



April 2001 – £3.50

Greenkeeper

INTERNATIONAL

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from the blue



These products seriously improve the health of your turf.

Applications of Syta-Turf and Syta-Thatch microbial products improve the overall condition of your turf by establishing a colony of beneficial soil microbes, working independently and synergistically, to benefit the plants health and, its on-going development.



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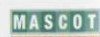
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1 Rysley, Holybread Lane, Little Baddow, Chelmsford, Essex CM3 4DD
Tel: +44 (0) 1245 222750 Fax: +44 (0) 1245 222755 E-Mail: greenlink@btinternet.com
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A guide to who's who at BIGGA

President
Sir Michael
Bonallack, OBE

BIGGA Board of Management
Chairman - Clive Osgood
Vice Chairman - Richard Barker
Past Chairman - Elliott Small

Board Members
Ian Sample
Paul Jenkins
Jim Paton
Ian Holoran
David Walden

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, Alne, York, YO61 1UF

E-mail: reception@bigga.co.uk

Internet: www.bigga.org.uk

Tel: 01347 833800

Fax: 01347 833801

INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Greenkeeper

The official monthly magazine of the British & International Golf Greenkeepers Association

Editorial

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

Advertising

Sales & Marketing Manager: Steve Hardy
Tel: 01347 833800 Fax: 01347 833802
E-mail: steve@bigga.co.uk

Sales & Marketing Department:
Cheryl Broomhead, Diane Bray, Meredith Foster
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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TIME TO TALK

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Visit www.bigga.org.uk and check out the latest chat from the greenkeeping industry

FOR GREENKEEPERS
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CHAT GREENKEEPERS

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Making the most of a bad situation

While the attention is quite rightly focussed on the nightmarish time the farming community is enduring right now, as well as the knock on effects the Foot and Mouth outbreak is having on tourism, many golf courses are also suffering a second kick in the teeth in the space of a few months.

Rainfall which broke longstanding records and closed some golf clubs for weeks and, in some cases, months at a time has fortunately abated only to be replaced by a phenomenon which is closing golf clubs for an altogether different reason.

Many calls were received at BIGGA HOUSE from members seeking advice on dealing with the outbreak and they were referred to their local MAFF office. Obviously different degrees of risk existed depending on the location and nature of the golf course and while some would no doubt have been recommended to close - including BIGGA Chairman, Clive Osgood's own club, Walton Heath, which closed for a week - others were not within a hundred miles of an outbreak and could continue very much as normal.

No doubt some clubs have received the doubly whammy of closure for flooding and closure for Foot and Mouth and for them the implications, while not as immediate as those for the poor farmers, are depressing.

No golf equals no golfers and no golfers, equals no revenue. While this is particularly devastating for pay and play and proprietary-owned facilities it also has implications for members' clubs, as no-one has reason to be at the club and clubhouse and pro shop need custom to keep them ticking over.

And if you think about it, if you are closed for a week that's 2% of the available money-making time in the year, a fortnight is 4%. If a club is budgeting for break even or a small profit that can be swallowed up immediately and golf club purchasing decisions may have to be reconsidered.

You don't have to be Einstein's long lost nephew to work out that the new fairway machine you've been promised this season might not materialise.

It is at times like these when you have to earn your stripes and look for ways of making the best of an unfortunate situation.

It would be hard not to agree with the treasurer when he says sacrifices have to be made, but couldn't other options be examined? Leasing, for example, or moving money from one budget to another. While drainage work must continue perhaps the three new tees you'd decided to build next autumn could wait for another year and the money saved used instead to finance a new hand mower. Whatever you consider most important.

It's all about priorities. How best can your reduced budgets be used to maximise your effectiveness over the tough short and middle term?

It's a question you should be asking because when the frustrated golfers return to the courses determined to make up for lost time they are going to be looking for tip top conditions.

An ability to make the most of a bad situation will be a valuable weapon in your armoury.

Scott MacCallum
Editor

Kubota restructures sales operations

Kubota (UK) Ltd has brought together its three sales operations into one division working beneath a single banner - Kubota Sales. Covering the three formerly separate sales divisions of Tractors, Industrial and Construction Machinery, and Engines, the move is designed to improve customer support.

Responsibility for the new combined sales operation lies with Kubota UK's Deputy Managing Director, Rene Orban, who becomes Sales Director in charge of all Kubota product sales.

Operating from Kubota UK's headquarters at Thame, Oxfordshire, the combined sales operation will have an annual turnover in excess of £50 million. Among the products contributing to this figure are compact tractors, tracked mini excavators and small diesel engines.



Above: Rene Orban, Deputy Managing Director of Kubota UK outside the Kubota UK headquarters at Thame, Oxfordshire

Sales, parts and service support for the Kubota product ranges brought together within the single sales division will continue to

be handled by a specialist distribution network of almost 90 Kubota-appointed and trained dealers throughout the UK.

HSE software launch

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) in collaboration with Royal & Sun Alliance has published Essentials of health and safety Routemap, an easy-to-use computer software package designed to help small businesses improve their health and safety awareness.

Director-General of the HSE Timothy Walker said, "The Essentials Routemap will assist firms to avoid accidents and ill health at work by helping them identify and control the risks their workers face."

"Having a health and safety

management system which is relevant to the risks or hazards involved helps ensure compliance with health and safety law, and more importantly helps reduce accidents and ill-health. Health and safety failures cost Britain up to £18 billion each year. The cost of work-related accidents and ill-health to employers is £140 to £300 for each worker employed," he said.

The Essentials Routemap is available at HSE Books, HMSO and at high street book stores and retailers at £95 + VAT.

New work-based NVQ Level 2 from Cannington College

Cannington College, Somerset, are currently developing a Work Based programme of study that will allow greenkeepers to gain an NVQ Level 2 qualification in Greenkeeping & Sportsurf Maintenance.

The work-based programme allows greenkeepers to be assessed in the workplace with minimal college attendance being required. The qualification is based upon the Greenkeeping Training Committee's 'Black Book'.

This new qualification offered by Cannington reflects the college's attitude of providing quality assured education & training for both people and businesses.

Interest shown in interest-free scheme

Over £2 million worth of new golf course equipment has been financed by John Deere Credit this winter, following an interest free credit scheme launched for the first time last year.

The scheme has proved very successful, with 107 deals signed with 30 dealers across the country. The most popular machines

chosen by golf courses have been John Deere's new greens and fairway mowers, and 4000 Series compact tractors, with list prices ranging from around £10,000 to £30,000.

"John Deere Credit's interest free scheme has obviously helped a number of our golf club customers with their equipment

purchases this winter," said Graham Williams, John Deere's Commercial and Consumer Equipment Division Manager.

These sales have contributed to a 40% increase in our golf and turf business over the last quarter, compared with last year, and we will certainly be planning to repeat the scheme next winter."

Huxley Golf expands business

Huxley Golf, who specialise in the supply and installation of all-weather surfaces for golf, and whose customers include many of the world's top golfers and golf courses, are expanding their business in response to increasing demand from customers.

The Hampshire-based firm, owned by Paul and Barry Huxley, has developed a comprehensive range of all-weather surfaces which includes putting greens, golf greens and target greens, golf course tees, practice tees, path-

ways, lawn and standing areas, cartways and driving range landing zones.

Huxley Golf's customer list includes Ian Woosnam and Darren Clarke, who are among several golfers who practise at home on Huxley Golf all-weather greens.

"Our business with golf courses has grown fast, but we could cope. Courses typically try one Huxley Golf all-weather tee and then come back for more. Several clubs now have 18 tees, while

pathways are now becoming popular. Last year we introduced our new all-weather putting greens and we only just coped with the demand. Because of this, we appointed five new Huxley Golf Specialist Area Distributors and Installers, in addition to our Scottish operation.

These new Distributors are now doing well and we are looking to appoint several more in key parts of the United Kingdom and also overseas," said Paul Huxley.

Get the most out of your Association

Having stood down at the end of my term of office on the National Board of BIGGA in January, I have had time to reflect on the progress made by the Association since its inception in 1987.

The saying "from little acorns big oak trees grow" certainly is the case as far as BIGGA is concerned. In 14 short years we have achieved so much. We now have our own purpose built headquarters, with its education unit, marketing department, magazine and advertising with a design base, a membership department to look after all members needs, plus a finance department to run the whole show. The regions have their own paid Administrators to keep members in touch with what's going on. It has all moved so fast, it is hard to take in, and we still have members dissatisfied - Why?

I wonder how many members have not yet attended our week in January for the National Education Conference and Exhibition. If not, you don't know what you are missing. There is so much to do, see and learn. Then of course there is our AGM where all members should make the effort to attend, even the critics. Harrogate is a lovely town and certainly the place to be for the BTME week. The camaraderie is unbelievable. Everywhere you go, whether it's in the halls, hotels, or around town in restaurants you see groups of greenkeepers young and old talking and passing on ideas, experiences and knowledge. A great week run by BIGGA for you!

If you add to that the Environment Competition, Toro Student of the Year and Excellence in Greenkeeping Competitions, with Management Courses held at BIGGA HOUSE, regional education courses etc, BIGGA members and staff should be proud of what has been achieved.

I would also like to mention our Section Secretaries and committees, Regional Administrators and their Boards. They all work very hard on your behalf. So why then are there so many moaners? Members who say, "what do I get out of it?" They never seem to ask themselves "what do I put into it?" If you don't help yourselves it is difficult for others to help you.

There is not a greenkeeper in the whole of the UK who has not benefited from BIGGA. Greenkeepers enjoy a far higher status now than ever before. Greenkeeper salaries and conditions



Above: Past Chairman, Gordon Child

have improved, so has your standing with clubs and in the golf world. This has not just happened because you have been sat on your backsides. This has come about with hard work and drive from your Association. Your membership package is first class, but again - do you use what's on offer? How many of you use the legal helpline for every day happenings at work or home, insurance discounts, education courses, library and of course your magazine. I bet most of you just take out your membership card, sign it and bin the rest, and then moan about what's in it for me.

Let's take one case in point. Do you read your magazine? If you do, do you then criticise its contents? There's nothing wrong in criticising just so long as it's constructive. How many of you put pen to paper? The magazine is all about information and if you have something to say why not write about it. I am sure the Editor will put it together for you if you feel you need his help. Don't just sit there and grumble about it, do something! Of course some people will criticise anything, often without knowing enough about the subject. Those people are very hard to please, and some will never be happy, no matter what.

The trade companies in general sup-

port the Association a great deal and we very much appreciate their help. Often they set a fine example to members up and down the country so don't slap them in the face by not attending their supported events, whether it be at national, regional or section level. I know you can't attend them all but it would be nice if you could turn up to a few, and not leave it to the same stalwarts all the time. Many greenkeepers and trade members have spent

a lifetime trying to improve the greenkeepers' lot, and still do, but now with BIGGA at the forefront we are at last seeing things happen. I have been in greenkeeping for 55 years and believe me the changes have been dramatic. We have come a long way over those years and it's great to see.

Nothing gives me more pleasure than to visit and see many young greenkeepers running golf courses in such a professional way. It makes me feel proud to be still part of this fine profession. I cannot understand members who are always being and talking negative, running down the very people and organisation that are there to help them to a better life and career. So I ask you all, just stop and think where you would be without BIGGA, try to think positive and help where you can.

I know there is still a long way to go, but we need your input if we are to keep on improving. It's your Association and if we are talking about value for money then all I can say is, "it's no use paying the bus fare if you don't get on in the first place".

On a personal note, I have always felt honoured to be allowed to serve BIGGA members as Administrator, Board member and most of all, your Chairman over the years. I got tremendous enjoyment from being part of something special, and for that I thank you all. Now that I have stood down, I do not intend to walk away as greenkeeping has been my life, so I will still be at as many events as I can, but certainly BTME.

There is no truer saying than, "he only helps those who help themselves."

Gordon Child, Past Chairman

Foot and Mouth: Latest advice

As the Foot and Mouth Outbreak spreads throughout the country more and more golf clubs are being forced to take action, including temporary closure to reduce the chances of the virus spreading.

Many members have contacted BIGGA HOUSE for advice on what action they should be taking and they have been referred to the MAFF Hotline 0845 0504141 for England and Wales and 0845 9335577 for Scotland. The lines are open from 8am to 11pm seven days a week.

It is this course of action which is also being recommended by the three UK mainland-based Golf Unions.

Additional information can be obtained from the MAFF website, which can be reached by a hyperlink from BIGGA's website, at the end of the Foot and Mouth Outbreak statement.

However the situation is still volatile, and advice often conflicting. A MAFF fact sheet outlining restrictions and precautions on outdoor activities in infected areas was withdrawn in light of further guidance issued on March 16.

With the level of risk dependent on location and topography of the golf club many Course Managers and Head Greenkeepers have taken the common sense attitude of "being seen to be being responsible" with disinfected straw or mats at the entrance to clubs, trolley bans and signs requesting that golfers wash their spikes after every round.

A fuller report on the impact the FMD outbreak has had on golf will be included in May's magazine.

Get the latest FMD news and links at www.bigga.org.uk/footandmouth.html

Plans for BIGGA's future get underway with survey

A selected number of members will shortly be receiving the survey, explained in last month's issue of Greenkeeper International. If you do have one drop through your letter box please take time to fill it in as comprehensively as you can as the information gleaned from it will help to shape the future of your Association.

If you don't receive a survey but would like to take part you can obtain one by contacting Mike Williamson, at: MW Associates PO Box 6677, Edinburgh, EH14 3YB Tel/Fax: 0131 476 6677 email: mw.assoc@virgin.net

New President elected for CGSA

Jay Leach has been elected as President of the Canadian Golf Superintendents Association for 2001. Jay is Superintendent of the Cottonwood Golf and Country Club in Dewinton, Alberta.

At the same time Vince Gillis, the National Executive Director of the CGSA, since '89 has been awarded a contract extension by the Board of Directors.

Royal Inverdivot GC...

www.tonyhusband.co.uk



Rachael joins BIGGA staff



Callers to BIGGA HOUSE may well already have spoken to the Association's new Receptionist/Administrator Rachael Foster who started work shortly after BTME.

Rachael recently moved to the York area after 16 years on the island of Jersey where she had worked as a Unit Trust Fund Administrator for two banks, Kleinwort Benson and Standard Bank. The move to North Yorkshire came with the appointment of her partner, Michael, to the post of Head of Spanish at a York school.

A fully qualified hairdresser and aerobics instructor Rachael (34) currently takes step, aerobic and Taijibo classes at Easingwold Community Centre while she is also interested in cooking and reading.

Architect expansion

Architects Gaunt and Marnoch Ltd have continued their expansion with a new office development in Huntly, Aberdeenshire, opened to give national coverage.

The office manager in Huntly is Allan Knight who will act as a first point of contact, passing on more detailed inquiries to Steve Marnoch and Jonathan Gaunt.

Gaunt and Marnoch currently have around 40 projects on-going in the UK, Ireland and continental Europe.

Hardi 3 Star approval not shrouded in secrecy

The Hardi Defender range of shrouded amenity sprayer booms have been awarded LERAP 3 Star approval. As the only shrouded boom currently on the market to have such approval, it essentially means that only a Defender boomed sprayer is legally allowed to spray within one metre of a watercourse.

"Defender is the first shrouded boom to gain the full 3 Star LERAP rating and the importance and consequences of this award should not be under-estimated, especially for those who need to spray close to water," said Nick Tremlett, Managing Director of Hardi Ltd.

"Regardless of whether or not a sprayer has a shrouded boom, unless the boom has this 3 Star rating it generally cannot be used to spray within six metres of a water course."

Under LERAP (Local Environment Risk Assessment for Pesticides), where the drift from pesticides could affect water quality or harm plants, water or aquatic life, such pesticides can only be used near water if a Buffer Zone, generally six metres, is left



unsprayed. The only exception to this is where the spraying equipment is proven to reduce drift, it will be given a 1, 2 or 3 Star rating. The higher the rating, the more the buffer zone can be reduced, coming down to one

metre for 3 Star rated equipment.

The Defender boom has been awarded 3 Star approval when used at pressures of between 1 bar and 10 bar, which covers most spraying requirements.

New year sees new staff for STRI



Three new members of staff joined STRI for the New Year.

Dr Ruth Mann replaces Kate Entwistle as Turf Pathologist. Ruth arrived at Bingley from the Northern Ireland Plant Testing Station, to take up her position in charge of our Biology Laboratory. Her area of work covers turfgrass disease identification, and evaluation of turf management practices on disease development. Her team members, Kathryn Hickson and Clare Kelt, are responsible for pesticide efficacy and selectivity evaluation.

Richard Windows has joined Steve Isaac in Scotland to look after the south of Scotland under Steve's guidance. Richard is working from his regional base in Glasgow, taking up a

new position of Turfgrass Agronomist for South Scotland covering golf courses, bowling greens, cricket grounds and sports pitches including Murrayfield.

Emma Beggs returns to STRI to take up a new position as Regional Agronomist in the North West.

Emma's career at STRI began in 1993 working as a Research Officer in the Department of Soils and Sports Surface Science, then later as a Turfgrass Agronomist in the North East, before relocating to the Wirral. Emma is a keen golfer and a member of Royal Liverpool Golf Club.

Sports Surface Technology MSc to start at Cranfield

Cranfield University in Bedfordshire has introduced an MSc in Sports Surface Technology to start in October 2001.

The first of its kind in Europe the programme will equip students with the scientific principles and management expertise to design, construct and maintain natural sports surfaces.

Students will also carry out an industrial-based research project with sports clubs and organisations in the UK.

The statement from the University states that the course has been designed for graduates who have good numeracy skills but no previous knowledge of soil science, turf grass agronomy or business management is necessary.

Innovative puncture prevention solution from Seal-a-Wheel

Ever since the advent of pneumatic tyres, the benefits have often been overshadowed by the implications of punctures.

Damage to greens, downtime, high call out and repair charges can now be virtually prevented by the use of a newly formulated Puncture Preventative Tyre Sealant called Seal-a-Wheel.

Awarded the International European award for quality in Paris, the water-soluble sealant takes minutes to install and will not damage tyres, rims or grass. Once installed it will provide ongoing protection

against continuously occurring punctures, for the life of the tyre.

When a foreign object penetrates a tyre while it is in motion, air inside the tyre rushes to escape.

Interlocking fibres along with grouting agents are immediately forced into the hole sealing it with a permanent flexible gator.

Seal-a-Wheel is available in 1 litre bottles and 25 litre drums. A calibrated, high performance applicator pump is also available - no need to fully deflate the tyre.

For further information telephone: T.S. Supplies Ltd 0114 2440834



activate

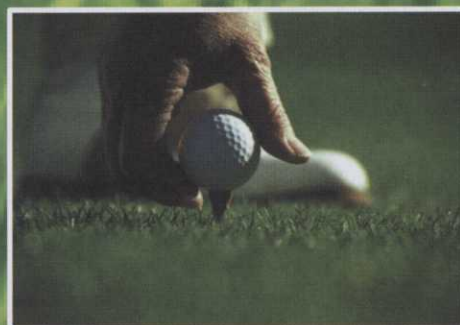
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Research has shown that by stimulating the microbes in the soil, significant improvement in growth and vigour of turf grass can be achieved

Activate has been specially developed to provide the vital carbohydrates needed to maximise soil microbial activity, and provide increases in shoot and root growth.

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- Improves seed germination and turf crown establishment.



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Become associated with one of BIGGA's Flagship Events

An environmental Partnership ...

"Respect for the environment goes hand-in-hand with human well-being and indeed sporting excellence. This is certainly true for golf in which harmony with nature is part of the game's heritage and its enjoyment. Golf is a great opportunity to serve as a role model for good environmental practice and I urge you to seize this opportunity."

Jacques Santer, Past European Commission President

Hankley Common, Lindrick, Temple and The Dyke golf clubs are all proud to have won the BIGGA Golf Environment Competition over the last four years.

It is a competition of undoubted significance within golf and a growing significance within conservation circles - you only have to listen to Dr Keith Duff, Chief Scientist with English Nature and a principal judge of the competition, to appreciate its growing importance.

Another indication came in 1998 when the prizes were presented by Royal golfing enthusiast, The Duke of York, while the R&A, the governing body of the game has provided funding for the competition. A book highlighting the excellent work of clubs who have emerged with credit in recent competitions is also currently in production.

Managing Director of Amazone UK, Rod Baker was the brainchild of the competition, having launched it in 1995, and before BIGGA's involvement he had crowned Purdis Heath and Rudding Park Golf Clubs as the first two winners.

Amazone remained a joint sponsor of the competition and Rod its most eloquent supporter, always on hand to make impassioned speeches on the subject of the environment and golf's positive role in promoting it at the presentations, but last year he took a well deserved early retirement and Amazone's support for the competition retired with him.

BIGGA is therefore looking for a partner to ensure that a competition which enjoys a high media profile and which has captured the imagination of golf clubs the length and breadth of the country and helped raise the standard of environmental management of golf courses, can continue to thrive.

If you or your company feels that it wishes to be associated with the BIGGA Golf Environment Competition as a co-title supporter, the Association would be delighted to hear from you to discuss the matter.

Please contact Neil Thomas
Executive Director of BIGGA
Tel: 01347 833800



Above: David Ansell, Head Greenkeeper of the Dyke Golf Club, near Brighton, pictured with his winning team and the BIGGA Golf Environment 2000 trophy

"It is right environmentally for us to protect this great legacy that we have got. If we abuse it we will only be sorry later."

Jackie Stewart,
Three-times Formula 1
World Champion

"Golf Greenkeepers appreciate the precious landscape features and wildlife habitats. For centuries they have helped preserve and restore the magic of the beautiful living countryside on British Golf Courses."

Malcolm Peake - Course Consultant at
former winning golf club, Temple.

"To change what nature has done to a piece of property over the years is very stupid and is probably one of the most difficult things you are going to do because you are going against the grain. You cannot plant a different type of grass or different types of trees that are not indigenous to an area and are not used to that climate, it just doesn't work properly."

