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NEW



The world's only Greens Maintenance Cassette System for triple mowers!

Imagine being able to carry out almost any greens maintenance task with all the speed and ease that your greens triple gives you.

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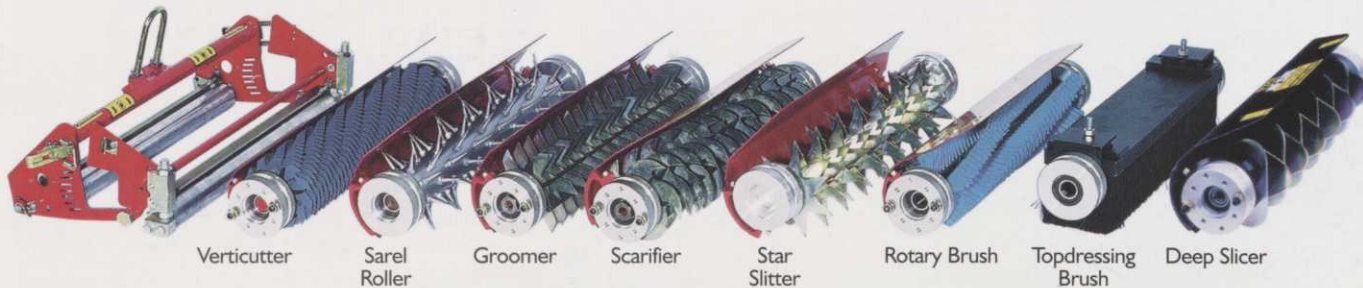
The amazing NEW Thatch-Away SUPA-SYSTEM is a totally unique concept. These revolutionary multi-purpose units will operate 8 different types of cassettes to handle all those jobs you never had time for before.

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Welcome

FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH

Well there we are, Harrogate has come and gone and we can look back on another week when the greenkeeping profession did itself proud.

From the Sunday afternoon, when delegates began to arrive for the National Education Conference, supported by the John Deere Team Championship, to the Thursday evening banquet when The Counterfeit Stones entertained everyone so royally, no-one could have anything but praise for the professionalism on display.

It has become almost commonplace to announce record attendance figures for BTME so you won't be surprised to hear that once again we had added to the numbers we announced last year. But the degree by which last year's totals were bettered augers well for the long term development of both BTME and ClubHouse, which made its Harrogate debut this year.

Over 5,500 people visited the Shows over the three days and, with many of those staying for more than one day, the overall attendance figure for the three days was well over 10,000. Last year we had just over 8,500, so that's a good measure of development.

But perhaps more importantly than the pure attendance stats were the comments from a large number of exhibitors about the level of business they had done during the week.

It would appear that, more than ever before, people were visiting the show with a view to placing orders, rather than merely investigating potential purchases. Exhibiting at Shows is an expensive business nowadays so if companies can look to the number of orders they took during Harrogate week they are more likely to make a decision to return next year, and not only that, perhaps increase the size of their stand.

It might be that the addition of ClubHouse to the mix has a lot to do with that as the people required to make large purchasing decisions may have been together during the week and decisions could be made much more quickly.

That is all good news for BIGGA as the more successful Harrogate can be the more the Association can plough back into the industry. And so it snowballs.

While it was good news just about all the way at Harrogate itself there was some extremely sad news which began to filter through the Halls from west of the Yorkshire town.

Jimmy McDonald MBE, who retired as Royal Lytham and St Annes Head Greenkeeper three years ago died in hospital following a short illness. There can be few men who have prepared a golf course for as many major events as Jimmy McDonald, and few men who have left such a positive impression on the industry they served. He had seen Open Championships, Ryder Cups, Curtis Cups, Senior Opens, Ladies' Opens and Amateur Championships and players in all of those events knew that they would be playing links golf at its best.

His legacy is carried on by the large number of Course Managers and Head Greenkeepers who were given their start by Jimmy and more than anyone, outside of his immediate family, they will miss him.

A full tribute to Jimmy McDonald MBE will appear in next month's magazine.

Scott MacCallum, Editor

ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE IOG

This year's annual conference of the IOG at Leicester Hilton Hotel, April 12 -14, covers a wide range of issues reflecting the diverse nature of grounds management.

Among the issues tackled will be the reduction in availability of pesticides under new EU legislation, managing water resources and IOG-funded research into electrokinetic processes in the management of sports turf conducted by the University of Newcastle.

The keynote address will be by David Payne, Director of Investment for Sport England.

Other issues tackled will be grass seed quality, artificial surfaces, multi-sport grounds and facility management, by James Mead of Millfield School, and

the new national stadium at Wembley, explained by Noel Jeffs, the Director of Operations.

On the third day of the conference, Monday, April 14, there is a strong local authority input with a focus on Best Value and contractors, composting waste and managing a local authority pitch improvement project.

Among the visits planned are a study tour to Leicester City FC Walkers Stadium and Leicester Tigers Stadium plus a visit to Loughborough University and the new ECB National Cricket Academy.

For booking information Tel: Charlotte Lambert on 01908 312511 or e-mail: iog(ff)iog.org

RANSOMES JACOBSEN

Thanks to the support of Ransomes Jacobsen BIGGA has produced a Machinery and Work Equipment Training and Assessment Manual which gives guidance to Golf Course Managers and Head Greenkeepers on training, assessment of competence, training providers and on qualifications and an Individual Record of Achievement.

Each Manual will include a disk so that managers will be able to produce Individual Records of Achievement for each member of their staff.

"BIGGA puts greenkeeper training at the top of its list of priorities, believing that training should start as soon as greenkeepers commence employment and that it should continue throughout their careers," explained

BIGGA's Education and Training Manager, Ken Richardson.

"Training in the safe use of golf course machinery is essential, not only to ensure high standards of golf course preparation and maintenance but also to ensure the safety of greenkeepers, golfers and the general public," he added

The Manual complements the recently introduced GTC Machinery Training Wall Chart and it will help to improve Health and Safety on the Golf Course.

Copies of the Manual will be distributed to all Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper members of BIGGA during February.

JOHN DEERE

John Deere dealer Godfreys from Sevenoaks, Kent, has entered a three year preferred supplier agreement with The Royal St George's Golf Club, host club of The 2003 Open Championship. This means John Deere will have supplied course maintenance equipment for three consecutive Opens, in 2001 at Royal Lytham & St Annes, in 2002 at Muirfield and now again in 2003.

Godfreys delivered its first machine to the club last October, a 2500 triple greens mower.

Two further 2500s, a 3235B fairway mower, a 2653A mower for tees & bunker surrounds and a 48hp 4700 compact tractor are also now being delivered. The club will seek to add to its range of John Deere equipment as existing machines need to be updated.

Having conducted extensive trials with John Deere and Godfreys over the past few months, the club has been impressed by the quality and reliability of the machines, as well as the support service offered.

"These factors, alongside John Deere's performance

at major championships, have helped clinch the deal," said John Rolleston, Godfreys dealer principal.

Course Manager, Neil Metcalf, said "We have been most impressed by the reliability of the John Deere machines, their high quality of cut and their adaptability working over our undulating links fairways and greens."



Past Chairman Richard Barker, a guest at the East Anglia Section Turkey Trot and AGM with Section Chairman Steve Millard, the winner of the Ernie Hart Award Peter Howard and Section Secretary Ian Willett. Richard was amazed at the Section's support of the event with 80 attending. To see the results of the Texas Scramble see 'Around the Green'.

Email press releases and new product updates to: scott@bigga.co.uk

DEVON AND CORNWALL SECTION



An impressive turnout of Devon and Cornwall members met at Okehampton Golf Club for the Section's annual Christmas tournament and meal.

Snow greeted the golfers but once they had completed their rounds they were soon warmed by the fine meal and the humour of the Section's resident comedian Tank Sherman.

The occasion also featured the final event administered for the Section by Richard Whyman before he took up his position of Course Manager at Burnham and Berrow Golf Club and the occasion was marked by a presentation to Richard made by Section Chairman, Cary Rawlings.

STRI AWARD

Following an assessment in December the STRI has been awarded the Investors in People Standard.

The formal assessment included a full review of the STRI's planning processes and training and development systems. Very positive feedback highlighted details of good practice within the STRI across the entire range of principles set by the standard.

The Assessor praised the STRI's strong commitment to staff development and its policy of equal opportunities.

"People within the organisation feel that their contribution to the STRI is recognised and that they are valued; during interviews I was told many times that people enjoyed working at STRI"

Dr Gordon McKillop, the Chief Executive, praised all STRI staff for their contributions and sustained commitment over the last few years in working towards achieving the award. He also expressed his considerable gratitude to Linda Howell of Business Link for West Yorkshire for her guidance, support and encouragement throughout the entire process.

SISIS



Jason Briggs, Midlands Territory Manager for SISIS Equipment has been named as "SISIS Territory Manager of the Year".

The annual award is given to the member of the Sales Team who proves his excellence in territory management and shows the biggest improvement in sales.

The photograph shows Jason receiving a cheque from Joint Managing Directors Roger and William Hargreaves.

TERRY BUCHEN TO TEACH AT HARVARD

He has grown-in more than 13 golf courses, consulted on nearly 100 others and worked as the agronomist for the PGA Tour as well as some of the country's top golf and country clubs. Now, Terry Buchen, CGCS, MG, will teach what he has learned over the past three decades to Harvard University students.

Buchen, President of Golf Agronomy International in Williamsburg, Va., will teach at Harvard Design School's Golf Course Design and Development Institute on March 25. He will speak on golf course maintenance costs and how to evaluate a maintenance operating budget in relation to a course's size and how it is designed. Addressing staffing levels, wages and

benefits, equipment and irrigation repairs, utilities, drainage and key items like fertilisers, chemicals, grass seed and sod, Buchen will also present a number of cost-saving tips — something he is well-known for in the golf industry.

"Teaching at Harvard is a unique experience that I look forward to, especially to interact with the Design School students about real-world playing conditioning standards and how design influences golf course maintenance operating costs," said Buchen, who has spoken at regional and national conferences around the country and in Great Britain, where he is a favourite of the British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association.

NEW COMPANY

Bob Cook, previously known for his work with Parkers, spanning over two decades, and then more recently for Farmura, has announced the launch of his new company, T Parker and Sons (Turf Management 2003) Ltd.

Bob stated that the new Parkers has a few similarities to the old company being that it will still be a family run business with himself and his daughter Nickola and that also, as before, Parkers will be providing quality products coupled with efficient and effective service.

The Parkers name was chosen by the partnership because of Bob's close links with the original company and also the already excellent reputation that Parkers has gained.

Bob will be concentrating on Kent and parts of Sussex and Surrey to supply a wide range of products for all your turf care needs.

For sales or more information please contact Bob on 07798 866345 or 01233 642646

VITAX



Vitax has appointed Stephen Millar as the company's new Technical Representative for Scotland.

Stephen, brings 17 years greenkeeping experience to the post, and comes directly from East Boldon Golf Club, in

Tyne and Wear, where he was Course Manager for over five years. He is looking forward to the challenge of selling new products, and those which he has used himself over the years and knows well.

As a married man with three children, Stephen is also looking forward to settling back into his hometown of Forfar, near Dundee for good.

"I was born here, my family are here, and I trained at Forfar Golf Club before taking my first professional greenkeeping post at Hartsbourne Country Club in London," he explained

"I've been back and forth from England to Scotland ever since, and now, with responsibility for the whole of Scotland I have the chance to travel in my own country."

Clive Williams, Sales and Amenity Manager for Vitax said that Stephen's greenkeeping background coupled with his strong, regional roots made him the ideal candidate to develop the company's interests in Scotland.

ROLAWN



Davina Turner has been promoted to the position of Distribution Manager. Davina joined the company in January 2001 and has successfully worked towards increasing efficiency while building a more flexible and customer friendly operation.

Phil Cuthbert, Rolawn's Distribution Director said, "We can maintain and build on our success only by meeting the challenge of providing excellence in customer service. Doing so against a background of increased volumes and new transport legislation has created the need for change within Rolawn's Distribution Department. As Distribution Manager, Davina's role will be paramount in driving forward the future development of the company's logistics strategy."

MYERSCOUGH COLLEGE



Myerscough College has launched Myerscough Turf Management (MTM) a complete advisory and consultancy service to the Sports Turf Industry.

The service will build on the expertise built up at Myerscough through some 20 years of

education and training in sportsturf. A wide range of skills and knowledge will be utilised, complemented by the superb range of specialist sportsturf equipment at the College's Turf Technology Unit. Allied to this will be the College's extensive mix of facilities ranging from state-of-the-art information technology equipment to fully-equipped laboratories for analytical purposes.

Wayne Roberts, of Myerscough Sportsturf, who will lead the new service, commented, "This is an opportunity to develop existing and new relationships with members of the industry, by providing a complete 'one-stop' service for all sportsturf surface

requirements from introductory training through to research and development."

Wayne adds, "This work will complement our existing educational provision and allow us to deal effectively with the ever increasing demands made of us for this type of service which we have previously only been able to resolve on an ad hoc basis. We see our service as complementary to those already existing in the industry, within which we have established numerous commercial links."

The 'one-stop shop' approach will allow agronomy-based visits and on-site testing where existing work practices, maintenance regimes and good practice can be developed and enhanced, fully supported by laboratory and analytical services where required.

For further information on Myerscough Turf Management, contact Wayne Roberts on: 01995 642447/642222 or e-mail: wroberts@myerscough.ac.uk.

TURFTRAX

TurfTrax, is hosting a number of regional workshops to provide baseline solutions to solve turf troubles.

The events, to be held throughout March, at venues between Cheltenham and York, are for all those involved in sportspitch and golf course management and the renovation decision-making chain, from senior club or local authority managers, to greenkeepers.

"We estimate that the UK sports industry from school playground level to the Premier League loses between £600-800 million every year as a result of poor playability or postponements," says TurfTrax Managing Director, Justin Smith.

"However, most of this could be avoided through simple planning and adopting scientifically sound, remediation and management practices, which in many cases need not cost a fortune.

"There simply is no reason why sports turf shouldn't be able to cope with extremes of weather. Anyone who is experiencing problems at present needs to re-examine their pitch or course construction, or drainage system."

TurfTrax is hosting the six free regional workshops to present those facing up to the problems of poor playability with some answers. They will identify what are the top-ten turf-troubles and provide some simple solutions to avoid these recurring.

They will also help decision-makers draw up a simple strategy to follow when sourcing contractors and agreeing specifications for remediation or reconstruction. Finally, it will give delegates a chance to air and discuss their own problems with TurfTrax's consultative team.

The workshops, which start at 9.30 and finish with lunch, are at:-

| | |
|------------------------------|------------|
| Leicester City Football Club | 11th March |
| Haydock Park Racecourse | 12th March |
| Twickenham RFC | 17th March |
| Wyboston, St Neots | 19th March |
| BIGGA HOUSE, York | 20th March |
| Cheltenham Racecourse | 25th March |

For an invitation, please contact Sarah Mason, on 01234 821750, or e-mail sarah.mason@turftrax.co.uk.

CHARTERHOUSE



Charterhouse Turf Machinery has promoted Nick Darking to Sales Manager. He has many years' experience of the turf machinery industry, and his appointment at Charterhouse comes during a period of strong, ongoing growth for the business.

"One of Nick's first tasks now is to help devise the company's strategy for launching an exciting line-up of new products being introduced early in 2003," says Charterhouse Turf Machinery Director, Philip Threadgold.

"The last 12 months have seen tremendous growth for the company, as more and more turf professionals appreciate the benefits of the high work-rate machinery we offer."

Celebrating their 20th Anniversary this year, Charterhouse Turf Machinery are renowned for having introduced to the UK the Verti-Drain deep aerator, penetrating compacted ground to depths of over 40cm (16in). The product portfolio also includes overseeders, scarifiers, corers, core collectors, pedestrian turf aerators, and drift-free chemical applicators. Most recently, Charterhouse unveiled a new range of powered post hole borers.

In a separate development, Charterhouse Turf Machinery continue to grow their operation in the USA, with Paul Hollis recently having been appointed as Sales Manager of the company's US subsidiary.

ALPHA PLUS GROUNDSCARE

Alpha Plus Groundcare at Inverurie, near Aberdeen, is the latest recruit to John Deere's nationwide grounds care dealer network, covering north and north east Scotland.

The John Deere range of professional and golf & turf equipment will now be sold by Alpha Plus to golf clubs, local authorities and contractors in the area.

The business was established in 1991 by Managing Director, Steve Matthews, primarily to sell facilities management equipment to municipalities throughout Scotland, from its head office in West Lothian.

"The opportunity to take on the John Deere range of machines came at a time when we were looking to expand and set up premises in Aberdeenshire," said Steve.

"The timing couldn't have been better, and we now have the facilities to extend and develop our customer base. Our aim is to become the major supplier of grounds care equipment in the north of Scotland."

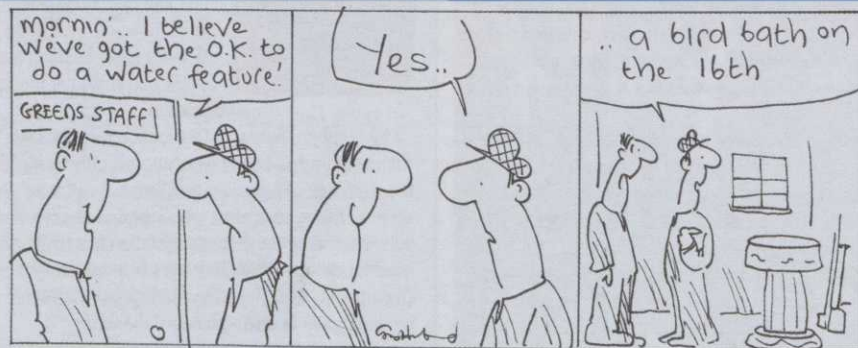
Alpha Plus employs about 30 staff between the two premises. An experienced team is responsible for John Deere equipment, sales, parts and services support at the Inverurie site, headed by Dealer Manager Raymond Warrender.



Scottish Region Patrons together with the winners of the 2002 Patrons' Awards at the annual lunch held in Stirling just before Christmas.

Royal Inverdivot GC...

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



Can you name this well known Head Greenkeeper and Section Secretary? Answers on a postcard to Mr Steve Dixon, c/o East of Scotland Section

NEW BENEFITS FOR 2003

SILVER KNIGHT RESCUE

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Education



Greenkeeper Education and Development Fund

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Golden and Silver Key Membership is available to both companies and individuals.

For details, please contact Neil Thomas on 01347 833800 or via neil@bigga.co.uk

Golden Key Supporters



Golden Key Company Members

| Company | Tel: Head Office |
|----------------------------|------------------|
| Gem Professional | 01254 356611 |
| John Deere Ltd | 01949 860491 |
| Hayter Ltd | 01279 723444 |
| Massey Ferguson (AGCO Ltd) | 02476 851292 |
| PGA European Tour | 01344 842881 |
| Rigby Taylor Ltd | 01204 377777 |
| Scotts UK Professional | 01473 830492 |
| Ransomes Jacobsen Ltd | 01473 270000 |
| The Toro Company/Lely UK | 01202 319987 |
| TurfTrax Group Ltd | 01722 434000 |

Golden Key Individual Members

J H Fry; J H Greasley; WJ Rogers; David S Robinson; Stuart Townsend; Douglas Smith; Andrew Cornes; Andy Campbell MG, CGCS; Roger Barker; Iain A MacLeod

Silver Key Supporters



Silver Key Company Members

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| Ernest Doe & Sons | 01254 380311 |
| General Legal Protection Ltd | 01904 611600 |
| Heath Lambert Group | 0113 246 1313 |
| RainBird | 01273 891326 |
| Syngenta Professional Products | 0041 613 233 028 |
| Wolf Proline | 01495 306600 |

Silver Key Individual Members

Clive A Archer; John Crawford; Bruce Cruickshank; Douglas G Duguid; Alan Holmes; Robert Maibusch MG; Richard S Mullen; Elliott R Small; Steven Tierney; CJ Yeaman; Richard Lawrence; Clive Osgood; David Robinson; Richard Stillwell; Stephen Dixon; Ian Semple; Paul Jenkins

After a tiring but successful week in Harrogate, Sami and I are turning out thoughts to Continue to Learn 2004, which will be, again, supported by the John Deere Team Championship. The theme for the Harrogate week will be 'Golf, Sport and Business'. We hope to look back in time and see if things were really better 20 years ago, look at the present and the problems and pressures on the game and on greenkeepers and attempt to look forward to see what changes may occur in the next twenty years. Please let us know if you wish to see a particular speaker or subject.

We had a wide range of speakers at Harrogate in 2003, both greenkeepers and speakers from outside the Industry. We had some excellent talks and I would like to thank all those who took part. The Careers Fair was successful, in its first year, and, thanks to the support of TORO, it will be expanded and enhanced for 2004.

Watch out for further announcements in future editions of this magazine.

Greenkeeper Membership



Following a vote at the Annual General Meeting, held in Harrogate, on January 22, all those wishing to join the Association as Greenkeeper Members, after February 1, 2003, will need a minimum qualification of N/SVQ Level 2 Sportsturf or equivalent qualification. This change to the Constitution will not affect current

members who will retain their current membership category. Anyone wishing to join the Association after February 1, 2003 who does not hold a minimum qualification of N/SVQ Level 2 Sportsturf or equivalent qualification will be offered membership of the Association and will be called Members, i.e. not Greenkeeper Members, until such time as they become qualified.

Non-Greenkeeper, Members will pay a reduced membership fee of £10 less than the equivalent Greenkeeper Member rate. This reflects the lower recommended salaries for unqualified personnel. Additionally, Non Greenkeeper Members will not be given voting rights nor will be allowed to take up office at National, Regional or Section level.

