

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



DECEMBER 1991

Elliott Small paid tribute to Cecil George on his retirement as 'a man 'o many parts: greenkeeper; educator; committee member; secretary; chairman; president; editor; poet and sometime singer of 'auld Scottish songs'. Cecil had begun his greenkeeping career in 1943 at Whitecraigs Golf Club finally settling at Lenzie Golf Club where he spent 37 happy years. Above all perhaps Cecil remains synonymous with greenkeeper education with his active interest continuing to this day. He remains closely involved with BIGGA and his contribution to each AGM remains eagerly anticipated.

Jim Snow, as National Director of the USGA Green Section, covered the topic of winter play on greens. It is common knowledge that three topics are simply too controversial and should never be brought up at social functions; politics, religion and winter play on greens. The last mentioned topic - few subjects raise such an emotional response from greenkeepers and golfers alike. Jim concluded that winter play can do an inordinate amount of damage to the health and playability of the greens in relation to the number of rounds. Every club considering winter play should question whether or not it is worth the risk of damaging the greens and affecting their playability for a significant period of the regular season by allowing a relatively small percentage of the Club's members to use them all the time. In the view of most head greenkeepers, turf grass scientists and agronomists, it is not.

Allen Power open day

Allen played host to nearly 200 dealers and their salesmen in a recent series of demonstration days in Scotland, the north and south of England. The first day at Murrayshall Hotel and Golf complex near Perth was well attended by dealership representatives from all over Scotland and the far north of England.

The entire range of Allen equipment was at the disposal of dealer sales personnel to test and try the machines in a variety of demanding situations.

Also in attendance from the suppliers was Mark Barnett from Honda who went through the new engines and Tim Mitchell from Friendly Robotics who manufacture the Robomow robotic mower recently taken on by Allen.

The culmination of the road shows came at Blenheim Palace, near Oxford. Over the two days 100 dealers and their staff had the Allen range presented to them against the stunning background of Blenheim.



Try the Samuel Ryder Cocktail!

Celtic Manor has developed a cocktail in honour of the club's successful bid to host the Ryder Cup in 2010. The 20/10 might well have appealed to seed merchant, Samuel Ryder, as it is produced with ingredients which are based on grasses and herbs.

They include Zubrowka vodka, each bottle of which contains a blade of Bison Grass, Pikesville Rye Whiskey, and Galliano, the famous Italian herbal liqueur in a distinctive bottle.

Preparation

25ml Galliano
 25ml Zubrowka Bison vodka
 25ml Pikesville Straight Rye Whiskey

Preliminaries

Stirred not shaken over ice. Chill the glasses and shaker with ice and drain when ready for use. Add ingredients to shaker and stir vigorously for 30 seconds then strain into glass.

Presentation

Garnish with the tip only of a sprig of fresh mint and a 1cm twist of lemon, preferably organic.

Support boost for Hydroscape

Simon Squires has joined, the Hydroscape Group as the company's UK Technical Support Manager.

Simon's brief covers all technical aspects of the Hydroscape Group's distribution interests, ranging from Toro golf irrigation products, Otterbine Barebo (water) aerators, Global Atmospherics electrical storm warning systems to Sweetwater International sulphur burning units.

Simon recently worked closely with St Andrews Links Trust officials as Contracts Manager responsible for the second phase of the £940,000 irrigation update of the Old, New and Jubilee courses, completed in May of this year.

Prior to that, he managed phase one of the St Andrews project, involving irrigation for approaches, greens, tees and fairways on the Eden, Balgove and Strathyrum courses which was completed within budget and ahead of schedule, in 1999.

"We are delighted that Simon has become part of our team. He will ful-

fil a key role in providing technical support for the complete product range which we, a national distributor specialising in the use of water resources and its management - primarily in UK sports turf markets - view as extremely important," said Graeme Francis, Hydroscape's Marketing Manager,



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Letters
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Leading the way

I read Duncan McGilvary's article in November's Greenkeeper magazine with interest and found myself agreeing with much that he said, as well as being very concerned. It seems strange that as a profession we have progressed so far in developing ourselves in the last 10 or so years, yet many greenkeepers are respected less now than their predecessors of 30 years ago. Then the greenkeeper's words were law. As you talk to many greenkeepers the recurring statements seem to be "It's what our members want", "We can't do that as it upsets our members" or "I want to keep my job".

There are far too many people writing about, and teaching, greenkeeping principles with those statements in mind. I can't think of many other industries that employ professional, well-trained managers to manage their major asset, and then expect them to be told by committees and members how to manage this asset and, of course, if this asset is in poor shape then it's the manager's fault.

In answer to Duncan's question we should, of course, lead. We are well-trained professionals who have been trained to understand how our courses should be managed. But we need strong minded greenkeepers who have a sense of tradition and of what is right, who want to lead and if they are not out there already then managers from other professions will eventually end up managing many golf courses with dangerous implications. These managers will have no sense of tradition and will undoubtedly change the face of British golf. As greenkeepers we need good training and first-rate leadership to help us in these difficult times. Where this comes from is the real question.

Golf clubs also need to look at themselves very closely too, as their aspirations for their golf course are far too often wide of the mark and against what is traditionally right. We live in an "environmentally friendly" world yet many clubs want to produce a totally artificial environment instead of a natural course that enhances it.

First and foremost we, as greenkeepers, need to come to the front and lead the way forward. We then need our members, committees and professionals to leave us to do what we do best, without having to pander to them and work our management around them.

They are the ones who need education. Who does that is the next question...

Alex McCombie
 Deputy Course Manager
 Parkstone Golf Club