Nick Price, Former Open Champion and World Number 1 Golfer

Below: The Dyke GC, near Brighton, winner of the 2000 BIGGA Golf Environment Competition

CGSA trip thanks 1

Just a short letter to thank both Neil Thomas and BIGGA for the part they played in the forming of the delegation of the 10 lucky individuals who were selected to represent the Association at the CGSA Show & Conference in Vancouver and who were sponsored by Bernard and Company.

I think that the exercise was extremely successful from all points of view and I hope that many more greenkeepers get the opportunity to visit our counterparts from other countries and gain valuable knowledge of how others manage their golf courses and resources in different parts of the world.

Many contacts were made and friendships formed and not just in Canada but also among the party from the UK.

Everyone in Canada was extremely friendly and made our albeit short stay a very enjoyable one. Both Peter Hampton and Sam Mclean should be commended for their hospitality as should Stephen Bernhard for agreeing to sponsor this wonderful trip.

Thank you BIGGA for making this possible, for without being a member of our association, this would not have been possible at all.

Peter Lacey, Pennard GC

CGSA trip thanks 2

I would like to take this opportunity to thank BIGGA and Bernhard and company for their support and sponsorship of my colleagues and myself, for the trip to the CGSA and WCTA. This was an absolutely wonderful trip which was made possible by the generous support of Bernhard and company. Apart from the excellent Trade show and seminars which had been very well organised, there was also a tremendous social programme of Salmon cruises and banquets etc.

Also Vancouver is a wonderful city to visit, with ski-slopes, science museums, Stanley Park, Grouse Mountain, a fantastic harbour and shopping centre. But the highlight of the whole visit for all ten of us was the new friends and contacts we have made in Canada. The hospitality was second

to none with three course Superintendents taking the time to allow us all to view their courses, which were all in great condition, and taking us sightseeing and helping to cement ties in our own industry. Hopefully we will all be able to do the same whenever a group of Superintendents from anywhere in the world come and visit us.

Once again I would like to thank our very generous sponsors Bernard's, Sam Maclean and Peter Hampton of Bernard's, who helped us gain so much from our trip and Michelle Morley, of Bernard's, who organised the whole trip for us. Last but not least my nine fellow colleagues for all their help, in making this a great trip.

Antony Bindley
First Assistant, Kirby Muxloe Golf Club

YOU'VE GOT MAIL!

If you've got an email account, and want to keep up to date with the latest news and events from the turfcare industry, drop us an email, and we'll add you to our ever increasing list of online subscribers. We'll then inform you of any forthcoming features and events via email.

Simply send an email to:

updates@bigga.co.uk

quoting your name and Membership number, and we'll do the rest - it's that easy!

Clarification over mailing of Greenkeeper International

How pleased I was to read last night that a fellow member (in a far-away land!) gets his magazine in the middle of the month.

I live in Margate, Kent, and my magazine turns up on the last day of the month. Why? Why? Why?

G. Mills, Chestfield GC, Whitstable

Editor's Note: Sorry that you had to wait quite so long for your February Greenkeeper International.

The fact that it didn't arrive until the end of the month suggests a postal problem as you should have received it within a day or two of February 19 which was the date billed in the January issue. I'm pretty sure the member in the far away land will have had to wait longer still this time.

Canada thanks 3

May 1, on behalf of the Northern Region, thank Bernhard & Co for allowing us the privilege of attending the recent CGSA Conference in Vancouver, Canada.

The experience of exchanging views and ideas with Canadian Green Keepers was most rewarding. The concerns on golf course management were not too dissimilar to ours. We try to achieve near perfect results in the same way as they do.

Without Bernhard & Co and BIGGA organising this trip we would not have made new connections and new friends nor had the opportunity to promote BIGGA on the world stage where it so rightly belongs.

Thank you once again

We remain yours in golf.

Anthony Davies and Jimmy Richardson
Northern Region

Canada thanks 4

I am sure that I can speak for all the delegation, that we found the trip to Canada most informative and have come home with a broader view to greenkeeping.

Also the friendships made during the week with the Canadian Superintendents and our own delegation, will I am sure continue for many years to come, hopefully many more BIGGA members will be able to benefit in the way I have from the visit which was made possible by Bernhard & Company's very generous sponsorship.

I have arranged to give a presentation of the trip at the Section's October meeting, which will be held at China Fleet Golf Club.

Many thanks

Richard Whyman,
Bude and North Cornwall GC

Canada thanks 5

On the behalf of the South East delegates for the Canadian International Turfgrass Conference in Vancouver. We would like to thank all involved from Bernhard and Company for making possible such an educational and enjoyable trip. It is a trip that all 10 UK delegates will never forget. We all have wonderful memories of the trip. We must not forget to thank all the Canadian

Superintendents for their wonderful hospitality. But a big thank you to Sam and Peter from Bernhard's for looking after us so well in Canada.

Tom Smith & Raymond Day
South East Region

"I use one criteria when judging a golf course which is; 'Would what has been done here convince a sceptic?'. More often than not, yes is the answer as more and more golf courses manage their courses in an environmental friendly way."

Dr Keith Duff, Chief Scientist with English Nature and competition judge.

This month, BIGGA'S Education and Training Manager, Ken Richardson, comes in to land after a particularly hectic month, and delivers some important Education and Training updates

Education and Training roundup

This has been a busy Spring for the Education and Training Department, following up on the Learning Experience, completing this years series of Education and Training Courses, attending a wide range of Seminars and conducting computer training courses.

I have driven almost 3,000 miles on BIGGA business since January so if you have tried to contact me and had no success then you know why. This month is destined to be no less hectic as I have to fit everything into two weeks before I depart for Antigua.

You've got mail!

If you've got an email account why not send an email to the education department, where we can place you into our exclusive education email address book. We can then keep you up-to-date with education news and events as they happen.

Send an email to:
education@bigga.co.uk
ken@bigga.co.uk
sami@bigga.co.uk

BIGGA Essay Competition

How would you like to have an extra £500 to spend on Christmas this year?

All you need to do is: Write between 1500 and 2000 words on 'Poa Annua, friend or foe' and submit your entry to reach BIGGA HOUSE by October 31, 2001. There are three categories:



1. Golf Course Managers/Head Greenkeepers and their deputies.
2. Assistant Greenkeepers and Students aged 25 and over.
3. Assistant Greenkeepers and Students aged 25 and under.

Send your completed entries to Essay Competition, BIGGA House, Aldwark, Alne, York, YO61 1UF.

The Learning Experience 2001

If you missed the National Education Conference or Seminar Programme in January, at Harrogate or if you want to see and hear the presentations again, you can discover what happened by purchasing a video of the event.

Education Conference Videos all sessions £80 including VAT and postage

Education Conference Videos individual sessions £22 including VAT and postage

Seminar Session Videos all sessions £80 including VAT and postage

Seminar Session Videos individual sessions £22 including VAT and postage

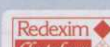
Individual presentations £10 including VAT and postage

Please note that the Keynote speech by Richard Noble is not available. Contact Sami at BIGGA HOUSE for an order form, or visit the BIGGA website, where you can fill out an order form online. Further details can be obtained from education@bigga.co.uk



Greenkeeper Education and Development Fund

The Fund provides the key to the future for greenkeeper, golf club and game. Individuals and companies can join the Golden Key Circle and Silver Key Circle. For details, please contact BIGGA on 01347 833800

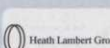
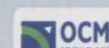


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A guide to 'on the job' training

Regular readers will remember that I wrote an article last year about On the Job Training. Most training that takes place on the golf course is 'on the job' with many Golf Course Managers already running training sessions for their staff and, in some cases, assessing competence on the completion of training. As many people seem to have missed the article it is reproduced below.

What is involved in 'On the Job Training'?

The first thing to ask is What do my staff need to know? This involves the use of a technique known as a Task Analysis. This simply means breaking the job down into its component parts and may be simple or more complex depending on the job. For example, Cutting a new hole is a straightforward process which requires few decisions except where to cut the hole. On the other hand, applying fertiliser can require a number of decision to be made eg, when, how, what, why.

There are some basic steps that you need to take when you are conducting a training session. These are:

Introduction

1. Put your staff at ease. Conduct training in comfortable surroundings (if possible). Encourage them to ask questions and take part in any discussions. Let them know that training is taking place and not assessment.
2. Tell them why the training is taking place and how your training session relates to other training sessions and other jobs.
3. Check what they know already and identify gaps in their knowledge and skills.
4. Get them interested by explaining why the training is important.
5. Show them all the new tools, equipment and materials that they will use and give them a list of 'buzz' words.

Content

Show your staff how to complete the task, using the procedure that you identified in your task analysis.

Put all of the component parts into context and try to give your staff a mental picture of what is required.

Explain the critical points as you progress.

Keep checking that they understand.

Show staff how to do the first stage of the job, stressing key points as you progress.

Let staff practise the first stage and make sure that they can explain their actions.

Continue until each stage is mastered.

Let staff complete the whole process, giving feedback and encouragement where needed.

Conclusion

Summarise the whole procedure

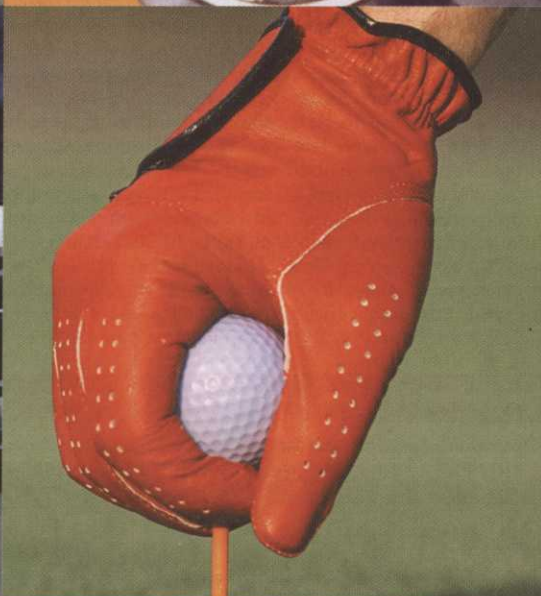
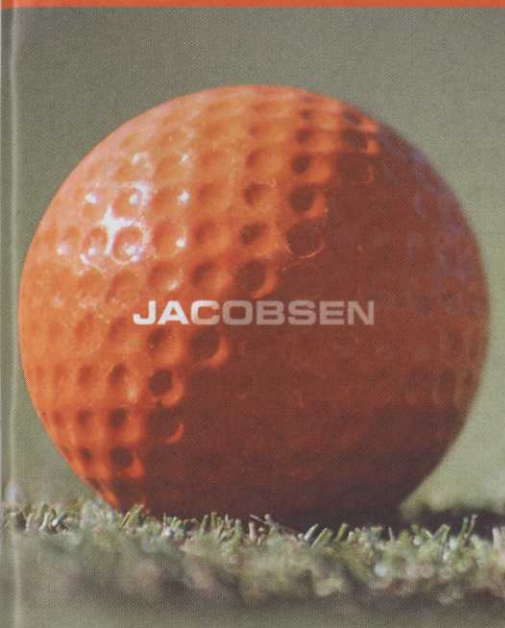
Issue any notes, manuals, operating procedures

Point out the best method of doing the task and why

Review the required performance in terms of time, standards and safety requirements

Check if there are any questions

If all of the above seems to be common sense then think about what can and does happen in training sessions or, far worse, in the use of untrained staff. How many of you have been told to 'Go out and cut the first three greens' when you have not been trained on the mower, do not know the height of cut, do not know what to do if players approach, have not been given health and safety brief etc?



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BIGGA'S Membership Services Officer, Tracey Maddison, would like to welcome over 220 new members, and give some important information for BIGGA's overseas members

It's never too late for renewals!

Time Flies ...

If your membership expired in December 2000, January or February 2001, it is still not too late to renew. Just contact Tracey or Susannah in Membership Services for information on how to renew your membership.

If you have retired from greenkeeping or are about to retire, your membership doesn't have to retire with you. Why not apply for retired membership and keep in touch with your friends and the industry and carry on receiving your valuable copy of Greenkeeper International. Just ring Tracey or Susannah at BIGGA HOUSE.



BIGGA welcomes ...

Scottish Region

Robert Allan, North
George Anderson, Central
Austen Cameron, Central
David Cartmill, Central
Stuart Crossan, West
Angus I Forbes, North
James P Fox, Central
Richard Johnstone, North
John Kelly, West
Christopher Lamarra, West
Christopher Mayle, West
Allan R McBeath, North
Graham McDonald-Malia, East
Alan I M More, West
Stuart Orr, West
Norman D Rose, North
Craig Ross, West
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Jamie Barlow, N West
David M Chadwick, Northern
Mathew Corbishley, N West
Carl J Davies, N West
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Leonard Frith, Sheffield
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Steven Holmes, N East
James Hoyle, Sheffield
Dylan H Hughes, N Wales
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Alwyn Jones, N Wales
David A Kendall, Northern
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Roger I Mackerell, Northern
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Geoffrey H Carrigan, BB&O
Alan Coburn, BB&O
John M Davies, E Midland
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Graham Evans, BB&O
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Paul French, E Midland
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Rhys J Grenham, Sussex
Michael Groombridge, Sussex
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Michael Knight, Sussex
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Send an email to:
membership@bigga.co.uk
tracey@bigga.co.uk
susannah@bigga.co.uk

Eurocheques are no more

For all those overseas BIGGA members who have previously or are thinking of paying for their membership by Eurocheque, unfortunately, the UK banks are no longer accepting these as valid forms of payment. Included with your renewal form will be information on other ways to pay including BIGGA's banking details.

If you have any questions, please email either tracey@bigga.co.uk or susannah@bigga.co.uk for further information.

March's Monthly Membership Draw Winner

Just introduce one or more new greenkeeping members to BIGGA and your name will be placed into a draw to win a fantastic BIGGA sportswatch. Our congratulations go to March's winner, Paul Peasgood of Stoke Rochford GC.

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

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



Name: Steven Nicol

Club: Winterfield GC

Position: Assistant Greenkeeper

Age: 31

1. How long have you been a greenkeeper?
14 years

2. What education are you currently undertaking?
None

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

4. Which one task do you most dislike doing?
Soil and seeding divots

5. What job other than greenkeeping might you have ended up doing?
Brick layer

6. Who has been the biggest influence on your career?
Former Head Greenkeeper, Stuart Greenwood and present Head Greenkeeper, Craig Pennycuik

7. What would you do to improve the life of a greenkeeper?
More education for golfers

8. What are your hobbies?
Golf, darts and football

9. What do you get out of BIGGA?
Educational seminars, magazine, meet other greenkeepers at outings

10. What do you hope to be doing in 10 years time?
Course Superintendent on one of the top Golf Courses in the world

Check out May's edition of
Greenkeeper
INTERNATIONAL
for all of the new members from March 2001!



Get online this month, and find out about BIGGA's latest additions to the website. From brand new content to improved Bulletin Board access, online is the way forward...

Get online and surf the BIGGA Web...

If you are worried about diving in, now is your chance to immerse yourself in the BIGGA website. And don't worry, when you surf the site, you won't even need a wetsuit!

Packed with news, features and educational content the BIGGA site is presented in a clear and concise format. What's more, each item carries hyperlinks to many other relevant topics, to save you having to fish around, and best of all, we're adding new information all the time, so the site is constantly getting BIGGA and better!

Brand new initiatives include news and feature articles from the Association's monthly magazine, Greenkeeper International, enhanced Directory search facilities, improved Bulletin Board topics

and an updated events section.

Greenkeeper International is the industry's leading publication, regularly informing members of new initiatives and opportunities within the turfcare industry. Packed with news and features every month, the magazine has a subscription currently over 9,000, but that is only a quarter of the monthly traffic to the BIGGA website.

We regularly update the Greenkeeper International section of the website with content from the magazine BEFORE the mailing date. So if you want to read about what's going on in your industry, and can't bear to wait for your magazine, log on to the BIGGA website today, and join the thousands of other online users.

The Time to Talk Bulletin Board was launched just before BTME, and enables greenkeepers to exchange news, views, tips and tricks between each other. The more subjects that are discussed, will help to create an online community which will grow in numbers and in shared knowledge. There are currently



over 120 registered users, and the list is growing on a daily basis, but with a membership of over 7,000,

that's just a drop in the ocean!

If you need help or advice with any greenkeeping matter, then log onto the Time to Talk Bulletin Board, and register today. It's quick and easy to do, and as soon as you've posted your query, you can sit back, and watch the responses flood in.

If you have any comments or questions regarding the BIGGA website, we'd be delighted to hear from you. After all, the website is another tool you can use for either information or communication, and we can only improve it by listening to comments from you. Please address your email to <webmaster@bigga.co.uk>

EMAIL ROUNDUP

Got a question to ask or have some information or comments to pass on? Contact us via email at the relevant address below.

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membership@bigga.co.uk

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Get online and visit the BIGGA website where we are now taking orders for industry entries in our 2001/2 BIGGA Golf Directory. Packed with thousands of industry names, addresses, telephone, fax, email and website contacts, the BIGGA Golf Directory is the most comprehensive guide to the products and services in the turfcare industry.

Published annually, the Directory is a stand-alone publication which provides the industry's buyers with an unrivalled database of contacts from which to make their buying decisions. Easy to use, with over 125 individual product categories, the Directory is proving to be a major resource for buyers as they search for industry contacts. **Can you afford NOT to be included?**

Entry into the 2001/2 edition starts from just £110 for 3 category listings, with your contact details automatically included in our searchable Online Directory, absolutely FREE of charge! To find out more about the various advertising opportunities available to you and your company, call Cheryl Broomhead on 01347 833800 or send an email to cheryl@bigga.co.uk

DESCRIPTION	CATEGORY LISTINGS	FREE WEB LISTING	ONLY
Minimum entry	INCLUDES 3	✓	£110
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Full page	INCLUDES 10	✓	£1,050
Full page DPS	INCLUDES 15	✓	£1,575

Send your details online by pointing your browser at

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Send an email Cheryl Broomhead at

cheryl@bigga.co.uk

Call Cheryl at BIGGA HOUSE on

01347 833800

A new career in Germany for Andrew Jeffrey together with Peter Haggarty has opened the door to a whole new set of challenges ...

Under one roof

As an experienced Landscaper of 15 years and pretty set in my working ways, starting my first day's work as a Greenkeeper was very daunting.

I had decided some six months prior to April '98 to try and find work on a golf course, firstly because I am fascinated with the sport, and secondly I wanted a new challenge and considered that perhaps a golf course could use a landscaper from time to time.

I was very lucky to be offered a job as Greenkeeper/Landscaper at Golfplatz Munchen Nord-Bichenried in March '98. I had lived in Germany since October '92 so I could speak German fairly well but nevertheless I was very relieved when I met the Assistant Head Greenkeeper who turned out to be Peter Haggarty, recently moved over to Germany from Helensburgh Golf Club in Scotland.

I learned very quickly that Peter is a very talented golfer (plays off scratch) and has a terrific enthusiasm

for everything in greenkeeping and in particular course development and construction. Like me, Peter is constantly trying to find ways in which you can improve on things, or how you can do something better next time. One thing, however, struck me after a fairly short while which was every time a new bunker was constructed, or if ideas for course upgrading were to be considered, the Club would ask outside companies for advice and eventually a quote. My thinking then was "we could do that" and "why should we bring in outside help when we are capable of doing the work ourselves".

Essentially, keeping everything "under one roof" seemed to be an obvious way forward for a number of reasons. Firstly, if you have experience in construction and a sound knowledge of up-to-date construction techniques, then why would you bring in outside help? Secondly, I am convinced that if you are passionate about something you will always give 125% to achieve the best possible result. Also, you can be justifiably proud if you have been directly involved and the finished product works and looks good, and finally the cost savings to the club are enormous.

With this in mind, we started talking to our Club Manager, Dieter Von-Restorff, who listened to what we had to say and didn't dismiss the idea as ridiculous as we had feared. The outcome was that there was indeed work that we could undertake and our first project was to make a feature out of a very neglected pond sitting very close to our 4th green. I saw it as an opportunity to really upgrade the area while Peter saw it as an opportunity to really enhance the hole from the perspective of playability. We worked together on

ideas and the end result was a greatly enlarged pond which came in much closer to the green with a stone retaining wall which gave great definition to the hole and a new fore green. The whole thing worked and definitely enhanced the look of the hole.

As a result more ideas were discussed and in the winter of 98-99 we started work on a big project which would entail the complete upgrading of one of our par 5 holes. It included the construction of a 1200sqm pond, over 150 metres of stone retaining wall, the complete reconstruction of the fore green and a new bunker. This was indeed a big project because, not only are we a private members' club but also the host to the BMW International Open played in late summer. So we had to build something that was fair for our members but also a test for the Pros who visit us. We were very pleased with the result (see photos), the members liked it, and as some of the scores on that hole showed during the tournament, indeed a good test for the Pros.

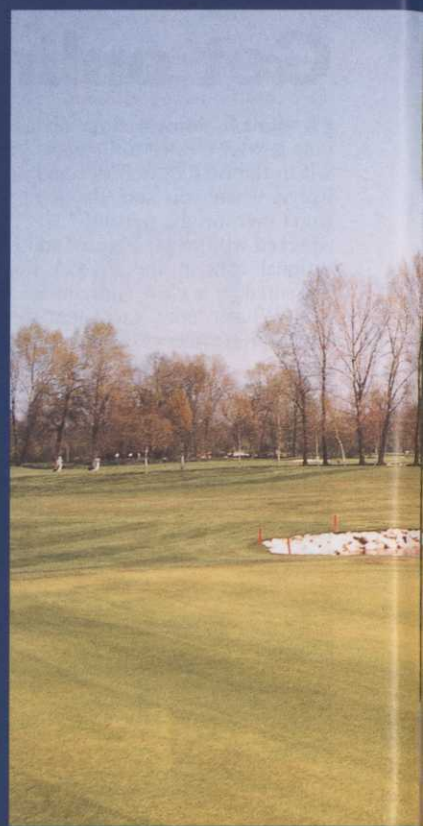
Since then we have undertaken many projects and it is as a result of being able to communicate to a Committee and Club Manager who are prepared to listen, that has allowed this to happen. We are indeed fortunate.