Regional Training

There are still some places left on the Spring Series of Regional Training Courses. However, due to lack of support, we have had to cancel some courses. Courses with places still available are:

| | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| The New Supervisor | Newark Golf Club | 12 & 13 February |
| Further Management Skills | Manchester Airport | 19 & 20 February |
| Abrasive Wheels | De Vere Carden Park | 26 February |
| Further Management Skills | Luton Airport | 26 & 27 February |
| Further Computer Skills | Berkhamstead Golf Club | 4 & 5 March |
| Project Management | Ross on Wye Golf Club | 5 & 6 March |
| Presenting a Professional Image | De Vere Carden Park | 20 March |
| Budgets and Finance | De Vere Carden Park | 16 & 17 April |

Remember that each one day course costs £30 + Vat and each two day course costs £60 + VAT thanks to massive subsidies from the BIGGA Education and Development Fund. All Golden Key contributors also have Training Vouchers, which they issue to their customers. As each training voucher is worth £30 + VAT, you could get your training free of charge.

Courses cancelled due to insufficient numbers are:

| | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| Basic Computer Skills | Old Fold Manor Golf Club | 19 & 20 February |
| Coaching Skills | Potters Bar Golf Club | 6 & 7 March |
| Basic Computer Skills | Southerndown Golf Club | 18 & 19 March |

BIGGA Golf Environment Competition

I have just been informed of the excellent news that two companies have agreed to sponsor the BIGGA Golf Environment Competition 2003. Following the announcement by the R&A to continue to support the Competition in 2003, Scotts UK Professional and Syngenta Professional Products have agreed, jointly, to sponsor the Competition, initially for 2003. Further detail of sponsors, sponsorship and detail of the Competition will appear in the March edition of this magazine.



Golf Environment Competition

Machinery and Work Equipment Training and Assessment Manual



Designed to complement the GTC Wall Chart, the Machinery and Work Equipment Assessment and Training Manual will be sent out to all BIGGA Course Managers/Head Greenkeepers, later this month. Sponsored by Ransomes Jacobsen, the Manual has been designed to assist Course Managers/Head Greenkeepers in the training and assessment of their staff and to give each member of staff a full record of training, assessment and competence.

Many Course Managers have already been visited by

Environmental Health Inspectors who have asked to see written records of training, assessment and competence. Be prepared by ensuring that all of your staff are given appropriate training and assessment of competence and that you keep full, written records.

Higher Education Scholarships supported by Ransomes Jacobsen



Several requests for Higher Education Scholarships 2003 have arrived at BIGGA House. Thanks to Ransomes Jacobsen, there are funds available to

support Greenkeeper Members of BIGGA who are about to enter Higher Education (N/SVQ Level 4, HNC, HND, BSc, MSc). The closing date for applications for the academic year starting in October 2003 is 2 June 2003.

TORO Student of the Year Competition

Application forms for the TORO Student of the Year Competition have been sent to all Training Providers. Applications must be returned to BIGGA House by 9 May 2003. Regional Finals will be held in Edinburgh, Manchester, St Albans, Cheltenham and Cambridgeshire during the week commencing 30 June 2003.

Get your entry in now and you could be following Murray Long, the 2002 Winner to the United States in January 2004.



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- Successfully complete all ten, together with a research project which can be carried out at your own sports venue and you will be awarded an MSc in Sports Surface Technology. You can take up to five years to complete the course.
- Our MSc in Sports Surface Technology is also available as a one-year full-time course. Apply now for entry in October 2003.

Supported by the Institute of Groundsmanship, British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association and the Football Association as well as other leading professional bodies and industrial organisations. This qualification will enhance your future career and salary prospects.

Bursaries available

For further details please contact Sue O'Neill, Student Enquiries, Cranfield University, Silsoe, Bedford MK45 4DT.
Tel: 01525 863319 Fax: 01525 863399
Email: StudentEnquiries.silsoe@cranfield.ac.uk
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Rachael Palmer from Membership Services would like to welcome 36 new members to the Association and asks "do you do it with a debit?"

How well do you know the people who work for the Association?

In this new series we give you a chance to learn a little more about a member of BIGGA's Headquarters staff



Sarah Sowerby

Position:
PA to Executive Director

What does your role involve?
Providing a secretarial service to the Executive Director, organisation and administration of BIGGA Golf Day and National Championship

How long have you worked for the Association?
Five years

Where were you born and brought up?
Ripon, North Yorks

Where did you work before you joined BIGGA?
Yorkshire Television, Leeds

What are your hobbies?
Going to the cinema/theatre; dining at the Drum & Monkey; being amused by my seven nieces/nephews

What is your favourite food?
Paella

What is your favourite film?
In no order: Shrek/Goldfinger/Jaws/The Thomas Crowne Affair

What was the last book you read?
Knots & Crosses by Ian Rankin

Who is your all time hero?
My Mum

What was the best event you've ever attended?
The Wimbledon Championships each and every year I've been (89/98/99/02)

What is your claim to fame? (None not acceptable)
Sitting next to Beppe (from Eastenders) in the theatre while watching Madonna in her West End acting debut. After just having seen Tom Cruise and other celebs arrive for the premiere of Minority Report in Leicester Square. (Maybe I should be working for Hello!)

Changes to the Direct Debit Scheme

Due to problems with our normal supplier we have decided to administer the direct debit scheme ourselves. Implementing these changes has made the scheme both more flexible and cheaper for you, the member. You now have the choice of paying your membership in either 5 equal instalments or 10 equal instalments which is a change for the better from the previous scheme. If you would like to pay for your membership by direct debit this year then please contact Membership Services and we will send you a direct debit form which needs to be completed.

INFORMATION FOR EXISTING DIRECT DEBIT PAYERS

If you are already paying for membership by direct debit we will be contacting you when your membership is due for renewal with details of how to change over to the new scheme until then your payments will continue to be taken by Premium Credit. If you have questions please do not hesitate to contact me on 01347 833800.

Paying for your own subscription?

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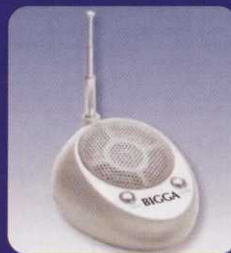


paying for a night in the pub at least. You are entitled to this refund because BIGGA is recognised by the Inland Revenue as a legitimate professional body and membership fees to such bodies are eligible for tax relief.

FEBRUARY'S MEMBERSHIP DRAW WINNER

Just introduce one or more new greenkeeping members to BIGGA and your name will be placed into a draw to win a fantastic BIGGA Clock/calculator/calendar and alarm. Our congratulations go to February's winner, Matthew Evans of Whiteleaf Golf Club

Message of the Month Winner



Each month the person who has written the best message on the BIGGA Bulletin Board, which is found on the BIGGA website www.bigga.org.uk, receives one of these FM desktop scan radios.

Our congratulations go to February's winner John Davenport from Turton Golf Club who's message was posted on 18th December 2002 under the 'Talk about Turf' section.

BIGGA welcomes...

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Peter Reid, West

Northern Region

Stuart Wilson, North East

Midland Region

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Kevin Butcher, BB&O
Tom Evans, BB&O
Adam Grantham, BB&O
Sam Lennox, East Midland
Jerome Pearce, BB&O

South East Region

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Gary Davies, Kent
Brian Finn, Sussex
Roy Fogg, Kent
Robert King, East Anglia
Billy McCausland, Kent
Shaun McKenna, Kent
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S West/S Wales Region

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Course Feature

BACK WHERE IT BELONGS

Royal Liverpool Golf Club, or Hoylake as it is more familiarly known, will host the 2006 Open Championship a return to the rota which rewards a great deal of hard work by the club and the local authority. Scott MacCallum found out more from Links Manager, Derek Green.



Derek Green and his close friend Bill Lawson

Tuesday, December 2nd, 2002, was a very significant date in the history of the Royal Liverpool Golf Club at Hoylake. It was then, at a packed press conference in the clubhouse, at which delighted members outnumbered press by around 20 to one that the R&A announced that the 2006 Open Championship would be played on the historic links a mere 39 years since Roberto de Vincenzo had become the last of the club's 10 Open Champions.

The delight which greeted the announcement was genuinely heartfelt and not, merely from the club members, as the press were delighted to be returning to a club which boasts a history others could only dream of as well as a friendliness which marked the place out as special.

It was, however, not wholly unexpected as a programme of both on and off course improvements had been underway for quite some time and the R&A had placed Hoylake back on its Open Championship rota about 18 months earlier. However, the final confirmation was a triumph for the club and the local authority, who had invested much in the campaign for The Open's return to this particular corner of the north west.

One of those with most to be pleased about was Links Manager, Derek Green, one of the most respected men in the greenkeeping industry and the person who bore the responsibility for the successful implementation of much of the on-course improvements.

But what was it that saw the club fall off The Open rota in the first place? After all Royal Liverpool had been responsible for the

launch of the Amateur Championship in 1885 and had its name engraved on a very particular piece of golfing history when Bobby Jones won our Open Championship there on the way to his Grand Slam in 1930.

Well, there were two key elements which conspired against Hoylake as The Open Championship grew in size over the last 30 years. One was the lack of land to cope with a modern day Championship - the club could provide a practice ground or a tented village but not both. And the second concerned the layout of the course and, in particular, certain areas which had suffered with the development of the game both in terms of distances hit from the tee and size of the galleries now attracted to Open Championships.

To look at the implications and potential solutions to these problems the club started a Championship committee who, as well as The Open Championship, looked at other potential events the club might lure to the Wirral.

One thing that came to light very early on, and indeed, was one



The Hoylake Team

of the principle reasons the course had dropped off the rota was the lack of sufficient land upon which to host the event.

Part of that problem was solved when an adjacent plot of land was purchased by the club while another assisted when the feelers were put out to about the possibility of using Hoylake Municipal Golf Course as the practice ground.

"The real problem with this potential solution was that the course is across a main road and a railway line from us," explained Derek.

However, and this is where the local authority can take a huge amount of credit for what has subsequently transpired, no problem would seem to have been insurmountable.

"It became obvious that that the Municipal authority and the transport department were prepared to close the railway line between Hoylake and West Kirby for the week of the Championship which was great," revealed Derek.

Donald Steel was then brought in to upgrade the Municipal's 14th green and 15th fairway to suit the high standards expected and Head Greenkeeper, Nick Bower, can enjoy a course alteration carried out by one of the world's top architects and lick his lips at the prospect of seeing Tiger, Ernie et al visiting his course for one week in July, 2006.

With the off course issues being addressed the club turned its attention to the grand old course itself.

"It became obvious that certain things were a real problem and Donald Steel spent time evaluating the situation," recalled Derek, as we spoke several months before the much anticipated announcement.

"Donald looked at bunker positions taking on board the fact that the ball is now hit a lot further, the size of tees which were very, very small but the real issues were the 17th green; the 3rd hole which was a short par-5 and the 18th which was not a very good finishing hole with an undemanding green at the end of it," he explained.

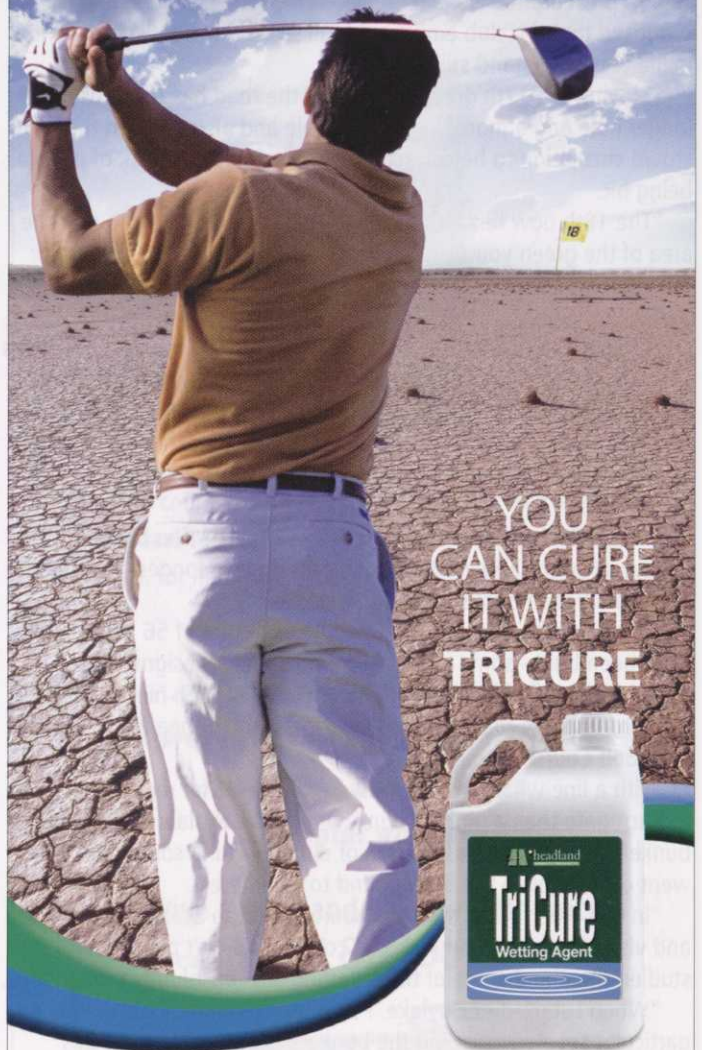
The 17th green was at the side of the Stanley Road which was causing real health and safety issues.

"It was a very good hole when there was little traffic going down the Stanley Road and people didn't park their cars along it but it did genuinely become very dangerous and the club was looking at it irrespective of whether we were getting The Open or not.

"The 3rd hole would have been fine if we could have played it from right back in the corner of the course but that would have eliminated any gallery movement around the 2nd," said Derek.

Donald Steel came up with the alternative design which alleviated the congestion problems on the 3rd and improved the 17th and 18th giving the course a finish to be proud of.

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Course Feature

"It says a lot for the open minded nature of the club, and the superb presentation Donald Steel made on the changes he proposed that the club embraced it all so readily but like anything in life you can't stand still.

"Moving the 17th green away from the road has given us a longer hole and a more demanding hole and also allowed the crowd circulation to be correct. It also eliminated the risk of people being hit.

"The 18th now has a much tougher green. You have to pick the area of the green you want to land on, rather than just aiming for the whole green. As a result it is much easier to defend," said Derek.

Hoylelake had always been known for its tough finishing five holes - known as the Finningley Five but those holes now consist of two par-5s of around 560 yards, followed by three par-4s of 475, 470 and 460 yards. Anyone finishing in par figures for those five holes in the heat of an Open Sunday afternoon will be deserving of the glory.

The course has never lacked length and when The Open is played, at over 7200 yards it will be the second longest course on the Championship rota behind Carnoustie.

As well as the work on the three holes a total of 56 new bunkers have been built - some totally new and some redesigned.

Indeed Derek's bunker revetment work has seen him conducting masterclasses on the subject at Harrogate and appearing in BIGGA's own Golf Course Preparation video.

With a line which would undoubtedly be better received in a bar at Harrogate than a nightclub in Liverpool he explained: "Revetted bunkers have been a fascination of mine for quite some time." He went on to explain the background to his interest.

"In fact when I was still at Woburn I went to Scotland for a week and visited all the Championship courses. I didn't play, I just studied them and some of the revetting was absolutely tremendous.

"When I started at Hoylelake, I suppose fortunately, there was no particular set style of doing the bunkers so we developed this

system of tapering the edges of the bunkers in and getting it to flow so, instead of being a pure hazard, we tried to make them aesthetically blend into the area," said Derek, who talks on all greenkeeping issues with such an enthusiasm and sensible matter-of-factness that makes him a joy to listen to.

But bunkers are definitely one of his specialist subjects.

"We build them to 10 to 15 degrees and while some might consider that to be a bit to generous our members don't. After years thinking about them my conclusion is thus. If you play The Belfry and go into a lake you've lost your ball. If you play St Pierre and get behind one of the the 300 year old oak trees you play out sideways. So the weakness of a bunker is that the decision is left to the golfer who has to play it, whereas the lake or the tree make the decision for you. You have the choice and the people who moan are the people who take the wrong choice. They will always try to go out forward although there is no rule which says you have to and what happens is that when they've played three shots they then go out sideways," said Derek.

The Midlander has also worked hard on improving the quality of the sward over the past 17 years.

"When I arrived we had a very, very high phosphate level in the greens and on some we had between 80 and 90% annual meadow grass. Basically without overseeding we set to work top dressing with fen soil and local sand. Once we were happy with the mix we retained it and still use the 80-20 today. We've built up about two inches on top of the green and the phosphate level is very low and we have an average of 80% bent grass."

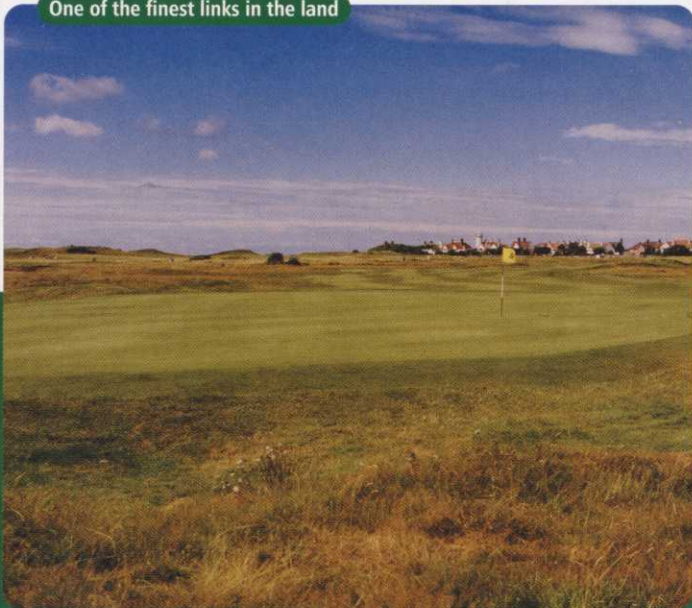
He does admit that since reaching the 80% mark progress has slowed somewhat.

"In an ideal world it would be lovely to remove the lot but I don't think I'll live long enough to see it."

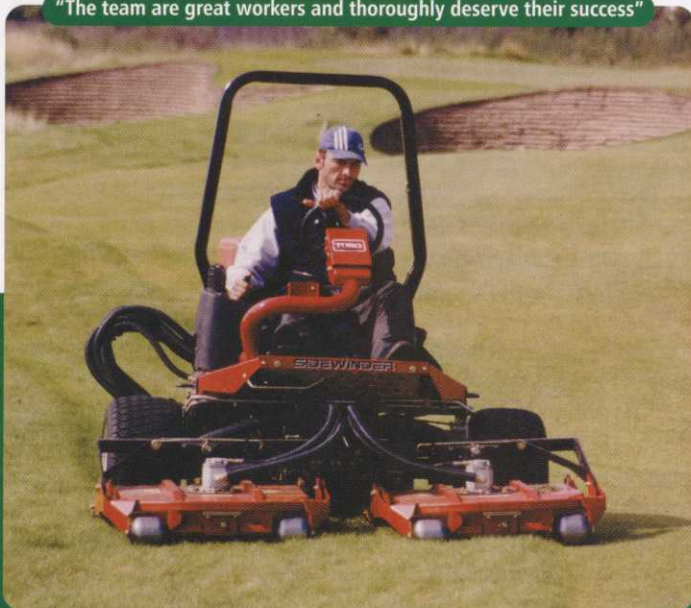
They have also been working on the removal of some of the green surrounds.

"We have been doing this because of the high rye grass contamination we have found."

One of the finest links in the land



"The team are great workers and thoroughly deserve their success"





Another project they started doing last year which has proved successful came with the help of North West Turf who grew a special mix of sheeps fescue and creeping red fescue for the club.

"We replaced about an acre and a half of rough which had become contaminated with rye grass and creeping soft grass and the results have been very good indeed."

A keen Aston Villa fan, Derek uses a footballing analogy to paint a picture of where he feels Hoylake is at the moment.

"We are a good First Division team who very occasionally have a very good cup run and do well against the Premiership teams. I'd say that was when we hosted the Curtis Cup and the Amateur Championship, but after that we go back to being a First Division team."

"Getting The Open back has put us in a position where we have got to be a Premiership team again but we have got to be one which is in the top three or four and this is where we've got to remain."

"To that end we have to bring the financial structure up to meet the needs and already we have increased our staff to 10 and now have first class maintenance facilities."

With more than three and a half years until its Open Derek is already excited about the prospect.

"I hope it will be the pinnacle of my career. I can't think of anything greater but what I will be especially happy for the club itself because it didn't deserve to be off the rota in the first place. Also for my staff because I have always been lucky with the staff that I've worked with. The Liverpool sense of humour is great but they are also great workers and they thoroughly deserve the success that it is going to bring because they are the guys who have been out there in the driving wind and rain when in normal years we would have found some work inside. Over the years Jim Arthur and David Stansfield's contributions to the development of the links should never be underestimated and my good friend, Bill Lawson, Heswell retired, who has always been at hand to talk over any problems."

But above all I'll be delighted most for the Green Chairman, Brian Gourley. Hopefully I will see the Open through with him before we both retire. That would come together quite nicely."

That it would, and you can't think that it will have happened to a more deserving person and a more deserving club.

Photographs taken by Alan C. Birch, Golf Design Consultancy

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From Princes to Presidents

George Brown was brought up on a golf course, played and still plays golf to a high standard and for the last 17 years he has held one of the most prestigious jobs in the industry. Indeed his love of the game, and his position of Golf Courses and Estate Manager within the Westin Turnberry Resort, has seen him play with some of the most famous people in golf as well as some of the most powerful men in the world.

"I was brought up in the Deal/Sandwich area where my father was Caddie Master at Princes Golf Club and then latterly Royal St George's. From the age of 15 we lived on the golf course right between Princes and St George's," recalled George, as we sat in the Majestic Hotel a couple of days before he officially became BIGGA's latest Chairman.

