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# Greenkeeper

## INTERNATIONAL



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Past Chairman - Richard Barker

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Ian Semple  
Paul Jenkins  
David Walden  
Iain Macleod  
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Executive Director: Neil Thomas  
Email: [neil@bigga.co.uk](mailto:neil@bigga.co.uk)

Deputy Executive Director: John Pemberton  
Email: [john@bigga.co.uk](mailto:john@bigga.co.uk)

Communications Manager/Editor: Scott MacCallum  
Email: [scott@bigga.co.uk](mailto:scott@bigga.co.uk)

Sales Manager: Rosie Hancher  
Email: [rosie@bigga.co.uk](mailto:rosie@bigga.co.uk)

Education & Training Manager: Ken Richardson  
Email: [ken@bigga.co.uk](mailto:ken@bigga.co.uk)

Membership Services Officer: Rachael Palmer  
Email: [rachael\\_p@bigga.co.uk](mailto:rachael_p@bigga.co.uk)

## Contact us

You can contact The British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association in any number of ways:

Post: BIGGA HOUSE, Aldwark,  
Alne, York, YO61 1UF

Email: [reception@bigga.co.uk](mailto:reception@bigga.co.uk)

Internet: [www.bigga.org.uk](http://www.bigga.org.uk)

Tel: 01347 833800

Fax: 01347 833801



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# Greenkeeper

The official monthly magazine of the British  
& International Golf Greenkeepers Association

### Editorial

Communications Manager/Editor: Scott MacCallum  
Tel: 01347 833800 Fax: 01347 833801  
Email: [scott@bigga.co.uk](mailto:scott@bigga.co.uk)

### Advertising

Sales Manager: Rosie Hancher  
Tel: 01347 833800 Fax: 01347 833802  
Email: [rosie@bigga.co.uk](mailto:rosie@bigga.co.uk)

Advertising Sales Executive: Cheryl Broomhead  
Tel: 01347 833800 Fax: 01347 833802  
Email: [cheryl@bigga.co.uk](mailto:cheryl@bigga.co.uk) / [sales@bigga.co.uk](mailto:sales@bigga.co.uk)

Sales Administrator: Katie Davies  
Tel: 01347 833800 Fax: 01347 833802  
Email: [katie@bigga.co.uk](mailto:katie@bigga.co.uk) / [sales@bigga.co.uk](mailto:sales@bigga.co.uk)

### Design

Design and Production Editor: Marie Whyld  
Tel: 01347 833800 Fax: 01347 833802  
ISDN: 01347 830020  
Email: [marie@bigga.co.uk](mailto:marie@bigga.co.uk)

### Printing

Warners Midlands Plc, The Maltings,  
Manor Lane, Bourne, Lincolnshire PE10 9PH  
Tel: 01778 391000 Fax: 01778 394269

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## DON'T MISS THE ACTION!

Win a Casio portable colour TV in this month's Turf Time Teaser. The Casio portable colour TV has a 2.3" screen with a non-glare screen feature. The extendable antenna provide both UHF and VHF reception and a tuning indicator makes for easy selection of channels. A flip out stand allows for desk top viewing. Tuning keys, volume selector and brightness dial are all featured. To win, all you have to do is enter this month's Buyers' Guide competition sponsored by Greenlink International.



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## November 2003

Your next issue of Greenkeeper International  
will be with you by 5 December 2003

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Welcome

## DON'T LET YOUR CLUB BECOME GREEN WITH ENVY

There are times when you really wonder if banging your head against a wall is a pastime worth continuing.

I say that after listening to a national sports radio channel when a former European Tour pro turned pundit, announced to the listening nation that he'd never seen Wentworth in better condition. "I've never seen it greener" were the exact words chosen by Talk Sport's Robert Lee.

Now, I'm a huge fan of Wentworth. I was based there for a time in the early 90s and it was a real privilege to drive across the 18th fairway on the way to the office every morning. I've seen the superb work of Chris Kennedy and his team first hand and peaking a course twice a year is a skill for which Chris has no equal. So I would use many measures to praise Wentworth, but I certainly wouldn't use the "greenness scale".

Of course, you could argue that Robert's crime is minor and the fact that golf is even being reported on a predominately football station is a plus, but for greenkeepers attempting to do the job to the best of their abilities it is yet another blow.

The fact is that too many golfers equate "greenness" with quality. With the splendour of Augusta laid before the television watching nation every April I suppose it is an understandable conclusion for the club member to reach, but long term sustainability is something which doesn't enter the equation of members dazzled by the azaleas.