Currently, we are completely upgrading our practice facilities, and have as of now, built ten target greens on the driving range, constructed a new bunker practice area, including a new green, a pitching area encircling a green, and a new 550sqm chipping and putting green. All these

Main picture: The par 5, 6th hole, completed, prior to opening. Myself (Andrew Jeffrey) on the right of flag, and Peter Haggarty, left

Far right: Construction of a dry stone retaining wall around the first tee

Below: The almost complete first tee, shortly before opening



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features are of course very usable but we see them as a natural development of our golf course and as such can offer much more to our members and guests and indeed the Pros when they are here. We think it is essential that people should be offered the most that the Club can provide and we are always looking at ways in which we can improve our product, which in turn keeps members interested and generates much needed cash to help the Club stay healthy.

Perhaps we are lucky here in Bavaria because the winters can be quite long which allows us to undertake construction projects when active greenkeeping is not possible but I think it is very refreshing to have club management who are prepared to lis-

ten to what greenkeepers have to say. After all, we are all members of the same team and the success of the team is only as good as the people within it, so if you all work together then surely you will be successful.

We are currently building a new 9-hole course and the Club has asked that Peter and I oversee the construction. Again, a very positive approach, in respect that although this is a huge responsibility, the Club appreciate that we will have to manage this Course when the constructors have gone home so it is essential we know how it is constructed so we can plan maintenance schedules more precisely for the future. A good argument then for "keeping it all under one roof".



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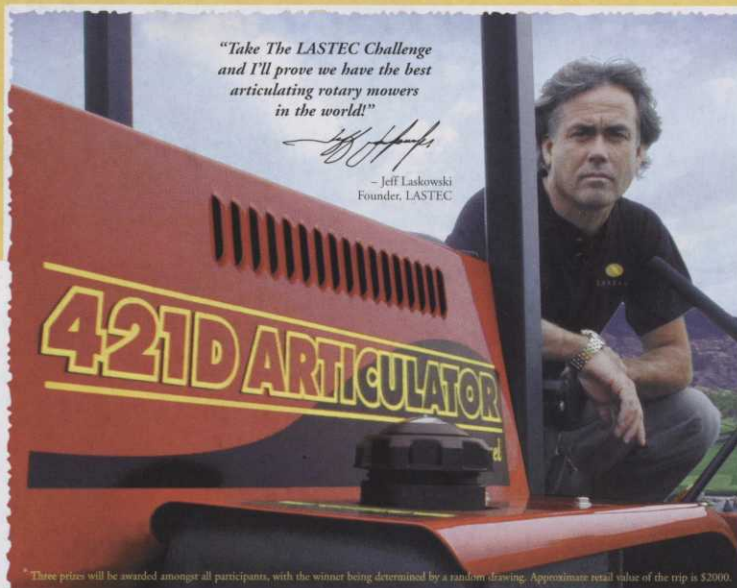
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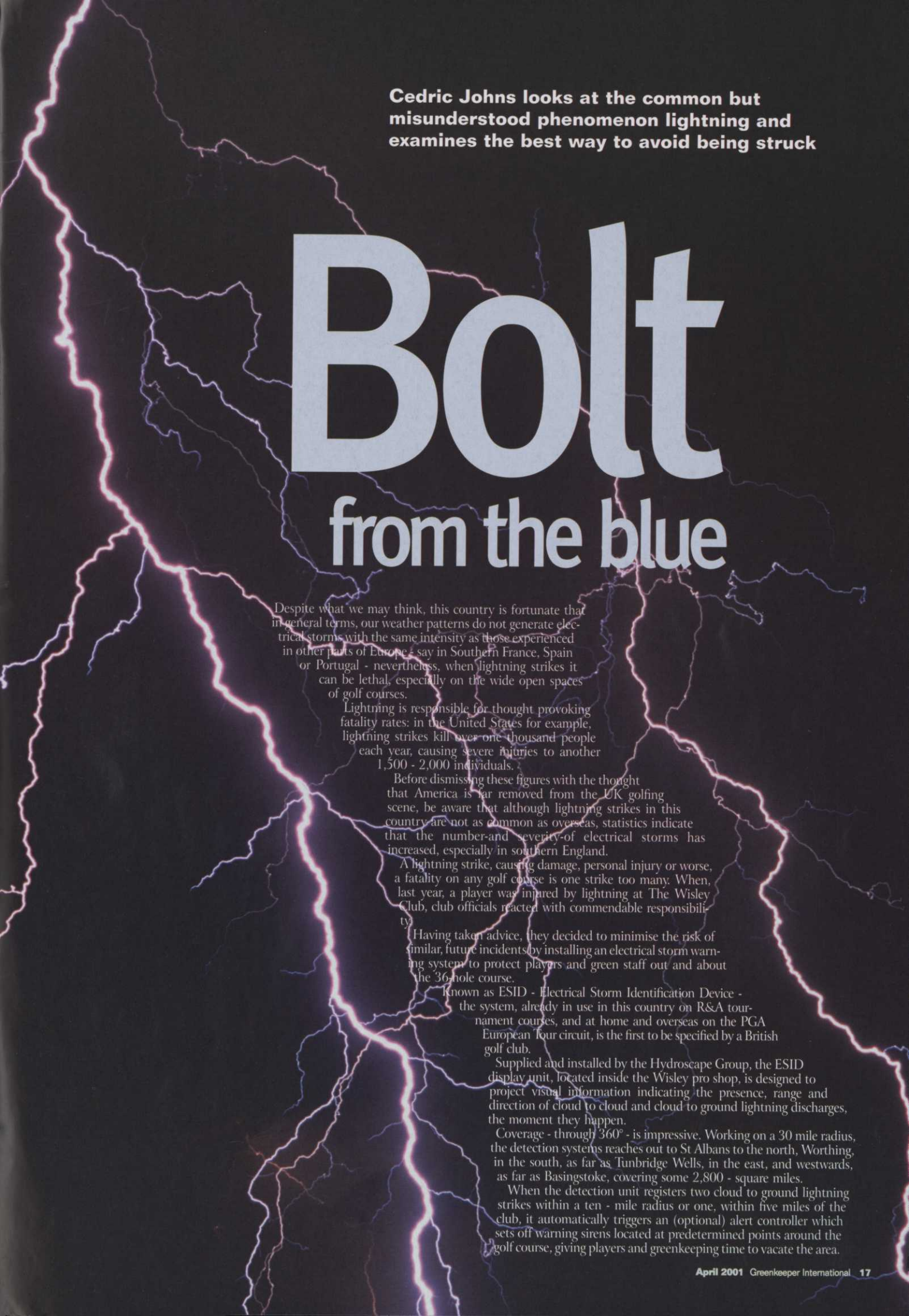
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Cedric Johns looks at the common but misunderstood phenomenon lightning and examines the best way to avoid being struck

Bolt

from the blue

Despite what we may think, this country is fortunate that in general terms, our weather patterns do not generate electrical storms with the same intensity as those experienced in other parts of Europe - say in Southern France, Spain or Portugal - nevertheless, when lightning strikes it can be lethal, especially on the wide open spaces of golf courses.

Lightning is responsible for thought provoking fatality rates: in the United States for example, lightning strikes kill over one thousand people each year, causing severe injuries to another 1,500 - 2,000 individuals.

Before dismissing these figures with the thought that America is far removed from the UK golfing scene, be aware that although lightning strikes in this country are not as common as overseas, statistics indicate that the number and severity of electrical storms has increased, especially in southern England.

A lightning strike, causing damage, personal injury or worse, a fatality on any golf course is one strike too many. When, last year, a player was injured by lightning at The Wisley Club, club officials reacted with commendable responsibility.

Having taken advice, they decided to minimise the risk of similar, future incidents by installing an electrical storm warning system to protect players and green staff out and about the 36-hole course.

Known as ESID - Electrical Storm Identification Device - the system, already in use in this country on R&A tournament courses, and at home and overseas on the PGA European Tour circuit, is the first to be specified by a British golf club.

Supplied and installed by the Hydroscape Group, the ESID display unit, located inside the Wisley pro shop, is designed to project visual information indicating the presence, range and direction of cloud to cloud and cloud to ground lightning discharges, the moment they happen.

Coverage - through 360° - is impressive. Working on a 30 mile radius, the detection systems reaches out to St Albans to the north, Worthing, in the south, as far as Tunbridge Wells, in the east, and westwards, as far as Basingstoke, covering some 2,800 - square miles.

When the detection unit registers two cloud to ground lightning strikes within a ten - mile radius or one, within five miles of the club, it automatically triggers an (optional) alert controller which sets off warning sirens located at predetermined points around the golf course, giving players and greenkeeping time to vacate the area.

Bolt

from the blue



Above: The Hydroscape ESID warning system

The unit's digital display information can be varied by programming it to indicate other warning thresholds. In addition to safeguarding people out on the course, warnings provided by the ESID detection system also enables greenkeeping staff to switch off irrigation controllers (or other, sensitive electrical equipment) to minimise the risk of damage caused by lightning strikes.

What is lightning? Physically, lightning is an exchange of an electrical discharge between clouds or from cloud to the earth's surface. Such exchanges travel at the velocity of almost one third the speed of light, with current levels running as high as 35,000-40,000 amperes, generating one million volts or more.

In addition to electricity, lightning - more particularly a bolt - superheats the surrounding air to temperatures to an almost unbelievable 50,000 degrees centigrade. That's five times hotter than the sun's surface.

Lightning originates from thunderclouds - typically "charged" cumulonimbus clouds. The classic thunderbolt is essentially an electric dipole with a positively charged region above a negatively charged region.

Two theories exist as to how clouds are electrified: according to the con-

vective theory, cloud droplets trap ions in the atmosphere which are moved by convective currents within the cloud to produce charged regions.

Alternatively, the gravitational theory suggests that the heavier negative particles tend to be the lower portion of the thundercloud due to gravitational attraction. Whichever, a charged thundercloud is an unstable entity. Electric fields emitting from thunderclouds can become so strong that they cause an electrical breakdown of the atmosphere.

When this happens, a charge is exchanged via a lightning flash travelling in four possible routes: from cloud to cloud, cloud to ground, from cloud to air or within the cloud itself.

Cloud to ground lightning flashes have three distinctive parts, each occurring in microseconds: the stepped leader and the dart leader. The stepped leader involves the transfer of the charge from cloud to ground along the path of least resistance, in a succession of steps.

This transfer can sometimes follow different paths resulting in what we know as forked lightning. When the stepped leader gets close to the ground it induces corona discharge (dielectric breakdown in the air, which we call St Elmo's Fire) from tall objects - like isolated trees, pylons, church steeples - which literally 'reach out' to the leader.

Connection between the leader and the discharge 'closes the circuit' and establishes an unbroken path between cloud and the ground. This triggers a powerful, upward return stroke which ends in the originating cloud.

The lightning flash may end there or, if the return stroke imparts enough charge to the cloud, a dart leader may emit from the cloud and return in a direct path to the ground. A kind of double whammy!

This dart leader can be powerful enough to induce a second, return stroke. On average, a single lightning flash consists of the three or four return strokes but flashes of up to thirty return strokes have been monitored.

There are also two kinds of cloud to ground lightning: a positive flash which transfer a positive charge, the negative, which as it suggests, exchanges a negative charge with the ground. Usually consisting of a single stroke, positive flashes are

potentially more dangerous as continuous currents created can last up to ten times longer than a negative flash.

That said, you don't need to be an expert to recognise a thunder storm. Not only can you hear the rumble of thunder (thunder, incidentally, is the consequent shock wave from the electrical discharge) you can see lightning.

When this happens and you are caught out on the golf course bear in mind the following: avoid solitary trees, open areas, waterlogged areas and high ground. Avoid all metals objects including sprinklers, fences, machinery, flag poles, power lines, telephone lines and unprotected, small open sided buildings.

If you are in a group, spread out, allowing at least twenty feet distance between yourself and the next person.

In contrast, seek shelter in a substantial building or fully enclosed metal vehicles - like a car, van or 4x4 - ensuring that all windows are closed. If these are not within walking distance, look for cluster of small shrubs or trees or find a ditch, trench or low ground as refuge.

Leave mowers, small pick-ups or golf buggies behind you. Take off any form of metal objects you may be wearing, watches, chains and the like. Clubs and umbrellas should also be discarded.

More sensibly, the next time you are out on the course and you hear or see thunder or lightning, forget about edging that green and raking bunkers or if you are playing, finishing that hole. Walk off, the risk is not worth taking, remember the fates can strike with lightning speed ...

In this day and age, golf clubs, playing members and greenkeeping staff have a duty to each other and themselves to take all necessary precautions to reduce the risk of injury or worse caused by lightning strikes. The R&A, PGA European Tour and now the Wisley club have taken the initiative by using ESID detection systems. Maybe your club should think along similar lines. Discuss.

Readers wishing to learn more about the storm detection systems mentioned in this article can consult Peter Roberts, the Hydroscape Group, telephone 01425 476261 or contact Cedric Johns on 01202 311345 or 01425 614790

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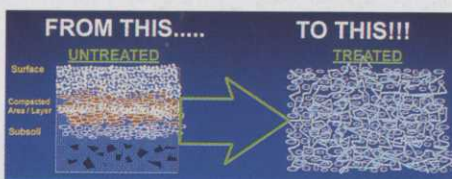


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Scott MacCallum meets Master Greenkeeper John Wells who has shown that with hard work and application, the limit of a greenkeeper's horizons might not be where he thinks they are...

Reach for the stars

When John Wells began his career as an apprentice greenkeeper at the age of 16 he might have been forgiven for letting his mind race on a few years to what the future might hold in store for him.

As a teenager with no qualifications, having enjoyed school's sporting opportunities more than the academic ones, the possibility of reaching the position of Head Greenkeeper was a long way off, but by transferring the dedication and application he had shown on the sporting field to his greenkeeping career, he was confident that he might just pull it off.

Well, within five years John was a Head Greenkeeper and as we sat in the majestic surroundings of the Bocket Hall Clubhouse I was facing John Wells, Master Greenkeeper, Estates Manager of Bocket Hall, International Ltd, a man in charge of two teams of eight greenkeepers, three gardeners, a forester and all the security of the 543 acre site which boasts two superb 18-hole courses - the second of which he project managed, a six hole par-3 course and three hole short game facility.

"My career should be a perfect message for everyone who thinks he is just an average greenkeeper. Unless you work hard and push yourself you have no idea how far you can get," said John, speaking as a man who has very definitely practised what he preached.

"I left school with no qualifications because I wanted to play a lot of sport at school at the expense of my education so I've done most of my learning since leaving school," he explained.

"I went to night school one night a

week to study Business Management Level 4 Greenkeeping and General Horticulture, with a lot of additional reading in between time but I did it as I felt that I had the ability to run a team out on the golf course but I didn't understand budgets or have a lot of the management skills. When I worked for my Master Greenkeeper certificate there was also an awful lot of work outside my normal working hours.

"It is one step at a time. You have got to look at what you want to become and then look at what you need to become that person," added John, who moved to Bocket Hall in 1992 having previously been Head Greenkeeper at nearby Welwyn Golf Club.

"A career is all about gradual progression and I can assure you it is not handed to you on a plate. It is something you have to work hard towards. It can start, as it did with me at the age of 16, just by proving your worth to the Head Greenkeeper and working hard, being conscientious and reliable. As you move on opportunities will arise to advance within the team," explained John, who added that reading magazine articles and bothering older greenkeepers for information will show a keenness and assist up the first rungs of the ladder.

"From there on get involved in BIG-GA, go to conferences and seminars and take what you learn back to your golf club. It is a form of progression. I didn't say at the age of 16 that I wanted to be an Estates Manager on a prestigious estate by the time I'd got to 40, but I took one step at a time and my career developed.

"As soon as you reach one level in your career you should be looking to get more information to develop on to the next level. I'm learning all the time and, with this new job I'm on a steep learning curve."

Having moved from a members' club to a larger proprietary operation where he has flourished John is well placed to comment on the differences between the two styles of club.

"I think one of the saddest things about greenkeeping is that there are a lot of talented greenkeepers running members' golf clubs who are not being allowed to develop fully as professionals.

"A lot of clubs don't hold their greenkeeper in high enough esteem for him to be respected by the people around him. If the greenkeeper was portrayed as a skilled professional the members would listen more and understand that a lot of the problems the greenkeeper is dealing with are inherited, the result of poor choice of materials or poor construction from many years before. The greenkeeper is therefore trying to put right problems many of which may have begun before his arrival at the club," said John.

He compared the role of the greenkeeper to that of the club professional, who is invariably held in high esteem at the golf club and judged on what competitions he has won or that he once qualified for The Open.

"The pro is often judged on how good he is at golf but that doesn't mean he will make a good teacher or run a good shop. A greenkeeper is always judged and often put down but ultimately he is more important than

Reach for the stars

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1 Jacobsen Smithco Sand Rake
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2 John Deere 3235A
1 John Deere 4400
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4 John Deere Gator Diesel
3 John Deere Gator
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1 Back Hoe
1 Kuhn Rotovator E L 35
1 Little Wonder
1 Massey Ferguson 20
1 Massey Ferguson 240
1 Ransomes 350D (2WD)
1 Ransomes Hydraulic 5s
7 Ransomes Marquis 51
4 Ransomes Super Certes 51
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the golf professional to the success of the business."

John did accept, however, that the situation has improved over the last 10 years and that now, at least, the majority of Head Greenkeepers at 18-hole members clubs have use of a company vehicle whereas a decade ago the figure was more like 10%.

"The portrayal of the greenkeeper's job has risen but still it nowhere near reflects the importance of the job he does."

Having spent 25 years in greenkeeping, and now having responsibility for 45 holes plus all the additional Brocket Hall Estate John has developed planning skills to ease the way towards a smooth running operation.

"From a practical point of view being a good forward planner is a huge advantage. The Course Development Plan is something which often catches out Master Greenkeeper candidates, I know it did me. We have five year machinery plans so why not have a five year course development plan?"

"Courses are judged by existing Master Greenkeepers so, when Gordon Irvine came and failed me on the golf course, my first reaction was to resent him, my second was to sit down and work on the areas on which I'd failed and my third was to realise just how much better a greenkeeper it was going to make me by doing these things."

To highlight the point he explained how his plan for the two courses worked.

"I have a plan for the whole year from week one to week 52 and I plan in each job that has to be done, with some spare columns to give flexibility. For example I might plan to put some fertiliser on in week 11, but it might end up going on in week 13 because of a cold wet spell, or it might be week 10 because we've hit a nice mild week and you know in greenkeeping that it's the right thing to do.

"Formulating the plan helps me to know when we have to bring our products on site so we don't have a shed full of materials sitting waiting to be used."

Also included in this plan are the heights and frequency of cut.

"I do my soil tests in November and do the plans for both the Melbourne and Palmerston courses in December.

Once I've organised the fertiliser programme I work out when all the other jobs are going on - the scarifying, the brushing, the hollow tining, top dressing etc. Bunker renovation work is also planned in for the last week in February, beginning of March where we edge the bunkers, check sand levels and getting everything in good shape for the start of the season.

With such a big combined team, operating under Head Greenkeepers John Moorhouse, who is also John's Deputy, and Mark Jennings communication is vital to ensure smooth running.

"Every morning we have a briefing where the day's jobs are handed out while every month we have a meeting where I talk about what is going on within the company as a whole. John will then report on the Melbourne Course; Mark, on the Palmerston; the Head Gardener, on the gardens; there will be a report on all the projects going on on the estate and one of the team will talk about what he has planned for the social side.

"Every two or three months we all go and do something while twice a year the company run something for the 150 employees. This tends to be an annual party which we have in early January and then in late summer when we have an activity day on the Estate," said John.

In addition the staff play 16 aside golf matches against both the men and lady members which is a great way to build





relationships with the members.

Brocket Hall has a history as illustrious as any stately home in the country. The first record of the house goes back to the 13th century and it was named Brocket Hall in 1440. It was the home of two serving Prime Ministers, Lord Melbourne and Lord Palmerston in the 19th century.

Golf became a part of the Hall when Lord Brocket decided that it was an ideal way for the estate to earn its keep and the first course, the Melbourne, designed by Peter Alliss and Clive Clark was opened in '91. Plans for the second course were put to one side while the future of the Estate was decided and moved forward when the current owners CCA International bought the lease for the Estate in '96.

The Palmerston Course was designed by Donald Steele and opened by Dame Kiri Te Kanawa in June last year.

The mid '90s uncertainty was obviously unsettling for anyone connected with Brocket Hall and Lord MacLaurin, currently Chairman of the England and Wales Cricket Board, was appointed Chairman of Brocket Hall Ltd to look after the interests of the members and staff.

"When any course goes through troubled times and take over is talked about the greenkeeper always feels very vulnerable but in most cases it is the greenkeeping team which is safest. When new management take over they often see that it is the greenkeeping team which is very well organised and very

adaptable and it is the greenkeeping team which is required to lift the golf course. It is more likely to be the finance and marketing departments which are vulnerable."

He added however that hopes that, after working on a shoe string for an extended period, that money would be lavished on the golf course were rarely fulfilled.

"The new company will take a look at the place and you've got to prove to them that you are the right guy to develop the site and you have to put in place the reasons why you feel investment is required, often providing leasing options for consideration," said John, who often looks to purchase second hand machin-

ery to make the budget go further.

It was since the new owners arrival that John has really flourished, being Project Manager for the new course and working closely with Donald Steele, who was chosen from a short list of five architects because he was considered most suitable to work with chosen tract of land, to produce a course that has received acclaim from all quarters.

"The whole project went very smoothly and we came in just under the original budget cost," said John, who has fond memories of watching Donald plot the route through dense forest.

