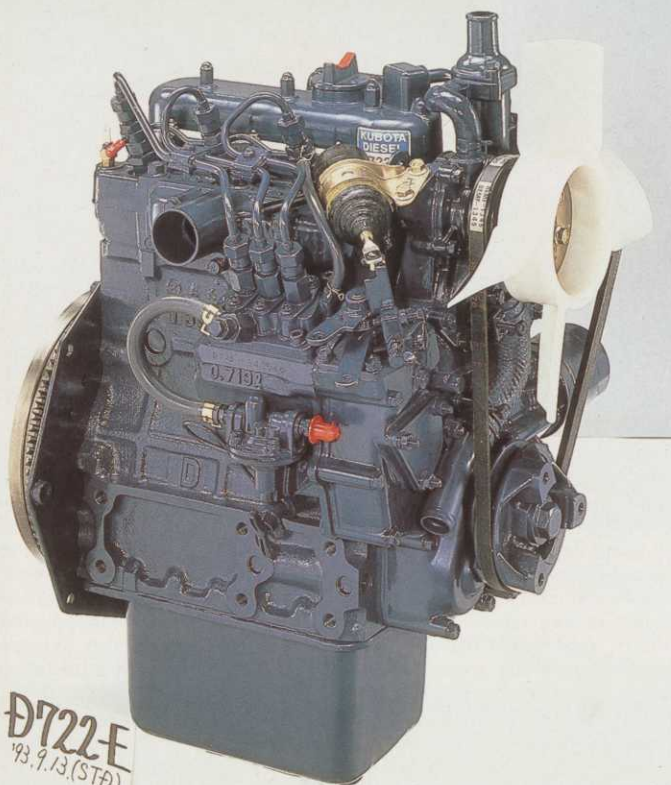
This is available from some manufacturers and can be a less expensive way of acquiring what amounts to a

new engine. The unit consists of a new cylinder block including valves, head and pistons. In fact it is taken off the assembly line before all the components such as flywheels carburettor and electrics are fitted. Not only will it have warranty cover, it will also be the latest version. The only drawback to this choice is the labour rate a service engineer will charge as this could escalate the price bringing it into the new engine category. If the work is done in-house, this could be a cost effective alternative and is certainly an avenue worth investigating.

New engine

The advantage here is that the unit should be bang up-to-date and carry a full warranty period. This replacement situation also offers another course of action and that is to fit an alternative power source i.e. diesel instead of petrol. Before going down this route the rest of the machine needs checking out to ensure all the other components are in good working order. Where a change in the make of engine is being considered then it is important to check what, if any, modifications to mountings or drives will need to be made to accommodate the new power unit. The engine supplier will be able to advise, generally there are kits available.

Whatever course of action is taken any engine needs to be regularly and well maintained. In the pressurised world we live in it is easy to forget the



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little things that through neglect suddenly and unexpectedly turn into a large problem. These can often be avoided by what amounts to a quick and simple routine such as checking the oil level every time the engine is used, or cleaning dried grass and accumulated dirt from cooling areas such as fins and radiators.

Combustion pollution is very much an issue at present maintenance plays an important part in keeping emission levels low. A worn unit will burn oil whilst a badly adjusted carburettor will drastically increase the amounts of poisonous gases being pumped into the atmosphere. It will also increase the running costs, not just in the fuel and oil it consumes, but also in the time a particular job takes to be carried out. We have all had the experience of using a new piece of equipment and discovered how much easier and faster it is.

Engine technology has come a long way over the last two decades with the introduction of:

- virtually trouble-free electronic ignition
- increased output from smaller more compact units
- reductions in fuel and oil consumption
- lower emissions and reduced noise and levels

The race is on to find alternative sources of fuel and already we have

seen the use of electric power on golf course equipment. Green diesel made from natural products is also available, although there is not very much evidence of it being taken up here in the UK. On a lighter note, cooking oil is being used in diesels in the USA - the only drawback is that a trail of fumes smelling like 'french fries' is left in the vehicle's wake!

Engines are also now becoming available that have been specifically designed to run on Liquid Propane Gas or natural gas. At present these are mainly being fitted on stationary standby units such as generators, but it will not be long before there will be models suitable for mobile equipment. These should not be confused with the petrol engine Calor gas conversion kits that have been on the market for many years.

From time to time, we see in the press details of power cells and this is an area that is being explored especially by automobile manufacturers. There is plenty going on behind the scenes in the quest for environmentally friendly fuels.

However, regardless of what manufacturer incorporate into their engines, at the end of the day it is the user who has the ultimate responsibility to ensure they are maintained correctly. It also makes sense that by looking after an engine it will give the optimum performance and is less likely to break down.

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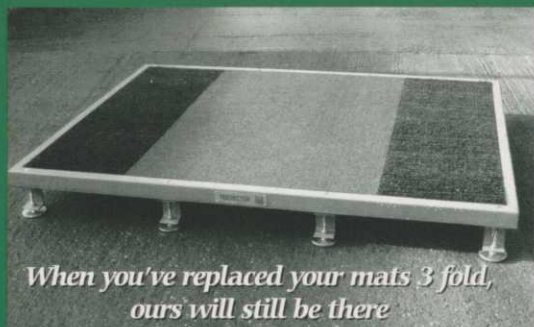
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In a follow up to last month's article in *Greenkeeper International* on the the Valderrama Declaration and the Committed to Green Foundation, Scott MacCallum travelled to Dorking to meet David Stubbs, and discuss the issues surrounding Committed to Green...

Green Issues

THE DAVID STUBBS INTERVIEW

Greenkeeper International: Can you tell me about the Committed to Green Foundation and why the decision was taken to move on from the European Golf Association Ecology Unit?

David Stubbs: I see the new Foundation as a seamless progression from the original Ecology Unit, which had been going for the last six years. It started as an in-house environmental advisory unit within the European Golf Association, essentially to help the golf authorities gain a proper understanding of environmental issues and how best to deal with the green lobby. We first developed An Environmental Strategy for Golf in Europe (published 1995), and this led on to a pilot project on a sample of courses from all over Europe, with a view to setting up an Environmental Management Programme for golf.

Early on we received vital support from the European Commission, which enabled us to take the programme forward and establish what is now known as Committed to Green. In the course of time, it was felt by our main funding partners - the R&A, European Tour and EGA - that the best way forward for Committed to Green would be on an independent basis. A key concern is credibility. If golf is to gain public acceptance as an environmentally friendly activity, we need a clear, credible system to demonstrate what is being achieved. An in-house green label would not make sense.

The new Committed to Green Foundation will, therefore, be an independent, not-for-profit trust, based in the UK but with a pan-European remit. We are in contact with the

Charity Commission to try to obtain Charitable Status. Although our environmental and educational goals are generally accepted as charitable, to confine our activities purely to golf courses would not be. A charity has to offer general benefit to the public as a whole, and golf is too narrow a field.

As it happens, over the last few years there has been an increasing debate within other sports about environmental issues. In some circles there is talk of a European green label for sport. Given all we have already done in golf, I think it is essential that we are active players in this growing debate. It will give our Foundation the necessary wider scope, and for golf it should ensure that the game remains at the forefront of future developments in this field.

GI: Within the Foundation are there mechanisms for consultation with people who are working within the industry like greenkeepers?

DS: The Foundation is run by an independent Board of Trustees. We certainly plan to set up some form of consultative forum, whereby interested parties - funding bodies, industry organisations, environmental groups, etc - come together to discuss current issues, to help us develop our strategy and action programme. I see this as an advisory commission, but very important in guiding our work. It should certainly include greenkeeping representation.

We also have a Technical Working Group to discuss the nuts and bolts of the Committed to Green programme. This started under the Ecology Unit and is basically for the National Ecology Officers who are employed by

their respective national golf federations. These are not strictly ecologists, some are, but others come from more agronomic backgrounds, and some are in fact ex-greenkeepers. Their role is to develop golf-environment projects in their country and this means regular contact with greenkeepers on the courses they visit. Our group meetings usually involve the greenkeeper from our host site.

GI: It doesn't sound as though there are any formal arrangements for anyone from the greenkeeping profession to contribute to those meetings?

DS: That is fair comment. My feeling is that through the original pilot projects, the continual work of the National Ecology Officers and liaison with clubs already signing up to Committed to Green, we have had considerable input from the greenkeeping profession. There is no way anyone can say we have ignored greenkeepers, but I do accept that this has not been apparent at a formal association level and I suppose that is where the problem is perceived.

One important principle I am keen to maintain is that all formal contact between the Committed to Green Foundation and the greenkeeping profession should be via FEGGA. We are a European programme and we need to be able to communicate with greenkeepers at that level. When FEGGA delegates come to our meetings - such as the recent Valderrama Summit - they are representing all 22 national greenkeeper associations, including BIGGA. We are doing exactly the same with the golf architects.

In future, therefore, we will certainly be happy for FEGGA to participate

What is the Valderrama Declaration?

The Valderrama Declaration reads as follows:

Golf is a game rich in tradition and heritage, which owes its origins to nature. The first golf courses were formed entirely by natural elements and the game evolved to fit what nature provided.

However, like in many other sports, the pressures of modern life have tended to move the game away from its natural origins, as courses have increasingly become concentrated near to large population centres. Moreover, the growth of the game has spread golf far beyond its original climatic region, which has led to the need to confront new challenges in the field of course design and construction, and the management of turfgrass and water resources. The television image of manicured perfection reinforces the risk of golf becoming more and more disconnected from its natural environment. This is having a fundamental effect on how the game is played and perceived.

Golf has an enormous global following. It has the capacity to motivate and inspire. At the same time, when pursued without the limitations of a guiding environmental ethic, it can impact severely on ecosystems and communities. Golf is both influenced by, and exerts an influence on, the society and the natural environment in which it takes place. By drawing on its traditions and values, golf has therefore a remarkable opportunity, and a responsibility, to play a positive role in moulding the attitudes and goals of the world in which we live and to set an example in environmental stewardship. Over recent years the golfing bodies in the USA and Europe have achieved a greater understanding of the environmental aspects of golf course construction and management. By using science as a foundation for research and education programmes in the areas of turfgrass management, sustainable development and environmental protection it has been possible to develop initiatives and partnerships for the benefit of golf, the environment and people.

These actions represent long-term commitments embodied in the philosophy of a 'Green Games' ethic: a combination of environmental stewardship, economic efficiency and social responsibility, which together form the cornerstones of the international sporting community's Agenda 21. By subscribing to this ethic, and by continuing to support the principles and practices of the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program and Committed to Green the golf community declares its commitment to sustainability and respect for its natural heritage.

Signed on behalf of the golf authorities by

F Morgan Taylor, President of the USGA
Peter Dawson, Secretary of the R&A
Dieter Usner, President of the EGA

Also endorsed on behalf of sport and the environmental community by

Pal Schmitt, Chairman, International Olympic Committee Sport and Environmental Commission
Claude Martin, Director General, World Wide Fund for Nature International
Jacqueline Aloisi de Larderel, Director Technology, Industry and Economics Division
United Nations Environment Programme
James Currie, Director General Environment, European Commission

actively in our Consultative Forum and Technical Working Group meetings. Meanwhile at a national level the Ecology Officers will continue to work with their national greenkeeper associations and that will give us another line of feedback.

GI: There is a feeling perhaps that BIGGA being the largest greenkeeping association and with UK viewed as the leading golf force in Europe that BIGGA should be given a slightly greater voice.

DS: BIGGA is a key member of FEGGA and has its influence through that route. I believe it is important to stick to the principle of FEGGA being our single point of contact for the entire European greenkeeping profession.

GI: From where did the initiative for Committed to Green initially come?

DS: In our early meetings with the European Commission, they mentioned the Blue Flag scheme for bathing beaches. You go to a beach, see a blue flag flying, and know it is clean and safe. They felt we could take a similar approach and develop a green flag for golf courses to prove their environmental credentials.

The Blue Flag is underpinned by the Bathing Water Directive, a simple, legal threshold for water quality. No such scheme would work for golf, so instead we took an Environmental Management System approach. You may have heard of EMAS or ISO14001, international standards for environmental management. They are primarily aimed at large enterprises and are very bureaucratic and costly. However, their basic structure and principles can readily be adapted to smaller situations. So, in effect we have shadowed EMAS, stripped it down to reflect the scale and nature of golf courses and branded it Committed to Green. In this way we have a product which addresses golf in a relevant and practical way, yet is based around the structure of an internationally recognised management system.

Our biggest problem in golf was the perception from the outside world that the game was anti-environment. Although we have made good progress in putting forward a more positive case, there are still plenty of people who think golf courses are bad for the environment. Committed to Green is therefore a tool for helping golf clubs to show that they are being responsibly managed and to gain public recognition for their environmental

achievements. It is not a question of interfering with how courses are managed. It is a voluntary programme and it is up to participating clubs to progress according to their wishes and circumstances. We want to help them gain full recognition but there is no compulsion.

I know many greenkeepers say that they are doing much of this already. That's true, but largely this is being done individually in an unstructured way. If we could bring all this together under the Committed to Green label "from all across Europe" imagine the positive effect of hundreds, even thousands, of golf clubs taking an environmental lead. It would be a huge statement by the golf community which would be immensely beneficial for the game as a whole.

GI: Do you think the public perception of golf is still negative or has this changed over the last five years?

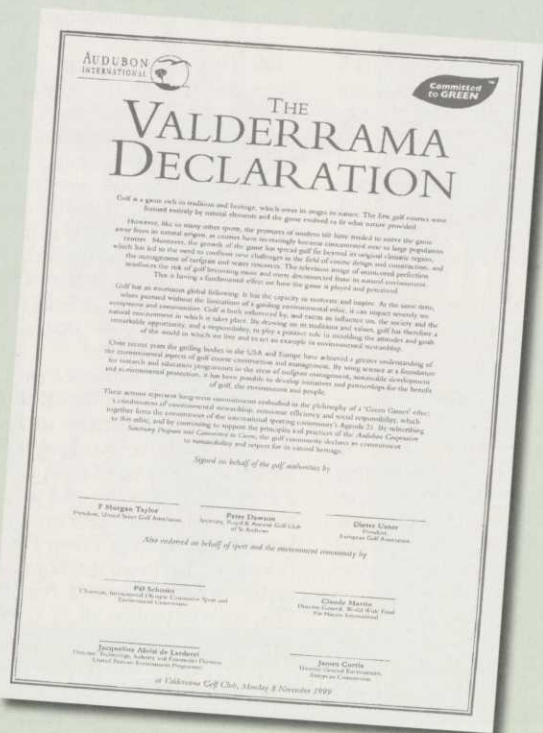
DS: It has improved but there is still a long way to go. Attitudes in the UK have always been less hostile than on the continent but we must never be complacent. To establish and maintain a positive public perception of golf is a long-term, continual task. There is still a lot of work to be done.

GI: On a practical level, on the implementation of the programme, who are you highlighting to carry out the programme for you at individual golf clubs?

DS: Committed to Green is about teamwork. I have often seen greenkeepers doing great conservation work on their course but without any support or involvement from others.

In most cases the greenkeeper will be the pivotal person in devising and implementing the programme. I certainly cannot imagine a club achieving full Committed to Green recognition without the active participation of the greenkeeper, but nor will any club achieve recognition solely on the greenkeepers' efforts. It has to involve members, other staff and perhaps even local specialists.

The starting point of Committed to Green is for a club to adopt an environmental policy statement and to create a Committed to Green Team. That will ensure broader support and legitimacy for the project. Remember, the programme is not just about conservation on the golf course. It embraces a wide range of technical aspects - obvious course related matters such as nature conservation, turf and water management, as well as



broader topics such as energy efficiency, waste management, purchasing policies and communications. These topics can relate to the club as a whole (buildings and dealings with the local community), so there has to be input from other people in the club.

GI: Do you find your enquiries come from greenkeepers who already have environmental policies of their own in operation?

DS: I quite accept that in many cases the initiative will come from greenkeepers but not exclusively so. Remember we are promoting Committed to Green across Europe and the situation varies from country to country. Sometimes the initial contact comes from a member, Chair of Green or Club Secretary, in other cases the National Ecology Officer may make a presentation to a club meeting. Whether or not the greenkeeper makes the first move, he or she is soon closely involved.

GI: I am not saying it should be greenkeeper-led but that the implication is that they can do the physical work but the thinking should be left to other people. That is perhaps why there is an element of antipathy towards the programme?

DS: I do not see Committed to Green as necessarily being greenkeeper-led. The whole concept is to involve the club as a whole - that is the only way to achieve lasting improvements. Across the different management categories I expect the bulk of the practical implementation will fall to the green staff - hence their pivotal role - but the planning and presentation of the programme should involve the whole of the Committed to Green Team. To my mind that is a way forward for greenkeepers to have their work better appreciated and understood. I have not sensed any antipathy among the greenkeepers I have met but certainly we need to listen to any concerns from the profession generally.

GI: What has been the response since you were launched? How many clubs have registered within the UK?

DS: It is still early days but I think there has been a good reaction from the golf community. As the former Ecology Unit, we have not strenuously promoted Committed to Green, preferring to leave this to the National Ecology Officers, who can then provide good back up. That means the main response so far has been on the

Continent. In countries like England and Wales, where there is not yet an Ecology Officer, interested clubs have been contacting direct to my office, or via Bob Taylor at the STRI.

GI: How does the Scottish Golf Course Wildlife Charter fit into Committed to Green?

DS: Committed to Green is a flexible structure, able to accommodate different national approaches. We have a common entry point (i.e. registration) and everyone eventually works towards a common goal (i.e. full recognition at European level). How they get there will depend greatly on the focus and support provided at national level. In this respect the Scottish Charter fits perfectly into the system.

GI: In effect the Scottish Charter would be seen as an "O" level as opposed to the "A" level that is final Committed to Green status?

DS: The Charter is an important, integral part of the Scottish programme and confers valuable status on those who have been awarded it. The focus is more particularly on wildlife and natural heritage aspects whereas the full Committed to Green programme is meant to be a fully integrated plan including aspects like communication, education waste management and energy efficiency. In this way the Charter is an essential intermediate step in the procession along the Committed to Green path for Scottish clubs that choose to go this route.

GI: There is a concern it is the elite end of the market and that it is the big name golf clubs that have been signed up for it. Is the programme elitist?

DS: I'd reject that totally. The whole aim is to ensure that it is suitable to any club, any time, anywhere.

GI: The clubs you do hear about are Valderrama, Loch Lomond and The Belfry.