With his mother and sister both working in the club kitchen it was natural that George would work on the course where he caddied and then started greenkeeping.

"I started as a greenkeeper when I was 15 and I was 'the boy'. When I left nine years later I was still 'the boy'," said George, in reference to the fact that there was no greenkeeper education in those days.

"In fact it was more the other way round. I was an inquisitive young man, working on a golf course and wanted to learn what fertiliser mixtures were used on the greens but I was not allowed to know. In nine years I never did find out. It was a closely guarded secret."

His first move came about through his prowess as a golfer and a bet.

"I used to play three or four nights a week with one of the assistants at the club. He said I should try my hand at pro because I was quite a useful golfer. I said I wasn't ready for it, plus the fact that there was a five year apprenticeship.

"He bet me half a crown that if I applied for a job I'd get one. So when I was 24, and recently married to Brenda, just as a bet, I applied for the job of pro/greenkeeper at Alton, in Hampshire, a nine hole course."

Of course he got the job and had to pay out, but he stayed at



Alton for almost three years, living out of a caravan.

"I did everything. I was working on the course on my own, with very little machinery and give lessons in the evening. My learning curve went through the roof and this is how I've progressed through the years - I haven't actually been trained. What I have been is self taught."

It was perhaps fitting that he returned to Princes as Course Manager in the 70s, the very place where he'd started greenkeeping.

"I worked there until 1979 when I moved to Broome Park Golf and Country Club, near Canterbury, where, working closely with architect, Donald Steel, and agronomist, Jim Arthur, he supervised the construction of the new golf course.

"I took on the job of Director of Golf and eventually was responsible for everything from the pros to the kitchen staff and I was working six or seven days and 60 + hours a week."

It was a six months before the '86 Open Championship that George took the job at Turnberry.

"My predecessor, Russell Brown, tragically died suddenly of a heart attack in the autumn of '85 and my first job was to prepare for

BIGGA's new Chairman, George Brown, celebrates 50 years in greenkeeping this year and, as Scott MacCallum found out, is a man with golf running through his veins



Who's that with George Brown?

the Open Championship with an extremely young staff," said George, who added that by sheer coincidence Russell had been the person to take his job when he left Princes in the 70s.

That '86 Open will be remembered for the horrendous weather and a round of 63 shot by the eventual winner Greg Norman, which is widely regarded as one of the finest ever played.

"It was a spectacular experience and another fast learning curve to be working closely with the R&A and installing new underground services to the tented village."

Since then he has done another Open, Nick Price's victory in '94, as well as Amateur Championships; the Ladies' British Open and three Senior Opens, with another due this year, coincidentally, the week after George will return to Royal St George's for this year's Open.

"The highlight was probably my first Open but to me every day is magic and I love every moment of it. I love a challenge."

With 50 years in the business, George is in a prime position to assess the industry.

"It is very big business nowadays. When I started we'd have half a dozen cars in the car park on a Saturday morning. If it was raining the course would be virtually empty. Now most courses are full and golfers all want fast putting surfaces greens and year round quality conditions in which to play."

George feels that it has all conspired to put the greenkeeper in an extremely tough position, particularly in this country.

"Despite all the dedication and money spent I believe golf courses are not that much better than they were, but that's purely down to the sheer volume of play. Compaction is now much worse and guys have got to run to stand still. In warmer climates it is not so bad, but in Britain we have an all year round game, but a seven month growing period with no grass recover and it does take its toll."

George is one of the very few Englishmen to have headed north of the border for a greenkeeping job.

"Someone had to go in there to re-educate them and redress the balance," he laughed, while adding that one of the first people to go up and shake his hand when he started was Harry Diamond.

"I've won them all over now. I get on well with most guys," said George, who is known to have a word for everyone, from the top Course Managers to the young apprentices.

"There is a lot of camaraderie. It's a lovely industry and most of the greenkeepers I meet are just the salt of the earth."

The Scottish weather did its bit to be a little unwelcoming in those first years.

"If you look at the video of the '86 Open and the BBC pro celebrity series which was filmed at Turnberry the following years you will see collars up and gloves on. And this was in August. Coming from southern England and warmer summers Brenda didn't like this much. But since then it has changed. We've got to know

everybody, the weather has changed and we love it in Scotland now."

And as well as getting to know the Scottish greenkeeping fraternity George has also had the opportunity to golf with some extremely high profile people who welcome the chance of playing the Ailsa Course at Turnberry in the company of someone so well acquainted with the course.

"I've played with many Open Champions, while I have also had the chance to playing with Prince Andrew and President Clinton. Thinking back to the times when we humble greenkeepers weren't even allowed to stand near the clubhouse door, never mind go into the clubhouse, that's quite a privilege."

George recalled when, on the Christmas staff day, he was allowed into the Princes clubhouse and saw the huge honours boards hanging on the walls.

"I was gobsmacked and from then my ambition was to have my name on one of them. Now when I return my name is on virtually all of them," said the man who was Club Champion many times and course record holder with a 67.

He also holds the course record on Turnberry's Arran course with a 64 shot when aged 58.

He is delighted to have been given the opportunity to become BIGGA's Chairman.

"It is a chance for me to put something back into the industry as greenkeeping has been very good to me. I am a little apprehensive given that I have such a big job at Turnberry but the General Manager and the Directors have encouraged me to go for it. They feel proud that it is a Turnberry man who is the 2003 Chairman. I will also be relying more on the staff and my three Head Greenkeepers at Turnberry, Martin Lothian, Jimmy Johnstone and Tom Cuthill. during this period."

He also has some firm views on the style he will adopt as Chairman.

"I don't see myself as purely a decision maker. I will rely on the Headquarters staff and the experienced members of board who will make decisions. I see the role of the Chairman as to be impartial, put the members point of view and promote the Association in any way I can," he explained.

He is also pleased to be joining his old friend, Walter Woods, as a BIGGA Chairman.

"Walter and I do engage in a little bit of oneupmanship so I think I'll dye my blazer just a little bit darker than his just to rub it in," he laughed.

And you know laughter will never be far away with George Brown around.

GET IT RIGHT!

TORO

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Continue to learn

Graeme Francis discusses the thinking that is required before making a decision on renovating, upgrading or installing a new irrigation system

Last month in 'Continue to Learn', Barry Beckett wrote about the future of turf management. Barry, an international Senior Marketing Manager at Toro, discussed a wide number of new technologies that are set to change the face of many aspects of course management. Among these was irrigation, in particular the impact that computers will have on the management of golf course watering.

This article focuses entirely on irrigation and how Course Managers and greenkeepers can ensure that they make the right purchasing decisions when renovating, upgrading or installing a new system.

Many factors come into play during this process, but the increasing sophistication of irrigation systems, the wide choice and significant capital expenditure involved, all make it essential to take a well-planned step-by-step approach.

A modern system can have an effective working life of up to 25 years and making the right decisions at the outset can have great bearing on that life expectancy being realised.

As with any important project there has to be strong emphasis on planning before anything else. With irrigation, planning involves laying down the parameters, criteria and objectives within the project.

At some point the Course Manager or greenkeeper, as the client, will be asked a number of questions that relate to what is required. These will include:

- What are the areas of the course to be watered?
- Is there a need to expand the system to other areas in future and if so where?
- What is the optimum time available to irrigate, and are there restrictions through pressure from players and course maintenance operations?
- What is the proposed water source?
- Are there any planning restrictions or implications?
- If radio operation of the system is desired, do any licensing regulations need reviewing?
- What is the budget?

During the process, one imperative aspect of golf course irrigation that must be considered is the water source. It's likely to have a significant bearing on the scope and success of the new system provision.

Much has been written about the new Water Bill and indeed this legislation could be very relevant to any individual course. The Water Bill justifies its own article, but there should be an awareness that the supply of water will be more controlled in the future.

Almost everything that's done in establishing the objectives and selecting a new system will be affected by the source of the water.

When it is almost certain that a non-potable water supply will be required for larger systems such as fairways, the whole area of water availability, control and cost must be investigated at the earliest possible opportunity.

In addition to technical aspects, ask why the club is looking to improve what's already there. What are the reasons and motives behind the choices and decisions? What is wanted from the system? This should be a thought process geared more to the benefits that a good efficient system will bring rather than simply taking a strongly technical bias. All these elements will have a direct impact on the design of the system and the project as a whole and they need to be considered before approaching contractors or consultants.



In recent years the Construction (Design and Management), or CDM Regulations, have entered the golf-contracting field. This regulation places increased responsibility on clubs as the client with regard to Health and Safety. It is essential to establish if the contracting provision of the new system comes under the CDM Regulations, as there are certain tasks that have to be undertaken by the client at the outset.

Having established the project's CDM status and fulfilled any obligation, the next move is to establish the basis upon which bids will be sought.

There are two approaches to choose between once the basic criteria have been set.

A design/build project is the more common route. This path involves asking a number of contractors to submit proposals based upon the designs they produce. With this approach it's absolutely essential to ensure comparable proposals are received.

Every irrigation designer produces a different solution to meet individual requirements, which makes true comparison more difficult. An effective way to overcome this is to insist that all product selection and performance information is submitted with the bid.

This includes sprinkler data, application rates, system operating times, pump capacities and operating pressures and, importantly, water-use figures.

The British Turf and Landscape Irrigation Association has for many years produced a list covering all technical operation data that should be provided within a design/build bid. It can be found on the Association's website at www.btliia.org.uk

A design cannot be produced without the generation of this information and any company that has undertaken a comprehensive design should be able to provide it as a matter of course.

The other path is to employ an irrigation consultant. There are a number of irrigation consultancy practices in the UK. Employing their services brings their expertise and experience into the equation. They can provide advice on the technical and contractual aspects of the project as well as areas such as CDM Regulations and water sourcing. The consultant may be making product

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recommendations and it is important, therefore, to work with one who holds a truly independent commercial status.

Whichever option is chosen – the design/build or consultant-led bidding process – a number of contractors need to be selected to bid.

There are a relatively large number of irrigation contractors in Britain. They vary from small service-orientated companies that usually operate locally, to large national and international businesses.

Some of the selection criteria should include establishment of golf irrigation experience, depth of resources to carry out the contract, long-term service and support strategies, product linkage, financial standing and levels of insurance cover.

Real, relevant references are best to get a good feel for the suitability of a particular company for the work, but all too often they are not sought. If a thorough evaluation is made there is no need to ask more than three or four contractors to bid.

Once requirements for the system have been set and a list of contractors created, it's time to invite the bids.

Contractors will want to meet the club to establish what's required and carry out a detailed site survey. This initial meeting is a good opportunity to get a first impression of the bidders. Are they asking the right questions to fully understand what is wanted? Do they act in a professional manner? Do they instil confidence or raise concern?

As part of initial meetings, a timescale for receipt of tender bids will be agreed and contractors hoping to win the business will submit their bids within this. It's very important to give contractors adequate time to produce comprehensive, well-prepared submissions. Rushing them will only bring errors and ambiguity.

Contractors usually base proposals on the products of one, perhaps two, manufacturers. This will be due to commercial links or the suitability of certain products for particular system requirements that have been set out.

With a tender process based upon a consultant's design and specification, all the performance data will have been part of the consultant's design package. However, with a design/build bid, remember to ensure that all information discussed earlier in this article is provided to allow a fair and true comparison between designs.

Other than design, history shows that key areas of concern for clubs looking at a new irrigation system are course disruption, reinstatement of pipe installation lines, training, plus long-term support and service.

Short and long-term support and spares pricing are other items that should also be investigated, but often aren't. So make sure these are all clearly covered in proposals and that as much ambiguity as possible is eliminated at that stage.

Contractors make a big investment in producing design proposals and bids. While they are responsible for gathering the information they need for the bid, it's perfectly reasonable to allow them to formally present their proposals at the club.

This meeting can give a deeper insight into contractors' individual abilities and provides each with an opportunity to demonstrate how they will meet the requirements.

I mentioned earlier that an irrigation system can be a relatively sophisticated piece of engineering, so there will be questions relating to the technical, installation, operation, and contractual and financial aspects of the proposals and bids. This meeting is the perfect forum for raising these issues. By well managing the timing, with a succession of contractors visiting the club over a short period, a continuity of questioning achieves a better comparison process.

At this point, there is likely to be discussion of particular products. Often this discussion is centred on the control system and particularly the controller. There is no doubt that, as Barry Beckett mentioned last month, PCs will radically change golf course management.

This is no more so than with irrigation control, where PC-based control has been used in the UK for over 15 years. Today's PC-based systems, such as

Toro's Gemini-Trident controller with VIP (Visual Irrigation Program) graphics package, have advanced greatly since then.

The integration of PCs with other course management tasks using GPS and other related technologies is with us now. PC-based control systems offer major operational benefits and it is strongly recommended that when specifying a PC-control system a graphics package is included. A good graphics package, one that shows the actual course, with sprinkler positions and types, can make irrigation system programming, scheduling, operation and diagnostics as simple as is possible.

When it is considered how valuable a turf professional's time is, any management tool that saves time and allows a focus on those tasks that need a direct input must be given very serious consideration. How long does it take to recoup the small extra investment in a PC-based controller when set against the longer-term reduced operational costs?

Other major benefits are the increased flexibility and programmability brought about by PC-based control. The ease with which such tasks as programming, scheduling and fine-tuning of the system can be undertaken reduces the time spent in front of the controller and allows important operational benefits to be derived.

Some Course Managers who've progressed to PC-based control report water savings as high as 30 per cent. Therefore where water costs are a major aspect of irrigation system management, such savings need to be fully evaluated before choosing the controller.

More and more Course Managers and Head Greenkeepers now look at the longer-term support services that manufacturers and contractors provide. PC-based control system support for hardware, software and specialist interface units must be assessed.

This should be not simply an insurance policy against system failure, but should offer other services such as a dedicated telephone helpdesk giving guidance on programming and scheduling. Looking at more general support, it is important to question the level of back-up behind the contractor.

Find out if it's through a strong national distributor with support product and personnel, as it is for example with companies like Lely UK, the distributor for Toro irrigation products. The level and quality of support that contractors get from manufacturers are important points that must be raised during presentations.

Following the bid evaluation and presentations it should be possible to award the contract and move onto the next stage, installation.

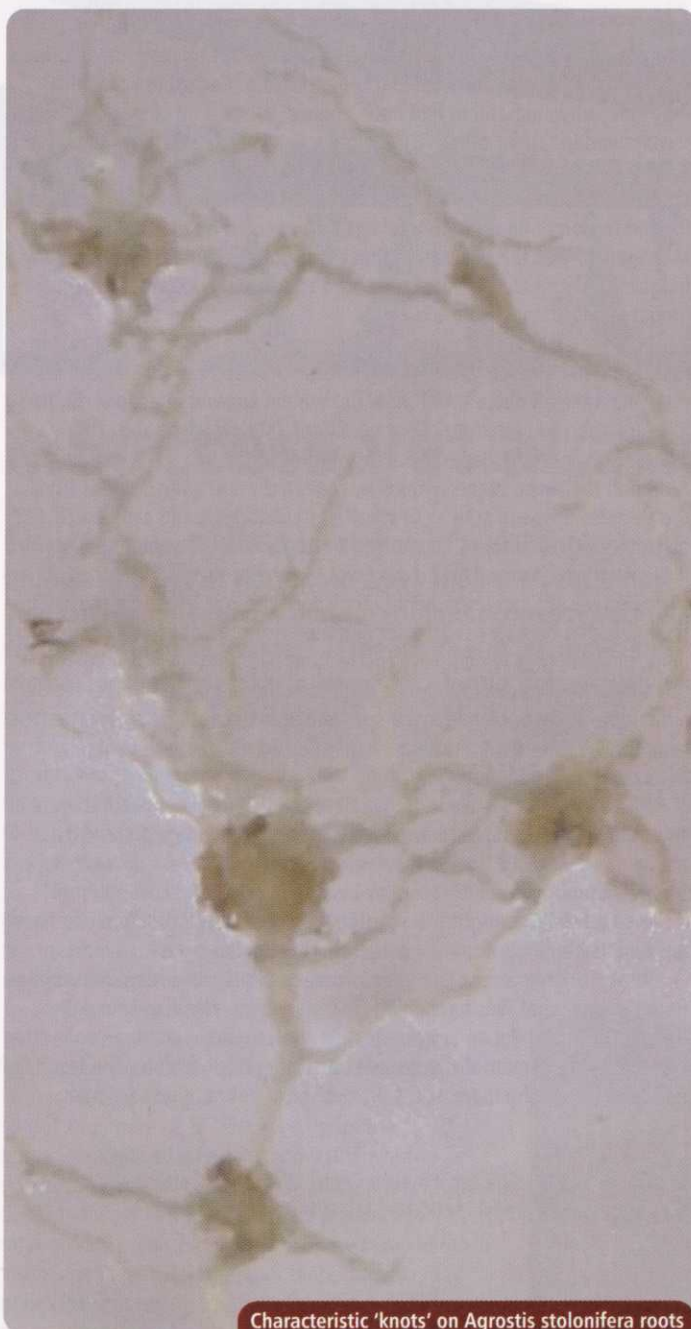
An irrigation system must be well designed, installed, operated and maintained to be an effective turf management tool. The process described in this article is only a beginning. But if a thorough, well-planned, well-managed decision process is executed at the outset there is a far greater chance of realising the objectives.



PC-based irrigation control systems like this Toro Gemini-Trident unit offer major operational benefits to Course Managers and greenkeepers

ROOT KNOT NEMATODE INFECTION OF CREEPING BENTGRASS GREENS

Dr Kate Entwistle becomes Miss Marple as she tries to solve a nematode mystery



Characteristic 'knots' on *Agrostis stolonifera* roots caused by the *Meloidogyne* sp. nematode

While visiting golf courses across the UK and Ireland during the summer of 1997, Mark Hunt, of Headland Amenity, became aware of a number of courses that all showed unusual patches of yellowing turf across the surface of the putting greens. The affected greens did not show any loss of sward cover or any detrimental effect on the playing quality of the sward but the visual effect was quite dramatic due to the extent of the patch development across each green and the speed at which the problem had apparently developed on the new surfaces.

It was not until the following year when more courses were identified as showing the same symptoms, that Mark realised all of the affected courses had creeping bentgrass greens above a USGA rootzone construction. The symptoms were the same on all courses; patches of yellowed turf approximately 30 cm diameter, developing from around April/May and persisting until November each year. The patches returned to the affected greens each year and developed equally on all greens, regardless of local environmental conditions. Several turf samples were sent off to a laboratory in the UK to identify the cause of the yellowing and in each case the analysis result came back as *Rhizoctonia* (no species identification). The symptoms certainly resembled those of the documented disease, Yellow Patch (caused by *R. cerealis*) and so, with the analysis results in hand, fungicide applications were made to control the disease. The fungicide treatments, although different between courses, showed no effect on the disease expression. During 1999, the problem showed again and although further analyses continued to confirm the cause as a *Rhizoctonia* fungus, no single, multiple or combination of fungicide applications, put down at any rate, showed any effect in reducing or controlling the disease.

During November 2000, Mark approached me to see if I would be interested in working with him in trying to solve the mystery of this apparent turf disease. I was eager to help and curious about this potential 'new' pathogenic fungus that apparently did not respond to any fungicide treatments. Although the symptoms were not showing on any course at that time of the year, Mark had photographs and information that I was able to take a look at in order to get an idea of the type of fungi that may be involved with this problem. I had considered the possibility that one of four possible types of fungi may be associated with the symptoms and my

reasons for and arguments against each, were as follows:

The symptoms of these patches as expressed on the turf surface distinctly resembled yellow patch, a known turfgrass disease caused by the fungus *Rhizoctonia cerealis*. During 1997 and 1999, 15 separate turf samples had been sent to a diagnostics laboratory in the UK for identification of the cause of the disease and in all cases, the result given was a *Rhizoctonia* sp. However, I didn't understand how this could be yellow patch because the pathogen would normally cause damage to cool-season turfgrass over the winter and spring – not from spring to winter, through the relative heat of the summer months. One other nagging doubt that I had about this being related to a *Rhizoctonia* sp. was that the symptoms, once they showed in April, remained unchanged throughout the year. Diseases caused by a *Rhizoctonia* sp. would be more than likely to enlarge at some point as the fungus grew outwards but this was never seen to be the case – not on any green or on any course affected. In addition, if it were a fungal disease, why should it appear on the places on the same greens, year after year? If it were a fungal disease, this was very unusual symptom development.

I had also considered some type of superficial basidiomycete to be the cause of these symptoms, but this did not feel quite right either as a possible diagnosis. Although these fungi do cause development of yellowed turf, they are not commonly seen on seeded greens but are more likely to show on recently turfed areas. In addition, it would be more likely that only some of the greens would be affected, those in which the local environmental conditions were conducive to basidiomycete development. But this problem was appearing equally on all greens. In addition, the presence of superficial fairy ring fungi would almost always be identifiable by the development of surface mycelium and/or a characteristic musty smell. Neither of these symptoms had been associated with any patch on any green on any course.

One further consideration was that the roots were being colonised by a pathogen similar to, if not the same as, the one responsible for take-all patch disease. It is well known that take-all patch is a common disease of bentgrasses and so if a similar type fungus was affecting the roots of these plants, it could cause patch symptoms on the turf surface. However, if this were the case, these type of fungi (of which there are quite a few!) would be easily recognisable and should have been obvious to the diagnostic laboratory in the UK that had seen 15 samples of turf already. Surely it would have been detected on one of them? A gut feeling told me that this type of root infection may not be the cause – as with the *Rhizoctonia* sp. idea, if this was the cause, you would expect there to be variation in the size of the patches and in their growth between years. Neither appeared to be the case.

