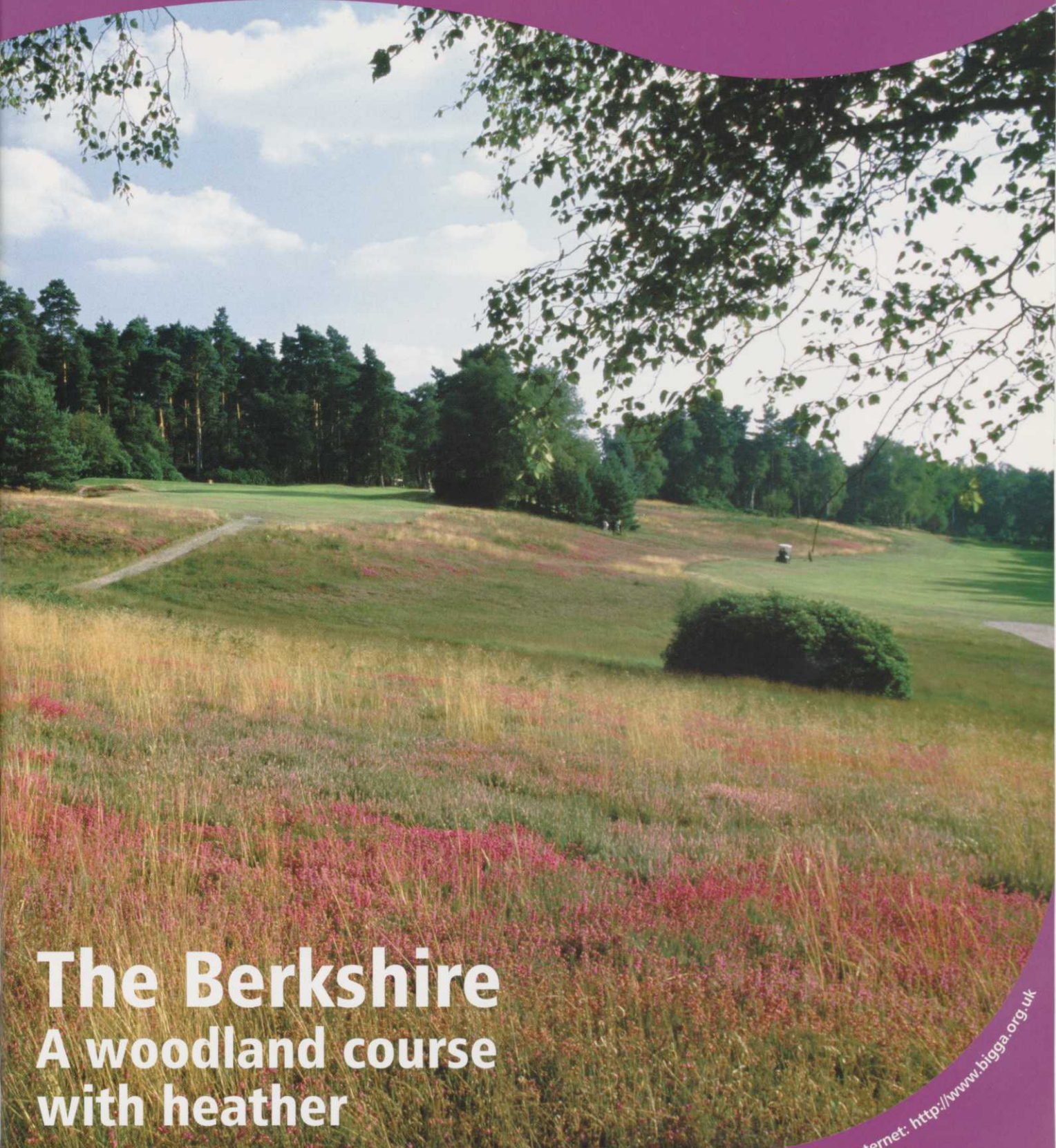




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Greenkeeper

INTERNATIONAL



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A guide to who's who at BIGGA

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Greenkeeper

INTERNATIONAL

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WIN

ONE OF TWO PADDED BODYWARMERS

Now you can keep warm while you work when wearing this superb, rain resistant, padded Bodywarmer with zip fastening and press-stud storm flap.



Inte-rate
TURTLE & COMPANY

'THE TURFTIME TEASER'
DETAILS ON PAGE 43



Welcome

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING ERNIE

With BTME/ClubHouse now a fading memory it is time to welcome in the new golf season and in the world of professional tournament golf it looks like it might be quite a humdinger.

For too long now the question has been "Who is going to step up to the plate and challenge Tiger?" Well it looks as though we may have an answer.

The start Ernie Els has had to the season has made even Tiger stand up and take notice.

As I sit here Ernie has played six tournaments, won five and was second in the other... and in that one he led by one with a hole to play but finished bogey to Lian-Wei Zhang's birdied to lose. No, I hadn't heard of Lian-Wei Zhang either, but he is the only man to have got his nose in front of Ernie so far this year. Not a bad claim to fame.

As Tiger himself said when asked to comment on Ernie's form, "You can hit the ball 400 yards off the tee but you still have to get the ball in the hole and Ernie isn't missing from 12 feet in."

It might have been so different had Ernie contrived to lose last year's Open at Muirfield. With so many opportunities to nail down victory had he not eventually done so the mental scars would have lingered for some time but as it is the positives he must have taken from that have been a real springboard to his current successes.

With The Great One having had an enforced layoff due to a leg injury, the feeling among the golfing press began to take hold that the gap between the two was narrowing and hopefully we could be producing one of those great head-to-head rivalries that makes golf so exciting. Nicklaus and Palmer, Nicklaus and Watson, Faldo and Norman created huge interest but while we have been able to marvel at Tiger's dominance and record making achievements we haven't seen him needing to make birdie down the last to win nearly often enough.

David Duval and Phil Mickelson and to a lesser extent Sergio Garcia have mounted challenges but Duval has lost a bit of form since winning The Open at Royal Lytham; Mickelson can't seem to keep himself in full control coming down the stretch in a Major and is still to win one, while Garcia still has time to develop into a player who can compete regularly.

But in Ernie we have a class player playing at the top of his form, with a run the like of which I can't recall having seen, and if he can sustain it a viable challenge for supremacy will be mounted.

But what did Tiger do in his first tournament back from injury? Need you ask. He won by four shots.

So it looks very much as though it is game on between Tiger and Ernie, and golf can only benefit.

Scott MacCallum, Editor

JAMES (JIMMY) MACDONALD MBE

25TH APRIL 1934 – 21ST JANUARY 2003

It is with great sadness that I must inform fellow greenkeepers of the death of Jimmy MacDonald, who passed away in hospital on 21st January 2003.

Jimmy was one of the most respected and experienced greenkeepers in the country, with many of the great names writing to congratulate him when he was awarded the MBE in 1997.

Jimmy started his illustrious career at Lytham Greendrive Golf Course and then moved to Royal Lytham & St Annes Golf Club in 1964, where he became Deputy Head Greenkeeper.

In 1970 he moved to Formby Golf Club as Head Greenkeeper, until he was invited back to Royal Lytham & St Annes Golf Club as Head Greenkeeper in 1973.

During his career at Royal Lytham & St Annes Jimmy had the unique record of being, Deputy Head Greenkeeper for the 1969 British Open won by Tony Jacklin and was proud to have been Head Greenkeeper for four Open Championships:- 1974 won by Gary Player, 1979, & 1989 won by Seve Ballesteros and his last open in 1996, which was won by Tom Lehman. Jimmy was also proud to have had four Seniors Opens, the Ryder Cup and Home International. Amateur Championship, Curtis Cup and the Weetabix Women's Open.

His one regret was that he never had the Walker Cup, which he said on many occasions that this would have completed the set for him.

Upon his retirement Jimmy was proud to have been awarded honorary life membership of Royal Lytham & St Annes.

He was also immensely proud of his home nine hole course at Traigh in the West Highlands, where he assisted in the design, layout and rebuilding work. The 4th hole, a 247 yard par-4, is named after him "Jimmy's Choice".

Jimmy had been a keen golfer playing off 4 in his peak when he won many trophy's including the Ex Servicemen's Trophy.

Jimmy was a great believer in greenkeeper training and helped many students to develop their practical skills with on course training at Royal Lytham. He always had time for people and will be remembered for his help and guidance.

He helped many of his staff (his old boys) to progress and become Head Greenkeepers and Course Managers, including John Bucher, Derek Postlethwaite, Chris Whittle, Geoff Whittle, Mark Broughton, Peter Simpson, Ritchie Bradshaw, and Paul Smith, who became Jimmy's successor at Royal Lytham.

Jimmy always said he had two women in his life, "his wife, Carol, and his golf course Royal Lytham". He always had an anecdote to help make a point and one in particular, when being interviewed about the course it was mentioned that Royal Lytham was not the most picturesque of golf courses, Jimmy's reply was, "No it was not a pretty course but there again it is not the prettiest of ladies who necessarily make the best wives."

Jimmy's love for the course was legendary and he always defended it against its critics, "people say it is surrounded by houses. But you don't have time to look at the houses. You must concentrate on your game and as a test of golf there is no better."

Our heartfelt sympathy goes to Jimmy's wife, Carol, daughters, Alison and Claire, son, Andrew, and his beloved grandchildren.

A truly great man. One of the last true traditional links greenkeepers and one that we are all proud to have known.

Geoff Whittle



GOLFPLUS

GolfPlus, have been swamped with enquiries and overwhelmed by the response they received following their launch at January's BTME & ClubHouse Exhibition.

"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".

GolfPlus's buggy GPS system adds a new dimension to a golfers buggy round, and in the process drives greater demand for buggies promising Golf

Professionals exciting new revenue opportunities from their buggy fleets.

"Being a British designed and manufactured product, we are able to guarantee our customers the very best in service and support," added Colin. "We work closely with regional and national buggy distributors to make sure that we can offer the same or next day part replacements, and in doing so, minimising the impact on the golf operation".

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

THE GREENKEEPING SUPPLY COMPANY (GSC) TO SPONSOR THE BIGGA NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP 2003

The Greenkeeping Supply Company (GSC) is to sponsor the 2003 BIGGA National Championship, due to be held at Notts Hollinwell GC and Coxmoor GC on October 6 and 7.

"We are really excited at the prospect of being the sponsors of this event," said Managing Director, Liam Galway.

"It makes a good deal of sense for us to get involved in this way; we are based close to BIGGA HQ, and have established a terrific relationship with thousands of greenkeepers around the country and this is an opportunity to say thanks to our clients in the golf market."

The BIGGA National Championship has been developed over the years from the two previous competitions that were discontinued. Qualifying for the event comes in the form of regional qualifiers or a simple application direct to BIGGA (along with a cheque for £70.00!). Around 100 BIGGA members are likely to tee it up on the two midlands courses and the quality of golf is likely to be exceptionally high.

Ian Semple from Old Fold Manor won the event last

year and off a one handicap.

Such quality and skill should not put the less able golfers off though as Liam was keen to emphasise, "This is a two-day event for greenkeepers from all over the country. They can meet up, play some golf, share a laugh and a few beers with their peers in the industry and enjoy the hospitality that the GSC and BIGGA are happy to offer. Sure the golf is the centrepiece but the social aspect is so much more important."

That point was also reinforced by BIGGA's Executive Director, Neil Thomas.

"We are delighted to welcome The Greenkeeping Supply Company on board as the new sole sponsor of the BIGGA National Championship, the most prestigious golfing event on the BIGGA calendar. It is played on top quality golf courses and attracts some of the finest golfers within the Association's membership."

"I'm sure that The Greenkeeping Supply Company will be first class partners in ensuring that the Championship continues to flourish and that this year's event will be the best yet."

BERNHARD & CO.



Peter Wood, 40, has joined the Bernhard and Company team in a new role as General Manager.

Based in Rugby, during the next few months he will be building on the existing successful business base of grinding specialists Bernhard and exploring

fresh opportunities and challenges.

"I will be heading up business administration," says Peter, "and strengthening the management team."

"This is a wonderful opportunity for me to bring a fresh approach into the industry," said Peter

"I am certainly looking forward to learning more about the vital role of grinding within the turf management field."

Skilled in IT project management, Peter's previous roles include Business Manager for a manufacturing group specialising in fenestration and architectural walkways.

Already living near Rugby, Peter is married with a son, and his hobbies include sailing and table tennis.

IPSWICH GOLF CLUB, (PURDIS HEATH)

Ipswich Golf Club, (Purdis Heath) has signed an exclusive five-year agreement with Bartram Mowers.

The agreement will see the Ipswich based dealers supplying the club with a range of Ransomes Jacobsen equipment over the next five years, together with a raft of other turf maintenance equipment.

"We are delighted to have signed this exclusive five year agreement with Bartram Mowers. It will mean that all our equipment requirements will be met by them, and apart from exceptional circumstances, all machinery will be from the Ransomes Jacobsen product range," said Club Secretary Neill Ellice.

"As part of the agreement, Bartram's will also be responsible for all the club's training requirements, which will also be supported by Ransomes Jacobsen. This will take place either on site at the club, or on Ransomes Jacobsen premises, which are located just two miles away from the club.

"The quality of the equipment coupled with value for money, were among the main reasons that we turned to Bartram Mowers. The agreement also provides the club with exceptional after sales support along with very

competitive finance terms."

The agreement was signed on the Ransomes Jacobsen stand at the recent BTME exhibition, shortly after Ipswich Golf Club was presented with the BIGGA Environment Award for the second time, which has not happened during the history of the award.



TURFMECH

Turner Groundscare's branch at Stamford Bridge, Tarvin, near Chester, is Turfmech Machinery's dealer of the year for the second year in succession.

The award, which is now in its sixth year, was presented to Turner Groundscare in recognition of its outstanding sales successes during 2002 and the consistently high level of service it has provided to owners and operators of Turfmech machines.

Presenting the award, Turfmech's Northern Area Sales Manager, Clive Carter, said that Turner Groundscare had produced consistently strong results since being appointed a Turfmech dealer three years ago.

"The firm has built a loyal following for Turfmech products among local authorities, contractors, golf clubs, hire firms and private customers throughout Cheshire, Flintshire, Greater Manchester and Merseyside," he said.



Royal Inverdivot GC...

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



ALPHA AMENITY

Alpha Amenity has been successful in securing the services of two of Sportsworld's best performing representatives, Terry Adamson, in North Wales, and West Cheshire, and Mike Whitehouse, in the West Midlands. "Sportsworld's existing customers will be reassured to know that they can continue to secure the supply of the popular Humate range of fertilisers from Alpha Amenity who has recently secured supply of these products for distribution in the UK," said Alpha Amenity Managing Director, Clive Heginbotham.

With the sales team now numbering nine, Alpha has made some internal changes to manage the business better. John Marland has been promoted to Business Manager and is responsible for all internal business systems eg Administration, IT, Stock. This will allow Clive Heginbotham more time to focus on sales and marketing activities.

"John is currently taking part in a sponsored climb to the Peak of Kilimanjaro and has raised around £3,000 for the charity SCOPE (for people with cerebral palsy). We look forward to his return and know he will take on his new responsibilities with his usual enthusiasm," said Clive.

LOCH LOMOND GOLF CLUB

Loch Lomond Golf Club has recently signed a three-year exclusive deal with John Deere as its preferred supplier of course maintenance equipment.

Located on the banks of the famous Scottish Loch and set within the ancient 12th Century Clan Colquhoun estate, the 300-acre private members course is managed by Golf Course Superintendent Ken Siems and his staff.

Ken has been at Loch Lomond since it was established nearly 10 years ago, before which he was working in the trade in his home country of Canada. The club has been supplied with course maintenance equipment from local dealer Nairn Brown in Glasgow since its opening, and took delivery of its first John Deere machines when Ken arrived - a 6x4 Gator utility vehicle, a 955 compact tractor and a 220 walk-behind greens mower.

"We have built up a very strong relationship with Nairn Brown over the years and the service and support that they give us has been fundamental in signing this three-year agreement," said Ken.

PGA DESIGN CONSULTING LTD

Golf course and driving range safety is fast becoming a key issue of concern with an increasing number of high value claims from players and course neighbours who are encouraged today to resort to the law for settlement of claims and disputes.

Insurance underwriters now look for proof that Clubs and Owners are diligent and careful in the safe management of the course or range.

After numerous accidents PGA Design Consulting Ltd have published the Design Guide for Golf Driving Ranges and Safety Guidelines for Golf Courses but accidents continue to happen.

It is important for clubs to realise that the committee members, Directors, Golf Professionals and course designers are all targets for the victim's insurers. PGADC has launched a safety audit scheme to help clubs ensure that they stay on the right side of the law.

For further information Tel: 0117 9527599

WORKSHOPS TO PROVIDE STRATEGIC HELP FOR COURSE RENOVATION

At a time when there is growing criticism of the state of sports turf throughout the UK, soil and grounds management specialists, 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 playfield level to the Premier League loses between £600-800 million every year as a result of poor playability or postponements," said 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."

The workshops will identify what are the top-ten turf-troubles and provide some simple solutions to avoid these recurring.

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

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

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

THE WISLEY GOLF CLUB

With the installation of eight Huxley Golf high-intensity practice mats, The Wisley Golf Club has reinforced its objective of providing members with the best possible practice facilities.

Planned and managed by club professional, Denis Pugh, the golf practice area at The Wisley comprises a combination of natural turf and Huxley all-weather practice tee surfaces, the latter measuring 75 yards (69 metres) long by 4 yards (3.66 metres) wide. The resulting area of 300 sq yards (250 sq metres) - one-third of it under cover - makes the installation the

largest all-weather golf practice area supplied and installed to date by Huxley Golf in Europe.

"The winter practice area at The Wisley has evolved from temporary hard rubber mats to high quality Huxley Golf surfaces which look, feel and react to a golf shot just like natural turf," commented Denis.

"Laid on a prepared base and then sand-filled, the Huxley all-weather surfaces accept a normal tee peg while also allowing the ball to be played straight off the pile, enabling back-spin to be generated without jarring of the hands or wrists."



THE ASSOCIATION OF GOLF CLUB SECRETARIES (AGCS)

The Association of Golf Club Secretaries will be holding its 2003 Conference at Bosworth Hall, Market Bosworth on April 8 and 9, when around 200 Secretaries and Managers will gather to hear a series of Papers on topics of importance and interest to all in golf administration.