As we concluded the interview and John prepared for another meeting he added.

"I'd like to finish off by saying to every greenkeeper out there. Don't get comfortable with your lot, try to push yourselves because although a lot of hard work is needed, there is an awful lot of enjoyment. Never rest on your laurels, keep driving and see how far you can take it because the rewards are out there.

"I now get trips abroad, assessing other courses the company is involved with, and that is a great fun as well as a great education for me.

"One of the professions biggest mistakes is to think that once we've reached a certain level we've gone as far as we are going to get."

Master Greenkeeper Anthony Davies MG, Course Manager at Prestbury Golf Club, was one of the BIGGA delegation chosen to attend the CGSA Conference and Show in Vancouver

BIGGA shakes Vancouver



Above: Recently voted the world's number one city, and you can see why

Far right: Raymond Day carries the flag for Britain

The visit to Vancouver, Canada for ten BIGGA Greenkeepers started last September. The trip was open to all BIGGA Greenkeepers whose only qualification was to own a BIGGA Blazer. The ten candidates were chosen after a rigorous interview conducted by the well known supplier of grinding machines, Bernhard & Co, who were the main Sponsor together with Officials from Headquarters. After a few short months the week to attend the Canadian Golf Superintendents Association's Convention had arrived.

All the party arrived at Heathrow Airport eager to board the Boeing 747 and head off to Canada. After

what seemed an endless wait, the big plane flapped its wings and we were off. Off to share and exchange views with our counterparts in Canada. The nine and a quarter hour flight wasn't too arduous the worst part was being subjected to 'Charlie's Angels' on the in-flight movie channel. As soon as we landed in Vancouver we were met by a guide who took us to our hotel and there to greet us were Sam and Peter from Bernhard & Co. Sam, who was a brick during the week, bought the team a very welcome drink and briefed us on the week ahead - and what a week was in store for us.

The next morning we boarded a coach and travelled a short distance to North View Golf & Country Club.

The 36-hole complex, was designed by Arnold Palmer and is described as a public course but with prestigious private club standards. The courses are laid out on 400 acres of land and cater for 65,000 annual rounds of golf. Both courses were in great condition for the time of year and it is no wonder that the USPGA have a Tour event there. The \$80 dollar a round courses are owned by two sawmill owners who leave the day-to-day running of North View to Dave Fair, the Superintendent.

Dave, whose working compound resembles that of Manchester Airport, has a large open service yard where stone and its like are deposited and swooped up by mechanical



loaders. The machine store, or should I say the 'hanger', was well stocked with various machinery. A total of 53 staff are employed to look after the two courses with every nine holes having their own team of Greenkeepers for that section who compete against the other members of staff who are then rewarded for the best nine holes at the end of each month. The list of machinery is endless so I will not bother to bore you with such details but just picture this:- seven Cushman's, eight Jacobsen Greens King, four Toro Reel Masters and three full time Mechanics working from a 60' x 40' repair shop. I didn't just envy Dave Fair, I wanted his job!

Over the next few days the BIGGA team attended the well organised educational seminars.

Their system is not too dissimilar to that of Harrogate but one thing was noticeable that the seminars were well attended by like-minded Greenkeepers whose intention was to exchange ideas and to listen and learn from their peers who offered advice willingly and freely - I told you it was like Harrogate! As soon as the seminars ended the Trade Show opened. The neatly arranged rows of machinery were gleaming in their entirety trying to entice the onlookers to at least talk about their golf course requirements.

The BIGGA team were welcomed

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BIGGA shakes Vancouver

Right: Clive and wife Sue pictured with world famous pop star - but who is it? (Answer at bottom of page)

on all stands and we engaged in verbal chit-chat and made many new acquaintances and desirable future contacts.

On the morning of our departure home, while working on a few notes in my hotel room and chatting with my room mate, Jimmy Richardson, on various pertinent subjects, he leapt from his armchair and, in his sometimes understandable accent, pointed out that he could feel tremors vibrating within. I jibed him and said that he had too late a visit in Gas Town the previous night - Gas Town being the local place to unwind.

Alas, however, he was right. On looking out of the bedroom window I noticed that the water in the swimming pool below resembled that of boiling water bubbling away in a pan. It was then that our hotel and other hotels within the vicinity started to move. The large pane glass window in our room started to creak and the sound of distant thunder rang in our ears. The vibration and swaying seemed endless but in fact only lasted some five to ten seconds. We switched the TV on and instantly the news headlines reported that Seattle and Vancouver had just experienced an earthquake and for all persons to stay calm. I can report that Jimmy and I were very calm for within seconds we were looking for ways out of the hotel. Just then a voice came over the tannoy reporting that we had in fact gone through an earthquake and for us to remain calm and stay in our rooms until further notice.

That really put Jimmy and I at ease.



Knowing that we had 24 floors above our bedroom we donned our coats and got outside. The local news reported that the earthquake had measured 6.4 on the Richter Scale - the highest yet in Vancouver. I didn't realise that ten Greenkeepers from the UK could make such an impact!

So what have I learned from this trip? I have realised that Greenkeepers who have never met before can become friends, exchange opinions and work together to break down barriers between local and international Greenkeepers.

What has BIGGA achieved from this trip? BIGGA was exposed on the international stage and was also successful in breaking down barriers and ten proud BIGGA Members assisted with the performance.

What did Bernhard & Co achieve from this trip? I cannot answer this question, the Company would have to answer this in their own words but

I go as far as to say that they sponsored the trip to allow the selected men the chance to travel to Canada, mingle with other Greenkeepers giving them the opportunity to listen and learn and to present their views on modern Greenkeeping in the UK today.

The highlights of the trip for me were to meet nine other like-minded Greenkeepers from home being introduced to the British Consulate General, making many new friends and surviving an earthquake.

On a final note I would like to extend my sincere thanks to my Section and in particular to Bert Cross for putting my name forward for the trip and to BIGGA for selecting me to represent the Association for which I was honoured to do so and a big thank you to Bernhard & Co for their generous sponsorship.

Lastly my thanks to Jimmy Richardson my room mate.

Below: Sam McLean of Bernhards pictured with the famous ten



Answer to pop trivia question: Spencer Davis of the Spencer Davis Group

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Roland Taylor examines the world of the fairway mower

Fairway to heaven



Capability Brown the famous landscape gardener, left his mark on some of the greatest gardens in the UK. Part of his style was to create large vistas that drew the eye to a distant point and in a way this is exactly what the golf course fairway does. It concentrates the golfer's sight on his ultimate goal - the green. In doing so they should test his control of the ball and judgment as to where best to place it for the next shot.

They also link the landscaping and add an aesthetic quality to the overall scenery and are an important

element of courses that appear on television. Maintaining them has changed over the last two decades, especially the rough. In the past a wayward shot might finish up in virtually impenetrable grass or scrub. This often meant golfers spent considerable time searching for their ball. In those days there were fewer golfers and probably less pressure to speed up the play. The density and extent of the semi and deep rough is generally determined by each club's course management programme.

Fairways

The objective is to create a uniformity of grass cover. Mowing frequency will depend on growth and prevailing weather conditions and height of cut should be such that the ball sits well on the turf. With such large areas to maintain there are going to be considerable variances in the ground contours, so care has to be taken to avoid scalping.

The first fairway mowers were single trailed units pulled by a horse. With the introduction of three and



five gang mowers the animal power was replaced with petrol or diesel power. Many courses still use this system today or variations of it. Trailed gang mowers rely for their cylinder drive from wheel traction and as such consistency of reel speed can vary due to ground conditions. With the advent of hydraulic systems, manufacturers found the solution to this problem by fitting motors to each cutting, thus producing a uniform reel speed regardless of the terrain. There was also another advantage by fitting hydraulic

rams on the carrier each unit could be lifted independently - a feature which makes transporting between sizes and getting through narrow entrances easy. There are still plenty of gang mowers trailed or power driven available for clubs that prefer this method of mowing their fairways.

Time does not stand still and the next phase of development saw the introduction of self-powered fairway mowers - the point we are at today.

Golf suddenly took off as a sport for all and golf courses suddenly sprung

up virtually everywhere, so the demand for specialist equipment quickly grew.

The advent of the fairway mower heralded a change in manufacturers interests in golf course machinery as up until then there had been only a few companies directly involved. Speed and efficiency were the key factors and in addition operator comfort became important and words such as fatigue began to appear.

Over the last few years the competitive element has made manufacturers



look long and hard at their designs so there are now plenty of machines to choose from with a host of benefits that are aimed to make the job efficient, cost effective and easy.

Regardless of whose name is on the label the modern fairway mower normally has a diesel engine, hydraulic transmission and drives plus power steering. Generally cutting configurations are similar and made up of three or five units. Ergonomics have played an important part and features such as all round visibility, fully adjustable

seat and driving column are common.

The cutting units are fully floating, ground hugging with usually a choice of 5, 7 or 11-bladed reels.

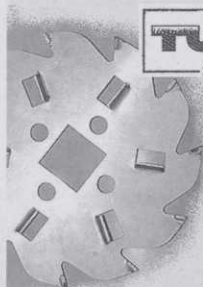
Other types of options offered depending on the make include grass catchers and interchangeable units for scarifying, verticutting and brushing.

Electronics are now becoming a key feature especially in diagnosing a fault in the engine or hydraulic system and these can save a lot of down time trying to locate the source of the problem

On the question of maintenance the

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things to look out for are accessibility to all components especially the reel units. If you are considering buying alternative reels it is important at the demonstration to ask the operator to change these over. You can then judge how easy it is and the time it takes. This is also a good time to ask about the availability of replacement parts.

The rough

The semi rough defines the point where the fairway merges with the rough and its width will vary between courses. The cutting height needs to be no more than about 60mm and should be carried out regularly with the gang type mowers so there is a clear indication where the deep rough begins.

When it comes to heavy rough the type of mower used will differ from course to course. As the vegetation is going to be left relatively long (about

10cm) the machine has to be able to cope and a rotary or flail could be the best answer. How many times and at what intervals will largely depend on the plant life. In the case of heather to promote formation of young growth and to stop it becoming leggy it will require mowing in the autumn.

On courses where wild flora is being sown and encouraged then the management programme is different depending on how long it has been established. In the first year it needs to be cut and collected regularly at height of 5cm and 7cm throughout the growing period. In the second year and following seasons the first flush of spring growth should be mown and the cuttings removed. Continue until late May when the mowing should cease to allow the flowers to bloom. When flowering declines towards the end of the summer mow and collect again. Further cuts can be carried out

until October.

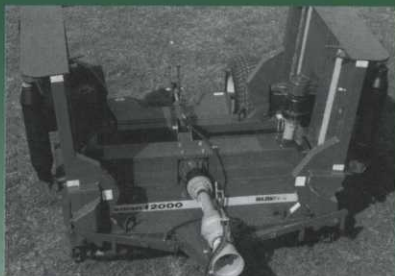
For flower management a rotary or flail with collecting facilities is a must, otherwise the clearing operation is extremely labour intensive. This type of machine is not only useful for this job but it can be used also for collecting leaves. There are a number available and the main thing to look out for when having these demonstrated is their ability to collect in wet conditions. Otherwise in the present climate you are going to be faced with either not being able to cut, or continually having to unblock the machine.

Where the rough is made up predominantly of grasses then the rotary is an alternative to gang mowers. There is a variety of cutting widths to choose from either as tractor-mounted or shelf contained units. During the last decade we have seen the introduction of wide trailed rotary mowers made up of cutting units which are independent of each other, so they are able to follow the ground contours closely. Again they are worth checking out if the terrain is difficult with scalping often occurring.

Another alternative is to let areas naturally develop, but these will require some controlled management. If they do need thinning out or some cutting, then the new spate of ride-on brush cutters are suited because they can deal with relatively heavy brush wood and saplings.

The fact that the fairways and adjoining rough account for the biggest areas to maintain means the equipment has to be fast and cost effective. What is suitable for one course is not necessarily the right answer for another. With mowing areas of this size there are a host of variables to take into account, so before changing from one method to another carefully analyse all the pros and cons - then look at as many machines as possible before deciding.

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**Victor Jamieson gives some advice on
the purchase of a new irrigation system**

Splash out

Thinking about a
new irrigation system?

Looking back over the past nine months it is hard to imagine an irrigation system ever been used in this country again. However, not so long ago we were talking about drought conditions, water shortages and restrictions. Hot dry summers are sure to come again and when they do golf clubs with old irrigation systems will very quickly realise their inadequacies. With an ageing irrigation system the greenkeeper will be forced to spend more and more time trying to keep the system going and having to hand water to make up for its poor performance.

Comparisons will be made between the condition of their course and the course next door that was installed with a state of the art irrigation system a few years previously. An efficient irrigation system is not only an insurance policy against dry weather but also an effective management tool to help with the control of divots and overseeding etc., enabling greenkeepers to improve the overall condition of their course.

At some stage the club will have to make the decision to install a new system and this will probably be one of, if not the largest, capital expenditures they will ever make on their golf course. Once they have decided to go ahead there are many considerations

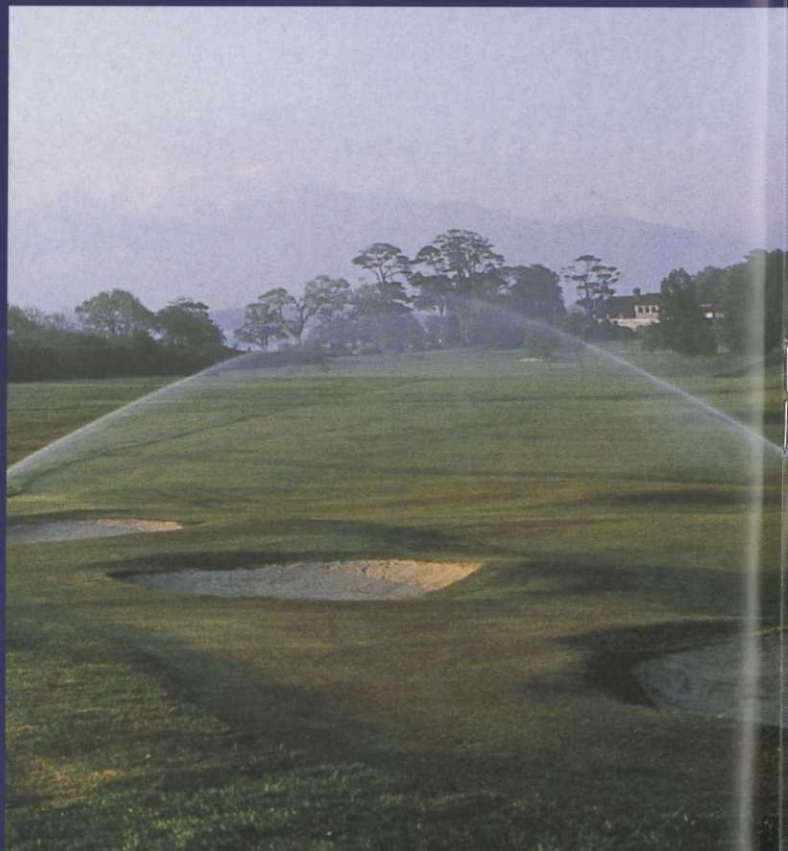
to take into account and various options open to the club as to how they should proceed.

They can employ an irrigation consultant to take care of the project from conception to completion, or the consultant can prepare a specification to be issued to contractors to bid on a design and build basis. The consultant can then be used to make a comparative analysis of the submitted bids with a recommendation as to how the club should proceed.

Another alternative is for the club to proceed alone without professional advice. This is not the easiest of routes and one that should only be taken if the club is prepared to do its homework, considering the enormous costs involved.

Continuous research and development ensure more advanced and high tech materials and equipment are available to the irrigation contractor. These days a well designed, well installed and properly set up irrigation system should be relatively maintenance free. Leaks should be a thing of the past and greenkeepers can undertake their normal maintenance operations without the risk of damaging equipment and materials.

To select the most appropriate irrigation system for your golf course certain decisions must be made. The club should decide on the following:





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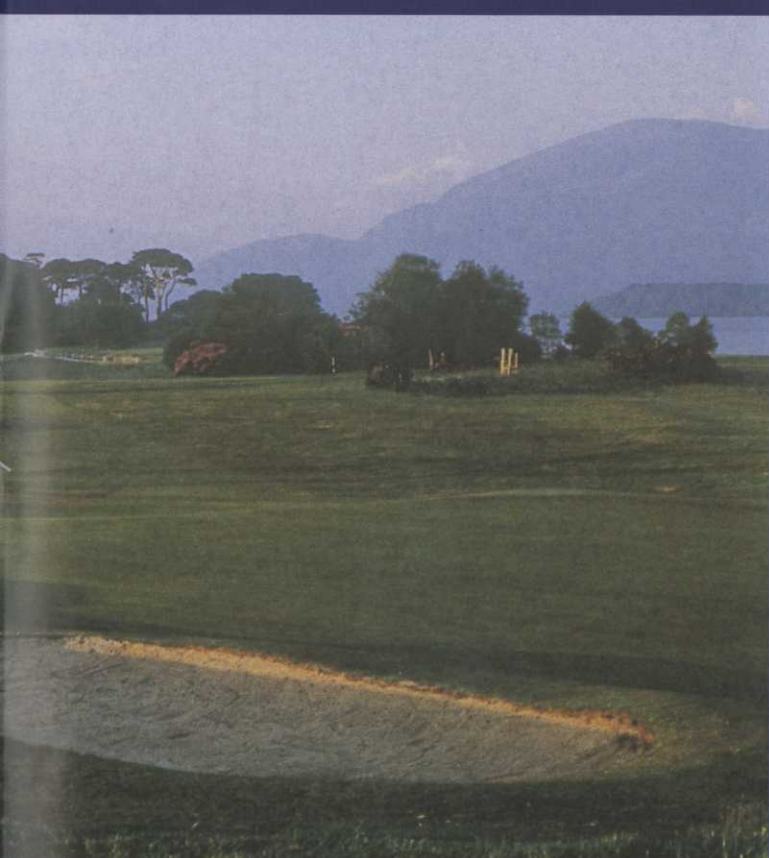
In addition to providing the latest, simplified desk-top control technology, the Toro 'GT' Update Package ('GT' stands for Gemini-Trident) enables you to exercise better flow management, the key to reducing water consumption. It also eliminates the risk of over-watering and ultimately, helps cut the cost of your club's water and electricity bills.

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- Which areas of the golf course need to be covered by the irrigation system eg, greens, green surrounds, tees, approaches, fairways, carries, walkways, bunker surrounds, areas prone to wear and other areas such as turf nurseries and landscaped areas.
- Maximum design application rates. This is the amount of water that the system should be able to deliver to the selected areas of the golf course within the irrigation-operating window, normally in mm/day or mm/week.
- Available irrigation window. This is the length of time the system will need to be operated to apply the chosen application rate. In the UK this is generally eight to 10 hours. It is useful to bear in mind that the shorter the irrigation window requested the more expensive the irrigation system will be. For an eight-hour operating window the system will require a larger capacity pumping system and larger pipework than for a 10-hour window. Once these have been decided the club can go into further detail and decide on:
 - Type of coverage. Part or full circle sprinklers on the greens and approaches, single or double row on fairways and tees etc.
 - Sprinkler type. Valve-in-head or non valve-in-head controlled in blocks.
 - Sprinkler control. Individual head control or sprinklers controlled in pairs/block.
 - Control system. Wall mounted standalone controller or PC controller. Remote control facility. Weather station etc.
 - Pumping system. Pressure or variable speed set.

Usually the club will have limited funds available and although they may wish to install a wall-to-wall irrigation system immediately this may not be financially viable. This does not mean that the golf club cannot have what it wants in the long term as long as it is taken into account in the initial design.

For example a system can be designed to initially irrigate greens, tees and approaches but the irrigation mains and electrical control system can be sized so that the system can be extended at a later date to irrigate other areas of the golf course e.g., fairways. The pumpset can be designed and fabricated in such a way that an extra pump can easily be fitted to provide the required extra duty. In this case the club can add fairways one at a time as funds become available.

Before approaching contractors the club should find out how much water they have available, as this will dictate the size and area that the irrigation system will cover and they should have a budget figure in mind. The club should research other clubs that have had a new irrigation system installed. They should also examine the workmanship of the installer, quality of reinstatement etc, and short list a number of contractors that they would like to bid on the project. Impartial professional advice is advisable and considering the huge costs involved, the club

should satisfy themselves that the advice they receive is appropriate.

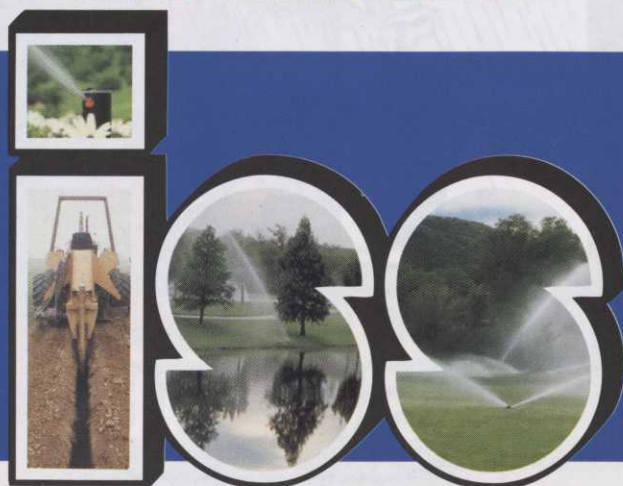
If a consultant is not involved, the club should make sure that the contractors they select bid using the same criteria as listed above. In addition they should ensure that materials offered meet or exceed appropriate standards. With regards to installation, the club should make sure they know how the irrigation system is going to be fitted, to what depth pipework will be installed and how reinstatement will be carried out. Guarantees and warranties should be examined and the club should make sure that the contractor has allowed for the system to be set up and commissioned fully. Make sure the contractor's bid has included for as-built drawings, spare parts, tools and training etc.

