



Welcome

SO NEAR YET SO FAR

Did you watch The Masters? Silly question. If you have any interest in golf whatsoever, of course, you watched The Masters. Well, those of us connected with the greenkeeping profession in Britain nearly had a lot to celebrate, didn't we?

Rained out on the Thursday and it was looking good. News of muddy spectator walkways, people falling on Augusta's famous undulations and squelchy lies and it was looking even better. But, what do you know, the weather improved and before you knew it the awful conditions were no longer the story and the fact that a Canadian left hander won and not Tiger was taking all the headlines.

Yes the Augusta Syndrome nearly didn't happen in 2003. Augusta National and the Georgia weather almost did a passable impersonation of Sludgecombe Pay and Play during a wet weekend in November... but it didn't. The green staff did an outstanding job, no doubt putting in enough hours during the week to have a Working Hours Directive inspector foaming at the mouth, and pulled it off.

So while you nearly avoided the April and May headaches which go along with Augusta Syndrome, I'm afraid you didn't. Instead you may well get additional grief.

Greens were submerged under five inches of rain one minute and putting at the speed of light the next, so how many learned members might just pipe up,

"Look at the rainfall Augusta took and they still had their greens lightning fast the very next day."

The fact that Augusta can call upon a technologically advanced and highly expensive under green system to suck moisture away doesn't come into it.

Having said all that at least we haven't had to cope with the dreadful weather of the recent past. The prolonged dry spell has hopefully enabled you to get on with many of the jobs the soggy conditions of recent times have prevented you from doing and produce a level of spring course presentation of which you can be proud.

In addition to the weather The Masters didn't get an easy ride, with Martha Burk's sex discrimination protest against Augusta National Golf Club hitting the headlines. There is a better than even chance that the same type of protest will fill the British newspaper columns in the run up to The Open at Royal St George's with the R&A taking the flak.

I won't take sides on what is a complex argument but what I will say is that it will perhaps deflecting attention away from a potentially more damaging problem affecting the game. Golf is currently at a low ebb and the lack of money in the game is already taking its toll on many of the country's golf clubs, some of which have already gone into receivership or, at the very least, are looking to trim costs.

This has obvious and significant knock-ons for a great many people. Let's hope a successful conclusion to the war has a positive impact on the economy in general and the game of golf in particular.

Scott MacCallum, Editor

BIGGA TURF MANAGEMENT EXHIBITION
BTME
& EDUCATIONAL SEMINAR PROGRAMME

2004

&

ClubHouse

Each month we will bring you news of the industry's premier events.

ClubHouse will move from Hall D to Hall Q to run alongside BTME.

The Careers Fair will run alongside the BIGGA college stands within ClubHouse.

The Keynote Speaker and Seminar programme will move from the Royal Hall to Hall D.

Stand rebookings are well ahead of this time last year, with 139 companies booked at the time of going to press. Companies are urged to book early to obtain a preferred position.

REVISED OPENING HOURS

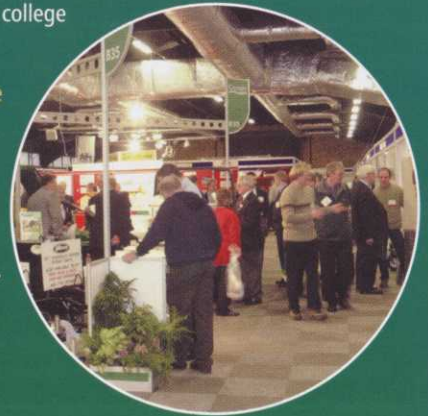
Tuesday 20 January 9.00am - 5.00pm

Wednesday 21 January 9.00am - 5.00pm

Thursday 22 January 9.00am - 4.00pm

For details of exciting new sponsorship opportunities now available, contact Pauline Thompson 01347 833830 / pauline@bigga.co.uk

Watch out for more announcements in the June issue of Greenkeeper International.



ROSIE JOINS THE ASSOCIATION

BIGGA has appointed a new Sales Manager to lead the Association's sales team and maximise money raising opportunities within the industry.