The Conference Keynote speech will be given by Tim Yeo, Shadow Minister of Trade & Industry. He is a keen golfer and will be talking about how he sees the role of the Secretary in golf.

Among the other speakers are The Professional Secretary, AGCS National Secretary Keith Lloyd who will speak about the Association and how he sees it progressing; Iain Fraser, Director of the North Highlands College, Kyle Phillpotts, of the PGA, and Alessandro Forte who will advise on how secretaries should set about building a secure pension.

Other speakers include Dale Clements, of GolfENGLAND; Richard Flint, of the EGU, will introduce the EGU's; Mike Round, Chief Executive of the Golf Foundation; Michael Shaw, Secretary of the National Golf Clubs Advisory Association; Tom McKenzie and Martin Ebert, of Donald Steel & Partners, and Michael Barratt, R&A member and one-time Presenter of BBC's Nationwide, and Tim Taylor, Chairman of the R&A Golf Course Committee, will explain the aims of the new Golf Course Committee and how it can help clubs.

The final event of the 2003 Conference will be the now-traditional Panel of Experts, who will answer questions from delegates. The Home Unions, the R&A, the LGU, the PGA will all be represented.

For further information contact:

association@sovereignconference.co.uk

HAYTER AWARDS

At the annual dealer dinner held during BTME at Harrogate this year, Hayter recognised the outstanding work done by their dealers throughout 2002.

Awarded the prestigious "Top Professional Dealer Award" were Jon and Ben Morgan of Keith Morgan Mowers, from Usk in South Wales.

Outstanding Dealer of the Year Award went to Mitchell Industries. Ian Collingwood from Mitchell Industries also received a special mention because of his meticulous attention to detail and hard work in preparing for and carrying out product demonstrations. The Special Achievement Award went to Trevor Howard and Mick Livingston, of Gibson's Garden Machinery, for their success in sales of spare parts.

The photo shows from the left facing the camera Jon Morgan, Ben Morgan and Chris Faulkner, who presented the award, from Lister Wilder, who were Top Dealer last year.



ERIC HEPWORTH

The telephone number of renowned golf course photographer Eric Hepworth was incorrect in the BTME & ClubHouse Show Guide where he was exhibiting. Apologies to Eric, whose work in the shape of this superb photograph of Ballybunion Old, you can see here.

Anyone wishing to contact Eric, who is available to photograph golf courses please call: **01302 322674**.

A complete list of courses that he has on file is now available on his website: www.hepworthgolfphotography.com



'This used to be the long par 5'

Daily Mail

The recent Government announcement on the increased number of houses required to meet the needs of a growing population might well have implications for greenkeeping if this Mac cartoon in the Daily Mail is to be believed.

NEW CHAIRMAN...



Chris Carr, Sales and Marketing Manager of Q Lawns, has taken over as Chairman of the TGA.

Elected officially at the TGA's annual general meeting held in Padstow, Cornwall, in late January, Chris will serve as Chairman for the next two years. The

Association's new vice-chairman, also ratified at the AGM, is Stephen Edwards, Joint Managing Director of Inturf.

Speaking following his appointment, Chris Carr commented that he would be doing his utmost to maintain the excellent forward momentum achieved by David Waring during his two and half years at the helm of the Association.

"David did a superb job in raising the profile and standing of the TGA throughout the entire turf industry," pointed out Chris.

ROBERT BECOMES NEW KEEPER

Independent agronomist Robert Laycock became the new "Keeper of the Register" at the second meeting of members of the Register of Independent Professional Turfgrass Agronomists (RIPTA) in January. He will act as contact person for RIPTA during 2003.

RIPTA's website, www.ripta.co.uk, was launched during 2002 and contains information about the Register and its aims. Links to the websites of members and also to those of some of the associations who support the Register can also be viewed.

Since its inception, the Register has been administered by Jeff Perris, Director of Advisory & Consultancy Services at the Sports Turf Research Institute. Members present at the meeting thanked Jeff for the excellent work he had done in getting the Register off the ground.

The Register of Independent Professional Turfgrass Agronomists currently comprises seventeen agronomists who fulfil specified criteria of independence, experience and academic excellence. They advise sports turf clients of all types in the UK and abroad. Agronomists who fulfil the requirements for membership are encouraged to apply to be added to the list.

The launch of RIPTA in January 2002 was enthusiastically welcomed by the main sporting bodies in the UK and Ireland, including the R&A, Football League, England & Wales Cricket Board, Jockey Club, English Golf Union and The Golfing Union of Ireland.

The seventeen agronomists on the register are: Alistair Beggs; Emma Beggs; Andy Cole; Eddie Connaughton; John Hacker; Mike Harbridge; Steve Isaac; Gordon Jaaback; Robert Laycock; Tim Lodge; Ian McClements; Stuart Ormondroyd; Jeff Perris; George Shiels; David Stansfield; Neil Squires and Peter Winter

For further information contact:

Robert Laycock. Tel: 01759 318680

Email: robert.laycock@btinternet.com

WOLF PROLINE

BTME proved to be the ideal launch pad for WOLF Proline - the professional turf division of WOLF Garden. Headed up by new recruit Clive Pearson, the Proline team enjoyed a hectic show, with much interest being shown in the new range of professional lawn fertilisers.

The experienced team, which comprises of WOLPs Managing Director Richard Smith; Sales Manager, Clive Pearson, who joined WOLF from GEM in December with over 20 years experience in the industry; Turf Technician Emma Passman, who joins with a HND in Agriculture and a Degree in Land Management, and Mamie Lake (who also joined in December, as Proline Administrator) were delighted with the feedback to the new range.

Sales Manager, Clive Pearson said "We came to the show knowing that we had an excellent product to offer and this, backed up by strong corporate branding, an experienced team, and excellent in-house support would aid us in our attempt to find suitable distributors for the range. The show has proved most successful and the new team will be kept busy following up leads over the next month or so".

A competition to win a WOLF ride on lawnmower - the Cart generated much interest on the stand, with the winner of the competition Andy Campbell MG, of Carden Park being drawn on the Thursday afternoon.



Greenkeeper Education and Development Fund

Unlock the doors to progress through BIGGA's Education and Development Fund - the key to a great future for greenkeepers, golf clubs and the game of golf.

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

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Clive A Archer; John Crawford; Bruce Cruickshank; Douglas G Duguid; Alan Holmes; Robert Malbusch 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

The BIGGA Golf Environment Competition 2003

Thanks to the continued support of the R&A and sponsorship by Scotts UK Professional and Syngenta Professional Products, BIGGA is pleased to announce the launch of the BIGGA Golf Environment Competition 2003.



THE AIM OF THE COMPETITION IS TO:

- Develop greenkeeper and club awareness of the need and benefits of environmental and turfgrass management.
- Demonstrate to the general public and conservation bodies the level of support for environmental issues that exist within the golf industry.
- Generate awareness of environmental achievements of the golf industry.
- Educate the general public and conservation bodies about the positive role of golf in the environment through promotional articles in the press, on television and on radio.


JUDGING

- BIGGA will distribute invitations to enter the Competition, to all golf clubs in Great Britain, during late March/early April.
- All golf clubs wishing to enter the Competition will be sent application forms during April/May.
- The STRI will consider each entry and select ten clubs to be visited by an STRI Agronomist, comprising two from each judging area i.e. (Scotland, N. England, Wales, SE. England and SW. England). Additionally, three clubs will be selected from across all five areas for each of the Best Newcomer and the Best Overall Initiative Awards. Thus 16 clubs will be visited in total.

- Each of the clubs will be assessed on two main criteria (nature conservation and turfgrass management) plus five additional criteria (landscape and cultural heritage, water resource management, pest management, communications, and education/training). For those clubs assessed in the Best Overall Initiative category, there will be particular emphasis on assessing the initiative itself.

BENEFITS TO GOLF CLUBS

- Every club entering the Competition will receive an information package from BIGGA, the STRI and the sponsors.
- Clubs not visited, as part of the judging process, will receive a short report from the STRI on the content of their application with general recommendations on how to progress further in the Competition in future years.
- All Clubs visited, as part of the judging process will be given advice, where necessary, by an STRI ecologist.
- Prizes will be awarded according to the prize scheme set out on the next page.
- Clubs that are of a high standard yet do not achieve Regional or National winner status will receive a Highly Commended Certificate.



Golf Environment Competition

PRIZES

The National Winner will receive a Scotts Weather Master weather station worth £2,500, a cheque for £2,000, the BIGGA Golf Environment Competition Trophy to hold for 12 months and a plaque to display in the Clubhouse.

Each of the other four Area Winners will receive a cheque for £500 and a plaque to display in the Clubhouse.

The Runner up in the Winner's judging area will receive a cheque for £500 and a plaque to display in the Clubhouse.

The Most Impressive Newcomer will receive a cheque for £500 and a plaque to display in the Clubhouse.

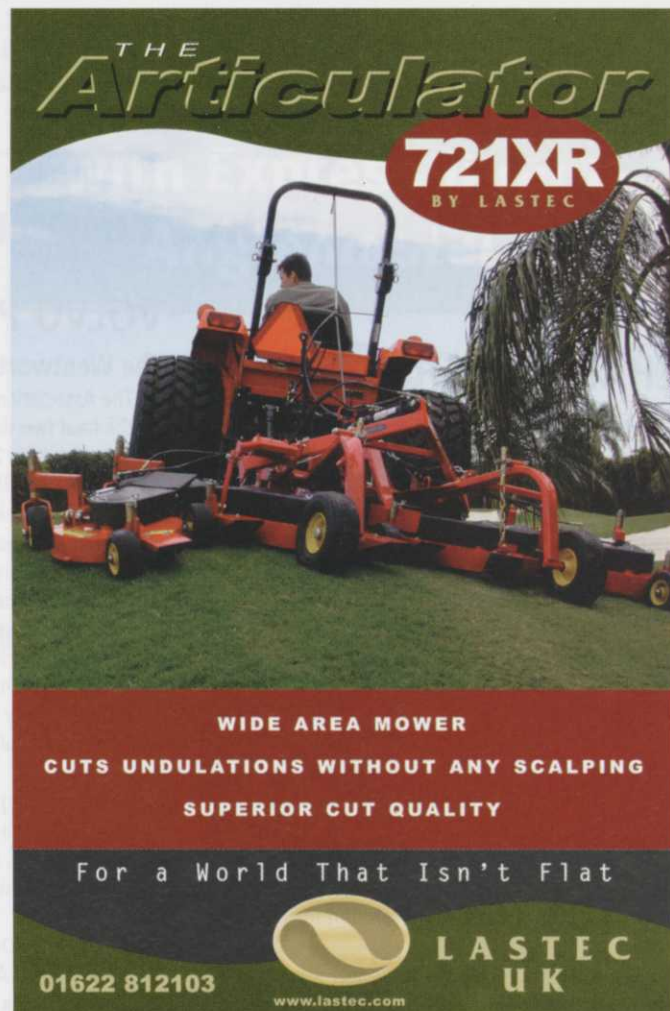
The Best Overall Environmental Initiative will receive a cheque for £500 and a plaque to display in the Clubhouse.

Matt Reed, Managing Director of Scotts UK Professional, said, "The potential of golf courses as important refuges for wildlife is becoming increasingly apparent. One of the key factors in our product development programme is to ensure minimum impact on the environment throughout our operations – from manufacture to application - and we are delighted to be able to extend further, this philosophy, into sponsorship of the BIGGA Golf Environment Competition."

Jose Milan, of co-sponsors Syngenta, said, "Golf is an industry and, like any industry in the 21st century, it must take its responsibilities, to the environment, seriously. Golf is in a fortunate position, as it has the potential to make a significant contribution to the preservation and enhancement of natural biodiversity, and we are pleased to be able to offer practical support through this sponsorship."

Neil Thomas, Executive Director of BIGGA, said, "The continued support of the R&A plus the generous sponsorship of Scotts UK Professional and Syngenta has ensured that BIGGA can continue to run this prestigious competition. The Competition encourages greenkeepers and club members to work together in furthering the environmental management of golf courses."

Gordon McKillop, Chief Executive of the STRI said, "The STRI is delighted to be involved in judging the Competition, again. Over the years, judging has become more and more difficult as the quality of entries continues to increase. This problem is one with which we are happy to contend. The results should serve to demonstrate, in particular to the non golfing public, the extent to which golf is an excellent custodian of the countryside."



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THE OPEN CHAMPIONSHIP

Royal St. George's Kent, July 17-20 2003

The BIGGA Greenkeeping Support Team at The Open Championship will be involved in early morning course preparation, bunker raking while matches are in play and evening course repair. You must be available from Wednesday evening 16 July, through to the close of play on Sunday 20 July.

Whilst all transport, accommodation and meals will be provided between these dates it is the team member's responsibility for travel from home to the venue and return.

Full BIGGA members only may apply to be considered for the Team, and must apply to: John Pemberton, BIGGA HOUSE, Aldwark, Alne, York, YO61 1UF. Should you require any further information then John can be contacted on 01347 833800 or via e-mail: john@bigga.co.uk

The closing date for applications for the Open is Friday 14 March 2003.

VOLVO PGA CHAMPIONSHIP

The Wentworth Club

The Association will again be providing a support team for the final two days of this prestigious event which this year are Saturday 24 May and Sunday 25 May. Each member will be allocated a match and will walk the course with the game, raking any bunkers found by the players.

In addition, should adverse weather conditions prevail, you may be required to assist the Wentworth greenkeeping staff in keeping the course playable.

You will be responsible for your own transport arrangements to the course and there is no provision for overnight accommodation.

You may apply to help on either or both days and usually all those who apply are given the chance to participate on at least one day.

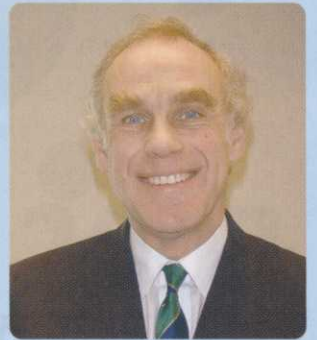
When applying please give details of your polo shirt size as this may be provided together with daily meal vouchers.

Helping at this event will not prejudice your chance of a place on The Open Championship Support Team.

Applications to Derek Farrington, BIGGA Regional Administrator, 35 Cleveland Road, Worthing, Sussex BN13 2ES Tel: 01903 260956 Email: derek.farrington@tesco.net

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



Tony Cocker

Position:
Assistant Accountant

What does your role involve?
Looking after the receipts and accounts and preparing monthly management accounts

How long have you worked for the Association?
Since January '97

Where were you born and brought up?
Lancashire - Red Rose forever!

Where did you work before you joined BIGGA?
Newspaper publishers in York

What are your hobbies?
Transport, travelling and watching sport

What is your favourite food?
Thai and Indian

What is your favourite film?
Die Hard with a Vengeance

What was the last book you read?
John Simpson's autobiography

Who is your all time hero?
Ian Botham

What was the best event you've ever attended?
1961 FA Cup Final where my team, Blackburn, played - but lost!

What is your claim to fame? (None not acceptable)
Winning a cricket cap when playing at Old Trafford for North Lancashire Schoolboys

MARCH'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 March's winner, Anthony Woolley of Piltdown 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 March's winner Timothy Allard from Charnwood Forest Golf Club, posted on the 5th February 2003 under the 'Talk about Turf' section.

BIGGA welcomes...

Scottish Region

Thomas Adamson, Central
Neil Cross, Central
Jamie Downie, Central
Euan Ferguson, Central
Neil Henderson, Central
Derek Lithgow, Central
Scott Reid, West
David Twaddle, West
Mark Wilson, West

Northern Region

Nicholas Davenport, North West
Paul Farrelly, North West
Gary Robertson, North West
Phillip Wrigley, North West
Jonathan Conway, Northern
Andrew Hunter, Northern
Gary Rollinson, Northern
Matthew Davies, North Wales
Jamie Williams, North Wales

Midland Region

Steven Kirk, East Midland
Katherine Walls, East Midland
Andrew Allcock, Midland
Michael Deakins, Midland
David Harding, Midland
Ian Holden, Midland

Jarrold Hughes, Midland
Krzysztof Misiaczynski, Midland
Gareth Morgan, Midland
Filip Naglak, Midland
James Neale, Midland
Alan Parton, Midland
Philip Rainsford, Midland
Tom Shinkins, Midland
Greg Smith, Midland
David Steventon, Midland
Bevan Tattersall, Midland
C Warr, Midland
Gordon Cooke, East of England
Anthony Hore, BB&O
Paul Appleby, Mid Anglia
Ian Ballard, Mid Anglia
Robbie Butler, Mid Anglia
Robert Duncan, Mid Anglia
David Kinchella, Mid Anglia
Charlie Milbourn, Mid Anglia
Kevin Miller, Mid Anglia
Alastair Ogilvie, Mid Anglia
Leigh Welford, Mid Anglia

South East Region

Sam Bethell, Surrey
Alan Dyer, Surrey
Nick Foley, Surrey
Moray Juby, Surrey
Richard Pennell, Surrey

Adam Pierson, Surrey
Robert Wallis, Surrey
Matthew Gray, Kent
David Bircham, East Anglia
Matthew Jordan, East Anglia
Carl Taylor, East Anglia
Robert Coughlan, Essex
Andrew Holman, Essex
Tommy Hunter, Essex
Terry Hunter, Essex

S West/S Wales Region

Desmond Watts, South West
Benjamin Hosking, Devon & Cornwall
Justin Searle, Devon & Cornwall
Francis Austen, South Wales
Clive Moran, South Wales
Wayne Tregonning, South Wales

International

Gary Baxter, Austria
Stig Helm-Petersen, Denmark
Nigel Prestwich, Germany
Joroen Brouwer De Koning, Netherlands
Colin Fenby, USA
Dick Gray, USA
Alan Hospes Cgcs, USA

Student Members

Sean Berry, Central
Calum Brydon, Ayrshire
Steve Newell, Central
Craig Spruce, North West
Mark Bell, Essex
Richard Butler, South Coast
Robert Mitchell, South Coast
Craig Reid, South Coast

Corporate Members

Keith Cann-Evans, North East
Eric Hunter, North East
Ian Robinson, North East
Paul Gardiner, BB&O
Ian Geoffrey, Midland
Tony Snaith, East Midland
Nigel Howe, South West

Associate Members

Bob Twaddle, East Scotland
Michael Caplan, North West
Nick Gladstone, Northern
Michael Lukar, Kent
Desmond Meharg, South Coast
Tracey Criaik, Spain

Did you take the SealSkinz test?