A club should always install the highest quality, most sophisticated system it can afford. The investment will quickly reflect in the improved quality of the course enhancing reputations and revenue.

Don't forget irrigation is as important to golf courses as central heating is to houses. Not necessarily essential, but without an efficient system conditions are uncomfortable and inferior.

Victor Jamieson is Rain Bird Area Manager for UK and Ireland

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The other four videos in BIGGA's portfolio cover, spraying; golf course preparation; golf green construction and golf course ecology. The production of this video was only possible through the generous support of the Association's Golden and Silver Key Supporters who donate to BIGGA's Education and Development Fund. Irrigation is produced by Goodwood Videos, who also produced the Golf Course Ecology video, and is priced at £14.95.

Contact the BIGGA Education Department for further details on 01347 833800 or via education@bigga.co.uk

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David Rhodes explains how to achieve the best results from the time, effort and money invested in sward renovation

Testing times

How you can improve your turfgrass

These days, greenkeepers are being asked to provide good playing conditions seven days a week, every week of the year. This continual wear and tear, in increasingly wet conditions, is bound to affect the quality of the grass surface at strategic points across the course. Deterioration may also result from excessive thatch accumulation, a predominance of undesirable grass/or weed species, excessive shade, or injury due to pests and disease. Improving the sward by laying new turf or overseeding will often be the only answer.

In most situations, unless an instant surface is required, overseeding will be cheaper and more practical than putting down new turf. Although less demanding in the initial phase of establishment, turf limits the choice of species and cultivar to that used by the turf grower, and this may not be the ideal match for the course.

With over 200 amenity grass cultivars on the STRI List, the possible combination of varieties and species that can be sown in a repair, or overseed mixture, is endless. Trials at our research station in Lincolnshire, repeatedly show that mixtures out-perform the individual varieties grown on their own - especially with regard to density, colour and disease resistance. Considerable time and effort is taken to devise mixtures to suit a particular end-use. These do not necessarily include all the best-rated cultivars, but those that will

grow and perform well together in a specific situation.

In amenity grass breeding programmes, the primary objective is to find new varieties that will reduce labour and input costs — for example, by selecting cultivars that require less mowing, chemical sprays and fertiliser.

In Britain, important qualities to look for in grass seed selection are persistence under close mowing, durability under wear, disease tolerance, turf density, slow vertical growth rate, good winter colour, and cleanness of cut. The life of any sward, be it tee, green or fairway, is neither static nor infinite. Even areas prone to least damage, will eventually benefit from being replaced with genetically better, healthier plants. Advances in breeding continually produce new varieties with superior characteristics to those already available.

Sow quality seed

Good quality seed is essential for successful establishment. The three basic components of quality are purity, viability (germination) and trueness of type. Quality seed must confirm to UK seed labelling laws. For example, the Higher Voluntary Standard for purity in rye grass is 98 per cent, and for fescues is 95 per cent.

Seed size and weight are important characteristics associated with

seedling vigour, both between, and within species and cultivars. For example, rye grass has greater vigour than bent grass. The relative vigour of seed lots can be obtained from the interim germination on the seed test certificate. Lots with a high interim germination, which will be similar to the final germination, have the highest vigour.

Seed numbers per kilogram differ widely for different species. With large seeds like those of perennial rye grass, there are less seeds per gram than for bent grasses. Therefore more weight of seed is required to achieve the same plant numbers. Achieving the right sowing depth is critical, which for most turf-grass seeds ranges from 1.25mm to 6.5 mm. Seeds sown too deeply may not germinate.

The type of grass, soil conditions, planting depth, germination percentage, seedling vigour and the level of post planting care, all determine how much grass seed is needed. The target should be a living count of between 10,700 and 21,500 plants per square metre, to ensure rapid establishment of a thick, dense sward.

When to sow?

Turfgrass renovation programmes need to be planned to ensure the various operations progress in a systematic manner, with minimum disruption to players. Cool season grasses are usually sown in late spring and early autumn, with an optimum

Testing times

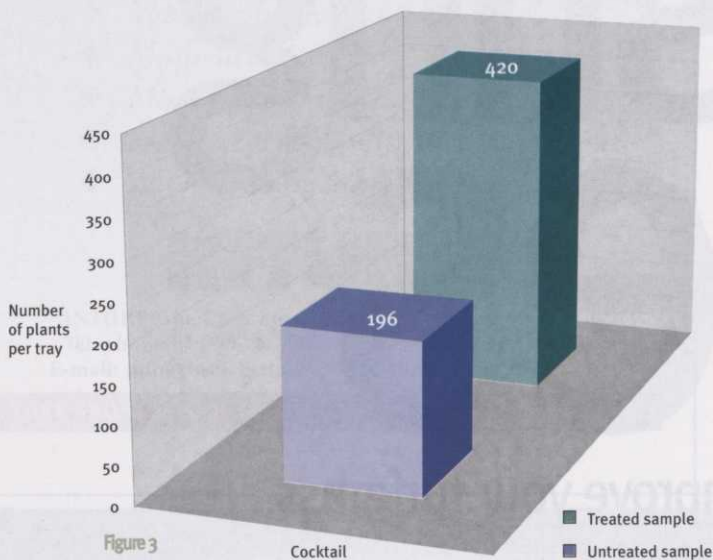


Figure 1 shows how the seed treatment speeds up establishment in a perennial rye grass/red fescue lawn mixture, sown at Advanta's Lincolnshire research station in September 1999.

In figure 2, trials carried out in glass houses in Holland, demonstrated that more than twice the number of plants established with the treated sample.

Finally, figure 3 displays the results of mixtures trials carried out by several Dutch turf growers during 1999. The greatest difference is seen where smooth stalked meadow grass was grown with creeping red fescue, rather than with perennial rye grass where the meadow grass suffered from the much fiercer competition.

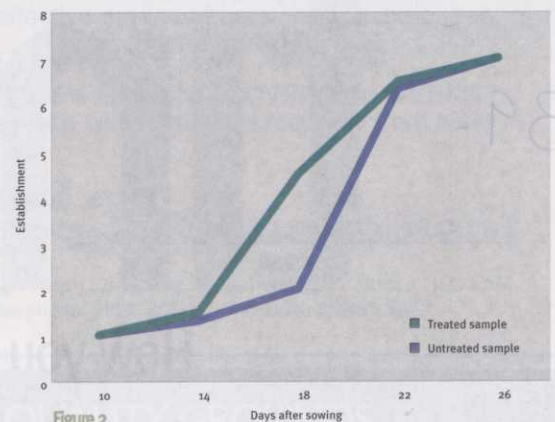
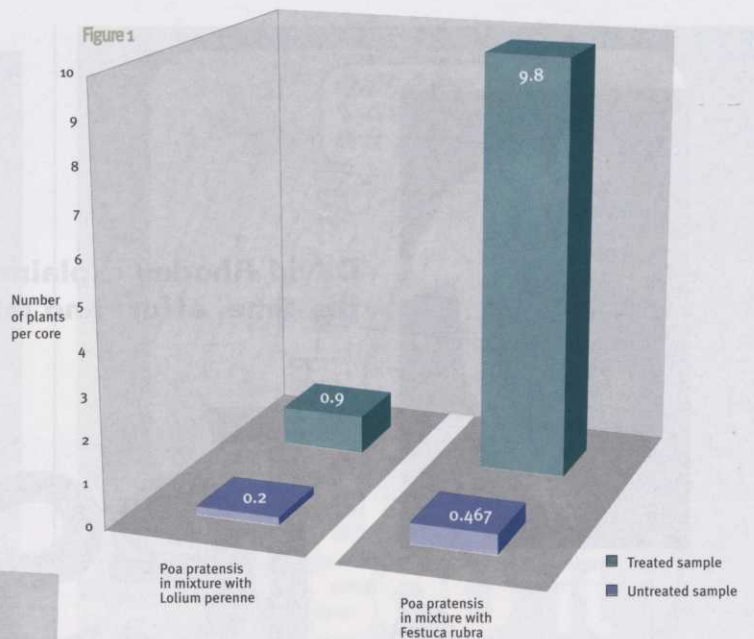
temperature for seed germination of 16 to 30°C. September is usually the ideal, providing moist, warm conditions, allowing new plants to establish well enough before day length shortens. Competition from annual weeds and existing grasses is also less at this time.

The continual heavy rain and flooding experienced by many last autumn, means there will be more spring renovation going on this year. The best advice is to aim for mid-April seeding, as soil temperatures should have risen high enough to allow germination.

How to sow

The sequence of operations includes site preparation - ie weed and thatch control, mowing, aeration and nutrition, followed by the selection of appropriate seeds, sowing, and post planting care. The surface should contain at least 60% cover of desirable perennial grasses. If substantial weed or non-desirable grasses are present, treatment with a non-selective herbicide may be needed first.

Thatch control is very important, and excess material should be reduced with a vertical mower, or in severe cases with a turf cutter, and removed from the site. Generally the area should be vertically cut in several directions before overseeding,



particularly when using mixtures containing bent grass as the seed is so small. All turf grasses produce lateral growth as stolons, aerial tillers or trailing stems. This lateral growth gives the appearance of complete turf cover, but in fact it may shade developing seedlings and new tillers.

Soil analysis will highlight any deficiencies in the nutrient status of the root zone, and the opportunity to apply fertiliser, particularly phosphorous, at seeding should not be missed.

Nitrogen should be withheld for three weeks prior to, and following overseeding, to reduce competition.

The seed can be applied with a spreader - with passes at right angles to ensure even distribution, or broadcast by hand. This should be followed by topdressing and watering if necessary (not last autumn!), to encourage optimum germination and growth.

Post establishment care practices need to be in place for at least four to eight weeks following sowing, and the area will be out of action for this period. Irrigation is especially important after spring sowing to avoid loss by desiccation during the summer months. The initial irrigation should be long enough fully to wet the root zone, and frequent enough to keep the area moist.

When the plants are firmly rooted, and leaf growth has reached 40 to 50

millimetres in length, mowing can start. No more than one-third of the leaf should be removed at any one time to ensure optimum growth. Mowing height should be reduced gradually over a period of one to two months, until the recommended height is achieved. Cylinder mowers can pull out newly established grass, so it is better to start off with a rotary machine.

Difficult conditions

Where greenkeepers are under intense pressure to repair key playing areas in far from ideal conditions, such as a late wet spring, an additional insurance is available from seed treatments.

These, like Advanta's own Headstart, can contain cytokinins, enzymes and trace elements. Cytokinins promote cell division, particularly in rapidly dividing cells, such as occurs during germination. The enzymes help mobilise food reserves, which are an essential source of energy in germinating seed. The chelated trace elements are readily available to the young seedling, and two organic complexes called osmotic attractants, draw available moisture to the germinating seed from its immediate surroundings.

David Rhodes is Technical Manager for Advanta Seeds UK.



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BIGGA
ESSAY
COMPETITION

Simon O'Hara, Assistant at Fota Island Golf Club, Cork, Ireland, was the winner of the Under 25 category of the BIGGA Essay Competition... for the second year in a row! The Irish literary tradition lives on.

Managing without Chemicals

We are fortunate to be living in a time of considerable scientific and ecological enlightenment, for in such an era surely we will prove that turf grasses can be successfully maintained without resorting to synthetic chemicals. It is becoming abundantly clear that legislation will increasingly limit the use of chemicals so we must therefore concentrate our energies on finding alternative solutions.

The prospect of managing a turf grass environment without utilising chemicals may one day be tenable. The advances being made in researching maintenance practises, developing resistant grass cultivars and exploring biological alternatives to synthetic chemicals may soon enable us to adopt chemical free maintenance practises.

The task of managing golf courses without resorting to chemical solutions is a path that many of today's most progressive managers are beginning to tread. There are a number of sound reasons for this strategy, principally the European Union's increasing restrictions on pesticide usage, growing environmental awareness, inherent risks to personal health along with the financial costs combine to instil on us the need to seek alternatives where ever possible.

Through the examination of the most prevalent problems to affect our turf grass environment we may be able to explore non-chemical alternatives. The most frequent attacks, normally dealt with by chemicals, that are ravaged on turf grasses include worm casting along with invasion by animals, pests, weeds and pathogens. These common concerns may yet be controlled by non-chemical means. While many potential solutions may be too expensive or time consuming to implement, they may nevertheless prove themselves in the long term.

We are certain to see the continued use and development of chemicals within our industry, used sympathetically in conjunction with cultural and biological practises, they will provide us with the necessary tools to produce perfect playing surfaces

Worm casting can leave even the most beautifully manicured courses horrendously muddled. Restrictions on the use of chemical controls have led us to explore various alternatives. One method that has been suggested would be the incorporation of a layer of sharp angular gravel, coarse sand or even broken glass beneath the rootzone, very much like the construction of USGA specification greens. Obviously this would be a costly operation, feasible really only during construction, however the benefits over time may yet make this a prudent alternative, especially with the added drainage benefits which could prove effective as our climate gets wetter and as golfers demand perfect year round amusement. Such barriers to surface earthworm activity have previously met with considerable success.

The persistent problem of animal activity on the golf course has been shown to be effectively managed without resort to chemicals. A great deal of damage can be wrought by many bird and animal species as they seek a tasty subsurface meal. Whilst it is plausible to use a shotgun to prevent damage, several more novel ideas are beginning to appear which reduce turf grass disruption without

wildlife injury. The use of trained dogs on the golf course to chase away individual species of animals and birds that have been identified with specific damage has been initiated and would appear to be both environmentally sound as well as cost effective. The use of lion dung, at spaced intervals, has been successfully employed in the United States to discourage deer activity in those specific areas. It would be lovely to think that we could solve all our problems in such environmentally sound and novel ways.

The problem of pathogenic infestation on fine turf grasses is always a worry. This is perhaps the most noticeable arena in which there has been very little option once an area has been infected than to seek chemical assistance. However, recent developments suggest that natural biological alternatives may offer similar success. The discovery that a compound from Peach Oil may be a suitable substitution for synthetic compounds such as methyl bromide. It has been found that the peach essence kills *Fusarium oxysporum*, *Pythium aphanidermatum* along with various other soil pathogens, which lead scientists to believe that it may be a very suitable fungicide. Equally important though was that this peach oil was found to favour beneficial organisms in that soil.

In the context of natural chemicals another excellent alternative may come from the world's coral reefs. Australian scientists appear to have isolated a group of compounds that disable an enzyme that is specific to the photosynthesis of most weed plants and yet have no negative effect on grass plants. Research like this will undoubtedly provide genuine encouragement in the bid to provide a synthetic chemical free maintenance regime for the turf grass environment.

It is hoped that scientists will be able to provide similar organic based compounds to deal with turf grass pests such as leatherjackets. The control of pests of this nature will no doubt provide a real challenge. Novel suggestions have included the use of scarab beetles, parasitic flies, colonies of Bats or even the introduction of predatory non-indigenous organisms may also prove effective. While these may appear fanciful, it may nevertheless be concepts such as these that may yield success. The introduction

The prospect of managing a turf grass environment without utilising chemicals may one day be tenable. The advances being made in researching maintenance practises, developing resistant grass cultivars and exploring biological alternatives to synthetic chemicals may soon enable us to adopt chemical free maintenance practises.

of the mechanical devices, already in standard use, to apply both water and air under high pressure directly into the soil, may also help to control such pests. At present however it is clear that the controlled use of chemicals is without question the most effective method of dealing with the previously mentioned turf grass dilemmas.

Whatever alternatives there may be to chemicals, there are no alternatives to good greenkeeping practise. There can be no substitute for maintaining turf grasses in their healthiest state. Good cultural practises contribute significantly to reduce the threat of pathogen, weed or pest invasions. The employment of appropriate seed and seed bed sanitation will provide the purest crop. The planting of disease-resistant species and cultivars is essential.

Once established then maintenance practices must be used that promotes the health of the plant particularly at times of potential pathogen or pest ingress. Therein the use of sound cultural practises is vital. There can be no substitute for encouraging better percolation and infiltration as well as a reduction in thatch. Neither can we fail to maintain turf grasses at their optimum heights and with appropriate fertiliser levels to ensure greater

health whilst also ensuring regular dew removal. Similarly keeping cutting reels perfectly sharp and even to ensure minimal plant injury and stress. All of these factors not only contribute to reducing the incidence of disease, but also ensuring that the golf course is presented in the best possible fashion.

The continuation and extension of funding, with regard to alternative as well as conventional scientific research into matters relevant to the turf grass environment, is essential if we are to progress towards a chemical free approach. New research at present has had encouraging results with the use of beneficial soil microbes which greatly contribute to the health of the grass plant. This has undoubtedly become one of the focal areas of current work with positive results regarding plant uptake of nutrients, better seedling establishment, disease resistance and reduced poa annua growth.

Similarly, new developments in the creation of new grass cultivars will continue to be an important focal area as scientists attempt to create new super grasses. Standard cross breeding procedures are likely to be allied with genetic engineering in future years providing we can reconcile our moral dilemmas about tampering with nature. With such tools at our disposal we may see the creation of greens quality grasses that contain compounds that can repel pathogens and pests.

It is becoming apparent that if current research continues there will be significant changes in our industry within that next few decades. If we analyse developments as they have happened during the last fifty years, we can see that every new year has brought a greater number of changes than the last. This trend will continue, as it does in all scientific fields, to provide increasing research that may yet lead to the possibility of a chemical free future for the turf grass manager.

We must however be wary of over-confidence for despite fantastic scientific breakthroughs, there is very little evidence to suggest that we may ever master the turf grass environment without the use of synthetic chemicals. Whether the fungicides that we are creating are natural or not, and regardless of our advances in developing increasingly resistant grasses, neither of these strategies have previously offered a permanent solution to turf grass ailments. Most

plant pathogens have proved themselves able to mutate very rapidly to become resistant to all but the most toxic of fungicides, similarly pathogens are very adaptable at disguising themselves so that they become unrecognisable to plants carrying genes with previously resistant characteristics. We have just cause for concern that any of our new developments will share a similar fate as pathogens continue to prove their adaptability.

It would seem that on present evidence, although there may be some very interesting developments, we must conclude that the controlled use of chemicals will undoubtedly continue to be a very important part of greenkeeping. Most superintendents have adopted the sensible approach by combining cultural, chemical and biological practises as their management policy. This integrated management concept has proved itself most successful and we can be justified in advocating it. While we may be on the verge of a new era, we should undoubtedly stick to the tried and trusted. This though is not to say that we should forever forsake new ideas, rather that these ideas, particularly if they are at the cutting edge, should be thoroughly investigated before adoption.

It appears likely therefore that we must reconcile our desires for a chemical free environment against their proven effectiveness. Nevertheless we should encourage any proven approaches to turf grass management that do not require chemical applications. Good cultural practises are vital to keep the turf grass environment at a healthy advantage over potential pathogenic invasion. Therein the probiotic approach has thus far shown promising results by inoculating the sward to counter turf diseases essentially by promoting healthy growth. No doubt the combination of these two operations will form the cornerstone of future management practises. Continued investment in research projects will assuredly provide many new and exciting possibilities that may forever change work practises within our profession. However irrespective of such hypotheses we are certain to see the continued use and development of chemicals within our industry, used sympathetically in conjunction with cultural and biological practises, they will provide us with the necessary tools to produce perfect playing surfaces.

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Scottish Region
Peter Boyd
Tel/Fax 0141 616 3440

The Scottish National Tournament will be held on Tuesday June 12 by kind permission of the management of Drumoig Hotel and Golf Club. The cost of the event will be £17 which includes coffee/tea, filled roll and an evening meal.

Entry will be restricted depending on the number of entries received. Entry forms will be available at all Section Spring outings and from the Regional Administrator.

All entries, with remittance, must be sent to the Regional Administrator, Peter J. Boyd, 10 Meadowburn Avenue, Newton Mearns, Glasgow, G77 6TA by Sunday June 3. Cheques made payable to BIGGA Scottish Region.

Peter Boyd

North

New members continue to roll in. This month we welcome the following: Norman Rose from Hazelhead, Graham Dawson from Stonehaven, Roderick Allan from Turiff and Richard Johnstone from Nairn Dunbar, while re-joining the Section is Robert Allan from Hazelhead.

I really enjoyed my trip to the USA for the GCSAA Show in Dallas and the following week went to South Carolina and Atlanta to play some golf. While visiting East Lake, Bobby Jones's home course, I met a certain Kevin Bell who was working there. Kevin roomed with me at the Open when it was at Royal Birkdale a few years back. He was a student at Elmwood College then and is currently doing a year as an intern at East Lake, sampling greenkeeping USA style. A great opportunity for young greenkeepers today and he recommends it to anyone back home thinking about it.

I attended the Scottish one day conference in Dunfermline last month and was delighted to see a large contingent of North members in the 180 or so folk there. A great turnout, maybe due to the weather we have had this winter.

It was a great day and very informative, congratulations to Peter Boyd and the committee for putting it all together. I know I went on about asking everyone to buy their 200 Club tickets this year as it was our only fund raiser, but I didn't realise we were so poor that we couldn't afford stamps for sending them out, or was I the only one that had to pay 69p to the post service to get my letter with 200 Club tickets enclosed! Stewart assures me the stamp must have fallen off in the post box.

All members should be getting their application forms for the spring outing to Brechin Golf Club on May 17 soon. As usual there will be a big demand for places so send your entries in quickly to ensure your place. Head Greenkeeper is ex-Chairman Andy Wilson and we look forward to visiting his course.

I notice in my report for this month last year I was bemoaning the fact that the winters are mild and wet now, so

we don't get the hard frosts and the courses miss out on a little rest. Well this winter has certainly made up for that! From Christmas Eve until early March the weather has been horrible with snow, frost and even ice covering courses. We need a good spring to recover, so here's hoping.

Iain Macleod

Central

This month we welcome another six new members to the Section and they are Austen Cameron and Robert Robertson, from the Dukes Course, St Andrews; David Cartmill and George Anderson, from Downfield Golf Club; Garry McKenna and Stuart Thomson, from West Lothian Golf Club and as I always seem to say, hopefully we will have the chance to meet some of you at our forthcoming events. The Spring Tournament, which is at Scotsraig Golf Club on the 19th of this month, will be your first chance to attend an event so if you haven't done so, get your form in straight away!