Rosie Hancher brings with her extensive experience in sales and arrives at BIGGA having most recently worked for Barker Brooks Media, in Harrogate, who specialise in publications in niche markets.

In her four years with Barker Brooks, where latterly she was Managing Director, the company worked for the DTI and the Foreign Office; published its own magazine and organised and ran conferences, shows and Award Ceremonies.

"I am delighted to have joined BIGGA and to become heavily involved in the sales side of the Association. It is what I love doing and what I'm good at," said Rosie, who is married with two young children.



Having started at the beginning of April, Rosie is already enjoying the benefits of working at BIGGA HOUSE.

"I love working in the countryside, rather than in a town, and it means I can be in the gym before work instead of being stuck in a traffic jam," said Rosie, who lives in Ripon, a few miles from Aldwark.

She will be in charge of galvanising the Sales team, whose tasks include selling stand space in the Harrogate Shows, advertising in the magazine, website and directory as well as identifying and creating sponsorship opportunities.

"We will be going all out to maximise turnover of the Association in order to increase the benefits we can pass on to BIGGA members. These aren't empty words. This department will make a real difference," said Rosie.

"I would also value comments from members on the magazine and any improvements which might be made or subjects you'd like covered. I'd then pass those ideas on to the Editor."

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

SUCCESSFUL DEFENCE

On 3 April 2003 our annual match against the Secretaries Association took place at Prestwick St. Nicholas GC, Prestwick. We were defending the trophy we retained at Haddington last year.

Before play commenced the Secretaries decided that that it should be full handicap allowance. As it was the Secretaries turn to host the event we had no choice in the matter but to agree, however we still felt we had been conned.

As the results came in the Secretaries' tactics seemed to be paying off, as after seven matches we were trailing, but with strength in depth we went on to win

the last three matches and to clinch victory by 6 points to 4.

Our thanks to the Captain and Committee of Prestwick St. Nicholas for the courtesy and facilities and best wishes to the club's Secretary Tom Hepburn in his year of office as Captain of the Secretaries Association, Scotland.

Congratulations to Head Greenkeeper John MacLachlan and his staff for providing us with a course in such excellent condition.

Next year it is our choice of venue and hopefully we will be able to return to a links course in early April.

Peter J.Boyd, Regional Administrator

STAR ENDORSEMENT

Top golfing star Laura Davies is following in the footsteps of Britain's best greenkeepers after becoming the proud owner of a Toro Greensmaster 1000 pedestrian greensmower.

The four-times world number one, with 64 title wins, including four majors, under her belt, purchased the mower to cut a small golf green she's constructed at her home near Woking, Surrey.

Laura is out on her green between tournaments, practising to keep her putting razor sharp.

It was David Whitaker, MG Course Manager at Wisley Golf Club, who recommended the Toro Greensmaster to Laura. He laid the turf for her green and regularly checks it over so it's in tip-top condition.

"Wisley recommended the mower to me because they have always achieved great results with Toro,

and the mower I used to have really wasn't giving me the finish I wanted. Good support and service was also very important to me, and Toro dealer John Shaw Machinery is giving me all the help I need. This is certainly one of the best greensmowers out there, so I'm delighted to own one," said Laura.



ELECTRONIC ACCESS

The STRI and the Turfgrass Information Centre have combined in a joint effort that provides electronic access to back issues of the Journal of Turfgrass Science via the Turfgrass Information File (TGIF).

STRI produces the Journal of Turfgrass Science to facilitate dissemination of turf related research results, while the TIC serves to index the literature of turf, using TGIF to direct users to appropriate research in a vast array of publications, including the Journal of Turfgrass Science. This agreement will enable TGIF users to go directly from a citation/abstract to the full text of the article for all Journal of Turfgrass Science issues published prior to 1999. Electronic full-text availability will be for all years from 1929 up to the

last three. In addition, current subscribers to the STRI will also have access to the electronic back-file via the STRI website homepage.