DS: We have over 20 clubs in Belgium, the same again in Austria and a whole pile in Finland all setting about their environmental programme. I bet you won't have heard of most of them! Here in England we have clubs like Temple (which everyone has heard about I guess) as well as Blundell's Hill, the Phoenix Club near Rotherham, Burnham Beeches, Merrist

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Wood and many more. So, no way is there a preponderance of big name clubs. In Scotland, clubs like Linlithgow and Kilmacolm are very much at the forefront of the initiative.

On the other hand, it is important to have the tournament venues like Valderrama and The Belfry involved. They are in the public eye and they set examples to the rest of the golfing world. Indeed they should arguably be leading the way in environmental management, but you are right that we do not want any small clubs to be put off.

GI: What is the cost of getting enrolled?

DS: There is no enrolment charge. The real cost is mental strain in terms of getting people, the Committed to Green Team, to think about environmental matters. Any real expenditure should be for things they would have done anyway to improve the course, not simply to get a green award. I just hope that by thinking green, people will find better solutions to management problems; ones which enhance the golf playing experience, improve the environmental quality of the course and make for more efficient management.

GI: The other comment you hear is that it is held up by some organisations and individuals as a good cause and is purely in existence for reasons of political correctness.

DS: I don't think the golf authorities would have spent all this time and energy in developing Committed to Green if it was purely a PR exercise. I really don't understand such sentiments. If people truly care about golf and want to see the game continue to develop, they must recognise that environmental concerns have to be addressed in a proper, professional way.

We are also getting significant recognition from respected environmental groups and individuals: such as WWF and Jonathon Porritt. They are not going to stand by and let golf get away with lip service, so we have to deliver.

GI: When do you think there will be a flow of clubs coming through and completing the programme?

DS: We are still working on the final recognition criteria but I hope that we can get an initial batch of fully certified clubs within the next year or so. It does take time. Bearing in mind your previous question, it would be disastrous if we rushed things through just to claim some numbers, without having everything in place. Credibility is the key: we need accepted Environmental

Performance Indicators, we need a pool of experts around Europe to help with verification, so nobody can turn round and say it is some kind of internal fix.

GI: So when do you think you'll be going around making presentations to clubs which have completed the programme?

DS: It would be nice to peg the presentations to some major event, so we get to all the golf media. We launched Committed to Green at the 1997 Ryder Cup, so maybe next year's matches at The Belfry would be a good target.

GI: What was the purpose of the Valderrama Summit?

DS: This needs explaining because I think there has been a few misunderstandings about the Summit.

The Valderrama Summit was primarily a joint meeting between the USGA Turfgrass and Environmental Research Committee and National Ecology Officers and researchers from Europe. It was to review research findings from the last decade and to discuss mechanisms for their practical application.

We then found we had the opportunity to invite top officials from the golf authorities and leading environmental organisations. In the end we had the Director Generals of the World Wide Fund for Nature International and the European Commission Environment Directorate, on the same platform as the Presidents of the USGA and EGA and the Secretary of the R&A. This does not happen every day and was a unique chance to get them to agree a joint statement on common principles and goals relating to golf and the environment - hence the Valderrama Declaration.

Given how only a few years ago WWF was so sceptical about golf, I feel this was a fantastic achievement and an exciting development. It is one which the golf industry as a whole should be supporting.

GI: The fact that it was initially a USGA committee meeting perhaps answers the comment about there being an American bias.

DS: There was no American bias. Those comments in last month's Greenkeeper International were ridiculous - they were inaccurate and offensive. The Summit had a well balanced programme focusing on issues, not a comparison between countries. Technical research has been predominantly American - that is a fact - so there was more emphasis on American

research but when it came to practical matters like nature conservation and Committed to Green, then there was ample input from European participants.

GI: Although there was an under representation of European greenkeeping?

DS: There were two FEGGA delegates there out of a total of about 35 Europeans. Indeed we had bent over backwards to make sure the greenkeepers were represented, so I am disappointed to hear such comments.

GI: How do you greet the news that member Associations of FEGGA have agreed that the programme can't be supported?

DS: I was very surprised and I certainly had no inkling of it. What we had asked for was an endorsement of the Valderrama Declaration; something we are putting to other golf organisations such as the PGAs and golf architects. Indeed we have received a very warm letter of support from the GCSAA.

The Valderrama Declaration is about traditional values of golf and good environmental practice. There is nothing here which can conceivably be antagonistic to greenkeepers. The invitation is still open to FEGGA to come on board, support Committed to Green and to work with us. I accept we can improve the communications there but it is a two way flow.

GI: What are your views on BIGGA's own Golf Environment Competition?

DS: I think it is a great initiative. At first I was concerned that the competition format creates a winner, while the efforts of all the others is unrewarded, which could be discouraging. However, the competition has progressed over the years and it is now a widely known entity. Indeed it could be an excellent feeder into Committed to Green. That would be a great opportunity for BIGGA to help our programme. All those entrants who do not gain an award could still be encouraged to take their environmental work forward through Committed to Green.

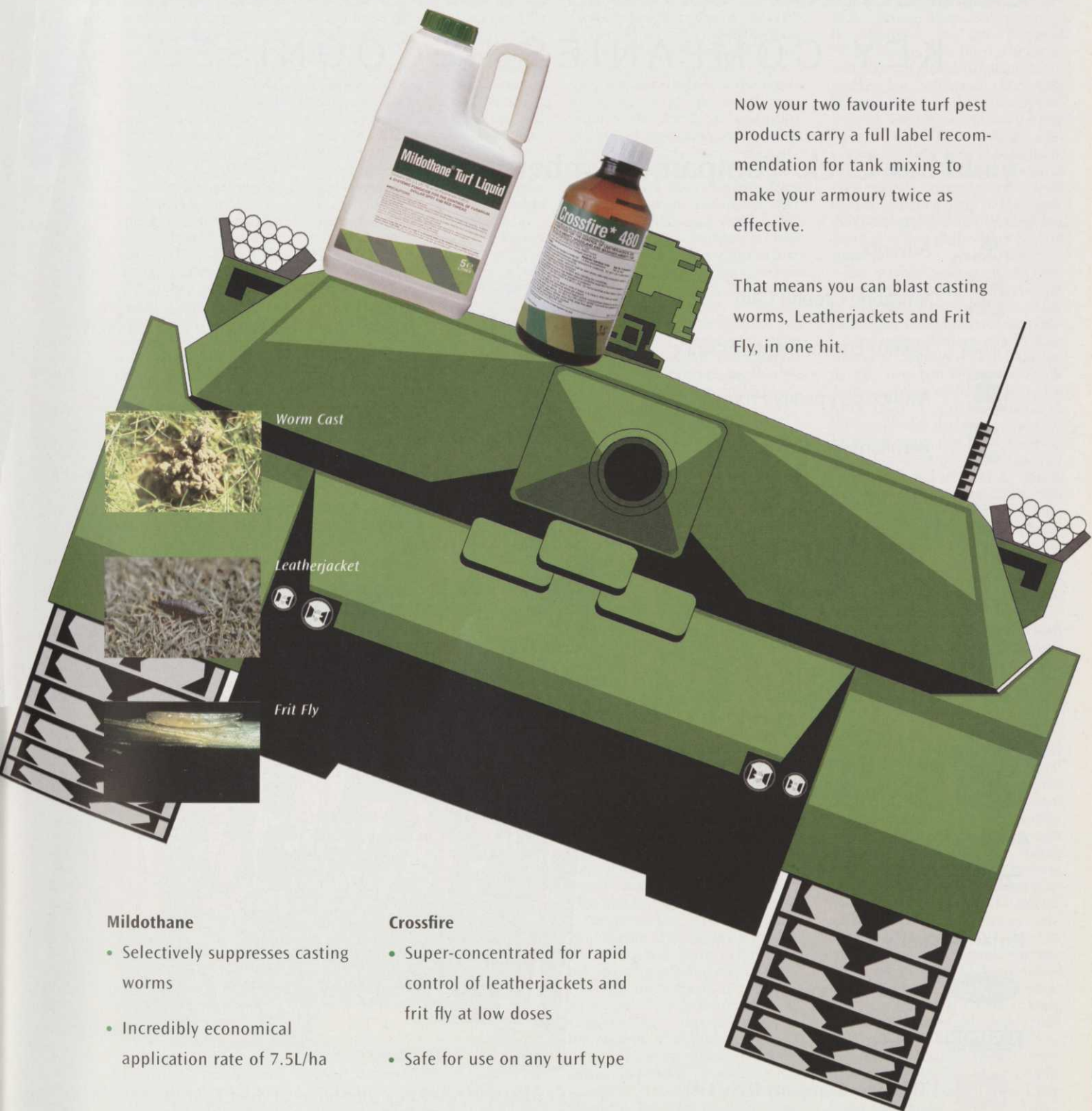
GI: Any other comments you'd like to make?

DS: Just to say I think we are all working towards common goals, and despite recent difficulties, I very much hope that the greenkeeping profession will get behind Committed to Green, so we can work together.

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West

Welcome to this month's news. Firstly I must apologise for the lateness of these notes and events, due to mis-scheduling. These items failed to materialise in the latter part of 1999.

The Autumn outing at Windyhill GC on 22 September was played on schedule. The day's weather started in an ominous fashion. However, by the time we teed off, the clouds gave way to broken spells of sunshine, although the wind was a touch breezy! A low turnout on the day with only forty three entries returned. Nevertheless some good golf, and some erratic golf, was played. Trust me on this. So here are the results of the day's play.

Scratch prize G. Bruen, East Kilbride 74-3 (71). First Class. First. L. Miller, Cowal GC, 80-9 (71). Second: B. Duncan, Drumpellier GC, 80-6 (74). Third: D. Gall, Cardross GC 84-9 (75). Second Class First. J. Brown, Bearsden GC, 78-11 (67). Second: T. Hindmarch, Erskine GC, 81-12 (69). Third: G. Semple, East Kilbride GC, 86-14 (72). Third Class, First: B. Brown, Douglas Park GC 94-25 (69). Second A. Donaghy, Erskine GC 91-20 (71). Third S. Murray, Douglas Park GC, 96-21 (75).

Trade Prize: B. Ingles, Greentech, 76-2 (74). Visitors prize: S. Harriet, Bearsden, GC 96-13 (83). The prize for nearest the pin went to L. Miller, Cowal GC. Longest drive went to S. Harriet, Bearsden GC.

A big thank you to the Captain and members of Windyhill GC for allowing us to use their course and facilities. Thanks also to Head Greenkeeper Mark McBride and his staff for having the course in great shape on the day, considering the rainfall that week and finally thanks to the Clubmaster, Andy Falkner, and his staff for all their efforts. A personal thank you also to Joe Bell for volunteering to sell raffle tickets. Your help is much appreciated. Fancy a job on the Committee?

On now to the second draw of the 100 Club and the lucky winner was none other than Jim Smith. Well done to you Jim.

Five-a-sides at Scotstoun, Sunday 3 October turned out to be a big disappointment for the organiser Stuart Taylor.

Only 12 teams entered for the tournament. Two teams gave a few days' notice of cancellation and on the day two more teams cancelled at the last minute. After the preliminary rounds the qualifiers were Crow Wood v East Kilbride/Pollock and Rigby Taylor/Killermont v Souters. Into the final went Rigby Taylor/Killermont v Crow Wood, with Rigby Taylor/Killermont winning by 1-0.

I have been asked by Stuart to thank Martin Carey, from Balmore GC, for arranging his team so well

and also to apologise to Windyhill GC for the decision taken on the day of awarding the points in the fashion that he did.

As mentioned previously Stuart Taylor was very disappointed and disillusioned with the poor turnout. It takes a lot of time and effort to organise these events for your benefit! Additionally a considerable amount of Section funds have been needlessly wasted booking extra pitches and referees that weren't required on the day. In future, please have some consideration for the organiser of any such event and give them sufficient notice of your intentions.

Nairn Brown, with John Deere's machinery demonstration roadshow, at Haggis Castle GC 7 October. A good turn out, at least a hundred bodies turned out representing councils and golf courses alike. A great opportunity to see the machines in action and a chance to have your backside on the seat and try out the latest equipment for yourself.

It is time to say farewell to Robert Hogarth who, by the time you are reading this, will have taken up his new post at the new McKenzie Hotel complex. We wish you all the best in your new post, Robert, and hope everything goes well for you.

Best wishes and every success to Tom Hindmarsh on his appointment at Cathcart Castle GC.

Stuart Taylor will be trying to arrange an 11-a-side match against the Central and Northern Section some time in February. Anybody interested should contact Stuart Taylor. Once again, please send me any information you have regarding anything! Well, just about anything. 0141-776-1532 M:07050-173080 Gavin Jarvis

North

As I write this on my computer in early January, I am wondering what all the fuss about Y2K was all about, or was it just that we were all so well prepared. That makes a change! Anyhow, my computer did not crash so here comes another boring old North Section report.

I attended the Scottish Region Patron's lunch in Stirling during December along with my Vice-Chairman Wilson Morrison and our two Patrons' Award winners John Geddes and Gordon Moir. We had an excellent meal in the company of our friends from the trade and once again RA, Peter Boyd, provided us with a great after meal speaker. All the Section winners were in attendance, which is very good and a great time was had by all. A huge vote of thanks must go to Peter for his efforts.

The Highland Golf Development Group ran an environmental seminar day at Nairn recently in conjunction with the Scottish Wildlife Trust. It was good to see many Section members present for what was a very informative day, with a range of speakers covering all the areas. Two members, Alan Dobbie, Boat of Garten, and Stuart Hogg, Fortrose, gave talks on their plans and how they are implementing them.

Both were excellent and could be used by BIGGA in future for seminars. After lunch Nairn head man, Ian Carson, took us out onto his lovely course to look around and discuss with Jonathan Smith of Scottish Wildlife Trust, areas that could be changed for the benefit of golfers and wildlife alike.

The day was excellent and credit must go to the HGD and its Officers, Neil Hampton who, incidentally, is the son of Section member George Hampton, Pitlochry. Their next seminar is this month at Tain and is called Golf Course Management - Facts not Fiction. I have been invited to speak to committee members and officials of clubs in the Highlands to try and give them an insight into the ways a greenkeeper looks after a golf course and how the officials and greenkeeper can work together to achieve, what, after all, should be a common goal.

I will present two papers in the morning and take delegates for a course and shed visit in the afternoon. Hopefully, as a result of this day, club officials will respect their greenkeeper better and officials from smaller clubs with no full time staff will learn a little about the job and what it entails.

Finally, in December's report, you may have seen me welcome Peter Culter to the Section. I checked my report and can honestly say that the mistake was not of my making!

Iain Macleod

Central

Here's the news you have all been waiting for! The number of the first winning ticket in the Club 2000 draw is No. 00247 and the lucky ticket holder is A. Brown, from Auchterarder. A cheque for £50 is already in the post. The winner of the February draw will be in next month's magazine.

On the new members front we welcome Sharon Laurie, from Elie Golf Club, and Willie 'Whitty' Whitfield, from STS, who are both rejoining the Section and also William Bell, from Tulliallan Golf Club, I bet he doesn't see much of his boss this year, Duncan Wright, Paul Brown and Stuart Muir, all from Elmwood Golf Course. They all put on their forms that they play golf, so surely the numbers at the golf tournaments will increase this year!

Congratulations go to Section member Elliott Small on his appointment as BIGGA Chairman and to John Philp from Carnoustie on his recent award in the New Year's Honour List. Well done to you both.

The entry forms for the Spring Tournament at St Andrews in April will be with you shortly, as this is also the second qualifying event for the National Tournament. If you want to be one of the lucky ones to participate in this prestigious tournament, PLEASE return your entry form, along with the entry fee, as soon as possible, as places are at a premium. I know I keep harping on about this but some of you do leave it to the last minute, which totally up the perfect organisation of the event. You can put your own letters in the blanks.

At the last committee meeting, various ideas were put forward as to how we can get more of you to participate in some of our events. A form regarding this will be sent to you and can I ask you to take the time to put your thoughts/ideas down, keeping them clean, as it is your section which the committee are running on your behalf and for your benefit.

John Crawford

Ayrshire

The Patrons' Christmas lunch was held on December 8 at the Terraces Hotel, Stirling. It was, as usual, expertly organised by our Regional Administrator, Peter Boyd. The entertainment was provided by after dinner speaker, Ian McPherson, from East Kilbride, who kept the company well amused. The main event was the presentation of the Patrons' Award with our two winners, Roland Blackburn, of Southernness, and Scott McLean, of West Kilbride, on hand to collect their awards, including a trip to Harrogate 2000. Congratulations to Roland and Scott as well as all the other Section winners.

The Ayrshire Section wish to echo the sentiments of the Scottish Region by extending a big thank you to the Patrons for their continued support.

News has reached me that Wallace Mercer of Skermolzie Golf Club has recently won best student at South Ayrshire College when completing his SVQ Level 3. Congratulations to Wallace for this fine achievement.

It is with regret that I have to report the sad news of the recent death of Harry Diamond after a long illness. Harry was a very distinguished character, well liked by all who knew him. He was a very prominent greenkeeper and was always very active within our Association, even after his retirement. On behalf of the Ayrshire Section I would like to extend my sincere condolences to Harry's family.

That's it. See you next month with news on Harrogate and anything else I hear. Any news please call on 01505 683278

Iain Barr

East

Well I hope everyone had a good start to the new Millennium and you are looking forward to the year ahead. The start of the new season is only a matter of a few weeks away so hopefully it will be a good start one. The Section held its annual dance at the start of December and a great night was had by everyone who was there. Hopefully we can get a few more along this year as numbers have dropped over the last couple of years. The Grand Draw was drawn at the dance and the top prizes were won by 1. TV/Video, name unknown, but it was a friend of Peter Ormiston, Uphall Golf Club. 2. CD Mini hi-fi, Richard Mullen, Swanston Golf Club. Various prizes were won by various other people, names can be obtained from Craig Pennyquick, Social Convener. A decision will be made soon if this is to continue this year. Watch this space.

If you have any ideas about the dance/grand raffle, or anything else

going on in the Section, drop me a line or give me a call on the usual numbers. Come on, let's hear from you because it's your section.

People on the move this month are yours truly. I am on the move to take up the position of Head Greenkeeper at West Linton Golf Club in January and I am looking forward to this as it will present a marvellous challenge and I look forward to working with the club who have a very progressive attitude and a large membership.

What makes it more exciting is working at a club that has former Masters and British Open Champion Sandy Lyle as a member. Having been at Swanston GC for nearly nine years, I must say I have had a great time over the years and have made a lot of friends in the Club. I would like to thank the Captain, Secretary, committee and all the staff and members for making it a very enjoyable time. I would like to wish the club all the best for the future and may it go from strength to strength. I will be back regularly for a game, so hopefully I'll see you all then.