At BTME 2003 we demonstrated the remarkable waterproof capability of the SealSkins range of waterproof socks and gloves.

Developed by Porvair International Limited using a waterproof, breathable membrane these products offer the benefit of the latest technology in the protection from wet conditions.



THE TECHNOLOGY

The socks are designed to fit and behave like a normal sock but are made with the porelle membrane sandwiched between two textile layers. The finished product is **100% waterproof** and breathable, similar to wrapping a waterproof jacket round your foot but a lot more comfortable! They are most comfortable when worn with light weight non waterproof footwear, and will protect your feet from getting wet all day long. Ideal for work, golf, hiking etc

The gloves are made from a similar 3 layer construction and are **100% waterproof**. Designed to offer excellent grip and dexterity in wet conditions.

THE BENEFITS

- SealSkinz keep the hands and feet warm and dry all day
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- Wear a light weight boot or shoe and SealSkinz for the most comfortable combination - no more heavy wellingtons!

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SOCKS - £16.00 pr +£1.00p&p
BIGGA are offering a discount off the RRP of £20.00 to members

GLOVES - £16.00 pr +£1.00p&p
BIGGA are offering a discount off the RRP of £22.50 to members

Buy any combination of two of the above items for £29.50 +£1.50p&p

SIZING

Socks: S (3-5), M (6-8), L (9-11), XL (12-13)

Gloves: XS, S, M, L, XL

WASH AND CARE: Both socks and gloves can be washed at 40 °c

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Course Feature

coursemanager@hotmail.com

Scott MacCallum meets Chris Lomas, a young man well prepared to meet the challenge of becoming the fourth head man in the history of The Berkshire Golf Club.

When Chris Lomas took over as Course Manager at The Berkshire Golf Club, in charge of the club's two highly rated courses, last September it was a challenge he was more than ready to meet.

He had spent four years working at Swinley Forest as Deputy Course Manager before making the short journey to The Berkshire where he initially shadowed Rob Moreton. After about 18 months he began to take more and more responsibility for the running of the courses before finally, on Rob's retirement, he was promoted to the position of Course Manager.



After two hours of chatting with the 29 year old Lancastrian I was more than convinced that the club had been right to identify Chris as their new Course Manager and nurture him accordingly, but it was just before we said our good-byes that I appreciated fully that Chris was a man doing the job for which he was destined.

At the end of the interview I said I'd send him the piece before publication just to ensure I hadn't misinterpreted anything and that he was happy with what had been written. He said to email it to him and proceeded to write down his address.

Now having only been in post a few months you could have forgiven him for not yet having acquired clomas.theberkshire@hotmail.com or coursemanager.theberkshire@hotmail.com as his email address so, as you might expect, his address was neither of these.

Chris' email address is coursemanager@hotmail.com When I complimented him on having got hold of such a definitive address he said he'd had it for sometime and that he had coursemanager@btopenworld.com as well.

If good management is all about planning ahead and seizing the initiative Chris obviously has those qualities in spades.

And he has grabbed his opportunity with both hands keen to place his own stamp on the Herbert Fowler designed Red and Blue courses at The Berkshire,

which both rank within the top 50 of Golf World's rankings, but at the same time full of praise for the way in which Rob Moreton prepared him for the task.

"A lot of people were upset that the position wasn't advertised and I'm not surprised because it's a wonderful job and I'm very lucky to have it," said Chris, as we sat in the bungalow style office and mess room block which sits alongside the main maintenance facility.

When it came to the hand over period which can often be a fraught time for any retiring Course Manager and his keen-to-get-started successor Rob's handling of the situation could provide the blueprint for others.

"He did it very cleverly," said Chris.

"He started to cut me more and more slack, leaving me to make the decisions I find myself making today. From time to time our ideas conflicted a bit but on the whole it was a sound partnership.

"I've never met a man who was so enthused about greenkeeping as Rob. He would live it, breath it and talk all day about it. It was wonderful because I learned so much from that.

"He also acknowledged his mistakes and was very open about them. He'd say 'Look I did that wrong' or 'I didn't get that drainage right'. That was what I liked about the man."

So what will the Lomas approach be to managing what is one of the finest



The Berkshire Team with Fudge the dog



Chris classifies The Berkshire as a woodland course with heather

pieces of golfing land to be found anywhere?

Well, one of the first things that he did was to split his team of 14 into two teams, one for the Red Course, under Head Greenkeeper Mark Hancock and one for the Blue, under John Haines.

"At the moment there is a team of six on each course with myself as Course Manager and our Horticultural Engineer - he hates to be known as a mechanic! We have 576 acres of land, which is a fair old lump and the guys used to go out in the morning and have little focus on where their job was going to be. By splitting them into two teams I'd like to think everyone was a little bit more focussed. It's been difficult through the winter as all we seem to have been doing is digging holes and repairing drains and cutting and burning trees, but in the summer we should get a bit of friendly rivalry and competition going. People commenting on the greens on the other course and that sort of thing," said Chris, who is hoping to add another man to each team to bring them up to seven.

The Berkshire never has winter tees or greens and Chris has inherited a non course closure policy which he loves.

"It takes the pressure off me as I don't have to come in in the morning and say sorry guys we're closed today."

On the management of the courses themselves, Chris sees woodland management as a big issue and has been talking with John Nicholson about improving their practices.

Interestingly Chris doesn't class The Berkshire as a heathland course any more.

"I think 75 years ago you could say it was heathland, when there were no trees but I'd class the likes of The Berkshire and Sunningdale as woodland courses with heather. I'd actually say that genuine heathland courses are very few and far between. Hankley Common and Walton Heath are two of them but they have both done a great deal of work in clearing out trees. Some courses are meant to be heathland and others are meant to adapt between the two.

"If we were to clear trees here I think it would spoil the nature of the golf course. Each hole is an entity in its own right and some members like to see thick woodland on the course. We are trying to retain that but thin the trees

out so that if you look carefully you will be able to see another fairway. We are trying to get more light and wildlife into the areas, give the trees a chance and get some secondary growth coming through. Most of the trees out there are the same age as the golf courses 75 years, so they have all grown to the one height and will die and fall down around the same time so we need some secondary growth."

They are working on an on-going programme of tree thinning using AJ Forestry to remove trees for them.

"Where we have a green surrounded by trees with the sun struggling to get through we are taking out a wedge of trees - the wider portion near the green working back to a point - which will let the light in and retain the look of the hole from the fairway.

"Woodland management plays second fiddle to turf management but it is hellish important on these golf courses. If you don't keep it up it soon gets away from you."

Chris drew my attention to an aerial photograph of the course on his office wall.

"If you look you can see that where the trees are creating shade there is no heather but where there is sunlight the heather is better developed."

Knowing how important heather is as a resource, a number of Course Managers at some of the more heather rich clubs are planning to form a Heather Committee to discuss the best ways of managing and protecting it.

"David Murdoch MG, of Liphook; Brian Turner, of Sunningdale; Clive Osgood, at Walton Heath; and Gareth Roberts, of Hankley Common and others will get together and talk as we've all got similar types of golf courses of similar ages."

Heather is a much talked about subject among the Course Managers who are both blessed with it and carry the responsibility of looking after it.

"You hear that Swinley's heather is good one year or that Sunningdale's is fantastic and wonder why?. So we intend to get together and discuss who's cutting at what height, how regularly and the benefits that have come from it. How do you get rid of grass in heather - spraying, digging, burning it out? Everyone is doing so many different things. Clive does a lot of turf lifting at



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Course Feature



Walton Heath and it works well for him but might not work for other people so we will brain storm it. You can never know too much, the minute you think you know it all is the minute it comes up and bites you."

One of The Berkshire's contributions to the discussions is on the topic of heather overhangs in bunkers.

"They look beautiful but are not very playable and some people chop it back severely, but you lose the heather. We have been building the bunker faces out with pit sand so the overhang is not so bad and we don't have to cut the heather back. A few of the other guys found that interesting," said Chris, whose father, Nick, worked with Clive Osgood, as Secretary of Walton Heath for a number of years.

"He loved working with Clive. He could listen to him all day and says that Walton Heath have a wonderful asset in Clive," said Chris.

He was always going to have a career in sport. He was brought up in a home backing onto Pleasington Golf Club, in Lancashire and initially he became an Assistant Pro at the club.

"I got a little disillusioned working in the shop and felt I wasn't going to be good enough to make it as a player but I got to know the greenkeepers at the club and became really interested in agronomy and turf culture, learning a lot from Len Cook, the now retired Head Greenkeeper."

He left the Assistant's post after eight months, finished his A Levels and contemplated doing a Sports Science degree but eventually decided upon the HND at Reaseheath College, which was in its first year.

"I did my sandwich year at Carden Park under Andy Campbell MG and worked for a time for the European Tour, at The Colony Club in Vienna under Gary Moseley."

He freely admits that he, along with his fellow students were the guinea pigs for the three year HND course and feels that many of those who finished the course quickly became disillusioned.

"Many of them had no experience of working on a golf course before starting the course and were expecting to walk into good jobs at the end and I

would think about a third of them are no longer in greenkeeping at all," he said.

When he finished the course he sent his CV to all the clubs he admired in the Home Counties, as he'd played golf in the area and loved the courses and also wanted to live near his brother, who'd also moved south.

He also wanted to further his rugby career which had seen him play for, among others, Orrell along with England international, Dewi Morris, and win around 30 England caps at various levels up to England Under 21. He is also a good friend with England and Lions Centre, Will Greenwood, with whom he grew up, and who also visits The Berkshire for a game while training with England at their base near Bagshot.

Chris initially played for Premiership club, Richmond, as he says, acting as a human tackling bag for Ben Clarke and Scott Quinnell, before playing semi professionally for Esher and latterly Chobham before retiring last year. It doesn't prevent him from accepting the odd invite to play in the Dubai Sevens however.

"I quit because I'm 29 and wanted to wake up at 40 and be able to play golf and not be carrying long-standing injury problems."

Back to greenkeeping...

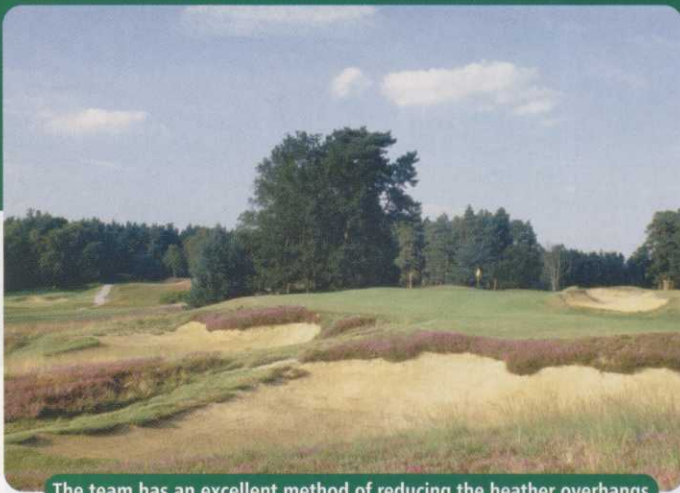
Among the clubs to reply to his CV blitz was Wentworth where he was interviewed by Chris Kennedy and Graham Mathieson and offered a job.

"Quite a surprise really because I wasn't Scottish," he joked.

However, Chris Kennedy advised him that there was an opportunity at Swinley Forest and to get along there. I'd heard of Swinley Forest as my dad had played it years before and you can't do anything but fall in love with it. I owe Chris Kennedy a lot for pointing me in that direction."

Chris worked under Lawson Bingham for three years at Swinley and is grateful to Ian Pearce, Secretary, for taking a gamble in a young upstart still wet behind the ears. Then the opportunity of becoming Deputy at The Berkshire came along.

"I knew Rob was due to retire but there was never any guarantee that I'd



The team has an excellent method of reducing the heather overhangs

get the job."

But get the job he did, becoming only the fourth head man at The Berkshire in its 75 year history. To celebrate its 75th anniversary among other things a shotgun start tournament for 140 between The Berkshire and Sunningdale will be held in the summer complete with marquee and barbecue while the club is hosting the British Ladies' Seniors this year and the British Men's Seniors next year.

"I am indebted for the opportunity I've been given here and I will do everything in my power to justify their confidence in me. The members are a really supportive bunch and I have a very experienced team who rarely let themselves or each other down. I also work closely with the Secretary, Colonel John Hunt, who will fight my corner if needed," said the extremely happy Chris.

Oh, and he's more than happy to communicate by email with anyone who wants to discuss anything within the piece, or greenkeeping matters in general.

You know the address.

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The problems caused by roots finding their way into underground drainage pipes are not often considered or discussed. However, root ingress is a very real problem to drainage systems and therefore in order to ensure that you get the most effective use of your drainage scheme, education in the causes and how to prevent the damage or deal with blockages once they have occurred is necessary.



When a drainage scheme is installed consideration should always be given to ensure that the system is functional, the pipes and backfill are at the right depth and sized correctly. However, how many consider the implications of the planting that provides the landscaping feature?

A good drainage design will consider and accommodate the implications of the present landscape on the drainage system. There is a rule of thumb, which suggests that a drain should never be laid under the canopy of a tree, others will say that a drain should not be installed within 10-metres of a tree. If there is no option but to lay the pipework within the canopy of the tree then it is imperative to lay a section of unperforated pipe. This is not ideal,

as time passes and the tree grows, the roots will spread and there is always the possibility that they will eventually find their way into the pipe and cause serious problems.

Roots of trees and woody plants naturally grow in the upper layers of soil, usually not extending beyond the tree or plant's drip line. However, if the sensitive tips of root shoots, called the 'meristem', detects a good source of nutrition or moisture they will grow one cell at a time towards that source.

Roots enter the pipes as tiny hair-like structures. They grow quickly inside the pipe and can separate or crack pipe joints and eventually block the system. Because both pipes and roots are underground and out of sight Golf clubs are often unaware of root



invasions until serious and costly damage has occurred.

So what can be done? One option is to cut the roots in the pipes or rod the pipes to clear blockages. This is only a temporary measure, as this often encourages faster thicker re-growth. Nigel Law, Contract Supervisor for White Horse Contractors tells the story of a recreation ground in Reading where the company had been asked to review the drainage and establish the problem. A wet spot was identified in the field and small-scale excavations took place, which showed the roots had attached themselves and entered the drainage pipe. The only course of action on this occasion was to cut the pipe and remove a section and pull the roots out, this was quite remarkable as the roots were removed in a single piece measuring 12-meters and 100mm diameter, the size of the internal pipe. On this occasion the pipe was replaced and rejoined.

"Cutting down established trees on Golf Courses in general is not welcomed", says Robert Donald Managing Director of White Horse Contractors, "and landscaping is an important aspect. Trees provide many of our courses with a natural architecture that could not be mimicked in land formations alone. However, we have noticed on so many occasions that the drainage of a recently constructed course suffers as planting schemes are introduced after the contractors have left and take little account of drainage schemes. Some of the worst species are willows and poplars, these

are frequently introduced to provide rapid cover as they are quick growing and tolerant of heavy soils. Unfortunately, these are also water loving plants and the roots have a propensity to seek moisture, the drainage becomes the target"

To manage and maintain root ingress it is possible to install a plastic or synthetic root barrier. Using a chain trencher a trench is cut to a minimum 1.25m depth the barrier is installed between the drainage scheme and the roots, thereby preventing future growth in that particular direction. The trench is backfilled and reinstated and a permanent solution achieved. An alternative to this is to dig a trench only, around the fairway, green, or drainage scheme and then every other year the trench is re-excavated and the roots effectively pruned. This method is widely used in Portugal, where many of the courses are surrounded by dense coniferous woodland.

If you consider that the drainage scheme efficiency is diminishing on your course you would do well to explore the possibility of root ingress as well as the usual capping compaction and general deterioration. Have an inspection, expose some pipe work adjacent to tree planted areas and see if you can get to the root of your drainage problem.

Robert G. Donald
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Fescue, Forgiven and not forgotten



Chris Haspell makes a plea for the return to more traditional values and grasses

After a recent National Turfgrass Foundation Conference that I attended in the UK which revolved around new techniques of turf management with some of the world's best known turf experts talking about *Agrostis palustris* or, as it is known today, *Stolonifera*, and our old friend *poa.annua*, I felt compelled to offer some hope to those in the industry who have heard the word "fescue" and indeed still believe in it as a big part of our green, tee and fairway management today.

As I left the conference I walked away in deep discussion with my colleagues wondering if, indeed, we lived in the same world as most of the speakers.

Cutting heights of 2-2.5 mm were common on the new *Agrostis* types, and speeds of 16 foot not uncommon on the stimpmeter, Architects are making greens with less undulations to accommodate this, and Stanley Zontek, from the USGA, admitted that even the Director from the USGA commented at a recent conference that the USGA were hypocritical in making recommendations that went out of the window as soon as you mentioned tournament!

However, does your Chairman of Green attend the USGA annual conference or just talk about the speed of the greens at the US Open in the bar with his friends?

Grow in of these new types of creeping Bent grasses was relatively easy. You just need to apply 25 kilos of N a week for around seven months and hey presto a fantastic green with a very large Bio Mass (when I was a lad this was called thatch) which shock horror has to be controlled! Hollow tining up to four to six times in summer, plus graden which could be visual on the greens for up to nine months afterwards. Topdressing with fine sand was the only option, for anything else could not be matted in.

Mr Zontek went on to say that the average US golf course will have a pesticide budget in the region of \$50,000. I do not know how many clubs in the UK and Europe have this size of budget but I would estimate around 1-2%. How many of these club members are aware just how much has to be done to control the thatch sorry "Bio Mass"? And how many accept you actually doing it. Staff levels on golf courses using these new Bents were also much higher.

Dr Frank Rossi, from Cornell University, told us how good poa could be on greens, we all know how poa reacts to *Fusarium*, and *Anthraco*se, The use of growth inhibitors could be used to both control and manage poa, so the question was posed if you had no chemicals how would you manage it. The simple answer from Frank was that you do not, it will die!