The years 1989-1998 are currently online. Subscribers to the Turfgrass Information File can access these materials at <http://www.turf.lib.msu.edu/>. Subscribers to STRI can access these materials via the STRI homepage at <http://www.stri.co.uk/books/journal>. The process of adding earlier years is underway, and is anticipated that the entire run back to 1929 will be available within this calendar year. Subsequent years, such as 1999, will be added once three years have passed.

NEW MAN AT LELY

Lely UK has appointed John Pike as Business Development Manager for turf maintenance machinery, for south and south-west England. John previously spent most of his career selling the Flymo range.

He lives in Wimborne, Dorset, and enjoys water skiing, power boating and clay pigeon shooting in his spare time.



SALES BOOST

Sales to Norway have significantly increased for Hunter Grinders Ltd after participating in an Export Explorer mission to the country 12 months ago assisted by Trade Partners UK, the government body dedicated to providing UK companies with global expertise on international trade and investment.

The increase in sales of grinding machines to the Scandinavian country marks the beginning of a greater understanding and participation in trade relations with the region. The Newcastle-based company is one of only three manufacturers worldwide of specialist grinding equipment for cylinder mowers used on fine turf in golf courses, parks and other landscaping schemes.

"The growth in the Norwegian and Scandinavian golf industry alone represents a potential market worthy of the interest and investment required to promote Hunter Grinder products," said Keith Cann-Evans, Managing Director.

"Although our equipment has been successfully sold around the world, we are only just beginning to establish a global network of distributors. Trade Partners UK programmes such as the Export Explorer allow us to establish links with new markets more cost effectively."

THERE HE GOES!



BIGGA National Vice Chairman, Andy "Coulthard" Campbell, is the envy of many after winning a superb ride-on lawnmower Go-Kart at Harrogate recently.

Andy, Course Manager at the De Vere Carden Park Resort, won the grass cutting kart in a raffle on the Wolf Proline stand and the prize, which will make Andy even more of a hero in his son Cameron's eyes, was presented to him by Wolf Proline, Sales Manager, Clive Pearson.

Royal Inverdivot GC...

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



NEW ROLE FOR KIM

Kim Macfie has agreed to join David Jenkins Turfcare Equipment Ltd as a non-executive Director.

For nearly 20 years Kim was Sales & Marketing Director for Hayter Limited where he gained great respect for his knowledge of the industry and his ability to work with his Dealer distribution network.

David said that he was delighted that Kim had agreed to be part of the team and felt sure that Kim's enthusiasm, wide experience and knowledge of the market would be of immense value to the Company.

"It is always of benefit to any organisation to stand back from the day to day operations and have a dispassionate and detached examination of its direction. In a new Company this is doubly so but difficult to do. If I can help David by bringing some focus from the outsiders view, I will be happy, and look forward to witnessing the success he deserves," said Kim.



FERTILISER USAGE SURVEY

A survey of fertiliser usage conducted by Jim Arthur and sponsored by the R&A produced the following results together with comments supplied by Jim Arthur himself.

1. TYPE OF COURSE

Links 15%; Heathland 13%; Downland 10%; Parkland 50%; Others 5%.

2. TYPE OF FERTILISER USED

Nitrogen only (chiefly 8:0:0) 15%
* Nitrogen and Potash (no phosphate) 50%
§ Complete (NPK) 35%
Note: * This was mainly N2 only with one dressing of potash annually, though a few fed potash all year.
§ There were considerable variations with a very few feeding heavily all year (Feb-Nov) However, an estimated 50% used one only NPK dressing - the commonest formulations being 10:2:10, though some used more.

3. TONNAGE PURCHASED

All figures have been adjusted to total per 18 holes. They relate to use for all areas, tees, fairways, approaches etc. and not just greens. Note also that many returns showed in the group between 1-3 tonnes as being much nearer 1 tonne than 3.

Under 1 tonne	21%
1-3 tonnes	70%
Up to 5 tonnes	7%
* In excess of 5 tonnes	2%

* One club admitted to using 24 tonnes per 18 holes, but few known recognised larger users replied to the survey.

4. AREAS FED

It was not possible because of incomplete returns to assess how many clubs fed fairways as a routine - but deduced from 91% using up to 3 tonnes, we can safely assume very few.