The only other type of fungi that readily came to mind as having any possible involvement in the yellow patch development, was a *Pythium* species. These fungi can colonise the roots of turfgrasses and cause a yellowing of the plant due to their impairment of water and nutrient movement through the plant. Again, these fungi, if present, would leave characteristic spores in the roots that would be easily identified by any diagnostician! These fungi rely on free water for movement, but only on one green out of all of the courses affected was there any evidence of patch development being associated with water movement across the green. And if a *Pythium* sp. was infecting the roots, why should all greens be affected and why would the patches be so large and not vary in size or location from year to year?

Discussions had now led me along many avenues but, in all cases, had resulted in a dead end. For one reason or another I had come to the conclusion that none of the fungi that I had thought MAY be involved with these symptom expressions, could be. The only way to be sure of what was present was to wait for the symptoms to show and take a look at a sample.

In 2001, I collected some turf samples from an affected course in the UK. The Course Manager offered a little more information on the problem



general view of the yellow patches on a creeping bentgrass sward (photo courtesy of Headland Amenity Limited)

and his comments were found to echo those of all the other Course Managers in the UK and Ireland. The symptoms start to show on all greens on the same day, usually following torrential rain. Regardless of which fungicide active ingredient had been applied, alone or in combination, at recommended rate or otherwise, no reduction in the severity of symptom expression was identified on any green, on any course. Although all of my potential theories on the likely cause of the symptoms could be dismissed for one reason or another on the facts as presented by the Course Managers, it was this realisation that the problem did not respond to any fungicide treatment, that made me start to seriously doubt any direct fungal involvement with the patches.

I analysed the samples from the affected course in my laboratory and found that in all cases, there was no *Rhizoctonia* sp., no superficial fairy rings, no 'take-all patch'-like fungal or *Pythium* sp. root infections, but that all were affected with a root knot nematode (*Meloidogyne* sp.). The samples taken from unaffected areas of turf did not show the root knots. Although the cause of the symptoms appeared to be quite obvious from the samples, I was unsure as to whether nematodes could cause such discrete patch symptoms. I contacted Dr Roger Cook, Nematologist at IGER, Aberystwyth, and asked if he would confirm these nematodes as *Meloidogyne* sp. and also, identify the species for us. He came back with the news that they were root knot nematodes on the affected turf and that in his opinion, they were a new species that had not previously been described. He also confirmed that of all the different plant pathogenic nematodes known, *Meloidogyne* sp. were able to cause patch type symptoms, rather than diffuse areas of affected turf that are generally associated with nematode infections.

When it was announced that we believed these yellow patches were caused by this nematode, there was considerable doubt expressed by many in the Industry. The symptoms looked so much like yellow patch (*R. cerealis*) that it was still believed to be a fungal disease – even though many of those doubting the diagnosis had not seen the problem first hand nor had any analysis done on samples from affected areas.

Since Mark had spent four years working with Course Managers trying to determine what was happening on their greens, Headland Amenity decided to fund independent research at IGER to prove one way or another whether these nematodes were indeed causing this problem. The results of this research will be the basis of the next article about these yellow patches.

Dr Kate Entwistle, The Turf Disease Centre, Waverley Cottage, Sherfield Road, Bramley, Hampshire RG26 5AG. UK Tel: 01256 880246

BIGGA TURF MANAGEMENT EXHIBITION
BTME
 & EDUCATIONAL SEMINAR PROGRAMME

&

ClubHouse

REVIEW 2003

...Success yet again!

Every year we at BIGGA set ourselves a challenge of producing a better Harrogate week than the year before. As you can imagine, given that by common consent each year so far we have succeeded, it means that it becomes an increasingly difficult task. However, we do believe we have done it again.

This year we had the added attraction of the ClubHouse Show for the first time. With over 40 exhibitors, and a steady flow of visitors over the three days to Hall D, ClubHouse had a pleasing debut and from these solid foundations it will be expected to expand and develop over the next few years.

Measuring success is also not easy. We pride ourselves on producing a "feel good" show, but that isn't really quantifiable. What we need is for people to say they have taken more orders than before and for more people to attend in record numbers and take time to see the entire show.

Well, we have reports of people doing record business over the three days while the attendance figures also produced new records. Adding up the figures for those who attended each day we reach the staggering figure of 10,359, well up on the 8,629 figure we achieved when the show first went to its three day format last year. Within those figures were 5,693 individuals, again up on the previous year's total of 5,201. This highlights just how many of those visitors remain at Harrogate for more than one day which is encouraging for those Exhibitors who worry that visitors won't be able to get round every Hall in just a one day.



COUNTDOWN TO 2004...

Neil Thomas reports on a year round operation...

So the 15th BTME has come and gone as well as the first ClubHouse exhibition. New records have been set for both show visits and visitor attendance. This must be encouraging for both trade and the profession after a most difficult year with the economic downturn hitting hard at both the industry and golf clubs generally. While the 'Harrogate week' remains a major event in the golfing calendar with its very special atmosphere and invigorating effect, we in BIGGA remain conscious of the need to keep moving forward and to meet the challenges posed in these turbulent times if the success of the exhibitions is to be both maintained and strengthened.



Within BIGGA, we now work on a 12 month rolling plan such is the size and scope of the Harrogate operation, taking in a comprehensive education and training programme as well as the two exhibitions. Yet there are still those who believe we employ an agency to come in and do it for us. The truth is that the whole week in all its aspects is organised and run through our headquarters operation at BIGGA HOUSE. Herein lies one major reason for our success - we stand or fall on our own efforts.

As I write immediately after the event, we are busy analysing the statistics and feedback from the show. The Steering Committee, represented by 16 companies, is being consulted. Members of our Board of Management will have visited the exhibition stands and will be reporting back on the outcome of their visits. By the end of February we will be able to take stock of the 2003 exhibitions and, having validated the feedback, this will be of great assistance in our planning for 2004.

On the education and training front, accessing the BIGGA website will provide excellent information on the views of our members as to what worked and what did not with the education programmes, while surveys undertaken during the week will also provide vital planning information for 2004.

By mid-March our BTME/ClubHouse Staff Working Party will be setting the parameters for next year's event. At the end of that month we will have already reached the final date for this year's exhibitors to confirm their bookings for 2004 before stand bookings are opened up on a first come first served basis.

Early summer and the education and training programmes are taking

shape. Much consideration is given to the choice of Keynote Speaker, a session that has proved most successful in recent years. Debra Veal was outstanding this time around, so much achieved at so young an age. Not to be underestimated is the choice of Banquet entertainment. The social highlight of BIGGA's year demands a high standard. This year the Counterfeit Stones seem to have met with universal acclaim.

As we move into autumn the pressure is mounting. The halls are filling fast and speakers from around the world are being chased for CVs and photographs. Liaison with Harrogate International Centre on a daily basis is crucial while the bookings from delegates are pouring into BIGGA HOUSE. The details of various BIGGA functions during the week are set out and circulated and VIP invitations issued. The first two weeks of January see it all coming together and finally the logistics of moving the BIGGA HOUSE operation, staff and materials, to Harrogate for a week are debated and decided.

Before you know it, another year has passed and the Sunday sees the start of 'Harrogate week' with the BIGGA staff bright eyed and raring to go!

I hope that I have been able to paint just a small picture of the background and planning of a much anticipated event. Each year we look to learn and innovate for the future. We believe our partnership with the industry is vital for ongoing success. We also firmly believe at BIGGA HOUSE that each year we must improve on what has gone before and with that in mind we will set our sights on 2004 being bigger and better than ever.



Gold and Silver Key Supporters



Outgoing Chairman, Richard Barker, helps George Brown into his blazer following the AGM



"What a cracking exhibition. A truly superb launching pad for our new range of STAR TINES and MICRO-STAR (TM) TINES. Greenkeepers certainly know what they want and used our TINE selector to choose. 24 new account orders and 22 potential European Distributors speaks volumes! Well done!"

Stuart Booth, Allied Turf-Tech



"Very good attendance from overseas visitors. A lot of interest from new customers. Excellent show and good value for money."

Derek Cooper, Garfitts



"We've had the best BTME yet since we've been attending over the last 10 years, with the special interest of 2003 being in the new SandMaster."

Gary Mumby, Director, BLEC

LAUNCH OF CAREERS CD

A new information pack for those interested in a career in golf course management and greenkeeping was launched at the Show.

Funded jointly, by the BIGGA Education and Development Fund, the Greenkeepers Training Committee and the Golf Course Superintendents Association of Ireland, the information is available on CD ROM and/or DVD.

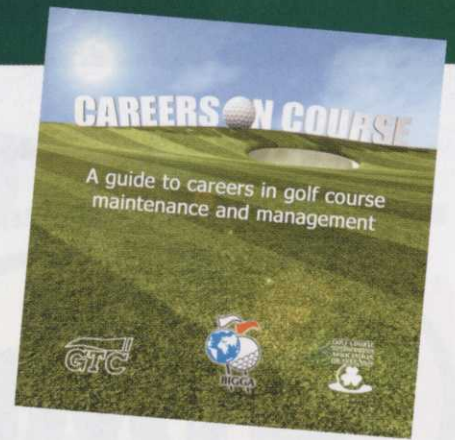
The CD ROM contains a 12 minute video, narrated by Peter Alliss, which shows the work of greenkeepers, information on qualifications, information on training providers and examples of career progression. The DVD includes an additional greenkeeper master class.

The pack will be distributed to all careers offices and training providers in the United Kingdom and Ireland. Other interested bodies may request a pack from BIGGA, the GTC or the GCSAI.

"The industry has been waiting for a careers information pack for some

time. The CD ROM/DVD should appeal to the target audience of school leavers and spread the word about careers in greenkeeping," said BIGGA Education and Training Manager, Ken Richardson.

David Golding, the GTC's Education Director, added, "The new career CD and DVD promotes Greenkeeping as an excellent profession to join and with education and training opportunities for persons at all levels I hope that the career advisors will help our sector to recruit Greenkeepers, some of whom will become the Course Managers of the future."



The Bernhard's Scholarship Reception. Hosted by Stephen Bernhard, the Wednesday evening occasion gave the 10 latest recipients of the Scholarship the opportunity to meet up and get to know their American hosts when they travel to Atlanta for the GCSAA Conference and Show



John Deere's Pieter Nel speaks during the National Education Conference Dinner



A popular visitor to the Show was Kim Macfie, the recently retired Sales and Marketing Director of Hayter, who was a guest at the dinner he used to host and, received a gift from all his former dealers



Conference dinner speaker John Stirling regaled some tales from his lifetime in golf



One of the most popular Sessions in the Education Conference was on Organisational Politics delivered by David Bancroft-Turner



Keynote Speaker, Debra Veal MBE talks about her amazing journey



The Golf Course Design Workshop with Howard Swan and Simon Gidman saw the creative juices flowing

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"It has been the best attended show for a number of years. There has been good appreciation of the Rovral Green name change to Chipco Green. The earlier opening times prevented queues forming at the Hall entrances prior to the show. There was a better quality of visitors due to BIGGA's direct marketing. Will be exhibiting again in 2004."

John Hall, Bayer Environmental Science



"We have never taken so many orders at an exhibition! It is the best show I have ever experienced. We took 13 orders for machines and a great deal of product interest was expressed from European visitors, in particular the new 3696M Machine."

John Millen, Lastec



"Staggered and stunned at the amount of visitors to the Tenax stand - we were bowled over by the number of leads generated. When a show is like this, it makes it all worthwhile."

Paul Munday, Tenax UK Limited



"BTME 2003 has been a huge success for Headland Amenity. More people than ever before visited the stand, and we were able to talk to a greater number of potential new customers than at previous shows. It proved to be the ideal launchpad for our new TriCure Wetting Agent Pellets which generated a high level of interest from greenkeepers and groundsman alike. Interestingly, we have seen much interest in new fertiliser technologies and customers have spent more time discussing the technical aspects of nutritional programmes as well as seeking value."

Andy Russell, Sales & Marketing Director, Headland Amenity Ltd



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JOHN DEERE Team Championship

Goes ahead for second year...

Following the successful involvement of Great Britain and Ireland in the 2002 John Deere World Team Championship golf tournament, John Deere chose the Show to announce that its participation is to continue in 2003.

Now in its 17th year, the Team Championship will follow a similar format to last year. John Deere dealers organise their own qualifying tournament for local golf clubs, operating within the Team Championship's own rules and regulations. Each team of four entered at this stage must include a senior member of the club's greenkeeping team, two members of the board or committee, and the club's head or assistant professional.

The winners of these regional qualifiers will go through to either the GB or Ireland national final, where the teams will be joined by the local dealer representative.

The two winning teams from the 2002 GB and Ireland national finals recently travelled to Scottsdale, Arizona, for the 2002 world finals. Brokenhurst Manor Golf Club from the New Forest and Milltown Golf Club from Dublin, victorious at the national finals held at The De Vere Belfry in August, were among 34 teams from seven nations, all competing for the world title on one of the most famous courses in America - Grayhawk Golf Club.

"The championship's success in GB and Ireland has exceeded all expectation in its first year. Altogether 27 dealers took part in qualifying



The John Deere Team Championship

tournaments with a total of 450 teams participating," says Pieter Nel, John Deere Limited's Commercial & Consumer Equipment Division Manager.

"The chance to go to the world final in Arizona is a big draw and the championship also provides a great opportunity to spend time with existing and potential customers in an informal atmosphere.

"The 2003 details are yet to be finalised but one thing is for sure - two teams, one from GB and one from Ireland, will be travelling to the USA in November to take part in the world final, and the chance to be crowned John Deere World Team Champions 2003."

John Deere Limited will again make a donation of £25 for every British and Irish team entered, to support the educational activities of BIGGA and GCSAI.

BIGGA used the £9,300 it received to support the National Education Conference during Harrogate Week.

MASTER GREENKEEPER CERTIFICATE



The latest Master Greenkeeper is Huw Morgan, Course Manager at the Wildernesse Club, in Sevenoaks, Kent.

There are now 33 BIGGA Master Greenkeepers in the World, two in Germany, 11 in the United States and now 20 in the United Kingdom.

A native of South Wales, Huw joined the Master Greenkeeper Scheme in 1999 and quickly achieved Stage 1 from a combination of experience, formal qualifications and Continuing Development. He moved onto Stage 2, the Assessment of Golf Course Operation in October 2000 and passed the Stage 3 Examination in March of 2002.

Huw was presented with his Master Greenkeeper jacket and plaque by the President of BIGGA, Sir Michael Bonallack and BIGGA Chairman Richard Barker, at a ceremony at BTME/ClubHouse 2003.

Among his other achievements Huw was the 2001 Toro Excellence in Greenkeeping Award winner.

BTLIA

The BTLIA presented four members with the prestigious BTLIA Certificate of Merit.

The Certificate of Merit is both highly prized and highly regarded because it is a performance award based entirely upon feedback from the customers. Through the analysis of questionnaires completed by these customers and using a set formula, attainment marks are given for each contracting member. These are then used to produce a performance mark and those companies reaching the high mark of 85% are awarded the Certificate.

The companies that have been awarded the Certificate of Merit for 2002 are: -

- Irrigation Control Limited
- MJ Abbott limited
- SJS Irrigation
- TIS [Scotland] Ltd.



Harrogate increasingly attracts influential people from the world of golf and this year was no exception. Kyle Phillips, (left) the architect who designed Kings Barns, in St Andrews, and Southern Gables, near Ayr, attended the show to discuss his latest project The Grove, near London. Kyle who is pictured with Nigel Wyatt, of MJ Abbotts, who are constructing the course, expressed himself well impressed with the Show and promised to be back.



John Nicholson of John Nicholson Associates with Ken Brown, Mark James and Paul Jenkins, Course Manager of Lilley Brook GC



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ClubHouse



"A tremendous show for us - appointments for nearly 100 site visits to measure up for our RubaPath and RubaRange golf surfaces, as well as several enquiries for driving range refurbishment. We will definitely be back next year!"

Alwena Beresford, On Course Matting



"We are delighted by the levels of enquiries we had at the show" commented Colin Surman of GolfPlus, "particularly as it was the first time we had exhibited. We were also encouraged by how many clubs were planning to expand their buggy fleets for the coming season, and how they are increasingly seeing golf buggies as a source of profits"

Heath Harvey, Golf Plus



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20-22 JANUARY 2004
HARROGATE INTERNATIONAL CENTRE



"An excellent opportunity to increase our business"
Geoff Hardisty, Silesia Grill Systems



"I should like to express my absolute satisfaction at the recent BTME show in Harrogate. I thought that the planning and professionalism, shown by staff from BIGGA was without doubt, beyond reproach.

It was by far our company's best BTME show to date. We attracted more regular and prospective clients on to our stand than ever before.

We have also, thanks to the Harrogate show, sourced distributors in four countries, that up until BTME 2003 we did not have representation in. As we continue to grow, so it seems does the BTME show.

It goes without saying that once the many sales leads have been followed up, we can expect the success at Harrogate to continue.

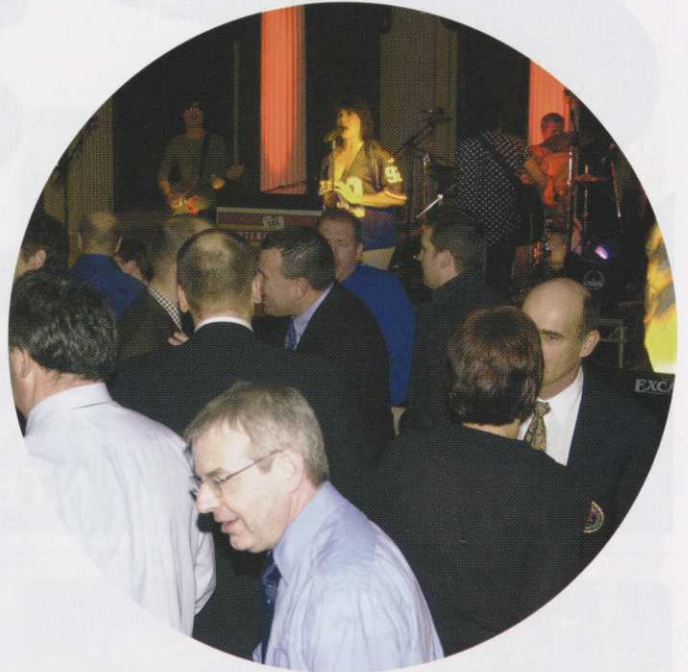
I look forward to Harrogate 2004 with the knowledge that BTME is without doubt the only one stop Greenkeeping exhibition."

David Goldstone, Managing Director, Tower Chemicals



"Advanta Seeds have been presenting their 2 amenity grass ranges, MM range, designer ranges and Headstart. The interest from the user at the show has been incredible. A very worthwhile exhibition. A very satisfied Exhibitor - will be back again in 2004."

Simon Harrison & Jim Fulton, Advanta Seeds



Environment Award 2002

GREEN LINK

The 'Big Bertha' promo Green Link held during the Show was very well received, creating a lot of interest in the Nutri-Rational foliar fertilisers which were featured.

The draw made by George Brown provided two well known winners, the first to be drawn was BIGGA Past Chairman, Elliot Small of Tulliallan Golf Club - George could not believe he had drawn that one out! The other was Devon and Cornwall Section Secretary, Steve Evans, of Yelverton Golf Club. Both received a Callaway 'Big Bertha' C4 Driver.



"May I congratulate you and your team on another successful show! We were very impressed with our own results, taking firm orders to the value of nearly three times that taken at our previous best BTME! The only way to follow that is to do better next year, so here is the booking form!"

David Mears, Highspeed Lubricants



VITAX

The annual Vitax prize draw for a £150 BIGGA voucher for use on any Association merchandise was made by new Chairman, George Brown, and won by John Sinclair, of Thorpe Hall, GC, Southend.



Richard Barker with Sir Michael Bonallack, OBE and Huw Morgan MG



For those that know!

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Amenity Grass Seed

RYEGRASS TEES MM 50

- 100% Ryegrass blend
- Fast establishment and recovery
- Fine leaved and clean cut
- High disease resistance
- Hard wearing and good colour

TEES & FAIRWAYS MM 22

- Hard wearing mixture
- Fine texture turf
- Quick to establish
- Needs irrigation and fertilisers for best results
- Early mowing recommended to allow fescues to establish

50% Perennial Ryegrass, 20% Slender Creeping Red Fescue, 25% Strong Creeping Red Fescue, 5% Browntop Bent

TEES & FAIRWAYS MM 13 WITHOUT SSMG

- Use when SSMG is difficult to establish
- Fine dense compact turf
- Good drought resistance
- Low fertiliser requirements
- High disease resistance

30% Chewings Fescue, 25% Slender Creeping Red Fescue, 35% Strong Creeping Red Fescue, 10% Browntop Bent



Tel: 01529 304511 Fax: 01529 413179
email: amenity@advantaseeds.co.uk web: www.advantaseeds.co.uk



CUSTOM MADE



The new MultiRack Platform™ (MRP), standard on the new MF AgTV 400 and 500 Automatic models, means you can tailor your machine to the job in hand. No more attaching equipment with old bungee cords and tie-down straps. The unique MRP system has open-channel receiver racks front and rear. This allows you to slide in a wide variety of versatile, precision engineered accessories that can be securely attached to the rails with just a pin. Now you can custom-make your MF AgTV to match whatever tasks that need doing. Ask your nearest MF dealer now for details of these new models and the large range of attachments available, the possibilities are endless.



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NEW PRODUCTS

MCCORMICK

Has added a second, more powerful, mini compact tractor to its grounds care range. Joining the existing 21 hp McCormick G25, which is being used by private and commercial grounds care operators alike, the McCormick G30R has the distinction of a reversible seat and controls.

The tractor has a rigid chassis and short wheelbase with smaller wheels and tyres at the front to give a tight turning circle. It can be run in two-wheel drive for low steering effort and minimal front tyre scrub on delicate surfaces.

Power is from a three-cylinder Perkins engine developing 23.5hp, with hydrostatic drive providing infinitely variable speed control up to 2.5mph in creep range, up to 5.6mph in the first range, and up to 12mph in the second range.