I have been involved in turf management around 20 years, the last eight in Denmark, and the restrictions we have are coming to the UK. Similar restrictions exist in the Netherland's, Norway, and many other European countries.

Staffing levels in Denmark are very low because of the cost of

labour, with the average course being 18, plus a par 3, plus driving range; you will find three to five staff to maintain all these areas.

With this in mind, coupled with restrictions on chemicals, we need easy-to-manage greens which do not grow vigorously and need only small amounts of nutrients. There is tax on the use of N in any form in Denmark 50 pence per kilo.

Many people have tried new creeping bent greens but with little staff and chance for maintenance the greens quickly develop thatch sorry "Bio Mass" with the swings in temperature and winter play they quickly develop disease for which we have no chemicals and poa comes in. Greens which are around five to seven years old are generally 50% poa and yet architects still want to use it.

Many people say that fescue cannot become dominant on old poa greens, and with the risk of being controversial, "Bull Excrement". The problem is even consultants advise a softly softly approach and in many cases do not want to look for or recommend its use. We have successfully transformed our greens over a seven year period from 100% Poa to a dominant bent and fescue sward. But this is not just on one course in Denmark but several golf courses are running these programmes. We have a pay-and-play course just outside Copenhagen which is 54 holes both short and long courses and the main course has in excess of 60,000 rounds a year and still maintains 95% fescue greens after 10 years even with winter play. They have a staff of 12 in summer, all fairways are fescue all greens dominant Fescue with some Bent, so for the cynics who say it just can't stand traffic the theory needs to be redressed. "Bull Excrement" I hear you say.

I think it was Jim Arthur who said "Some of the best greens are on the poorest courses" and recently I heard Walter Woods reply to a comment of water on the fairways at St Andrews, "There are cliffs around St Andrews but I do not have to jump."

I ask myself is traditional greenkeeping a dying art? There are only a few people who really know how to look after Bent/fescue left, and we need to milk all their experience before it's too late. There are far too many who simply write off the thought because they have heard it's impossible. The problem is we have become caught up in the

golfer syndrome, a need for false speed. Many of us think short is good in place of true and honest greens which still putt with pace. Unfortunately many of us use salesmen as our consultants for nutrients and there are some very good angles on sales tactics now.

On my previous course we had around 40-45,000 rounds a year. It's a parkland/woodland course and the greens stimped generally at 9 on a daily basis and this is with cutting at 5mm but with a regular light verti-cutting and topdressing program. The key to success is low fertility primarily light dressings of 8.0.0 throughout the season and around 40-60 kilos of N in a good year. Keeping the surface as dry as possible for as long as possible we try to give the poa cold turkey with a fine balance of watering to maintain a surface but enough to encourage drought stress on the poa and keep it on the back foot. This was obviously difficult at first with high-domination of poa on the greens. Anthracnose disease was actively encouraged but sensible management was required to maintain a reasonable putting surface for the membership while the transformation process from poa to Fescue was taking place.

On top of this we use seaweed around once a month and a little K in the last dressing in September and regular applications of Iron Sulphate during the winter months.

In Great Britain you only need travel to St Andrews and talk with Gordon Moir; or Kingsbarns, where Stuart McColem deserves a medal, and Chris Whittle, at Birkdale, who is reintroducing fescue and doing an excellent job. We need to change the golfers perception of how a green looks and get them to focus more on how it putts.

I am sure there are many more who share the same views, so stand up and be counted, My personal view, if my short experience is anything to go by, is that a spraying ban will also hit the UK as I see it within the next 10-15 years.

Of course, in any project, you need the backing of your club and communication is vital if you want to have the membership on your side. If you explain the facts that fungicides may soon be history to your committee, maybe they will look a little more long term and give you chance to try and reintroduce fescue and bent. What's the alternative?

Greens, which have had fusarium, which will not recover until the middle of May or even June and fall in quality towards the end of September, that's a five-month season. Will they accept that?

The facts are that a new management strategy for your greens needs to be put in place now to try and swing the poa dominance to a higher percentage of bent and fescue in your sward. For all the clubs that don't act now the future is a fall in quality and revenue and, maybe worse, members leaving your club as they seek those courses which have better prepared firm dry fescue playing surfaces all year round as opposed to playing temporary greens for five months in winter as the thatched, wet, diseased yellow poa greens at their present club are unplayable.

I am the first to admit you will never be 100% Poa free but with poa in the minority you have a chance for quick true greens.

Chris Haspell is Greenkeeping Consultant to the Danish Golf Union.

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MELOIDOGYNE

'YELLOW PATCH' ON CREEPING BENTGRASS GREENS

by Dr Kate Entwistle

The purpose of this second article on root-knot nematodes in turfgrasses is to provide some general information on the nematodes themselves and to show some of the results of recent independent research that proves these nematodes to be the cause of the yellow patches seen over the past four years on creeping bentgrass greens in the UK and Ireland.

In the previous article, I detailed the evidence that was collated from over 20 golf courses across the UK and Ireland which showed that the incidence of large, yellowing patches of creeping bentgrass turf was consistently associated with a root-knot nematode infection. To be absolutely certain of this and to calm the resulting scepticism that followed this diagnosis, Headland Amenity funded independent research to show whether or not this identified cause for the turf symptoms was indeed correct. Before looking at the results of this research, it may be useful to have a few facts and some general information on these root-knot nematodes – they are after all, a relatively new turfgrass pest as far as cool season turf management is concerned.

Root-knot nematodes belong to the nematode genus *Meloidogyne*. Nematodes are unsegmented roundworms, most of which are microscopic (not visible by the naked eye) and are generally translucent (without colour) making them virtually impossible to see in affected rootzones without the aid of a microscope. Many nematodes are elongated but some, like the female root-knot nematode, swell and become more spherical as adults. Nematodes in general feed on over 3000 plant species worldwide and although some may be able to cause damage to several plant types, there are those that are less common which are very host specific. It is worth remembering that not all nematodes cause damage to plants and some are beneficial in the rootzone feeding on rotting plant debris. Some plant parasitic (damage or disease causing) nematodes live mostly on the outside of the plant roots (in a comparable manner to that in which greenfly feed on plant shoots) while others live the majority of their lives inside the root tissues affecting water and nutrient uptake and movement. Although nematodes will vary between genera (and species), their life cycles are roughly similar. They develop from eggs through four larval (or juvenile) stages to become adults. In most species, nematodes hatch from the egg as second-stage juveniles (J2) and these move through the rootzone in water films searching for a host on which to feed. Males may or may not be necessary for completion of the nematode life cycle. Most nematodes complete a lifecycle from egg to adult in about three to six weeks and some juveniles are able to withstand periods of desiccation.

The female root-knot nematode is what's called a sedentary endoparasite of roots, which means that after emerging from the egg she very quickly makes her way inside a root and spends the rest of her life embedded inside the root tissues. Males and juveniles may be found moving freely in the rootzone. Root-knot nematodes cause general unthriftiness, stunting, chlorosis and nutrient deficiencies to infected



PHOTO 1: General appearance of the yellow patches on the creeping bentgrass greens

plants. These plants may wilt on hot days and severely infected plants may even die. Infection by these nematodes causes a complete change in the functioning (or physiology) of the turfgrass plant. The most notable changes are the development of swollen cells in the roots that form the visible root-knots or galling which is always associated with their infection.

Although these nematodes are microscopic and, until now not recognised as potential pests of cool-season turfgrasses, their effects on the sward can be quite dramatic. Many nematode types can cause a general decline of the affected turfgrass areas with large areas of the turf showing general symptoms of stress. I have always considered that the best way to identify a possible nematode infection is when the sward appears to be suffering from drought but it doesn't actually need watering, or it appears to need a feed but the nutrition is adequate. Overall, turf that looks 'unthrifty' or in need of 'some attention', when you know that nothing is lacking with regard to its maintenance, this is a sward that may well have a problem with nematodes. As for the root-knot nematode, the symptoms are a little different. Although affected turfgrass plants still have these same general characteristics, the affected area of the sward is much more clearly defined and, as in these cases, can appear as very distinct patches on the turf surface. In the case of these yellow patches that we have been investigating on courses across the UK and Ireland, we know that the nematode present is a root-knot nematode (*Meloidogyne*) but more importantly, that it is a new



PHOTO 2: Galling of roots caused by the root-knot nematode (*Meloidogyne n. sp.*) and unaffected roots as a comparison

species (*Meloidogyne n. sp.*) which is currently being described by an expert in root-knot nematodes.

Now that we know a little more about the root-knot nematodes in general, we can take a look at the independent research that was completed under the direction of Dr Roger Cook at IGER, Wales. The aim of the research was to confirm whether or not the root-knot nematode (*Meloidogyne n. sp.*) identified on the affected greens was the cause of the symptoms seen on the surface of the swards and to see if reducing the population levels of the nematodes present would allow improvement of the overall turf quality.

Three golf courses across the UK and Ireland, that had been affected by these yellow patches for up to four years, agreed to help with this experiment. All of the courses had been seeded with American bred creeping bentgrass cultivars and all had USGA-type rootzone constructions. From each course, 16 hole-cutter core samples were removed to a depth of 10 cm, eight from yellow affected areas and eight from green unaffected areas. All of the sixteen cores were wrapped separately to avoid movement of material between individual cores and to keep the rootzone profile intact. The cores were delivered either on the day of removal from the course or by next day delivery, to the laboratory at IGER. Once received, the cores were removed from their packing and prepared for the experiment. Details of this preparation are available should anyone be interested in reading it but for the purpose of this article, the set-up can be seen in Photo. 4.

A 'cake-slice' sample weighing on average 200g was removed from each of the cores to allow for an assessment of initial nematode population and degree of root galling to be made. Initial readings of turf colour were also recorded. Of the eight affected and eight unaffected cores from each course, half (i.e. four of each) were then treated with a nematicide. The purpose of this was to see if the nematodes that were present could be killed, resulting in subsequent improvement of turf quality and also, if further infections of new root growth could be prevented thereby determining the correlation between the nematode presence and the root galling /sward yellowing symptoms.

Initial assessments of the cores (which had been removed from each golf course by the Course Manger and not by anyone involved in completing this experiment) showed that on all courses, the samples removed from the yellow affected turf areas had populations of *Meloidogyne n. sp.* nematodes and numbers of root knots far in excess of those found on the green unaffected cores. In fact on two of the three courses there were no nematodes or galls present in the unaffected samples. On the third course, the apparently unaffected cores did have a few nematodes and galls present but their numbers were much less than those present on the yellow infected areas. It was concluded that these initial observations were strong evidence for constant association of nematode and symptom and indicate that this new root-knot

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PHOTO 3: The female root-knot nematode inside the root (stained red and with the galled root tissue removed to show her size)

nematode species is the cause of the yellow patch problem.

Root damage was deemed to be so severe at the start of this experiment that any responses to the nematicide treatments in the short term, may have been difficult to determine. At the end of the experiment, there were many undeveloped juveniles in many new galls as well as newly matured females in older galls and newly hatched J2 in the rootzone. The results of the nematicide applications showed that the treatments controlled nematode populations in samples from all courses and reduced the severity of new gall development on new root growth. The experiment showed that controlling the root-knot nematode reduces symptom expression, confirming the conclusion based upon constant association, mentioned above, that these nematodes are the cause of the symptoms as seen.

It is accepted that, since the *Meloidogyne n. sp.* female is endoparasitic, any possible options for control would be best achieved if they could be applied before the female becomes embedded inside the roots. Once in the root, she is well protected from the treatments applied and therefore, able to continue feeding on the root and reproducing. However, the eggs and juveniles that she produces during her life will, during their early stages, be free-living in the rootzone. At this time, applications of the nematicide would have prevented their further development and subsequent symptom expression on the turf. The use of the nematicide in this experiment was to prove a point – that this new species of the root-knot nematode is the cause of the

symptoms as seen. This has been achieved. The use of any nematicide to control this or any other nematode problem on amenity turf in the UK and Ireland is not permitted as no products have approval for use. The product used in this work is extremely toxic and was used under controlled experimental conditions in the laboratory.

So now that we have identified and confirmed the cause of this yellow patch problem on creeping bentgrass greens, how can we best control it? At the moment, the symptoms can be masked by foliar application of nutrients. The nematodes affect nutrient uptake due to their distortion of the roots and so if nutrients can get in to the plant without having to go through the root, the yellowing of the turf will be reduced. Work is ongoing and further research is being planned by Headland Amenity to help Course Managers find practical and lasting control options for this newly identified pest problem on cool season turf. I would like to thank Headland Amenity for allowing me to use some of the information gained from their independent research and for their photographs used in this article.

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

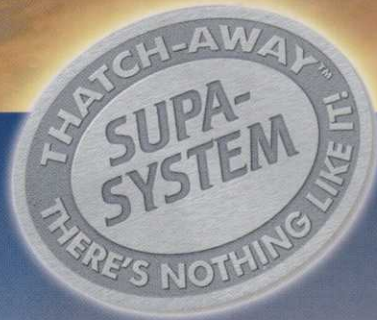
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PHOTO 4: The set-up of the sample cores used for the experiment (before randomisation)

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OVERSEEDING Golf Greens

By Henry Bechelet B.Sc (Hons) MBPR, STRI Turfgrass Agronomist, Eastern Region

THAT OLD CHESTNUT

We all want the best possible playing surfaces. For golf, the quality of the putting surfaces takes top priority. The golfer requires firm, fast, true and smooth greens that are receptive to well hit approach shots, that grip then release a chip and also allow a putt to roll out true. For the greenkeeper, we add ease of management to the playing quality. For the sake of argument, I say that better greens come with an increased proportion of the finer grasses. Bents and fescues create firm, fine and fast greens, while annual meadow grass gives good summer surfaces that very often suffer through autumn and winter, being soft and disease prone. I know that it is not entirely true to say that the quality of the surface is dependant on the sward composition, but an increased proportion of the finer grasses does usually bring; improvements in playing quality, a reduction in the propensity to build thatch, improved disease tolerance etc (better surfaces that are easier to manage). The finer grasses are good and must be the object of our intention.

GET REAL

Sometimes I feel that I'm wishing into the wind! Let's just say that we are aiming for predominantly bent and annual meadow grass greens for inland courses and predominantly bent and fescue surfaces for coastal situations. All I aim to do is reduce the level of annual meadow grass that I see and make things better for everyone. It's my job, remember.

WHAT DO YOU KNOW?

In my previous article "Changing the Nature of your Greens" (Greenkeeper International, April 2002 - unedited copies available via email); I tried to explain that the grass composition of golf greens reflects the environmental pressures being placed upon them. These pressures may come from the local climate, the geography of the site, the level of play and of course the greenkeeping management program. With the knowledge that the different fine turf grass species are adapted to survive in different conditions, we can endeavour to create an environment favourable to the finer grasses rather than (as at present) annual meadow-grass. To change the nature of the greens you have to influence the environment to favour the desired grasses. Annual meadow-grass comes with a highly productive and disturbed environment

while the finer bents and fescues are left longing for a less productive and more settled situation. The current vogue for maintaining high levels of active growth (as dictated by dubious soil test based fertiliser programs) and regular inconsiderate verticutting using super-effective tungsten tipped verticut reels plays into the hands of meadow-grass dominance. Obviously, there are other factors; if the environment is overriding (poor drainage), or the course is heavily played through the year, then there is little else that you can do but work with the meadow grass and make the best greens possible. This however, is not nearly always the case and a great deal of my work with greenkeepers is involved with resetting the environment to bring the finer grasses – with much success I may add. The great challenge for the greenkeeper is (if possible) to create greens dominated by the finer grasses. Also, let's not forget that one of the reasons why Annual meadow-grass is so invasive is because it is such a cunning seeder (so to speak) – something to take encouragement from.

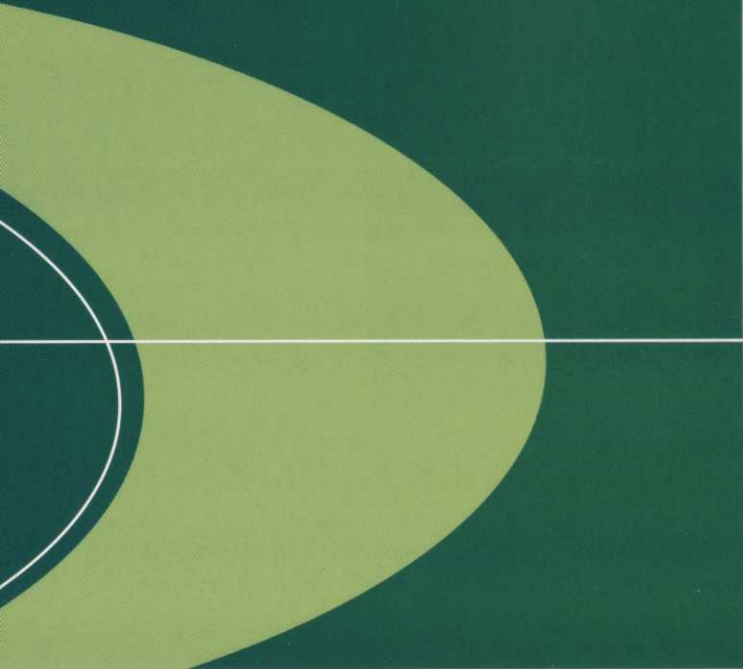
SO, WHAT ABOUT OVERSEEDING?

Simply changing the environment will encourage the existing finer grasses to flourish and take greater dominance. This process of change may be enhanced and accelerated with overseeding. This article is about successful overseeding. My perception of general opinion regarding overseeding is that it is a total waste of time, effort and money. Many greenkeepers hardly notice a difference achieved by overseeding, let alone the golfers. This lack of success may be due to incorrect overseeding procedure or maintaining the wrong "established environment" i.e. unsuccessful germination or failure to establish. Overseeding (if carried out correctly) can really help improve the quality of our greens.

Common sense!

Successful overseeding is simple, just follow the rules...

- Choose the correct species for your situation
- Choose the best cultivars
- Undertake your overseeding at the right time of year during favourable conditions
- Create a receptive seedbed
- Place the seed correctly *into* the surface
- Encourage germination



- Nurture the seedlings through establishment to maturity
- Manage the correct "established environment"

SUCCESSFUL OVERSEEDING REQUIRES A SPECIFIC MAINTENANCE PLAN

Introducing new grasses into your greens cannot be achieved by crow barring overseeding into the existing program. Seedlings are small and many are unable to survive in the conditions experienced by the established plant – they need help. You need to approach overseeding with a specific plan. To start with, successful overseeding needs to be founded upon a considerate and patient attitude – young plants need nurture. I'll make sure the golfers appreciate that their consideration is also necessary if the greens are to improve - It's my job, remember.

