

Setting ourselves challenges

I find it hard to believe but I've just experienced my seventh Harrogate. It seems like only a few months ago that I was meeting so many of you for the very first time, but now it is friends of quite long standing whom I bump into each January.

This year, of course, the week took on a new form with a three day show, beginning on Tuesday morning, and the inaugural Golf Club Show joining BTME in the Harrogate International Conference Centre.

Both innovations could be deemed unqualified successes with record numbers attending the Show - 8,629, more than 10% up on last year's record total - and the feedback from the Golf Club Show exhibitors extremely positive. It must be hoped that after such a promising launch this Show will go on from strength to strength and reinforce the belief that Harrogate is the "one-stop shop" for greenkeepers and golf club officials alike.

I, like so many of you I met during the week, am already looking forward to BTME 2003 - my eighth - although to surpass the quality of what we have just experienced it will take a fair bit of preparation and imagination. Still, as Sir Edmund Hillary might have said as he stood on the foothills of Everest, what would life be like if we didn't have challenges? Between now and next January every effort will be made to ensure that your week in North Yorkshire is as rewarding, and as entertaining, as it can possibly be.

This month I must pass on my congratulations to you on providing the magazine with the strongest Letters' page since I have been Editor. In fact, calling it a Letters' page is doing it a severe injustice as it stretches to two full pages and is packed with well expressed arguments on a range of subjects.

Credit for much of this must go to Duncan McGilvary, Course Manager at Potters Bar GC, whose article, "Should we lead or should we be led" was the catalyst for a flood of correspondence stretching over the last three months.

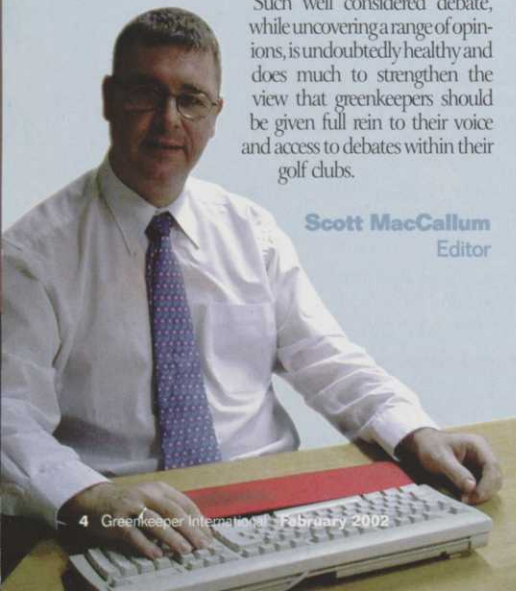
It is a topic which obviously struck a cord with you all and, as the debate continues to develop, I'm sure the letters will keep flooding in.

Following on from the article Duncan hosted a couple of meetings at Harrogate at which many of those who had commented up until that point, as well as several other interested parties, discussed the issues raised by the piece. Feedback from those meetings will be aired in the magazine in due course.

The article also made its mark outside the green-keeping fraternity and was discussed at the EGU Masterclass at Woodhall Spa in early January, where more greenkeepers and golf officials were given the chance to air their views.

Such well considered debate, while uncovering a range of opinions, is undoubtedly healthy and does much to strengthen the view that greenkeepers should be given full rein to their voice and access to debates within their golf clubs.

Scott MacCallum
Editor



Brian's ordeal at hands of armed robbers

Brian Woodhouse, Head Greenkeeper of Chalford Golf Club, in Buckinghamshire, endured a terrifying ordeal late last year when, early one morning when he was first to arrive at the club, he was attacked, handcuffed, beaten up and asked if he wanted to die by robbers armed with a shotgun.

Speaking in his local paper, the Bucks Examiner News and Advertising, Brian, 54, said that at first he resisted but they had started hitting him around the face.

"One of the guys threatened to shoot me in the legs and asked if I wanted to die. They got the handcuffs on me and kicked me in the stomach," said Brian.

Since the attack new security measures have been put in place at the golf club and Brian has

Police took 'too long' to get to scene of gun-raid

report by Helen Osborne

MANAGERS have criticised police after it took them nearly 20 minutes to travel two miles to a golf club to tackle a violent armed raid, in Little Chalfont.

Greenkeeper Brian Woodhouse, 54, was handcuffed, beaten up, and asked: "Do you want to die?" by the would-be robbers armed with a shotgun.

The victims at Chalfont Golf Club, called three times before police officers from Amersham arrived.

"It's disgraceful," said owner of the club Mike Dunne, who chased the intruders after discovering the battered and bruised Mr Woodhouse.