At West Linton I am taking over from Donald Fraser who is retiring after 30 years with the club, so I, the club, members and staff wish Donald all the best in his retirement.

Moving back to Swanston, Richard Mullen, who was my deputy, has been promoted to Head Greenkeeper and Frank Forrest who was assistant greenkeeper, has been promoted to Deputy Head Greenkeeper. All the best to both of them in their new positions at Swanston and if either of them need any advice, don't forget my phone will always be switched off. All the best from the Section to both of them.

Committee member, Stuart Townsend and his wife Alison, have just had a baby, Rebecca. Both mum and baby are doing well. Congratulations to both of them from everyone in the East section. If anyone else knows of any births, etc., or any other information, let me know.

On a sad note, one of our past Scottish Chairman Harry Diamond, from the Ayrshire Section, passed away in early December, after an illness. Harry, who was Head Greenkeeper at Ayr Bellisle for many

years will be sadly missed in the Scottish Region as he was one of the true characters of the region. Our thoughts go out to his family.

Well, that's it all for this month. Next month we will have a report on BTME 2000 and any other news from around the Section. As I am moving I will have new phone numbers and address which will be published in next month's magazine for anyone who has any stories etc, to get in touch.

See you all next month.
Chris Yeaman.



Northern Region
Douglas Bell
Tel: 0151 431 0433

Sheffield

Firstly, on behalf of the Section our sincere thanks to Martyn Jones,

Senior Lecturer at Myerscough College for giving us a first class talk on microbiology. Martyn's reputation precedes him as a lecturer who is able to make even the driest subjects interesting and this was vindicated on the day. Our next lecture on the 4th of March at Rotherham Golf Club is by Mr. Simon Barnaby, of the Scotts Company, and I'm sure his talk will also be of the highest standard.

Our AGM was held on the same day and some developments transpired. Firstly, both Jeremy Duffield and John Lax resigned from their respective posts on the committee. The Section would like to thank Jeremy and John for all their endeavours over the last few years and naturally we wish them well for the future.

Ken Arnold also relinquished his position as President. Ken held this post for over 30 years and during that time has seen the Section rise from small beginnings to one of the most successful in the country. He is an Ex Councillor and Lord Mayor of Sheffield and at over eighty years old still retains an enthusiasm for Greenkeeping which can only be described as amazing. On the day of his resignation he was presented with a suitable commemorative award and was installed as immediate Past

President, bestowed as a life member and co-opted back on to the committee, which clearly illustrates how valuable he has been and continues to be to our Section. All at Sheffield would like to thank him for his council over his many years as President and wish him and his family all the best for the future.

Out with the old and in with the new as they say! Congratulations to Barry Heaney, Past Chairman of our association on his appointment as President of our Section. Barry has been the hub of the Section for many years and in being appointed as President will ensure he remains integral to the continued development of our requirements.

Congratulations also to Alan Samson on his appointment as committee member.

Alan, who works at Wortley Golf Club, is seen as an enthusiastic and active individual who will no doubt benefit our Section.

We would also like to welcome some new members to our Section. They are: Andrew Fenn, Alferton GC; Adam Kendall, Brough GC; Andrew Billings, Brough GC; David Creaser, Brough GC, and Darren Thomas, Rother Valley GC.

Finally, two dates to put in your diary. The President's Day tournament will be held at Wheatley Golf Club on Tuesday May 9th tee off at 1.30pm and the Annual Tournament is at Matlock Golf Club on Monday 10th July tee off at 1.30pm.

John Coleman

Northern

I would like to start off as your new Secretary by thanking Simon Heppenstall for his time and dedication to this position over the years. Enjoy your retirement with your new family.

The Winter Golf Tournament took place at Fulford GC. This was sponsored by The Greenkeeping Supply Company, which was represented by Liam Galway. Many thanks for this valuable sponsorship and all the other companies who sponsored our golf days during last year.

Back to the golf and despite the bad weather leading up to the event, this had no effect on the course, everybody had a good time despite the

wind and rain. Thanks go to the head greenkeeper Mark Mennal and his staff for the good condition of the course, the caterers for the meal and Fulford GC for the courtesy of the course. Teams of four were the order of the day with a few teams of three people not turning up for whatever reason. Results: 1. Robin Smith, Richard Harris, Telford Jarvis, Steve Dale; 2. Roy Spencer, Marcus Cordingley, Norman Schofield. 3. Les Kirkbright, Richard Pull, Mark Mennal.

One of the teams with three counted all three scores instead of the best two, Dennis is already sharpening his handicapping pencil for you, be warned!

The 1999 AGM followed with 31 members present. The main issue to come out is an increase to the golf entry fees. It was decided to have an increase to £17.50 with two courses, still good value for the day. Committee members are as follows: President- Liam Galway, Chairman- Simon Heppenstall. Vice Chairman- John Waite, Secretary/Treasurer - Andy Smith; Committee- Dennis Cockburn, Gary Potter, Richard Smith, Jim Brown.

The committee would like to thank David Thackery, Telford Jarvis, Richard Gamble, Phil Mitchell, and also the outgoing President, Mel Guy, for their work and time during their years of service. Liam has a hard act to follow.

The annual Dinner Dance on Saturday 11th March will again be held at Bradford G.C. after last years success. Tickets are on sale from committee members.

There is no other news at the moment and future events will be published at a further date. If any one has any news around the section that I could print would you please let me know at the following address :- 67 Asquith Avenue, Morley, Leeds, LS27 9QS or telephone on 0113 2383188

Andy Smith

Cleveland

Congratulations to Anthony (Titch) McGeough. On New Year's Eve he got engaged to the beautiful Pippa. Titch is First Assistant at Richmond Golf Club. Good luck and

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best wishes go to both of them.

Oliver Shepard, also of Richmond Golf Club, did not get engaged. In fact he's still looking for a partner. If anyone knows of a suitable girl, contact Richmond Golf Club.

Congratulations also to Kevin Scarce, of Bedale Golf club. He reached the National Final of the Toro Student of the Year Award. Unfortunately he did not win, but to get to the final is still a great achievement. Well done.

It's been a long time coming, but the Greenkeepers beat the Groundsmen in the Annual Turf Care Quiz at Mount Oswald Golf Club. It was a close battle with only a couple of points for the winning margin. Unfortunately those who attended the quiz probably can't remember much about this historic victory and it might be a long time until we win again. Many thanks to Terry Charlton and Turf Care for organising the event and providing drinks and the supper. Any news contact me on 07808 196558.

Steven Jaques

North Wales

A meeting was held on January 4 and it was decided that at all our future golf events the prize and trophy structure will be: Greenkeeper members can win trophies and prizes; guests (golf related only) can win prizes and, as an appreciation of the trade, trade members will now have trophies to play for at each of our events donated by the Section. I hope this will be to everyone's satisfaction. Entrance fees will also be pegged to the same cost as last year and a review taken to see how much it has eaten into our funds at the end of the year. The annual North Wales - North West match will take place at Hazel Grove GC around the 20 April. Please contact Gary Edwards. Gary is also in discussion with Peter Lacey of the South Wales Section about a match around June - July to be held at a mid Wales venue. Again, any interest, get in touch.

Remember our spring tournament and regional qualifier is on April 5 at Frodsham Golf Course.

The annual College Seminar is on Wednesday 23 February. Confirmed speakers are Bob Taylor,

Conservation; David Stansfield, The Role of the Agronomist, and my own Chairman of Greens, Jim Wren.

A full itinerary will be sent to all clubs. Please try to get chairmen, secretaries, captains etc, interested. There's a lot happening out there and golf clubs need to know. The event will be chaired by Mike Cole, President of the WGU.

On March 22 we have a lecture again at the college on the rules of golf and the greenkeeper and noise levels. Please come along, free to members, £1 to guests. Starts 2.30 - 4.30 pm.

Finally, welcome to one new member David Michael Gavin of Holywell GC. Hope to see you at our events some time.

That's all folks. See ya,
Dave Goodridge



East Midlands

This year's Christmas Tournament was held at Glen Gorse GC on Thursday December 9. The day was fine and dry, but with a very strong cold wind making conditions very difficult. The format for the day being a Singles Stb 3/4 H/Cap. However, some very respectable scores were returned.

The winners were as follows: Category 1, 1. Jeff Dickinson, Leen Valley, 30 pts; 2. Adi Porter, Greetham Valley, 28 pts; 3. Richard Barker, Kirby Muxloe, 28 pts. Category 2, 1. Gavin Robson, Lingdale, 27pts; 2. Mark Bindley, Kirby Muxloe, 27pts; 3. Jamie Bedford, Birstall, 25 pts. Trade & Associate, Pete Fell, Aitkens, 30 pts.

I would like to thank Glen Gorse GC for extending courtesy of their excellent course and also to our sponsor Rigby Taylor for providing the prizes. Also I would like to thank Frank Kempster, Head Greenkeeper and his staff for a very well presented course, not forgetting the Steward & Stewardess for a fantastic Christmas meal. Next year's Tournament will be held at Oakmere

Park GC, on Thursday, December 7 2000.

I would also like to thank all those who kindly took their time to fill in the recent questionnaire. The results of which will appear in next month's article.

Finally, I have now got my own e-mail address, so if any member should need to contact me via Email, the address is as follows. Antony-Bindley@beeb.net

Antony Bindley



South East
Derek Farrington
Tel: 01903 260956

Essex

Easy, I thought, take over the job as scribe for the Essex Section, jot down the winners' names, include a few thank you's for the trade and that's that. But, as the pile of crumpled paper containing failed efforts began to overflow out of the bin, it dawned on me just how much we all take the work done by the committee for granted. When members step down they are very hard to replace, especially when they are as professional as David Wells who stands down as scribe and as enthusiastic as committee member Steve Cox. They will both be missed, but hopefully myself, Steve Crosdale and Andy Sheehan will be able to fill their shoes.

Firstly allow me to welcome new Section members Robert Cox, South Essex G&GC and Michael Walsh, from Burnham on Crouch. I hope to see you both at future events.

My first golf day report comes from Rochford Hundred GC which, despite freezing conditions, was on all main greens and very well presented, thanks to Head Greenkeeper David Wells, Deputy, David Rand, and all the green staff at Rochford GC who braved the conditions early in the morning to make the course playable. These thanks are extended to the catering department who laid on a fantastic carvery enjoyed by all. The winner on count back from two others was Dave Wells who scored 34 points just beating Mark Stopps and M.Allen respectively. Nearest the

Pin went to H. Wilson and Longest Drive to S. Tovey, Orsett GC. Thanks to Greenkeeping Supply Company for supplying the prizes. The trade prize went to H. Wilson, from Greenkeeping Supply Company, with 28 pts.

Main sponsors for the day were Ernest Doe & Sons who along with Sherriff Crop Care, CMW, Rigby Taylor, Gem Professional, Grass Roots, Driving Force Leisure, Grasshopper, Greenkeeping Supply Company and Bishop Brothers ensured that every golfer taking part received a prize of some description. Thanks one and all.

Golfer of the Year went to Chris Ward, of Abridge Golf Club, who won the Burnham On Crouch and Thorndon Park golf days. Well done Chris.

Following the golf the AGM was held and the committee installed. They are: Chairman: Carl Croucher, Orsett GC; Treasurer: John Selwood, Abridge GC; Secretary: Martin Forrester, Stapleford Abbots GC; Education Officer: John Sinclair, Thorpe Hall GC; Competition/Handicap Secretary: Dominic Rogers, Orsett GC, Scribe: Steve Crosdale, Great Hadham G&CC, Andy Sheehan, Bentley GC also joined as committee member.

If you want to know what else happens at the AGM and where your money goes, come to the next one, or give the relevant committee member a call, numbers are in the BIGGA Directory.

The fixture card for 2000 should be with you by the end of February, if yours isn't contact Martin Forrester, 01245 603131. Martin also tells me that the Gentleman's Dinner at Walton Heath this year is to be held on March 10. Invitations will be sent to members who have supported the golf days throughout 1999.

Two more dates for your diary, this time from Mr Sinclair: Thursday 3rd February, although this may have passed before you receive the magazine and Thursday March 23, both dates are booked for lectures at Writtle College. Details of lecture topics will follow shortly.

That about wraps up my first report, and without a mention of a

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certain mid-table London football team. Please let me have your views on what you consider my articles should contain, without your input they will end up as just a list of names and dates. I am confident that between us we can manage more than this. My number is 01376 551350, give me a call.

Steve Crosdale

East Anglia

Another year older, deeper in debt, such is life. One word describes our day at Bungay Way back in December and that's lovely. Lovely Day.

Lovely grub, Lovely course and lovely people, what more can you want? Sixty Nine turned up, what a number all raring to go before it rained. It was, of course, the Annual Turkey Scramble sponsored by CMW. Results. 1. The Barnham Broom Trio of Lemon, Elliot and Brown, 58.4; 2. The Caldecot team of Davidson, Bun and Holiday, 58.9; 3. Three Nomads, Bird, Nash and Bartram, 59. All pretty tight. Longest Drive, Mat Gill. Nearest the pin Alan Elliot. The loo seat was nearly won by Sam for going into the wrong loo. His "Handlebars" gave him away. The loo seat was actually won by Mike Taylor, of Tomlinson, but I don't know why.

All prizes were presented by Miles James. I think that's the right way around, Bungay Captain. A special thanks to Mike And James for presenting the course in fine nick.

There was a warm welcome for the new Head Greenkeeper at Purdis Heath, Norman Fredrick. I am sure he will build on the foundations laid by his much respected predecessor Steve Noye.

One comes, one goes, our adopted cousin from over the pond Greg McHugh, Pulh, Barney McGrew, Cuthbert Dibble and Grub is off to some horrible place - Hawaii. He'll miss the frost and the fog. I'm told the grass over there grows on the women. Hope he's got some shears. Seriously, we all wish him the very best, he's a smashing bloke and will be missed.

More prizes than a Miss World contest, well nearly, were presented by Ernie Halt to Nick Brewster, Spring; Steve Davidson, Summer; Greg Hash, Autumn and Steve Curtis Winter. Finally, the President's Prize was presented to our Secretary, Ian Willitt, for the tremendous work he puts in to keep our Section at the top. We have it on good authority that we are the largest, the best organised and the best behaved of the lot and that has much to do with Ian's leadership. Cheers mate.

Then came the AGM, if you blinked you would have missed it - 25 minutes start to finish. Enough said, no waffle. All offices elected en block with Paul Gould taking over from Greg McHugh (Pugh, Barney, no, I won't do that Alan).

A few dates for 2000 Haverhill April

27. Rushmere June 9 Norfolk v Essex. Stoke by Nayland July. Royal Cromer 15 August 15. Waldenfield October. Thorpeness, December 19 AGM. Also a seminar at Thorpeness on November 14.

Let's not forget the trade lads who look after us so well throughout the year: I'll try to remember all, as I forgot to pick up the list. Here goes: CMW, Sisis, Rushbrook, Rhone Poulenc, Colliers, Rigby Taylor, Consultant Clarkson, Toro, Bartams, Ben Burgess, Wilmot Pertwee, Greenkeeper Supply Co, Pattersons, Hayter and anyone else who knows me.

And finally as another round of pay talks have come to an end, does anyone think that some clubs assume that there is an honour attached to working for them which negates the need for payment?

Mick Lathrope

Sussex

Firstly, I would like to wish Happy New Year to all the members and hope that everybody had a great Christmas.

Our Turkey Trot was once again held at Littlehampton. I would like to thank David Wood and all his staff. The course was, as usual, in exceptional condition considering it was the middle of December. I would also like to thank the kitchen staff, bar staff and the Secretary for their hospitality this year and every year.

Now the results of the Texas

Scramble; This was played in teams of four with a few 3 balls, each player having to use three drives and all the scores counting on two of the holes.

Results: 1. (On count back) 58 pts. Chris Allen, John Luckhurst, bandit, Peter Bearmore. 2. 58 pts. John Hill, David Haskell, Nick Beadle, Peter Hammond. 3rd with 57 pts. Mark Day, Billy Martin, Richard Vetch.

The team with the longest wack was Tony Bremer, Mike Ring, John Davidson and their influential captain Brian Willmott! Nearest the pin prizes were won by Ian Semple, Andy Cloud, Stefan Antolik, David Ansell, Chris Allen, Richard Vetch and Mike Ring.

Thanks to everyone who attended and thanks to George Barr for the organisation.

Also it was great to see a good turnout by the Sussex Section for the James Beard Seminar on January 6 at Wentworth. Everyone who attended will agree it was a very worthwhile exercise and thanks to Scotts for putting on a great day at a great venue.

Now some dates for your diary in 2000. May 4, Spring Tournament at Royal Eastbourne GC. July 20 Summer Tournament at Copthorne GC and some time in the summer there will be a special Club Team Challenge Fourball event at Cooden Beach Golf Club. eg. Head Greenkeeper, Club Captain, Green Chairman, Stewards.

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Please think about your teams and phone Mike Gould on 01342 712508 with your selection.

Also, on behalf of the Sussex Section, I would like to congratulate Austin Houghton, Head Greenkeeper at Seaford Head GC who has been awarded Sussex County Greenkeeper of the Year by the Sussex Professional Golfers' Union. One last note. If anyone has anything to report and would like to see it in "Around the Green" please phone me on 01903 218675 or 0378 189785.

Gary Ogilvie



**South West
and South Wales**
Paula Humphries
Tel: 01288 352194

South Wales

High winds and heavy showers made most of us return to the 19th hole at Pyle & Kenfig GC on 8 December, although a few continued and battled their way around the course and thanks to P Robinson & his staff for the good condition of the course.

Chairman D Ward opened the AGM and gave his report for the year. P Lacey gave his secretary's report and ran through the finance report. Election of officers: Chairman, Adrian Panks; Vice Chairman, J. B.

Jones; Secretary, P. Lacey; Education Chairman, M. Davies; Committee Officers - Angus Macleod, A. Hatcher, J. B. Jones, R. Patterson, R. Hatcher and D. Ward. Our President C. Murphy gave good words during the meeting, thanks Colin. Finally, David Ward ended his term for Chairmanship and closed the meeting.

Our Christmas dinner followed, which was outstanding. The presentation of the Vitax Shield went to M. Jones. Well done! Thanks to Vitax Ltd who were the main sponsors of the day and to Celtic Mowers who sponsored nearest the pin and longest drive competition. Thanks to all the other agents' reps who attended, too many to mention, sorry. Lastly, thanks again to the Pyle & Kenfig for their hospitality and courtesy of the course and to the Captain of P & K who attended the evening.

