

# The Muirfield Champion? Let me guess!

We are halfway through the "Major" season and, what do you know, Tiger Woods is halfway to the Grand Slam. It used to be considered all but an impossibility. The original Grand Slam, as completed by Bobby Jones, in 1930, comprised the US Amateur, US Open, British Amateur and Open Championship, but only Ben Hogan had previously got close to the modern day slam of Masters, US Open, The Open Championship and USPGA Championship winning three and, in those days, not being able to get back to the States in time to play in the USPGA. Tiger has made the impossible, seem possible, even probable.

He became the only man to hold all four at the same time when he won the 2000 US Open, Open Championship and USPGA then won the Masters in 2001 but some, not me I hasten to add, considered this to be an "imperfect" Slam as they hadn't been won in the same calendar year.

This year, having perhaps suffered a mental reaction to that imperfect Slam and gone a few Majors without winning, he is back on form and has already clinched the Masters and the US Open and he will tee up at Muirfield as overwhelming favourite.

That is not just because of his phenomenal ability but the fact that, even those who would consider themselves to be closest to him in terms of talent - Duval, Mickelson, Garcia and Els - seem to capitulate when they go head to head against the Tiger in a Major.

So is he a guaranteed winner at Muirfield, a course where the cream has invariably risen to the top? Well no, golf is probably the only sport where the top player in the world loses far more tournaments than he wins - a wonderful season, even for the likes of Jack Nicklaus, would always have been regarded as five wins out of probably around 22 events - although Tiger's strike rate is significantly higher than that.

It only takes one hole to dent severely an Major Championship challenge - do you recall Tiger's bunker problems at Royal Birkdale in '98 and gorse problems at Carnoustie in '99 which cost him probable victories. Even then he came within a couple of shots of Mark O'Meara and Paul Lawrie. Since then, however, Tiger has developed the knack of keeping the ball in play and not having to play outrageous shots to make a score. He can have an off week when the ball doesn't run for him and the putts don't disappear, as at Royal Lytham last year, but his "average" is better than most rivals' "brilliant" and if he is within striking range by Sunday he doesn't often fail...

if he's atop the leaderboard at any stage of the week, forget it, he's already home and dry.

So a win at Muirfield would complete three legs of the 'perfect' Slam and who would then bet against him at the USPGA?

**Scott  
MacCallum**  
Editor

## A unique treble for Kingsdown GC

Members, staff, family and friends gathered recently at Kingsdown Golf Club to celebrate a unique treble. The Club, which was founded in 1881 and is the second oldest club in the West of England, was celebrating yet another ground breaking record.

Two of the Green staff have already served over 25 years, and Mark Ford, appointed Head Greenkeeper in 1989, was celebrating the completion of his 25 years service. Led by Club Captain, David Rawstrone, tributes were paid to Mark and his staff and it was clear that such collective loyalty has played a major part in ensuring the reputation of Kingsdown as one of the premier courses in Wiltshire.

Mark, who joined Kingsdown when he left school in Corsham,



Head Greenkeeper Mark Ford (centre) with his staff, Phil Jones (26 years service) and Dave Seabright who has completed 27 years service at Kingsdown

trained at Lackham and Cannington Colleges and is a fully Qualified Greenkeeper and NVQ Assessor for the Institute

of Greenkeeping.

He was runner-up in the national Greenkeeper of the Year competition in 1997.

## BIGGA looks to the Future

The first meeting of BIGGA's Futures Sub-Committee took place at BIGGA HOUSE in May. As its name suggests the future for both the individual greenkeeper and the profession will be the theme for the Sub-Committee.

In setting it up, BIGGA's Board of Management is looking to generate fresh ideas and proposals on the way forward for both the Association and the profession and to secure greater member input. The Sub-Committee is set to meet twice a year under the chairmanship of Elliott Small and its members will embrace modern technology to work as groups between meetings on agreed topics. The first topics being considered are the Development of the



Profession, Education and Training and Communication with the Industry and the Game. Recommendations from the Sub-Committee will be subject to Board of Management consideration and approval.

