

Exceedingly Good Greenkeepers

Have you caught the advert on television which shows two greenkeepers watching an inept golfer knocking divots out of the course. One turns to the other and asks why the club had allowed him to become a member. The other says something along the lines of "Mr Kipling? He can't play golf but he does make exceedingly good cakes."

Now there are three elements to this advert. One. Mr Kipling's cakes, which I have no doubt are exceedingly good. Two. Golf, which is being used as a vehicle for selling the product. Three. Greenkeepers, who are central to the plot.

Now it may be argued that it would have been nice to see them doing something a little more dynamic than drinking tea, a bit of aeration work or top dressing, bunker edging perhaps but let's not be greedy. The advert may be for Fondant Fancies or Cherry Bakewells but at least it recognises the fact that golf courses need to be maintained and that the job is done by greenkeepers.

That is a huge stride forward because any recognition for the work that you do is positive and if someone like Mr Kipling, the cake manufacturer not the inept golfer, feels that greenkeepers can help them sell cakes, then great!

As we have said many times communication is the key, using cakes or anything else, and the need for that has been hammered home once again through the excellent aeration survey produced by the Berkshire College Greenkeeping Liaison Committee by Ray Clark and Martin Gunn and the BB&O Section. It appears on page 17 this month.

The response to one particular question leaps out. "If you do not aerate your greens as often as you would like, which reason best describes why?" The overwhelming response - some 54% - was "Golfer Pressure" which was 30% higher than the next highest answer "Lack of Resources". Now you can accept lack of resources as a practical reason, particularly at smaller clubs, but the fact that golfer pressure is making such an impact is frankly appalling.

Golf club members should hang their heads in shame and if that doesn't tell us that communication about the need for aeration, and many other greenkeeping practices, is desperately needed to be improved I don't know what does.

It would be interesting to see if the BB&O results, and I understand Ray and Martin had a 100% response rate, are reflected over the rest of the country so please let me know via snail mail, email or fax.

If it is the case it shows that we have a really huge education job to do.

Finally, it would be remiss of me not to use this column to congratulate Paul Smith and his team on the magnificent condition in which they produced the course. It was a wonderful Open, made all the more so by a course which reaffirmed its place as one of the finest links courses in the country.

Scott MacCallum
Editor

Henton & Chattell and Breakwells sign up to John Deere

John Deere has signed ET Breakwell Ltd and Henton & Chattell Ltd as Commercial and Consumer Equipment dealers in the Midlands. The two dealers had previously been part of the Textron stable.

Between them Breakwells and Henton & Chattell have over 120 years in the grounds care industry and both will now be selling and servicing John Deere's full line of professional, golf and turf and domestic equipment, including the Roberine and Sabo brands.

"We are delighted to welcome these two leading dealers, with such a strong history of machinery, sales and service to the John Deere network," said Graham Williams, Deere's C&CC Division Manager.

"Their experience and established customer base will strengthen our position in the Midlands and enhance our continued growth in the UK grounds care market," he added.

Breakwell's employs 65 people across the business, with 22 in service and parts. It will now be covering the West Midlands, Staffordshire and part of Leicestershire for John Deere.

"In order to maintain a high level of after sales service and ensure our continued success in the grounds maintenance industry we see our future with John Deere," said Len Breakwell, Managing Director.

Henton & Chattell also



John Chaloner and Len Breakwell with Graham Williams seated

employs 65 people with 28 in service and parts. Its new territory for John Deere covers Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and part of Leicestershire.

"We have taken a commercial

decision that our long-term future lies with John Deere, and its plans for expansion in the grounds care marketplace," said John Chaloner, Managing Director.

A new 'yellow patch' of bent grass

A new problem of bent grass has recently been identified across the UK and Ireland.

Mark Hunt, Product Manager, Headland Amenity Limited, initially spotted the unusual patch problem back in 1998 on a small number of recently constructed courses and with the support of Headland Amenity began looking into the problem.

During the next two summers, more courses began to show up the symptom extending across England and Ireland. With the assistance of Cropcare, Headland's Irish distributor, samples were taken and analysis began.