Manager, of the club in Lodge Lane,

she explained.

"We received a call about the robbery at 6.54am. Nine officers were on their way to the incident within one minute of that call being made even though they were not yet officially on duty.

"Police were in the vicinity within two minutes and surrounding locations including the railway station were checked very quickly.

"An officer attended the scene itself at 7.12am, by which time we had been able to confirm that the shotgun used in the incident had not been discharged and there was

Flashback to the chilling headline in Brian's local newspaper

shifted his hours so that he arrives at the club during daylight.

"Many golf clubs are isolated so I would caution any greenkeepers

who tend to be first to arrive at the club to take care," said Brian, who has yet to recover fully from the trauma.

A second series of training courses planned by TGA

Following a successful launch last year the Turf grass Growers Association (TGA) will be holding a second series of half-day training courses at venues in the West Midlands, Yorkshire, Berkshire and Surrey between March and June.

Targeted primarily at professionals who supply, specify or install quality sports, amenity or ornamental turf surfaces, the courses are being hosted by independent turf consultant and agronomist, Robert Laycock, the appointed advisor to the TGA.

Course content has been carefully chosen to help attendees understand and achieve optimum selection, installation and after-care of cultivated turf. Specific attention will be paid to the importance of turf quality and the various methods of quality assessment, including the TGA standards for cultivated turf, independently drawn up in 1996. Robert will also look at the selection of turf for different

lawn situations together with lawn design, establishment and long-term care, including the most suitable equipment for the job.

The first TGA training course of the 2002 season takes place at Birmingham City Football Club on March 18. Further courses will be held on April 23 at a venue near Bradford, Yorkshire; on May 22 at a venue near Reading, Berks; and on June 18 at a venue near Reigate, Surrey.

To register for or receive further details on the TGA conference or the TGA's 2002 training courses, contact TGA headquarters, telephone 01728 723672 or e-mail: david.clarke@turfgrass.co.uk



GTC article gets Chairman of Green thinking right 'On Course'

An article in the new issue of the GTC newsletter "On Course" has set at least one Chairman of Green thinking.

Management consultant Frank Newberry had argued that better management skills were allowing Course Managers, Head Greenkeepers and their Deputies to cope with the ever-increasing demands put upon them and Brian Jackson, Chairman of Green at Bishop Auckland GC, read the piece and immediately contacted David Golding, the GTC's Education Director, to say how much he enjoyed the article.

"My time in industry has taught me that training is very worthwhile. Anything which motivates people and inspires self-confidence has to be good," said Brian.

"Frank's article rang bells with me and reinforced in my mind that training is the way forward for the industry."

David retires from industry after 45 years

David Smith, a Director of Atherton and Ellis, has retired after a career which spanned 45 years having joined the company in 1956 as Secretary

From the start of his career David was involved in sales, and attended exhibitions to keep abreast of industry developments. The main event in those days was the Institute of Groundsman Exhibition at Motpur Park, now SALTEX held at Windsor. He holds what must be a record of never having missed an exhibition in 45 years.



David pictured with Clive Osgood and Stephen Bernhard at last month's BTME

Lely is new UK irrigation distributor for Toro

The Toro Company has appointed Lely (UK) Limited as its Irrigation products distributor for the United Kingdom and Ireland.

Philip A. Burkart, Toro Vice President and General Manager, International Division announced the move. He said that the development, effective from February 1, enhanced and expands the partnership between Toro and Lely, which began its role as UK distributor of Toro Commercial equipment, such as professional turf mowers, aerators and utility vehicles, in 1983.

"Lely has been an outstanding partner handling Toro Commercial products, and we anticipate the Lely team will deliver similarly exceptional performance with Toro Irrigation," said Philip. "The Lely staff now includes a team of irrigation professionals whose experience and expertise, combined with their operational excellence, will make a positive difference for Toro irrigation customers in the UK and Ireland."

In its new role, Lely, of St Neots, Cambridgeshire, distributes Toro Irrigation products such as sprinklers, valves and controllers to Toro Irrigation dealers throughout the UK and Ireland. Lely also provides dealers and end-users with next day parts, service and technical support from its



Lely Managing Director, Graham Dale

in-house staff and the Toro National Support Network (NSN) Global computer support service.

"Toro is the only brand to offer both commercial equipment and irrigation, and Lely now becomes the UK and Ireland's source of Toro Total Solutions," said Philip. "Everyone at Lely shares the Toro commitment to provide value, productivity and strong product support. We feel fortunate to expand our relationship with such a quality partner."

Toro Irrigation was previously distributed over here by TIL Irrigation Limited.