Members are welcome to convey their individual views to members of the Sub-Committee on the above or any other relevant topics. Members of the Sub-Committee are Elliott Small, Chairman - Tulliallan Golf Club, Richard Andrews -

Highgate Golf Club, James Braithwaite - Long Ashton Golf Club, Andy Campbell MG CGCS- De Vere Carden Park, Jonathan Cleland - Helensburgh Golf Club, Euan Grant - St Andrews, Duncan McGilvray - Potters Bar Golf Club, Billy McMillan - Mannings Heath Golf Club, Huw Morgan MG-Wilderness Golf Club, Andrew Pledger - The Hertfordshire Golf Club, John Ross - Laleham Golf Club, Peter Wisbey - Woodhall Spa Golf Club.

## Charterhouse maps out its future in detail

Philip Threadgold, a founding Director of Charterhouse Turf Machinery, has announced plans for the company's future development and expansion.

Philip, who for the last five years has been working for the company's parent, Redexim Charterhouse, setting up the North American operation, took over at the helm of Charterhouse this January.

Speaking at a press lunch in The Reform Club, London Philip said, "Charterhouse Turf Machinery should be seen as a group of four mini-companies operating within the grounds

care and landscaping sphere. As with any diverse operation, some people only know us for one of our ranges or products. We are strongly associated with the Verti-Drain, which has become a generic term for deep aeration, but in fact we have no less than 60 other products in the Professional Turf Machinery Division! We aim to project an image that better reflects our breadth and depth, which means significant, positive changes. That's why we feel as if we're looking far ahead to the 22nd Century."

He has already implemented plans to move Charterhouse forward, while maintaining operational control of Redexim Charterhouse USA.

"My job, aided by my dedicated staff, is to integrate and maximise our resources, and exceed customer expectations. I



Above: Philip Threadgold

have modified our field staff operation, so that sales people are now responsible for all products within their regions, rather than covering the whole country with just one line, as before. This means dealers see only one representative instead of three, and maximises efficiency. Our staff also relish their additional responsibilities."



## Golf's Environmental role gets boost from Minister

Scottish Golf took another step forward as the European leader in the field of environmental management of golf courses at Gleneagles Hotel recently.

The event was organised by the Scottish Golf Environment Group, where the Deputy Minister for Environment and Rural Development, Allan Wilson announced a new strategy for Golf and the Environment. The Group is funded by Scottish Natural Heritage, the SGU, the R&A and the Scottish Greenbelt Foundation.

"Scotland is endowed with over 530 golf courses - areas of permanent green space within cities, in greenbelts, along our coastlines, buffering nature reserves. These golf courses provide a very important function in the conservation of Scotland's rich natural heritage. In many cases they do this by their very presence, protecting areas from other forms of harder development. However, we are increasingly in need of golf courses to find ways to assist in the conservation of wildlife and habitats. We need Clubs to consider the needs of wildlife in their management and where possible to provide new habitats. I am pleased to say that many golf courses are taking this forward," said the Minister.

He went on to say that on the evidence of previous work, and the content of the new strategy, the golfing sector in Scotland was a leader in the field of environmental management.

During the day the Minister, along with representatives from the main golfing and environmental organisations



in Scotland, reinforced this message - that golf courses can be developed and managed in harmony with nature - for the benefit of golfers.

Duncan Weir of the R&A also gave a presentation which recognised the ongoing support of the R&A.

Following the launch of the Strategy, Environmental Excellence Awards were presented to four courses: Mortonhall Golf Club, Edinburgh; The Duke's Course, St Andrews, Fife; Pumpherston Golf Club, West Lothian and Fortrose and Rosemarkie Golf Club, Inverness-shire

They followed on from Elmwood, Gleneagles, Kilmacollm and Linlithgow who were among the first 12 in Europe to receive the Award in 2001.

The Environmental Awards are both a national and international award through the links between the Scottish Golf Environment Group and Committed to Green. It means that when awards are made in Scotland they are to a standard that is matched across Europe.

Many other courses across Scotland and throughout Europe are now working towards this standard. Cochrane Castle, Peebles and Ratho Park Golf Clubs received Environmental Certificates in recognition of their progress.