Any member who has not received their entry form for this event should get in touch with me ASAP!

The winners of last month's Club 200 draw are Archie Dunn with ticket number 008 and Vice Chairman of BIGGA, Richard Barker, with ticket number 157. Your cheques are in the post!

Thanks to those who got in touch following the Section report in the February issue of Greenkeeper International. S. Connah, T. Comerford, G. Smith, S. Pearson, S. Howie, A. Gibson and a special thanks to I. Knight and S. McGregor.

It was pleasing to see so many Section members at the Scottish Conference in Dunfermline last month and we even managed one from a local club! Well done Kenny Duncan, from Dunfermline Golf Club, sorry Fraser! One member who couldn't make it was "Deek" from Scoonie who (and I have this on good authority) was too busy searching for "lost" treasure on Scoonie Golf Course. Hope you were successful Deek!

Congratulations to Peter Boyd for giving us another superb conference, which was standing room only, and the excellent speakers on the day.

Also at the conference a long standing patron of SIGGA, BIGGA and especially the Central Section, John Souter, of Souter Sportsturf, was presented with an engraved crystal decanter to mark his recent retirement from the profession. May you have a long and happy "retirement."

John has kindly offered to organise a visit for us to the new course being constructed at Southern Gables in Ayrshire, so, if you fancy going, please get in touch with me and we can get something organised for next month possibly.

Hopefully, next month, I will have a report on the football match against the West Section which was organised to take place in Dundee on the 11th March. Incidentally, we are still looking for a manager to take some of the pressure from Andy O'Hara,

so if anyone fancies this highly "paid" (you don't get much money but you get a lot of laughs) position, just get in touch with Andy and he will give you a full "job description."

John Crawford

Ayrshire

The final arrangements for this year's outings have still to be confirmed as I type these notes.

The committee meeting has been delayed because of the snow and is now beyond the deadline for this month's notes. Derek Wilson has made preliminary arrangements with Bridgehouse Bay for May 10 for our spring outing. The usual information will be sent out in due course and I will confirm arrangements in next month's notes.

Any news call me on 01505 683278

Iain Barr

West

Welcome to this month's West Section news. By the time this magazine reaches you we will all have dug ourselves out of the snow drifts of February, probably experienced a false spring and be in the midst of a cold dry easterly, usual Scottish spring. As I write this report many of you will be preparing for your March competitions by clearing four foot of snow from your access roads. Do we start the season too early? Enough small talk.

The Greenkeeper's/Convener's match will probably have been played at Helensburgh GC by the time you receive this magazine as it was scheduled to be played on April 5. I am sure all who attend this day will enjoy playing Helensburgh as much as I have in the past. A report and the results of the day will be printed in the June edition of Greenkeeper International.

The West Section spring outing will be played at Kirkhill GC on April 25. Hopefully there will be a big turn out on the day and I look forward to seeing all the usual faces and maybe some new faces as well. Please try and help Sandy out by returning entry forms on time. Once again, our thanks go to John Scott, his staff and the Kirkhill membership for the use of their course.

Two football matches will have been played during March, one against the Central Section the other against Maryhill Police. Stuart Taylor after many years of sterling service eventually cracked under the tremendous pressure. The management of the section football team put's on a man and has handed over the running of the football team to Gerard (Houllier) Bruen. Gerry would like anyone who may be interested in playing in future matches to contact him at East Kilbride GC on 013552 36335.

On an educational note, Mike Dooner, of Thorntree Landscapes, has kindly offered a West Section assistant/trainee the opportunity to visit BTME at Harrogate next year. In order that all eligible BIGGA West Section members have an opportunity to win this great award the committee are considering an essay

competition. Details of the competition have still to be finalised but the essay will be based on a Greenkeeping subject. So get your thinking caps on and watch this space for competition details. The committee again would like to thank Mike for this very generous award.

During a recent committee meeting it was brought to our attention that due to the rather poor response to recent BIGGA run regional training Programmes in our area that perhaps the content or venue of such events was wrong. To gain a clearer picture of what you the Section member's want from such regional training Programmes we ask that you contact us with any suggestions you may have for the improvement of such events.

What areas of training can we improve on? Is the venue right? Is the cost right? What particular subject's interest you? If you do have any suggestions feel free to contact me on the number given below.

On a committee note we would like to welcome John Yeats on board as one of our trade members. The committee would also like to welcome all the new West Section members these being Victoria Cavinue, Hamilton GC; Christopher Mayle, Williamwood GC; Ian Malcolm More, Aberfoyle GC; Douglas Steele, Aberfoyle GC; Stuart Orr, Aberfoyle GC, and Peter Donald McVicar, Machrihanish GC. We look forward to meeting you all at up and coming Section events.

Well that's my report for this month, so have a successful season & remember if any of you have anything you would like added in the column please call me on 013552 66862.

Brian Bolland.



Northern Region
Douglas Bell
Tel: 0151 431 0433

North East

Apologies to Matfen Hall Golf Club. Last month, we said the club was to start work on another nine holes in the spring. In fact, they are currently at the stage of seeking planning approval for the extension. Apologies for any embarrassment caused.

Jimmy Richardson

Northern

I apologise for missing last month's report; I wasn't feeling too well. The Spring Tournament will be played on Tuesday 24 April at Filey GC with a 12 o'clock tee off. The cost of this day's golf including a meal, prizes and a good crack is only £15. Payment to be made in full to any committee member before 17 April. Places will be on a first come first in basis, with cheques made payable to BIGGA Northern Section. The trophies that were won at last year's President's Day are for the Spring Tournament. Could trophy winners please bring them back for the Spring Tournament!

The rest of the fixtures are President's Day, Harrogate GC, 19 June; - Roses Match, Sand Moor GC, 22 August; - Invitation Day, Howley Hall GC, 12 September; - Autumn Tournament, Woodsome Hall GC, 18 October; - Winter Golf, Headingley GC, 5 December.

It is with regret that after six years on the committee, four as Secretary and one as Chairman, Simon Heppenstall has decided to step down from the committee. The committee would like to thank Simon for his hard work in keeping the Section going over the years. I would like personally to thank Simon for his help and advice in helping me settle into my role.

Your new Chairman is Jim Brown, and Vice-Chairman is Dave Thackray. Speaking of Jim, you may have read of Jim's departure in February's magazine. I can now report that Jim couldn't leave his beloved Yorkshire and is now staying at Cookridge.

We welcome Jason White, Halifax Bradley Hall GC; Joseph Cassell, Neil Clarkson, Oakdale GC; Alistair Bolch, York GC; Graham Wilson, Boothferry Park GC; Roger Mackerell, Gary Anderson, Moortown GC; Andrew Cox, Ilkley GC; Peter Aldridge, Lightcliffe GC; Robert Turner, Halifax GC; David Kendall, Craig Finnegan, West Bradford GC; Alan Martin, Heworth GC; Martin Green, Bradford GC; Brian Kirkby, Grimsby GC; David Chadwick, Moor Allerton GC; Stefan Jones, Pike Hills GC; Christopher Barnacle, Fulford G.C.; Tom Bennett, Bradford Moor GC; Steve Townsdale, Northcliffe GC; Gary Dyson, Pontefract & District GC; David Syer, Branshaw GC; David Bateman, Otley GC as new members.

There is no other news at the moment, if anybody as any then let me know. My address is 67 Asquith Avenue, Morley, Leeds, LS27 9QS; Tel: 0113 2383188; mobile 07790 678572, Email: andy_smith21@hotmail.com

Andy Smith

Sheffield

Let's start this month with a little bit of good news. Congratulations are in order to Gary Marsh, of Lickleton Golf Club, on receiving the runners-up prize in the BIGGA Essay Competition. The prize was presented at BTME by Sir Michael Bonallack. Well done Gary.

On February 1 we held our second Winter Lecture at Rotherham Golf Club. Thank you to James Morley and Richard Tyns for their informative presentations on John Deere equipment.

Entry forms will soon be sent out for our first golf day at Bondhay Golf Club on May 15. Please try to return these forms before the stated closing date. Any information regarding golf days may be obtained by contacting the competitions secretary on 01302 831665

A Sampson

North West

Very little to write about this month other than a snippet of news from Wilmslow Golf Club. Steve Oultram tells me that one of the staff from Wilmslow has just officially retired. He is Ernie Bartlett who is 84 years old, and has worked at Wilmslow for 52 years.

He retired from full time employment at 65, and since then he has worked three days a week. Steve tells me that until he was 74 years old he was cutting fairways with a tractor and trail gangs, and then he took on the job of divoting tees and fairways, while keeping the clubhouse areas clean and tidy.

I am sure we all wish him the best in his retirement years (perhaps he will take up golf).

The Spring Tournament is at Mere Golf & Country Club on Monday, April 23, and you need to apply to Bill Merritt, 225, Utting Avenue, Clubmore, Liverpool, L4 9RB enclosing a cheque for £15. Lunch is 12:30pm to 1pm, and the tee is available from 1:30pm till 2:30pm. Get your applications in quick because we are restricted to 50 in number.

The match between the Northwest and North Wales is to be played on Tuesday, May 1, at Abergele GC. The tournament is sponsored by Gem Professional, and I require a team of 16 to retain the GEM trophy. If you are available please contact me as soon as possible on mobile 077615 833387 or 0151 7245412

Bert Cross

Editor's Note:

Apologies for the fact that Bert and Billy Merritt's addresses were printed incorrectly in the March magazine.

Cleveland

It's time to dust the cobwebs off your golf clubs, polish your golf shoes because the Spring Tournament is upon us and this year it will be played at Wearside Golf Club on April 24. There are still a few places left so to book call Barry Walker on mobile 07968 308892/home 01915 650691. The entry fee is £10 including meal and remember a bad day's golf is better than a good days work.

This year's summer knockout, The Cleveland Shield is again sponsored by Carrs. Many thanks to them for their very generous and continued support.

To enter again call Barry, the fee £2, the first round draw will take place at the Spring Tournament so make sure you enter before then. If you are unable to attend, Jim Thompson will be entering and hoping to get past the first round this year!

Jim is leaving the Wynyard Club and is moving to join Paul Moore, Course Manager at Darlington Golf Club, and his team. He has been at Wynyard for five years the first six months of which he worked without pay! Everyone at Wynyard wishes him good luck in his new role.

And finally, Tony Burge, Head Greenkeeper at Richmond Golf Club, the man who never leaves anywhere without a prize strikes again, he won a grinder at this year's BTME in a draw put on by Course Care. Any news call 0771913381

Steven Jaques

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North Wales

Not a lot to write about this month. Firstly though, my apologies to Sportsworld for omitting them from the list of sponsors for the Xmas comp.

The Section wishes Dewi Hughes, Head Greenkeeper at Pwllheli Golf Club, a long, healthy and happy retirement.

By the time you read this you should have enjoyed our Spring Meeting at Ruddlan Golf Club. However I write as the Foot and Mouth epidemic is rampant so God only knows. Access to the countryside is being restricted and seeing as most of our courses are surrounded by farmland it can only be a matter of time before our industry is affected. I know it is nothing compared to the terrible hardship that the farming community is suffering and our thoughts must be with them. However on the back of so many course closures due to the wet weather this is the last thing that our industry needs with revenues so badly hit. Let's just hope that by the time you read this it has been eradicated.

The annual match against North West is pencilled in for April 24 at Abergele and if you are interested in winning our Shield back get in touch with Jeremy Hughes.

The college seminar was held in February to much reduced numbers.

Again I think that the smaller turnout than normal was due to the weather, as we all try to catch up on our winter programmes. Everyone I have spoken to who attended said it was very interesting, so thanks go to Graham Wright, the college and the liaison panel for putting it on.

If you have anything of interest please get in touch. See ya
Dave Goodridge

Midland Region

Mid Anglia

All members should, by now, have received a fixture list for the forthcoming events being held within the section for 2001. Entry forms for golf competitions and the Lodgeway Four Ball should also have been received. Should you wish to enter more than one event, please photocopy the main competition entry form. This year's costs for the spring, summer and autumn tournaments are £15 for those aged under 25 and £25 for those aged 25 and over.

Our first golf event of the year is to be held on Thursday 3rd May at Overstone Park Golf Club, Northamptonshire.

As there is no qualification requirement for the National Tournament this year, it is hoped that - subject to sponsorship - the Section will partly fund two members to attend. The tournament will be held at Birkdale and Southport & Ainsdale Golf Clubs October 1 and 2. The cost for entry is £70 plus accommodation

and expenses. The Section is also hoping to arrange a visit to Queenswood Golf Club, Surrey, some time this year; details to follow.

Draws for the Lodgeway Fourball will be made at the Spring Tournament, so please ensure that Steve Mason receives your entries by May 3. As mentioned previously, this will now be a straight knockout competition.

The Golf Management Trophy will be held at Verulam Golf Club this year; the date is yet to be confirmed. Teams representing each club must be made up of: Head Greenkeeper, Captain, Secretary and a Committee member - preferably Greens Chairman. Our Regional Administrator, Les Emery, who is organising the event, will forward invitations for entry to clubs.

Paul Lockett.

East Midlands

This year's Go-Kart evening was held at The Wymeswold industrial estate on February 21. Again the evening was generously sponsored by Toro-Lely to the tune of £10.00 per person plus prizes. This year saw a record attendance of 26 racers, with a format of 4 teams of five, and 1 of six, competing in the endurance race format. After 1 hour 40 minutes of high speed driving and tactical pit stops, the eventual winners were team C, which consisted of the following members. Richard Barker, Matthew Chambers, Gavin Robson, Maurice Hume and Kevin Kinzer. For the third year running Adi Porter finished as a runner-up.

Our thanks go to Andy Humble of Toro Lely for sponsoring the evening and to our Section Chairman Gavin Robson for organising the event, the next Section meeting is at Kirby Muxloe GC on April 10 for the Lecture evening. With the support of the members we will again organise a Go-Kart for next winter.

By the time you have read this article I shall of returned from my trip to Vancouver, and for those of you who attended the lecture evening at Kirby Muxloe GC you will have heard all about it. However, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Bernard Grinders for their very generous sponsorship, which enabled a team of ten delegates (including myself) to attend the combined CGSA and WCTA in Canada.

Antony Bindley

Midland

Firstly, I would like to congratulate three members of the green staff at Copt Heath Golf Club who, by August of this year, will each have enjoyed 25 years of service with the Club. They are Derek Smith, Paul Hofman and Steven Tipper.

Copt Heath Golf Club are also leading the way in terms of their maintenance facility. Jeremy Pilcher was kind enough to give me a tour of the new building which is equipped and finished to the highest standard.

All credit to the Club for investing in their future and taking the lead in an area so often disregarded. Jeremy

is contactable at Copt Heath and would welcome anyone interested in investing in a new facility of their own.

Sports World have once again been kind enough to arrange an excellent day at the Hardi factory in Hinckley. Tours were taken by Ann who managed to be informative and light hearted while maintaining the discipline (must be the army training!).

Rigby Taylor's Turf Management Workshop held at Hittington Heath Golf Club on March 1 was also very informative with contributions from Andy Cole, of Grass Science; Mike Finney, of Omega Science; Chris Pie, of Dow Science, and Mike Higgins, of Ruffords.

Finally, I look forward to seeing you all at Great Barr for the Spring Tournament on May 14 so please post that entry form as soon as possible.

Phil Gates



South East
Derek Farrington
Tel: 01903 260956

Essex

In this month's very brief report we welcome a host of new members, they are:- Stuart Wren, Great Hadham Golf and Country Club; Steve Jackson, Ilford GC; Ben Scrivener, Stock Brook Manor GC; Ian Wood, Romford GC; Boyd Evans, Trent Park GC; Mark Kiff, Bishop Stortford; Scott Colgate, Bishop Stortford; James Pickess, Chelmsford GC; Michael Dillway, Three Rivers Golf and Country Club.

I hope to see you all at our next Section event which will be at Frinton Golf Club on April 25.

A seminar covering all aspects of Golf Course Design was held at Writtle College last month. Thirty members ventured out to hear David Kidd hand out valuable advice to all considering any design work. Thanks to David and also to Sherriff Crop Care (Graham Paul) who sponsored the evening.

Another thank you, this time to Neil Peachey and Tuckwells for sponsoring the production of our fixture cards which you should all have by now. If not contact Martin Forrester (01245) 603131. One amendment to the new cards has to be made. The date is given for the Winter Trophy but not the venue which is Three Rivers Golf and Country Club.

Well that's about it, I did say it was brief. If you have anything you would like including in the magazine just let me know.

See you all at sunny Frinton.
Steve Crossdale

Sussex

With spring knocking on our doors and summer just around the corner, (ha ha), I would like to take this opportunity to remind you all of all of the forthcoming golf days we have organised around the county.

Starting off with the spring meeting at Cowdry Park in April which would have been played by the time you read this. You should have all received a fixture list containing the other dates.

These days are organised for the benefit of all greenkeepers who are members of BIGGA.

I sometimes hear people saying that it is too expensive and how would it benefit me?

Well, as for the latter, not only are you going to be in the company of a bunch of lads who share interests, whether it be greenkeeping, or golf, you get to hear about things going on in the trade, whether it be a new fertiliser or a new machine which someone has bought, all good information.

As for the standard of golf, that is a different matter. The average handicap being 24 shows you that you don't have to worry about your own game.

So to the money side. Well, being that we are very fortunate that the clubs give us courtesy, your only expense is your food and refreshments and maybe a raffle ticket. This on average comes to £30 for a day's golf, and with the possibility of going home with a great prize, which are donated by the trade, and the company of friends you can't really moan too much.

While I am on my soapbox, I recently attended a workshop course held at Cooden Beach Hotel. The course was computer skills and was run by a chap called Martin Burkinshaw in conjunction with BIGGA. I enjoyed two very informative days in the setting of a 4 star hotel, and at the end received a certificate to go on my CV.

So what is my problem? Well in a nutshell, the company or do I mean lack of it, (5 in total out of 300 members) you see the problem. The days are set up for our benefit they are sponsored so the cost is brought right down and this is thanks to the companies who are Golden, Silver and individual key sponsors.

The cost to my club? (Remember this is education and beneficial to both parties) was £75! This was a computer course, which may not be too beneficial to you, but there are many different subjects, which are covered.

If you are interested in finding out more you can call or email Ken Richardson at BIGGA headquarters. The contact details are on page 10 of this magazine. Well, sorry for the moaning, but sometimes it has to be done just to remind you that there is a lot of work being done for the benefit of yourselves.

To change the subject. If any one is interested in a grinding course, which will be held at one of the local collages, please let me know.

It will work on the format of being introduced to new products as well as hands on experience, I need to get some idea of numbers as this sort of day/half day takes a lot of organising. Thank you.

Jon Budd

email: jonboy69@ukonline.co

Surrey

Monday March 5, about 11:15 and only a few days away from the Gentleman's Dinner at Walton Heath on the 9th. My mobile phone rings and, from Royal Epsom, Mr Douglas Fernie is the bearer of bad tidings. Foot and Mouth precautions close and our annual South East Section Golf Day and Dinner at our new Chairman's course is postponed. Derek Farrington will let us know as soon as possible if Walton Heath can fit us in at a later date.

Happier tidings now with the news that Mark Bellamy, from the Drift Golf Club, and his wife, Deborah, have a second child, a baby boy born on December 26 2000 and weighing in at 8 pounds 7 ounces. We wish Kieran Thomas health and happiness and a full head of hair.

Also celebrating are Derek and Linda Cunliffe whose daughter, Jessica Louise, 7 pounds 3 ounces was born on February 9, 2001.

Remember, please keep me informed of all events at your Surrey Club so that I can spread the news and gossip every month in Around the Green

Brian Wilmott

London

I am sure you have all seen either in newspapers, or on the television, the utter devastation caused to agriculture by the recent outbreak of Foot and Mouth disease and even in our modern industry much higher pressures can only begin to imagine the impact on each farm around the country. Those directly affected, or indirectly, depending on how you look at it are Jim Cassidy, at Ashbridge Golf Club; Gerald Bruce, at Berkhamstead Golf Club, and Steve Brocklehurst, at Harpenden Common Golf Club. All these courses have been closed over the past week to protect cloven hooved animals on the golf course and as I write this in early march there may well be more as you read this.

Congratulations to Phil Chiverton, formerly Course Manager at the Buckinghamshire Golf Club, who takes up a new post at The Grove Estate just outside Watford. Welcome to the Section, Phil.

Interestingly for the historians among you The Grove was an Elizabethan Country Estate, circa 1924, and was sold to the hon. Thomas Villiers in 1753 who went on to become the Earl of Clarendon. Now you may think that I'm rambling on but those of you who know Watford well will know that there is a Clarendon Road and a Villiers Road - Interesting or what!

For those locals out there you would probably remember The Grove as the British Railway Management Centre as it was acquired by London Midland Scottish Railways (LMS) as an

H.Q. in the event of war.

(Don't stop me now, I'm on a roll). Ralph Trustees Ltd, who own the prestigious Athenaeum Hotel in London and the Runnymede Hotel in Surrey, bought The Grove in 1996. The building of a golf course to complement what I'm sure will be a fantastic hotel is underway. The best of luck to Phil Chiverton and his staff.

Now you can see what happens when you guys don't get in touch with any info from the Section! You have been warned.

Here at Sandy Lodge we say goodbye and good luck to Assistant Greenkeeper Steve Nicholson, (the only man who can produce a gherkin jar from his sleeve), who moves onto pastures new. We will miss all your magic! We also welcome Scott Walker, who joins us from Grimsdyke Golf Club.

A date for your diary has been confirmed. The Spring Meeting will take place at Stockley Park Golf Club on Tuesday, May 1. It's also looking promising for a new venue sometime in august, hopefully I'll have more to reveal in my next report.

