

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

Open thanks 1

Could I take this opportunity to thank the BIGGA Support Team for their assistance during the 2000 Open.

The bunkers were presented to the highest standard I have seen throughout the competition and it was a vital factor in the presentation of the course and the success of the championship.

I hope that you enjoyed your time at St Andrews and that the bunkers were not too deep for the elderly members of the Support Team!

Once again thanks,

**Eddie Adams, Head Greenkeeper
 Old Course**

Open thanks 2

Just a quick line to thank you very much for another superb week at The Open Championship. It was once again such a privilege to represent the Association at the best golf event in the world.

To be there alone is so exciting and such an honour. This year I was even more lucky and fortunate to get some "cracking" matches, including Lee Trevino's final round. An experience I will never forget.

**Roger Clark, Course Manager,
 The Bedfordshire Golf Club**

Retirement wish

I would like to bring to the attention of fellow greenkeepers and to the companies that I have dealt with while I have been at the Phoenix Sports and Social Club, that at the end of this month, I have decided to call it a day and retire, due to ill health and personal reasons.

In the 37 years that I have been in the Greenkeeping/Groundsman business, (fourteen at Phoenix) I have made a lot of good friends, especially the reps from the companies. So to Mike Brears and Brian Booth, Rigby Taylor; Andy Crowther, Glenside Organics; Peter Fell, Aitkens; Mike Shepherd, Vitax; Robert Bone, Supaturf; Les Purdsy, who was always ready for a laugh and a joke and my good friend, Glen Sawyer, of South Yorkshire Groundcare Ltd. To these people I say a big thank you to you all.

As I retire from the work that I have always loved and known no other, I wish everyone in the trade, the best of health and to the guys who are hanging in there because you think the place will fold up if you leave, don't kid yourself - please fellas don't leave it too late.

Yours forever in the green stuff,

Keith Riley

The end of a nightmare?

Your dramatic account of the unusual accident at Westhill Golf Course some six years ago finally resulting in a Civil Court hearing last November provides interesting reading.

Notwithstanding, it is difficult to believe that the drama expressed as the "Head Greenkeeper's Nightmare" ever existed! From the day the club lady member decided to take Court Action I have no doubts whatsoever that the Club Committee informed the Head Greenkeeper that both his job and the costs arising from the case would be fully covered. I can not conceive that the Head Greenkeeper could have been left to worry about these serious matters for a period of six years. In short there was no "Nightmare" - and perhaps no dream? Unless, of course, you have paid him handsomely for your story.

More seriously, it is worth recalling that the injured lady left the course with her playing partner immediately after the accident occurred. Some four days later, after hospitalisation, she returned to the course to search for the stone which she convinced herself her ball had struck. How anyone else could

accept that she found the actual stone must be a matter of some doubt.

Perhaps the bringing of the case in the first place was another example of the over hyped TV advertising "NO WIN, NO PAY" complex with which the country is now saddled.

Some three decades back a much more interesting and serious case occurred when a Golf Club Captain lost an eye when struck by a golf ball driven by another committee member/friend.

There were two foursomes playing on adjacent fairways parallel to each other and running in opposite directions with a narrow area of rough separating the two fairways. When one of the foursomes was driving off their tee the other foursome was some 260 yards away walking as a group down the middle of their fairway. When the member concerned drove his ball, with a considerable hook, all of the four members on the tee called "FORE".

Of the group towards whom the ball was struck, three of the members immediately ducked with their hands on their heads and turned their backs.

The Club Captain alone, conversely, looked up and was struck in the eye by the ball.

His friend, who was fully insured, gave his condolences and apologised and invited him to sue.

At the Court Hearing the Insurance Company called the late Dai Rees as an expert witness. Rees was asked by the Company Lawyer if the player striking the ball was, in his opinion, negligent? Rees replied "No", the group were sufficiently far away, and on a busy competition day it could happen frequently. He was then asked if there was any negligence or irresponsibility on anyone's part? Rees replied "Yes. Three of the approaching four players turned their backs and hunched shoulders covered their heads with their hands. Conversely the fourth player - the Club Captain - looked up and was struck in the eye." The complainant lost the case and the Insurance Company was awarded its costs.

**R. W. Garson CBE RN,
 Old Hunstanton, Norfolk**

Can anyone help?

I am working on a book about the reel lawn mower as manufactured in the USA. I am always looking for catalogues, literature, etc. on reel lawn mowers. Any help or assistance would be greatly appreciated.

**James B. Ricci, Reel Lawn Mower History and Preservation Project at North Farms,
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A new experience? Plain sailing for Cedric

What a wet year we have been enduring over 300mm of rain the last three months. "If it carries on raining like this" I said, "I think we might have to invest in a boat". Of course I was only joking. The only boat I'd been on was a ferry across the channel and it's not an experience I wish to repeat.

A couple of weeks ago Nick Bennett, of Groundforce Leisure Ltd, asked me if I fancied going sailing. Sailing, ah yes, a nice sunny day and calm seas, sipping champagne, sounds like a great idea. Nick Bennett and his partner in crime, Dave Franks, are experienced sailors. Their crew for the day consisted of myself; Dean Roberts, Painswick, and Wayne James, Belmont. We all agreed that with the rain we have been having that it might be to our advantage to learn to sail. Although Nick Bennett pointed out that it might be alright for Wayne, but if my course, Broadway, floods, being 1,000ft above sea level, he might be better

off building an ark. We travelled down the day before and I must admit to feeling a little nervous. I'm bound to be seasick, I thought to myself. Anyway I was determined to enjoy my last meal on dry land. What's on the menu I enquired, Ostrich was the reply.

The boat turned out to be a 42ft yacht called the Jaybee and our destination was The Needles. We awoke the next morning to the sound of a force seven wind blowing outside. The Solent was very choppy indeed. On approaching Hurst Castle the wind and waves started to make things very uncomfortable, so the decision was to go about and run with the wind, down the Solent. This turned out to be an exciting, wild ride with speeds up to 11 knots, surfing down the waves. Dave was on the helm and thoroughly enjoying himself. The only person not worried by the conditions was George, the out-pilot. It was suggested that we all had turns at the helm of the yacht. Some

of us were more successful than others. Dean was up first, and he was that good, that Nick said he must be a natural. I went next and I must say in my defence that the wind was gusting quite strong, which affected my performance, so much, that Wayne declined his invitation to steer, saying he was happy to stay where he was.

While sailing I caught sight of a yacht in front of us leaning over a great deal. Look at that, I said to Nick, "Is that safe?" only for him to reply, "Just look at the porthole in the galley." It was under water, we too were sailing at an angle. We sailed up the Beaulieu River stopping at Bucklers Hard for a short time before returning to Lymington and dry land.

Can I thank Nick and Dave for an eye opening day out, it was a day I will never forget.

**Cedric Gough,
 Broadway Golf Club**