

Communication is the key

I don't know if you followed the US Presidential election and all the amazing problems it produced. As I write it hasn't yet been resolved but hopefully, just hopefully, by the time you read this the most powerful man in the world will be known.

You may call me a cynic but I'm sure through all the legal toings and froings the two men, who traded on the strength of their convictions and the clarity of their policy declarations, would have had no qualms in arguing the opposite case in the courts, if that was what was needed to be done, just to get elected.

"Pregnant chads to be included in the ballot," against, "If people can't complete a simple ballot paper properly their vote shouldn't count,"... or "If overseas ballots arrive without postmarks they should be omitted," against, "If ballots from American servicemen arrive on time but a technicality left them without a postmark they should still be counted".

Cases were built around the desires of the person making the case and not the merits of the case itself.

It got me thinking about how it works in normal run of the mill situations. Would you, as greenkeepers for example, take a different view of your golf course if you were a regular club member, and not on the greens staff?

Would you see, for example, an area of the course which has been left untended for 12 months as a conservation area or just unkempt? Would you see aeration work as being to the long term betterment of the greens or just a damn nuisance always coinciding with a regular round, or temporary greens as a logical safety net to ensure members can play in poor weather or an admission of failure to keep the main greens open? Would your thinking change just because of your personal circumstances and not because of the rights and wrongs of the particular case?

There is usually more than one way to look at the same situation and it may be that a side is taken because, as in the US election, it suits someone to argue a particular case, or alternatively that not enough information is available to come to another conclusion.

So the best way to influence a person's thinking, other than to dangle the prospect of high office in front of them, is to give them enough information to come to a different conclusion to the one they originally came up with.

That can happen in a number of ways, formal and informal, but all boil down to the same thing - Communication. Get that right and more people will be on your side of the fence when it comes to differences of opinion. It might not win you a Presidency but it might make your job a little less stressful.

Happy New Year and may all your problems over the next 12 months be the type which make you look good when you solve them!

Scott MacCallum
Editor

Awards for US distributors

American distributors were presented with awards from Bernhard and Company while enjoying a night-time cruise on the Thames through London.

Top north American distributors were presented with the awards for their exceptional sales efforts.

"It has been a great experience visiting the UK," said Pat Duggins, of Florida-based Wesco Turf.

"This is my first trip and the weather here is certainly very different from Florida," he said.

"Sights such as the Houses of Parliament and Tower of London are just great and I had a wonderful time."



Above: Pat Duggins of Wesco Turf, Florida winner of an award from Bernhard for his exceptional sales

Busman's holiday for Irish GKs



A group of Irish greenkeepers made a trip to White Hart Lane, home of Tottenham Hotspur FC to tour the ground and stadium. The trip was sponsored by Advanta Seeds and Lindsay's Turfcare. The picture shows the group with Darren Baldwin, Head Groundsman at White Hart Lane, in the middle of the back row.

Committed to Green recognition

Following a meeting of its International Advisory Commission on 21 November 2000 in Brussels, the Committed to Green Foundation is pleased to announce the first ever awards of Committed to Green Recognition. Fifteen pioneer golf clubs from five European countries will receive the Recognition, which is valid for three years. They are:

Scotland: Kilmacollm GC; Linlithgow GC; Gleneagles (3 courses); Elmwood College
England: Kenwick Park GC; The Belfry (3 courses)
Denmark: Faaborg GC
Finland: Kurk Golf Club; Rantasalmi GC; Ronnas GC; Tarina GC; Sarvik GC (2 courses)
Portugal: Belas Club de Campo; Vilamoura (4 courses); Carveiro Golf (2 courses)

"All these clubs have shown a commendable effort to prove their

concern and care for the environment. Many of these are 'typical' small golf clubs, simply wishing to be seen to be responsible managers. But whatever their situation, large and small clubs alike have devoted time and effort to achieving worthwhile environmental improvements," said David Stubbs, Executive Director of the Committed to Green Foundation.

"It is still an early stage in our programme and we are delighted to have such committed pioneers to help us in our mission."

The Recognition process involves clubs submitting an Environmental Statement reporting on their policies, achievements and future targets across eight environmental management categories. To ensure the credibility of the programme, each Statement is subject to on-site verification by

Mountfield joins Europe's largest

Mountfield, the UK's largest petrol engine rotary lawnmower manufacturer, has been acquired by Stiga UK Limited, which is part of an international garden machinery Group currently being formed that includes Stiga of Sweden and Castelgarden and Alpina of Italy.

