

Taking the time to reflect ...

I sit in front of this computer composing my regular Editorial just five days after the horrific events in the United States and it is fair to say that my mind, as well as those of my colleagues in BIGGA HOUSE, is still a little numb.

Sure, I didn't have any relatives or friends caught up in the nightmare but such has been the scale of the horror, the stories which have emanated from the States of personal and collective tragedy, have touched me, and many others, in much the same way as if we had.

What has happened will impact on many aspects of our lives from now on whether it be travel and the restrictions we will face every time we leave these shores to the possible recession such a strike on the world's principle financial centre could accelerate.

But in our world of golf one of the immediate casualties has been this year's Ryder Cup which has just been postponed for 12 months. I'm sure you will join me in sending our best wishes to Dave Sammels and his team at The De Vere Belfry who have just seen all their work, aimed at three days in September 2001, knocked on the head.

Such a crushing let down, even if it is seen in the entire scheme of such a disaster, must be extremely difficult to take and motivation over the next few months will undoubtedly be hard to come by.

I recall talking to Dave a couple of months ago and him telling me that every eventuality had been considered and contingency plans put in place. It would have required a crystal ball of considerable sophistication to cope with these developments.

One can only imagine the thoughts of everyone involved as they dismantle the grandstands and the tented village knowing that the job of erecting them again will be done not 10 months on.

That is not to say that it is the wrong decision. Had the match gone ahead on the scheduled date the result would have been of little significance to many of those taking part. While the quality of golf from both sides would have been applauded equally by the European galleries, the fact that the significance of victory would have been downgraded in the minds of the 24 players makes postponement the correct decision - outright cancellation would have made too much of an impact on the finances of both the PGA and the PGA European Tour.

No, the thing which makes the Ryder Cup so special is that victory means so much to the players, the respective Tours and those they represent, whether it be the Continent of Europe or the United States of America.

Come September 2002 victory will mean everything once again and the golf will reach the levels we have come to expect from one of the greatest sporting events on earth.

But for now it is right that everyone's thoughts are with the families of those people who have lost their lives in America.

Scott MacCallum
Editor

Clive visits latest Golden Key supporters

BIGGA Chairman, Clive Osgood, caught up with the Association's two newest Golden Key members the Stoke Park Club and AGCO to present them with their plaques.

He travelled first to Stoke Poges to make the presentation to Alex Miller, the Estate Director (left) and Hartford King, the Managing Director of Stoke Park outside the famous clubhouse before making a similar presentation to Tim Lawrence, Agco's Sales Manager - Grounds Care during Saltex.

"We are delighted to have the support of both of these companies and the money they donate to the Education and Development Fund will go a long way to making our proposed educational projects a reality," said Clive.



The Stakeholder Pension Scheme

John Pemberton, BIGGA's Administration and Finance Manager gives some important information about company pension schemes.

As you may be aware most employers with five or more employees must, by law, offer a Stakeholder Pension arrangement to their staff after October 8 of this year.

Employees can choose whether or not to join the scheme. BIGGA has a solution that could be of assistance to you and your club.

Stakeholder Pensions have been introduced by the Government to encourage people to provide financially for their own retirement through a low cost savings scheme.

A Stakeholder Pension is a savings fund that belongs to the individual. The Government encourages savings into the fund by proving tax incentives. A gross contribution of £100 actually costs £78 after tax relief at standard rate. Anyone below normal

pension age, working or not, can invest up to £3,600 gross each year, the contributions can be invested in a range of different funds to suit the savers requirements. Contributions can be as little as £20 per month. On retirement the fund is used to provide an income for life. There is usually also an opportunity to take part of the fund as a tax free cash sum.

The advantage of the Stakeholder pension over other plans is that there is no initial charge. The annual charge is limited to a maximum of 1% per year and there are no other charges. There are no penalties for stopping or changing contributions and there is also no penalty for switching the pension fund to another provider.

