

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

Praise for Sandy McDivot

Congratulations on continuing to turn out a first class magazine for BIGGA in Greenkeeper International.

The article I enjoy and deserves much credit is Sandy McDivot - very humorous with a lovely sting in the tail.

Keep up the good work and regards to all my greenkeeping friends.

John Nudds, Retired Course Manager, Gerrards Cross GC, Now Hunstanton, Norfolk

Retirement thanks from Allan Stow

Yes, it is true, I have retired after over 35 years working for Synchemicals/Vitax. I have covered, at some time, most of the British Isles and have driven over a million miles.

I have met so many greenkeepers and groundsmen over the years and would like to say thank you to you all for making my job so enjoyable. Also a big thank you to all at BIGGA and members of the trade.

Thank you and farewell,

Allan Stow, Farnham

PS Don't let the golfers get you down!

Chris Yeaman Jnr

I want to thank you all for the money you raised for me after my transplant in April this year. I have put the money into my building society, so that I can use it to go to Butch Harman's Golfing Academy in Portugal next summer with my mum, dad and sister. I'm hoping to be the next Tiger Woods, and a week's tuition at the Academy should hopefully send me on my way.

Once again thank you very much for the money. I'll send photographs of my time there next year.

**Christopher Yeaman Junior
West Linton GC**

Friendly advice not taken on board

I feel compelled to write this letter in response to the article "Friendly Advice" by Sandy McDivot, in the August 2000, edition of Greenkeeper International. On reading the article I was utterly astonished at the attitude that was being taken by the author and the way in which he encouraged other BIGGA members to adopt his principles. In my view BIGGA is an Association that promotes professionalism and the way in which it has encouraged this along with its members in recent times is to be admired.

In my opinion if members of your golf course are not repairing the damage they cause, they should be told in a courteous manner that it would be beneficial

to the overall condition of the course if they replaced their divots and repaired their pitch marks on the greens. After all this is basic etiquette that should be followed while playing a round of golf.

To turn a blind eye to this type of behaviour is the worst thing that anyone can do. If you can get the more prominent members to follow these rules then they themselves will do the work for you. After all this type of person thrives on telling other people that they know best.

I agree that all greenkeepers should strive for good relations with their membership, but never lose sight of the fact that you work long hard hours to produce a good golf course for them and

to resort to arse licking means you lose your self respect and the respect of your employers.

I believe that it is time Mr Sandy McDivot revealed his true identity so we can see just who is responsible for this ridiculous feature, because I am pretty sure that he is talking (in his own words) out of the final component of his elementary canal.

I am more than happy to leave my real name and address and I look forward to any response that Mr McDivot has to my comments.

A J Mannon, Deputy Course Manager, Southerndown Golf Club, South Wales

'Sales ploy' defended by seed company

I am writing in response to the Talking Heads' article in the September 2000 issue of Greenkeeper International where your panel of greenkeepers debated the pros and cons of overseeding.

As Technical Manager for Amenity Grasses at Advanta Seeds, I feel I must defend the statement that this practice is merely "a sales ploy invented by seed companies".

The life of any particular sward is neither static nor infinite, and eventually some of the species will need replacing with better, healthier plants.

We are investing heavily in developing new amenity cultivars, which will make golf course management easier. We understand the increasing pressures that greenkeepers face, and are working hard to produce new varieties that will cope with greater use, but which need less physical and chemical inputs.

For example, we are developing varieties where the speed of regrowth has

been reduced, so that in future, greenkeepers won't have to mow the grass so often. Twenty years ago, our breeders made disease resistance a top priority, and varieties coming out of the breeding programme now, show very good resistance to diseases like red thread.

In some situations, tees and fairways will benefit from the introduction of the new strains of fineleaved ryegrasses, which have been specifically bred for golf course use. They offer benefits such as high wear tolerance, rapid establishment and good root development, and produce a dense, disease free and clean cutting turf.

Your contributors displayed a wide range of expectations with regards to germination - which makes me wonder whether some were not confusing this with establishment. All seed sold in the UK is subject to strict regulation regarding germination potential and purity. All Advanta seed sold exceeds the Higher Voluntary

Standards set by the EC.

Sward preparation prior to overseeding, and subsequent management will influence establishment considerably. This is particularly true when using mixtures with bentgrass in them because the seed is so small. But if managed correctly it will drop down below mowing height, especially if sown after verticutting.

Finally I would always advise using a mixture of cultivars. We take considerable efforts to formulate mixtures that are right for each particular situation. In mixture trials we started in the UK two years ago, we have already seen dramatic differences. In terms of shoot density, tolerance to close mowing, cleanness of cut and disease resistance, mixtures out-perform individual cultivars every time.

David Rhodes, Amenity Grass Development Manager, Advanta Seeds UK

Dustin's thanks after National Championship win

After a fantastic few days golf at Lytham St Annes playing two of the best courses I have had the pleasure of playing, I felt I just had to write to you to express my feelings now that it has sunk in what I have managed to do. I was so very shocked when I was announced the winner and it just all seemed as if I was in a dream. That was first time that I found myself lost for words but I wanted to say so much.

The two days golf were on two courses that were very well presented, and in excellent condition that suited my golf to a tee. The accommodation provided was also very good and the food fantastic, what more could we ask for, everything was so well planned and all seemed to go very smoothly. This event would not have taken place had it not been for the kind sponsorship from Charterhouse and Scotts who pro-

vided some lovely prizes and just made the event the success it was. Of course I would also like to thank the good people behind the scenes at BIGGA who have obviously put a lot of time and effort in to the championship to allow the competition go off without a hitch and make it the success it was.

I am sure that I speak for all who attended this Championship when I say thank you for the enjoyment had

by all. This was a great experience to meet other Greenkeepers from around the country, and to play some good golf on great courses.

I look forward to playing in future events. Keep up the great work at BIGGA.

**Dustin Houghton
Winner The Charterhouse/Scotts National Championship**