Nothing much more to mention, although on the 9th of this month, Peter Johnson gave us a lecture at Pencoed College.

Richard Hatcher

Devon & Cornwall

With 1999 being one of the wettest years of the old millennium it was not surprising that members were greeted with heavy rain on arrival at our P. J. Flegg Christmas meeting held at Okehampton GC on Wednesday December 8. I wondered if we would be able to play any golf during the

morning but the splendid effort put in by Richard Wisdom and his team meant that the greensome format competition for the P. J. Flegg Trophy went ahead as scheduled.

Our non golfing members were, as usual, treated to the guided course walk by Richard. Both golfing and non golfing were delighted to seek shelter in the P. J. Flegg refreshment tent by the 6th green. Inside, Patrick and his staff treated members to snacks and drinks which set the Christmas atmosphere for the day.

After an excellent Christmas lunch, the day continued with the morning's golf prizes for the P. J. Flegg trophy being presented by Patrick Flegg to: 1st, B. Lever, Dainton, & J. Stevens, West Cornwall, 36 pts. 2nd, M. Samuel, President, and T. Bennett, Trevose, 33 pts back 9. 3rd, J. Mills, Taunton, & K. Yeoman, Dartmouth, 33 pts.

A special prize was donated by Laurence Davis, Deputy Head at Okehampton for the best triers and was presented by Patrick to M. Tucker and T. Blackburn. Our afternoon entertainment this year was by the one and only Tank Sherman who kept us all laughing well into the evening. Our raffles concluded a really excellent day. The first raffle was for two Christmas hampers, kindly donated by Avoncrop and Peter Andrewartha, with our final raffle of day, consisting of more than 40 prizes donated by members and trade.

The Section would like to thank Okehampton GC and their staff who made our day so special, with a special mention to Richard Wisdom and his staff who, as always, had the course in superb condition.

A big thank you to Patrick Flegg and P. J. Flegg Ltd for sponsoring the day and providing the wonderful snacks and drinks on the course. Also, thanks to our President, Martin Samuel, who supplied the wine at lunch and thanks to all of you who donated prizes for the day.

Dates for your diary: Avoncrop Meeting, Thursday February 24, venue Trevose G.C. Rhone Poulenc & Supaturf Meeting, Tuesday March 28, venue Yelverton GC. Westurf Trade Show at Westpoint, Exeter on Tuesday April 12.

Richard Whyman

South Coast

Our Annual Turkey Trot AGM and Christmas Dinner was held at Hockley GC. The course was in superb condition thanks to the Head Greenkeeper, Trevor Blythe and his happy band of men. Well done Trevor.

The results were as follows: The overall match winner was Phil Nason, who is over here for his three months holiday. Sorry Phil, I had to get that in. Category 1 winner, Matt Blake. Category 2 winner, Alan Rideout. Category 3 winner, Peter Baynham. Nearest the Pin, Simon



Bell- TYE: The Longest Drive, S Hooker.

On completion of the golf we all sat down to Christmas dinner. There was plenty of it, so there was no excuse for anyone going hungry. At this point we must thank the catering staff for all their hard work, also thanks to Jim Fry, our President, who once again provided the wine. Thank you Jim.

Before the meal, the captain of Hockley Golf Club said a few words and made us very welcome. To the Captain, Committee and Members, thank you for a lovely day and allowing us the courtesy of your superb course and the use of your Clubhouse. The Clubhouse is a little larger than the last time I was there. The sponsors for the day were Sheer Water Leisure represented by Mark Wilton and New Forest Farm Machinery, John Deere, represented by Nick Clarke. Thank you Mark and Nick for your continued support.

To round off the day we had the AGM. The Chairman, Tony Gadd, and Secretary, Jef Drake, stated that they would not be seeking re-election at the next AGM. This is going to leave two large holes. Anyone who would like to take on these posts, please let the committee know. The only new member to join the committee was Chris Sturgess. Welcome aboard Chris. Yours truly has stood down after nearly 14 years. I would like to thank everyone who has supported me over the years. I will still be around but I feel we need new blood and new ideas. Some of you youngsters should be filling the gaps and pushing us forward. Thank you everyone for the lovely crystal glasses that were presented by Tony. I was taken aback and lost for words.

Moving on to a more serious note. Our Chairman was very concerned at the dwindling numbers at our lectures. What really concerned me was that when he asked the floor for suggestions as to what we should do to attract more support, there was a deadly silence. Please pick up the phone and let us know what you want from the section. There are nearly 300 members in our Section. We could not get support for a small 30 seater coach to go to Hankley Common.

Our next winter lecture is at Crane Valley GC on Wednesday 8 March 8 at 10am. A representative from Scotts will be talking about their products and applications. This will be followed by lunch and 9 holes of golf.

Ken Lodge

South West

Kingsdown Golf Club was the venue for the Christmas Tournament held on December 8. The event was sponsored by Roffeys. Head Greenkeeper, Mark Ford, and his staff did a superb job in getting the course into great shape, especially when you consider that December had seen twice the normal rainfall. The greens really did putt well, although eventually the steady rainfall slowed them up quite considerably.

By the time the last of the golfers came in off the course, the rain had become cold and torrential. One drenched and shivering golfer even suggested holding next year's Christmas Tournament in Trinidad & Tobago, but I don't think BIGGA funds could stretch that far!

Despite the weather, some really good scores were achieved. The winner of the event was:- I. T. Humphrey & Tony Crouch, 37 points. 2 - G. Cook & A. Knight, 36 points and better back 9. 3 - Dan Dobie & N. Wilson, 36 points.

A superb Christmas dinner was laid on by Les and the catering staff at Kingsdown, with all the wine kindly provided by Phil Greenway and Roffeys. A huge raffle then followed with all the prizes donated generously from all the local companies.

The comedian then came on to entertain us. Now, greenkeepers are not always renowned for their sense of humour, but this must have been one of this comedian's hardest ever venues. He really did have to work hard for his money, especially with Dave Begin, sitting on the front table, questioning every one of his jokes.

Anyway, we must once again thank everyone connected with Kingsdown for the smooth running of the day and Roffeys for their kind sponsorship.

Let's hope for better weather at

this year's events, the first of which is the Winter Tournament being held at Painswick Golf Club on the February 23.

Following last month's article in which I asked for suggestions at getting more BIGGA South West members to turn up for events, I have received several ideas on how this can be achieved. I will pass these ideas on to the other committee members.

If you're thinking about doing a training course, it's not too late to join the one day first aid course at The Southern Ambulance Training College on February 15. I still have places for a PA2 Tractor mounted Sprayer course on March 2 and PA6 Knapsack spraying course on March 8. Telephone me on 01249 783382 for more information.

Paul Cunningham



South East

I'll start these notes by wishing all our members a Very Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year. It's a bit belated I know but better late than never. We apologise for a lack of notes at the tail end of last year as we were hit by a "M" bug in our system, but we are now 2000 compliant and ready to go. I hope you are all enjoying this glorious weather, all your winter's work done and dusted, and not a mark on your courses from the hundreds of golfers that insist on playing through El Nino, gale force winds and inches of snow.

Anyhow down to business:- The South-East Section AGM was held at Clondeboy Golf Club on Tuesday, December 7. The election of officers to last for the next 1000 years, sorry to take us into the next 1000 years, are as follows:- Graham Wylie - Chairman/Treasurer, Jonathan McCabe- Vice Chairman, Ken Henderson- Secretary, Alan Strachan-Assistant Secretary, Terry Crawford- Matching Handicap

Secretary, Iain Harrison-Magazine Liaison Officer.

The main topic at the AGM was the amalgamation of the South-East and North-East Sections. A vote was taken that it would be beneficial for both Sections if we did join together, in which case an EGM would be held to select officers from both sections to form one committee. This would be a new committee with a larger membership and we feel this would certainly strengthen BIGGA in Northern Ireland and would entice more people to join. So we have voted Yes for this merger and we are now waiting for feedback from the North-East section on how they feel on this matter.

A very well attended seminar on budgeting took place on December 2-3, '99 in the Burndale Hotel. Brin Bendon presented this subject very well indeed and all who attended thought it was of great benefit to them. Some people travelled quite a distance to attend, such as Des Murtagh, from Waterford; David Lenham and Karl Dooley both from Dublin.

An entertaining night was had at Queens University playing fields on Monday 13th December when the Institute Of Groundsman ship invited us to join them at their Christmas Quiz. We fronted two teams, The McDivots and The Cunning Linguists. Needless to say the IOG team won hands down but between our two teams, The McDivots, my team finished streets ahead, stewards enquiry. Many thanks to the IOG for their hospitality and friendly atmosphere and I'm sure this will be a definite fixture this year again.

Finally thanks to last year's committee for all their hard work and giving up their own time to arrange all the various days that we all enjoyed throughout the year. Sterling works chaps and keep it up! Iain Harrison.



See you all next month!



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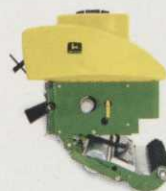


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BTME 2000

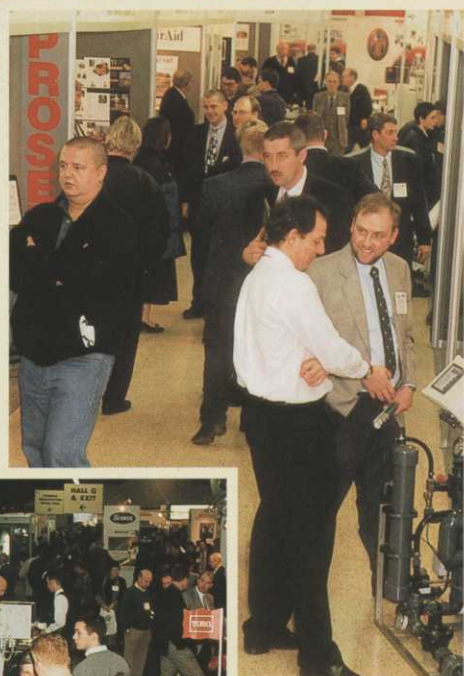
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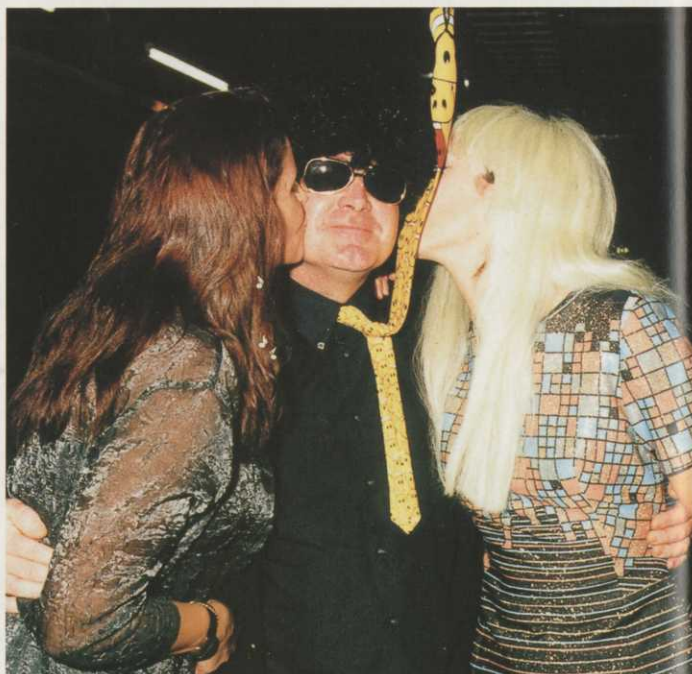
WHAT A WEEK!



Above: Visitors flood into Hall Q - new this year at BTME



The feeling among those who attended was that BTME 2000 was the busiest they had ever experienced.



Top: Reliving that 'Abbey Road' experience.

Middle: Some guests really entered into the 60s groove

Above: Can you name the famous Course Manager who is the centre of all the attention?

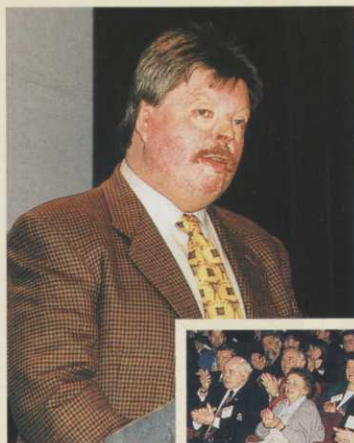
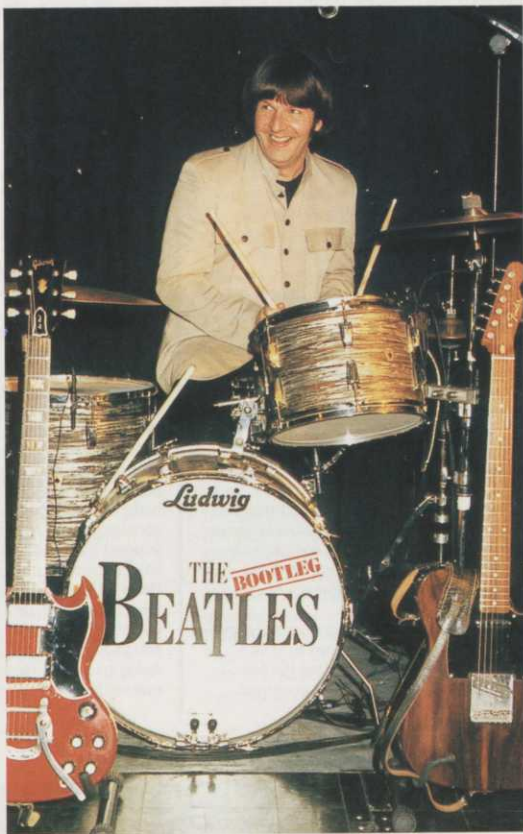
Answer: Billy McMillan



Above: "Paul" and "John" had everyone a twistin' and a shoutin'

Right: "Ringo" enjoys his evening

Below: The Cavern Club or BTME Banquet? Who could tell the difference?



Left and Below: Simon Weston held the attention of the large audience with his moving account of the incident which changed his life and how he has emerged from it a better person



Above: BIGGA's Golden and Silver Key supporters were thanked at the Chairman's Lunch which was attended by Sir Michael Bonallack and Simon Weston



Above: Textron's Nigel Church passes on some valuable advice during the Machinery Workshop in the Majestic Hotel



Above: The Design and Construction Workshop saw some wonderful plasticine models produced

A masterful performance



The two latest members of one of golf's most exclusive clubs were unveiled at Harrogate this year.

The honour of being one of BIGGA's Master Greenkeepers was until this year held by only 20 greenkeepers but this year Seve Schmitz and Steve Jones swell that number to 22.

The Award of Master Greenkeeper, run by the British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association (BIGGA), shows that the recipient has reached the highest standards of excellence within the profession and is based on experience, ability and education.

To achieve Master Greenkeeper Status a greenkeeper must first have achieved a minimum of 200 credits based on experience, qualification, additional vocational training and attendance at seminars. He then must have his golf course assessed by someone of Master Greenkeeper status and finally undertake a case study and examination.

Seve Schmitz is Course Manager at the Golf Club Schloss (Castle) Mülledorf, Korschbroich in Germany. He started his career in greenkeeping in 1970 as an assistant greenkeeper at St Ives Golf Club before moving to Cradock Golf Club as Head Greenkeeper in 1979. He then spent seven years at Ellesborough Golf Club before moving to his current club in 1988. He is the second Master Greenkeeper currently working in Germany.

Coincidentally Steve Jones, a graduate of Rutgers University in the USA, started his greenkeeping career in Germany before moving to the Oxfordshire in 1992 and then to the London Club in 1994. Currently a consultant, Steve is working with golf clubs both in Britain and in continental Europe. Steve becomes the 17th Master Greenkeeper in Europe, joining five from the US in the elite band.



One welcome visitor to the show on Thursday was last year's Ryder Cup Captain, Mark James, who visited the Rigby Taylor stand with his Golf Design and Management Partner, Andrew Mair, and Brian Robinson of Grass Science. Mark, who lives just a short distance from Harrogate took time to walk round the rest of the show.



Swiss award

Steven Tierney, a British greenkeeper based in Switzerland, has won a prestigious Environmental Steward Award with the GCSAA - the first time a European based greenkeeper has won such an award.

Ironically Steven, who is Course Manager at Golf Park Nuolen, Wangen, one of Switzerland's 70 golf courses, only entered the competition after he discovered that the BIGGA Golf Environment Competition was only open to British golf clubs. "My golf course is only four years old but as Switzerland is not in the EC our own regulations are extremely tight. For example every six weeks our water is tested by the Government and they have the power to close us down if we are not up to scratch," he explained. Steven travels to New Orleans later this month to receive his award.

Sharpes + Mommersteeg = Advanta

Amenity grass seed breeder Advanta Seeds UK, took the chance to announce that they had completed a year of corporate restructuring, combining the operations of the two well-known seed suppliers, Mommersteeg and Sharpes International, under the one new company name. Sharpes was previously owned by Booker Seeds, while Mommersteeg International was a part of the Dutch based Royal Van de Have group. The latter merged with Zeneca in January 1998 to form Advanta Seeds.

For the past two years, Mommersteeg and Sharpes have been operating autonomously under the Advanta banner, but since 1 Jan 2000, the two separate companies ceased to exist. Advanta is the fifth largest seed business in the world - breeding and marketing the full range of amenity and agricultural crops, through 35 operating companies in 20 countries.

Announcing The Lawn Company

Turf Professionals who have dreamed of owning their own business had a look into the future with the launch of The Lawn Company at BTME. The new enterprise, conceived as a van based franchise aims to bring a professional approach to domestic lawn maintenance.

The brain child of Mike Seaton, who has 20 year's experience caring for amenity turf first as a Groundsman and latterly as founder and Managing Director of Weed Free, The Lawn Company will control weeds and moss, aerate, seed, feed, scarify and top dress, in an integrated programme which will leave the home owner nothing to do but cut the grass. "Since I started Weed Free, the domestic market has changed beyond all recognition," said Mike.

"The demand for stylish, labour saving areas which are both aesthetically pleasing and able to double as an outside room has been created by a flush of TV programmes and a growing number of gardening magazines. Amid the mountain of paving, decking and gravel, the lack of advice and specialist lawn care services is noticeable by its absence. The Lawn Company is perfectly equipped and positioned to fulfil this need," said Mike. "As every turf manager knows, grass care is a science, not something that is practised on a weekly basis when the lawn receives its trim. Although the concept of hiring professional grass experts for domestic use is relatively new to the UK, the idea has already taken root across the Atlantic."