Mountfield currently manufactures over 100,000 lawnmowers a year retailed through a UK wide servicing dealer network and DIY chains.

Duncan Martin, Mountfield Managing Director, describes this exciting development as, "the most obvious step forward for our dealers, our products and our brand."

This new addition to the Group, retaining all the sales, service, marketing and financial personnel. The new company will have its headquarters in Plymouth and trade as Stiga UK Limited with Duncan Martin as MD.

A move for British Seed Houses

British Seed Houses is moving its Warrington-based amenity seed business to improved facilities at its Swindon site in Lincolnshire following the purchase of adjacent land and buildings.

The move will bring all British Seed Houses amenity seeds processing, packaging and distribution under one roof, improving logistics and efficiency and reducing dependency on third party storage.

The Warrington site is being retained by British Seed Houses parent company Germinal Group for rental to a third party.

appropriately qualified, independent specialists. A network of National Ecology Officers is helping the Committed to Green Foundation to deliver the programme throughout Europe.

The Environmental Statements of each Committed to Green golf club will be published on the Committed to Green Foundation web site over the coming months: see www.committedtogreen.org

Several more clubs across Europe are in the final stages of preparing their Committed to Green Statements. Further awards of Recognition will be announced during 2001, and it is hoped that the example set by these first clubs will be an inspiration for the rest of the golf community to come forward and demonstrate its commitment to responsible environmental management.

John Deere to supply 2001 Ryder Cup

John Deere has been appointed the official supplier of turf maintenance equipment for the 2001 Ryder Cup at The De Vere Belfry.

The De Vere Belfry - world-famous venue of the 1985, '89 and '93 Ryder Cup matches already uses a full range of John Deere machinery for course preparation and maintenance throughout the complex.

A staff of 40 operates a total fleet of more than 50 machines to maintain three 18-hole golf courses - the Brabazon, Derby and PGA National - on 500 acres.

"We are delighted to be associated with De Vere Hotels and with the Ryder Cup, one of the world's greatest golf events at one of the world's greatest courses," said Alec McKee, Managing Director of John Deere Limited.

"This exciting partnership underlines the remarkable progress we have made as a business since entering the golf



equipment market seriously in the mid 1990s."

John Deere is the official golf course equipment supplier to the USA PGA Tour, providing a full range of machinery on an exclusive basis to the tour's network of Tournament Players Club (TPC) courses around the world. The company is also the title sponsor of the

John Deere Classic, a regular stop on the USA PGA Tour, which was played for the first time in 2000 on the new TPC at Deere Run course in Silvis, Illinois.

John Deere Limited will also be supplying equipment to The De Vere Belfry for the Benson & Hedges International Open in May 2001.

BIGGA AGM

The Bigga AGM will be held on Wednesday, 24th January 2001 at 5.45pm in the Majestic Hotel, Harrogate. Entry by BIGGA Membership Card. Papers for the AGM can be obtained in advance of the meeting on request to BIGGA HOUSE, Regional Administrator or Section Secretary.



Winners announced

The five lucky winners of a superb BIGGA Sports Watch from those who pre-registered for BTME 2001 are:

Graham Hodson, Delamire Forest GC, Northwich, in Cheshire; Paul Robison, Head Greenkeeper, Ryton GC, Tyne and Wear; Iain Carson, Course Manager, Nairn GC, Nairn; Paul McDowell, Head Greenkeeper, Burnham & Berrow GC, Somerset and Simon Osbourne, Head Greenkeeper, Wildwood GC, Worthing.

Rigby Taylor are appointed exclusive Maxicrop distributor

Rigby Taylor has been appointed exclusive UK mainland distributor for the market-leading Maxicrop range of seaweed extract based bio-stimulants for amenity use.

The new partnership will help ensure that research and product development activity by Maxicrop is available to greenkeepers and groundsmen, through Rigby Taylor's nationwide sales and distribution coverage.

Maxicrop which was recently acquired by Algea, part of the giant Norsk Hydro group, has already taken the opportunity to introduce a new improved formulation of its flagship product, Maxicrop No.1 Triple

Seaweed. This product now contains increased levels of trace elements, which Maxicrop claims will help ensure better season-long turf micronutrition, especially where clippings are regularly removed.