With rear implement lift, two-speed mechanical power take-off and remote hydraulic couplings, the tractor can handle a wide range of purpose-designed implements. These include ploughs and cultivators; stone buriers; hydraulic diggers; rotary and flail grass mowers; mini balers; blades and blowers for clearing snow; front-end loaders and a rear-mounted forklift; sprayers and fertiliser broadcasters.

Grounds care tractor drivers wanting more comfort and protection from the elements can now have a cab fitted to McCormick G30R and GX/GXH series models.

Providing spacious accommodation despite the compact size of the tractors, both cab designs feature large doors and plenty of headroom to make it easy for the tallest drivers to get on and off easily, and large windows for clear all-round visibility.

They also have top-specification work lights front and rear for early starts and late finishes during the winter months, and are homologated to comply fully with noise level requirements for both private and municipal operations.

For further information Tel: 01302 366631 Fax: 01302 762636



RANSOMES JACOBSEN

The new SLF-1880 is the lightest of all the Ransomes Jacobsen fairway mowers and is ideal for undulating fairways. Its failure to make any impression will please Course Managers and golfers alike, as it produces manicured and extremely playable fairways that are visually attractive as well.

Greens mower precision and fairway mower productivity come together in the Jacobsen SLF-1880, the lightest 5-gang fairway mower on the market. This new mower meets the growing demand for finer, tournament-level fairways and does it more efficiently than less-productive triplex greens mowers. Weighing 996 kg, the SLF-1880 delivers a 2.03 metre, greens quality cut, while minimising turf compaction.

A new reel-lift system works with patented, articulating 18-inch Jacobsen Classic reels to follow precisely ground contours and deliver a smooth, uniform finish on undulating fairways, approaches and surrounds.

The SLF-1880 features a powerful, high-torque, 26hp Kubota diesel engine and the welded, tubular-steel frame ensures rugged durability. Biodegradable hydraulic fluid protects turf and is friendly to the environment.

The Jacobsen E-Walk, the first all-electric pedestrian greens mower made its world debut at the Show.

This new walk-behind has been granted a US patent and features independent, weather-sealed 48v brushless DC motors with integral control electronics. Power is supplied from a quick-release snap-in/snap-out sealed battery tray containing four 12v lead-acid batteries, wired in series providing mowing speeds of 1.21-5.47 km/h. An easy-to-read charge level meter provides a constant battery condition indicator.

This new electric greens mower is ideal for golf courses close to or adjoining residential areas. Electric power provides a consistent and exceptional quality of cut and the absence of a hydraulic system and petrol engine results in pollution-free operation with low noise levels. It costs just a few pence a day to operate and with over 70% of its parts in common with Jacobsen's Greens King pedestrian mower, the E-Walk combines quiet operation, economy and performance.

Without doubt legislation, pressure groups and technology will ensure that our profession looks more closely at alternative fuels, something that we at Ransomes Jacobsen have already embraced. Many of the turf utility vehicles and golf cars can be adapted to run on LPG. Our LPG-powered Ransomes Highway triplex mower is a first in the municipal turf sector and the Jacobsen E-Plex II, our ride-on electric greens mower is unique to the golf sector.

For further information Tel: 01473 270000 Fax: 01473 276300



The new SLF-1880 is a super lightweight fairway mower producing excellent results on undulating fairways



TORO

New for 2003 are Toro's significantly upgraded heavy-duty Workman 3300 and 4300 utility vehicles. The latest models have been improved to give operators more power, greater comfort and increased flexibility of use.

A more powerful and reliable Briggs Daihatsu 26.5hp diesel engine - 2003 EPA/CARB compliant for emissions and noise levels - has replaced the vehicles' old Mitsubishi 23hp power unit. The 3300 and 4300 versions are two- and four-wheel drive respectively.

Additionally, a high-flow hydraulic kit is now available so that some of the most up-to-date hydraulically-driven attachments can now be fitted to the heavy-duty Workman. The kit is available with an oil cooler and fan, 15-litre reservoir, 30.2-litre/min pump and quick-release couplings to the rear of the machine.

All current attachments are compatible with the new models.

Three new irrigation products being announced by Toro are designed to make it easier and quicker for greenkeepers to water the course.

Toro's Gemini-Trident PC-based controller now comes as standard with a VIP 811 (Visual Irrigation Program) graphics package that shows the location of every sprinkler on the course. The software enables users to operate and manage systems even easier than before, as they can now see virtually every aspect of their irrigation system displayed on a computer.

For further information Tel: 01480 226806 Fax: 01480 226801

EARTHQUAKE TURFCARE

A new, updated version of the 1.5m EarthQuake decompactor was being launched by EarthQuake Turfcare at the Show.

Known as the Shockwave the latest model provides turf maintenance professionals with a faster, more effective means of removing soil compaction from the surface down to an increased maximum depth of 260mm on golf courses, sports pitches, recreation areas, parks and many other leisure, amenity and sports turf areas.

In common with its larger 2.1m stablemate, a key feature of the new 1.5m EarthQuake Shockwave is its ability to remove compaction fast without surface disturbance, enabling play and other activities to continue without interruption, maximising the use of and income from the facility.

This ability to work effectively without surface "heave" is achieved by the use of powered rotating knives to remove soil compaction rather than the more commonly-used reciprocating tines which are more likely to lift and tear the turf. Mounted sequentially across the full width of the machine, the EarthQuake Shockwave's 18 curved knives taper from a width of 12mm down to a knife edge. The result is a clean cut through the turf followed by a high level of sustained lateral soil movement which shatters and relieves compaction to depth across the full working width with minimal surface disturbance.

Ruggedly built to handle the toughest working conditions, the 1.5m EarthQuake Shockwave has a working width of 1,542mm (603/4 in) and is suitable for use with four-wheel drive tractors in the 35hp to 50hp class. Mounted on a compact tractor at the lower end of this power band, the

machine is able to work comfortably, without marking, on finer turf surfaces such as golf and bowling greens/ ornamental lawns and grass tennis courts.

Important features on the new machine include an updated gearbox and oil-immersed chain drive to the main shaft, single point adjustment of working depth, tapered rear skids to allow scalp-free treatment of MacKenzie-type greens and a five per cent increase in blade torque to enable more effective operation in highly-compacted soils. Side footbars and a hinged rear guard provide greater operator safety.

Priced at £9/500, the new 1.5m EarthQuake Shockwave will be available for demonstrations nation-wide from February onwards.

For further information Tel: 01889 271509 Fax: 01889 271528



ALLEN POWER

Introduced a range of four pedestrian cylinder mowers manufactured for them by Ransomes Jacobsen to an exclusive specification

The 20in and 24in cut units will be supplied through the Allen dealer network both at home and abroad.

The Super Fine models deliver 138 cuts per yard and are therefore ideal for use on fine turf areas such as cricket squares, bowling and golf greens, and the Super Stripe units will appeal to private users as well as the professional groundsman.

The models offered are Super Stripe 51, a 20in unit features a six bladed 5in cylinder and is powered by a Honda GC135 4hp 119cc engine. 'Motivair' servo controls to primary drive and cutting cylinder for smooth comfortable operation with a sturdy reliable manual clutch via chain providing the drive to a split twin ridged cast iron rear roller.

Super Stripe 61 as with the 51 but with 24in five bladed cylinder.

Super Fine 51, a 20in ten bladed 5in cylinder is powered by a 4hp GC 135 119cc Honda engine. Solid front roller and quick release pneumatic transportation wheels are featured with an automotive type manual clutch to chain drive powering the split aluminium rear roller. A grass collection box is an optional extra on Super Fine 61, as before but with 24in cut.

For further information Tel: 01235 515400 Fax: 01235 515401



SCOTTS

launched a brand new fungicide at the Show containing a new active ingredient that offers unparalleled control of Fusarium disease. Heritage belongs to a new class of environmentally sound fungicides which have been developed from naturally occurring chemicals found in saprophytic woodland fungi. In UK development trials and in commercial use throughout the USA, Canada and Japan, the product has proved superior to other available treatments on every level.

Heritage disrupts the mitochondrial respiration of target fungi and prevents the pathogen from transferring energy, leading to the death of the fungal cells.

This mode of action renders Heritage an ideal pest control option in the context of resistance management programmes.

Application of Heritage offers a long lasting prevention and early cure of turf disease, and efficacy is further enhanced by the products systemic mobility within the grass plant. Heritage is absorbed through leaf blade, crown, root and stem, and moves throughout the plant, via the xylem vessels, to provide total protection. The product will even move into fresh blade growth as it develops, and has a translaminar movement through the leaf blades.

Regular mowing of sports and amenity turf poses less of a threat to the control offered by Heritage compared to conventional products, as the active ingredient lost as sap exudes through the cut blade can be reabsorbed again through the roots.

This 'recyclable' characteristic, combined with the high performance of the product, means that Heritage has one of the lowest use-rate ranges on the turfgrass market - vital in today's environmentally aware industry. In addition, the low hazard rating to birds, beneficial insects, non-target organisms, and the operator makes Heritage an ideal choice for Integrated Pest Management Programmes.

For further information Tel: 01473 830492 Fax: 01473 830386

NEW PRODUCTS

TERRAIN AERATION SERVICES

Herald oil-digesting bugs as the answer to oil and diesel spillages around the golf course.

Using their Airforce machine, which penetrates to a depth of one metre and employs compressed air to create underground fissures, the company offer a new service, which injects oil-digesting bugs into contaminated soil. Travelling at the end of the final air blast and carried by dried milled seaweed, the bugs, which need air to breathe, rise upwards into the fissures, settle at different levels and begin to digest the problem.

As Airforce moves on to a new section, more bugs are spread onto the surface of the original area. These bugs migrate downwards through the newly created fissures, towards those already feeding. Once the area is decontaminated, the creatures die.

Lynda Green, a Director with T.A.S. said that working to their usual staggered grid pattern at two metre spacings, the company can ensure total coverage of treated areas to a depth of one metre.

"This service is economical and eco-friendly with no mess," she says. "At the moment the only other alternative is the dig-and-dump method which entails using a specially registered land-fill site. Even then, the turf manager is left with an unsightly hole in the ground."

For further information Tel: 01449 673783



BRITISH SOCIETY OF PLANT BREEDERS LTD



'Turfgrass Seed', which objectively assesses the performance of major new and established amenity grass cultivars under rigorous trial conditions, is recognised as an invaluable reference.

The latest edition, being published by the British Society of Plant Breeders Ltd (BSPB) and the STRI at BTME has a new format with more practically orientated information.

'Turfgrass Seed' reports comprehensive test results evaluating the suitability of cultivars for three key usage areas. These include: Use in winter sports pitches, such as soccer and rugby fields, and municipal parks (intensive wear trials); use in lawns, summer sports pitches, turf and general landscaping (lawn landscape trials); and use

under intensive management regimes for golf and bowling greens, tennis courts or ornamental lawns (close mown trials).

To make the information as relevant as possible to the end user, each cultivar is assessed under several important criteria. These comprise visual merit (an overall measure of suitability), shoot density, live ground cover (important for winter sports turf), slow re-growth, fineness of leaf, cleanness of cutting, colour and freedom from disease.

Users can identify the properties that are important in their individual situations and choose cultivars scoring well for those characteristics.

This information can also help groundsmen, greenkeepers and specifiers in their discussions with seedsmen, and in understanding the composition of grass seed mixtures.

British Society of Plant Breeders Ltd Tel: 01353 653200 Fax: 01353 661156

JOHN DEERE

A new 750 litre low profile sprayer is now available from John Deere for use with the company's established 24hp Pro Gator utility vehicle. This is the first time John Deere has offered a machine for the amenity sprayer market in the UK and Ireland.

Adapted for the European market, the HD200 utilises the whole of the Pro Gator's load space to provide a very low centre of gravity for stable, efficient spraying on all amenity turf areas, especially on slopes. The design also provides the operator with good visibility over the back of the tank to the sprayer boom.

A choice of 5.5m or three-way folding 4.6/6.4m fixed spray booms is available, complete with safety breakaway system. The boom operates at up to 50cm above ground level and at ground speeds of up to 10mph.

Individual boom sections can be selected as required, and boom height can be adjusted manually if necessary. Electric raising and lowering of the boom is an option.

In addition to the main tank, the sprayer features a 75 litre rinse tank, plus clean water foam marker and chemical tanks. Chemicals are mixed using a jet agitator and the tank contents can be fully emptied using a special sump system.

John Deere has added two new models to the 4010 Series compact tractor range launched in January 2002. Officially launched at this year's Show, the new four wheel drive 4610 and 4710 large chassis compact tractors are available with a choice of advanced Hydro and PowerReverser transmissions - making the 4710 the highest horsepower tractor available from John Deere with a hydrostatic transmission.

These transmissions are based on proven technology used in the company's larger agricultural and construction equipment, and feature simple fingertip push button controls, more efficient diagnostic servicing and reliable, heavy duty construction.

Featuring high capacity hydraulics, both tractors are powerful enough for multi-implement operation, including front loaders, mid-mounted and trailed mowers, tillers, aerators and trailers, for example.

The 4610 and 4710, with gross horsepower ratings of 44 and 48hp respectively, replace the previous 4600 and 4700 models. The new hydrostatic transmission features the same innovative electronic controls and performance benefits as the smaller 4310 and 4410 mid chassis models, and is designed to provide greater productivity and easier operation by enabling tractor output to be matched more precisely to different applications.

John Deere's Pro Gator utility vehicle was originally launched in the UK and Ireland in 1999. It can be used as a general materials transporter or with specialist turf maintenance equipment, utilising the vehicle's hydraulic services and optional pto for a wide range of applications in the golf and turf and commercial groundscares' markets.

This four wheel, two seater vehicle has a choice of two or optional four wheel drive, a five forward, one reverse speed synchronised transmission with full front and rear suspension, hydraulic drum brakes on all four wheels plus differential lock, hydrostatic power steering and a maximum speed of nearly 20mph.

For further information Tel: 01949 860491 Fax: 01949 860490

CAMPEY TURF CARE

The new Koro deep verti-cutting rotor attachment launched at the Show, offers turf professionals the opportunity to combat thatch problems by mechanical means, rather than chemicals.

The Koro deep verti-cutting rotor fits onto the Campey Koro Field Topmaker machine in place of the standard rotary blades that completely remove top layers of soil for quick ground renovation.

Offered in 1.2m and 2m widths, the verti-cutting rotor incorporates a series of 1.5mm or 3mm thick blades, available in hardened or tungsten-tipped versions, at 40mm spacings. These blades cut through and remove the fibrous thatch material, encouraging water, air and nutrient permeation.

They also deal with troublesome lateral grass growth that can lead to weak, shallow-rooting turf.

For further information Tel: 01260 224568

More NEW PRODUCTS launched at Harrogate will appear next month...

Trees

Mycorrhizal Management of Golf Course Trees

Why given the amount of specialist time, money and considerable effort in creating the 'right' environment does tree transplant failure happen?

The answer can often be found in the microbial activity under your feet. More than 75% of a tree's survival system is found in its roots, so healthy roots mean healthy trees.

The symbiotic relationships between trees and plants and bacteria and fungi in nutrient exchange in the natural forest habitat have evolved over hundreds of millions of years. This complementary microbial activity is especially helpful in times of reduced soil fertility, drought, temperature extremes and other forms of stress.

SOILS AND STRESS

Soils especially in the new golf course environment often contain very few of the desirable characteristics of forest soil and often suffer from compaction, salt, drought, low organic matter and undesirable pH,

So it is little wonder that at the time of greatest stress when trees are transplanted from a protected nursery into to a recently built fairway that transplant failure happens.

Whips or small trees that are moved from a benign nursery habitat, lose up to 90% of their root mass and are then placed into soil typically devoid of many of the natural support mechanisms which ensure survival in the forest environment.

Recent advances in environmental biotechnology using natural fungi and bacteria from the forest have produced a range of products to help improve the transplant process and reduce subsequent maintenance costs.

EXPAND YOUR ROOTS

University studies over the last 30 years have shown that certain fungi form special associations with plant roots. These are mycorrhizal fungi that have developed a natural survival strategy to help 99% of all trees, plants and grasses survive stress and promote healthy growth.

Mycorrhizal fungi create enhanced root structures that greatly increase the absorptive surface area to several hundred times larger than non-mycorrhizal roots. This increases the plants' absorption capacity and enables increased nutrient assimilation and water absorption.

Healthy trees and plants naturally have mycorrhizae associated root systems which provide better tolerance to drought, heavy metals, salt, toxins and pH extremes, i.e. the conditions commonly found in the urban or roadside environment. Healthy trees have increased resistance to microbial and nematode root pathogens.

There are two main types of mycorrhizae - endomycorrhizae and ectomycorrhizae. Endomycorrhizae are the most common, of this type vesicular-arbuscular mycorrhizae VAM occur on more plant species than any other, particularly agricultural crops, grasses, fruit trees and hardwoods.

Ectomycorrhizae occur on about 10% of the world's flora but are just as important commercially to the urban arboriculturist and landscape architect. This is because they colonise the trees typically used for transplanting including pine, oak, chestnut, beech, birch, willow and poplar.

NEW PRODUCTS TO HELP THE ARBORIST

Transplant failure happens in spite of a host of precautionary activities to prevent it. Now a variety of ecto and endo mycorrhizae are available,

commercially, to landscape contractors, nurseries and arborists to help prevent transplant failure, or save and promote healthy growth in mature trees under stress.

Mycorrhizae are plant specific so you must ensure that you inoculate with the correct species for your plant or purchase a cocktail of species which will work on most plants.

Plants should be inoculated prior to planting. This can be done in three ways:

1. By inoculating the soil in the nursery.
2. By dipping whips in a root dip on site immediately prior to planting.
3. Pouring the spores around the rootzone when planting 1-2" calliper trees with balled roots.

Mature trees under stress can also be revived by inoculating the root zone with the appropriate mycorrhizae and nutrients.

Inoculating trees and flowerbeds is a very cost-effective way of improving results while reducing costs. Whips can be inoculated for a few pence by dipping into a solution containing the relevant mycorrhizae, biostimulents, and water retaining polymers to ensure everything is in place to help with a healthy start.

Inoculation of container trees or balled trees of 1" or 2.5cm calliper costs less than £2.00 and usually trees only need to be inoculated once in their lifetime.

Typically case studies show transplant failure in inoculated plants, not subject to vandalism, can be reduced by over 50%.

INNOVATIONS

Mycorrhizal inoculation helps but new technologies provide further assistance to ensure transplant success, and reduce costs, particularly in manpower by simplifying maintenance in the early years.

Slow release water retaining gels are very helpful to young plants that have lost part of their root system on transplanting or are subject to desiccation during transit or establishment by the roadside. As the gels expand and contract they also open the soil and help aeration, they also hold many times more water than peat and make up to 90% available to the plant.

For further information please contact:

Martin Ward

Symbio

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Email Martin@symbio.co.uk

GOLF COURSES IN FRONT LINE DEFENCE OF HEATHLAND HERITAGE

Anyone who doubts the importance of golf courses in the fight to preserve our natural heritage should consider the plight of one plant. Carol Dutton reports.

Heather, home of some of our most vulnerable and endangered species, the Smooth Snake, Slow Worm, Sand Lizard, Wood Lark and Night Jar, in the south, and both the Red and Black Grouse in the north, was, 100 years ago, so prolific on these islands, that we hosted two thirds of the total European resource.

Nowadays, according to Bob Taylor, Senior Ecologist to the STRI, the plant's presence has become severely fragmented, especially in the south.

"Although we have considerably more heather in the North of England and upland areas throughout the UK generally, in the south the species is confined to a few fragmented, and often reducing patches in Dorset, Suffolk, Sussex, Surrey and Hampshire. Obviously, our southern heathlands have been under threat during the last century by a variety of factors including, industry, agriculture, housing and quarrying, which have not effected the northern uplands to the same extent."

According to Bob this north/south difference is reflected in the way in which conservation is viewed.

"In the South of England, heathland management is seen as important, whereas in the Northern Uplands, where the biggest threat is from sheep overgrazing, the heather is managed as it has always been, but conservation is not perceived as vital."

Following a recent survey, the STRI estimates that of our 2,800 UK and Irish golf clubs, 440 are heathland courses, and approx 140 of these are situated in the vulnerable south. With an average heather coverage of six point two hectares per course, these southern golf clubs would appear to be responsible for an approximate 868 hectares of heather between them. Although a small percentage of our total national resource, the STRI are keen to point out that considering the rate of the plant's decline, the fact that a golf course is a stable land use, will render the heather on these areas increasingly more important as time goes by.

Interestingly, 80% of the golf clubs included in the survey wanted to extend and increase their heather coverage, although only 55% believed that the plant was declining. Perhaps this is explained by the fact that 63% believed heather to be important to the playing character of the course and 75% believed heather enhanced member's enjoyment of the game.

Bob who has written two important books relating to heather conservation on golf courses, "Studies In Golf Course Management, Number One, Heathland." and "A Practical Guide To Ecological Management On The Golf Course", lists the following reasons for heather decline in order of importance:

1. Trampling, which leads directly to grass encroachment.
2. No management, which leads to tree and other scrub, plus bracken encroachment.
3. The influence of past management. (In the 60s and 70s Parkland golf courses were in vogue, and many Heathland courses were limed, in a bid to get rid of the heather all together!).

Blackmoor Golf Course, the 18- hole Harry Colt designed Open Qualifier, situated on the Surrey/ Hampshire border, is committed to the rejuvenation of its original three to four hectares of heather. Harry Davies, Head Greenkeeper for the last four years cites the following areas of maintenance, which he feels necessary to achieve this goal:

1. The removal of weeds and grass
2. The removal of saplings
3. Bracken control
4. Golf traffic management
5. Tree clearance
6. The collection of leaves
7. Removal of turf from dormant heather seedbeds, coupled with over seeding in known decolonised areas.