"We are way behind America, where one out of five households hire lawn and landscape services, spending 14 billion dollars per annum."

Mike believes that The Lawn Company offers commercial opportunities, especially for people already operating within the amenity turf industry. A comprehensive training course, on going support package including an interactive link connecting all Franchisees directly to Head Office, and The Lawn Company Operations Manual - a translation of 20 years turf care experience into accessible advice and straightforward know-how are ready to arm all those interested in making lawns their business.

BTME DIARY OF THE WEEK – NEIL THOMAS

Saturday January 15

An early start this year meeting with Bill and Monica Montague at Aldwark Manor. They've just flown in from the USA and it's a real pleasure to show them around BIGGA HOUSE. Bill is one of BIGGA's greatest supporters and flies the flag for us in his homeland where he is a regular on the BIGGA stand at the GCSAA Show.

Sunday January 16

I reflect that I am driving to Harrogate for BTME number 12. Where have the years gone? It takes me all of 15 minutes and its proximity to home is one sure reason for the BTME remaining in Harrogate. There are many more compelling ones. This year the weatherman is making all the right noises and I reach the Majestic well set for the week ahead. Many of the regulars are already in residence and Ken, Sami and Sarah have registration well under control. Dinner is taken in a pleasant, informal atmosphere and many depart for the pleasures of Harrogate's nightlife. Meanwhile in the Majestic's bar old friends are meeting once again and catching up on news during the past year.

Monday January 17

The Conference and workshops are off to a smooth start. The Conference is chaired once again by Dr Mike Canaway and we are all keen to assess the success of the new formula this year whereby it is divided into four main intensive sessions. Early feedback is positive and each session maintains a full complement of delegates - a good sign indeed. The Conference Dinner is full of mirth with quick fire Irish comedian Dusty Young a big hit to the extent that greenkeepers are queuing to buy his tapes when he finally sits down.

The Monday night comedy spot seems well established. We are delighted to welcome Andrew Sunaway, Peter Bell and David Withers from Textron to the Dinner and the company's support of the Learning Experience programme, now in its fifth year, is instrumental to the success of the BTME week. Their backing of greenkeeper education stretches back over many, many years and we have much to thank the company for as a Golden Key supporter in terms of the educational and training provisions available to BIGGA members as we enter the new century.

A moderately late night as the week stretches ahead and stamina is all important.

Tuesday January 18

Delegates are up early and reasonably fit for another day of Conference and workshops. Meanwhile the pace is quickening down at the exhibition halls. This year we are in Hall Q for the first time and with the expansion of the show we anticipate logistical problems. Jenny is doing well however and there are no major issues to concentrate the mind. Why do the great majority of companies decide to arrive at around the same time when there is a two day spread? I don't expect that will change!

In the afternoon there is a short Board of Management meeting with Gordon completing his two year stint and Elliott Small being elected as Chairman with Clive Osgood from Walton Heath as his Vice Chairman. The exhibitors' reception is being held down by Hall Q and everything seems in place. For me the day ends at the seventh Hayter Dinner in the George Hotel. This seems part of the BTME tradition now with Barbara Garton

as the gracious hostess and Kim Macfie, as always, humorously in charge of the evening. Back in the Majestic the Past Chairmen are in evidence by their red blazers and much food for thought emerges from their annual dinner.

Wednesday January 19

One of Gordon's last duties is to cut the ribbon at 9am at the entrance to Hall A. Meanwhile the new entrance at Hall Q opens and we can't be in two places at once. How many will realise there is a new entrance? Our fears prove groundless as there is a good early response helped by the proximity of the Moat House Hotel. The halls are very busy and numbers seem evenly distributed through halls A, B, C and Q. Make a note for next year to tighten control as a considerable number of people are gaining unauthorised access through both a walkway entrance and from the underground car park. The new Press Centre and Exhibitors' Lounge are widely welcomed.

A large audience gathers for the Keynote Speaker session. I have the privilege, a real privilege, of spending some time



New degree from BIGCA

The British Institute of Golf Course Architects used the show to announce the formation of a degree course in golf course architecture to be established at Heriot-Watt University in Edinburgh, in conjunction with the University and its specialist college, Edinburgh College of Art, as well as Merrist Wood and Elmwood Colleges. The course, which will take the form of a nine month diploma in golf course architecture, which will lead to a full time residential three month Masters' Programme and will parallel, in its first stage, the present part time and distance learning diploma operated by the Institute at Merrist Wood College. The two year diploma course will be expanded to take in a two-centre field study programme, which will be conducted not only in Surrey, where the Institute is based, but also in Fife, so that diploma students can experience, at first hand and in practical terms the historic links courses of that part of Great Britain. In February 2000, there will be a total of 31 students at Merrist Wood, from 14 different countries.

Blizzard hits Harrogate

Allen Blizzard couldn't believe his luck when he visited the BIGGA Career's Clinic, run by Brin Bendon and Frank Newberry, during BTME 2000. Having gone in for advice on the presentation of his CV Allen left with a conditional place at Ohio State University. In the ultimate case of being in the right place at the right time Allen, whose ambition had always been to attend that particular university, found himself chatting to Master Greenkeeper Bill Montague who had popped in to see how a CV differed from the American Resume. Bill, who is from Ohio, revealed that he lectured at the University and tracked down Michael O'Neil, who was also attending the show and whose job it is to clear all European applications for Ohio State. Michael checked out Allen's CV and told him that if he passed his Cannington College course a place was his! As he is progressing well at Cannington and passing all his exams to date he is as good as there. Now that's service! The Careers' Clinic was a great success with Brin and Frank handling 120 cases over the course of the two days.

Everyone's a winner



The prize winners in the BIGGA Charity Raffle to raise money for the Imperial Cancer Research Campaign were

A Holiday Break at Carden Park G&CC - Neil McIntyre
Epani Software - David Marnoch
Education Pack 2001 - Philip Bennett
Majestic Holiday weekend - Iain Macleod
St George Hotel Break - Roger Eade
Vauxhall Car Hire - Dougal Duguid
Crown Hotel Weekend - Andy Smith
2000 Open Tickets - Richard Barker
Two Banquet Tickets for BTME 2001 - Andy Campbell
Tzoid Driver - S. Yates
Snooker Cue - Ernie Walker
Champagne - Terry Hamel and Steve Hasell.

The winner of the £600 Holiday voucher for introducing new members to the Association was Mark Smith, Head Greenkeeper at Drayton Park Golf Club.



BTME - BEING THERE MEANS EVERYTHING

talking with Simon Weston. A fellow Welshman, we talk of rugby and many other things Welsh. He is an impressive man in so many ways. His talk receives rapt attention from a large audience and not a few tears along the way. It ends with a standing ovation. Simon surely sets a supreme example of how to cope with adversity and to get the very best out of life. Quickly to the Majestic to set up the presentations at the Chairman's Luncheon to our Golden and Silver Key company supporters. A special pleasure to welcome our new President, Sir Michael Bonallack, who seems to thoroughly enjoy his visit. Back to the halls for a busy afternoon and then to the AGM. Wonder of wonders, Cecil does not ask a question - quite worrying really! The Chairman thanks Gordon for all his work for the Association in the past two years and for a job well done. He welcomes Clive as Vice Chairman and says farewell to Pat Murphy, George Barr and Robin Greaves who are standing down. Ian Semple and Paul Jenkins are welcomed to the Board. There is no peace for the wicked and I am

quickly off to Rolawn's 25th Anniversary Dinner in the company of Terry Ryan and fellow guests. This proves a pleasant, relaxing evening in the middle of the week.

Thursday January 20

The numbers are excellent pouring into the halls and another busy day is in prospect. The seminars are in full flow and a buoyant atmosphere prevails. The Chairman and I attend a Press Conference and I am soon on my way to the FEGGA AGM where it is all change. Claus Detlef Ratjen from Germany is now Chairman with Joe Bedford of the GCSAI as Vice Chairman. Board members are Jean-Michel Hérisse from France, Pirjo Hotti from Finland, who maintains the ladies' input, and Hans-Peter Thaler from Italy. Dean Cleaver takes over as FEGGA administrator. The afternoon sees me linking up with Sami as our major social event, the BTME banquet, draws nearer. This year it's the Bootleg Beatles to entertain and the set up of the banqueting hall is tremendous with a 'balloon' expert having been engaged and with pictures

of the original Beatles adorning the walls. The sense of the 60s prevails and a great night is in prospect. At 6.30pm I make a brief visit to the Chairman's reception for VIP guests and then to the banquet. Guests are arriving in hordes and some of their 'gear' is drawing attention. Upstairs the bar area is a hive of activity and noise. The announcement of dinner is ignored not once but many times with claims that the announcements were not heard above the din. Dining eventually commences some 20 minutes late. However, we start catching up and at 10.10pm I am able to introduce the Chairman to say a few words and then the moment has come and the Bootleg Beatles take to the stage. Simultaneously our intrepid members take to the dance floor. I am told that the Bootleg Beatles voted it their best corporate show in 20 years. As they finally take their leave, the Funtime Music disco takes over with hits from the 60s and 70s all the way through to 1am before the dancers depart for further revelry at the Majestic bar. Indeed a night to remember.

Friday January 21

It's Friday morning and you know the feeling well. The pace in the halls is sedate yet this is a good day to visit for those who want easy access to the stands and to get their business done. They won't get trampled in the rush but at least they will be able to talk with those whom they are seeking. The seminars end on a strong note with Dr Joe Vargas. The Chairman makes a grand draw with proceeds going to the Imperial Cancer Fund. Farewells on all sides for another year. I thank my exhausted staff who have done a fantastic job. The years roll on but BTME remains very special. It is unsurpassed as a gathering for greenkeepers from all over the world. It is now a truly international show anticipated eagerly by companies and members alike. There is a unique atmosphere and already we look forward to 2001. I would urge members to be strong in their determination to be there for they will most certainly be better for the experience and feel very much a part of the great community of greenkeepers.

Toro's new Workman 2100 utility vehicle offers a big payload capacity and the Toro-exclusive 'twister' Active In-Frame Suspension

This consists of a unique rubber joint that attaches the front operator platform to the rear section containing the engine and cargo bed. The 'twister' suspension allows 15 degrees of flex in both directions, so the vehicle can travel over uneven terrain and still keep all four wheels on the ground.

These features and more make the vehicle ideal for use in a host of different working environments such as golf courses.

The vehicle has a roomy operator platform with excellent leg room. There's also more storage space in the Workman operator platform, including a centre tray for storing items such as hand-held radios, clipboards and tools. A 12-volt outlet allows for the recharging of radios and other equipment.

The front axle of the Workman uses independent front suspension which allows for the tight turning radius of just 2.9m with 70-degree steering. The Fuji rear axle is powered by an automatic, constantly variable transmission.

A pedal-start accelerator and pedal-stop brake make the vehicle as easy to drive as a golf car.

The Toro Groundsmaster Contour 66 is a new version of the Groundsmaster rotary. But this time it is fitted with the company's ground-breaking Sidewinder system that enables all three cutting decks to shift from side to side up to 61cm.

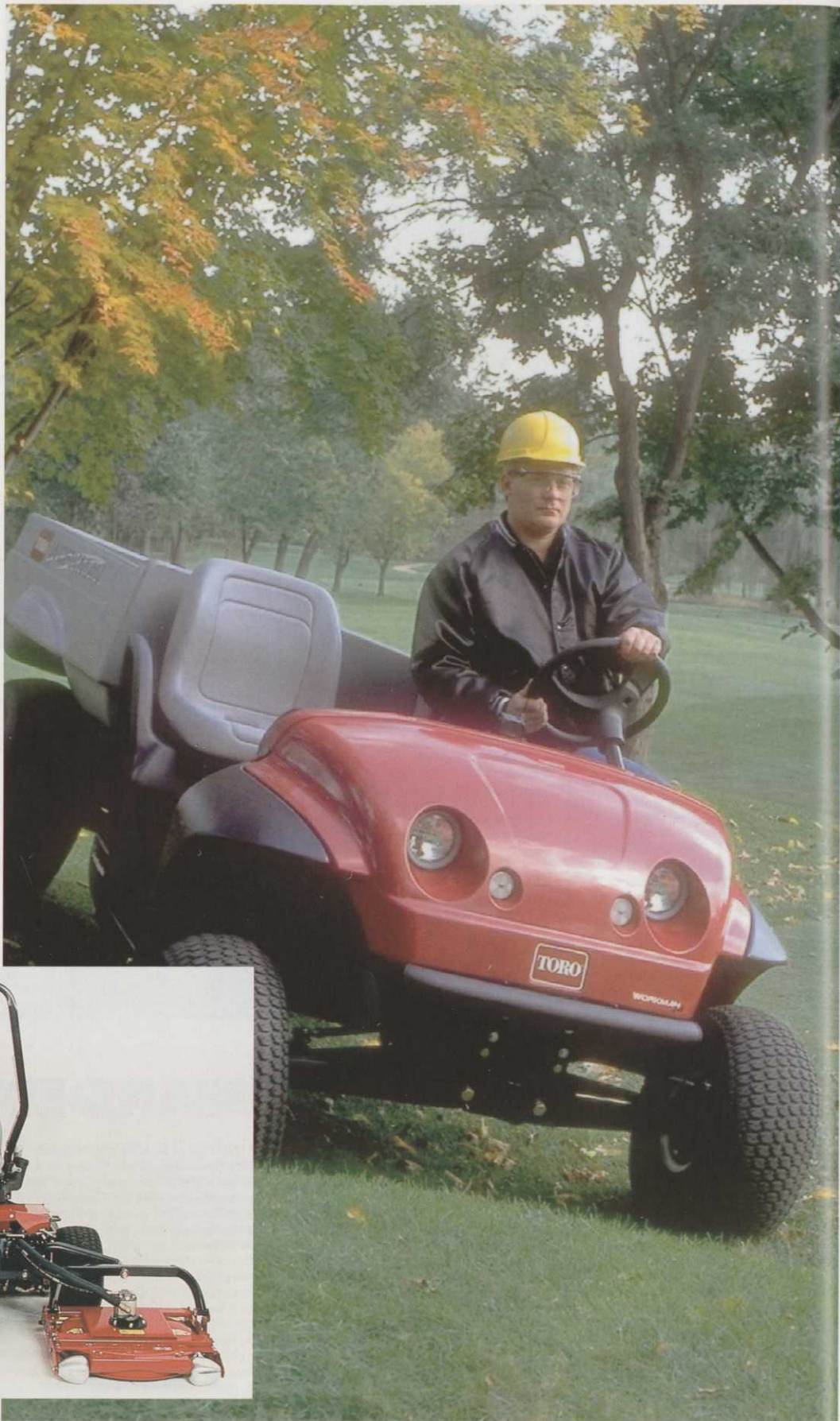
It follows on from the Reelmaster Sidewinder fitted with cylinder cutting units, which is receiving outstanding universal acclaim after its introduction to UK golf courses last season.

All three rotary decks can shift from side to side up to 61cm by the use of a joystick control. Shifting the cutting units to the sides means they can mow bunker overhangs, fringes, approaches and edgings that might otherwise need tackling with a push-mower or strimmer.

Such a greater mowing range substantially increases productivity on all fronts.

Additionally, jobs that traditionally needed follow-up mowing can be completed by the Groundmaster Contour 66 because the operator can shift the mowing deck positions without leaving the seat.

The ability to shift the decks sideways also varies the tracking of the mower's wheels so reduces tyre tracks and turf damage.



Developed by Greenkeepers for Greenkeepers, the new Intake Range of Foliar Feeds offers the perfect complement to existing granular and liquid feed programmes. It will be distributed in the UK by **Amenity Technology**.

The range has been developed in the United States by Gary Grigg, Master Greenkeeper and former President of the GCSAA, and is backed up with over 20 years of research.

The "organic facilitators" or chelates used in each of the Intake products mimic the plants natural chelating actions and increase nutrient penetration into the plant's cells.

The foliar action of the range has shown to be of dramatic benefit on low cut turf where a poor rooting systems can be an inherent problem. Intake bypasses root uptake and delivers readily available nutrients direct to the leaf blade, rapidly correcting nutrient deficiencies.

The latest development from the Koro Design and Manufacturing Centre in Holland is being shown for the first time on the **Richard Campey Ltd** stand. The now established Recycling Dresser has given birth to a Mini' version for specific work on Golf Greens and Tees. The GT model, RD13OKR has been produced to provide the same remarkable benefits to surface management in the Golf sector, as in the general sports and amenity areas, already transformed over the past few years. As with its father' version, the 'son' alleviates the need for top dressings by recycling the original soil. The equipment is 3 PT. linkage mounted for attachment to 30 35hp Compact tractors. In addition to Richard Campey Ltd in the UK, the machine will be available on an international basis from Hummer Sports Turf (USA), Manoeuvre Mow Pty (Australia) and Barthela Motorgerate (Germany).

Parent company **Textron** announced a new generation of Ransomes compact tractors was on show for the first time at Harrogate with the introduction of the TT series.

Replacing the smaller models in the CT range, the TT series offers a more ergonomic control layout; improved engine technology producing greater power and quieter performance, a new hood design for improved accessibility and a more rounded shape to aid operator visibility. This new Class 1 series is available with hydrostatic or mechanical transmission for the 18hp and 21hp derivatives and hydrostatic transmission on the 24hp option.

Also introduced was the MowerCaddy, a walk-behind mower trailer for transporting mowers from one job to the next quickly and easily.

Designed for durability it features a lift and lower level with a comfortable rotating padded handgrip that makes loading and unloading easier.

Textron also introduced new side discharge cutting decks to the Ransomes AR250 rotary mower.

Complementing the existing 'Envirodeck' - the patented twin blade mulching system, the new side discharge deck will prove popular with greenkeepers that require less frequent mowing regimes. The cut grass is discharged immediately from the side of the deck enabling higher heights of grass to be cut compared to the 'Envirodeck'.

Another feature when cutting around bunkers is the two-position setting for the front caster wheels on the left-hand deck.

When the inner position is used it prevents damage to the bunker wall. With a choice of two decks and a wide range of cutting heights, the Ransomes AR250 will provide a quality cut on driving ranges, semi-rough and deep rough, whatever your cutting regime.



Making its first appearance at BTME was the Kubota AM3000 ride-on triple cylinder mower with its hopper grass collection system which can be emptied without the driver having to leave the seat. Powered by a low emissions 33hp Kubota diesel engine, the AM3000 features on-demand four-wheel drive which engages

automatically when loss of traction is detected. All three cutting units are positioned ahead of the wheels and are offered with either five or seven bladed 200mm diameter cylinders. Instead of the standard grooved front rollers, the cutting units can be specified with side rollers which allow the heads to still follow ground

contours, yet without flattening the grass before it is cut.