Shane Deaville, Maxicrop UK Sales and Marketing Director, said that the new partnership would ensure that what is a well researched and highly effective established brand reaches a wider audience.

"We believe we are seaweed extract experts and highly product focused; Rigby Taylor is the market leader in the golf and turf sectors. Thus it makes sense to forge a relationship with a

commercial partner that is closer to the end-user and can deliver what he needs," said Shane.

"This appointment represents further recognition by leading multi-national companies that the best route for products into the UK amenity market is through a dedicated nationwide organisation such as ours," said Rigby Taylor Chairman, Bernard Hedley.

"Algea and Maxicrop have invested heavily in an on-going R&D programme into the benefits of seaweed extracts and this fits well with our strong science and research-based philosophy for product development."

Susannah is the latest BIGGA recruit

Membership Services Assistant, Susannah Sweeney, is the latest recruit to join the BIGGA HOUSE team.

Susannah joined the Membership Department in mid December, but had spent a month before that on the BIGGA reception desk.

Susannah, 32, lives on the RAF base at Linton on Ouse, just a short distance from BIGGA HOUSE, with her husband, Mark, who is a Chef on the base.

They have recently returned to the UK from a posting in Cyprus where Susannah worked with the Ministry of Defence. Previously they had been stationed at a number of RAF bases in England.

A real lover of watersports Susannah learned to water ski while surrounded by the warm waters of Cyprus and also enjoys snorkelling and scuba diving.

Now back home they are looking forward to settling in the York area.



Simon joins Advanta

Simon Harrison has joined Advanta Seeds UK as regional sales manager for the North of England. Simon, who is 31, is based in Leeds and has a career background of sales in the sports trade industry. He has previously worked for Puma sportswear, and latterly for the Asics Sports company.

A keen sportsman, Simon has played rugby for Yorkshire - at fly half and centre, and continues to play the game socially.

"We are delighted to welcome Simon to Advanta," said Dave Phillips, Amenity Sales and Marketing Manager.

"His sales experience and contacts within the sports sector is impressive, and he has already established himself as a valued member of our team."

Philip picks up first Toro Student GC Architect Award

PGA professional Philip Sparks beat off stiff competition to win the first Toro Student Golf Course Architect Award. While runners-up Jeff Young and Jamie Sharp each received the associated Barenbrug Award. The annual competition is open to students studying for a two-year post-graduate diploma course in golf course architecture at Merrist Wood College.

Philip is the first golf professional in the world to have gained this qualification. With six other finalists, Philip presented a verbal dissertation to judges on his diploma course thesis, as well as his design ideas, detailed drawings and costings for the site of a new golf course near Bournemouth.

As his prize, Philip enjoyed an all-expenses-paid trip to The Toro Company's worldwide headquarters in Minneapolis and California.

Royal Inverdivot GC...

www.tonyhusband.co.uk



Stephen gets set to scale the heights

Weed Free is the first major supplier to support a greenkeeper in his bid to climb mount Kilimanjaro.

Stephen Thresher, Deputy Superintendent at Mill Green Golf Club, (part of American Golf UK Ltd.) will spend 10 days in February tackling Kilimanjaro, the highest peak in Africa in aid of NCH Action for Children. In order to raise the necessary fund-raising target of £2,200,

Stephen has contacted all suppliers to the club, and already raised £765, mainly from local companies, and members of the club itself.

"Our last year's Lady Captain has raised £100, and the club are running a monthly medal golf competition which we are hoping will bring in £500. The club have been brilliant. I shall be taking my company waterproofs with me, along with thermal bottoms, a micro fleece and boots with special linings."

Below: Stephen set for his trek



Weed Free have pledged 1% of all net invoices relating to worm control on American Golf complexes.

"I don't want to lean on my family and friends too much," says Stephen. "I'm sure that now Weed Free have set the ball rolling, many other companies will follow suit."

Temperatures on the 5,896 metre peak range from 28 degrees Celsius to well below zero, and Stephen expects to begin his ascent in shorts and finish by sleeping in a tent pitched in snow.

"We take four days to go up, two to come down and have a days rest before flying home," he said.

At 54 years of age, Stephen is taking no chances, and has been in training since September.

"I've joined a local running club and the local gym, Harpers at St. Albans, have given me full use of all their facilities free of charge until I leave for the trek

Stephen's family have rallied round. His 80-year-old mum has collected over £100 from the old people's complex where she lives, despite her view that her son is mad, and his son, who manages a pub, has had the tin can out for some time.