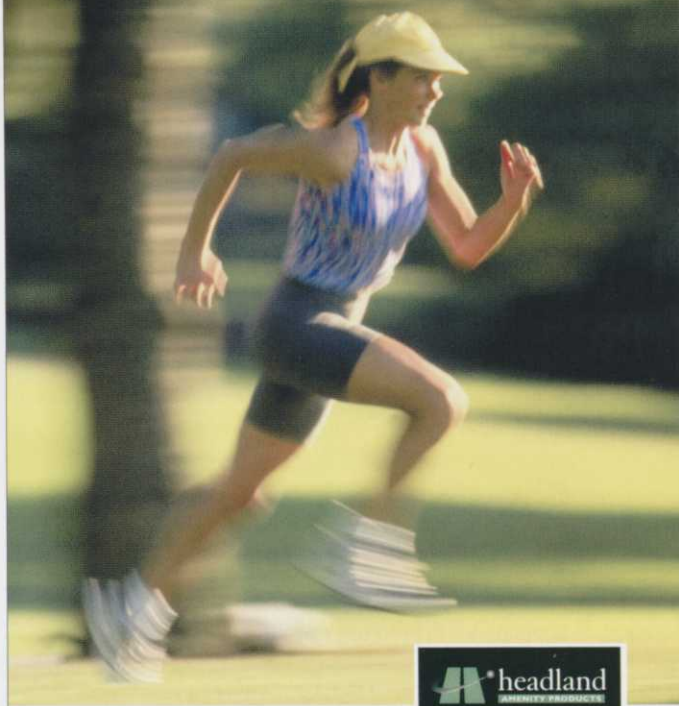
CHOOSING THE CORRECT FINE TURF GRASS SPECIES

Choose grass species that, when established, actually have a chance of surviving in the environment you are tending. The existing composition of your greens will give you an indication – take a closer look. If drainage is a problem sort it out, then select your preferred grass species. From my previous article, we know that Browntop bent is adapted to survive in fairly unproductive, undisturbed environments possessing satisfactory drainage and preferably an acid soil. Creeping bent requires fairly continuous "active growth" through the year with infrequent levels of disturbance and low levels of stress i.e. a quiet, high quality course set in an environment where play occurs during the growing season and tails off during dormant periods – nice work if you can get it. Velvet bent competes with moderate levels of stress and low levels of disturbance. Red fescue prefers an unproductive, dry, acid environment with low levels of disturbance. Annual meadow-grass likes a highly productive and disturbed environment with low levels of stress. The choice is yours. Basically, in the UK we are looking to favour Browntop bent for inland soil based greens and bent/fescue on for coastal situations (ignoring complicating factors).

CHOOSING THE CORRECT VARIETY OF SEED

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OVERSEEDING Golf Greens

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TIMING OF OVERSEEDING

The general rule of thumb for overseeding is that it is best carried out in late summer-early autumn when the soil temperature is still high and rainfall adequate for the germination and establishment of new seedlings without experiencing too much environmental stress. Autumn is also a time when the maintenance program begins to tone down, to give the new seedlings a greater chance of surviving. It depends; a spring overseeding will likely germinate the same and establish if allowed, it depends on the intensity of the post-seeding management. Ideally, we should be thinking of introducing the seed when the sward is at its least competitive to give a better chance of establishment. In an annual meadow-grass dominated sward, this may well be during early spring or during the height of summer, which might not be a practical time considering the intensity of play or management. Decide what is best for your situation.

PREPARATION OF THE SURFACE

Before overseeding, the surface must be opened up and turned into a welcoming and protective environment (without unduly disturbing the surface). The surface should be able to accept the seed to the desired depth, be able to permit germination, it should allow the seedling to grow unencumbered and it must also provide protection all-the-way through from establishment to maturity.

The seedbed must be a good growing medium (get rid of thatch it produces stress extremes of wet and dry) - nutrient may be required on sandy materials. The soil must also be open structured to allow rooting to develop (roots grow in airspace), so aerate if necessary.

Bury the seed to prompt germination, aid root penetration and to provide protection for the developing seedling. Work the seed into the turf base/upper soil profile and follow with top dressing. Open the surface by either aerating (hollow tining, micro-hollow tining, solid tining or sarrel rolling) or by opening a channel (slit-

seeder or deep scarifying). Overseed at a rate of 35g/m² for fescue and bent/fescue mixes and at the lower rate of 5-6g/m² for a pure bent-grass mix. Apply seed in conjunction with top dressing then work into the surface and down tine holes by brushing (brushing by hand is by far the most effective method of working top dressing into the surface). Leaving hollow tine holes partially full (i.e. 1-2mm below the turf surface) gives the seedlings a chance to establish, mature and thicken without being unduly disturbed (cut too close) from regular mowing. This tactic should be used for spring overseeding when the post seeding maintenance is (necessarily) quite intensive.

GERMINATION

Climate dictates germination, so time overseeding appropriately taking heed of the prevailing weather and future forecasts. Germination sheets are available to hasten germination. These require the surface to be covered and are therefore quite disruptive – it depends on your level of commitment. Seed germination takes time so be patient, the weather is in charge.

ESTABLISHMENT

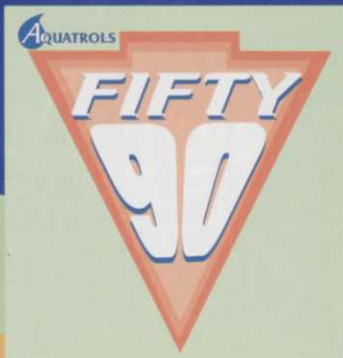
Once the seed has germinated we move into the most important "establishment phase". Be considerate through this period, I am fed up with hearing that the seed germinated well not to see any evidence of it 2 months later. Be easy on the seedlings they are small, vulnerable and need time to strengthen enough to survive the fine turf environment. This will mean toning down the intensity of mowing (raise mowing heights to 6-8mm) and verticutting (don't for a while). To prevent or control thatch build up, it is best that the greens are intensively worked (scarified, hollow tined and top dressed) prior to seeding. Timing may be best in autumn when the maintenance program begins to naturally tone down. Just be considerate and patient, it will come.

GET BACK

Successful overseeding requires a considered plan. You must be able to move your greens from a nurturing environment gradually through to mature intensively maintained fine turf. Don't bother if you are not creating an environment suitable for the finer grasses at the end of it.

Henry Bechelet is an STRI Turfgrass Agronomist covering Eastern England. Henry and the rest of the team may be contacted on: 01274 565131, email: info@stri.co.uk or visit our website: <http://www.stri.co.uk>

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MACHINERY SERVICING

Roland Taylor gives some handy tips which should help you make the most of your machinery this season

My New Year brought with it a heavy head cold. It was while taking various potions to get rid of it, that I got to think how many similarities a piece of machinery, especially the engine, has with the human body.

With that first flush of new growth only a few weeks away, if the equipment has not already been serviced, now is the ideal time to carry out this important work. Modern machinery requires less servicing than in the past, but it is still vital that it is done, as laid down by the manufacturer, if optimum performance is to be maintained.

Bearing in mind my original thoughts, lets first take a look at the heart of all powered equipment - the engine. This component requires the most attention and there are generally four areas of importance, fuel, lubrication, air and coolants - similarly our bodies require all these. A deficiency in any one will have detrimental effects on both our performance and machinery we use.

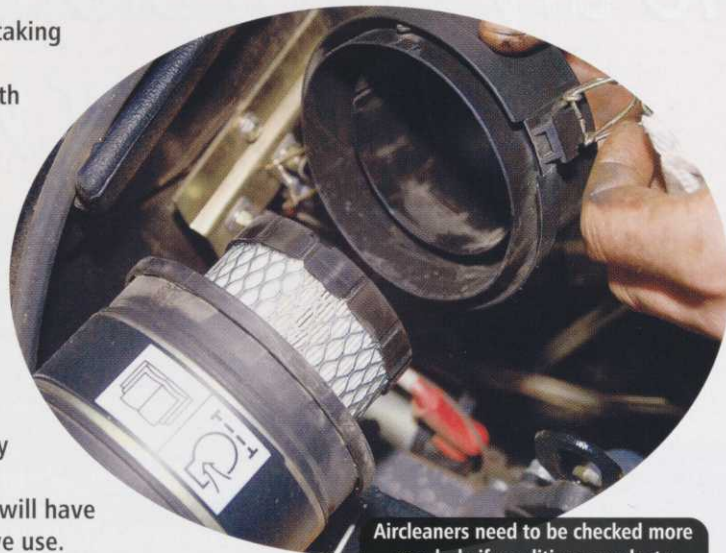
FUEL

There are two factors that can effect fuel's efficiency, contamination and sell-by-date. Where modern petrol has been left in the engine's fuel system it becomes stale, and may have done considerable damage to the carburettor's components. This is a common reason why an engine fails to start and means the whole system needs to be thoroughly cleaned down and fresh fuel used. In storage it will also go off. A solution to both these problem is to use a fuel additive. This is reasonably cheap and will keep petrol fresh for up to 24 months. It is available from leading engine manufacturers and is worth the investment.

We do not like drinking dirty liquid, nor does an engine. Contamination of fuel can occur in a number of forms. The most obvious one is dirt and this can get into an engine's system via the fuel container and/or the method of filling the tank. Some form of clean filter funnel is required. Water is another agent that could find its way inside a power unit. A by-product of the considerable heat, combustion generates, is condensation. Water can also gain entry via the the fuel supply system.

LUBRICATION

Going back to the comparison between machinery and the human body, our joints need some form of lubrication otherwise we would seize up. But there is a greater problem. When our hands are cold we rub them together and this creates friction, which in turn produces heat. In the context of engineering, two metal surfaces rubbing against each other results in a considerable increase in surface temperature. If this is not dissipated they will eventually become welded together. The main function of oil is to provide a protective film between two surfaces. This keeps them apart so they move smoothly with minimal heat generated. Oil also acts a coolant, helping to disperse the heat. Any changes in this vital film, if left unchecked, could have a number of unpleasant possibilities including poor performance, a reduction in the equipment's life span or a complete seizure. It also causes downtime and, top of the list, costs money. The crazy thing about this situation is that the quantity of oil involved is relatively inexpensive, especially when compared to the bill for, say, a replacement engine. Combustion is a filthy process and generates carbon and moisture coupled to this



Aircleaners need to be checked more regularly if conditions are dusty

the ingress of dirt from outside and it is easy to see how polluted and ineffective oil can become. This also applies to other lubricants such as grease.

Lack of a reduction in oil efficiency, due to contamination, decreases the film layer and brings the two surfaces closer together so heat builds up and in turn starts burning off what little oil is left. It is not long before metal is rubbing against metal. Oil needs changing at the recommended times and the levels checked every time a piece of equipment is used. When it comes to oil, saving pence at the expense of quality is definitely false economy.

COOLANTS

For small engines these are water, air or a combination of both. As already mentioned oil also helps to dissipate heat.

From a human point of view we all know how lethargic we become in hot weather if there is nothing to keep us cool. With engines the heat build up results in a decline in performance, more fuel is used and the chances of damage occurring is considerably increased.

AIR

To be efficient, air-cooling requires a large surface area. On engines and hydrostatic systems this is achieved by creating a series of fins. The air is sucked or blown over these by some form of fan. In the event of these airways becoming blocked up with dirt, debris or dried grass the flow becomes restricted and hot spots start occurring. If nothing is done to clear these, then there is every possibility of a fire breaking out.

WATER

This is pumped around a system and into a reservoir (radiator) where air again is used to cool it. The same applies, as far as blocked fins are concerned, the water is then not cooled sufficiently before being returned into the system. Hydraulic oil is dealt with in a similar way. The level of liquid is also critical. If it is too low, then the cooling process becomes highly inefficient.

With both these methods, cleanliness and regular checking of liquid levels (topping up) are key operations.



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MACHINERY SERVICING

AIR FILTERS

With head colds you generally have a stuffed up feeling, it is hard to breathe and one is left thoroughly debilitated. This is what happens with an engine.

In addition to producing correct power output, the air filtration system is a major factor in the level of emissions an engine puts out. An efficient combustion process requires an air and fuel mixture in the right ratios. Less air means more fuel is used and this is emitted into the atmosphere. Another symptom is poor starting. There is also an increased possibility that foreign bodies will enter the engine.

Air filtration systems are generally in the form of paper cartridges often with a pre-cleaning element. Although, in some cases these can be cleaned, for the amount of money they cost, it is better to replace them with new ones. In dry, dusty conditions the elements will need to be checked more regularly and cleaned or renewed. Oil baths are less commonly found. Where they are fitted the level and condition of the oil needs to be constantly monitored.

SPARK PLUGS

Electronic ignitions are virtually trouble free, thank goodness! Some readers will remember contact points and the fiddly process to ensure the gap was set correctly in relation to the pistons top-dead-centre. While these have long disappeared, there is one part of the ignition system that does require attention - the spark plug. Combustion is a dirt process with carbon and some oil being by products. This accumulates around the plug's electrode and as a result reduces the quality of spark and in extreme cases it eliminates it. The symptoms of spark plug problems include poor starting, increased fuel consumption and a considerably reduced performance. In the old days sand blasting was the method of cleaning spark plugs. However much they were cleaned afterwards some minute particles of sand were still retained. These rattling around in the engine, in alloy models quickly heralded its demise. A spark plug is not an expensive component, so badly corroded or worn ones should be dumped and new ones fitted.

OTHER THINGS TO LOOK OUT FOR

Where a recoil starter is fitted, the rope needs to be checked regularly for any signs of fraying or wear. An electric starting system includes a battery that may require inspection. Connectors and terminals will benefit from a smearing of grease.

Having looked at servicing, as far as the power source is concerned, it is time to consider the rest of the equipment. Each machine will have its own specific requirements, but there are areas that are common to all.

At this point it is worth considering overall cleanliness. Because of the types of condition these units are used in there is always plenty of dirt, dust and abrasive compounds around, plus build-ups of debris. It is easy to forget that the modern machine is often a sophisticated piece of technology, built to exacting tolerances and therefore can be easily damaged by the ingress of foreign bodies. For this reason alone, it is wise to keep equipment as clean as possible. This policy also has other spin-offs. It is much more pleasant to operate and work on and there is less chance of a problem being hidden from sight by a layer of grime. In some cases if it has been maintained and kept to a high standard of cleanliness its resale value can be higher than one that has not been looked after. The modern pressure washer is ideal for the job, but beware of forcing water into electronic components.



Check oil levels every time the unit is used

BLADES

There are a number of possibilities that need consideration when it comes to poorly maintained cutting systems.

- Regardless of the system, the common denominators of all are sharpness and balance.
- Blunt worn or damaged blades are unsafe. An unbalanced unit will set up destructive levels of vibration and is highly dangerous.
- More stress is placed on all the machine's components thus shortening their lives.
- A bigger risk of a major breakdown which will result in down time and inconvenience.
- Increased fuel and oil consumption.
- It takes longer to carry out the work.
- Increased costs.
- Damaged turf, especially the finer grass.
- Higher levels of emissions into the atmosphere and an increase in noise levels.

All blades that are sharpened must also be balanced. Most of us, who drive cars, have at sometime experienced an unbalanced wheel. Whatever the travelling speed, it is not a very pleasant experience and we take immediate steps to rectify it as soon as possible. A rotary blade is spinning at 120mph plus, so if it is damaged or worn and unbalanced it becomes lethal. The vibration generated will eventually shake the machine to bits.

In the case of cylinder mower systems the settings are critical, not only for a quality cut, but also so the grass is subjected to as little stress as possible. A badly adjusted unit, where the reel is too hard onto the bedknife, will give a poor finish, and act like a brake on the engine. Similarly, a cylinder not set close enough to the bedknife will tend to snatch at the grass rather than cut it. This damages the plants and makes them more susceptible to disease. The whole mower is subjected to more stress, the job takes longer and the quality of finish is not acceptable.

After the power source, the sharpness of the cutting system is critical to all round performance.

HYDRAULIC SYSTEMS AND OTHER DRIVES

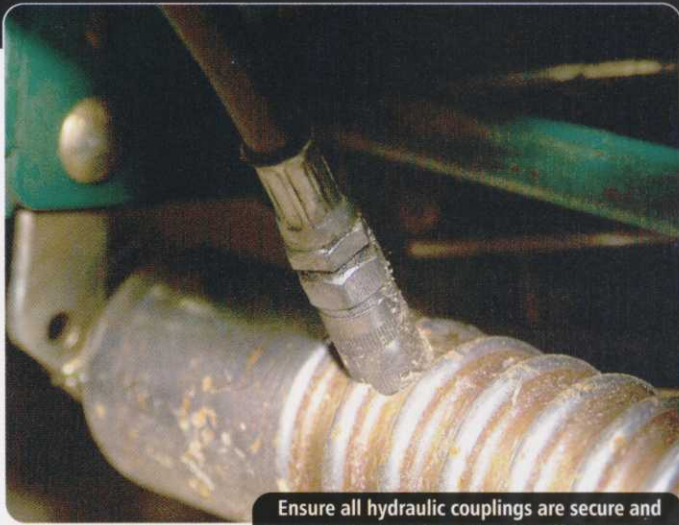
The cooling of these is similar to that of an engine, so where fins are involved they need to be kept free of debris so the airflow can circulate freely. Check the oil levels regularly and top up if necessary. An inspection should be carried out to ensure all the hose connections are not leaking and there are no signs of them being of chaffed or worn. Spots of hydraulic fluid on the storage area floor or lower levels in the tanks require further investigation.

Where belts or chains are used, they should be adjusted to the correct tension, especially in the case of belts if these are loose they will quickly heat up and can cause a fire.

TYRES & GUARDS

Having the correct tyre pressure is important, if incorrect it could increase ground pressure resulting in compaction. Take a look at treads for signs of wear or 'foreign bodies'. Missing or damaged safety guards should be repaired or replaced.

Having a good service schedule pays dividends across the board.