To fulfil the legal requirements an employer must offer a scheme but does not have to make a contribution, although many employers may choose to do so. The main duty of the employer is to deduct contributions from

wages and pay the pension provider the premium within fixed time limits.

BIGGA have enlisted the help of an Independent Financial Adviser, Walsh Lucas and Co of York, and chosen Standard Life as a preferred provider. Standard Life is one of the world's leading mutual financial services companies whose mutual status is a key to their success. Walsh Lucas and Co has been known to BIGGA for several years and has the expertise to provide the additional financial advice that will be required by many Clubs and members.

Arrangements have been made that any member of BIGGA or employee of a Club joining the scheme can have free independent financial advice over the telephone. Anyone wishing to join the scheme can also do so by telephone.

Further details are available from Geoff Steel of Walsh Lucas and Co, 33 Micklegate, York YO1 6WE. Tel: 01904 610495

Andrew and Ian receive special medals

Andrew Wood and Ian Smith have each been awarded a special medal by the City & Guilds in recognition of the high standard of work they have achieved during their studies. These awards only go to one in every 3,000 people.

Andrew is studying NVQ Level 3 Sports Turf Maintenance at Plumpton College while Ian, who is now at Mentmore Golf and Country Club, is studying for his National Certificate in Greenkeeping at Oaklands College.

Pictured are: Andrew, centre, and Ian, right, with Ian Merrick, Curriculum Team Leader at Oakland College.



National Championship qualifiers go through

The Northern Ireland Section had a very successful day at Royal Portrush at the end of August at which Andrew Wray, from Castle Rock GC, and Noel Crawford, Royal County Down, each won a place in the BIGGA National Championship field following fine performances over Portrush's Valley course.

Cyril Johnston and Co donated a fine Golf Trophy to Section, which will go to the best golfer from the competitions played this year. Sam Thompson from the sales team presented the trophy to Chairman Jonathan McCabe.



Sam Thompson presenting Jonathan McCabe with the Trophy plus the Northern Ireland Section with winners Andrew Wray and Noel Crawford front centre in the Royal Portrush clubhouse

Bunker Competition winner presented with Hayter prize

Mark Garrod, winner of the Great BIGGA Bunker Competition held during this year's Open Championship at Royal Lytham and St Annes was presented with his prize by Kim Macfie, Sales and Marketing Director of Hayter Ltd at Brocket Hall.

Mark, who in addition to being the Golf Correspondent for the Press Association is the Secretary of the Association of Golf Writers, came closest in his estimate of how many balls would find sand during the four days of the Championship.

A grand total of 1585 balls found

one of the 197 Lytham bunkers and Mark's accurate estimate earned him a superb Hayter Harrier lawn mower donated for the seventh successive year by Kim Macfie.

Many thanks to Hayter for their wonderful support of a competition which always attracts a lot of attention in the Open Championship Media Centre and to John Wells and Brocket Hall for providing the venue for the presentation and for kindly giving a tee time on the Melbourne Course so Kim, Mark and your Editor could show off their skills.



Surf to Turf relaunch from Avoncrop Amenity

Avoncrop Amenity Products has re-launched its range of seaweed products Surf to Turf.

The new improved range will offer turf managers a wider choice of liquids and a new enhanced Soil Improver. Both Avoncrop Amenity and Aitken's will jointly market the New Surf to Turf range, giving nationwide availability.

The New range consists of one granular Composted Seaweed Soil Improver with 7% Potassium and five Seaweed liquids, Triple Seaweed containing 27% seaweed extract, Seaweed plus 6% chelated Iron; Seaweed with 20% Nitrogen, Seaweed plus 12-0-7 + 1% chelated

Iron and finally Seaweed plus 2-0-15 + 0.5% chelated Iron. This liquid range offers the turf manager analysis to compliment almost all nutritional programmes for use throughout the seasons. They will encourage deep-rooted healthy turf as well as stimulating beneficial organisms.