If other suppliers of services or equipment would like to support Stephen's trek they are invited to write to him at Mill Green Golf Club, Gypsy Lane, Welwyn Garden City, Herts. AL74TY.

Parts restructure at Textron



Above (L-R): David Brown, Mark Poppleton, Wendy Forsdyke, Jim Snell

Textron has reorganised and restructured its Parts operation which will now be known as the Service Parts Organisation.

This restructuring follows the recent appointment of David Brown as International Parts Manager with a brief to achieve improved customer service in conjunction with a 95% pick rate for the parts operation.

To help achieve this, Wendy Forsdyke has been promoted to

Customer Services Manager and a Customer Services Help Desk has been established and is the first point of contact for customer parts enquiries.

Mark Poppleton has been appointed Inventory Control Manager, heading a team responsible for all parts stocking levels with Jim Snell completing the management team in his role as Warehouse Operations Manager controlling the goods in, parts picking and dispatch functions.



George Pitts, flanked by Paula Humphries, BIGGA Regional Administrator, and Terry Horne, Senior Lecturer of Cannington College, is pictured receiving the BIGGA Cup for Top Student and also the South West Cup for Best Project at the Cannington Awards ceremony. George, who works at St Mellion, also received a College Certificate with a distinction.

New business venture for Kate

Kate Entwistle, still known to many in the turf industry as Kate York, has recently left the STRI where she had worked since 1990. She has now relocated to Hampshire where she will continue to work in turf pathology under the name of The Turf Disease Centre.

"Starting my own business allows me to really focus on providing a thorough and personalised turf disease management service," said Kate.

"I studied plant pathology, plant physiology and microbiology at college and have developed a specialist knowledge of turfgrass pathogens over the last 10 years."

As well as providing analysis of turf samples for disease identification, Kate will continue to offer lectures, take part in seminars and produce articles on turf diseases.

In addition, one of the main areas that she is keen to develop is site visits, aimed

specifically at discussing turf disease problems directly with the turf manager.

"Although many of our turf disease problems can be diagnosed from sample analysis, supported by general discussions with the turf manager or agronomist, there are an increasing number of persistent and unusual problems which would be better investigated through an on-site inspection", she says. "We are now seeing diseases which were not a problem only a few years ago and changes in grass types and cultivars used are likely to lead to further novel disease outbreaks. Disease development is heavily affected by local environmental conditions and these can not always be adequately appreciated by looking at a turf sample in the laboratory", explained Kate. "Seeing the problem at first hand can lead to a more rapid diagnosis of the disease and can assist in offering specific information on

Westurf 2001

Pre-registration tickets for Westurf 2000 were entered into a random draw for a fourball of golf at St. Mellion on the Jack Nicklaus course. The prize, which also included two buggies and a meal afterwards was won by Dave Everett of Lyme Regis Golf Club.

Westurf 2001 is on March 14th - make sure you pre-register!

New Association aims to provide quality assurance

Britain's leading rootzone and top dressing manufacturers have formed an organisation to be known as the British Rootzone and Top Dressing Manufacturers Association.

The Association is a collaboration of experience and expertise in the manufacture of Rootzone materials to offer architects, constructors and agronomists a recognised focal point for the industry.

The aims of the Association are:- to appoint its own technical advisors to agree and standardise testing procedures; to develop a quality management scheme to be used by its members; to promote the use of appropriate materials and offer the best working practices in manufacture in order to offer a consistent and repeatable standard; to promote materials offered within a quality framework; to develop the use of environmentally friendly products; to promote research into effective UK rootzone specifications and to liaise with other organisations involved in the specification and purchase of rootzones and top dressings.

Members of the newly formed Association include Bailey's of Hevingham; Bathgate Silica Sand Ltd; John Bourne & Co Ltd; Roffey Ltd; Stewart & CO Seedsmen Ltd; Banks Amenity Products Ltd; Boughton Loam Ltd; Prestige Sports Surfaces Ltd; Rufford Soil Technology and White Moss Amenities Ltd.

Further information on the Association can be obtained from Tim Banks Tel: 01858 464346.



the best ways to control the disease on that particular site".

Contact Kate by telephoning 01256 880246, Fax 01256 880178, email kate@theturf-disease-centre.co.uk or visit her web site, www.theturf-disease-centre.co.uk