"It became apparent during that period that the problem didn't fit a specific recognised turfgrass pathogen, though it closely resembled a particular turfgrass disease, a situation that led to a number of 'dead ends' and inevitable frustration," said Mark.

Towards the end of last summer, Dr Kate Entwistle, The Turf Disease Centre, UK, was called in to identify its cause, but because

of its period of activity, it wasn't until this summer using fresh samples from the UK and Ireland that progress was made.

Kate was, however, able to discuss the problem with Dr Joe Vargas Jr., Michigan State University, during last year's Myerscough Turf Conference, since Joe had been independently asked to become involved in the identification of this peculiar phenomenon. Work is still ongoing to determine the complete nature of this new condition, but they have found that the symptoms are definitely associated with the establishment of a root knot nematode of the *Meloidogyne* genus.

"This is an extremely exciting discovery for us," explained Kate.

"I have been aware for some time that several types of nematodes increasingly appear to be associated with problems on amenity turf, but this is the first time that I have seen *Meloidogyne* causing such dramatic symptoms on putting greens in the UK and in Ireland.

"We hope to have further details

very soon and are looking at publishing an article on the condition in a forthcoming issue of *Greenkeeper International*," said Kate.

The problem shows itself as pale green or yellow/green patches or rings which appear around May/June and remain throughout the growing season until they disappear from the putting surface around November time. Only very occasionally does the sward thin or show dead areas within the affected patch.

"We fully appreciate the concerns of the Course Managers presently involved in this investigation with regard to finding a cure for this disfiguring problem. However, we need to be absolutely certain what we are dealing with before we can make any recommendations. Misidentification and incorrect advice at this stage for control could actually exacerbate the problem," said Kate.

For further information contact Kate Tel: 01256 880246.

BIGGA takes a Walk on the Wildside of Golf

The Wildside of Golf - the latest publication to be produced by BIGGA - was officially released during the Open Championship.

Financed by the Association's Education and Development Fund, which is supported by companies within the fine turf industry; the full colour booklet highlights the positive contributions golf courses make to the environmental management of the British Isles. This is achieved through photographs, text and quotes to show that golf courses are being managed to help with the preservation of wild flowers, native heathland, varied woodland and a range of other flora and fauna.

Written by Bob Taylor, Senior Ecologist with the Sports Turf Research Institute, Malcolm Peake, Course Consultant, Temple Golf Club and Lee Penrose, also the STRI, with a forward by Michael Parkinson. It also contains quotes from many sporting and golfing figures, among them Ian Botham, Sir Jackie Stewart and former Open



Champion Nick Price, who all appreciate the benefits golf does for the environmental wellbeing of the country as a whole.

Printed on 80% recycled paper the

28 page booklet is an ideal compliment to the successful BIGGA Golf Environment Competition; the golf environment video and posters which have all combined to help raise the pro-

file of the wonderful ecological work being carried out on many of the country's courses.

Copies of The Wildside of Golf can be obtained from BIGGA HOUSE.

Damage repaired

Flood damage, affecting irrigation control system satellites on all 36 holes at both the Wisley and East Sussex National clubs has been repaired by golf course irrigation specialists TIS (Southern) Ltd.

Put out of action by flood water, created by recent record rainfall levels the satellites, 72 in total were replaced in time to enable course watering to be implemented at the onset of dry warmer spells of weather.

"Satellites are able to cope comfortably with seasonal rainfall but continuous immersion in deep flood water caused the problems," explained TIS Operations Director, John Roberts.

Thanks to Alan for Royal Lytham pics

Greenkeeper International would like to acknowledge the wonderful Royal Lytham & St Annes photographs which appeared in last month's magazine. They were taken by Alan Birch, a long time friend of BIGGA, who is known to many greenkeepers particularly in the north west.

Thank you Alan for your efforts and apologies for not acknowledging you at the time.

Hard work pays off for Ian Willett



The eighth person in the country to complete successfully a pilot course on Amenity Horticulture has been awarded a certificate for his achievements.