The Soil Improver is a powerful fermented seaweed rich in trace elements, carbohydrates and plant growth stimulant, providing sustained nutrition for plants and beneficial micro organisms. Soil Improver also releases alginate gel once moist, which helps tilth and crumb structure in all soil types, aid-

ing aeration, moisture and nutrient retention. The added potassium helps to produce tougher harder wearing turf.

For further details contact Chris Briggs, Avoncrop Amenity Products Ltd on 01934 820868



Matt appointed new Scotts MD



The Scotts Company has appointed Matt Reed as its new Managing Director of Scotts Professional Business Group UK and Ireland. This follows the departure of Bernie Ford, Managing Director of UK & Ireland Professional Business Groups, who has left the Scotts Company and returned to the USA.

Matt, who takes up his position from immediate effect, has been responsible for business development and legal activities across the international division of Scotts and has previously help senior financial roles within both the UK and the international management teams. He has worked for Scotts since 1997 when Miracle Garden Care was acquired and has been heavily involved in building Scotts' international business through a series of acquisitions and strategic supply agreements over the last five years.

He will be based at Scotts Headquarters at Bramford near Ipswich.

Parkstone GC launch website

Parkstone Golf Club has launched its own website and members are invited to take a look on www.parkstonegolfclubgreens.fsnet.co.uk

Latest news?

www.bigga.org.uk/news.html

The Missing Link

The final paragraph of Daniel Binns' article in on Soil Analysis in last month's magazine should have read;

There are now a plethora of green-keeping products available on the market and we are constantly bombarded with information on the latest development that will make all the difference to our turf. In terms of nutrition, try not to be blinded by science; instead keep it as simple as possible. The most important factors in maintaining healthy, disease tolerant turf are the physical maintenance of the rootzone and sensible nitrogen fertiliser applications.

Apologies for any confusion that may have arisen.

Royal Inverdivot GC...

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



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



OCTOBER 1991

'Just where is all our water?' was the question posed in 'Greenkeeper International' as greenkeepers faced another year - the fourth - of water shortages. Rainfall for August in England and Wales had been only 32% of the average when taken long-term while the rainfall for the first 19 days of September was 1% of this long term average ... The main sufferers were in the south east and East Anglia - reeling from hosepipe bans and with tougher restrictions set to be imposed. The forecast for most of England read doom-laden for the greenkeepers - continuing dry!

Roger Evans of the STRI wrote on a problem created by concern for the environment - WORMS. He concluded that earthworm control is more difficult now than in the past, due to the increasingly responsible attitude taken by public opinion towards environmental matters. Effective chemicals may well be banned but there is every possibility that we may be able to keep worm populations down to acceptable levels by other means which are not ecologically unacceptable.

A leading American golfer turned golf course architect was reported to have sent one of his experts to report on the building and maintenance of a course in Scotland. His report concluded 'and if you follow my instructions you will have the best greens in England' ...

Tribute to former Turnberry Head Greenkeeper, Jimmy McCubbin

Jimmy McCubbin, who died after a long illness, borne without complaint and cared for by his devoted wife, Agnes, on July 29 aged 85, was a great friend of mine.

We first met when he took over the head post at Turnberry in the run up to their 1977 Open. He was responsible for the huge success of that event and in particular for restoring, in a very short time, links which had been neglected and mis-managed.

We had three years to get what was almost total disaster into condition suitable for the world's most important Championship. This was achieved to the surprise of many pundits, and illustrates how it could be done in very short order by following traditional methods and not taking too much notice of the members!

Although Jimmy had served his greenkeeping apprenticeship at Maybole, when he joined Turnberry Hotel in 1935 he started literally at the bottom in the kitchens before becoming Head Gardener, from which post he moved to take on the management of the course. When he retired in 1982 he had 47 years service with the Hotel.