"Last year the club committed its self financially, freeing the resources to begin this major project," he said.

"As a starting point we felt that tackling the grass/weed control would be most beneficial. Due to the undulating terrain, the nature of the work, and the specialist equipment needed, we decided to contract the work out. Weed Free, the Berkshire based specialist sprayers were known to be experienced in this field, and we felt we could confidently put this part of the programme into their hands."

Mark Mason, Contracts Manager for Weed Free, spent three days in January and another three days in June conducting semi trials on both the heather and bracken at Blackmoor. An approved pesticide was applied at the recommended rate with knapsack sprayers to the bracken. ATVs were brought into play on areas where the plant had taken advantage of the extra light afforded by the first phase of a substantial tree-felling programme.



"These areas were infested by the plant, and we pushed it back into the tree lines where there is less light," recalled Mark.

"Ideally, the bracken needs to be actively growing, but not too tall. Once it's reached waist height, treatment becomes difficult and a health and safety issue arises. In some places, as the plant was four to six feet high, we used telescopic lances, working from the boundary."

The trials included treatment of all bracken present in the heather, to create space, encouraging dormant seeds of the endangered plant to germinate.

Weed Free returned in January this year and applied one application of an approved pesticide for grass control in heather, at the full recommended rate, spraying the heather from ATVs with specially adapted small booms, to compensate for the terrain. Mark says that the turf tyres, which were fitted for this particular job proved ideal.

"Although wider than standard they give light ground pressure, and the plant just springs back upright with no damage done. The vehicles themselves cope well on undulating surfaces, and in this case they were important for our own safety. Heather is notorious for covering hollows."

Mark found that in many places the company were treating relatively small patches of heather, which were surrounded by grass.

"In this situation, when applying a powerful herbicide, it is important for the operator to choose all routes to ensure that neither he, she or the ATV comes into direct contact with the grass. Once the operation is complete, it is essential that all golf traffic is kept away from treated areas so as to minimise the risks of the chemical being transported onto the fairways."

Having treated bracken during the semi trials of 2001, the company found further tree and shrub clearance, predominantly pine, silver birch and gorse, (undertaken by the club as part of the heathland conservation programme), had encouraged another influx, which needed attention. In all, around three hectares of bracken were treated.

Returning in May, Mark was gratified to find that the company's January heather application had done its job.

"All the weeds, mainly cats ear, sheep sorrell, thistles, and rose bay willow herb had gone, leaving voids for new growth," he remembers. "Grass removal was almost as good, with the exception of the purple moor grass which was still present, but less dense."

By August, the heather was responding to treatment, producing new growth, formerly blocked by weeds and grasses.

"Inspection revealed a denser plant, which confirmed our

theories and answered any questions I might have had about the effectiveness of the process. Everything was as it should be," said Mark, "but much better."

Meanwhile, Harry had been continuing to implement other aspects of his heathland rejuvenation programme.

"Once the scrub clearance and selective tree felling is complete we will begin to reseed and strip back areas of turf adjacent to the heather to encourage further dormant seed germination," he says.

Harry would like to thank Clive Osgood, Course Manager of Walton Heath, (which is involved in a major heather regeneration programme) for his valuable technical input. Harry is due to spend additional time at Walton Heath, gathering further information and exchanging notes.

Bob Taylor warns of the pressures on golf courses of golfers trampling over the plant, which is a slow grower and takes years to establish.

"Footpaths across heather, even in upland areas soon revert to grass," he says. "Purple moor grass is the main culprit, but on golf courses bents and fescues can put up strong competition. Not only can they tolerate trampling, which the heather can't, but they also produce thatch. Once the heather disappears, this leaves the ground open to tree regeneration and the whole area reverts to woodland. Even Ilkley Moor has experienced this threat to some degree, with an influx of Silver Birch, Pine and Oak. It must be remembered that heather has a life cycle of 20 to 30 years, and new growth must be given space to develop."

Following progress at Blackmoor, last reviewed in October by Harry Davies, Mark Mason and Michael Cave, Chairman of Greens, the club would appear to be heeding these warnings, and winning the battle to preserve their heathland against considerable odds.

Michael Cave reports compliments on the heather from the club's membership, stating that in his opinion the heather has been better this year than in the last 20, Harry Davies, aware that this is the beginning of a long process, professes to be delighted with the immediate improvements, and Weed Free have had their efforts rewarded, with a booking for more treatment this winter.

But perhaps the strongest confirmation that this particular fragment of vulnerable southern heathland has a firm future comes from the measured reassurance of the STRI. Neil Squires, Regional Agronomist for the South East who visited Blackmoor on behalf of the R& A. to ensure that the standard of the course reached Open qualifier requirements, (it did,) reports that the club are "approaching the management to heather in a professional manner."

Could it be, that in the south at least, the safest place for our endangered heather is in the rough?



SCOTTISH REGION
Peter Boyd
Tel/Fax: 0141 616 3440

East

Well it's February already and a new season is on the horizon so hopefully we will get a good spell going into the spring. As I sit and write this we have two inches of snow covering the course so at least the course is getting a rest as we've been very lucky with the weather in the last couple of months of 2002 and are well on our way to completing our winter programme. Hopefully you are all in the same position as it's good to get most of our work done quickly as you don't know what the weather will throw at us in the next few weeks.

The Section is quiet at the moment but the committee are hard at work putting together the fixture list for this year with only a few dates to be confirmed and then the fixture list will be with you as soon as possible. At the end of December Jackie Dalrymple retired after 40 plus years at Baberton Golf Club. The Section would like to wish Jackie all the best in his retirement and we look forward to seeing you at all future Section events. The Section are going to give him a presentation at the spring outing so I look forward to that. We will have a more detailed report on Jackie in next month's magazine.

Well that's it for this month. If you have any news for the Section please get in touch you should all know the numbers etc by now so I'm waiting.

Chris Yeaman

North

No new members to report this month, but hopefully that will change as the year goes on. As the winter starts to grip up north, the cold weather is becoming the norm, and, as it has started later this year, hopefully will not go on for so long.

Good news to report on Ross Macrae, from Oldmeldrum Golf Club, whose children had been struck down by illness, is that they are all on the way to a full and complete recovery. Best wishes from the North Section, Ross, to you and your family.

A couple of greenkeepers on the move are Steven MacIntosh, formerly of Blairgowrie Golf Club, who has now taken over as Course Manager of Torvean Golf Club, in Inverness. Steven was Head Greenkeeper at one of the courses at Blairgowrie.

The town desperately needs another quality course to play, and we wish Steven and his

team all the best. Also on the move is Graham Flett, formerly Head Greenkeeper of Newtonmore Golf Club. Graham has moved on to Gordenstoun, to supervise the construction of a golf course there.

The 200 Club will this year be run by Andy Wilson, from Brechin Golf Club, and there will be letters arriving through the post shortly concerning this. It is the main fundraiser for the Section, so if you don't think you will be rejoining then send your tickets back to Andy as soon as possible in order to give him time to resell them.

The Scottish Conference is on March 4, at Dunfermline College again, and will cost £28 for the day and your food. Hopefully there will be a strong support from the North Section, and the weather on the day will make travelling easier.

Not much else to report this month, but anyone with any info they would like to give can contact me on 01997 420155.

Iain Gunn

Ayrshire

Not a lot to report this month with Harrogate three weeks away at the time of writing. An attempt at a comprehensive round-up of all the action (well the stuff allowable for print) will be available in next month's column. It is hoped that those first returned have enjoyed some interesting agronomic discussions while avoiding the gastronomic repercussions of late night kebabs consumed while attempting to locate the only invisible hotel in Harrogate – Yours!

The Scottish National Conference will be held on Tuesday, March 4, at Lauder College, in Dunfermline, and, having attended the previous two, I can honestly say it is well worth a visit.

Give me a ring on 01292 478606 if you've got news of any kind or words of encouragement and, if anyone stumbles across Juninho on a baked Brazilian beach, tell him to make his way back to the frozen wasteland immediately. Thanks!

Dennis Tweddell

NORTHERN REGION

Northern

Hope you all enjoyed your time at Harrogate last month. I hope you have not all gone mad and spent all your budgets already?

Don't forget about the annual dinner dance at Otley Golf Club on March 1. Start time is 7pm for 7.30. There is the usual three course meal followed by a Salsa night for you and your loved ones to shake your thong too. I am informed that Steve Heaton will be giving us all a master class in the art of this type of dance. There will also be instructors around to put us all on the right path. Ticket price for this event is only £19 per head, which can be purchased from any committee member. I hope to see you all there.

Places on the Ransomes Jacobsen visit to Ipswich are all but full. The itinerary is as follows: Feb 25 pick up at 8am; arrive at factory around 1pm; Buffet lunch on arrival; go to Portman Road for tour of stadium facilities and machinery; arrive at hotel 5pm check in; evening meal 7.30pm; Feb 26 Breakfast then on to Ransomes Jacobsen factory, including power point presentation, tour of factory and spare parts and design operations. After a buffet lunch we will depart for home around 2pm.

There may be places left on this so if you have not booked and are a Head Greenkeeper then give me a call.

We have had several new members to the Section these being. Jonathan Conway, Forest of Galtrees Golf Club; Gary Rollinson, Cockford Golf Club; Andrew Hunter, Northcliffe Golf Club; David Gardner, Kirkbymoorside Golf Club, and Ben Besau, also at Kirkbymoorside.

16 Westwood Ave, Eccleshill, Bradford, West Yorks, BD2 2NJ. Tel: 01274 640739 Mob: 07976876264 E mail ; Dthackray@aol.com

Dave Thackray

North Wales

Welcome to February in the greenkeeping calendar. Just how many of those New Year's resolutions have you kept? Be honest! Well, I've not kept mine, I'm still writing these notes, with no news, no views and no information from our now 188 strong membership! But it's a good job and I enjoy it.

Another Harrogate has been and gone and thanks once again to Danny Tomkins Amenity Technology for sponsoring the coach up there from all who travelled and enjoyed a 'wave at the rave' as well as a look around the show. There are a few more tales to tell but these

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FOR GREENKEEPERS
BY GREENKEEPERS
CHAT GREENKEEPERS

are unprintable, sorry! This Show for most of us kick starts the year followed by the careful planning to get the greens and the rest of the course into shipshape condition for the first April Medals – I say the greens because that is all any golfer talks about, that they are bumpy, patchy, good, fast, slow, great etc, so the main thing seems to be if the greens are right the rest of the course is good as well. BTME gives you the choice of what's new in the industry, what to buy and why and how to apply it to your specific needs to gain the best results – you can never stop learning.

Our first committee meeting of the new year was held at Carden Park on January 7. We have three confirmed venues for the Golf days in place - the Spring will be at Ian Beckett's Mile End GC; the Autumn will be at Chris Peddie's Wallasey GC (might be a few playing here as this may be a named second qualifier for Hoylake 2006) and the Christmas will be at Darren Anderson's Abergele GC, with its reconstructed USGA spec sand greens.

A couple of sponsors I forgot to thank from our Christmas tournament were North Staffs Irrigation and Bathgates. The notes were a rush to get in, with the tournament being over the press deadline, but this may not be a problem in the future as we are asking companies to be 'Patrons' of our Section which will tie up their sponsorship for the year and have their name put on a 'Patrons' board put out at each event.

Also a correction to the scores. The best guest winner turned out to be a member, so the prize went to second place in the guests, who became the guest winner with the member then being joint 6th in the members... if you can grasp all that?

A further date for your diaries will be a Spring Seminar to be held at Carden Park with a host of high calibre speakers. This will be held on Monday, March 31 and your contact will be Andy Campbell on 01829 731601 for registration. Full details will be in next month's issue.

And, finally, we are trying to organise a triangular golf day with two other BIGGA Sections. The Midland Region would be prepared to offer a venue at South Staffordshire GC, organised by Rhys Thomas, and would require an eight strong team from each corner. More details to follow.

Any views, news or information, please contact me on: Home 01925 263394 - Fax 01925 269622 Mob 07778 162162 e-mail acorngolf@supanet.com

Mesen Cymru
Andrew Acorn

Cleveland

Good news for Tony Mears, of Dinsdale Spa Golf Club. After filling in an application form in Greenkeeper International and then attending an interview at Headquarters 'Big Tone' has been selected as one of 10 delegates to represent the Association on the Bernhard's Scholarship at the GCSAA Conference and Exhibition in Atlanta. Roll on February big man!

Staying at Dinsdale, the lads have recently celebrated Colin Tinkler's 21st birthday with a 'bit of a night out'. Apparently a good time was had by all.

Congratulations must also go to Ian Pemberton, of Bedale Golf Club. "Pembo" completed 'The Great North Run' in late 2002 and raised £264 for the Cleveland Branch of the ME Association. Well done!

Bedale have recently constructed a pond on the first hole so if anyone has any spare plastic ducks send them to Ian. I don't think they should have trouble filling the pond if this rain keeps falling.

The only bad news is that 'The Greenkeepers' lost the Turfcare Quiz to 'The Groundsmen' yet again. We really need more support next December. Watch this space for more info. Come along this year 'cos it's a really good night!

By the time you read this, Harrogate will have come and gone. It seems that BTME is now regarded as the premier exhibition for Greenkeepers. Please support our exhibition if you can.

Finally if any members have any news, serious or comical, for future section notes, please contact me on 07831 214 879.

Cheers,

Terry "L. Prez" Charlton

North West

Well that's Christmas over, and I hope you all had a good time and a few days rest. The weather of course over the last few weeks has been so bad that even though the body may relax, the mind will be ever active trying to plan the next move. The weather has been so divers, with snow in the north, and flooding in the south, you just cannot win. A comment from one golfer on the course that I am a member was "the greens look green, so why are we on temporary greens?" the frost at the time was one inch into the ground. At least if the course is flooded, or covered in snow, they will understand why the course is closed.

I would like, once again, to remind the younger greenkeepers just how important it is to take advantage of the education being

offered from the colleges in your area. To gain N/SVQ 1 & 2 is not so difficult as you may think. If you are capable of doing most jobs on your golf course that is the standard that is required to gain the qualifications, so go for it and don't just be a grass cutter, prove you can make yourself a better greenkeeper. More and more golf courses now see the advantage of having their staff educated, because they eventually reap the benefits.

On Tuesday, March 18, we have the annual seminar at Mere Golf & Country Club, and our Chairman, who is this year organising the seminar, tells me that it will prove to be a very educational day, with some fine speakers. The seminar is also open to non-members, so bring along your greens chairman, or any other club member. The cost of the seminar is £22, which also includes coffee on arrival, lunch and afternoon tea.

To register please send a cheque payable to BIGGA N/WEST for £22 to:-

Bert Cross, Harthill Lodge, Harthill Road, Liverpool, L18 3HU.

That's it for now but you can contact me on 0151 724 5412, Mobile 07761 583387

Bert Cross



MIDLAND REGION
Peter Larter
Tel: 01476 550115

BB&O

By now many of you will have visited the BTME and ClubHouse exhibition. This show really does express just how successful BIGGA has developed as an Association in world trade. It seems ever more important that we, the members, are seen in a professional capacity at our workplace and this exhibition allows us to show what can be done with the myriad of products and expertise available to get great results. I guess we will all be looking forward to the spring this year after such a wet December and January. In November we recorded 22 consecutive days of rain with a minimum of 2mm and considerably more than this most days. As Bart Simpson would say 'It just gets worse!'

Hopefully by the time you read this article the BIGGA AGM will have voted unanimously in favour of introducing a minimum qualification for a recognised greenkeeper. This sets a new precedent for our future success in the greenkeeping industry with a view to developing our own professional

standing in this industry. The fixture cards mentioned last month are with me now and they will be sent out to you by the end of February so keep them in a prominent position. It would be great to see some new faces playing this year so try to pencil in at least one of these fixtures into your 2003 diary. These golf days are a great way to meet with fellow, like-minded greenkeepers who enjoy a chance to banter on all aspects of the work we do so come along and join the fun. I have no news from members in the section so I wish you all a good month ahead trying to complete any major winter projects started in earnest several weeks back.

David Haskell-Craig MG

Midland

It's somewhat strange to me that it doesn't matter how cold it gets, I am still unable to drink unchilled beer. Must be a consequence of my time in Osterreich. In fact, in Austria it is illegal to drink beer unless it has been stored (Lagern) for a fortnight, 10 kilometres inside an ice-cave in the Upper Alps prior to serving. After that trek I hope it's not British lager in there!

The Christmas tournament was held at Stratford-on-Avon GC on December 10. Although it was bitterly cold, a great day was had by all. Our most gratuitous thanks to the Club for its hospitality and super meal. The wonderful condition of the course during the most difficult time of year can only serve as a testament to the efforts of Howard Middlebrook and his fine team. Well done chaps. The winning pair of the day brings to mind the old doctrine "Never the twain shall meet". A Villain with a Blue Nose, never! Results: 1. V. Lee & S. Mucklow, 43 pts; 2. R. George & T. Cheese, 43 pts; 3. E. Stant & N. Tyler, 42pts; 4. L. Swann & D. Gibbons, 39pts; 5. P. Larter & S. McDade, 37pts.

Thanks to T. Webb and M. Chamberlain, of Tacit, for the main prize table. Thanks also to J. Sketton of Rufford's for Nearest the Pin and Longest Drive prizes, winners, M. Brian and V. Gilroy respectively. Wine on the table was sponsored by the Midland Section Committee. No wonder it was Australian. Finally, well done to M. Hughes, of Edgbaston, for both best gross and nett aggregates over the year. Well played, Mike. The best aggregate gross and nett trade went to A. Corns and N. Tyler respectively.

After the tournament, and prior to the meal, the AGM was held. One of the issues raised from the floor being that the format of the three major competitions might include a Stableford style of scoring so as to afford the

higher handicapped players a greater chance of being within the prizes. Personally I do prefer Stableford, as one can have a few poor holes and yet still enter a respectable card. It's great fun. The motion was voted on via a show of hands and carried and you shall be advised which as soon as it is known. Also, may I leave Committee changes and welcomes until after the next Section Committee Meeting. After such, delegations shall be fully known and their fields realised. The minutes of the AGM were kindly taken by E. Stant, as P. Gates was unable to attend.

As the elected composer of the Midland Section "Around The Green", I would like to inform other greenkeepers of your personal events and general goings-on. I don't care whether it's your sister's hockey team winning an accolade; a colleague's promotion, or academic achievements, or indeed a few words of support to friends in difficult times. It's nice to be considered and recognised within an international magazine. Please inform me of your news, on 0121-414-0637 (home) or 0781640552 (mobile).

Finally, well done to W. Wood on his return to employ at Fulford Heath GC., for his third stint. Obviously, (think about it Bill) the last chance for a hat trick. Also accompanying Bill is Karl Williams. Geoff Andrews and his fine team at North Worcestershire GC. would like to convey their best wishes to you both for the future.

Lastly, please do not forget to respond to the flier you should have received. I am hopeful that both forward ideas and indeed criticisms shall be received. I look forward to your responses and counsel.

Sean McDade

Mid Anglia

Well, the snow has now gone, and temperatures have gone from -4 to 10 degrees in two days. It's amazing what my Poa will put up with.

In the last Section news Gerald failed to mention our Autumn meeting so he has therefore been fired as the Section scribe and "Scoop" Cassidy has taken over. Now to the news. Our Autumn meeting took place on October 10 with 31 competitors playing the lovely Stocks G&CC. Our thanks go to Mark and his staff for presenting a fine course and to everyone else there for making us so welcome. It was also good to see our National Chairman, Richard Barker, and Regional Administrator, Peter Larter. The champion golfers were 1. Steve Mason; 2. Gerald Bruce; 3. Gary Boulton. Following the presentation and a fixed raffle our AGM took

place with many members doing a runner before it started. For those who did not attend it all went quite smoothly with the election of officers as follows:

Chairman, Jim Cassidy; Vice Chairman, Steve Mason; Secretary/ Treasurer, Gerald Bruce; Match Secretary, Richard Saunders; Regional Board representative, Frank Scullion; Other members, Mark Ellis, Colin Robinson, John Wells

All the above are on this committee to try and help this Section's members so if you feel that there is anything else we should be planning or doing for you then please don't hesitate to contact one of us.

If there is any news that you feel should be shared then please contact me on 01442 842627 or

jim.cassidy@ashridgegolfclub.ltd.uk

Have a happy month

Jim Cassidy

East Midlands

This season's Christmas Tournament was held at Greetham Valley GC in Rutland. Although the course is situated right out in the sticks so to speak, it is an excellent Winter venue, as I am sure all those that played in the competition would agree. On a cold crisp but dry day, 24 keen golfers contested for prizes, which consisted of a singles Stb format. The scores were as follows.

Category 1. 1.. Carl Chamberlain, Glen Gorse, 28pts; 2. Adie Porter, Greetham Valley, 28pts; 3. Antony Bindley (Kirby Muxiloe) 28pts.

Category 2. 1. Gavin Robson, Lingdale, 28pts; 2. Mark Bindley, Kirby Muxloe, 28pts; 3. Derrick Foster, Cosby, 26pts.

Trade & Associate. 1. Simon Hedley, Boughton Loam, 34pts; 2. Simon Banks, Banks Amenity Products, 28pts.

I would like to thank Greetham Valley GC for allowing us courtesy of their fine course, and also thank the Steward and Stewardess for a great meal. Also I would like to congratulate Adie Porter and his staff for preparing such an excellent golf course. Finally a special thanks should go to Rigby Taylor who kindly sponsored the day.

The Christmas 100 draw was as follows. 1. No. 24. £100 Tony Stimpson; 2. No.85, £75, Simon Hedley; 3. No. 61 £25, Richard Barns. If you would like to purchase a number for the coming golf season please ask Gavin Robson or Jeff Dickinson.