Ensure all hydraulic couplings are secure and be on the lookout for signs of chaffing on hoses



Replace heavily contaminated air filters

LINKAGES & JOINTS

They tell us to take cod liver oil to lubricate our joints. Where grease nipples are fitted it is an indication that something requires attention, be sparing how much you apply. Modern grease guns can pump a lot of lubricant and there is a possibility it will push out a seal or come out the joints, to hang in dollops that attract dirt and sand to form an ideal abrasive paste which will wear away components. It is a good idea to spray all joints, cables and connectors with WD40, AS it will help to keep them mobile and rust at bay.

Finally, check all nuts, bolts and fasteners are up tight or engaged.

Having a tight servicing schedule pays dividends all round, as can be seen from the following list: I make no apology for repeating some points already mentioned because, to quote the medical profession, 'prevention is better than cure'.

- Machinery is less likely to break down.
- It is more efficient in work output.
- On fine turf the possibility of stressing the turf is virtually eliminated making for a stronger sward.
- From a Health & Safety angle, you are looking after operator's interests and keeping the equipment in a safe condition.
- There can be significant reduction in the noise and emissions a machine emits.
- Well-kept machinery is likely to fetch a better price when it comes to trading in.

Next time you are feeling under the weather and lethargic you will have some inkling of the effects poor maintenance can have on your equipment.

Thank you to Saffron Walden Golf Club for their assistance.

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TALKING HEADS

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Compiled by Malcolm Huntington MBE

1

Does your club have a Health and Safety Policy?



Name: Ian Bell
Course: Glencorse Golf Club, Penicuik
Region: Scotland
Course type: Parkland, 18 holes
Staff: Head Greenkeeper, plus five

Yes. We have had one for about five years.



Name: Andrew Boyd
Course: Bridlington Golf Club, East Yorkshire
Region: Northern
Course type: Parkland
Staff: Head Greenkeeper, plus three

We have had a Health and Safety policy for four years.



Name: Robert Rees
Course: Aldwickbury Park, Harpenden, Herts
Region: Midland
Course type: Parkland, 27 holes
Staff: Course Manager, plus four

We do. One has been in operation since the course was opened nine years ago.



Name: Gareth Roberts
Course: Hankley Common, near Farnham, Surrey
Region: South East
Course type: Heathland, nine holes
Staff: Course Manager, plus five, plus part-timer

We do now. A company came in last year to advise us on H&S matters and we did some ourselves before that.



Name: Paul Knight
Course: Shanklin and Sandown Golf Club, Isle of Wight
Region: South West and South Wales
Course type: Heathland and parkland, 18 holes
Staff: Course Manager, plus six

Yes, we have had a policy for about five years.



Name: Jim Eager
Course: Royal Belfast Golf Club
Region: Northern Ireland
Course type: Parkland, 18 holes, plus four grass tennis courts
Staff: Course Manager, plus seven

Yes, we have had one for six years.

2

Are you in favour of the more stringent H&S legislation which is now in place?

To a certain extent, yes. I think we go a bit overboard on risk assessment at times and we should rely more on common sense. At the same time there can't be too much care when it comes to applying pesticides.

It very much depends on what the legislation is aimed at. Some of it is over the top in my view, but I am a big believer in H&S.

Yes. So far as H&S are concerned I don't think you can be too safe. Maybe one or two things are over the top and it is getting more difficult to carry out certain activities.

Yes to a large extent, but common sense must prevail in some areas.

Most certainly. We have to keep up to date on machinery and all the bits and pieces in the greenkeeper's shed.

Yes, as long as it is sensible. Some of the H&S goes a bit too far in my opinion, an example being a restriction of cutting tee banks over a certain number of degrees.

3

How often are you visited by the Health and Safety Executive?

I have been in this post for eight years and in that time we have had only two visits.

I have had a visit in recent months and I receive a visit twice a year from a Health and Safety advisor. I am the H&S co-ordinator for our club and try to meet with the committee on a monthly basis.

We had a visit late last year and we would normally receive someone on an annual basis.

Nobody has visited us for the last seven years or so.

Only once a year.

We have a visit once per year and sit down to discuss anything we are not happy with to try to sort out any problems.

4

How much time do you devote to carrying out Risk Assessments and form filling compared to 10 years ago?

Ten years ago it was virtually nil. Now I would think that I spend two to three days a month filling in forms and talking about risk assessments with the latest machinery etc.

I would say 200 per cent more now compared with ten years ago. There is a fair amount of form filling and I update risk assessment once a year.

Ten years ago it was practically nil, though I wasn't a Head Greenkeeper then. I now spend a day a week on a combination of staff appraisal, form filling etc. I am keen on training as it brings more professionalism into the job eventually.

Hardly any time was devoted to this ten years ago, but now I would say I do three times as much including perhaps a couple of days each month.

Much more time. I spend several hours over the course of a month sitting down and talking to staff. We discuss the risks involved and talk it through together.

Ten years ago virtually nothing. We now have an annual risk assessment and keep everything up to date. I spend at least a day a month filling in forms. We also have thorough training sessions from manufacturers' representatives when we buy new machinery.

5

How do you ensure that your staff comply with H&S regulations?

We keep a very close watch on this. I have two deputies and we always impress on the younger members of staff in particular the need to be wary. We constantly keep an eye on personal protective equipment.

We write everything down and all staff have a copy. Updates are also done on any new machinery which comes out.

My staff go through appraisals about H&S and other aspects with regard to their abilities and this is done on a three-monthly basis to see how they progress. I am very training minded.

We have documents which are given to each member of staff and they sign to say that they understand them. I also watch what is happening.

I keep a close watch on them. We all know about the risks and I make sure, for example, that they have their hard hats, which are combined with ear defenders, on for certain jobs on the course.

By training them. Everything is written down and each member of staff has a copy of the H&S regulations.

NEW PRODUCTS

KUBOTA

The first-ever zero-turn ride-on mower to be introduced by Kubota in the UK and Ireland will be available for demonstrations from mid-March onwards.

Known as the GZD 15, the heavy-duty 1.07m (42in) cut mower is powered by a 15hp water-cooled Kubota diesel engine with both travel speed and direction controlled by a pair of paddle-type hand levers positioned immediately in front of the driver.

The combination of zero-turn radius and extremely compact dimensions makes the GZD 15 ideal for mowing in areas with limited access or turning space and for cutting close to trees, shrubs, buildings, borders, fences and walls.

To enhance the ability of the GZD 15 to pass through narrow openings and work in tight spaces, the mower is equipped with a twin-bladed through-cut deck which discharges all grass rearwards straight into an integrated 400 litre rear grass catcher, available in hydraulically-tipped low-dump or high dump (1.8m tip height) versions. This means that the cutter deck is the widest part of the machine, so if the mower is able to cut grass, it is also able to collect grass as there are no sideways protruding flaps, tubes or pipes between the deck and the grass collector.

The use by Kubota of a fully-sealed hydrostatic unit and final drive keeps transmission servicing requirements to a minimum and access to the engine is fast and simple thanks to the quick-tipping bonnet and seat.

For further information Tel: 01844 268163 or visit Kubota's website at www.kubota.co.uk



ALLEN POWER

The Allen Groundsman has been the flagship of the Walkover range of sprayers since the original purchase of the Cambridge company by Allen Power Equipment back in 1990.

Redesigned in 1993 to accommodate a larger tank and reduce manufacturing costs, the Groundsman has now again been updated with an improved spray boom that protects the nozzles behind a bumper bar and a simplified design that facilitates easier assembly.

The Groundsman still sprays a 24in width as before, and spraying rates are not altered as the jets remain the same.

The 25 litre tank allows spraying of up to 525 square metres (675 sq yds) in twelve minutes on one filling and marker wheels ensure 100% coverage.

For further information Tel: 01865 820731



HEADLAND

Headland's new Liquid Turf Hardener, introduced at BTME, is a sulphur free

formulation, high on Calcium with added Magnesium. Nitrates, used as a carrier, produce a rapid uptake of these two elements, which reduces stress on grass plants, increases strength and enhances disease resistance. Low application rates of up to 40 litres per hectare mean cost effective treatment, applied as and when required, regardless of season.

Should circumstances dictate, the product can be tank mixed with Headland's Multi-K soluble potassium nitrate and Seamac Proturf, which will add potash, further harden turf and produce excellent colour. When

additional nitrogen sources are added, application rates shrink to 20 litres per hectare in 300 to 600 gallons of water.

Trials throughout the winter indicate that Headland's new Liquid Turf Hardener is excellent at maintaining a strong, hard grass plant and aiding disease resistance.

For further information Tel: 01223 597834

Email: info@headlandamenity.com

TILLERS TURF

A novel approach has been created to increase the wear tolerance of grass, and to reduce surface hardness - with the use of rubber crumb incorporated into the rootzone, by Tillers Turf.

When grass surfaces are subject to heavy wear in wet weather, the top 25mm of the rootzone becomes compacted, leading to poor grass growth. By pre-mixing rubber crumb into a sand dominated rootzone, and then growing turf on it, Tillers Turf have produced a solution to the problem. By virtue of the rubber crumb's cushioning properties, the wear of the grass is greatly enhanced.

As the top 25mm of the rootzone is less compacted, the grass is able to grow in a far more favourable environment.

This has enormous potential for benefits to parks with a high volume of visitors, and indeed, successful trials using rubber crumb as a top dressing have been done at two National Trust properties already - Treliassick in Cornwall and Killerton in

Devon. Here, more than 100,000 people a year walk across the grassed areas. While in previous years grass areas had been reduced to muddy trails, this time they stayed fresh, green and unworn. Barry Champion, Head Gardener at Treliassick, says, "The rubber crumb works to relieve compaction, reinforce the grass and enhance the colour."

And recent tests by the STRI showed that measured values of hardness, recorded using a Clegg Impact Soil tester, were 20% lower on turf grown by Tillers with rubber crumb incorporated into the rootzone than on turf without rubber crumb.

"The implications are many, for all sorts of heavily used public parks and for sports such as football and golf. In fact, Sunningdale Golf Course have already taken delivery of a consignment to use on the high traffic areas between green and tee," said Tim Fell, of Tillers Turf.

For more information Tel: 01652 678000.



SISIS

New Health and Safety regulations mean that the need to fit ROP to greens and tees mowers could, in certain circumstances, become essential.

SISIS have developed a ROP bar for their Greenstar and Teestar ride-on triple mowers which has been tested and certificated. The ROP bar together with retractable safety belt and seat restrainer is now available as an option on new machines and is also available as a retrofit kit for existing Greenstars and Teestars.

CHARTERHOUSE

Given increasingly unpredictable weather patterns, contractors, landscapers and other grounds professionals are now typically faced with cutting grass in less than ideal conditions. Tough, heavy-duty mowing equipment is needed, such as the new Bunton walk-behind rotary mower, now available from Charterhouse.

Made in the USA by the Bunton organisation, which claims to be one of the world's largest manufacturers of commercial rotary mowers, this 36in (91cm) wide, rear discharge unit offered by Charterhouse features a rugged design to cope with the intensive and rough handling typical of use in local authority departments, contracting organisations and hire companies.

Powered by a 15hp Kawasaki V-twin engine, the mid-size machine is available with either geared transmission or hydrostatic drive, while finger-tip controls for the drive and the steering make them ideal for use on uneven terrain and slopes. The units offer a forward speed of 5mph and a zero-turn radius. A reverse gear is also provided.

Charterhouse Turf Machinery believe that the Bunton mowers are the perfect complement to their existing 'DR' trimmer range of walk-behind, wheeled brushcutters that can tackle heavy scrub and undergrowth.

For further information Tel: 01428 611222.



HUNTER GOLF

Hunter Golf has introduced the G870, the first electric valve-in head rotor with easy, through-the-top access to all serviceable components.

This design eliminates the need to dig or disturb the turf during routine service or other irrigation system maintenance.

All sprinkler components - including the internal gear-drive and valve, the pilot valve, pressure regulator, solenoid, valve seat and rock screen - can be pulled out for cleaning and maintenance while the Hunter rotor body remains in the ground.

This new through-the-top access is intended to save ground crews hours of time, while preserving the health and playability of the green, tees and fairways.

The G870 also features an "industry first" unitised valve. This all-in-one valve unit includes a snap ring, valve seal, valve seat and rock screen. During system maintenance, the crew can now pull out the unitised valve with a pair of needle-nosed pliers, flush the valve piping and repair leaks caused by soil or water contamination.

The procedure only takes minutes, rather than hours of disassembly and turf repair.

The G870 is available as a full circle or adjustable arc model (40° to 360°) and as an electric, check-o-matic or n.o. hydraulic sprinkler.

The G870 has a 8.75 cm pop-up riser and a discharge rate from 50 to 120 liters per minute in a 14m to 23m radius. Color-coded, interchangeable nozzles are included.

The G870 also features adjustable pressure regulation and exclusive Pressure Port nozzle system, which delivers close-in coverage and uniform water distribution.

For further information email: Hardwick@adwicks.com



The Best Yet!

As a Club Manager of some 25 years standing, I have, over the years attended several Harrogate Conferences together with the Head Greenkeeper from the particular club with which I was attached. Without question, the way in which BIGGA go about presenting this annual "Golf Experience" is an example to the rest of the Industry Associations as to how to best to promote their members.

Without wishing to sound too patronising, the 2003 was the best yet and in my humble opinion provided everyone who attended with an up to date appraisal of the way in which Golf Courses are to be maintained in the 21st Century.

Having spoken to some of the speakers I would however make a request that greater emphasis is placed on attracting representatives of Club Committees in an endeavour to educate them into the finer aspects of agronomy. In so doing this will give them a greater understanding of the problems that greenkeepers encounter when going about their routine duties. This year there appeared to be an emphasis on educating the greenkeepers on how to handle their committees. If this is required then surely the committees need to hear what is being said and perhaps as a result modify their thinking and thereby create a better rapport with their greens staff.

In general I believe that most Secretary/Managers work well with their head Greenkeeper or Course Manager and as such I was disappointed at the negative way in which some speakers referred to us. I for one have always supported my staff and I would hate to think the wrong message was being sent to your members.

Well done for an excellent conference and I for one look forward to next year.

D T Howe M Inst GCM

Robert "Bob" MacDougall

It is with a sad heart that I put pen to paper to write of another old, greenkeeper and friend who has passed on.

Robert MacDougall (Bob as we all knew him) died on Sunday, February 9th, aged 77. He had been struggling to recover from a heart attack for over two months.

Those of us who served with Bob on the West Section Committee of SIGGA will remember his dedication first as a Committee member and later as Chairman of the Section. He also supported and served on the Scottish Executive Committee.

He enlisted with the Palestine Police during the long drawn out troubles in Palestine 1945-1950. He then returned to greenkeeping at Clydebank & District, and after a few years took up the Head Greenkeeper's position at Douglas Park Golf Club where I know they were sorry to lose him to the more prestigious 36-hole Hilton Park Golf Club where he worked faithfully for the next 15 years, until his retirement at 65 years of age.

Bob was a man who never lost the urge to better himself or his course. I was speaking to his son, Allan, at Harrogate where he informed a small group of friends about his father's illness. I also had a word with Allan's son, Robert. He was telling me that only last summer, after being retired for over 10 years, Bob had not lost any of his enthusiasm for greenkeeping. He had Robert up to Hilton Park and was pointing out to him work he had completed and giving him instructions on what a golf course should be and what the golfers expected from a greenkeeper.

The MacDougalls are a greenkeeping family. Bob's son, Allan, is Head Greenkeeper at Royal Mid Surrey, where his grandson, Robert, also works as an Assistant.

The family can take pleasure and pride in the heritage of greenkeeping that Bob has left them. It is to our detriment as greenkeepers that the older members of our profession pass on and take their knowledge and skills, acquired over a lifetime, with them. Not so Bob MacDougall's family... his knowledge and skills are in the safe hands of his son and grandson. I do not believe that when we die everything goes out the window. I do believe there is a Heaven. That being the case there is bound to be a good golf course where there will be many old friends to meet Bob and scud a ball or two. I am also sure that the Head man up there will let Bob cut the odd green. It is the least a man can ask for who has dedicated his life to greenkeeping.

The funeral and service was held at Dalnottar Crematorium on Friday, February 14th. It shows the mark of esteem and respect that Bob MacDougall was still held in, even after 11 years of retirement, by the numbers of greenkeepers, golfers, bowlers and friends who were present. At this sad time of bereavement our thoughts are with Bob's wife, Jean, his sons Allan and Donald, and his grandchildren.

Cecil George

Don't Give Up the Fight

I would like to thank those who write in support of sound traditional greenkeeping and to debate with those who seem to have given up the fight. Let me be clear - I have never impugned Neil Ballingall's skills at greenkeeping - my criticism was as much of the motivation behind St Andrews Bay as the creation of so alien a concept. Why do developers opt for architects and their advisers with little or no experience of temperate European conditions? As one example, contour drainage relying on run-off as at St Andrews Bay has never worked here - as opposed to the rock hard soils of hotter climes and the need to cope with sudden but short "cloud bursts" where run-off on impermeable soils is the only solution. Our soils are permanently wet over many winter months and surface flow is minimal, so the turf simply water logs.

The main problem arising from the contention that "new golfer" is the life blood of golf and management must become consumer focussed is that golfers, especially the less able, ought to enjoy their game and not force their views on presentation. The vast majority take no interest in course management. As is admitted, they are driven by the spectacle of Tournament golf - in other words everything must be green. They and many authorities fail to make the connection between colour, Poa annua dominance and poor playing conditions for many months on end.

I would be very interested to learn from Ian Butcher what are the "benefits" which have been imported from the US. I am not talking about triplex mowers and pop-up irrigation but even their grasses, including new bents, do not stand up to our relatively mild wet winters. (Proof, STRI trials).

As I pen this letter, two very relevant telephone calls report matters which concern the very standing and indeed employment of any greenkeeper who stands up for the standards that he has been taught and believes in. One very respected heathland Course Manager has just been made redundant but told he can apply for his old job as Head Greenkeeper, but working directly under the new Club Manager, who will be advised by a fertiliser company! The aforesaid Club Manager has been in the job perhaps a year, coming straight from being a club professional! At another well known club, long renowned for having a superb course in excellent (traditional) order, a delegation of members demanded that the course management be altered to make it greener - they "did not like the colour of fescue fairways".