When the R&A gave me the task of getting back MacKenzie Ross' wonderful links I needed someone with an instinctive feel for traditional greenkeeping and Jimmy came with no baggage! For over two and a half years I walked the course every month with Jimmy and for his part he built up a devoted team, faithfully implementing an agreed policy. The result was a highly successful Open for which

Jimmy rightly took his deserved plaudits, showing what could be done in a very short time to restore any course ravaged by the feed and water school. The 1977 Open was indeed the jewel in Jimmy's crown!

Jimmy was a quiet man of total integrity, who could and did inspire loyalty in his staff and got the best out of them. He trained many youngsters in the sound basics and many of them have gone on to very senior positions.

I am not alone in remembering him with affection and respect but so many of his contemporaries have left the fray. One things of the old Scots toast ...

Here's tae us, Whae's like us?
 Damn few. An' they're all deid!

Jim Arthur

David Stansfield

Agronomist David Stansfield has announced he is now carrying out consultancy work on behalf of a new company, David Stansfield Ltd. Although this is a new venture it will be a continuation of David's 23 years' experience of providing input into established course management, new course construction and course redevelopment projects. Over these years David's clients have included many of the leading established golf clubs throughout Europe. In addition he has been appointed Project Agronomist for new works in locations ranging from Canada to Poland and from Northern Scotland to Southern Portugal. More details can be obtained by telephoning 01535 656849 or on www.dstansfield.co.uk

GCA commission

The UK's Golf Consultants' Association has won a prestigious commission to assess potential golf course sites in Greece. The GCA has been appointed by the Fuji Bank (London) who are currently undertaking a tourism study on behalf of the Greek Government and Hellenic Tourist Organisation. One objective is to develop Rhodes as a golfing destination. "This is great news for the GCA, it effectively means that we will be helping to develop golf course sites in Greece and putting Rhodes on the map in terms of golfing excellence," said Bryan Griffiths, Chairman of the GCA. The GCA boasts a collective experience of 275 years client service in more than 50 countries involving 2,150 assignments.

Sisis' silver staff



Andy Walker, Product Evaluation Manager with Sisis, clocked up 25 years service with the Macclesfield-based company and begins his second 25 years with a gold watch presented to him by Joint Managing Directors Robert and William Hargreaves. Territory Manager, Robert Chesham, also celebrated his Silver anniversary with the company in May making a total of 10 Sisis staff with service of more than 25 years.

Sulphur burner installed at St Andrews

St Andrews Links has installed a sulphur burner to improve the quality of the borehole water which is used to irrigate the courses.

The burner, no bigger than a domestic cooker, heats raw organic sulphur in the form of small yellow pellets and converts it to a gas - sulphurous dioxide - which, mixed with water, becomes sulphurous acid. When this,

entirely safe liquid with an acidity level similar to lemonade is added to the irrigation reservoir it reduces significantly the pH level of the water from around 8 to between 6.5 and 7.

"We are always looking at ways of improving the condition of the golf courses. This is an environmentally friendly and effective solution to a problem which affects all the courses on

the Links," said Links Superintendent, Gordon Moir.

"As there has been high rainfall this summer we have conducted only a small trial but this showed early signs of improvement in targeted areas. I am looking forward to seeing the overall results in the long term."

The company providing the burner is AquaSO2.



Oundle GC clinch trophy

Oundle Golf Club clinched the final Midland Region Golf Management Trophy day at Ryston Golf Club, Downham Market. Pictured at Oundle Golf Club are: Head Greenkeeper, James Dair; Club Secretary, David Foley; Chairman Of Green, Mike Scholefield; Club Captain, Tony Hilton. Also pictured is Nick Martin, of Scotts.



After a recent East of England Section event at Spalding Golf Club the Order of Merit winner for the year 2000, Les Howkins, Head Greenkeeper at Cleethorpes, along with the '99 winner, David Hornsey, of Woodhall Spa, were finally presented with their BIGGA Blazers, kindly donated by Tower Sport. Pictured left to right are: Gary Cooper, Tower Sport, Les Howkins, David Hornsey, Kevin Hodges, Chairman of EOE Section and Graeme MacDonald, Section Secretary.