Details of the criteria to be met and further information on the Scottish Golf Environment Group can be obtained from Jonathan Smith on 0131 660 9480 or e-mail: scot-golf.wildlife@virgin.net

## SW/Wales Course Management Trophies

These are being held at Cumberwell Park on August 7, Salisbury & South Wilks on August 31 and Tredegar Park on August 28. Entry is by invitation and if you have not received one and would like to enter please contact Paula Humphries on 01288 352194

## Hayter's new MD

Derek N. Boulton is the new Managing Director at Hayter, taking over from the recently retired Tony Bourke. The appointment was announced by James C. Pelletier, CEO of Murray Inc.

The new MD has had wide experience of engineering, particularly in the automotive and diesel engine industries. He has held various senior positions with Cummins and Komatsu Cummins Engine Co. and has managed operations in the US, Africa and Japan among others. He served his mechanical engineering apprenticeship with British Leyland and holds Diplomas in Management Studies and Mechanical Engineering from Teeside Polytechnic and Bromsgrove College. In addition he received his MBA from INSEAD, Fontainebleau, one of Europe's leading business schools.

He is married with four sons and intends to relocate from the US to Bishop's Stortford at an early date.

"Mr. Boulton's wide business experience should give ample impetus to the next phase of Hayter's development. He is joining a company with a fine pedigree and is looking forward to building on the achievements of the past 55 years" said Kim Macfie, Sales & Marketing Director of Hayter.

## Myerscough Foundation Degree in Sportsturf Science

Continuing its tradition of innovation in the development and delivery of education and training in sportsturf, Myerscough College, near Preston in Lancashire, has successfully validated a new two year foundation degree in Sportsturf Science and Golf Course Management.

Building on the success of its well established Higher National Diploma, the Sportsturf Department at Myerscough will offer the Foundation Degree from this

September. Underpinned by a sandwich placement period, the qualification is targeted at those individuals seeking to develop operational, technical and management careers in sportsturf.

Crucially, the course will allow successful candidates to "top up" to Myerscough's full Degree award - (already firmly established as the only specific sportsturf degree in the UK) - with an additional year of study and two "new bridging modules" aimed at supporting those

"Honours" year students undertaking sportsturf research.

Colin Stanfield, Sportsturf Programme Leader at Myerscough said, "We are extremely proud of our provision for Sportsturf here at Myerscough, and our students are provided with wonderful facilities. A new 2 hectare sportsturf trial site is currently under development here, which will allow our students to benefit from hands on experimental and research work in close collaboration with the industry".

## John Deere awarded official supplier status

John Deere has been given official supplier status for the 2002 British Open at Muirfield. This means Deere is supplying course maintenance equipment for three of this year's major international golf tournaments in the UK - in addition to the Open, the Brabazon Course at The De Vere Belfry is being maintained by John Deere machines for both the Benson & Hedges International and the Ryder Cup.

John Deere's first Open as preferred machinery supplier was at last year's championship at Royal Lytham & St Annes. As part of a large fleet of course maintenance equipment, three of John Deere's new 3235B fairway mowers fitted with fairway tender conditioners (FTCs) were used without grass boxes, due to the efficiency of the FTC reels in cutting and recutting the fairway grass in one pass.

## Royal Inverdivot GC...

Strip Cartoonist of the Year [www.tonyhusband.co.uk](http://www.tonyhusband.co.uk)



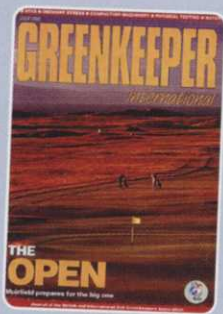


A LOOK BACK TO A DECADE AGO

# Back Lapping

FROM GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL

Take a time-honoured look back through the pages of Greenkeeper International from a decade ago



## JULY 1992

Key findings of the BIGGA/Golf Research Group maintenance survey were published in 'Golf Course Maintenance in the UK'. The survey showed the UK greenkeeping business to be of a considerable size, worth £187 million annually and employing over 10,000 people. Labour was the largest single component of this expenditure, accounting for £92 million annually. Capital spending was the second largest item accounting for £36 million. Two thirds of this spending goes on new machinery, one third on course projects such as extending tee boxes and re-laying greens. Golf came out of the survey looking very 'green'. On average a golf course spends £16 per acre per year on chemicals (pesticides and fertilisers) whereas arable agriculture spends £75. The survey suggested this as a very important area indeed, one where golf could say that it is environmentally friendly – all the more important in the current climate when new golf development is increasingly under attack as being evil incarnate.