Finally may I invite debate on the subject of "why chemically analyse soils?", bearing in mind that we feed the grass and not the soil. It certainly is not to formulate a fertiliser programme. Note the generally accepted (traditional) criteria that all fine grasses (bents and fescues) require is a little nitrogen never phosphates and only very occasional potash - a programme implemented as the recent R&A survey shows by over 65% of those responding. The ideal pH is the one you have got; there is no (economic) test for nitrogen; we never need phosphates; analysis will not guide you as to how much, if any, potash is needed and there is absolutely no need for so called trace elements, magnesium etc on any but pure sand greens, and I mean 100% sand. The only use for soil analysis is to check now we are succeeding in lowering soil 'fertility' levels - remembering those excellent greens which show phosphate levels at 3 p.p.m! Of course if you want Poa annua, lash on the NPK. I will be happy to debate with anyone, but the proof is there and has been for over a century!

Jim Arthur
Honorary Member



SCOTTISH REGION
Peter Boyd
Tel/Fax: 0141 616 3440

North

As I write this report the winter is hitting with a vengeance, and there have been several falls of heavy snow which have closed many a course. It can give the course a well needed rest, but hopefully not for too long.

There are 6 new members to report this month. Craig Dawson, Newtonmore GC; Michael Anderson, Elgin GC; Chris Black, Royal Aberdeen GC; Stuart Mckenzie, Royal Aberdeen GC; Murray Peat, Royal Dornoch GC; Robert Coutts, Kemnay GC.

Harrogate went well again this year with a good representation from the North Section. The show was bigger this year with the ClubHouse exhibition added on, so anyone working for the golf club would be catered for. The show itself takes at least a full day if not more to go round, but is well worth the effort. The workshops and education conference, and seminars make the whole week busy and pass very quickly. The nightlife as usual is very active, and making contact with people from other clubs makes the whole week seem even more worth while. No scandal apart from a couple of wanderers going to Bolton, of all places, for a night out, for a spot of integrating.

The Scottish conference at Dunfermline will possibly have come and gone by the time this magazine comes out, I will report on it next month.

200 club tickets have been sent out and hopefully we will get a full sell. If you do not think that you will keep your tickets send them back to Andy Wilson at Brechin GC, so as he can resell them.

Finally, a date of May 3 has been provisionally set for the match that was discussed last year between the North and the East parts of the Section. It will take place at Royal Strathpeffer GC and there be will good accommodation available in the village, or in Dingwall for anyone wishing to stay over. Please contact myself on: 01997 420155, or Rab Hardie on: 01224 783201. The East side are already asking for strokes, so they are running scared already. But I have to say no mercy will be shown.

Iain Gunn

Ayrshire

Time to dust off your clubs and start lubricating that rusty swing to prepare for the Spring Outing. Portpatrick & Dunskey will play host on Thursday, April 17. Remember the event also doubles as the first leg of the Harry Diamond Memorial Jug. Let's hope we attract as good a

turnout as the last outing in October.

Tuesday, June 17 is the date set for this year's Scottish Greenkeepers' National Championship. The Kintyre Course at Turnberry will, I'm sure, prove a popular venue with all the competitors and I know the Kintyre team are looking forward to presenting a well groomed and challenging layout.

Harrogate week surpassed itself yet again and I expect all attending would have found something to take away from the event.

Happenings during the week included Marshall Sloss finally succumbing to the inevitable and agreeing to become Martin Lothian's Vice-Chairman. Apparently negotiations were not pretty and alcohol played its part.

The AGM held on Wednesday night saw the approval of the 'New Members Proposal' whereby new members will need to achieve Level 2 or equivalent to receive full benefits of the Association. However, this shouldn't effect our Section, for the obvious reasons.

Last on the agenda was the induction of George Brown as National Chairman best wishes from the Ayrshire Section and enjoy your year, George.

Dennis Tweddell

Central

Sadly we begin this months report with the sad news that retired member David Sword, formerly Head Greenkeeper at Bishopshire Golf Club, Kinross, has passed away. David died in hospital after a very long illness. Our sincere condolences go to Mrs. Sword and her family.

Two new members joining us this month are Neil Henderson and Euan Ferguson, both from St. Andrews Links Trust. As usual we extend a warm welcome to them from everyone in the Section, the first event of the season, the Spring Tournament, is being held just along the road from them, so perhaps we will get an early opportunity to meet them there.

The dates for this years golf tournaments are Tuesday, April 29 at St. Andrews Bay Golf Resort and Spa, with the Autumn Tournament being held at Alloa Golf Club on Thursday, September 25. Entry forms will be with you shortly, so please return them ASAP!

As usual the BTME at Harrogate proved to be another great success and it was great to see so many current and former members of the section in attendance, former members, David Murdoch, Ian Ross, Ross Wilson, Alan Ferguson and Ian Ritchie send their regards to all their friends in the Section.

Trophies! Will all holders of Section trophies please arrange to have them returned to me before the Spring Tournament in order that I can have them valued and the engraving brought up to date. If need be I can call at your home to

collect them.

I thought I would just give a reminder to all those teams participating in the Inter Club Tournament that all outstanding ties must be played before the Autumn Tournament at Alloa Golf Club in September, you may think that this is a bit early, but I have only had the results from two ties which were played last year returned to me!

Do any members want the Five-a-Side Football Tournament organised this year? If you do, please get in touch with me or any other committee member.

John Crawford

West

Hello and welcome to this month's newsletter. Firstly, can I wish everyone a belated Happy New Year and wish you all a prosperous and successful forthcoming season.

Secondly as you know on October 24, 2002 the West Section AGM again was held at Nairn Brown Limited. On that day new appointments were made within the committee and read as follows:- Chairman, Brian Bolland, East Kilbride Golf Club; Vice Chairman, Fraser Ross – Renfrew Golf Club; Secretary, Gavin Jarvis, Lenzie Golf Club (past Chairman); Committee, Education, John Robertson, Hilton Park Golf Club; Football Organiser, Gerry Bruen, Williamwood Golf Club; Derek Duthie, Aitkens Sportsturf; Kenny Hunter, SGM; Magazine reporter, Douglas McIntosh, Cathkin Braes Golf Club.

Can I introduce myself as one of the newly appointed committee members. I'm Douglas McIntosh, of Cathkin Braes Golf Club. Brian Bolland (Chairman) has kindly delegated this honorable position as magazine reporter to me. Those of you who already know who I am are asking yourself 'a reporter' my a***! Hardly a greenkeeper! Maybe, but I'm quietly confident of reporting our monthly news as professionally and informative as our previous reporters!

I would like to begin by expressing our thanks on behalf of the committee and members to Cecil George for his time and effort spent over the years to promote and highlight the importance of education within this industry, once again thank you and wish him well in his retirement. Thank you also to our past Secretary Sandy Bulloch, who has decided to retire from the position of Secretary, leaving it to younger blood to take control of financial matters. Thanks Sandy for all your efforts and wish him well in the forthcoming and future seasons.

January, been and gone, BTME Exhibition, Harrogate, how quickly it comes around, sooner the better they say! Informative, very educational, gossip, socially overdosing, what more ingredients for an exceptional show. Colin Fulton from Celtic Manor, whose company I had

the pleasure of on most nights, says a big hello to Drew McKechnie and crew at Douglas Park Golf Club. I don't normally do requests but hey! That secures my round at Celtic Manor, ok Colin? Great nights and patter exchanged, I never knew greenkeepers were secret disco movers! Maybe that was the drink? If members could see them now eh!

A big thank you to Peter Boyd for his organisation and running of this trip and thoroughly looking forward to next year, and Mr Sandy Brawley, get your own style of fashion, don't steal mine! I hear the Biaria's are doing an excellent line in shirts, Joke!

On Monday 27/1/03 a football match was organised by our very own football manager Gerry Bruen. Venue – Glasgow Green Football Complex and from there a team was selected, 14 players from seven different clubs attended and are as follows: Barry McCulloch and Steve Dunn, both of Mearns Castle Golf Club; Brian Bolland, East Kilbride Golf Club; Eddie Wood, Colin Scott and Adrian Steren, all from Glasgow Golf Club; Gary Burns and Darrel, both from Lenzie Golf Club. Gareth Thompson and Scott Frame both from Dumpellier Golf Club; Chris Kerr, Cowglen Golf Club; Steven Brown and Willy Lewis, both from Williamwood Golf Club.

Weather conditions on the night were relatively poor with strong winds which did not hamper much of the game but did not hamper spirits among the team. Greenkeepers started off well but conceded a goal against the run of play. Shortly after Scott, from Drumpy, equalised with a quality strike. Halftime score 2-1 to Shawlands B. Greenkeepers came out fighting after the inspirational half-time talk from manager Gerry, Scott equalised again with a fine strike. The last 15 minutes fitness began to take its toll especially with some of the senior players, not mentioning any names (Brian Bolland & Gary Burns). Greenkeepers were stretched at this point and conceded two late goals. Final score – 4-2 to Showlands B

Gerry would like to thank all players for attending and contributing to what was a very successful night. Anyone wishing to play in future matches contact Gerry on 07813 331532.

Finally important events for the forthcoming year. March 4, Scottish educational conference at Lauder College, Dunfermline. Peter Boyd has done exceptionally well in organising this event in previous years and this year will be no exception. Organised speakers are of exceptional standard and I'm sure everyone who attends will take something of interest when returning to their own course, well worth the visit!

The Spring outing this year will be held at Hilton Park Golf Club on May 1. A big thank you

to Hilton Park Golf Club, committee and members for the courtesy of the course and I'm sure John and crew will have it in fine condition regardless of weather conditions (no pressure John!)

Last, but not least, Autumn Outing is to be held at, wait for it, yes my own course, Cathkin Braes Golf Club, date TBA, Yes I hear you say, can't wait for that day, I know, great course. Those of you that have had the pleasure of playing there know to bring a couple of dozen balls and that's just to get past the first 3 holes. Seriously, the committee and members of Cathkin Braes hope you will enjoy your day and hopefully play in some sunshine.

If you have any information you would like to report in the magazine and I mean anything, please contact me on Tel/Fax: 01416 445783 or mobile: 07774 420427. Look forward to hearing from you.

Douglas McIntosh

NORTHERN REGION

North East

On January 9 we had a talk with Richard Minton of Complete Weed Control at Tyneside Golf Club. This was the first one for a while and although there were only about 12 people there I'm sure the talk went well.

Richard chatted on various topics including legislation, products available and those likely to remain etc and I would like to thank the people who turned up for their support.

Thanks go to Tyneside again for the use of their premises and we look forward to perhaps holding another one this spring.

Again, on behalf of the Section, the committee would like also to thank Terry Charlton for putting on a coach to BTME it was good to see so many greenkeepers from our Section there.

I see that Alnmouth GC are still sending their staff to the workshops. Believe me they are worth attending perhaps there may be a few more from the Section in the near future.

Congratulations to Roy White from Stocksfield GC and his wife on the birth of their first baby boy. Good luck to you both.

The spring golf competition will be played at Tyneside GC on April 30. Members will be sent a letter nearer the date.

The Section welcomes the following new members:- R. Dickinson and S Fraser of Sillioth GC; A. Doig, of Tynemouth GC, and S. Wilson, of Longhirst GC.

On the move are John Devlin, formerly of Consett GC, to Boldon GC, and also to Andrew

Wright, from City of Newcastle GC, to Bedlingtonshire. We wish them all the best in their new positions.

Anyone got any news, please let me know.
Jimmy Richardson

North Wales

March showers and April showers bring forth May showers but we are going to get a couple of days sunshine in September, I believe, so get prepared.

A couple of sad notes to report this month is the loss of two people from the industry.

Firstly someone who many of you will have met at some stage or read about in the magazine is Jimmy MacDonald, formerly of Royal Lytham GC. A great character and this coming very early into his retirement, I have many fond memories, sitting in Jimmy's office and listening to stories not only of greenkeeping but of life in general a man with lots of knowledge. He will be sadly missed by all.

Also the untimely passing of Robert Konieczka, Course Manager of Shrewsbury GC, shortly after the BTME show. Robert was just 46 years old.

Our Spring Seminar will be held on March 31 at Carden Park GC. Your forms will be in the post very shortly if you have not yet received them. The closing date for form returns will be 14th March – please phone Andy Campbell if you require any information on 01829 731601 Or 731000.

The programme of events will be as follows; 9.00am Registration, 9.30am Welcome with, Frank Newberry and Ken Richardson, 9.45am the infamous (lead or be led) Duncan McGillvary, 10.30am Coffee, 10.45am Duncan McGillvary, 11.30am Wendy O'Brien tells all about her 12 month sabbatical experience working at the Augusta National GC, 12.00noon Lunch, 1.00pm Kerran Daly MG of Gog Magog GC, then, an experience not to be missed, at 1.45pm Jeremy Hughes, Vale of Llangollen GC, will re-live his Bernhards, BIGGA trip to Atlanta this will be aided by a power point presentation. 2.15pm we have Ken Siems of Loch Lomond GC, 3pm Martyn Jones, from the National Turfgrass Association, and Ken Richardson of BIGGA, 3.45pm Close.

The cost of this event is £20 for Members £25 for non members.

The announcement confirmed in January that Royal Liverpool will host the 2006 Open championship this is great for our Region and for Derek Green and the lads, It's also a boost for David Lewis, at Conwy GC, as he will be hosting one of the final qualifying rounds (Go on Dave 'Ave it') along with the newly computerised Chris Peddie, at Wallasey GC,

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which is also our autumn tournament venue.

Just a final note from Andy Peel, Bull Bay GC. Can anyone who has won the Aggregate Shield in 1999, 2000, & 2001 please contact him as he wishes to engrave it.

Any views, news or information, please contact me on:

Home: 01925 263394 Fax: 01925 269622

Mobile: 07778 162162

e-mail: acorn@golf@supanet.com

Mesen Cymru

Andrew Acorn

Cleveland

Well another successful Harrogate show has come and gone. After a chat with some of our section members and the lads on the Trade stands, I feel the show is going from strength to strength, which augurs well for our future.

One nice tale I heard on the 'Grapevine' was about a member of the greenkeeping fraternity who was staying at the Majestic Hotel. Having had a good session at the show on the Thursday afternoon (around the stands, not in the pub), he decided to have a catnap in his room at 4.30pm. He was expecting a long night on the dance floor at the banquet.

Unfortunately he dropped into a deep sleep. He woke with a start on hearing the Counterfeit Stones blasting out Honky Tonk Woman. He had overslept, so he washed and dressed very quickly and rushed down to the Ballroom. He burst through the doors only to find the 'Stones' rehearsing at half past five! What a plonker! I hope the greenkeeper concerned was not a member of the Cleveland Section!

On the education front I am happy to report further educational success for members of the Section. Ian Holoran, Middlesbrough Municipal; Tony Mears, Dinsdale Spa, and Tony Smith, Teesside, have all passed their L12 examinations. This is a new training and coaching unit run and financed by the GTC and our three lads are the first to pass. Well done. Further places will be available for anyone who is interested. Contact the GTC. for more info.

Finally on the social front, our Section football team, led by Bedales answer to Robson, 'Flora' Pemberton, should have played in an 8-a-side indoor football tournament. This was against the Rigby Taylor side, the Boro groundstaff and the Sunderland groundstaff. The big comp was due to take place at the 'state of the art' Middlesbrough training ground at Hurworth in mid-February. I hope we shifted some skin and gave the Bolton boys, the Smoggies and the Mackems a severe thrashing. Thanks to Jamie Applegarth and R.T. for their support! Flora has thrown down the gauntlet to any other Sections that fancy a social footie match later in the year. Contact Pembo on 07989 508878 If you dare!

Don't forget to let me have any snippets for next month's notes 07831 214879.

Terry "L. Prez" Charlton

Northern

You should all now have received your fixture list for the golf events this year. If you have not received one then here is a list of dates and events. Spring tournament April 16 at Kirbymoorside Golf Club sponsored by Alpha and Headland. President's Day, June 12 at Pike Hills Golf Club, sponsored by Bob Wild. Invitation Day, 10 September, at Wetherby Golf Club, sponsored Rigby Taylor. Autumn Tournament, October 16, at West Bowling Golf Club, sponsored by Scotts UK. Christmas Golf, 10 December, at Elland Golf Club, sponsored by The Greenkeeping Supply Company.

Many thanks to all the companies who have pledged their support to our Section once again this year. I hope you guys can support these companies at the golf days and other events we have planned for you this year. The price is £16 per event by cheque payable to BIGGA Northern Section, no later than a week before the event.

These notes are being written a couple of days after the Section's first committee meeting of 2003. It was suggested again that we try some other events as well as the usual ones. Crown Green bowling and Cricket matches have both been suggested. Other events such as an autumn seminar and some training days are being planned for later in the year. But what do you people out in greenkeeping land want to see or get from your Section. If you have any suggestions or comments please speak to any of the committee members or contact me at the address at the bottom of these notes.

A full report from the Ransome Jacobson trip to Ipswich and the annual dinner dance at Otley GC will be in next month's column.

A big welcome to Mark Davis, from Rawdon Golf Club; Richard Jagger, from Cottingham Park Golf Club; Craig Sanderson, from Hebden Bridge Golf Club; Karl Walker and Ben Hespini, from Knaresborough Golf Club; Chris Barker, from Pannal Golf Club; Adam Newell, from Malton and Norton Golf Club; Matthew Wildman, from Settle Golf Club, and Micheal Whitehead from West Bowling Golf Club who have all joined BIGGA this month.

Last but not least can I remind you all of the Northern Section Web site which can be found at www.northernsection.co.uk The site contains news and views from your Section giving dates of events and other information you may need through out the year. So get logged on and leave us a message or your views.

Speak to you next month

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



MIDLAND REGION
Peter Larter
Tel: 01476 550115

Midland

Greenkeepers united or what! First time I've stayed over at BTME. What was I thinking before? Never mind the educational, and budget saving opportunities. On the evening, free food and beer on tap! "By God it was like throwing water into a barrel of sawdust" £10 for the first correct answer out the bag, to whoever can tell me the song that line is taken from? A clue? Planxty!

Answers on a postcard to: 21 St. Catharines Close, Walsall, West Midlands, WS1 3TE, or if you have not yet already done so, include such on either of the questionnaires. Please do not forget to respond. Apathy is a word I wish not to be associated with our Section.

Thank you once again to P McCrainor and Midlube Ltd. for sponsoring that postal run.