Ian Willett, a part-time tutor and assessor for Otley College took considerable care collecting evidence from his role as East Anglia Section Secretary and in his job as Course Manager at Thorpeness Golf Club to build his NVQ Level 4.

"I wanted to keep up to date with my professional qualifications and to

remain competitive in the employment market while continuing my professional development," explained Ian, who was particularly indebted to his golf club for contributing towards his training costs and to Harry Dean his assessor at the college.

Ian, who also completed his Level 3 training and development qualifications at Otley now intends to take up further qualifications in Health and Safety, aiming for a degree course in future.

He's a Master!

Such is the esteem in which BIGGA's Master Greenkeeper certification is held that Brian Sullivan, Superintendent of the Bel Air Country Club in Los Angeles, flew to Royal Lytham and St Annes from California to be presented with his Master Greenkeeper Blazer.

Brian qualified as one of the 31 Master Greenkeepers worldwide - there are 18 in the UK, 11 in the United States and two in Germany - in November 2000, following his success in the October 2000 examination but could not make it to BTME, at Harrogate, last January, and was presented with his award by BIGGA President Sir Michael Bonallack at the Open Championship.



Brian has been involved with golf course maintenance since 1979, when he worked at the Arnold Palmer Bay Hill Club, while attending junior college. Following the award of a Bachelor of Science Degree by the University of Michigan, Brian moved to the Beverley Country Club, in Illinois before moving to the Desert Horizons Golf Club, in Indian Wells, California. He then moved to the Monarch Bay Resort in 1986, working as the Golf Course and Project Superintendent, finally moving to Bel Air Country Club in 1994.

Brian, who joined BIGGA and the Master Greenkeeper Scheme in 1997, is married, to Marybeth and they have four children.

Royal Inverdivot GC...

Strip Cartoonist of the Year www.tonyhusband.co.uk



New man for Scotts



Scotts has appointed Mike Jupp as its new Areas Sales Manager, Turf and Amenity for London and the South East, succeeding John Joyce who left the company in January.

Mike's background is in quarry products but for the past few years he has concentrated specifically on developing a range of aggregates designed to meet the needs of the turf and amenity market.

Prior to joining Scotts, Mike worked for Prestige Sports Surfaces Ltd with responsibility for marketing and selling top dressings, rootzones, bunker sands and drainage aggregates to the turf and landscaping industry.

He is 32 and lives in Portsmouth.

Honour for Donald

Golf Course Architect, Donald Steel, has become only the third Life Member of Turnberry Golf Club, following in the illustrious footsteps of Jack Nicklaus and Tom Watson. The head to head battle between Nicklaus and Watson in the first Open Championship to be played over the Ayrshire links in 1977 is regarded as one of the seminal occasions in all of sport and Donald must be congratulated on joining two such luminaries.

It is a busy time for Donald who has also been chosen to make the Founder's Day speech at his old school - Fettes College in Edinburgh. It is not known whether another "Old Boy" Prime Minister Tony Blair will be in the audience to listen to him.

New offices

Cebeco Oliver Seeds has relocated to much larger premises at Skellingthorpe, near Lincoln following a growing demand for its technically based products.

"We had completely outgrown our previous premises at North Carlton and were finding it impossible to provide our customers and agents with the level of service we expect to provide," said Managing Director, Gerry Cook.

"Our investment at Skellingthorpe, which includes new mixing machinery capable of 10 tonnes per hour of finished product has reassured our customers and our own staff of the commitment we have to expand market share across the agricultural and amenity sectors, while maintaining industry leading customer response and service levels," he added.

Golf Bravo Echo, cleared for take off!

These were the words which on July 2, gave me permission to open up the throttle of the Piper Warrior aircraft which I was sitting in on the end of Shoreham runway and launch myself into the most exhilarating experience of my life.

Only five minutes before all this my instructor had stepped out of the aircraft and informed me that I was about to go solo.

Well, if you've not already guessed, I'm learning how to fly, (with the aid of an aircraft)

This all started on May 1st this year when I passed an exam and then my medical, not long after my first lesson commenced in the very experienced hands of James Crabbe, of Sussex Flying Club.