Once again could I remind all members to please return your entry form and payment before the closing date if you wish to attend

section events. Our Spring tournament will be held at Ashbourne GC on Thursday, May 5. If you wish to attend please inform me and I will gladly post you a form.

Finally, If anybody would like to participate on a two day grinding course, please contact me for more details as we are hoping to run a course if we receive sufficient interest.

Antony Bindley



SOUTH EAST
Derek Farrington
Tel: 01903 260 956

Essex

A happy belated New Year to you all. I hope 2003 is the year that you will reach your goals and ambitions. First of all I would like to thank John Selwood and John Sinclair who are standing down from the committee. Many thanks for all of their hard work.

We open up this year's events with an educational day on March 12th at the Burstead Golf Club. The subjects are Manual Handling and Fire Training with the cost being only £30.00 for the day which will include tea/coffee and lunch. Please contact Martin Forrester on 01245 603131 or on 07984 867939 to book your place. I would highly recommend these courses as over the last few months we have had a visit from the HEO at the Essex Golf and Country Club. Their representative informed me that they are increasing their visits particularly to all local golf clubs in the next 12 to 18 months.

Our first golf outing is the Spring Tournament to be held at Benton Hall Golf Club on April 15. Further details will be sent nearer the date.

For those who ventured north for the long journey to BTME perhaps you have a story or two to tell. If so please would you pass these on to myself or Steve Crosdale on 07773 125354 and share them with the rest of us.

Let us hope that the weather has improved by the time you read this!

This year the Christmas Tournament was staged in the illustrious grounds of Stock Brook Manor Golf and Country Club. The competition was very close to having no sponsor but as always Steve Denton and Rigby Taylor came through with some great prizes for the top three finishers in each of the two categories. Greenkeeping Supply Company yet again sponsored the Longest Drive and Nearest Pin.

Category I winners in the 0 — 14 handicap range were:- 1. Richard Dunmow, 38pts; 2. Dominic Rodgers, 34pts ACB from 3. Steve

Crosdale, 34pts.

Category 2 winners in the 15 — 28 range were:- 1. M. Dillaway, 35pts; 2. Keith Chinnery, 30pts; 3. Course manager at Stock Brook Arnold.

Guest and Trade prizes went to J. Winters and Mark Day respectively, both notched up 34 pts.

Longest Drive, which must have been hit before the wind got up, went to D. Reale and Nearest the Pin on a tricky hole to J. Collantine. As usual the trade did us proud in both playing numbers and raffle prizes so thanks are extended to UAP, Wax, DFL, Sherriffs, Banks and Tuckwells.

The day went very well with golfers and trade alike being afforded a high standard of golf and food, Arnold and his greens staff are to be congratulated on a well presented and maintained course along with the catering and bar staff who served up a lovely meal.

The AGM, which followed the meal and prize giving was fairly well attended and allowed members to voice their opinions on the year's golf events and put forward any proposals. As with most years their silence rang through and the meeting swiftly moved on to the election of officers to the committee. All but John Selwood, treasurer, and John Sinclair, education, remained in their positions.

I look forward to seeing you all at the next golf day.

Martin Forrester and Steve Crosdale

East Anglia

Another year looms, let's hope it's a good one. The Turkey Trot/AGM at Thorpness came and went and we nearly had an election (election, I said).

The golf itself was pretty good and so indeed was the course thanks to Ian and the lads.

First prize was won by Messrs; Verley, Bartham, King and Cocker with 59 points.

Second was Messrs Lemmon, Elliot, Farrington and Clarkson 60.5 points. Third Plummer R, Hawkins, Stewart and Plummer S, 60.7 points. Nearest the pin prizes were 2nd Mark Day, 7th Roger Plummer, 10th Paul Gould, 16th Neil Worger. Longest Drive:-1st. B Cameron, 4th. Mark Teasel, 18th Mark Broughton.

The Ernie Hart prize was presented to Peter Howard for being a most professional greenkeeper. A very popular award to someone who is greatly respected and a true ambassador for our section.

The election we nearly had was for a new President, following the sad loss of Ernie.

There were four nominees to start with but three stood down to make it easier for us. So, by popular request and a unanimous decision Colin Rushbrook is our President. We wish him well.

We had a big white chief from BIGGA observing "the rustics". The National Chairman, Richard Barker, must have been pleased with what he saw as it was our biggest turn out yet, a massive 84 people, all being directed calmly and efficiently by the man who makes us tick, Ian Willett.

If the Christmas pudding and the wine won't come to us we shall go to them, as it has been proved!

BIGGA are sending a delegation to Atlanta, two of which are from our Section, they are — Kerran Daly and Kevin Hodges. Well done to them.

Bernhard & Company are keen supporters of education and training for greenkeepers. Our own section sponsors are many as you are about to see. Our main sponsor for the Turkey Trot was C.M.W. the other equally important sponsors are:- Rigby Taylor, Rushbrooks, SISIS, Bartram Mowers, TORO Consultants, Clarkson, Ben Burgess, Prime Irrigation, Tacit Turfcare, Greenkeeping Supply Company, Colliers, Atterton & Ellis, Textron, Bayer, Tomlinson Ground and anyone else who knows me. Seriously we do appreciate all you do for us.

Our thanks go to Thorpness for looking after us all so very well, see you in December 2003.

Mick Lathrope

Surrey

Well, the rain did stop eventually and was replaced at the beginning of January with the frozen version. While typing this I am also looking out onto my garden which is covered by four inches of snow. On my travels today all the courses I visited in Surrey were closed but I can imagine the thousands of golf club members all wondering how and why greenkeepers control the weather with the sole intention of spoiling a golfer's divine right to play their course at all times. Greenkeepers, stop upsetting your membership, take up your brooms and go forth from your mess rooms and sweep the snow from your fairways and greens and remember that your members are not just ordinary people like you and me but a gift from God.

Yes, you've guessed it there is very little to write about this month, so it was with much relief that I was given yesterday the event information for 2003. Please note in your diaries the following dates. March 17, Walton

Heath Golf Club; March 13, Cuddington Golf Club; May 29, Old Thorns Golf Club; June 17, The Drift Golf Club; September 25, Richmond Golf Club; October 17, Wimbledon Common Golf Club; December 4, Royal Epsom Golf Club. The dates for Sunningdale and Hankley Common to be announced. The events list is being printed and will be with you soon.

Finally a little information from Hindhead Golf Club. Steve Holmes has told me that his First Assistant, Matt Crawley has moved to Los Angeles Country Club in the USA so James Norris has been promoted in his place and that Lee Blackburn has joined his team from Gleneagles. Please let me know about your staff or any other information for the magazine.

Brian Willmott



SOUTH WEST & SOUTH WALES
Paula Humphries
Tel: 01288 352 194

Devon & Cornwall

For my final meeting as Section Administrator, 90 members attended the PJ Flegg Ltd Christmas meeting held at Okehampton Golf Club on Wednesday 10th December. This year we were delighted to have Scott MacCallum as our guest for the day and just to make Scott feel at home we laid on the snow. As in previous years two starting points were used for the PJ Flegg greensome format competition. Richard Wisdom, as always, offered our non-golfing members a guided course walk, but with the snow and bitterly cold wind members headed to the now traditional PJ Flegg refreshment tent by the 6th green. Inside, Patrick and his staff treated members to snacks and drinks which set the Christmas atmosphere for the day.

After an excellent Christmas lunch, Paul Watson presented the morning's golf prizes for the PJ Flegg Trophy to.

1. M. Child, Saunton & N. Eastman, Saunton, 33pts; 2. J. Phillips, Ilfracombe, & T. James, Killiow, 32pts; 3. N. Kent, St Enodoc, & M. Bosley, St Enodoc, 31pts

Richard Wisdom donated a special prize for the best effort which went to J. Mills & T. Bennett.

Before the after dinner entertainment the Chairman, Cary Rawlings, presented Richard Whyman with a gift on behalf of the membership for his efforts over the last 13 years as administrator.

The one and only Tank Sherman was back by popular demand and had us all laughing during his after dinner cabaret. The raffles

concluded our day, the Avoncrop hamper presented by John Palfrey was won by Richard Slade, the final raffle of the day consisted of more than 40 prizes donated by members and trade.

The Section would like to thank Okehampton Golf Club and all their staff who made our day so special, with a special mention to Richard Wisdom and his staff who, as always, had the course in great shape.

A big thanks to Patrick Flegg and PJ Flegg Ltd for sponsoring the day and providing the wonderful snacks and drinks on the course, also thanks to our President, Clive Ralph, who supplied the wine at lunch. Also to all of you who donated prizes for the day.

Please support Steve Evans, your new Administrator, as you have supported me over the years. Thanks to you all.

Richard Whyman

South West

Happy New Year to you all. Around the Green is brought to you by Guy Woods and Robin Greaves. I'm the straight man and Robin the comedian.

The year certainly ended on a high with the Christmas tournament at Cirencester. What a great day! Shame about the course. Only joking, congratulations to Dave and his team. The course was in superb condition and had it not been for the arctic conditions one could have been fooled into thinking we were playing summer golf, fast true greens and not a mat to be seen. However, the greatest respect must go to the bloody surgeon who cut the Christmas pud. Well done Nobby, great organisation - 50 plus and 12 on the walk round thanks again Dave for the guided tour and the supplied feed and machinery inventory. Don't forget the walk round can be just as good an experience as playing. The results are as follows:- The fastest round of the day goes to Nigel Howe and his playing partner not a pretty sight but two hours 14 minutes 29 seconds fair play. Results here - 1. R. Hook & M. Anderton, 42pts; 2. J. Keenaham & D. Warden, 41pts; 3. M. Hawker & P. Gibson

Training. Still two places left for BIGGA run two day Tractor Driving course at Bath Golf Club Feb 18 & 19 £70 including lunch for both days.

I would like members to be aware of the 'Golden Key Training Voucher Scheme'. This allows vouchers to the value of £35 to be obtained from Golden Key members and used for regional courses and/or workshops/BTME. I have seven kindly donated by Scotts and Handys (Toro) to be redeemed by September

30. Contact me! The link with Training Express is going well and we have successfully run a number of courses. Please remember these courses are run from your requests for training so please tell me what you need or would like.

We would like to thank the continued efforts of our Captain, John Keenahan, and the new Patronage scheme members which is now fully subscribed. More on that next month.

See you at Mendip on Feb 27 P.S. don't mention the war, sorry I mean rain. P.S. Congratulations to Guy Woods who got married during the Christmas Holidays.

Guy Woods and Robin Greaves

South Coast

For those of us who made the journey north to Harrogate and BTME we can reflect on what was a great week! The theme, as ever, was 'continue to learn' a simple but powerful phrase. The week started with the National Education Conference and day one concentrated on people management. We were inundated with superb presentations from the likes of the dynamic Frank Newberry, Brin Bendon and a superb look at politics within the workplace by David Bancroft-Turner and two great presentations from Course Managers Tony Mears and Kerran Daly MG.

The highlight of the day for many was our former Section Chairman, Kerran Daly MG. Kerran is a very different man than the confessed coward who was unable to speak at his own wedding. His superb presentation is a great credit to him and a great advert for Frank Newberry who tutored Kerran on the art of public speaking. His wonderful stage presence and passion for professionalism was relayed superbly to a spellbound audience but the best was left till last. Kerran is truly a very talented poet and received a great ovation on his latest poem, which he recounted to us magnificently. Well-done Kerran!

Day two concentrated on Course management with some very good presentations from the likes of Simon Barnaby and Ken Siems. We were treated to a superb presentation from Steve Cook MG, Superintendent at Oakland Hills Golf Club, which is the venue for the 2004 Ryder Cup. He relayed to us some of the extraordinary things that are done in preparation for the Ryder Cup. We look forward to seeing the finished product and wish Steve well for what, I'm sure, will be a memorable week for him and his team.

Wednesday saw the start of the BTME seminar programme after the presentation of the BIGGA awards. I was fortunate to go up

and receive the South West Environment award for Parkstone Golf Club, an award we are very proud of. We were then treated to an inspirational story of self-motivation from Debra Veal who rowed single handed across the Atlantic Ocean. Her talk centred on the need for a first class team and impeccable preparation in the quest to succeed. Having rowed across the English Channel myself, I was able to fully understand the magnitude of her superb achievement and her presentation was very well received. The many seminars and the exhibition followed. The show was bigger and better than ever with the inclusion of the ClubHouse show covering areas relating to Club management. All in all a great week! The Harrogate week is something you don't want to miss. Meeting old friends and making new ones, finding out that the problems we all have to deal with are the same all over the world. It's just how we overcome them that are sometimes different. So make sure you are there next year. It needn't cost the earth, as there are a number of packages to suit all pockets. Be a part not apart!!

February 26 sees our Section seminar at Canford Magna and details should be with you now. Speakers include Stella Rixon, Kate Entwistle, Tom Mackenzie, Ed McCabe, Stuart Ashworth, Gavin Robson and Ken Richardson. The theme for the day is 'in pursuit of excellence' and the cost is members £10 and non-members £15. Make the effort to come to what will be an excellent day. Places will be limited so get your completed forms back to Fred Deamen quickly to avoid disappointment. I also have two places available on one of Frank Newberry's public speaking courses, which will be held in the Bournemouth/Poole area. Please contact me if you wish to attend on what will be an excellent two-day course.

Lastly, let me pass on our best wishes to our Regional Administrator Paula Humphries and her family as she recovers from what we understand has been successful treatment. Our thoughts are with you as well as Gordon Child who has also had successful treatment recently. If you wish to contact me concerning anything then please call me on 01202 661106 evenings, 07813 841714 mobile or email me @ alex@mccombie.fsbusiness.co.uk. I'm off to Atlanta in two weeks for the GCSAA show and conference and will report in full next month

Until next month
Alex McCombie



A dry New Year to everyone, I could have said "happy", if it dries up we all will be. Isn't it surprising to learn that we have just ended the wettest year in history?

I know it's a waste of time me telling you how wet it's been, I often wonder how you ever manage to maintain your golf courses. Which brings me to the first of two points I would like to write about. Although I am closely related to your profession I am quite on the outside and this does not give me an opportunity to see all aspects. Not only do I have great respect for your profession, it's also not much fun being a golfer in the rain and at the end of the day everyone suffers – club-pro-bar-the trade, there isn't much we can do about the weather but we could start to educate golfers, management committees, Captains etc. and give them some understanding of managing the weather and a golf course.

David Ryan and Ian Harrison at Bangor have made a start. I wonder how many golfers have a practice putt or have 50 or so of their friends walk their front lawn on a wet January morning.

Secondly, Golf Days, I consider these to be of great importance and I don't mean just a day out. I believe a lot can be gained by visiting other courses, seeing how they are set up and managed, and most of all by meetings and talking to your colleagues from around the

province, so do try and support them and remember that your host has gone to a lot of trouble, so give him your support. Nothing in life is ever wasted, it could be your course one day.

The conference was a great success, everyone I spoke to commented on the high quality of all the speakers. Many thanks to them and well done committee for your organisation. Thanks to Massereene Golf Club for their hospitality and to Frank Ainsworth and The Hilton Hotel, Temple Patrick for their first rate hospitality.

Finally a thanks to the sponsors, without their contribution the show would not go on. Namely:-

David Laird, Grass Machinery; GUI; David Richardson, Horta Soils; John Lindsey; Lely Ireland; Stanley Emmerson; Textron, Brodericks; Tacit, Graham Prosser. Many thanks.

The AGM took place in December and thanks to Lisburn Golf Club for the venue. (Emmett Curran, Andrew Kerr and myself won the quiz quite easily) Your officers for the new year are: Chairman, Ken Henderson; Secretary, Michael O'Neill; Education, Andrew Kerr; Match and Handicap, Terry Crawford; Jonathan McCabe and Mark Riddle.

Welcome to new members, Robert White, Royal Portrush; John Kennedy, Royal Co. Down; Chris Larmour, Malone and Raymond McVeigh, Silverwood.

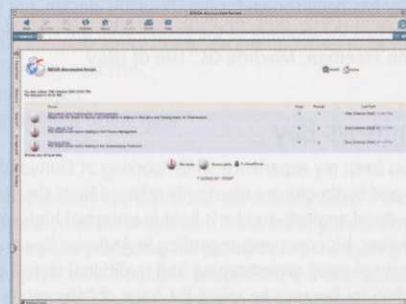
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Happy Days
Graham Prosser



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The One Over-riding Parameter

I was thinking recently that the content on your letters page was getting a bit thin on the ground; but when I saw Jim Arthur's controversial (as usual!) letter get printed in December I knew the tide would soon turn!

It is always difficult to disagree with the principles behind what Jim has to say, and I have to say in his defence that the condition of my course has improved 100% since I read Practical Greenkeeping again and implemented most of Jim's back to basics ideas. I owe him a great deal of the praise I am currently getting for the condition of my greens.

However, it would be very easy for me to sit in my ivory tower, lord of a piece of ground tailor-made to make best use of his principles (perfect sandy rootzone, wall to wall fescues and bents - any encroachment of poa here is MY mistake -, and only around 12000 rounds a year), and criticise others less fortunate than myself. While I think Jim and all the people who responded to him make perfectly valid points, I think there is one over-riding parameter by which we, as greenkeepers, can all judge our successes in our "individual" situations, which surely ends this long running feud once and for all.

"Do you, as a greenkeeper, maintain your course in the way it was originally intended by the architect to be maintained, and are you sympathetic to how much impact the way you look after your course has on the way your course plays? If the architect who designed your course, be it 110 years ago (as in my situation) or two years ago (as in Neil Ballingall's situation), returned to play it tomorrow, would he be pleased, or would he be disgusted?"

The reason I believe this point to be the crux of the argument is because, as Paul Copsey quite rightly points out, golf has become horses for courses. Not everyone enjoys playing on threadbare links courses, while many (myself included) are not big fans of parkland golf. I don't think this matters, but what does annoy me intensely is when a fine design is ruined by an unsympathetic greenkeeper who has no idea about the intricacies surrounding the design. My course is most fun when it plays as it was intended to play, ie. hard and bouncy - and it would therefore be the cardinal sin for me to turn my greens to poa sponges. The challenge and subtleties would disappear, as they have on so many links. This is what has annoyed Jim Arthur all along.

But I don't know how Neil Ballingall or anyone else in his position can be criticised for maintaining their courses in the way they were designed either. After all, Bruce Devlin and Sam Torrance would have been fully well aware that the fairways and tees were going to be sown with ryegrass before they finalised their designs, and would have designed the subtleties around the grass. Neil should certainly be receiving nothing but praise for the condition of his very new greens, either. I haven't played the courses yet, but I did walk the Devlin and the surfaces looked tremendous.

Right, that was going to be my rant over, but seeing as it was you who opened the can of worms about the road hole bunker, and seeing the subject ties in perfectly with the rest of my argument, I'm going to throw my hat in the ring before I sign off! I haven't seen the modification yet, but I always thought the bump that was obviously created by thousands of golfers splashing sand onto the green in a vain attempt to extricate themselves from this hell-hole made that side of the green a bit of an unusable mockery. If, as I suspect has been the case, the committee who decided on this change (be that Eddie, Gordon or whoever) have gone back and studied old pictures of what that area of the green looked like originally, and have simply recreated this, then I applaud that wholeheartedly. Once again, a bit of sympathy has been shown for the ORIGINAL design, not the one that only exists for as far back as the memory of the people who are whinging about it.

Simon Freeman, Machrie GC, Isle of Islay

St Andrews Bay

It has been my experience while working at Elmwood that Mr Jim Arthur's articles and textbooks are constantly referred to as the standard by which new ideas have to stand against, and he is held in universal high regard.

However, his comments regarding St Andrews Bay and the observation that it is "a travesty of good greenkeeping and traditional standards" I believe needs responding to, because he raises the issue of "progress", which is at the heart of the future direction of the greenkeeping industry. I am writing from two perspectives, namely the game of golf itself and education.

Firstly, having played the courses at St Andrews Bay I can assure your readers the inherent challenge of golf is alive and well. The fairways have the density and uniformity required to allow the ball to be worked, strategy is paramount, and perhaps not enough was made in the original interview of the selection of

traditional grasses in the greens, which are among the firmest and fastest in the area, which is saying something. When I played, hitting the green didn't mean you stayed on the green, and this from a course that doesn't claim to be a links. Colour was irrelevant.

From a wider industry perspective if the UK greenkeeping industry is going to achieve the regard and respect it craves, (reference numerous letters in past issues) then it must realise a more customer focused mentality is needed to establish relations between the committee/boardroom and the greenkeeping facility. Regarding the golfer as an uneducated job is simply going to alienate Course Managers and their staff from the very people they are working so hard for in the first place. We regularly visit St Andrews Bay with students to witness not only from Neil, but all his team, professionalism, standards of workmanship and dedication to the cause that is second to none. The cause, mind you, is golfer satisfaction. Elmwood is indeed fortunate to have such a location on its doorstep.

Whether it is appreciated or not, the demands of the modern golfer are driven by the spectacle of tournament golf. This can be a good thing in two ways. Many tour events are set up to challenge the skill of the golfer through firm and fast conditions. Montgomerie described Sawgrass as "total golf" and even Nick Faldo in last month's Golf World complained of watering heathland courses, recognising how British courses put an emphasis on shot making skills. "Let it be natural". Are these not the conditions Mr Jim Arthur has been battling for over the years, and on this evidence has been largely successful.

Secondly there will be greater emphasis on course presentation, hence the colour green at St Andrews Bay. However, the selection of recent cultivars, and indeed their colour, is no big deal if the ultimate challenge of golf is remembered.

Providing the game of golf, the greatest game of all, is a constantly evolving challenge. In order to meet modern demands, greenkeepers need to be innovative with resources, creative with advances made in turf culture and, above all, enthusiastic about improving on what has gone before.

And if traditional practices and turf species are to survive they need to stand up to comparison with what is being exported from the US. Personally, I believe the local traditional courses around St Andrews are stronger for the comparison, but to decry the dedication and management skills of Neil Ballingall is to ignore the demanding environment the modern Course Manager faces.