Don't forget to give me a call with any news, however small on 01923 835549

Robert Phillips



South West and South Wales
Paula Humphries
Tel: 01288 352194

South Coast

It's been a very quiet month, so there is very little to report. It's still not too late to enter the Spring Tournament, which is on Thursday, May 3 at the Army Club in Aldershot. Contact Chris Sturgess on 02380 494084 for more details.

The only other item to mention this month is Ken Lodge's retirement. Ken rang me to ask if I could let everyone know that he is retiring in May. He is having a get together on Friday, May 11 at Atherley Bowls Club, Southampton, at lunchtime.

Everyone is welcome to go along and have a drink or two with Ken.

I'm sure that everyone in the Section would like to wish Ken a long and happy retirement, and thank him for all the work he has done for BIGGA in his time. Cheers Ken.

I put my phone number in the column a couple of months ago and asked anyone to phone me if they had something they wanted put in the around the greens article. I had one call from Ken, and he got what he wanted put in it. So don't be shy if you want something printed! Phone me on 07939 860841. It will go in.

Well, that's it for another month.

Mike Cartwright.

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South Wales

As our evening lectures come to close on the 11th of this month with the Annual Quiz BIGGA versus IOG. I think you would agree that they have been very successful. As a reminder, the combined evening of Advanta & Biotol, held on Feb 14, was well attended with Jim Foulton of Advanta describing seed formation, diseases and plant production. Then Gerard Cuncliffe, of Cardiff-based Biotol, gave a talk on how their products help turf propagation with the use of micro-organisms specifically for the use in soil.

Thanks to you both for your time and Pencoed College for the use of the facilities - not forgetting our sponsor of the evenings Avoncrop.

It might be an idea to get your golf clubs out and dust them over as our first tournament begins at Southerndown Golf Club on May 9 with a tee off time 1.30pm playing for the Spring Tournament. The Summer Tournament then will be held at Llanwern GC on July 11 so there are some dates for your diaries. By the way, please would last years' tournament winners return their trophies 28 days prior to these events.

The Welsh Golf Union held a seminar at the Vale of Glamorgan G&CC on March 5 with 19 Golf Clubs in attendance with guest speakers Howard Swan, Education & Training Manager of BIGGA, Ken Richardson, and Peter Winter, Head Agronomist of the STRI.

Also Rigby Taylor set up Road Shows in our Section, one at Park Howard Llanelli and the other at Royal Porthcawl GC. Thank you to them.

Unfortunately our seminar had to be postponed on February 28 as the Foot & Mouth crisis hit the agricultural trade. Thanks to Scotts for their support and for holding it on another day; look out for the new dates.

Must mention the return of secretary Peter Lacey and Richard Whyman, of the Devon and Cornwall Section, on their trip to Canada to the CGSA Golf Course Conference and Trade Show in Vancouver 24-27 February sponsored by Bernard & Co. - they have too much info for me to mention but I am sure they will let you know what it was like. Lastly, during our evening lec-

tures in conjunction with the IOG it is my pleasure to announce that the Queen in her New Year Honours list awarded Bill Hardiman of the South Wales Branch IOG an MBE for his lifetime service to sports turf management. Excellent!

Richard Hatcher

Devon and Cornwall

This year's Avoncrop-sponsored February Section meeting had to be cancelled due to the Foot and Mouth crisis which has swept the country.

Hopefully we can rearrange the meeting for later on in the year.

As most of you are aware, I was lucky enough to have been one of ten BIGGA members selected to represent the Association on the Bernhard-sponsored trip to the Canadian Conference and Show held in Vancouver.

The trip proved to be of great educational value to all of the delegation.

The visit consisted of course visits to North View Golf and Country Club, host of the PGA Tour Vancouver Open and to the private members' clubs at Point Grey and Marine Drive. During the visits we were able to discuss with the Superintendents their maintenance practises which included budgets, staffing, machinery used, materials used, working practises, unions, membership and green fees.

The seminar programme was very well attended with the conference room full for every seminar. This was a reflection on the high standard of speakers presenting papers at the conference which included our Chairman, Clive Osgood.

The new friendships made during the week with the Canadian Superintendents and our own delegation, will, I am sure, continue for many years to come.

I would like to thank BIGGA and Bernhard and Company for selecting me to represent British greenkeeping in Canada, I would also like to thank Sam McLean and Peter Hampton for their hospitality and knowledge shown to the whole delegation, hopefully many more BIGGA members will be able to benefit in the way I have from such a visit in the future.

Richard Whyman

South West

I was hoping to give the results of the Section's first tour event to played at Stinchcombe but the weather curtailed any chance of the event taking place. The snow that fell did not deter about 20 members attending, it was the fog that got the better of the event. Thanks go out to all the Stinchcombe staff for all their efforts to accommodate us. Some members would not let the weather stop them from playing a round of golf. They made their way off Stinchcombe Hill to play at the Manor House to find a warm welcome and a course in excellent condition. If you have not been recently it is well worth the effort, Paul Bishop and his staff are doing sterling work.

Speaking of which, Chris Jack is leaving the Manor House to become not a rep, but a house husband. He will be replaced at the Manor House by John Keengahan. The Section wishes them both luck in their future careers. I feel Chris has the harder role! Nathan Marsh, Section member from Long Ashston, is having a year's training from March 2001 in the sunshine state of Florida. Anyone going can get in touch with Nathan at Bonita Bay Golf and Country Club, Naples, Florida. Good luck from all the Section.

The Tour's next event is on May 24, A Greenkeeper/Amateur at Woodspring Golf club, Bristol, please reply to Kevin James ASAP. Anyone who has not received a booking form can contact Kevin on 07788 327677. The committee, at the last meeting, have decided that people can now turn up to events on the day and to pay Kevin a £2 administration fee which will be added to the cost of the day. It would be appreciated if you could telephone at the earliest point in time to let us know you will be attending the event. Guy Woods is organising a seminar. People who are interested and want more details please contact him on 01225 333928.

Knobby Knight can be contacted on 01225 760634 for more information on team matches, the next one is on the 3rd of May 2001 at the Manor House in Castle Coombe and is against the Secretaries, Good Luck lads!

David Bougen

Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland

The Section held an irrigation talk during January at Allen Park Golf Club Antrim which proved very successful. The company, Drilling and Pumping Supplies Ltd. from Newtownards Co. Down were invited along to give the members an insight into the success of their company in the supply, installation, service, and maintenance of irrigation systems which they have installed at many golf clubs throughout Northern Ireland.

Company Director, Alastair Wilson, left us in no doubt of the company's commitment to giving good reliable service. Alastair also invited Gary and Gilbert Maddissoon from England along to give talks on the Rainbird range of irrigation equipment and the Heron irrigation controllers.

Many thanks to Maddissoon Irrigation who made the journey over from England and Alastair Wilson of Drilling and Pumping Supplies Ltd. who provided a lunch for all the members present. Thanks to the caterer Paul Corrigan for the very enjoyable lunch and Antrim Borough Council who allowed us to use the clubhouse facilities at Allen Park. If anyone has any irrigation problems or maybe would like to install a system why not contact Alastair Wilson on 02891 818347 or mobile 07711 013849.

I would like to thank the members for making the effort to come along and I sincerely hope you gained more knowledge on the subject of irrigation. The following clubs were all represented; Massereene, Allen Park, Shandon Park, Jurgan, Malone, Fort William, Holywood, Castlerock and Portstewart. The Section's first golf competition will be played towards the end of April. We are hoping to play the new course at Loughgall. The exact dates and venues for the competitions will be confirmed in March. All members will receive a letter from the Secretary outlining the Golf Days for the year. I would like to welcome Liam McVeigh, Silverwood Golf Club, Edmond Morris, Aberdelghy Golf Club and Gordon Nimmo, Royal Co Down as new members to the Section this month.

Ken Henderson

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Dr Kate Entwistle begins a regular series of articles on turf disease by taking a personal look at the most common to strike on UK golf courses. She also offers to examine any problems you might be having on your own courses.

Turf Diseases

So what's new?



Above: Darkly pigmented fungal hyphae on affected plant tissues

It's probably fair to say that during any one year, the majority of turf samples that I receive for disease analysis, are identified as having a disease problem which you would not be too surprised to see at that time of the year. This is because, generally speaking, diseases are seasonal, the reason for this is that the overriding factor that affects disease development, is the prevailing environmental conditions.

Virtually all turf diseases are caused by fungi so it is crucial to remember that it is not the disease that we are trying to control but the fungus which causes the disease. Fungal requirements for growth and development are fairly well understood. However, since it is in the interest of

the fungus to remain alive, its ability to survive adverse environmental conditions and to adapt to changes in its environment, make it both interesting and exciting for me to study and a potential nightmare for you to manage and control.

Over recent years I have seen changes in the diseases which are affecting cool-season turfgrasses, both in the type of fungi which are causing damage and the way in which a given fungus shows its effect.

I started studying turf diseases over 11 years ago and I learned quickly that disease identification is not simply a matter of identifying a fungus. The turf is a living system with its inherent and ever-changing microbial population of fungi and bacteria.

They will react to our management practices, as does the turf, and our aim has to be to manage the system so that the balance is always in favour of the turf. This is no mean feat given the ever increasing demands which are being made of our greens which result in the turf being kept under severe stress for much of the year. The fungus is always waiting to attack. You may well be able to identify several potential disease causing fungi on any given turf sample at any time during the year, but the skill in accurate disease identification comes with experience and a knowledge of turf management as a whole.

In case you are of the opinion that turf diseases remain the same year after year, I'd like to give you an

Turf Diseases

So what's new?

Right: Take-all patch. A different symptom expression of the same disease

Below: General Take-all patch

overview of how certain diseases have changed quite noticeably with the times.

Fusarium patch

The one disease which will be no stranger to any turf manager. I have to admit that I find it mildly frustrating that people tend to call this disease 'fusarium' rather than 'fusarium patch' because 'fusarium' is a genus or group name for fungi and 'fusarium patch' is the common name for a disease. However, fusarium patch is not caused by a fungus from the fusarium group of fungi and fungi from the genus fusarium cause diseases on turf which look nothing like fusarium patch. Confused? - I hope not, but if I appear confused when you say to me that you have fusarium on your greens and I see fusarium patch, maybe now you'll appreciate why.

Anyway, fusarium patch is probably the most common fungal disease to affect cool season turf grasses and, I'd probably be right in saying, will have been seen by all Greenkeepers at some time during their career. It has always been considered a disease which affects turf under cool, wet conditions and one which can cause severe damage if allowed to develop under snow cover. However, this disease has been seen to be active during the autumn months and, indeed, it is possible to see the damage being caused by the pathogen throughout the year. In itself, the fungus which causes this disease is not really a strong pathogen but instead, is content to live saprophytically on dead and decaying plant material until the conditions allow it to actively cause disease. Fusarium patch is caused by a fungus which is always ready to attack.

Red thread

Rather an attractive disease which causes the turf to take on a red/pink appearance. It has generally been considered a disease of the summer months and an indicator of low fertility. However, no more. Recently, this disease has been seen on the turf year-round and the sclerotia, or red needles, which characterise this disease can now be seen throughout the winter and spring months. An indicator of low fertility - not necessarily true any more either. Red thread can now cause significant damage on turf being maintained under adequate nutrition and although this disease is generally only superficial, its detrimental effect on the visual quality of the sward can not be denied.

Take-all patch

I have to admit that this is one of my favourites. It's gone through name changes over the years (not uncommon for turf diseases) but the fungus that causes the problem remains the same. Unlike many of the fungi which cause disease on turf, this one is actively aggressive. It is not too happy trying to survive as a saprophyte, instead, it prefers to live pathogenically causing disease whenever it can. It is one of several so-called ectotrophic root infecting (ERI) fungi which cause disease on turf and others of its kind have been seen recently causing damage in the UK. All of these type of fungi are similar in appearance. They are all characterised by dark runner hyphae on the roots and underground plant material. They produce similar-looking microscopic fruiting structures (although not always in the field) and they produce similar symptoms on the turf. Take-all patch disease has always been regarded as a disease of bent grasses but this is not strictly



true. The fungus is capable of attacking other grasses apart from bents and we have seen several outbreaks of take-all patch on *Poa annua* over recent years. If you see a patch disease, it's not necessarily take-all patch and if it's not, but you treat it as though it is, you may well not achieve any degree of control.

Anthracnose

Known as basal rot by some and anthrax by others. Again this is an increasingly common disease of turf which is most well known for its part in the demise of *Poa annua* in areas subjected to heavy traffic. The fungus which causes this disease actively enters the intact plant cells by means of specialised structures which aid penetration. However, the fungus which causes anthracnose basal rot is also capable of causing foliar infections on all grasses. Over recent years, I have frequently seen a general decline in the overall quality of a sward during the summer months, which is caused by the presence of this fungus on the leaf tissues. When expressed in this way, the disease is referred to as anthracnose foliar blight. Anthracnose basal rot is not restricted to *Poa annua* but has also been seen to cause dramatic decline of creeping bent. Now there's something to think about.

Dollar Spot

At one time, I thought I'd never see this disease away from trial plots! Dollar Spot was one of the more important turf diseases in the UK about 40 years ago and it is still regarded here as a disease which most commonly affects red fescues. The disease has not generally been seen over the last decade but the pathogen which causes it is still quite active in

turf and there have been recent reports of the fungus causing damage on *Poa annua* in the UK. In the USA and in other parts of Europe, Dollar Spot is the major disease affecting bent grasses and in my opinion, it is only a matter of time before we start to see more of this 'old' disease problem.

The list goes on with increases in the incidence of leaf spot diseases (*Drechslera* spp., *Bipolaris* spp. and even *Curvularia* spp. being identified over the last few years), the prevalence of yellow tuft, the increase in the severity of rust diseases and so on.

Why do turf diseases continue to plague us year after year and why do we seem unable to eradicate them? The answer is unfortunately quite simple. Diseases are (almost invariably) caused by fungi and it is in the interest of the fungus to survive and to cause disease. Many of the fungi which cause disease on turf are 'attacking' the turf most of the time, but their effects generally go unnoticed. It is only when the balance of favour weighs heavily on the side of the fungus that the disease development is so dramatic as to cause observable effects. If your aim is to eradicate fungal diseases for ever, think again. The fungus is capable of rapid adaptation to changes in prevailing conditions and any 'barriers' that you place in the way of its progress, will eventually be overcome. Your best approach is to work with them and to maintain the turf in such a way that even if it is attacked, it has the ability to recover rapidly. Know what to look for in the early stages of diseases and how to manage them so that their symptoms don't reach unacceptable levels. It's worth bearing in mind that many physiological disorders can produce



Photo courtesy of Barenbrug UK



symptoms which resemble certain turf diseases. This has been found to be the case on many occasions over the last couple of years and it has shown that if you wrongly assume the cause of the problem, you could waste much time, effort and money in applying control measures which at best, will have no effect. If you are in any doubt, get the problem analysed and put your mind at rest.

On a final note, for now anyway, I attended an interesting seminar recently where the speaker mentioned that with the advent of genetic engineering, turf diseases would be a thing of the past. I have to say that I totally disagree with this theory, but that's another article.

What turf disease issues would you like to read about?

Although I try to put together articles which are of topical interest and which hopefully make you think a little more about turf diseases and also stimulate some discussions, it is only through feedback that I can be sure that what I'm providing is what you need. I could write article after article on subjects that interest me, but that would be somewhat missing the point. If you have any comments on what you've read or heard about with regard to disease issues, or indeed if you would like to offer topics which you think should be covered in an article, please let either Scott at Greenkeeper International or myself know about it. If you think it's important you can be sure that others will too, so please get in touch.

Will you help?

This is a request for help from all Greenkeepers. As part of the work of The Turf Disease Centre, I am look-

ing to collect information on as many turf disease outbreaks across the UK, this year, as possible. The aim of the work is to prepare a 'map' of disease development throughout the year to see which parts of the UK get hit by each individual disease, which regions are most prone to disease development and which areas of the UK are showing new diseases or diseases which are now significant problems but may have been only minor inconveniences in the past. Obviously, I can't do this without your help and I appreciate that there are already many demands on your time. For this reason, I have set out a form on a single side of A4 which will take only a couple of minutes to fill in. The information that I am looking for is (i) which disease has developed on your course, (ii) when did it first show, (iii) when did the symptoms subside and (iv) what cultural or chemical measures, if any, did you take to control the disease. I will pool together all of the information that I receive and present it (as regularly as possible) in Greenkeeper International so that you can see how the disease on your course fits in with that across the UK as a whole. To send in disease data from your course, please contact either Scott or myself and we will send you a form which you can photocopy as often as you get disease and return the forms to me once completed. Your help with this is very much appreciated. Thank you.

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Scott MacCallum travelled to Coventry to visit Agco's European Headquarters and home of the famous Massey Ferguson machines ...

Going back to their roots



Above: Edmund Hillary used this very tractor on one of his expeditions to the South Pole. It now has pride of place in the Massey Ferguson museum at Coventry

Right: The huge production operation at Coventry

Rumour has it, and I am in no position to deny the fact, that the first of the many words I have subsequently uttered was "tractor"... or rather it was "tacta", but I'm assured everyone knew what I meant.

Now, and again I'm in no position to prove it, I'm pretty sure that the vehicle which so enthralled me that it induced the power of speech was a Massey Ferguson "tacta."

It was, therefore, a huge nostalgic moment for me, some 38 years later, to visit Coventry's European Headquarters of Agco, BIGGA's latest Golden Key Supporter and see the famous machines coming off the production line.

Massey Ferguson has been a name synonymous with tractors for almost 70 years and the union between Canadian, Daniel Massey, and Ulsterman, Harry Ferguson, is as significant in its sector of the industry as the famous coupling of Mr Royce and Mr Rolls.

Incidentally there was a Mr Harris, a manufacturer of harvesting equipment, who gave the company the initial name of Massey Harris Ferguson but the Harris name was dropped in the 50s to give us the name known the world over.

"You can trace the company back to about 1847 when Daniel Massey started to build agricultural machinery in a farm workshop in Ontario," said Tim Lawrence, Agco's Sales Manager - Grounds Care.

"He joined with Allinson Harris, who was doing a similar job with harvesting equipment and between them they built the bulk of their business on exports. The story moves forward to the 1930s when a link was forged with Harry Ferguson, whose three point linkage went on to transform modern agriculture," explained Tim.

Harry Ferguson was a remarkable man known for his inventions and his pioneering spirit. He was the first man in the British Isles to build and fly his own plane and a replica of the plane hangs in a Belfast museum. He also designed the suspension systems on the Lotus racing car as well as work on the famous Jensen sports car.

In the 50s Massey Ferguson was the true giant in agricultural machinery and with a 50%-60% share of a market, which in the UK at the time represented 55-60,000 tractors a year.

"Every farm has virtually had a Massey Ferguson tractor on it at some point," said Philip Evans, Product Marketing Manager - Specialist Products.

The tractors have been built at the Coventry plant since 1946 when Harry Ferguson formed an agreement with the Standard Motor Company after the war. Such was the success of the tractor production that it squeezed out the car production and Harry Ferguson eventually bought the site and continued to develop it to the stage that it covers 45 acres and boasts full manufacturing facilities and a 15 storey office block which can be seen for miles. The plant employs around 1500 people with the figure varying depending upon production rates.

I must admit I'd always associated Massey Ferguson with big red machines but, looking round the factory, I was interested, not to say a tad disappointed, to learn, and see, that they have other colours in their portfolio. They'll always be red to me, though.

Harry Ferguson died in the late '70s and just over 10 years ago Agco was formed.

"Agco was the result of a management buy-out of the Deutz Allis tractor brand in the States and took over the North American distribution of Massey Ferguson, effectively running the North American business for us. This relationship flourished to the extent that Agco eventually said that if we ever wanted to sell Massey Ferguson they'd be interested. A figure was set and the deal done," explained Phil.

Now worldwide dealerships number between 8-10,000 and there's no part of the world untouched. In fact they've been spotted in jungles, deserts, even on the South Pole where Edmund Hillary had use of one during an expedition.

"There were doubts whether an agricultural machine would even work in such cold conditions but, in the eight years it was there it never failed... not until it arrived back in the UK, someone drained the antifreeze and the block cracked," smiled Phil.

That very machine now has pride of place in the wonderful Massey

Below: A Massey Ferguson 1250 fitted with mid-mounted deck and spray tank

Bottom: One of the new quad bike breed which can be used for a variety of tasks





Ferguson museum which is also housed on the site.

The pioneering spirit also extends to tractor manufacture and the company has helped other companies develop factories in far flung places on a licensee basis.

"We've done this in places like Turkey, the old Yugoslavia, Libya, India and Mexico and we send out partially built tractors for them to assemble and as they develop their skills they move towards making and supplying their own," said Phil.

The company re-emerged as a force in ground care about two years ago having initially dipped its toe in the market about 15 years ago.

"We had an association with Iseki where we'd build around 500 tractors for them and export them back to Japan," explained Phil, who said that both companies had benefited from the other's experience - Iseki from Massey Ferguson's expertise in bigger tractors and Massey from Iseki's expertise in 15-40 horsepower tractors.

"Having said that, we felt many of the dealers we were using in the ground care sector were non-Massey Ferguson specialists and we wanted to take time to consolidate - step back and ask ourselves where we were going and what we were doing," said Phil.

In the intervening period the dealer network for the sector was strengthened considerably to the extent that they can now look to the future with confidence.

"We targeted more of the big Massey Ferguson dealers who were interested in grounds care and spreading their overheads over both the agriculture and grounds care sectors and we involved and developed these people," added Phil.

With the reestablishment now complete they are now looking for steady growth within the market.

"Golf courses need lightweight and compact tractors and we can offer them," said Tim.

The current range of products includes compact tractors from 15-38 horsepower; a diesel ride-on 24.5 horsepower tractor with mid-mounted decks. There is also the 2200 range of specialist turf tractors and quad bikes which are becoming increasingly popular especially when the ground is wet.