Toro personnel such as Andy Brown, Irrigation Manager for the UK and Northern Europe, are working closely with Lely to ensure the newly appointed distributor provides Toro Irrigation customers with excellent customer care.

Lely Managing Director, Graham Dale, who started in the turf industry in 1973 and has been involved with Toro products since 1980, welcomed the opportunity to expand the Lely-Toro partnership.

"We have enjoyed a long and rewarding relationship with Toro and are pleased to increase our role as a Toro distributor," said Graham.

"A primary focus of our Toro Irrigation business will be to strengthen partnerships with existing golf customers. We also see significant opportunity for large-turf and golf customers to renovate and upgrade existing irrigation installations with products such as the Toro Gemini-Trident control systems."

Lely assumes responsibility for supporting Toro Irrigation in use by several high-profile UK golf properties, including the St Andrews Links Trust, Wentworth Golf Club, Royal County Down, Celtic Manor, and the K-Club, which will host the 2005 Ryder Cup, as well as stadiums that are home to many leading football and rugby clubs.

IOG conference goes back to basics

The IOG Conference 2002 "Back to Basics" takes place from Friday March 22 to Tuesday March 26 at The Holiday Inn, Newport, South Wales.

Among those speaking on the programme over the course of the Conference are Gareth Davies, Chair of the Sports Council for Wales; Dr Stephen Baker, of the STRI; Giles Wardle, Irrigation Consultant; Dr Alan Gange, of Royal Holloway College; Martin Jones, of Myerscough College; Justin Smith, of TurfTrax; Douglas Shearer, of Elmwood College, and Jim MacKenzie, of Celtic Manor Golf Course and Resort.

Further information can be obtained from the IOG Tel: 01908 312511.

Reduce annual expenditure by joining Golf England

Golf clubs throughout England will soon get a chance to join Golf England - and to save money on their annual club expenditure.

Invitation packs are being mailed at the beginning of February to 1,900 clubs, along with a preview of the first of many offers available through the group-buying scheme. Clubs are being offered 15% off the cost of a range of fertiliser and ground-care treatment products; as well as catering equipment items at less than half price.

Clubs will also receive a reminder copy of the Golf England presentation made in November and December at roadshows around the country; promotional material to inform club and committee members; and finally two copies of the contract together with explanatory notes.

"Clubs should receive two copies of the pack in early February, and we know from our telephone calls that many clubs are ready to join as soon as they have their contracts," said Dale Clements, Marketing Director for Golf England.

Once a club returns its application to join, it will receive a welcome pack. This will include a CD-ROM catalogue of all the current products and services available on the group purchasing scheme which will allow them to place their first orders.

Illegal chemical use: Are you breaking the law?

Simon Barnaby, Technical Manager for The Scotts Company, has experienced an increase in the number of enquiries received relating to the potential use of pesticides not approved for use on turf areas. Scotts took the opportunity at BTME to bring the facts relating to the issue to the attention of their customers, and to warn them of the possible consequences.

Pesticide manufacture, storage, supply and application are regulated by law. There are a number of Acts of Parliament and Regulations that cover the above points. These include: Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH), Food and Environment Protection Act 1985 (FEPA) and Control of Pesticide Regulations 1986 (COPR).

The legislation requires that no product may be used unless it has

government approval on the grounds of safety and efficacy. Everyone must comply with conditions of approval. Only chemicals with a recommendation on the label for use on Managed Amenity Turf can be legally advertised, supplied, stored and applied to Managed Amenity Turf situations. It is illegal to use any other chemical that does not have approval.

Why are there different products for different situations?

Chemicals used on Managed Amenity Turf situations are specifically formulated and designed for use on turf. Each product has to undergo extensive research on turf in order to ascertain product efficacy e.g. does it work. Stringent research is also carried out to ascertain human, animal and environmental safety - this work can take a number of years to complete. Once above criteria is met PSD (Pesticide Safety Directorate) will reg-

ister the chemical with a specific Approval e.g. For Use On Managed Amenity Turf.

What if a non approved chemical is used?

The user, the club or site manager, supplier and advisor are all liable; and may suffer any or all of the following:

Heavy fines. Unlimited amount (a recent misuse case resulted in a £220,000 fine plus costs)

Imprisonment. Up to two years in prison for each case

Insurance void. All cover void

Turf damage. Products not formulated for turf use may cause severe damage

No efficacy. Products not designed for use on turf may not work or could increase the risk of resistance

Environmental damage. Products not used for the specific purpose for which they were designed or labelled, may harm the environment

Operator exposure. Non approved products may carry inappropriate advice for the situation

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



Paul appointed Finance Director

Paul Bray has been appointed Rolawn's Financial Director when Rolawn's current Financial Director, Paul Hopewell stood down after ten years with the Company. Paul joined the company as Financial Director Designate last October.