Other new Kubota products making their debut at the show were the GiS GlideCut - the world's first triple-bladed through-cut mower with integral rear grass collector - and the I4hp B1410 compact tractor with mid-mounted rotary cutter deck.

Charterhouse Turf Machinery, who announced sales of over £100,000 on the second day of the show alone, launched the new higher horsepower Ergit TTR Series from Antonio Carraro.

The new TTR 9400 fitted with an 87HP, turbo charged 4 cylinder diesel engine is capable of reaching speeds of 40kph and is well suited for a variety of applications in the amenity market.

With standard features such as ACTIG (full chassis with oscillation), with up to 30 degrees ensures grip and traction, four equal sized wheels with wide track gives good stability, balance and safety when operating in the most testing of conditions.

The short wheel base and steering characteristics of this tractor gives accurate manoeuvrability and a high work rate when working on areas with severe gradients, such as elevated fairways, golf greens and motorway bankings. Four oil bath disc brakes add to the all round safety of this tractor.

The synchro-shuttle transmission giving 16 forward and 16 reverse gears is added to with the addition of a 'Hi LO' transmission which reduces each gear by 20% and is operated through an electro-hydraulic control switch.

The latter is a standard feature on this model, as is the 'RGS' reverse guide system allowing the operator to change the direction of operation and use many attachments in front mounted mode.

The TTR range is also available in 60 and 64hp.

A new form of biological treatment for use in the professional turf and landscape market and developed and manufactured by **Biotol** was on display. The products are available through the recently-formed Pentagon Group.

The health of the grass plant is directly linked to the microbial health of the soil. Microbes are involved in the processes of recycling and processing of nutrients as well as natural defence mechanisms against potentially pathogenic disease. Biotol's 'Restore the Balance' programme is a three part natural solution that utilises standard cultural methods to enable environmentally aware greenkeepers to selectively enhance the microbial profile of their soil.

Combining three products, the programme reintroduces, feeds and boosts beneficial microbial concentrations in fine turf. The three products known as Microbalance, Biofeed and Microbooster, are also available for application separately. Microbalance is a blend of microbes researched, developed and produced in the UK. Selected for its ability to re-balance the soil micro-flora, Microbalance replaces protective microbes destroyed by intensive use of toxic chemical treatments. Biofeed is a natural seaweed extract used as a soil and foliar feed and specifically selected for natural surfactant content. Microbooster is an organic plant extract, which creates a suitable environment for the development of beneficial microbes within the soil profile.

Vitax's new Vitax Vitaliser was launched at the Show after trials by the STRI. This 100% organic, naturally slow release fertiliser, is designed for use all year round but, according to Clive Williams, Commercial & Amenity Sales Manager for the company, the product comes into its own before Spring sowing.

"Vitax Vitaliser has naturally occurring trace elements combined with a balance of both quick and slow acting nitrogen which means that the product avoids rapid leaching of nutrients during heavy Spring rains and nurtures the young shoots of an emerging sward rather than encouraging flushes of growth," he said. Vitax Vitaliser is a rich source of humus which improves soil texture and retains moisture, while also providing good colour.

John Deere Limited exhibited four new machines at the show, two of which - a wide area mower and a hydraulic top dresser - are being seen for the first time in the UK. The 1600 wide area mower is John Deere's first commercial rotary machine to use hydraulic mower drive, while the TD100 top dresser is a new hydraulic attachment for the heavy duty Pro Gator utility vehicle, which is being featured alongside the super quiet E-Gator electric model. Designed for easy servicing and increased productivity on golf courses and in parks and public areas, the new 1600 wide area mower incorporates an Eaton axial piston pump, which transfers power more efficiently compared with gear type pumps and motors, especially in tough working conditions. John Deere's two pedal forward and reverse foot control combines with a three lever mower deck lift control for easy operation. Good traction is also provided by the two speed transaxle with standard differential lock and mechanical four wheel drive on demand. The new John Deere 1600 wide area mower, is available from February 2000, priced at £25,600.

Barenbrug introduced three new varieties at the Show. Barpearl is a new slender creeping red fescue from the same breeding programme as Barcrown which has been shown in tests to have excellent shoot density, short grown characteristics and good resistance to Red Thread. It has also been shown to have good fusarium resistance in both summer and winter. Bar Fescue contains 25% Barcrown, 23% Barpearl, both slender creeping red fescues; 30% Bargreen and 20% Baroxi, both Chewings fescues. Bar Fescue has been shown to have good shoot density, drought tolerance and disease resistance while is extremely fine textured and displays slow re-growth. Bar Platinum is 30% Bareine (perennial ryegrass); 25% Barcrown and 25% Barpearl, 10% Baroxi and 10 Heriot (browntop bent). It displays rapid establishment, good wear tolerance and slow regrowth while it is tolerant of mowing down to five mm. It is the first mixture in Europe to contain perennial ryegrass for applications on golf greens.



Bernhard & Co launched its new Anglemaster 3000 at this year's BTME exhibition. Being at the forefront of 'Preventative medicine' for golf green management across the globe, demands that Bernhard & Co., continue to provide a range of equipment which maintains their premier position in this sector. The new Bernhard/Atterton Anglemaster 3000 has been developed to match the accuracy of the Express Dual to one thousandth of an inch. This provides easy loading, flood cooling and an auto cue system angle finding. Other major aspects include a unique central grind position to

minimise error plus an independent 'end feed' and single point advance. To provide stress free grinding a magnetic load assistant has been included plus a quad coolant dispersal and separation system. A worthy twin to the Express Dual 3000, the Anglemaster 3000 bottom blade grinding system is a result of five years research and development. Faster and more convenient than its predecessor, the Anglemaster 3000 has all the power and 'split thou' accuracy and convenience of the Anglemaster 2000. The Anglemaster 3000 is so called because it allows the mechanic to read

and set the exact angle for perfect bottom blade grinding. As the newest version of the world's finest precision grinders, this refined machine is even faster and easier to handle and provides leading golf courses with further affirmation of quality and performance. Also being launched is the Anglemaster 3000 DX, which has an up-rated control and feed system to standard AM3000. Incorporating a digital electronic auto cue control and feed with an 'auto line' feature, this 'high spec' version has a work centre case and operating height control.



Sisis launched the Robbi ride-on brush at the show. The Robbi is used on the golf course to disperse the dew; to lightly brush in top dressings; to lift grasses prior to mowing; to improve the presentation of the greens in the winter months. It can also be used on synthetic surfaces to lift the pile; remove scuff marks; level the sand. It features specially designed brushes to

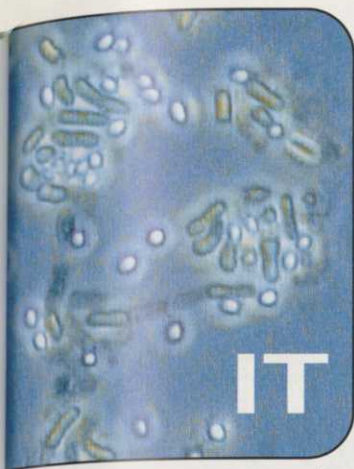
give improved brushing and "float" over contours, which are also ram-assisted to hold them down in use and to lift and fold them back when not in use. Handle bar steering with twist-grip accelerator and axle brake. Fold over seat with suspension springing and carrying box below. wheels have low ground pressure slicks to the rear and low ground pressure ribbed tyres at the front for traction on slopes. 6 forward gears, one reverse and one neutral.



Above: John Akers and Dave Philips of Advanta Seeds at this year's BTME

BTME saw the Mommersteeg and Sharpes brands of amenity mixtures re-launched under the **Advanta** brand name. These will be available in two distinct ranges - Advanta MM's and Designer from Advanta. "By combining the product portfolios of Mommersteeg and Sharpes International, we now have the strongest ranges of grass seed mixtures in the UK sports and amenity market," said John Akers, UK commercial Manager for Advanta Seeds.

"The merger of the two companies has allowed us to streamline operations, increasing efficiency, while retaining the product and service quality that the two original companies were well known for" explains John. "Our customers will now benefit from a much greater pool of production and research resources and experienced personnel. Advanta's aim is to continue developing new cultivars appropriate to our customers' needs, now and in the future."



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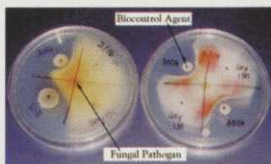
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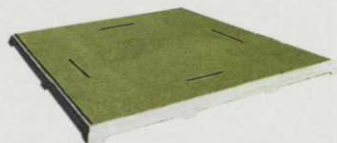
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BIGGA ESSAY COMPETITION

Over the next three months we shall be publishing the winning entries in the BIGGA Essay Competition which has been relaunched after a break of at least several decades. As you will see when you read the work of Kerran Daley (Course Manager), Simon O'Hara (Over 25) and, this month, William Bowden (Under 25) the standards are high and the three winners fully deserve their reward of £500. They have set the levels expected from this year's entrants.

The main judge for the 1999 BIGGA Essay Competition could not have been better qualified for the task. Donald Steel is a rare man. He reached the top in the field of golf writing, as one of the top journalists in the country before turning his attention to golf course architecture where again he rose to the top of the tree.

Having assessed the leading entries he made the following comments on the competition and greenkeeping in general.

Sherlock Holmes may no longer be the modern standard bearer among detectives. Poirot, Taggart and Perry Mason have fought for his crown but it was Sherlock Holmes who, on being complimented that he was a wizard for seeing everything, replied, "I see no more than you but I have trained myself to notice what I see."

If I were allowed one word to highlight the most necessary qualification for a good greenkeeper, my choice would be for him to be observant. Powers of observation

(allied to correct deduction) are an invaluable part of everyday lives and what better way to express those observations than through an Essay Competition?

It is easy to understand the natural diffidence of some at bursting into print. Taking the plunge can be as difficult as giving a first lecture at a seminar but belief and confidence are other crucial attributes of a successful greenkeeper. As a result, it is the facts that you accumulate that matter. Allowance will be made if ideas are not presented as well as they might be, either in print or out loud, but, as with cutting greens, you will find you will get better the more you attempt.

Whether they are made public or not, records or diaries are another means of storing knowledge although commitment to print may have been anathema to former generations of greenkeeper. They preferred to store everything in their heads. However, unless you are one of the few, you will soon find that memory plays tricks and, in any event, records can be handed down to a successor but writing essays or articles is a wonderful way of pooling information and airing hobby horses. I have enjoyed greatly reading the winning entries and congratulate the authors for having given of their time to set an example for others to follow. Make sure you start off the new century with a bumper bundle.

Donald Steel

AN ENVIRONMENTAL APPROACH TO GOLF GREENKEEPING William Bowden

Winner of the Under 25's Section of the BIGGA Essay Competition

Today more than ever, sport and recreation occupy much of our leisure time. It is therefore important to ensure that the pressures involved in terms of associated land-use, resource consumption, and pollution are continually minimised, not least within the golf industry where harmony with the natural surroundings is a fundamental element of the games heritage and enjoyment.

To this end, the future must involve the wise use of natural resources, and this should be the goal of every 'responsible' greenkeeper.

As we move into the next millennium, more than ever there is the potential for our industry to serve as a 'role model' for good environmental practice, this potential must be fulfilled. And while there are aspects from the past we can learn from, equally there are mistakes that we cannot afford to repeat.

Since the publication of the "Demand for Golf" produced by the Royal & Ancient in 1989, (in which it predicted that between 1989 and the year 2000, as many as 700 new golf courses were required just to keep pace with the growth of the game), then the emphasis has been on the appropriate and responsible care of both these new developments and established courses. The importance of such responsible

management can be put into context if one considers that within Britain alone, a total land area in excess of 102,950 ha is occupied by golf courses, a figure that highlights their significance within our landscape.

Further statistics show that nearly 36,000 ha of this total constitute 'rough areas', which in practical terms would equate to 1,800 potential wildlife sites, each measuring 5-50 ha in size. Furthermore it is estimated that a mean area of 58 ha is taken up by golf courses, while in comparison an area of just 40 ha is occupied by County wildlife reserves!

The concept of 'Environmental Management' is not a new one, for decades greenkeepers have been managing sensitive areas of their golf courses successfully. Particularly since the early 1970's at which time the general awareness regarding ecological issues increased. The public began to scrutinise both themselves and industry with regards to: Chemical use, and the health of the ecosystem. Borne from this awareness, many recreational industries (not least golf), had to come to terms with the tightening of legislation, and the increased interest regarding their effect on the environment.

Such restrictions have made it the policy of every conscientious green-

keeper to appreciate how their regimes can adversely affect their surroundings.

Although this is the case for the majority of golf clubs, there has to be some form of standardizing and monitoring attitudes and progress within the industry, to ensure the continued move towards a realistic and sustainable future which will see a massive reduction in the range of chemicals available to the greenkeeper.

Since the mid 1980's there have been a range of initiatives launched, all of which have set out to increase both environmental awareness and activity. Of these perhaps most successful has been the recent "Committed to Green" initiative, introduced by the European Golf Association (EGA), in 1998.

The scheme lays down basic guidelines for greenkeepers to follow, on how best to instill a comprehensive and worthwhile management strategy for their golf course. The goal of any such campaign must be to promote a move away from the unsustainable developments witnessed so often in the past, with the influx of so many "American" style courses requiring an incomprehensible level of input both in terms of capital and resources to maintain to the desired level. This cannot be an endorsable path for future developments to follow.



BIGGA ESSAY COMPETITION

Progression

There are several areas that need to be addressed, to help ensure golf courses continue to form a valuable and integral part of our landscape well into the future, of these paramount must be:

- Increasing environmental awareness, within both the playing fraternity and greenkeeping.
- Encouraging and supporting any positive environmental activity, making available qualified advice and guidance wherever necessary.
- The development of education and providing easy access to all information regarding greenkeeping and the environment.

Although not mentioned above, another important issue that needs to be addressed is the improvement of communication lines within many of our golf clubs. This should include the breaking down of out-dated and archaic communication barriers, enabling members and greenstaff to work together towards what must be their common goal: A quality golf course, set among attractive surroundings that is both enjoyable and rewarding to play.

Upon addressing any environmental issues regarding the golf course, it must be remembered that although not a particularly rare or threatened species, the golfer has to be the most important fauna of any club. As without his/her co-operation even the very best plans will be thwarted! I would be surprised if many golf clubs do not have keen environmentalists within both their membership and staff, however without satisfactory communication such underlying enthusiasm is wasted and with this the potential for the golf course to become a valuable site for both wildlife and the golfer.

Only from 'within' can a compro-

mise be reached, for the good of the golfer and the countryside.

All too often we see articles in magazines, often based more on opinion than fact, that heap praise upon the lush, green 'Augusta type' courses many of which are American. Unfortunately this opinion leads to unrealistic demands being put upon the greenkeeper to embark upon a course of extreme management, instead of maintaining the course within less intensive, and more viable parameters. It appears very often that the consensus of opinion within the golfing fraternity is for a 'Picture postcard' golf course, and as a direct result their enthusiasm to support a move towards a more sensitive 'style' of management could be less forthcoming, as this may not result in the production of intensively manicured, lush green fairways that many regard as the way a golf course should look.

The following quote was taken from a recent golfing publication which was previewing the Augusta Masters, it epitomises the attitude among many of today's golfers, and how they perceive the perfect course to be presented.

How can this industry move towards a more environmental standpoint, if golfing magazines continue to publish articles like this?

"Ladies and Gentlemen, we would like to introduce you to the most beautiful holes on the world. If they play golf in Heaven, then this is what the members are enjoying" - alongside a picture of a lush heavily striped Augusta National.

Unfortunately as long as golfers (however small the minority), view golf within such limited horizons, then what we can achieve from an environmental standpoint will be severely limited. You need only to talk to a cross section of any membership to realise how many still regard the extensive areas of rough found on our

more established courses, as nothing other than untidy. Such individuals require educating, so we can counteract this widespread desire for what amounts to little more than 'Theme Park' golf, and ensure more golfers appreciate how the game should be played; in natural settings wherever possible.

Due in large part to the development of so many badly designed golf courses, a number of organisations have become concerned with the environmental impacts of golf, many of these groups condemn golf, claiming among other things that it is:

- Destroying natural habitats
- Suburbanising the Countryside
- Depleting water resources
- Over-using chemicals
- Restricting public access

Such is the enthusiasm of these individuals, that a group known as the "Global Anti-Golf Movement" operating out of Japan and Malaysia has begun a campaign focussing on the development of major golfing resorts. The organisation claims to monitor golf on a worldwide scale, and in 1993 they initiated "World No Golf Day".

Although an extreme group, it would be foolish for the golfing industry to ignore it. As history has shown repeatedly that yesterday's 'fringe' groups have often become today's mainstream! Unless we adopt a more active and visible environmental philosophy, at a practical level, then the claims of such 'Anti-golf' campaigners, (that the industry is endangering our environment), will become increasingly substantiated.

A positive aspect has to be the continued development of greenkeeping as a profession, with the improvement and greater accessibility of education, there will be an acceptance that good environmental

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management should be an integral part of any regime. The present lack of environmental awareness is understandable if one considers that it was not until 1991 was the subject of golf course ecology fully acknowledged as part of greenkeeper training at SNVQ & NVQ level.

Steps to Success

All management plans should be drawn up with the help of a qualified expert, the aim is to ensure that a viable and sustainable plan is put into action. The concept that such ventures bring with them a drain upon resources, and require a large investment of capital is unsubstantiated.

A worthwhile 'EMP' is not only relevant to multi-million pound resorts, on the contrary, such plans will often bring saving benefits e.g. The recommendation that 'Tiger' rough be cut just once or twice each year, would surely save on time and resources at many clubs, who continually chop down all areas of rough throughout the year, so members don't lose their balls!

Above all an effective plan should be realistic and achievable in relation to the circumstances of any given club. All too often greenkeepers have embarked on elaborate projects, with good intention, only to find that the level of input required to make these schemes successful is impossible to sustain. Often resulting in a messy scrub, or weed infested rough, worthless both from an environmental and golfing view point. The overall aim should be to maximise the potential of natural areas on the golf course, while avoiding any interference with regards to its playability.

When embarking upon a management plan it is important to maintain written records, including: initial policies, and the short and longterm goals. The following points highlight some important issues:

1. Define your objectives: What are your aims? How will they be achieved? Over what time scale?

2. Focus on specific areas for development, decide how these areas will be improved, i.e. the establishment of buffer zones, no spray zones, areas to be left unmown at certain times of the year etc.