With the Open Championship upon us, it is interesting to recall Chris Whittle's preparations for the 1992 Championship when Muirfield was previously host to the great event. Asked about his plans for the Open, Chris ventured that it was really business as usual, but more of it with more intensive maintenance.

"Obviously we are protecting the greens and not cutting them quite so low – normally at this time we would cut at 3/16 on an inch, mowing six days a week with three handcuts and three by machine, but at the moment we are cutting at 1/4", though obviously we shall gradually lower to 1/8 of an inch when the Championship approaches – it will all be very gradual, ending up with a twice daily cut using both hand machines and the Jacobsen Triplex, which we stipulated should have extra blades in the verticuts from 3/4 of an inch to 1/2 inch spacing."

Drought had been of particular concern. "We have a lot of browning-off and moss is a recurring problem. It's been difficult to eradicate as we've had no growth to speak of until a few weeks ago – just a typical East Lothian cold, dry spring – so we just get on with it. During the season we don't fertilise much, maybe two light feeds of an 8-0-0 on greens and tees, and this year we've dressed the fairways with a farmyard type slurry dressing, followed perhaps next year with a seaweed formula."

**Today Chris Whittle is Head Greenkeeper at Royal Birkdale**

# Old Tom watches over Textron delivery

The Grand Old Man of Golf, responsible for the modern look and design of the Old Course at St Andrews, watched over the delivery of the new batch of mowers to the Home of Golf, today.

In a move designed to support the highest level of on course presentation, the St Andrews Links Trust, which is responsible for the six public links courses at St Andrews, has awarded a fairways equipment contract to Scottish Grass Machinery (SGM). The delivery of the new equipment was overseen by Old Tom Morris, played by actor David Joy, who was custodian of the Links at St Andrews for over 40 years until 1902.

The 50 St Andrews Links Trust greenkeepers still base their working practices and methods on the principles of Tom Morris. Morris was influential in developing the present shape and form of the Old and New Courses, and is remembered for using sand to encourage the fine indigenous grasses that characterise the world famous Links. It is this same turf that the SGM supported equipment has been brought in to maintain, with the machines being used to cut around 250 acres of fairways twice a week, with the grass ranging in height from 9mm to 14 mm.

SGM will supply the Trust with Jacobsen mowers and equipment for the next five years on a three-year replacement cycle. The equipment will



be used exclusively by the Trust's greenkeepers to maintain and improve the high quality fairway environment at St Andrews Links. This is the latest in a series of investments in the Home of Golf by St Andrews Links Trust, which has also recently installed a £2.5 million irrigation system on the Links and has a programme in place to tackle coastal erosion from the North Sea.

The Trust's order with SGM has seen it take delivery of a range of equipment, including: Jacobsen LF3400 Fairway Mowers; Jacobsen AR250 Semi-Rough Finishing Mowers; Ransomes rotary mowers and trailed gang mowers; Ryan green and fairway aerators; Cushman general purpose trucksters and top

dressers for greens and fairways.

Gordon Moir, Links Superintendent at St Andrews Links Trust, said, "Through this agreement the Trust has secured the use of what we believe to be the best fairway mowers for our courses, the Jacobsen LF series, supported in the field by Scottish Grass Machinery personnel. We believe that the Trust has secured a deal which will benefit all golfers at St Andrews."

David McInroy, managing director, Scottish Grass Machinery, added, "It is a real feather in the Scottish Grass Machinery cap that our customer-focused approach in providing the right equipment, finance and maintenance packages has been rewarded with a significant new contract at the home of golf."

## New National Turfgrass Conference

Cranfield University at Silsoe and the National Turfgrass Foundation, a newly formed charitable trust with the aim of funding research projects and raising awareness of turfgrass research, have joined forces to stage a major conference.

Entitled 'In Pursuit of Excellence' the conference will be held at the Southport Theatre and Floral Hall Complex, and the Prince of Wales Hotel in Southport from November 18-21.