"I have enjoyed having the opportunity of getting to know the business and the people in it prior to formally taking over the role of

Financial Director. I am very much looking forward to being involved in the exciting opportunities which lie ahead for Rolawn."

Before joining Rolawn, Paul worked as Group Financial Controller for Higgins Agriculture Limited, the UK's largest independent potato merchant with growing, selling and distribution operations in the UK and mainland Europe, dealing with many European blue chip companies. Paul (39) is married with one daughter, and lives in Cawood, North Yorkshire.

Ken Dawson, Rolawn's Chairman said, "we are extremely pleased that Paul has joined us. His expertise and experience will be important elements in supporting the future growth of our business".

Latest news?

www.bigga.org.uk/news.html

William joins Eammon Wall

William Garrett has recently joined consultants Eamonn Wall & Co at their Dollar office in Scotland. William replaces Alastair Seaman who is now in Nepal and remains an e-mail consultant with the firm.



William, 33, brings useful experience to the company in the fields of arboriculture, woodland conservation and continuous cover silviculture. Previously he worked for Coillte (Irish Forestry Board)

completing their inventory of native and historically significant woodlands before returning to the UK in December 2001. After graduating from the University of Wales, with an M.Sc. in Environmental Forestry William spent some time working for the Mersey Forest and Warrington Borough Council. Prior to his M.Sc. he obtained an NCH in Arboriculture from Merrist Wood and a BA from University of London. He has travelled extensively living and working in Spain and Italy and enjoys rock climbing, snow boarding and mountain running.

Rigby Taylor Matchplay Competition

The South Wales Section Rigby Taylor Matchplay Competition finals were played at Royal Porthcawl Golf Club. The eventual winners were the father and son combo of Jamie and Herbie Probert, of Pontaradawe GC who won the RT Rose Bowl. They defeated David Bray, of Morrision GC and Steve Mills, of Gower GC in the final.



L-R: David Carvey, Rigby Taylor Rep; Daryl Bray, Herbie Probert, Steve Mills, Roy Barker, Rigby Taylor rep with Jamie Probert, kneeling.

Lancaster Uni launches brand new modular training course for Industry

Lancaster University has launched a Modular Training for Industry programme, specifically for professionals working in the area of Plant Sciences and Agrochemistry, which aims to transfer knowledge and understanding from their research activities into industry.

The one to three day intensive courses are supported by the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council and have been designed to provide a new perspective to develop a sound understanding of the fundamental functioning of plants.

Full details of the current courses are shown on their website (<http://www.lancs.ac.uk/deptS/PSi>) together with the relevant registration forms.

EGU host successful Greenkeeping Masterclass

The EGU Greenkeeping Masterclass, held at Woodhall Spa, in early January gave over 60 greenkeepers the chance to hear papers from Rex Kimberley, Terralift Ireland Ltd; Kate Entwistle, The Turf Disease Centre; John Nicholson, John Nicholson Associates; Graeme Francis, then of the Hydroscape Group, and Sue Ingram and David Watling, of the Environment Agency, who discussed Water Abstraction.

Organised by Neil Cockbill of the Golf Services Division and chaired by Colin Spurr, Chairman of the Golf Services Committee, the Conference also involved some team tasks with eight groups splitting up and preparing short presentations on four greenkeeper related subjects.

The sessions were split by a superb dinner in the EGU Headquarters and excellent after dinner entertainment from a rules expert.



Roland wins first Clive Edwin Smith trophy

At the Essex Section AGM held at Channels Golf Club the Section were able to add an impressive piece of silverware to their trophy cabinet. Clive Smith had been a Member at Frinton-on-Sea Golf Club until his premature death aged 52 earlier this year and had also been a Member at several other clubs during his working life.

Wherever he played his golf Clive had always had a kinship with the Greenkeepers and Clive, a modest 16 handicapper had always appreciated that whenever he did have a good

round it was generally attributed to the Greenkeepers and the condition that they had prepared the course. His widow Carol who often walked the course with him when he played knew of his appreciation of Greenkeepers and has donated to the Section a magnificent silver cup to be awarded to the Section's "Golfer of the Year". The first winner of the Trophy was Roland Hughes of Forrester Park Golf Club.

Right: Mrs Carol Smith presents the "Clive Edwin Smith" Trophy to Roland Hughes (Forrester Park GC)