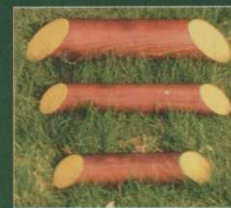
3. Delegate individuals within the greenstaff, to be responsible for specific areas. Encourage the involvement of anyone who has enthusiasm and interest!

4. It is vital that any work carried out should be recorded and monitored, this will ensure initial targets are being met, and also highlight areas for review and improvement. Ideally a set period of time (ie two yrs), should be established at which point the success and/or failings of the plan can be assessed, and if required addressed.

Every management plan must be carefully thought out, and not undertaken lightly. With careful and thorough planning, not only will wildlife benefit, but also the playability and general appeal of the golf course.

In summing up, it must be said that environmental factors are among some of the most significant external influences on the future development of the Worlds golf courses. How golf is perceived from an environmental point of view, will have a direct effect on the future growth patterns of the industry! The major benefit of a more environmental approach will be the improvement of golf's image, both within and outside the industry.

An Environmental Approach to Golf
Greenkeeping - William Bowden
Winner of the under 25's section of the
BIGGA Essay Competition



Elliott Small is BIGGA's New National Chairman and Scott MacCallum sat down at BTME to find out a little bit more about him...

Small beginnings

The honour of being BIGGA's National Chairman for the Year 2000 has fallen to one of the best known faces in British greenkeeping.

Elliott Small, who was helped into the famous red blazer by outgoing Chairman, Gordon Child, at this year's AGM, will lead the Association for the next 12 months and there can be few who would doubt his credentials for doing the job.

Like his predecessor, Elliott is a former Regional Administrator - holding the Scottish position until relatively recently - and as a result knows the workings of the Association, and all of the personalities within it, like the back of his hand.

"I was absolutely delighted when Gordon asked me to be his Vice Chairman, although I was a little apprehensive about what it meant - Gordon is a tough act to follow. He's had a number of tough situations to handle and has dealt with everything that has been thrown at him extremely well," said Elliott, as he grabbed a few quite moments during this year's BTME.

"I'm hoping that I have a comfortable year and that everything runs smoothly," he added.

Although well aware of the honour Elliott did have to think carefully about accepting the Vice Chairmanship - which automatically leads on to becoming Chairman.

"My first thought was that I couldn't do it while still a working greenkeeper, such is the amount of time that today's National Chairman has to devote to the role. It would also involve my club backing me 100%, otherwise it would not have been possible," said Elliott, who has been Head Greenkeeper at Tulliallan Golf Club in Kincardine-on-Forth, in Central Scotland, for the last 23 years.

Elliott talked it through with wife, Edna, who is as much a recognisable face in British greenkeeping as her husband, and she encouraged him to go for it.

"Originally I'd felt that if I ever was to be Chairman it would be like Gordon, when I was retired, but as Edna said I could be forgotten about in five years time."

He then spoke with his Green's Convener who was fully supportive

and he subsequently put the matter to the full committee.

"My Green's Convener was also Vice Captain as well so he'll be Club Captain at the same time as I'm Chairman. The committee supported me and said I could have the time off I needed to do the job."

BIGGA's new Chairman was born in Galashiels, in the Scottish Borders, into a greenkeeping family.

"My father, Bob, was the greenkeeper/pro at Galashiels Golf Club for 32 years. My brother, George, took over from him and was there for the next 30 years."

Now you would expect that with such a pedigree Elliott's future as a greenkeeper was preordained. But that is not the case.

"My father tried to put me off the profession initially. He didn't want me to become a greenkeeper because there wasn't any money in greenkeeping, or professional golf, at that time. Although I did work with him briefly after I'd left school."

Elliott had been a keen sportsman during his time at school. As well as golf he was a fine rugby player representing South of Scotland Schoolboys as a wing forward alongside a legendary rugby figure, and fellow Galashiels Academy pupil, Jim Telfer, the former Scottish and British Lion's coach.

Discouraged from greenkeeping it was to one of the Scottish border's famed industries that Elliott turned for employment and the tweed industry.

"I spent almost five years as an apprentice designer in the tweed mills designing skirts, travelling rugs, scarves, jackets... anything that is made out of tweed."

He left after completing four and a half years of a five year apprenticeship.

"My father retired and decided he would go out to New Zealand to see my sister who lived out there. I decided I wanted to go as well."

After Small Senior had been in New Zealand a few months the local golf club asked if he would take over the shop and he did that for another 10 years in his "retirement"

Elliott got a job driving a truck and worked in the golf shop or on the course in the afternoons.

"I'd start work at about 5am and deliver bread to the country stores and when I finished at 12 noon I'd go straight to the golf course to work on the course and hit balls."

"At that stage I had aspirations of becoming a professional golfer. I used to enjoy working on the course but I was very keen to play golf and I got down to a handicap of 1."

He also had a brush with another couple of golfers who did make a decent fist of becoming professionals.

"I actually played in the first tournament that Bob Charles ever won as a professional. The New Zealand Open was held at Invercargill Golf Club and on the Sunday after it finished our club, Queen's Park on the other side of the city, held a pro-am to which some of the top pros and amateurs in the country were invited. I was invited as one of the four of five up and coming players. Another Open Champion, Kel Nagle, also played in the tournament," said Elliott, who still retains the programme of the event as a souvenir.

Having met Edna before he first went to New Zealand they kept writing and Elliott returned to Scotland in 1963 and they were married the following year.

They went straight back out to New Zealand for another two years before the lure of the home country brought them back.

Another potential career almost snared Elliott on his return as he spent a few months working for an electronic's company before a greenkeeping job emerged working with his brother at Galashiels.

After Galashiels, Elliott worked at Hartsbourne Country Club, in Bushy Heath, before taking on the job of Greenkeeper/Pro/Club Master at the nine hole Torwoodlee in Galashiels.

"We did everything. Edna did the catering while I used to start at 6am out on the course - I had one person to cut the fairways in the summer - come back in and work in the shop and then the bar. We never finished before midnight," he recalled.

With the arrival of children, a move to something less time consuming was deemed necessary and Elliott was appointed First Assistant at Ralston

Elliott dons the
prized Chairman's
jacket, helped by
Past Chairman,
Gordon Child

Golf Club with the promise of the Head Greenkeeper's position when the incumbent retired.

"He retired quicker than we originally thought so I took over only about nine months later. I was there for six years before moving to Tulliallan in 1977."

He has always been heavily involved in the greenkeeping Associations during his time in the profession.

"I joined the East Section of SIGGA in 1977 when I was at Torwoodlee and when I went to Ralston I joined the committee. I was West Section Chairman when I moved to Tulliallan," said Elliott.

"I realised then that there was room for another Section so started up the Central Section in 1980 and was Secretary for the first two and a half years before eventually becoming Chairman."

Elliott took over as Regional Administer from Chris Kennedy in 1990 when Chris moved to Wentworth and worked in tandem with Edna for the next seven years before the part time appointment of Peter Boyd.

Elliott has gone for another experienced man for his Vice Chairman in the shape of Clive Osgood, of Walton Heath.

"I've always had a lot of admiration for Clive. He's a gentleman who has the best interests of the Association at heart. I think he'll do a good job."

As he settles into the role Elliott is very clear on one thing he'd like to achieve.

"I'd like to see the growth in the Association continue in membership terms. But the one thing I'd really like to see, and I don't think we will have arrived as an Association until it happens, is the greenkeeper sitting at the top table of a dinner alongside the Club Professional and the Secretary. Usually you find the greenkeeper sitting in the body of the hall and I'd like to see golf club members understanding the importance of their greenkeeper."

With Elliott Small at the helm for the next 12 months you can be sure that the Association will move closer to that goal.





BIGGA Golf Environment Competition 2000

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Thanks to the continued sponsorship of Amazon Groundcare and the support of the R&A, the BIGGA Golf Environment Competition will continue to run in the Year 2000.

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Nicola Gemmell has recently completed her BSc Honours in Horticulture. As part of her final year, she investigated the use of environmental management on the golf course. Here she explains her results...

Manager's special?

Environmental Management

There are over 500 golf courses in Scotland covering around 25000 hectares in total land area. As the game continues to grow in popularity, we must make the best use of the natural processes that have formed the courses and help maintain them. Almost every part of the golf course is potentially valuable to wildlife, but especially areas outwith normal playing zones that can amount to nearly 45% of the total area. Most courses have a wide range of natural features providing possible wildlife habitats. These habitats, such as grassland, woodland, hedges, individual trees and water features also draw in all sorts of insects, birds and animals making the golf course a potential wildlife haven.

Aims

As part of my Honours year at the University of Strathclyde/Scottish Agricultural College, Auchincruive, I chose for my dissertation to investigate the use of amenity pesticides on golf courses and their probable impacts on that environment. There is evidence that the use of amenity turf chemicals on the golf courses could be limiting their environmental quality and conservation potential. By using alternative methods to amenity pesticide use and through a reduction in their use, the environment of the golf course is enhanced. Another aim of this study was therefore to find out what measures have been taken to control the use of amenity pesticides as well as the underlying reasons.

Objectives

1. To assess the factors that are working for and against wildlife conservation on the golf course.
2. To determine to what extent environmental management plans are used in golf course management.
3. To review the role of amenity pesticides and fertilisers in golf course management and the factors that influence their use.
4. To determine the current threats posed by the use of amenity pesticides and fertilisers on the golf course and the implications for the surrounding environment.

The main focus of the investigation was to evaluate the use of fertilisers and pesticides on golf courses in Scotland. To gain relevant information, a questionnaire was produced for course managers. Two hundred and fifteen of these questionnaires were sent out to golf courses throughout Scotland, some small and some larger, more prestigious ones. Questions were designed to determine changes in amenity pesticides and fertiliser use and to determine what alternative methods are being employed.

A second questionnaire was sent out to 30 companies that supply and/or manufacture amenity pesticides and fertilisers. This questionnaire was used to determine whether the agrochemical companies have changed and are changing their product range to deal with the changes occurring in golf course management. Forms of advertising were also assessed to determine how the greenkeepers are kept informed about new products. In a competitive market, it is important to keep the greenkeeper updated with new products and improved methods of course management. The questionnaires were used to provide information about golf course maintenance and how this might be adapted to provide a better environmental management. They were used as the primary source of data collection, to gain information from golf courses throughout Scotland.

Results from Questionnaire sent to Course Managers:

Sixty-five responses were received from the 215 golf courses targeted in Scotland on which the analysis is based.

Land use

The majority (64.6%) of the courses have been built on agricultural land.

See Figure 1: Previous Land Use

Changes in amenity pesticide use:

The use of amenity pesticides has decreased over the last 10 years (Table 1).

The frequency of application of amenity pesticide products has also decreased or stayed the same.

See Table 1: Perceived Changes in Amenity Pesticide and Fertiliser Use in last 10 years by Greenkeepers/Course Managers

There has been a slight increase in the number of products used; this is because a wider range of products exists on the market and only a selection of products are used. For fertiliser products, it is the perception of the course managers, that the use of fertilisers has increased overall, but there is an increase in the use of organic and slow release products.

Most of the amenity pesticides are applied to the greens, with fertilisers mainly applied to the greens and tees. The greens are the main areas where fertiliser is used and where amenity pesticides are used to cure disease problems. Some fertilisers and amenity pesticides are also used on tees and fairways.

It was shown that a relatively wide selection of amenity pesticides are used; most frequent was Glyphosate, with 2,4-D & Dicamba used only half as often. Glyphosate is used as a total herbicide to remove all weeds from paths, hard surfaces and clearing vegetation prior to reseeding. 2,4-D & Dicamba is used to control annual and perennial dicotyledons in turf.

For fungicides, Iprodione and Fenarimol are popular for the treatment of Fusarium, Red Thread and Dollar Spot disease problems. Gamma HCH is used to control earthworms and leatherjackets in turf.

Environmental Management

Only a third (33%) of the golf courses are actively using environmental management plans.

Independent Agronomists are used by just over half of the courses most being visited every year (57%), some (36%) are visited more than once a year and a smaller number (7%) are visited every two to three years.

The most commonly used method of distributing information is through suppliers (28%), and other useful methods include; other greenkeepers (i.e. word of mouth) (19%), independent agronomists (18%), and trade press (18%), (Figure 2). Information

about new products is provided by the agrochemical suppliers through personal visits. Other sources of information are important such as the trade press and others, e.g. BIGGA.

See Figure 2: Information about New Products

Integrated Pest Management (IPM)

Two-thirds of those respondents were aware of the concept of IPM but only one-third actually use these methods (Table 2). In general, of those who currently use IPM, most of the greenkeepers were using IPM as a method for improving the environment on the golf course and as a way to reduce costs of pesticide applications.

See Table 2: IPM Awareness and use

Water use

In an age when there is less available water and more frequent drought periods (less so in Scotland), there will be implications for the golf courses. It is impractical to irrigate all areas of the course, so irrigation of only specific parts of the course, mainly the greens is undertaken. The size of the greens will have an influence on the wear and compaction of the green as well as their water requirement. The majority of courses (72%) use irrigation on the greens throughout the summer.

Pop-Up sprinklers (22 courses) are used to irrigate specific areas and are fixed, usually around the edge of the greens. Hand watering is used (5 courses) but is more labour intensive although there is less problem with overwatering. Bowers (5 courses) are used when there is no local water supply and less frequently used - when absolutely necessary.

Rough

The percentage of rough varies between courses and a wide frequency distribution is shown in Table 3. As there are different heights of rough, it was difficult to determine accurately the mowing regimes and the length of the grass. On the majority of courses, the rough is cut more than 3 times per

Manager's special?

year (54%) and usually clippings are not removed (71%).

See Table 3: Frequency Distribution of Percentage Rough Ground

Other areas

There are several features which exist on the course outwith the playing areas. Mainly there are woodland areas (45%) and water features (67%) which exist on the golf course. Other features include heather, gorse, hedgerows and wildflower meadows, represented in Figure 3.

See Figure 3: Other Features on Golf Courses

Results from Questionnaires sent to Agrochemical Companies:

Questionnaires were sent to 30 agrochemical companies that supply and/or manufacture amenity pesticide products; 15 responses were received.

Most manufacturers or suppliers responded that there has been an increase in the number of amenity pesticides used and that frequency of application of all amenity pesticides has increased in the last 10 years (Table 4). This is contradictory to the views of greenkeepers who thought that amenity pesticide use was perceived to have decreased. The number of amenity pesticide products sold increased but not in all the companies. For fertilisers, it is a different story as the use has increased but there is a greater number of slow release and organic fertilisers used instead of the inorganic or compound form.

See Table 4: Changes in the Selling of Amenity Pesticides and Fertiliser

Advertising Methods

Many forms of advertising are used and are listed below (Table 5). By rating the different forms of advertising on their success rate, it was shown that this depends on the company; 47% of the companies rated suppliers as the most successful methods of spreading information. Other greenkeepers were rated highly for spreading information (33%) while the other forms of advertising were not rated as highly, mostly with an average success rate. These forms of advertising are still used as they are still a viable means of advertising. There are a high percentage of no comments in this section as several companies did not rate the advertising methods.

See Table 5: Methods of Advertising

Representation at the major trade shows is important to the marketing of company products and many products are sold (Table 6). The most successful way to sell products is through company representatives and personal visits to the golf courses. Mail shots of literature are also a good method for trading and advertising in trade press,

like Greenkeeper International and The Groundsman, are also successful, shown in Table 6.

Table 7: Changes in company to deal with Environmental Management

Changes need to be made within the company to adapt to the changes in golf course management (Table 7).

Conclusions and Future Prospects

The work carried out in this research project is an introduction to the development of environmental management on golf courses in Scotland. Work has been carried out in environmental management in the US and elsewhere in Europe. However, little work has been done in Scotland. To ensure that environmental management continues more research needs to be carried out in Scotland and in particular to investigate the effect that amenity pesticides have on the environment and to develop new methods to overcome the use of chemicals.

If I was able to extend this project I would have liked to:

- Send out a larger number of questionnaires to all the golf courses in Scotland to get a fairer representation of the course managers' work in Scotland.

- Arrange meetings with agrochemical company representatives directly to interview them on specific areas of their product development and application. This would have gained a better response than the questionnaire. Several of the questions were poorly answered perhaps because they were unclear to some respondents.

- Meet with Agronomists to determine their role in golf course management.

Views of the Golf Club Members

A number of questions concerning environmental management were included in a questionnaire distributed to Golf Club members. However there was a poor response from this questionnaire. This was very disappointing as I feel that the members' viewpoint is important since it is their golf course which is being managed for better or worse.

Various methods have been used to inform the members, as shown in Figure 4. The most successful methods were found at Kilmacollm Golf Club, Renfrewshire. Members were taken on guided tours and rambles across the course to point out some of the areas which they are trying to promote, e.g. heather plantings, and pointing out wildflowers. Other forms of communication used included; distribution of newsletters, talks, posters and notices in the clubhouse.