Flying has been a bit of a passion of mine for most of my life, but it has not been until recently that I have had the chance to do something about it.

One of the first things you need to do is find a good school to learn at. I was lucky in that I had some buddies in the game who directed me to a very good school. You first start off with the very basics and are given the controls almost straight away. After an hour of flying over a certain golf course we headed back towards Shoreham Airport. At this point James asked if I would like to have a go at landing. Well I thought that I was either a complete natural (much like Tom Cruise) or that James was completely insane. Well it turned out that James was not insane, and that I was definitely not Tom Cruise (only in height). I did have a go at landing but all the time the controls were very well guarded by James who pulled off a very nice landing.

So one lesson down, many many more to go. Funny thing about launching yourself into the big blue



sky in an aircraft, which has the internal capacity of a golf buggy, it is very addictive.

This will probably explain why two months later there I was all on my Jack Jones sitting on the end of the runway.

If anyone reading this has had the opportunity to have flown an aircraft you will understand what I'm trying to explain. If you don't like flying you will never understand but to say that I felt like I could have taken on Tyson when I climbed out of the aircraft would have been an understatement (and probably very painful for me).

It took 15 minutes to complete my solo and two days to get rid of a very stupid grin.

Well back to reality. I have to complete four more exams and many more lessons (seven exams in total and 50 hours of flight training approximately before I'm truly let loose to go and get a bird's eye view

of all those golf courses we have dotted around the countryside.

It took my approximately 15 hours of flight training to get me this far which is around the average. It's now back to flying around the airport and perfecting my new found skills before I move on to the navigation and a few more solo hours.

It's strange when I think about it that I managed to land an aeroplane which is 10 metres wide onto a runway which is 18 metres wide and managed to keep on the centre line but give me a golf ball which is 42mm wide and a fairway which is, let's say on average, 30 metres wide and for all the will in the world I just cannot get the same result.

So perhaps flying is not as hard as I think ... or I am just garbage at golf!

The picture was taken just as I got out of the aircraft with that silly grin, which I maintained for two whole days.

STRI has appointed Conor Nolan to help cope with STRI's advisory services in Ireland. Conor joins Ian McClements, who has worked as STRI's Advisor for Ireland since 1991. Ian will continue to cover areas north of Dublin from his base in Hillsborough while Conor will be located in Tipperary and cover the southern half of Ireland. A graduate of University College Dublin, Conor has a degree in Agricultural Science specialising in Landscape Horticulture and has considerable work experience covering regular maintenance of golf courses, grown-ins, construction and golf course design.

Clever Cleverly

Mature student Neil Cleverly, 42, from Shoreham-by-Sea has just graduated from the University of Central Lancashire in Preston with an upper second class degree in Turf Grass Science.

After 15 years of army service Neil was seeking a challenged job where he could use his previous skills and knowledge of golf course management. He started his studies at Plumpton College in East Sussex taking an NVQ and working at West Hove GC.

He finished his studies in Preston, after spending the first year at Myerscough College, one of the University's partner colleges. He was also lucky enough to secure a five month placement, managing a golf course in Madeira during his second year.

"Working with the turf on a golf course is an art form. You are faced with the challenge of maintaining different surfaces. We also have to be more eco-friendly now, so we act as stewards of the environment," said Neil.

Most of the graduates from the course will be going to



Above: Neil with tutors Martyn Jones and Louise Clegg from Myerscough College

work either in an advisory or consultancy position or in golf course management. Some, like Neil, will be considering further research and a higher degree.

A LOOK BACK TO A DECADE AGO
Back Lapping
 FROM GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL

Take a time-honoured look back through the pages of Greenkeeper International from a decade ago



AUGUST 1991

Britain's First Master Greenkeeper

The magazine reported that Laurence Pithie had become Britain's first Master Greenkeeper. Course Manager at Minchinhampton Golf Club, Laurence wrote that 'Education, has, and always will be the foundation upon which BIGGA exists, for through training and education it can promote confidence, improve technical knowledge and engender motivation, which leads in turn to greater respect. Managing today's golf courses requires not just practical experience but a wealth of technical expertise in understanding the theory and practise of turfgrass management. If we are to change the public conception of being 'the greenkeeper that cuts the grass', we must improve our image'.