Martyn Jones, originator of the NTF and organiser of the Conference, announced that, "The Conference has been designed to augment the education programmes provided by BIGGA and the IOG by focusing on the results of recent and current research into a wide range of turfgrass topics. Delegates from all backgrounds who wish to keep abreast of the latest developments will receive up-to-date information from internationally renowned researchers, agronomists and educators from all over the world. This is the largest programme to date and will feature 25 speakers, sharing their vast knowledge on 36 topics."

Among the line up of speakers are Dr Stephen Baker, Professor Joseph Vargas, Jr., Dr Alan Gange, Professor Al Turgeon, Dr Kate Entwistle, Professor Karl Danneberger, Stanley Zontek, Professor Bill Adams and Professor Peter Dernoeden.

Presentations cover a range of subjects, including recent research from Newcastle upon Tyne University into enhancing drainage rates by the use of electrokinetic geosynthetics, and details of a UK golf green construction specification. The effectiveness of plant growth regulators and the emergence of new diseases are other highly topical subjects.

Environmental management of links courses, and turfgrass stress management will be of particular interest to some greenkeepers. Turf managers who wish to undertake a programme of advanced education or who would like to learn how they might contribute to turfgrass research will also benefit enormously.

"Those who have attended similar programmes will be aware of the tremendous knowledge that can be gained, not only directly from the presentations but also from socialising with the speakers and fellow delegates during out-of-conference hours. Greenkeepers will also have an opportunity to discuss 'The Vintage Years' with Walter Woods, OBE and Jack McMillan, MBE. In addition to the comprehensive learning programme, entertainment has been organised for each evening to help delegates and speakers relax in preparation for the following day," said Martyn.

For further details contact Martyn Jones on Tel. 01995 670675 or email: NTFoundation@aol.com

## Promotion for Textron's Glynn

Glynn Patrick, who recently rejoined the Textron group as Sales Director for Europe, Middle East and Africa, has been appointed Executive Director, Sales and Marketing.

As part of this co-ordinated drive to achieve market domination of these sectors, his new post includes responsibility for Product Management and Communications & Promotions. He will also deputise for Managing Director, Steve Chicken when business commitments result in his absence from the Ipswich head office.

"I am relishing the challenge of taking the business forward and

building on the success of our corporate branding initiative where we have successfully positioned our orange Jacobsen equipment exclusively in the golf sector, while our green Ransomes brand provides a full range of specialised products for our municipal clients," said Glynn



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## St Andrews Bay Agreement

Yamaha Motor (UK) Ltd have signed an exclusive three year contract to supply the St Andrews Bay Golf Resort and Spa, St Andrews Scotland with over 40 Yamaha Golf Cars.

St Andrews Bay will take delivery of their fleet of Yamaha Ultima 48-volt electric golf cars and petrol service vehicles in June and July this year.

## World Congress

The four World Scientific Congress of Golf will take place at St Andrews in the week immediately following The Open Championship at Muirfield.

Among the topics which will be discussed are golf course construction, turf grass breeding, pests, biotechnology and golf environment while the week will also include golf at Kingsbarns, as well as an alternative Ryder Cup, a three club tournament and a range of other social activities.

Further information, including a booking form can be obtained on the World Scientific Congress of Golf Trust website: [www.golfacts.org](http://www.golfacts.org)

## John Deere Championship tees off

Twenty-six golf clubs will be taking on the challenging Brabazon course at The Belfry in August, having won their regional qualifier in the inaugural 2002 John Deere Team Championship golf tournament.

The competition is being well supported by BIGGA regional administrators, and is likely to raise over £9000 to support the Association's educational activities - John Deere will be donating £25 for every British team entered at the qualifying stage.

Each winning team from the regional qualifiers - consisting of two members of the club's board or committee, plus the club professional and greenkeeper - goes through to the Great Britain and Ireland national final at The Belfry on August 19, a month ahead of the Ryder Cup, to play for a place in the world final at Grayhawk Golf Club in Scottsdale, Arizona, USA in November. Teams will be joined at The Belfry by a representative of their local John Deere dealer. By the end of May, 15 regional qualifying tournaments had been completed, involving 207 British and 55 Irish teams - with the host club's team winning in four. Another 11 of



The photograph shows a team member teeing off at the 2002 Team Championship regional qualifying golf tournament organised by John Deere Midlands dealer Henton & Chattell at Cotgrave Place Golf Club in Stragglethorpe, Nottingham, in May, which attracted 23 teams - the biggest entry to date - and started with breakfast at John Deere Limited's headquarters in Langar.

these dealer organised competitions are due to take place in June and July, with over 190 more teams planning to take part.