They are also finding a lot of 75-80 horsepower tractors going out of the factory with turf tyres on them and they know full well that they are going onto a golf course or into a local authority.

"Looking ahead I can see the front cut rotary being a good machine for us as it fills two markets, local authority and golf. It is a long term project for us," explained Tim.

The company sees Saltex and BTME as the two key salutes in the industry for them and it was at Saltex, where the size of stands gives them the opportunity of showing the complete range, in '99 that the assault of the grounds care market was rejoined.

"Customer reaction to Massey Ferguson is always very positive and this goes back to the days of the TE20," said Phil.

"The name is one that most people would know anywhere in the country and if they buy a Massey Ferguson product they know they will only have to travel a few miles in either direction to find a dealer. The products are well engineered, well developed and have a good support package in terms of parts.



Above: Cab interiors have functional switchgear and familiar control layout

"Also the products are easy to use. Whether you jump on a tractor with 20 horsepower or one with 80 horsepower you find the controls laid out in the same place and you are not having to learn a totally different package each time. It's the same with the 15 to 38 horsepower compact tractors," said Tim.

The decision to become a Golden Key Supporter of BIGGA was came as a result of the first impressions of the Association.

"I liked the approach and organisation of BIGGA itself. They are well organised and produce good quality publications aimed at the market we want to get to," explained Tim.

"It is good that we ally ourselves to professional organisations and when we looked at BIGGA we were impressed by what we saw and what they were doing for the industry around it. There is so much more to Golden Key than us just paying money to you and it all goes towards

helping to give BIGGA members a very good package," added Phil.

Training was always at the forefront of Harry Ferguson's mind and he was instrumental in setting up a training centre at nearby Stoneleigh - when you're buying a £200,000 combine harvester the two day training course that goes with it must be welcomed!

"We have always felt that training is a vital part of the whole package and that extends to our dealerships as well," said Phil.

Well, many years on from my initial brush with the company I can, on behalf of the Association, welcome Agco, manufacturer of Massey Ferguson "tactas", to the family of BIGGA's Golden Key Supporters.



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Last month, Mr T Moore, from Bungay and Waverley Valley GC, certainly knew his numbers when he correctly identified all three telephone numbers.

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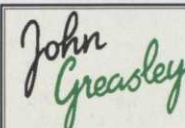
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April 2001 Greenkeeper International 61



NORTHWOOD GOLF CLUB

Requires a

COURSE MANAGER

Northwood Golf Club is an 18 hole, 6535 yard course situated in the north-west corner of Middlesex. The course has undergone a programme of major improvements in the past 5 years, and the successful applicant will be expected to continue the enhancements to the course and its reputation.

The position requires an outstanding candidate, hard-working and self motivated with the necessary supervisory skills to lead a team of five in all aspects of maintenance and development of the course.

The successful candidate must possess the following qualifications.

- A recognised qualification in Agronomy, Horticulture with specialisation in Golf Course management.
- A minimum of 10 years experience, with at least 3 years as Head Greenkeeper/Course Manager
- A proven ability to prepare and monitor budgets, inventories and expenditure
- A strong working knowledge of all modern golf course management practices, with the ability to train, motivate and direct staff.

Please apply in writing, including a full CV and an indication of salary expectation to: The Secretary, Northwood Golf Club, Rickmansworth Road, Northwood, Middx, HA6 2QW.

Accommodation on the course will be available

Closing date for applications: 23rd April 2001

NEW ZEALAND GOLF CLUB

Requires a

QUALIFIED GREENKEEPER

Applicants must be qualified to NVQ Level 2. Salary and conditions are negotiable but no accommodation. Please apply in writing, enclosing a full CV to:

The Secretary, New Zealand Golf Club,
Woodham Lane, Addlestone, Surrey KT15 3QD



CHILTERN FOREST GOLF CLUB

Require a

HEAD GREENKEEPER

Applications are invited for a qualified and experienced Head Greenkeeper. The successful applicant will be experienced in all aspects of greenkeeping and woodland management. Knowledge of machinery and irrigation is also essential. Reporting to the general manager, the post requires a self-motivated person capable of man-management.

Applications in writing please with full CV to:
The General Manager, Chiltern Forest Golf Club,
Aston Hill, Halton, Aylesbury, Bucks. HP22 5NQ
Closing date for applications: Wednesday, April 18th, 2001



Course Manager

The Abbey Hotel Golf & Country Club requires a capable and qualified individual to manage a team of six on an up and coming Midlands course. Excellent package including pension, private health cover and concession on golf and health club memberships.

Apply in writing to;

M I Blake, Managing Director,
The Abbey Hotel Golf & Country Club
Hither Green Lane, Dagnell End Road,
Redditch, Worcestershire B98 9BE

OLTON GOLF CLUB LTD

Require an

EXPERIENCED GREENKEEPER

The successful applicant will be self motivated, hard working, with a sound knowledge of turf maintenance practices. NVQ an advantage.

Apply in writing with CV to:-

Course Manager, Olton Golf Club Ltd,
Mirfield Road, Solihull, West Midlands, B91 1JH

REDBOURN GOLF CLUB & DRIVING RANGE

Require a

GREENKEEPER

NVQ I and II trained.
Spraying certificate an advantage

The successful candidate will be enthusiastic, conscientious and able to work well with an established successful team.

Further training is available.

Apply in own writing to;

Mr N Collins, General Manager,
PO Box 376, Redbourn, Herts AL3 7ZX



MOUNT MURRAY HOTEL AND COUNTRY CLUB

Require two

ASSISTANT GREENKEEPERS

SHOULD BE QUALIFIED TO NVQ LEVEL 2

Please apply in writing with CV to:-

Brian Hall, Mount Murray Hotel and Country Club
Santon, Isle of Man, IM4 2HT

BRAMLEY GOLF CLUB

Require a

Deputy Head Greenkeeper

We are looking for an ambitious, self motivated, enthusiastic person with a minimum of 5 years experience. The applicant will have a sound knowledge of all turf maintenance practices including irrigation systems and will be qualified to NVQ level III or working towards this qualification. PA1, PA2 & PA6 will also be required. Salary is negotiable. No accommodation is available.

Please apply in writing with full CV to:-

Mr P Smith, Head Greenkeeper, Bramley Golf Club,
Bramley, Nr Guildford, Surrey, GU5 0AL



HANBURY MANOR

HOTEL & COUNTRY CLUB

Marriott Hanbury Manor Hotel & Country Club is an exclusive 5 star Hotel and leisure resort situated 10 miles north of the M25 in Hertfordshire. We have an 18-hole Golden Bear Design Championship golf course, which has hosted the English open and the ladies European tour.

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Hanbury Manor offers competitive salary and package and an active social calendar.

Applications in writing no later than Friday 4th May 2001, to;

Kneale Diamond, Golf Course Manager, Marriott Hanbury Manor, Ware, Herts SG12 0SD



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Please apply in writing with your CV to:

Mrs Sue Armstrong
Advanta Seeds UK, Sleaford, Lincolnshire NG34 7HA
Closing date for applications 13th April 2001

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Invite applications for the position of

DEPUTY HEAD GREENKEEPER

To join a hard working team at this 18 hole public and members course.

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PA1, 2 and 6 spraying certificates, sound knowledge of course management, modern machinery and irrigation systems.

ALSO EXPERIENCED GREENKEEPERS REQUIRED

Apply in writing with C.V. to:-

Mark Logan, Silvermere Golf Club, Redhill Road, Cobham, Surrey, KT11 1EF



Invite applications for the position of

COURSE MANAGER

A top quality candidate with a proven track record in greenkeeping is required to manage this 45 hole complex. The successful applicant must have a minimum of 10 years experience in greenkeeping, 5 years as Course Manager, and must be experienced in the use of all sports turf machinery and computerised irrigation systems. They must be self-motivated and have the ability to lead a large enthusiastic team. Minimum NVQ level 3 or equivalent is required, with PA1, 2 & 6. D32/33 would be an advantage.

Canford Magna is a relatively new complex, with all greens having been built to USGA type specification. Experience working with USGA greens would be an advantage.

The club is privately owned and the Course Manager will report to the General Manager.

Salary negotiable. No accommodation available.

Reply in writing with full CV and any relevant references to:

Mr Trevor Smith, General Manager, Canford Magna Golf Club,
Knighton Lane, Wimborne, Dorset BH21 3AS

CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS 15TH APRIL 2001



OGBOURNE DOWNS GOLF CLUB

Requires a

FIRST ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

Qualifications up to NVQ level 3 are desirable as well as a minimum of 3 years experience of greenkeeping. The applicant will have a thorough knowledge of machinery and irrigation system maintenance. The successful candidate will be expected to take on the duties of the Head Greenkeeper in his absence.

Salary will be negotiable, based on qualifications and experience

Apply in writing with C.V. to:

Mr. Nick Pusey, Head Greenkeeper, Ogbourne Downs Golf Club,
Ogbourne St. George, Marlborough, Wiltshire SN8 1TB

Not long ago, Mrs McDivot and myself decided the unrelenting stress of being, necessitated a much needed vacation...

Service industry



As it was the middle of the winter months and we were in great requirement of some change in scenery and temperature, so we chose the ever-popular semi paradise known as Tenerife and one of those late deals that allocate your destination upon arrival.

Allocation on arrival always fills me with the fear of the unknown but as we had stipulated a four star hotel we were reasonably confident of meeting with a degree of success. I am glad to say we were not disappointed, as we discovered our stay was to be in a small resort in the most agreeable Hotel Los Gigantes, an establishment that catered for the mature guest and was as a result totally devoid of screaming little urchins and marauding teenagers desperate for some nocturnal activity.

We therefore settled down to a delightful week of sunbathing, coastal walking and the occasional sojourn in our little hired car to another part of the island. This particular activity I found to be most entertaining, as it involved heading in a roughly vertical direction for about half an hour up the side of a mountain along a highly precipitous road with a drop of about a thousand or so feet down the unprotected side.

Some of these roads, particularly when we got to about 7,000 foot were in places already starting to make their own way down the mountainside. This added greatly to the amusement value, especially when confronted as we were on a regular basis, by oncoming vehicles approaching at about 60 mph on the wrong side of the road or dirt track as it became. I must say some of the locals seemed to inject a great

Right: Hotel Los Gigantes' resident house band, Blackjack in full flow

deal of humour into their motoring, something that was not altogether shared by Mrs McDivot as we narrowly avoided our imminent demise on several occasions.

As we continued to survive each approaching hairpin bend and the weather and vegetation became indistinguishable from that found in the Scottish Highlands, I could not help but wonder if the local government officials had embraced the concept of risk assessment with quite the enthusiasm as we greenkeepers.

But when we got back to our hotel, we were always greeted by the inexhaustible politeness and charm of the hotel staff and a gargantuan evening buffet that invited a degree of indulgence not normally associated with life at home. It was at the end of one of these feeding frenzies, that Mrs McDivot came over somewhat faint and proceeded to pass out in front of about 200 other diners.

The next day having regained her health, we went down to breakfast and were greeted by a number of the hotel waiters all of whom showed genuine concern for her well being following the previous night's drama. Her own investigation of the causes of her blackout, revealed that a rare virus with an exotic sounding name like Camilla or something, had blown in on a Saharan sirocco causing a temporary lowering of her blood pressure. Personally I attributed the episode and resultant £50 doctors fee, to the effects of her success in fulfilling her personal ambition of sampling every one of the 20 or so puddings on offer that night. But using her usual powers of persuasion, it transpired that the romantic African microbe was the cause of her unconsciousness and not my theory of undiluted gluttony.

Following the evening's culinary extravaganzas, we made it our practice to partake of the odd cognac and cafe con leche to aid the digestive process. This we did along with all the other guests in the lounge area while listening to the syncopation's of "Blackjack", the hotel's resident musical duo. Aided only with a guitar, and a few thousand megabytes of Yamaha keyboard, this Swedish husband and wife team could, knock out orchestral masterpieces such as "Chirpy, chirpy, cheep cheep", "Quando quando quando" and Dawn's immortal, "Tie a yellow ribbon round the old oak tree".

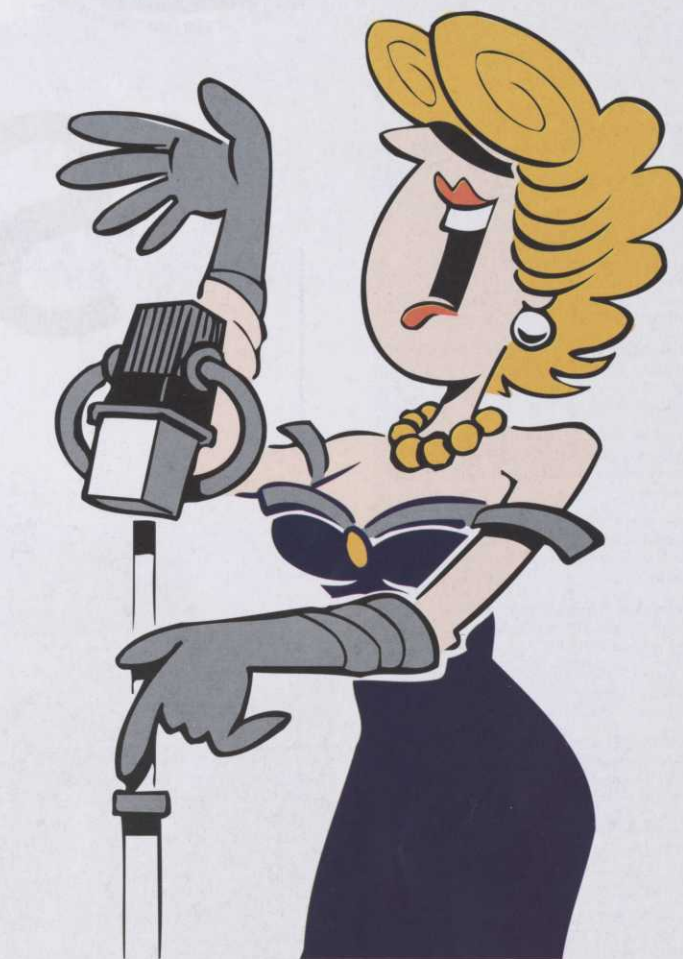
We would then be utterly amazed at how many of the hotels senior citizens would actually get out of their wheel chairs and dance the night away with seemingly boundless energy.

It was while listening to I believe a rendition of "The last waltz" which they chose to sing without quite the same vocal force as deployed by Englebert Humperdinck, that I realised we were metaphorically speaking, a little further away than the 2,000 miles that separated us from the golf clubs of Britain.

The service at this hotel was on a totally different level. If we required refreshment, I did not have to go to the bar and spend ten minutes or so trying to draw the attention of the barman while he moans about the house committee to some wearied member. I did not have to ring a bell and wait for some acne ridden gormless teenager to materialise from the recesses of a darkened kitchen and produce an unintelligible grunting noise. None of your twenty minutes of pugilism here that are required to purchase a half-pint of lager following the June medal back home. No, the technique needed to get served at Hotel Los Gigantes was to glance around and raise a digit for about one second before an immaculately dressed head barman would glide over, smiling to the other guests as he went and produce a note book ready to take your order. He would then pass this to one of the many barmen that were omnipresent yet inconspicuous and within the minute they would reappear with your drinks, complete with paper doilies and a sparkler in the wife's cocktail.

Now to my recollection, I have never once visited a British golf clubs clubhouse and received the same level of service that we received in this, a very pleasant but otherwise unexceptional hotel in Tenerife. Is it a question of economics, or is it a case of tradition being the immovable obstruction to progress on this front.

As "Blackjack" embarked on a medley of poignant 80's arias, starting with Ottawa's "Hands up", a song that unbeknown to me had an entire dance routine associated with it, I reflected on the quality of the headwaiter at Hotel Los Gigantes. In fact as we watched all the septuagenarians going through the routine of raising and lowering their arms in expert synchronisation as the Swedish Duo



sang "Gimme your heart, gimme, gimme", I could not help but notice how the maitre d'hote greeted many of his more regular female guests with a kiss on the cheek.

Was it the holiday atmosphere that had them swooning as he did so, or was it his polished Latino charm that enabled him to carry it off with such elegance? As I further observed the headwaiter's skills, I began to notice the little secrets that he had at his disposal. One of them was to never choose the pretty or younger females as the focus of his attention. They were the ones that did not need the boost to their confidence that came with his smiles of affection. More astutely it was the less attractive, slightly older women that became the subject of his charm treatment and I could see they loved every second of it, as they convinced themselves that his affection towards them was genuine. But the question I asked of myself was, could his technique with the ladies be imported to our shores? Certainly the thought of some of our nations club stewards slobbering all over their Lady Captain as she comes in for her toasted tea cake, did conjure up visions of knee being firmly dispatched to groin area, but maybe my lack of confidence in their natural allure is misplaced.

"Blackjack" were now completing their medley by trying to do justice to the profound lyrics of the Russ Abbot's timeless classic "Atmosphere" and as

they did so I asked myself, would the day arrive when we could walk off the 18th green on a summers evening, sit down and a waiter would immediately hand us a menu and enquire whether we requested any drinks. Would that menu ever include something a little more imaginative than sausage, egg and chips? Would the salad garnish that comes with the breaded plaice ever differ from lettuce, tomato and cucumber? Would the teatime gateaux selection ever extend beyond fruitcake and scones? I have seen it done in Japan, on the Continent of Europe and in the States, in fact in these places such service is the norm but in this country, I fear it has passed us by. Of course I realise that such advanced catering methods would be of little value in some of the cheaper traditional members clubs that we have dotted about this land of ours. In fact I would even venture to say, a great deal of their charm lies in their antiquated ways. But could it not happen in some of the more select clubs, the more progressively thinking establishments, those proprietary owned places that are looking to provide that little bit extra that will set them apart from the masses. Could it happen here, or is it just I and the rest of the World, that have missed the point entirely.

Sandy McDivot: Head Greenkeeper, Sludgecombe Pay and Play.

Feature listing from April '99

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: Slaley 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

February 2000: BTME2000 review; Committed to Green interview; Rookery Park GC; Engines; Chairman's profile; Environmental Management

March 2000: Cleobury Mortimer GC; Course Furniture; R&A Conference Report; Cutting heights; Avoncrop profile; Valderrama report; Westurf preview

April 2000: Fortrose & Rosemarkie GC; Utility Vehicles; Irrigation; Seed breeding; Gem Professional profile.

May 2000: Ross-on-Wye GC; Top Dressing; Course Mapping; Compact Tractors

June 2000: National Championship preview; Spraying; World Education Conference review; Environmental Management; Mowers

July 2000: Open Championship Preview; Dougal Duguid Court Case Report; Pest Control; Aventus profile; Course Conditioning

August 2000: Open Championship review; Water Features; Saltex preview; Charcoal; Malone GC; Royal County Down; Grand Tour Scholarship

September 2000: Blowers and Sweepers; Berkshire College Academy; National Championship roundup; Gordon McKillop interview; Winter health checks

October 2000: Toro Awards Preview; Ronald Fream; Irrigation; Saltex Review; Pest Control; Woburn GC

November 2000: Grass Cutting Machinery; Clandeboy GC; Drainage; National Championship review; Leatherjacket management

December 2000: Toro Awards; Making the most of your Dealer; Budget Boosters; BTME2001 preview; BIGGA/Bernhards CGSA delegation review

January 2001: Communication; Tyres; Turf diseases; Kingsbarns Golf Links; Environment Competition Winner - Dyke GC; Talking Heads - Pest Control

February 2001: BTME2001 review; Winter Mowing; Irrigation; Broadstone GC; Hedges; Security

March 2001: York GC; Greens Maintenance; Meland GC, Norway; Greens Mowers; BIGGA Essay Winner; Grass Science profile



Shaken not stirred



sadors for the Association during their time in Canada.

On the last day we were caught up in the earthquake which had its centre in Seattle, less than 100 miles away.

I was in our hotel room at the time and being typically British I went and looked out of the window, only to see the office workers in the building opposite all rapidly moving away from the windows and down the stairs.

Last month I talked about my new career as a columnist. Well I've now become a TV celebrity as well ... not once but twice. We got outside the hotel after the earthquake only for me to be grabbed by a local news crew and interviewed about what had happened. Buildings were moving about a foot up and down and it really was quite frightening. It had measured 6.8 at its epicentre in Seattle.

Arriving back home I had my second television appearance. Neil and I were interviewed for Sky Sports about BIGGA and greenkeeping matters generally. A great deal was left on the cutting room floor but I was pleased to have had the chance to make the point that nowadays the constant striving for pace on the greens is, in my opinion, not good for the greens or the greenkeeper. They inserted old black and white footage of a golfer from a previous generation putting on a green to highlight the point. It is good to see the Association gaining in credibility and recognition and appearing on television can only be positive for us.

Ironically the first picture they showed was of the wheels of my car being washed down with disinfectant

because of the Foot and Mouth outbreak. Walton Heath has been affected by Foot and Mouth as we are on common land. We had an enforced closure for a week and, as I write, have restrictions on access to the course.

The annual South East Region's Gentleman's Dinner was also a victim, the first time in living memory - 30 years - it has been postponed. I was hoping to have had the chance to thank the club for its support of the Dinner and the Association generally and also thank my staff for all the work they have done over the years to prepare the course for the arrival of so many greenkeepers and their guests. Hopefully it can be rearranged for later in the year.

Other cancellations included the GCSAI Conference I was due to attend in Ireland, and Westurf, and my thoughts go out to those, including Paula in the South West and South Wales, who had put so much work into these events only to see them fall victim to this horrendous disease.

Coming on the back of the flooding which caused course closures, the Foot and Mouth outbreak is another body blow to so many people, and we can only hope that it is halted soon and they can work towards getting back to some sort of normality.

On a positive note I was delighted to arrive home after my travels to discover that the team had already vertidraind the greens saving me a lot of grief as we all know it's never a popular operation in the eyes of the golfer.

Sometimes being away for a period has its advantages!

Clive Osgood
Chairman



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