The committee has had a bit of a brainwave. Wonders will never cease! Such being to introduce a "Thought of the Month" competition. So please send me your best anecdotes, to fit in the above heading. The best of each month will be published in "Around The Green" and a crisp £10 note in the post to the sender. Please keep such clean and printable.

It gives me great pleasure to welcome 12 new members to our Section. G.E. Smith.

J.K. Hughes, C. Warr, J. T. Neale, G. Morgan, A. C. Allcock, M. Deakins, A. Parton, P. J. Rainsford, T. Shinkins, M. A. Cunningham, and finally but certainly not lastly, I. J. Holden. Mine's a Golden! With chargeable glasses we all look forward to meeting you. Please be participants of the organisation, not just merely subscribers to a monthly magazine. BIGGA has a lot to offer, so use such. Remember, it's your organisation.

Now for an apology. This spring's golfing Venue's actual name is The Vale Golf and Country Club, to be held on April 15. Thank you to M. Heath for his courteous advisory. Please don't forget to get your entries in. Looking forward to seeing some new faces at such.

Congratulations to M. Gash, R. Shaw, B. Streton, and M. Reeves, on gaining their Higher National Certificates, via Morton Morrell College. Well done chaps. Bob has since, also made the move from Groundsman to Greenkeeper by joining North Warwickshire GC

as Deputy. Your in the big league now chap - you'll be cursing clay, not paying for it! Also, good luck to G. Wallace, the new Course Manager at Puckrup Hall.

With sadness, I have the unfortunate duty of reporting the sudden passing away of Robbie Konieczka, Course Manager of Shrewsbury GC. All members I'm sure shall join the committee in expressing their deepest and most sincere condolences to his partner, family and friends.

Charmed life or what! M. Cutler has won a trip to Australia, via a daytime BMRE radio competition. Mike, do your chaps have nothing better to do? Well done Mark, have a great time. Don't forget the corked hat.

As you may know BIGGA members get up to 20% off clothing, footwear and protective wear etc. from Arco. Until recently, this deal was only available through its Hull branch. Nigel Couchman, via extensive negotiations has secured the same deal with Arco's West Bromwich branch. Such thus affords opportunity to try items on, as well as mail ordering. Tel. 01215 006060. Rather sh'plendid Nigel.

By Jove!. I've no chance of including my meandering spiel in this month's Around the Green. What was that, thank the Lord for such mercies. Please keep your news coming in. Such is much appreciated, thank you. Speak to you next month regarding your thoughts on the questionnaires.

Sean McDade

BB&O

Hopefully spring is not too far away now with daylight becoming longer, my SAD syndrome will disappear for another year, we can look forward to the smell of freshly cut grass and the vivid green of new leaves on the trees. Sounds great but now to more important matters.

A course visit has been arranged to The Grove at Watford. The Grove is a new development due to open later this year, the course was designed by Kyle Phillips and at 7170 yds, par 72 will be a formidable test. There is also a 227 bedroom 5 star hotel on site. Our visit will take place on Tuesday, March 11 at 1pm. Please let me know if you wish to attend on 01442 842627 or mail

jim.cassidy@ashridgegolfclub.ltd.uk. My thanks go to Phillip Chiverton, Course Manager at The Grove, for allowing this to take place. For a little more information check out thegrove.co.uk

Just a reminder, our first golf meeting is at The Bedfordshire GC on May 16. Entry fees will be £25 for over 25's and £15 for under 25's. The scratch and handicap winners of the afternoon round will be sponsored to enter the National tournament to take place at Coxmoor and Hollinwell in Nottinghamshire.

Any news regarding chronic depression or acts

of overwatering contact me on the above.

Jim Cassidy

East Midlands

This year's visit to Harrogate for the BTME was again a great experience for all of those who attended. Again, there was a great deal to see and do. Various workshops and the conference, not to mention the show itself with the addition of the ClubHouse show. Unfortunately our own Section did not seem to be very well represented with only the usual die hard members in attendance. But on a positive side I am sure we will be able to better this next year.

If you have not yet received your entry form for this years Spring Tournament at Ashbourne GC on May 15, please get in touch with me as soon as possible, and I will forward you a copy. Also a reminder to all members: please ensure that your entry form and correct remittance is returned to me before the closing date if you wish to play. The fixtures for the rest of the year are as follows: E. Midlands Vs East of England, August 13, Beedles Lake GC 3.45pm. Autumn Tournament, Overstone Park GC. September 5. 1pm. AGM TBA. Christmas Tournament, Kilworth Springs GC; December 11- 10:30pm

Antony Bindley



Devon & Cornwall

Hi my name is Steve Evans. I have taken over from Richard Whyman as your new Section Administrator. Richard's enthusiasm and hard work over the past 13 years has been a great asset, not only to the Devon and Cornwall Section, but to BIGGA as a whole. I would like to take this opportunity to wish Richard every success in his new role as Course Manager at Burnham and Berrow Golf Club.

Our first meeting of 2003 was held at East Devon Golf Club in January. The day started with David Singleton, of Barenbrug, and John Palfrey starting our golfing members for the Barenbrug Trophy. After an excellent lunch our sponsor David Singleton from Barenbrug Seeds presented the prizes to:- 1. Simon Coombes, Dainton Park, 40pts; 2. Alan Gawman, St Mellion 28pts; 3. Nobby Clarke, Crediton, 34pts.

The Section would like to thank Barenbrug Seeds for their continued support and to East Devon Golf Club for allowing us the use of their excellent facilities. The golf course was in superb condition and is an absolute credit to Paul Newcome and his staff. Our afternoon educational talk was presented by Jeff Mills,

Course Manager at Taunton and Pickeridge Golf Club.

Our Regional Administrator Paula Humphries is retiring in May this year. Paula has recently undergone an operation and the Section sends their best wishes to her and her husband, Mike. I have just returned from the BTME show in Harrogate. The show seems to go from strength to strength and a big thank you to Neil Thomas and all the staff at BIGGA HOUSE for all their hard work.

I would also like to wish our new Chairman, George Brown all the best for his forthcoming year in office, as I know he will be a great ambassador to our Association.

Our next meeting for the Supertrurf and Aventis Trophies will be held on Tuesday, March 25 at Yelverton Golf Club. Hopefully Cohn Webber will have regained his memory and I look forward to seeing him at Yelverton with his clothes on!

I would like to thank all our members for their support and look forward to seeing you at our meetings in the future.

Steve Evans

South Wales

Firstly I would like to apologise for the lack of notes over the last five months, there seems to have been a breakdown in communication between me and HQ. Hopefully it's all been sorted out and we can look forward to some regular news from our Section in the future.

Let's start with the golf results from last year! Winner of the summer competition held at Dinas Powys Golf Club was Herbie Probert; Emyr Nicolls won the Autumn comp at Havardfordwest GC, and Adrian Panks won the winter comp at Pyle and Kenfig GC. The Rigby Taylor match play KO winners were Daryl Bray & Leigh Davis, from Morrision GC, who beat Jim Mckenzie in the final at Royal Porthcawl Golf Club.

A big thank you to all the clubs who allowed us use of their courses this year, and to the sponsors.

The AGM was again held at Pyle & Kenfig GC. Our outgoing President of 10 years, Colin Murphy, was presented with a wall clock as a sign of appreciation for all he has done for us over the last 30 or so years. We all hope he has a long and happy retirement. The new President is Ray Burrows, with Denis Archer as the Vice President. No major changes in the committee this year, although we would like to welcome Emyr Nicolls on board, (future Around the Green writer)?

A few notes for your diary, before the fixture cards are sent out, Thursday April 10th we will be at Royal Porthcawl GC for our section seminar, this will be sponsored by Symbio, details will be

sent to all members nearer the day. The Avoncrop sponsored evening lectures are under way, February 12, March 12 and April 9 are the dates for your diary. By the way the quiz night is on March 12, with the final talk in April.

Adrian Panks

South West

I would like to start by sending our thoughts and best wishes to Paula Humphries, she was sadly missed at BTME. On the subject of BTME what a great event. It truly does get better and better, our thanks must go to Head Office for the new changes re: start times and seminar organisation It worked really well.

Your elected officers would like to know your opinions on package options and travel arrangements some suggestions are one smaller coach going up on the Sunday coming back Thursday morning so incorporating the education seminars and another travelling on Tuesday back on Friday?

The Patronage scheme has proved to be a great success with a total of nine companies signing up, our thanks to:- MJ Abbott, Irritech, BS Mowers, ALS, Bioseed, Symbio, Avoncrop Rigby Taylor and AMTEC. The scheme involves the aforementioned companies making a financial contribution, with this extra input it enables us to fund certain initiatives such as, sponsoring the winner with the lowest gross score for the summer tournament to go to the National Tournament. We will pay entry fee and travelling expenses. Non golfers do not fear there is something for you too, those attending the course walks and staying for lunch, names will be put into a hat and the winner will receive a greenkeeping educational book such as STRI Care of the Golf Course etc.

The Committee would also like to sponsor a greenkeeper with a trip to BTME all you have to do is send a letter to our Secretary Nobby Knight stating the reasons why you should be chosen.

Education, education, education (who said that?) Seriously though I need to know your requirements, e-mail me, ring me, please someone, anyone 01225 333928. Some ideas coming through are arranging our own trip to GCSAA next year in San Diego California, cheap flight, budget accommodation? A Frank Newbury seminar, and for the Autumn I am liaising with Toro, an Agronomist and a Ecologist for a one day seminary here a Bath Golf Club. How about exchange visits? Local golf courses with major tournaments perhaps go for the week prior to the tournament and see how the preparation is done perhaps more rewarding experience than just bunker raking at the Open.

We would be grateful of any feedback or suggestions on some of the items raised we are

here to serve you! Our telephone numbers are supplied on the fixture card. I do apologise to go on so much but we do need to be aware of what is happening in our section. So may it rain just as you finish top dressing, wind blow after you have sprayed and sun shine on Captain's day, dream on.

Email: greenkeepers@bathgolfclub.fsworld.co.uk
Guy Woods



SOUTH EAST
Derek Farrington
Tel: 01903 260 956

Surrey

All members should have by now received this years events programme. Please make sure that you return the relevant forms to Ian Sellars as soon as possible or you will be left off the mailing list.

Surrey Section committee met on January 29 and one of the points discussed was raised at the AGM by Billy McMillan, regarding education. All Sections have access to money allocated by BIGGA for educational use so lets use it! Please give us the help we need to arrange seminars, visits etc. that you want to and will attend. If your course is undergoing an interesting change or improvement let the committee know so that a visit can be arranged and all members can benefit. All suggestions to Dan Lightfoot, at Gatton Manor Golf Club or daniellightfoot180@hotmail.com.

The golf venues this year will attract as always a large turnout especially as there are some courses we have not played before. Please return your entry slips by the date required as late entries and no payment mean no play. Will any member with a trophy or cup please contact Ian Sellars.

Congratulation paragraph this month tells us that Tony Kyle is now head man at Surrey Downs Golf Club and that his wife Samantha gave birth to Caden Joshua on August 1 2002 and that Caden weighed in at 8lb 7oz's. Jason King from Woodcote Park Golf Club became a father on December 2 2002 with the help of his partner, Paula, and their Daughter Georgia 7lb's 2oz's. Please note that Adie Locke's son is called Aiden and not Alden as reported in last month's magazine. Sorry Aiden.

Brian Willmott

NORTHERN IRELAND

Good morning. It's 7.30am, Saturday January 18 and I've been awake since five (the usual sedative hasn't worked). I started thinking about greenkeeping (am I sad or what) and making a comparison with other professions... now I won't sleep for a week.

My newly acquired mental turmoil began over a pint and a yarn with your colleague and my friend, Mark Farrell, from City of Derry.

Now this morning I'm thinking if I was a heart surgeon or a dentist or a stock market whizkid or a candle stick maker I would, like you greenkeepers, have had years of education and training to learn my profession. Then I considered a blade of grass (flipping heck). It's a living thing, it grows, it reproduces, it gets sick and stressed, has good days and bad like me - if I don't feel 100% in the morning I still have to look good. A spoonful of Eno's helps but I certainly don't function at 100%. If I have a toothache etc at least I can tell someone which tooth hurts, or if I come out in spots I can dab some cream on.

God help you greenkeepers if you tell your boss that the grass might be alright tomorrow. Well you have to be a doctor, a nutritionist, a physio, a psychiatrist, a mechanic, a PR man, a chemist and an accountant. Well, as we say, "I take my hat off to you".

I'm now having a cup of coffee and a ciggie and when I've finished I'm not going to be a greenkeeper or a vet. I'm going to be a rocket scientist, much easier. Too late for another sedative now. Having said all that I know from my farming background how enormously satisfying it can be. I used to inject 300 units of liquid ammonia to grazing land as soon as I could get on to see through the growing season and my cows were as happy as the day is long. A bit like greenkeeping I don't think.

2pm. Well, I've just cut the lawn for the first time and got down quite low, about two inches, and my neighbours think I'm mad but say it looks well. The six inches of thatch makes it lovely to walk on. Your feet go well down and it's nice to see the scorched foot marks were someone went when the frost was there - "Know what I mean?"

Here is a quick tip to make you the best greenkeeper in the world. When you cut new holes use a bevelled (saucer shaped) board, when the new cup is in place jump up and down on the board then all putts will roll in and there'll be smiles all round.

Happy days., Graham Prosser

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This competition is not open to BIGGA Staff or non-members. The solution to the February Turftime Teaser was 'Peter Mannington'. This was correctly answered by: Mr G Evans of Kington Golf Club and Lee Cobb of Shortlands Golf Club.

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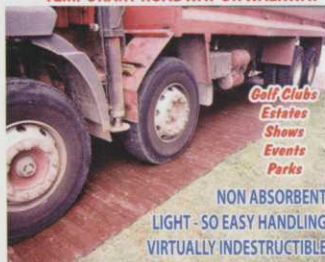
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Applications in writing by 24 March 2003 with full CV to:

The Manager, Elsham Golf Club,
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Applications in handwriting please including a full and current C.V. to:

Rob Holland, Birchwood Park Golf Centre, Birchwood Road, Dartford, Kent DA2 7HJ Tel: 01322 662038

Bob Thompson, Hoebridge Golf Centre, Old Woking Road, Woking, Surrey GU22 8JH. Tel: 01483 725755

Or, if you require more information about the positions please call the Centres direct

GIRTON GOLF CLUB

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

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- be able to demonstrate their ability to work within a small team to the high standards expected.
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Written applications with full CV by 31st March 2003 to:
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The Secretary/Manager, Scarcroft Golf Club, Syke Lane, Scarcroft, Leeds, LS14 3BQ

Feature listing from March 2001

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 Gables GC; BTME preview; Speciality 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; Caldy GC profile; Multi-tasking machinery; Bunker Sand; Essay competition; Fijian GC profile; BIGGA Minimum qualification

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

July 2002; Open preview; Turf; Steve Isacss; 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

February 2003; BTME/ClubHouse Review; Royal Liverpool Profile; Irrigation; Nematodes



Where have all the birds gone?



They didn't tell me when I took on the role of Chairman that I'd be quite this busy. We'd only just returned home from Harrogate and we were packing up again to head for the States and the GCSAA Conference and Show in Atlanta, Georgia.

But it was well worth the effort. It was a very successful week, particularly from BIGGA's perspective, as our stand was extremely busy with overseas members and prospective members while we spent a great deal of time fielding questions on BIGGA, and particularly the Master Greenkeeper programme which is very popular with American Superintendents.

There were a tremendous number of British greenkeepers in Atlanta this year. In addition to the BIGGA Scholarship Delegation of 10, and thank you to Bernhard for sponsoring the Delegation for the third time, there were many others there as guests of other companies, including Ransomes Jacobsen.

And it wasn't just as visitors that we made our presence felt. Eddie Adams, Head Greenkeeper of the Old Course, St Andrews, delivered a fine presentation on revetting bunkers.

I also spent a few hours in the company of Murray Long, Coombe Hill's Head Greenkeeper, and the winner of the Toro Student of the Year Competition in 2002. Murray visited Atlanta during a break in his studies at the University of Massachusetts which formed part of his prize. He was having an unforgettable time and is extremely grateful to both BIGGA and Toro for making it possible. It is a superb competition and the prize is well worth becoming a target to work towards. Look out for information on the 2003 Toro Student of the Year Competition and you too could be experiencing what Murray is currently experiencing.

One of the highlights of the week was the Banquet at which renowned golf course architect Pete Dye was presented with the Old Tom Morris Award. Seeing someone who is such an influential figure in the game of golf receiving the award makes it all the more special that our own Walter Woods received it last year.

One incident in the shuttle bus on the way to the hotel from Atlanta Airport really made me think. There were two Americans sitting just across from me who were strangers but who I took to be Superintendents. Once we'd settled down the first question that one asked the other was, "How much is your fungicide budget this year?" Now I know they experience different conditions to us and that their climate can be completely different but it really does sum up much of what Jim Arthur talks about and has written in Practical Greenkeeping.

It's probably not connected but in all the time we were in Atlanta, and it was over a week, I only saw two species of bird. A couple of old crows and some pigeons in the park and the Mall. If someone had said that to me before we went I would never have believed them. It was lovely to get home and hear all the birdsong.

As I write it is still February and the weather is very mixed. We are still cutting greens occasionally and are nearly finished the revetting of the bunkers on both the Ailsa and the Arran courses at Turnberry. It's the same with the aeration and turfing programmes and although the bunkers need topping up with sand it is too early as the March winds are still to come which would soon empty them again. Those winds will be very handy, though, when it comes to drying the course out and we have our fingers crossed for some early growth to enable the top dressing to smooth out the winter scars and even the putting surfaces.

By now, of course, all your course furniture should be ready - tee markers and flag pins painted or replaced while your irrigation systems should have been overhauled and ready to spring into action. Don't leave it until it's needed before finding out that there's a problem. Planning ahead is the secret.

Good luck with your final preparations for the new season and I'll keep you up to date with the work we are doing at Turnberry.

George Brown
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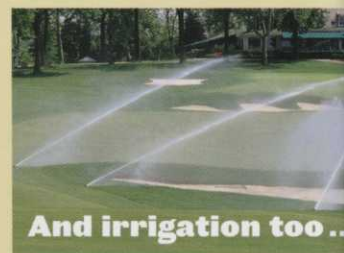
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