Winning golf clubs so far include Currawest from Loughrea in Co Galway and Thurles from Co Tipperary in Ireland; Ardglass from Co Down in Northern Ireland; and in England, Boothferry in East Yorkshire; Bowood Park from

Camelford in Cornwall; Carden Park in Cheshire; Chipping Norton in Oxfordshire; Felixstowe Ferry in Suffolk; Glen Lodge, Bawburgh in Norwich; Pryors Hayes from Osocroft, Chester; Ramsdale Park from Calvaton, Nottingham; Rodway Hill from Highnam, Gloucester; Sherborne in Dorset; Wheatley in Doncaster; and Windmill Village in Coventry.



Address letters to: **Scott MacCallum, Editor, Greenkeeper International, BIGGA HOUSE, Aldwark, Alne, York YO61 1UF**, or email them to: [scott@bigga.co.uk](mailto:scott@bigga.co.uk)

## That Old Chestnut

When Duncan McGilvray wrote his original letter late last year, he hoped for a response and he's had some. However he also knows the vast majority of the membership never even read it, as witnessed at a recent seminar at Carden Park.

It's that old chestnut apathy again. Look at the job section and throw the magazine to one side. Well at least we have a mag and that's because we have an Association, one that was formed by determined men for the betterment of us all. Look how far we've come in such a short time. BIGGA was formed at exactly the right time as the laws were starting to get more stringent and some would say restrictive, but in reality they are being put in place to safe guard us in what is becoming a litigious society.

Look at the amount of maintenance facilities there are now compared to five years ago - a bit different to sheds I would say. Why? Legislation and the BIGGA informing us of it that's why and that's just one example.

It's also good to see BIGGA and GTC together about time!

Education will always be the key to professionalism but nowadays it's as much to do with legality as it is to do with practicality and when it comes to the law apathy and ignorance are not an option.

Dave Goodridge, Denbigh GC, Clwyd, Wales

## A need for Ken's Key Skills Corner

After reading the responses to Ken Richardson's article on grammar basics, I feel that I must respond in Ken's defence. I simply fail to understand why Ken has been attacked.

Those attackers are obviously unaware of the fact that one in four adults in the UK have some kind of literacy problem (Government figures). For representatives of the industry to state that none of its members need this kind of support is simply blinkered and ill informed.

I work with many young (and often older) Greenkeepers who require extensive support in Literacy and Numeracy. Some of these students do not know how to form a sentence or produce a simple letter using standard layouts.

I often spend several lessons at the start of each academic year teaching students the basics of the metric sys-

tem so I can cover areas such as calibration later in the course.

Many students do not know how many millilitres are in a litre or how many square metres are in a hectare.

Those of you who are now thinking that this is because they have learned the imperial system can forget it, as most students have no concept of the imperial system at all.

I have extensive contacts within Further Education Colleges and they all report similar problems.

One of the fastest growing areas of provision in F.E. Colleges is for basic skills and must serve to indicate the scale of the problem in all sectors of UK industry. The government has invested heavily to raise standards of I.T., Application of number and Communication skills.

Indeed you may have noted the recent television advertisements

encouraging people to seek help in improving these key areas.

For Greenkeepers to accuse Ken of dumbing down is outrageous, how are we expected to encourage people to seek help if they perceive that they are stupid and should have learnt these skills when at school.

Those with high levels of literacy who find such articles condescending should simply ignore them and get on with their own lives and not interfere with those who try to offer some small degree of help to others.

I would like to end by saying, "Well done Ken", I hope you continue to offer support to those in our industry who are academically less able and in doing so raise the standard of education for all.