Today Laurence Pithie is Director of Maintenance for American Golf.

Diminishing Prospects?

Greenkeeper International was downbeat about the prospect for new golf course projects. A report estimated that some 30 golf course cum hotel sites were in the hands of the receiver. It was understood that one estate specialist had no less than 80 potential courses and 40 existing courses on its books with precious few buyers. Developers were being chided for having responded too soon to the 1989 R&A report predicting a need for 700 new courses by the end of the century.

Speaking of the Architect

'Those beautifully turfed golf courses that you enjoy are not laid out casually on the back of an envelope. Nor are they the result of pushing a little dirt around and throwing some grass seed on the ground. They are the result of talented and skillful people devoting what is often the better part of three years to plan, design and construct ... Just as becoming proficient as an expert golfer requires years of play and countless hours on the practice tee, so too is a long apprenticeship needed to be a real golf architect in fact. Just as the great player makes the game look easy, so the best of golf course architects often make their work look easy too. Don't you believe it. I have a lot of dirty clothes and worn out shoes to prove how tough it really is!'

Robert Trent Jones Jr.

Top student for Gaunt and Marnoch

Golf course architects Gaunt and Marnoch have recruited the top graduate from this year's European Institute of Golf Course Architects' Professional Diploma course. Dimitri Van Hauwaert, 32, from Belgium, who won the 2001 Toro Student Golf Course Architect Award, will head up the new Gaunt and Marnoch office in Antwerp and will spearhead the company's activities in Continental Europe.

"We're delighted to welcome Dimitri to our company. He is exactly the kind of person we are looking for - fluent in many languages, strong business acumen, tremendous golf design achievements in only a short space of time, not to mention his golfing prowess as an amateur international," said Co-Director Steven Marnoch.

"In recent months we've conducted a very frank assessment of our business and the future market potential. The progress we're making in the UK is really pleasing but we want to expand further the company's activities on the Continent," explained



Steve's partner, Jonathan Gaunt.

As part of his prize Dimitri will fly to the Toro Company's Headquarters in Minneapolis and its irrigation division in Riverside, California and attend the GCSAA Show in Orlando.

The winner of the associated Barenbrug Award was Richard Myers, who will visit Barenbrug's Dutch Wolfheze breeding station and tour links courses on the east coast of Scotland.

Swan Golf Designs land new contracts home and abroad

Swan Golf Designs Ltd has secured a commission to renovate Brickendon Grange Golf Club in Hertfordshire.

While a significant project for Howard Swan, Brickendon Grange will fail to help him to add to his growing collection of air miles.

The practice now looks after 25 courses including some as far afield as Reykjavik, Beirut and the Continent of Europe although his furthest commission is half way round the world.

The practice is redesigning the Ras Al Hamra Golf Course in Muscat, Oman where the nine hole brown course is being revised and is likely to become the Sultanate's first green and grassed layout.

The course is being lengthened and a full irrigation system installed to allow effluent water from a nearby refinery to be used to water the new grass. The course is designed to allow the recycling of all water so conserving to the maximum a resource whose value is immense in such a part of the world.



RainBird hold seminar at Gleneagles

Gleneagles was the venue for RainBird's annual Training Day attended by Course Managers and greenkeeping staff from courses across Scotland and Northern England.

The event, now in its second year, provides an introduction to new users of Rain Bird's computerised irrigation control systems and is also a refresher course for those already familiar with the systems offered by the company.

"Here at Gleneagles we have invested over £500,000 in our Rain Bird irrigation system and it has proved a worthwhile investment but only because we have received the relevant and necessary training," said Scott Fenwick, Golf Courses Superintendent.

"Effective water resource management, with its associated environmental implications is vitally important - hence the massive advances in irrigation technology over the last decade," said Mark Ganning, RainBird's UK Field Service Manager.

