

## Take a lead from Stoke Park

Elsewhere in this issue we profile Stoke Park Club, a wonderful place with a rich and varied history; a high quality golf course, both in design and conditioning, and a hotel with supporting facilities good enough to make even the most privileged feel pampered.

But despite all these qualities perhaps the one which we should applaud the loudest is the vision they have shown in becoming a BIGGA Golden Key Supporter - the first golf club in the country to do so.

Those within the fine turf industry, including the many high profile companies who have contributed for so many years, have long known of the benefits to the game from supporting BIGGA's Education and Development Fund, but perhaps those who have gained the most have not been aware.

It is without dispute that golf courses are now maintained to a higher standard than ever before and that this has enabled clubs to cope with increased rounds played over a much greater proportions of the year - it seems strange writing this when so many courses have been closed for extended periods but it shouldn't be allowed to cloud the overall picture - and the reasons this has been made possible is by the sophisticated machinery and knowledge and skills of those charged with their care.

From a golf club's point of view this has meant increased revenue, while from the member's perspective an ability to play more rounds over his or her own course than would have been conceivable 20 years ago.

Sure people do complain if the greens are a little slow or bumpy in February but they forget that not so very long ago their Mizunos or McGregors would have been gathering dust in the garage for about five months by then.

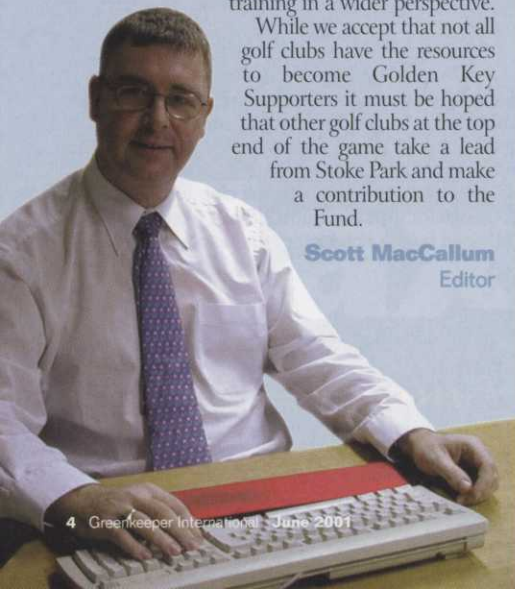
The greenkeeper's ability to keep on top of the job can be put down in no small part to the excellent training that is available to the fine turf industry and which is, in all modesty, the envy of many other professions.

Much of this is paid for, or subsidised, by BIGGA's Education and Development Fund and golf clubs have been the ultimate beneficiaries of this free, or low cost, training. It staggers me when I see the cost of training in other fields when compared to what is offered in the fine turf industry. The difference can be measured, not in tens of pounds but hundreds for two or even one day courses and this certainly does not reflect on the quality of the training which almost without exception is out of the top drawer.

Stoke Park must be applauded for recognising that they have a responsibility to assist in the development of not just their own excellent team of greenkeepers, but greenkeeper training in a wider perspective.

While we accept that not all golf clubs have the resources to become Golden Key Supporters it must be hoped that other golf clubs at the top end of the game take a lead from Stoke Park and make a contribution to the Fund.

**Scott MacCallum**  
Editor



## Gidman elected as new EIGCA President

Simon Gidman, well known to many BIGGA members who have attended the Golf Design Courses he and Howard Swan have held regionally and at Harrogate, has been elected as the new President of the European Institute of Golf Course Architects at the first Annual General Meeting of the EIGCA. Peter Harradine was re-elected as Vice-President.

Following his election Simon immediately thanked outgoing President David Williams for his work and guidance since the inception of the new Institute. He paid special tribute to David's reorganisation of the Institute's Committee structure and his work on Continual Professional Development courses.

"It is a great honour to be elected as President and I am looking forward to working to further develop the role of the Institute in the coming year within the golf industry and beyond. The next twelve months should be an exciting period for the EIGCA particularly with our intention to hold a conference in the autumn devoted to the planning of golf and real estate communities," he said.

He first entered golf course architecture with Hawtree in 1983 after studying Landscape Architecture at Leeds Polytechnic between 1979 and 1982 and prior to that having worked as a professional golfer for six years. In 1991 Simon set up his own golf course architecture company and has now designed more than 35 golf courses throughout Europe. He has served on the Committee of the EIGCA and before that the BIGGA for many years and has chaired the Institute's sub-committee investigating safety margins on golf courses.



## Kawasaki award for Jim Price

Kawasaki Commercial Products Group has just announced that the Jim Price Machinery at Craven Arms, Shropshire, has won its Welsh Dealer of the Year title and collected a ten-year dealer service award.

The Welsh dealer title recognises sales performance in both ATV and Mule utility vehicles and was presented to Managing Director Jim Price, by Kawasaki Commercial Products' Sales and Marketing Manager Jack Ford and UK Field Sales Manager Robert Rees.

## Here's mud in your eye!

Assistant Greenkeeper Jamie Gill got more than he bargained for during a recent demonstration of the Terralift machine at Stowmarket Golf Club. Invited by Head Greenkeeper, Roger Eade, who has been with the club for 30 years, Terrain Aeration Services probed to a one metre depth using their Terralift aeration equipment and injected compressed air at 10 bar into an area of the fairway which slopes towards the river Rat. Although the blast lifted the turf for two to three metres around the probe hole, the surface settled and TAS moved the Terralift further down the slope.

"As the machine is capable of injecting air up to 20 bar, we decided to up the pressure", remembers TAS director, Lynda Green.



"The spread was more extensive, the blast blew old divots out of their replacement spots and delivered a free mud pack to Jamie's face."

## David lands new role at Sportsworld



Sportsworld Amenity has appointed David Evans as its new Area Technical Sales Manager for the south region covering South Wales, Avon, Wiltshire, Somerset, the M4 corridor and London. David was previously Amenity Sales Manager with Stollens and prior to that spent eight years working for Maxicrop.