Andrew Wight, Lecturer in Greenkeeping Studies, Oaklands College, St. Albans Herts

## Controversial bunker issue receives response

Andy Law's article "Shifting Sands" in May's Greenkeeper International raises some controversial issues.

Firstly, why must bunkers be visible? There are bunkers all over the world with blind bunkers: does this mean that they are architecturally flawed? And what of pot bunkers on our links courses that are basically holes with sand in the bottom?

Secondly, I cannot agree that bunker sand should "be light in colour". May I suggest that the current desire for light sand was sparked by the high profile television coverage of American venues such as Augusta National. (Incidentally, this also increased the pressure on greenkeepers for faster and faster greens.)

Up until about 20 years ago, there

were very few inland golf courses in this country with light coloured sand. Personally, I would like to see a return to tan coloured sands which are not only less obtrusive, but conceal contamination better than light sands, and at the same time remaining perfectly visible to the golfer.

Richard Andrews, Highgate Golf Club, London



## It never rains – it pours!

Last year, the Greenkeeping Support Team at the PGA Volvo Championship really earned their free shirt and cap in 2001 by slog-ging it out in 80 degrees plus. This year they were warm enough but mainly because they carried out their duties (as well as a rake and a squeegee) wearing waterproofs. It precipitated down!

Saturday wasn't too bad, pretty wet but interspersed with sunny spells, but Sunday. Let me tell you about Sunday. The first ominous sign was when Craig Small, from Chris Kennedy's Greenkeeping Team, delivered 30 squeegees to our tent.

At first it seemed that Chris had been over cautious, early matches were returning with the squeegee being reported as "something extra to be carried and never to be used".

Wishful thinking if ever I heard it! Sure enough it rained steadily for a while and then came the first down-pour. Not too bad, just a hailstorm turning nicely to torrential rain. The greens however were up to it and only minimal work with the squeegees was needed. Play continued without a problem for about half an hour or so and then came the second tremen-

dous downpour. Greens started to be awash, bunkers started to flood. Chris Kennedy and his Staff were magnificent. And so were the Support Team, no panic, just hard work at a speed. All available Members (those who had finished their matches) and anyone else available in our tent was armed with a squeegee and dispatched to distant parts of the course to drain bunkers and to keep the greens playable. I would add at this point that there wasn't one single moan, even though wives and girlfriends were abandoned and everyone got on with it and helped.

The results stand for themselves, despite such rain the Championship finished more or less on time and the viewing public were hardly aware that there had been such problems. A brilliant achievement all round and I know that the PGA European Tour Tournament Director, David Garland, as well as Course Manager, Chris Kennedy, would like to use these columns to pass on their appreciation to the BIGGA Greenkeeping Support Team. Well Done!

Derek Farrington, South East RA

## In agreement with Ronnie

Having read Ronnie Bunting's article on environmental management in the April issue of Greenkeeper International I felt compelled to put pen to paper. I was particularly interested in Ronnie's comments about fusarium and that "leaving it alone" may be an option. I would like to say that leaving it alone is indeed a very good option. I have not sprayed fungicide on my greens for five years on the basis that it is a very expensive, harmful to the essential and beneficial micro organisms and labour intensive.

Ronnie is spot on in pointing these aspects out.

Once the decision to spray no fungicide had been made my club committee were informed and since then support has come from the club's agronomy advisor. What I have observed is that when fusarium attacks come they have become less damaging with every passing year. I believe a sensible maintenance programme has had a strong impact, however, I also believe that the turf on my greens is fighting back and its natural immune system is getting stronger each year. What I do know is that, yes, my greens are left scarred but no more scarred than had I sprayed fungicide upon noticing the first disease patch. Because, as most of us know, if you haven't sprayed before you see the first few patches

you're only going to spray a curative treatment on your attack and this will not prevent scarring.

You can argue that your scarring will not be so widespread, but maybe, if you leave the disease alone and let the green's natural defences work it may become strong enough not to need chemical support. It is an important point to remember, you can only prevent scarring if you apply preventative treatments and this means spraying well before any sign of disease.

Don't be frightened of fusarium, leave it alone and be assured, greens do recover on their own and a sound maintenance programme does ensure as quick a return as possible to full grass coverage.

Andrew Phillips, Head Greenkeeper,  
Glynhir GC

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