See Figure 4: Methods of Informing Members

Members are not willing to sacrifice their playing conditions to increase the

Table 1	For Herbicides Products:	Increase	Same	Decrease	No answer
Frequency		6	28	31	0
Area		9	28	24	4
Number		8	27	22	8
	For Fungicide Products:				
Frequency		16	19	29	1
Area		8	38	11	8
Number		15	24	18	8
	For Insecticide Products:				
Frequency		8	32	26	2
Area		9	30	19	7
Number		6	26	22	11
	For Fertiliser Products:				
Inorganic		17	3	27	18
Compound		26	4	26	9
N only		20	4	23	18
P/K only		17	3	20	25
Organic		40	2	9	14
Slow Release		29	3	10	23
	Others:				
Conditioners		5	-	-	-
Liquid Fe		4	-	-	-

Table 2	IPM aware (%)	Use IPM (%)
Yes	60	Yes 29
No	40	No 71

Table 3	% Rough	No. Courses
0-10		5
11-20		11
21-30		13
31-40		9
41-50		8
51-60		9
61+		4

Table 5	Advertising	Companies (%)
	Other GKs	66.7
	Contractors	46.7
	Suppliers	73.3
	Manufacturers	73.3
	Ind Agronomist	53.3
	Trade Press	66.7
	Others	20

Table 4	For Herbicide Products:	Increase (%)	Same (%)	Decrease (%)	No Comment (%)
Frequency of Application		40	13.3	13.3	66.7
Number of Herbicide Products Sold		33.3	0	20	46.7
	For Fungicide Products:				
Frequency of Application		33.3	20	13.3	33.4
Number of Herbicide Products Sold		20	13.3	20	46.7
	For Insecticide Products:				
Frequency of Application		33.3	6.67	13.3	46.7
Number of Herbicide Products Sold		20	0	20	60
	For Fertiliser Products:				
Inorganic		26.7	13.3	6.67	46.67
Compound (N, P, K)		20	20	13.3	46.7
Nitrogen only		33.3	6.67	6.67	53.35
K/P only		20	6.67	20	53.3
Organic		53.3	0	6.67	40
Slow Release		53.3	6.67	0	40
Other - Control Release		6.67	0	0	93.3
Liquids		6.67	0	0	93.3

Table 6	Form of Trading	Rating: 1	2	3	4	5	Other
Trade Shows		0	26.7	40	20	0	13.3
Trade Press		6.67	13.3	26.6	33.3	6.67	13.5
Company Representatives		66.7	6.67	0	6.67	6.67	13.3
Company Literature		0	33.3	26.6	26.6	0	13.5
Other (Seminars)		6.67	0	0	0	0	93.33

Table 7	Changes made	Yes (%)	No (%)	No Comment (%)
Environmentally Friendly Products		80	3.3	16.7
Increase in Specific Target Pest & Disease Products		53.3	13.3	33.3
Reduction in Broad Spectrum Products		46.7	20	33.3
Decrease Persistence of Chemical after Application		46.7	13.3	40
Other - Product Stewardship Campaigns		6.67	0	93.3

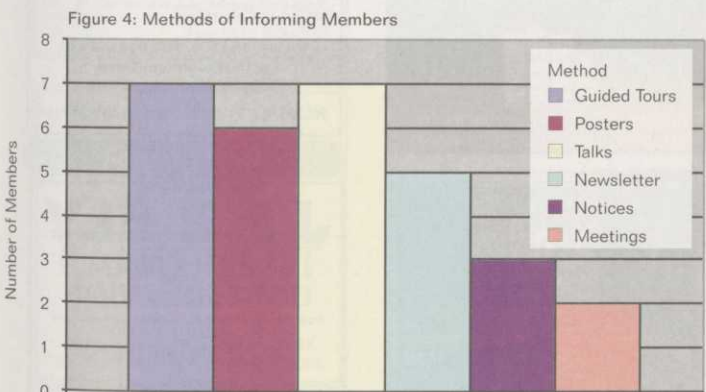
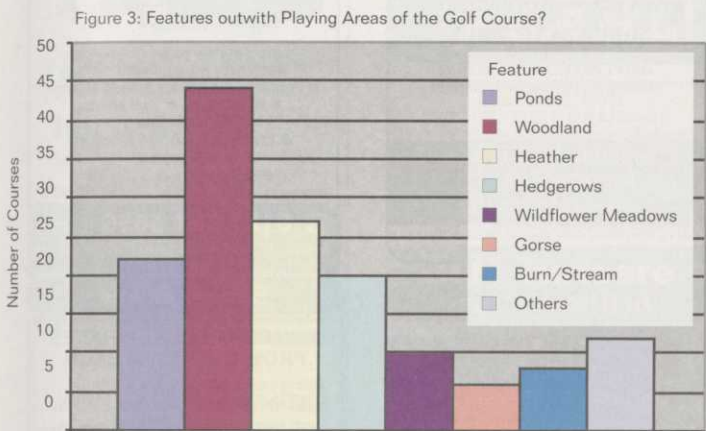
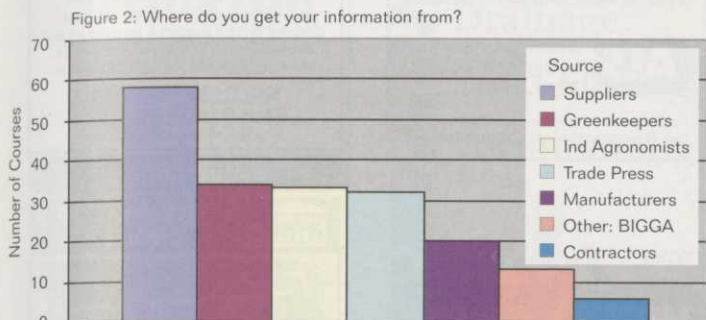
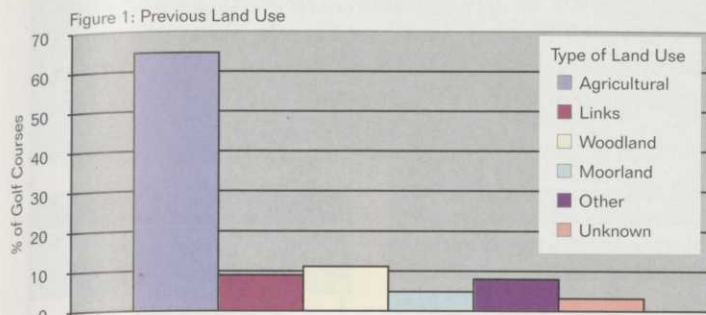
natural habitats on the golf course. There are plenty of areas outwith the greens and fairways which do not need to be intensively maintained. More than one-third of the members are willing to allow the rough and other areas to change as these are less intensively used areas of the course.

Summary

This study was designed to evaluate the environmental effects of golf course development and management in Scotland. Golf courses cover a large area of our country and as such can

provide important habitats for the survival of wildlife as well as providing an increasingly popular pastime. Most golf courses contain a high percentage of ground that can remain undisturbed by the application of amenity pesticides and fertilisers and with careful management and stewardship can provide ideal circumstances for the retention of the natural environment for plants, animals, birds and insects.

With the development of Environmental Management ideas it appeared appropriate to evaluate their effect on our golf courses. The results



were carefully analysed and the major conclusions to be made from the answers included; pesticide use had decreased in the last ten years, the use of organic fertilisers has increased and there is a limited awareness of IPM techniques.

Furthermore, a number of initiatives are being developed both nationally and internationally to encourage environmental management. Now agrochemical companies are working more closely with greenkeeping staff to produce and market more environmentally friendly products.

Nicola Gemmell is currently gaining experience of greenkeeping at Elmwood Golf Course, Fife. She would be interested in discussing this project and is contactable on 01505 613350 (answerphone) or via email - nicgemmell@hotmail.com

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HEAD GREENKEEPER

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The primary responsibilities of this very much "hands on" position are as follows

- Experienced and qualified in all aspects of modern greenkeeping
- Be self motivated with good/proven man management skills
- A good working knowledge of modern golf course management practices and techniques, with an ability to work on and within the financial budgets of the Club.
- Sound knowledge of health and safety obligations.

Please apply in writing with full cv to:

Vejle Golf Club, Ibaekvej 46, 7100 Vejle, DENMARK

Att. Manager - Henrik Hansen

Vejle Golf Club has 27 holes, part 3 course, driving range and 2 putting greens. Accommodation is available on the course.

Belton Park Golf Club

Applications are invited for the position of

HEAD GREENKEEPER

The club, a parkland 27 hole course founded in 1890, requires a successor to the head greenkeeper who is retiring after 25 years.

The position will require a hands on, hard working self motivated person with the necessary man management skills, health and safety knowledge to lead a 6 man team working to approved standards and budgets.

The club is preferably looking for someone experienced in computer controlled irrigation (the course has recently been fully irrigated) and a knowledge of modern machinery and techniques.

The salary is negotiable. No accommodation, but some assistance with re-location expenses will be met.

Applications in writing with current C.V. by
15th March 2000 to:

The Secretary, Belton Park Golf Club,
Londonthorpe Road, Grantham, Lincs. NG31 9SH

British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association is looking to appoint a

REGIONAL ADMINISTRATOR (part-time)

in the MIDLAND REGION

The successful candidate will cover the Midland Region with responsibilities for the East Midland, Midland, East of England, Berks/Bucks/Oxon and Mid-Anglia Sections where there are currently 1175 members.

Applicants should possess sound administration and communication skills whilst being able to demonstrate computer literacy. In addition to serving the needs of the Regional Board, a positive contribution to promoting the Association and the welfare of greenkeepers will be required.

The post holder will be expected to display initiative and enthusiasm particularly in the drive to introduce new members. Regular contact with golf clubs and greenkeeping staff will be an essential element of the post. Ideally applicants should be able to display an affinity with the greenkeeping profession and the game of golf.

It is envisaged that the average working week will be 27.5 hours and the post will be home based. A job description and further details are available from the
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Mere Golf & Country Club DEPUTY COURSE MANAGER

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The requirements for the Deputy Course Manager are:-

- Minimum of 8 years experience
- Holder of relevant qualifications, including PA1, PA2 and PA6 spraying certificates.
- Knowledge of automatic irrigation systems
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- Self-motivated and ambitious
- Able to manage, motivate and train staff at all levels to precise working practices.
- Able to work to current Health and Safety regulations.
- A good communicator
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- Ability to deputise in the Course Manager's absence

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The requirements for the Mechanic/Greenkeeper are:-

- Ability to repair and maintain a variety of Course Maintenance equipment.
- Work to current Health and Safety Regulations
- Ability to control stock and work to set budgets
- Able to work to service schedules
- Self motivated
- Ability to work alone or in a team
- Able to assist with Greenkeeping duties when required.

Applications in writing with full CV by 13 March to:
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Applications in writing including full CV to:

The General Manager/Secretary
Blankney Golf Club, Blankney, Lincoln, LN4 3AZ

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Nathan Kimsing, Head Greenkeeper
Sutton Green Golf Club, New Lane, Sutton Green, Surrey GU4 7QF

THE YORK GOLF CLUB

requires a

DEPUTY HEAD GREENKEEPER

Applicants will have at least five years experience in all aspects of greenkeeping. A thorough knowledge of machinery and water irrigation systems are essential.

Qualifications up to NVQ Level 3 preferred. Also spraying qualifications PA1, PA2 and PA6. Chain saw certificate would be an advantage. The successful applicant will be required to take over all the duties of the Head Greenkeeper in his absence. Early morning weekend working is essential. Salary negotiable.

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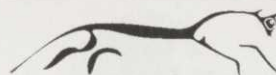
DEPUTY HEAD GREENKEEPER

The applicant will work as part of a team and will at times carry responsibility for course decisions, operations and staff direction.

Applicants should have the relevant qualifications and experience required for this post.

Please apply in writing enclosing full CV by
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The Managing Secretary
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All applicants are invited to apply in writing, enclosing current CV to:

The Course Manager, Hendon Golf Club, Ashley Walk,
Off Devonshire Road, Mill Hill, London NW7 1DG

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Applications are invited for the position of:-

Deputy Head Greenkeeper

We require an ambitious, enthusiastic and highly motivated person to join this established but developing club. Able to manage and motivate staff. Experience with irrigation systems.

There is no accommodation.

Qualified to NVQ Level 2 and possess PA1, 2A and 6A Spraying qualifications.

Please apply in writing with a full, current CV, including present salary to:-

Craig Bryant, Head Greenkeeper, Halesworth Golf Club,
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Jon Hill, Course Manager, Gosses Farm, Birch Grove, Horsted
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EASINGWOLD GOLF CLUB

Applications are invited for the position of

ASSISTANT HEAD GREENKEEPER – designate

Applicants should be qualified to NVQ Level 3 and hold PA1 and PA2 spraying certificates.

The position requires a person who is self motivated and possesses good man management skills.

The applicant will work as part of the Greens Team and may at times carry responsibility for Course decisions, operations and staff direction.

Early morning weekend working is essential.

Applicants in the first instance are invited to apply in writing with a full CV to:

**The Secretary, Easingwold Golf Club,
Stillington Road, Easingwold, York YO61 3ET**



OAKE MANOR GOLF CLUB

Invite applications for the position of

COURSE MANAGER

Oake Manor is a well known busy 7 year old commercial and progressive complex situated in the heart of the Taunton Vale. It consists of an 18-hole 6109 yard parkland course, Driving Range, 2 Academy holes and practise facilities.

- This challenging position becomes available in Spring 2000.
- The successful candidate will be fully qualified and require experience in all aspects of modern course management, with a minimum 10 years experience within the industry.
- The Course Manager is a key member of the company's management team and will require vision, drive and project/ team leadership in this expanding department.
- Attractive salary package with working incentives available.
- Accommodation available if required.

Applications with full CV and salary expectations by 25th February 2000 to:

**Michael King,
Managing Director
Oake Manor Golf Club
Taunton, Somerset TA4 1BA**

SHORTLANDS GOLF CLUB

Are seeking an experienced and suitably qualified **Assistant Greenkeeper** (NVQ2 Level) for employment at our 9 hole course.

Some conditional overtime.

Salary negotiable

Four weeks holiday.

Applications in writing including current CV to:

**Cliff Roberts, Shortlands Golf Club, Meadow Road,
Shortlands, Kent BR2 0PB
Tel: 0181 460 8828**

University College London Union

SPORTS GROUND MANAGER

(£21,597 + £2,134 LW)

Manager required for 90 acre site in Hertfordshire. Candidates should have at least three years management experience of a Sports Ground facility and will be experienced in the following:

- Preparation and Upkeep of Surfaces, Building and Equipment.
- Staff Rotas, Assignment of Duties and Processing Payroll.
- Ordering Stocks and Processing Invoices for Payment.
- Health & Safety Requirements.

Possession of the Institute of Groundsmanship Intermediate Diploma (or equivalent) is desirable. The candidate must be physically fit and able to work to high standards on their own initiative.

For application pack, call 0171 387 3611. Closing Date 5.00 pm Friday 3 March 2000.

UCL Union is an equal opportunities employer.

Reigate Hill Golf Club

currently require

First Assistant Greenkeeper

An ambitious, enthusiastic, hard working individual is required to join the team at this developing course in Surrey. Experience of working with USGA specification greens would be preferable but not essential as would spraying certificates (PA1, PA2, PA6).

Interviews will be held during the week commencing Monday 6th March 2000.

Applications in writing, including a current CV to:

**Ian Donnelly, Club Manager, Reigate Hill Golf Club,
Gatton Bottom, Reigate, Surrey RH2 0TU**

PACHESHAM PARK GOLF CENTRE

Require a

1ST ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

Applicants should have at least 3 years experience in all aspects of greenkeeping and a thorough knowledge of machinery maintenance and automatic irrigation systems.

Qualification up to NVQ level 2 as well as spraying qualifications PA1, PA2 and PA6. Chainsaw certificate would be an advantage. The successful applicant will be required to take over all the duties of the Head Greenkeeper in his absence at this busy 9 hole public golf centre and driving range. Early morning weekend work may be required and salary by negotiation according to experience.

Apply in writing with CV to

**Philip Filary, Head Greenkeeper, Pachesham Park Golf Centre,
Oaklawn Road, Leatherhead, Surrey KT22 0BT
and telephone for further details 01372 843 453 or 0403 716 867**

Feature listing from February '98

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, Ramsdale 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

September '99: Sleaford Hall; Tyres; Spotlight on Thatch; Elmwood College Awards; National Championship preview

October '99: The Manor House, Castle Combe; Aeration; Saltex review; Mycorrhizas; Toro Award preview

November '99: Sir Michael Bonallack interview; The Pines GC; Oil; Bunkers; National Championship review

December '99: Agronomy; Security; Environment Competition Winner; Toro Award Winners

January 2000: Greens Construction; Awkward Jobs; Sandy McDivot; Agronomy; Toro Award review



Future prospects



It is with a little trepidation that I write this, my first column, as Chairman of BIGGA. Although I have been involved with Greenkeeper Associations in one way or another for many years, to be invited to be Vice Chairman and ultimately Chairman of BIGGA came as a bit of a shock.

However, after much thought and discussion with my wife and my Green Convener I was delighted to accept and it was a very special moment for me on donning the Chairman's Blazer for the year 2000. I am very much aware of the great honour and responsibility bestowed on me and I will do my utmost to carry out my duties as your Chairman as efficiently and professionally as my predecessors.

I would like to extend my personal thanks to Gordon Child for inviting me to be his Vice Chairman and also to congratulate him on his most successful term as Chairman, especially in dealing with some difficult developments in that time. I also wish to thank Tulliallan Golf Club Council, who have given me 100% support to enable me to take on what I know is going to be a very busy year as well as my own staff who will have to cope with additional responsibilities this year. I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible during the year and hope that we can all make

the year 2000 a great start for BIGGA in the 21st Century.

It's only natural that, as we enter a new era, we reminisce on the past and also look forward to the future. I don't think it does any harm to look back at how things were and how we have progressed and I would like to briefly do that now.

The history of Greenkeeper's Associations over the last century can be a bit vague. I have a photograph of a gathering of greenkeepers in Edinburgh in 1904/5 and we know there was a meeting held in Broxburn, West Lothian in 1908 to form a Scottish Greenkeepers Association. In 1912 GGA, the Golf Greenkeepers Association was formed in England.

Unfortunately a lot of the early records in Scotland were destroyed in a fire so information is thin on the ground. However, through the 20's and 30's both the Associations were alive. In 1935 GGA changed their name to BGGA and the SGA amalgamated with them, so there was only BGGA. This carried on through the war years but in 1946 they split up and the SGA was reformed in Scotland and eventually they changed their title to SGGA.

In 1972 SGGA became SIGGA with international members from the continent. In the early 80's a breakaway group from BGGA formed the EIGGA, English and International Golf Greenkeepers Association, so now we had three Associations in Britain. In 1984 talks started between the three Associations and after two years hard talking and many meetings, it was decided to amalgamate and BIGGA came into being on January

1, 1987. We started off with 1,200 members and that has now grown to nearly 7,000.

From 1908 the fortunes of the associations fluctuated, membership numbers were never very high and they were run by hard working greenkeepers in their own time with help from members of the associated trades. Fred Hawtree in England and J.L. and Ian Forbes in Scotland spring to mind immediately. Education was unknown, trade lectures were the main source of theoretical knowledge. In the 50's and 60's some college courses started, mostly based on horticulture, and trying to convince colleges and authorities that greenkeeping was a skill, fell on deaf ears. SIGGA eventually got all five colleges in Scotland together to teach pure greenkeeping courses in 1980.

So, as we look back, it is apparent that, notwithstanding the tireless efforts by many greenkeepers over the years, that the real progress has been made since the formation of BIGGA in 1987. And now we must look forward and keep this progress going. We have laid the foundations and must keep on building. None of us will see 2100 but our descendants will and some of them will be greenkeepers.

Let's leave them an association so strong that they will look back over their 100 years and thank us for all the hard work and hopefully, foresight.

I wish you all good weather for 2000.

Elliott Small

**Elliott Small
National Chairman**

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