5. FIRST APPLICATION

No consistency but a few stated February/March most in (late) April.

Very few of the 91% using up to three tonnes used fertiliser in autumn, most stopped early August (sometimes sooner).

6. FUNGICIDES

There was a direct relationship between heavier fertiliser use and high fungicide bills. The average of all respondents was £2450 per annum. However, a few used over £10,000 p.a. and one £24,000. Eliminating these, the average fell to £180, but it is noteworthy that 22% used either nothing or under £250 p.a. on fungicides.

7. RELATIONSHIP OF BUDGET TO SIZE OF CLUB

There was no direct relationship. Many 36 hole complexes used less than 3 tonnes p.a. per 18 holes, while one 18 hole club admitted to using 24 tonnes p.a. of fertiliser.

CONCLUSION

The majority (65%) of respondents use no phosphatic fertilisers. The link between poa annua invasion/dominance and phosphatic fertilisers has been known and accepted for 90 years, with too many lapses, encouraged by advisers and fertiliser companies using 'just a little phosphate - and regular use of potash - will bring in poa in weeks and reverse years of its discouragement by using N2 only. This particularly applies to the use of NPK autumn fertilisers.

The recession, increasingly making itself felt, means budgets must be pruned, which does not imply lowering standards. The one thing fine turf does not need is either water or feeding over very limited levels.

These figures confirm my personal observations over many years and, more to the point, are agreed by fertiliser distributing agents as being in line with their experience and records.

J. H. Arthur

SUPPORT FOR NTF

Toro has sponsored the first 'In Pursuit of Excellence' conference by the National Turfgrass Foundation - a new charity-based organisation that helps fund education and research into turfgrass science, sports and recreational grounds maintenance.

"Toro was delighted to support the conference. The foundation's activities complement our own commitment to support the advancement of turf professionals," said Toro distributor Lely's Jeff Anguine.

The event in Southport, Lancashire, was aimed at sharing knowledge gained by the Foundation from its workshops and study tours. Top international speakers gave lectures and ran seminars for over 300 greenkeepers, groundsmen and turf consultants from 17 countries who attended.

The foundation is run on a voluntary basis by Martyn Jones and Louise Clegg. Martyn is a turfgrass maintenance specialist who, until a year ago, was Head of Turf Science at Myerscough College, in Preston, Lancashire.

"We approached Toro because of its long-standing involvement in education and research," said Martyn.



SECRETARY TO GOLF COURSE COMMITTEE NAMED

Steve Isaac has been appointed to the new position of Secretary to the R&A's Golf Course Committee.

"This appointment reflects our belief that golf courses throughout the world should be presenting themselves in the best possible condition and be working to the highest ecological and environmental standards," said Peter Dawson, Secretary of the R&A.

"We are therefore delighted that Steve Isaac, a highly experienced and widely travelled agronomist, will be joining our team in St Andrews."

The Secretary to the Golf Course Committee, reporting directly to Duncan Weir, will be responsible for developing management strategy guidance on all aspects of the golf course paying particular attention to the use of water and chemicals, climate change, planning of new courses and levels of play.

He will work with the Committee to offer best-practice professional advice and information to architects, golf associations and federations, planners, government agencies, golf clubs, greenkeepers and other relevant groups.

Steve Isaac, 41, gained a BSc (Hons) in Applied Biology from Liverpool Polytechnic in 1983. For many years he has worked for the Sports Turf Research Institute (STRI) and recently has been based in Blairgowrie in the position of Area Manager for Scotland and Ireland.



THANK YOU

BIGGA would like to thank the estate of the late Doug Bell, Northern Regional Administrator, for the donation of Doug's library of golf books to the BIGGA library.

DOUBLE DEALING

SISIS have appointed two new regional dealers to promote and sell their range of mowing equipment, and to offer a first-class after sales service.

Mitchells are appointed to cover the Midlands and have branches throughout the area and C & O Tractors Ltd at Blandford in Dorset are appointed to offer sales and service in Dorset, Wiltshire and South West Hampshire.