Ian Butcher, Lecturer in Greenkeeping, Elmwood College

Many Thanks

May I take this opportunity to thank the Northern Region for the support I have received over the past five years that I have served on the Board of Management. I have enjoyed my time immensely.

There have been many high points over the years. One of the most memorable is having our own Headquarters owned by the Association. If we could all just reflect on how far the Association has come since the formation of the three Associations joining, we are now accepted as equals with other professional bodies in the world of golf.

This is borne out by the ClubHouse Exhibition being held at Harrogate at the same time as our own Turf Management Exhibition. Education of green keepers with the GTC (Greenkeepers Training Committee) and Colleges has enhanced our credibility in the world of golf.

We can all be proud of the Association and its members. The Open Championship, the most prestigious Golf Tournament in the world where we have our support team, only enhances our standing in the world of golf.

On a low point, more and more greenkeepers through no fault of their own are having unrealistic targets placed upon them by unprofessional people who have got themselves into a position on golf club committees, who think they know better than the qualified and trained staff. Fortunately, these golf clubs are in the minority and most golf clubs take notice of their Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper. Unfortunately some do not. Sorry about my little whinge.

I pass my best wishes onto the staff at Headquarters who sometimes get criticised unnecessarily. The Board of Management and regional committees do an excellent job along with the section committees who are there for the sole purpose for the benefit of the membership. The Association is and always will be a membership run by Association.

May I wish everyone a happy and prosperous New Year and I wish Bert Cross every success as the new Northern Regional Board of Management Representative. Once again I would like to thank the Northern Region for their support in the five years that I have served with them. I am really honoured to accept the post of Northern Region Chairman.

Ian Holoran, Middlesbrough

St Andrews Bay Follow-up

In response to Neil Ballingall's letter (Jan issue) the connection which he, unlike many others who have contacted me, claims not to understand is that in both cases a combination of power and ignorance results in either an unsatisfactory end result or damage to an experienced and professional Course Manager's career. Too many American inspired extravaganzas have gone or are going broke to doubt this.

Perhaps it is unfair to blame someone who knows what he wants - and perhaps even what his 'clients' want i.e. lush green conditions all year round but not how to get it.

The real blame lies with those advising him, many of whom lack experience and often are motivated by a desire to be instigators of 'new' ideas, which prevents them warning their clients of the known inherent risks. As Paul Copsey (of American Golf) admits, some (many!) high cost ventures have folded or are in severe financial difficulties. Part of the reason may be wrong location, but the commonest causes are bad specification or bad construction or bad post-constructional management (or all three). Building courses in the wrong place admittedly pulls the plug quicker than bad building and bad specification, but the latter faults add huge and insupportable costs for repairs, rebuilding and just plain too expensive maintenance. In the foreseeable future golf, already commercially in decline, will predictably suffer more and only those who cut back or manage on sensibly low budgets will survive. Low budgets do not mean poor condition, often the reverse.

I have a copy letter addressed to all the members of a club that I used to advise (needless to say on a 'nitrogen only' diet but now with a new greenkeeper who has switched to heavy NPK) explaining that part of the reason for the adverse balance sheet was the "steep rise in the expenditure on chemicals".

By implication, I am accused of being old fashioned and out of date but I would point out that I am not concerned with detail but with principles. Paul Copsey may well have progressed from a Cortina but he is still driving a car with four wheels powered by an internal combustion engine, not a Tardis.

It is unrealistic to make comparisons between tee mats, worn out bent fescue and dwarf rye. Good management will ensure traditional winter tees in good order, but not if 'green-mad' golfers prevent any operations, that may temporarily inconvenience them, being implemented in summer.

The secret of good all year round condition lies in following basic principles which, like the grass, have not altered since greenkeeping began; avoiding gimmicks and educating both the members and too often the greenkeepers and their advisers, few of the latter seeming to agree among themselves.

This does not mean condemning every new idea, but it does mean evaluating them as few survive the test of time and performance but some have.

As an indication that the majority agrees with this philosophy a survey shortly to be published on fertiliser and fungicide use conducted for the R & A shows that 91% of clubs use under three tonnes - for everything - with 21% well under one tonne and only 2% used in excess of five tonnes p.a. per 18 holes. A majority (65%) use nitrogen or nitrogen with a little potash, and of the 35% using NPK more than half use very low phosphate mixes e.g. 10:2:10.

I ought also to stress that tradition is not linked solely to links and heathland. There are hundreds of first class courses, both old and new in superb condition all year round which have been maintained on sound traditional lines often for 30 years and more. Their secret is a first class greenkeeper who has the benefit of working for a convinced and intelligent club and often no green committee but a management structure.

J H Arthur, Honorary Member

Contribution to the Debate

May I contribute to the current debate initiated by Jim Arthur?

As a supplier, I visit many golf courses. There are some excellent Course Managers, and there are some poor Course Managers. The former are good at communicating, delegating, and planning. The latter are not, and will not survive today's demanding standards and resulting pressures.

Successful Course Managers realise that "new golfer" is the life blood of the industry, and they have the confidence, born of experience and professional training, to put forward their case and to compromise if necessary. The key is an understanding between the Chairman of Green and the greenkeeper about what is expected and what is possible.

How can we progress? By attracting the highest calibre into the greenkeeping profession, and giving them a first class training.

Tim Fell
Managing Director, Tillers Turf Company Ltd

Health and Safety Considerations

The recent cold snap has highlighted a concern I have had for sometime and I am hoping that through your pages a little light can be thrown on the subject.

The course closure variances from course to course undoubtedly give rise to numerous problems. Many clubs have adopted a no closure policy to avoid the aggravation of disgruntled golfers. However in this ever increasing culture of blame and litigation imagine the following scenario.

Frosty conditions underfoot and the Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper keeps the course open for play. During their round a golfer slips and sustains a nasty injury and decides to sue the club for neglect on the grounds of allowing play in dangerous conditions.

The question is then asked who is responsible for deciding if the course is fit for play etc. I would hazard a guess that the finger would point in the direction of the Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper.

As the Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper is responsible for all matters relating to health and safety on the course, is it a fair assumption that he will have been expected to have made a risk assessment as to this hazard. If this is so how many have?

If a risk assessment has been carried and the dangers identified would it be expected that the club inform their insurance company.

Every Owner/Manager of a golf club should surely have some kind of ruling to refer to. If it already exists please excuse my ignorance and if it does not, do you think now is the time for a golfing body to establish a clear definition of when a course is fit for play.

I look forward to any comments.

One other point that you might like to include now or at some other stage, again related to health and safety, is the hazard of dog excrement. In this age of increasing environmental concerns how many other courses suffer from this unnecessary problem. The environmental impact and health implications should surely warrant greater attention from the Managers who are being faced with the problem. Has anyone done a risk assessment with regard to contamination of machinery? As I say, it is a concern but I'm not too sure where I should go with it for fear of upsetting the dog owning community.

If any of your readers has any experience of dealing with this problem I would be most interested to know. I can just imagine some of the thoughts going through your head as you read this and as funny as they are there is a serious health issue attached to the problem.

Paul Seago, Course Manager, Gullane Golf Club, East Lothian

Inappropriate Photographs

I write, outlining concerns that I and many of my colleagues have regarding pictorial adverts, which often appear in the Greenkeeper International Magazine, which show a complete disregard for basic Health & Safety Regulations.

In particular I refer to female models operating machinery dressed in street clothes wearing inappropriate footwear and without facial and ear protection.

(Pages 39 Dec, 2002 and page 38: Jan 2003 are examples)

I understand fully however, that the client provides these pictures for you and is no doubt a valuable source of revenue. However, as the magazine is obviously proud of its award winning status (front page) and representative of the industry, I feel that more cognisance should be taken of the content of these pictures by your staff prior to publication and how that reflects upon the industry in general.

BIGGA has many female members and adverts such as these do nothing to help their integration within an industry, which has been a male bastion for many years. I personally find these adverts insulting and no doubt somewhere across the industry inappropriate references will have been made to the embarrassment of our female colleagues. I ask you to review this and hopefully reconsider your advertising policy and take appropriate steps to rectify the situation.

I hope that you feel this is worthy of publication in the Your Letters page of the Magazine which will give you an opportunity to explain your position to BIGGA members, many of whom share my concerns.

Tony McLure, Head Greenkeeper,
Whickham Golf Club, Newcastle Upon Tyne

Editors Note:

Editor's Note: The photographs Tony highlights are not actually adverts but were included in the New Product section of the magazine. These are supplied, along with a press release, by the company producing the product or its PR agency. In an ideal world the perfect photograph would be used but often it is a case of using the supplied picture displaying the new product or showing no photograph at all. I have taken the view that it is better to show the product even if the photo supplied has contained the elements to which Tony refers. However, should Tony's views be shared by a significant number of others it is a policy I may review.

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This competition is not open to BIGGA Staff or non-members. The solution to the January Turftime Teaser was 'The Power Brush Company'. This was correctly answered by Barry Gardner of Maidenhead Golf Club.

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Applications in writing with C.V to:

Andrew Ross, Course Manager,
Richings Park Golf & Country Club,
North Park, Iver, Bucks, SL0 9DL

STOCKS HOTEL & GOLF CLUB

has a vacancy for an

ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

We currently have a vacancy for a Greenkeeper with a minimum of NVQ Level 2 qualifications to join our existing team on our 18 hole, downland course, set in the heart of the Chiltern Hills.

Salary and conditions negotiable.

Please apply in writing to:-

Mark Ellis, Course Manager, Stocks Hotel and Golf Club,
Stocks Road, Aldbury, Nr Tring, Hertfordshire HP23 5RX

Batchwood Golf & Tennis Centre

Applications are invited for the position of:

COURSE MANAGER

Salary £21,000 - £25,000
according to experience and qualifications

Batchwood is a well established 18 hole parkland course set in the picturesque grounds of Batchwood Hall in St Albans.

This new position presents an ideal opportunity for the right person who has the ability to monitor and develop the health and overall appearance of the course and associated facilities.

The successful applicant will be able to demonstrate the following:

- Experience in all aspects of modern golf course management.
- The ability to recruit, train, motivate, appraise and manage staff.
- The ability to prepare budget proposals and associated reports for the Business Manager.
- A sound knowledge of Health & Safety obligations and the ability to implement them.

Applicants must have professional qualifications including spraying certificates and at least 4 years practical greenkeeping experience.

No accommodation is provided.

All applications by post or email with full current CV to:

Lee Jackson, Business Manager
Batchwood Golf & Tennis Centre, St Albans, Herts AL3 5XA
lee.jackson@leisureconnection.co.uk

Closing date for applications is 25th February 2003, interviews will be held on Tuesday March 4th 2003.

Leisure Connection Ltd is an equal opportunities employer.



Managed by
Leisure Connection Ltd
on behalf of the
City and District of St Albans



Biggin Hill, Kent

ASSISTANT HEAD GREENKEEPER

Cherry Lodge is a beautiful 18-hole parkland course bursting with potential. We are looking to recruit a hard working dependable Assistant head greenkeeper to join our existing team in a progressive environment.

The applicant should be able to assist in the maintenance, man management and in conjunction with the Head Greenkeeper continue the improvements being made to our course.

The successful applicant will hold NVQ Level 2 and be keen to expand their experience.

This position would suit someone looking for their first assistant head greenkeepers position.

Salary 16k + weekend enhancement.

Applications should be in writing accompanied by current CV to:

Tony Sharman, Course Manager,
Cherry Lodge Golf Club, Jail Lane, Biggin Hill, Kent TN16 3AX
Tel: 01959 572250 Website: www.cherrylodgegc.co.uk
Email address: info@cherrylodgegc.co.uk

LILLEY BROOK GOLF CLUB

Founded 1922.

Invites applications for the position of

DEPUTY COURSE MANAGER

Lilley Brook Golf Club is an 18 hole private members club set on the edge of the Cotswold scarp and widely renowned as one of the most picturesque and beautiful courses in the area.

The successful applicant will be a "hands-on" professional with a proven track record and ideally qualified to NVQ level 3 with PA1, PA2 and PA6 spraying certificates. He/she should possess strong motivational skills and the ability to lead from the front.

He/she should be competent in setting and managing budgets in order to assist the Course Manager in these aspects. He/she will be expected to stand in for the Course Manager during his absence, and assist in the planning and monitoring of course maintenance schedules and course projects.

Remuneration, pension scheme and holidays to be discussed at interview.

Applications in writing including a full CV and 2 references to be forwarded to:

The General Manager, Lilley Brook Golf Club,
Cirencester Road, Charlton Kings. Cheltenham GL53 8EG



COOMBE HILL GOLF CLUB

require

2 ASSISTANT GREENKEEPERS

The successful applicants will hold NVQ level 2 or equivalent, PA1, PA2 and PA6.

Have a minimum of 3 years experience and be expected to work along with a progressive team to high standards.

Input into course will be encouraged, together with continued Professional Development.

This is an ideal opportunity to experience a wide range of course management techniques at a high level.

Salary in accordance with CGS recommendation

Applications in writing with a full CV to:

Murray Long, Head Greenkeeper, Coombe Hill Golf Club,
Golf Club Drive, Off Coombe Lane West,
Kingston upon Thames, Surrey, KT2 7DF

PAXHILL PARK GOLF CLUB

Head Greenkeeper Wanted

Plus 1 experienced Greenkeeper

Plus 1 Greenkeeper Experienced/Unexperienced

For 18 Hole Golf Club in West Sussex

Immediate Start

Please Phone John 01444 484467
Paxhill Park Golf Club, East Mascalls Lane,
Lindfield, West Sussex, RH16 2QN

PYLE & KENFIG GOLF CLUB

have a vacancy for an

ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

Pyle & Kenfig Golf Club is situated overlooking the Bristol Channel and the Gower Peninsular in South Wales.

The course is a championship links, which hosts many major events. We are looking for an enthusiastic person qualified to NVQ level 2 and PA1, PA2 and PA6.

Salary will be based on age and experience.

This is an excellent career advancement opportunity.

Please apply in writing with full C.V to:

Mr. R. Hunt, Pyle & Kenfig Golf Club, Waun y Mer, Kenfig,
Bridgend CF33 4PU Email: rayhunt@pandk.freeserve.co.uk

SOUTHERNDOWN GOLF CLUB

Invites applications for the position of

ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

Southerndown Golf Club is one of Wales most prestigious, private member clubs.

The course is a championship downland links which will be hosting the Welsh Amateur Championships in 2003.

The successful applicant will be self-motivated with suitable experience and a sound knowledge of all turf maintenance practices.

He/She should be an enthusiastic and hard working person, reliable and capable of working efficiently within a team environment.

The club offers excellent working conditions and meets the Standing Committee recommendations with added benefits including pension.

Closing date: 25 February 2003

Please apply in writing with full CV to:

Gary Johnston, Course Manager
Southerndown Golf Club,
Ogmore by Sea, Bridgend CF32 0QP

Feature listing from February 2001

February 2001; BTME2001 review; Winter Mowing; Irrigation; Broadstone GC; Hedges; Security

March 2001; York GC; Greens Maintenance; Meland GC, Norway; Greens Mowers; BIGGA Essay Winner; Grass Science profile

April 2001; Lightning detection; Brockett Hall GC; CGSA report; Fairway Mowers; Irrigation; Sward renovation; BIGGA Essay winner; Turf Disease

May 2001; Foot and Mouth Disease Special Report; Maintenance Facility report; Bunker Sand; ATVs; RainBird Profile; Fineturf Genetics; BTME2002 countdown; Electric-powered machines

June 2001; Stoke Park Club profile; Stuart Cagle MG; Tractors; Leaf Spot Disease; Take All Patch; Construction

July 2001; Royal Lytham profile; Tees Mowers; Fertilisers; Green Grasses; John Deere profile; Sandy McDivot; College Listings

August 2001; Aeration Survey; Machrie GC profile; Rough Mowers; Saltex Preview; Dr Alan Gange - environmental research; Hayter Profile; Ponds; Open Championship review; Toro Student of the Year profile;

September 2001; Ryder Cup preview; Chafer Grubs; Drainage; BIGGA National Championship preview; Sandy McDivot; Machinery Maintenance; Soil Analysis; Wild Flowers

October 2001; Major Award for Walter Woods; Royal Portrush GC; Portstewart GC; Irrigation; Soil biodiversity; Leaf collection systems; Scotsturf preview/ Saltex review

November 2001; BIGGA National Championship review; Environment Competition winner; Spraying; Toro Awards Preview; Cutting regimes; Dyke GC

December 2001; Toro Award Winners; Southern Gales GC; BTME preview; Specialty equipment; Thatch removal

January 2002; Walton Heath profile; Greenkeeping in Denmark; Moving materials; A first for Andy Campbell; New products

February 2002; Harrogate 2002 Review; Drainage; Castlerock GC; Trees; Recycling; TurfTrax profile; Barn Owl special report

March 2002; Donnington Valley profile; Utility vehicles; Essay competition winner; Irrigation; Seeds; Sandy McDivot

April 2002; Heyrose GC profile; Bernhard's Scholarship; De-stress your greens; COSHH assessments; Rootzones and topdressing; Maintenance facilities; Essay competition

May 2002; BIGGA Report; Nematodes; Caldly GC profile; Multi-tasking machinery; Bunker Sand; Essay competition; Fijian GC profile; BIGGA Minimum qualification

June 2002; Finding Fungi; Greetham Valley GC profile; Tyres; Calabria GC profile; Lakes and Ponds; Poa Annua - Jim Arthur

July 2002; Open preview; Turf; Steve Isaccks; Emissions; Grinding; Rotary Mowers; BTME preview; Sandy McDivot

August 2002; BIGGA Golf Day; Open review; Talking Heads - Education & training; Trees; Dr Kate Entwistle; Pwllheli GC; Weather; Compact Tractors; Saltex preview

September 2002; National Championship Preview; Irrigation; Non Grass Cutters; Hawkstone Park; Careers in Greenkeeping

October 2002; Saltex Review; Golden and Silver Key Supporters; Environment Awards; Health & Safety; Sustainable Use of Pesticides

November 2002; Toro Student of the Year; National Championship; Drainage; St Andrew's Bay; Autumn Problems

December 2002; BTME & ClubHouse Preview; R&A Golf Course committee; Dr Kate Entwistle; Pennard GC

January 2003; Beedles Lake Profile; Talking Heads - Chemical Application; Rebuilding Golf Greens; Constructive Advice



Hectic from the Beginning



From the moment Brenda and I arrived at the Majestic Hotel on the Sunday of Harrogate week life has been one hectic whirl and ever since returning to Turnberry I don't seem to have stopped. Such is life in the 21st century I suppose.

Having said that BIGGA wouldn't have it any other way and the fact that Harrogate 2003 was the busiest yet says much for the success of the most important week in the year for the Association, and perhaps even the industry.

As a kick start to the new year Harrogate is invaluable, giving the trade an early opportunity to meet up with their customers first hand and giving greenkeepers the chance to chat with colleagues and discuss the issues and problems of the day.

That record numbers who attended this year make it extremely gratifying and shows that we are on the right lines.

This year saw the debut of the ClubHouse Show, aimed at Golf Secretaries, Managers and Owners, and it proved to be a great addition to the Harrogate mix. Increasingly over the years more and more club officials have been visiting BTME, usually along with their colleagues on the green staff, so it seemed completely natural to provide them with even more reason to attend.

With over 40 exhibitors, ClubHouse had a very good debut and I'm sure it will go on to become an invaluable element to what is a great week.

That was perhaps already apparent this year with the number of BTME exhibitors who have said that they did record business during the Show. With club officials there, along with their green staff, purchasing decisions could be taken so much quicker than previously, when often recommendations had to be taken back to the clubs before an order could be rubber stamped.

While ClubHouse was one addition to the week another was the Careers Fair, supported by Toro, which provided advice on jobs within all elements of the golf industry and gave clubs and companies an opportunity to advertise for new personnel at the Show. Another great innovation.

The one theme which runs throughout the week under the "Continue to Learn" banner is education and, again this year, the speakers were of a quality you don't often see under one roof. I particularly enjoyed the Keynote speech of Debra Veal MBE who rowed across Atlantic, most of it single handed, when

her husband developed a fear of the ocean and had to stop. A remarkable young woman, she rowed for over three months in shifts of two hours on and one off during the day and waking to check for shipping every 20 minutes or so at night. She said that each morning she "Chose her attitude" for the day and that helped keep her going.

The highlight for me was the AGM during which Richard Barker helped me into my red blazer and I began my year as Chairman. Richard did a superb job of flying the flag for the Association last year and, as members, we all owe him a great deal for the unstinting work he put in on our behalf. Having been Richard's Vice Chairman I have taken the liberty of choosing the very best Vice Chairman I could lay my hands on. I'm sure that Andy Campbell MG CGCS, of Carden Park, will be a superb Vice Chairman and go on to be a wonderful Chairman next year. We are very lucky to have him on board.

I'd like also like to pay tribute to Clive Osgood and Ian Holoran who both stood down from the Board at the AGM and welcome Bert Cross, who joins along with Andy.

I said at the very beginning that it has been extremely hectic since the beginning of Harrogate week, even since we returned to Turnberry, but as the saying goes it hasn't stopped me stopping to smell the flowers. When we got back home our garden was awash with fully bloomed daffodils... and this is the west coast of Scotland in January! Since then, of course, we have had two inches of snow and the daffodils have had a real covering but it just goes to show how the climate has changed.

I wish you all a year in which your problems are small and triumphs are large... and well recognised!

**George Brown
Chairman**

Recruitment



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For an information pack and application form please CV to Paul Thorburn, Director,
Pegge Thomas, Executive Resourcing, QED Centre, Treforest Estate, Cardiff CF37 5YR
Tel:01443 841100 E-Mail pegge.thomas@virgin.net

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