Unfortunately, through a quirk of members' club constitutions, those members have the power to influence agronomic decisions at their own clubs and pressure to become "greener" is becoming increasingly intense. Highly trained greenkeepers are often risking employment stability if they attempt to steer down the path of traditional British greenkeeping.

There are two examples in this month's magazine. The new Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year lost his job a year ago after attempting to adopt sound agronomic practices at a club which lost patience, made him redundant and headed off on their own search for "greenness". Fortunately he is now at another club. At Temple Golf Club Martin Gunn and Malcolm Peake are strong upholders of traditional greenkeeping but even they have come under pressure. They've also seen many quality greenkeepers lost to the industry and courses fall by the wayside.

"If courses don't follow best management practices we could be in danger of losing the character of all our priceless national heritage courses - heathland, links and downland and this would change forever the way we play traditional British golf," says Malcolm, in the article.

The "We Know Better" brigade is a strong lobby in many, if not all, British golf clubs and their case is helped when someone announces on air that a course has never looked better because it is so green.

The sad unpalatable truth is that golfers, and some supposed golfing experts, don't know what is best for golf courses.

The long term consequences should be of concern to everyone.

Scott MacCallum, Editor

## AN AMAZING MAN

Eric Barber was not the type of person to yearn for his pipe and slippers when he retired from greenkeeping eight years ago.

Eric, who was Course Manager at Teign Valley Golf Club, in Exeter, has just become World Champion in the gruelling sport of Duathlon which involved him running 10 kilometres, cycling 150 kilometres and rounding off with another 30 kilometre run, all on a mountainous course in Switzerland.

"It was the toughest event I've ever done," said the newly crowned 67 year-old 65-69 age category winner.

To put it in perspective the winning time of nine hours, 29 minutes and 19.9 second included Eric running 25 miles in three hours 41 minutes, virtually a marathon with a 94 mile cycle race sandwiched in between.

The race didn't go completely to plan and at one point Eric, whose strength lies in the running elements, was 15 minutes behind a youthful 65 year-old Italian with the prospect of falling further behind on the bike.

"But I clawed my way back into it and was 11 minutes behind at the start of the final run and caught him after 10 kilometres of the race," said Eric, who also won the 60-64 category in 2000.

Along with the better known Triathlon - which also incorporates swimming - Duathlon is a growing sport and the fittest man Eric knows is the five time world Champion, Benny Vansteelant, of Belgium, who is virtually unbeatable at the shorter Duathlon distance, but who was pipped for the gold this year in the open category.

Fitter, and with more stamina, than ever, Eric hopes to defend his title in Denmark next year and



also has some other mind boggling objectives before then.

"I want to run the 93 mile West Highland Way; complete a stage in the Tour de France and run the Jungfrau Marathon in Switzerland which starts at 2000 feet above sea level and rises to 7,000 above sea level," said Eric, who added that it would be ideal training for the defence of his title.

Eric has to fund his own trips and would be extremely grateful if anyone decided to sponsor one of Britain's toughest and most dedicated pensioners.

Eric's exploits were featured in the Devon paper The Herald Express.

Anyone who wishes to assist should contact Scott MacCallum at BIGGA HOUSE.

## TOP MAN

With the Rugby World Cup going strong in Australia it is nice to see some recognition for BIGGA's own rugby internationalist.

The day after England's match against South Africa The Sunday Times highlighted the team which played South Africa in 1972 which included Regional Administrator, Peter Larter. Peter won 24 caps for England and also represented the British Lions. A lock forward, he scored a long distance

penalty against New Zealand and a try against South African in 1969 which sealed an 11-8 win.

Peter is pictured as number five between Mike Burton, now a well known sporting ticket agent and Frank Cotton, now Managing Director of Cotton Traders. Directly below Peter is Andy Ripley, who became a star in the BBC's Superstars which has been relaunched recently.





## ELMWOOD COLLEGE AND THE DUNHILL CUP

During the recent Dunhill Links Championships, Elmwood greenkeeping students were involved as part of the team preparing the Kings Barns Golf Links. The volunteers came from the full range of full time courses, as in NC, HNC and HND.

Throughout the week they provided support ranging from mowing greens, tees and fairways, to raking bunkers, beginning at 6am, and after play repairing the course from the days wear and tear.

"The full time staff at Kings Barns maintain the highest standards of greenkeeping week in week out, and it is a superb learning experience for our students to witness these standards at first hand.

Every single one of them thoroughly enjoyed working on such an inspiring golf course," said Ian Butcher, Course Tutor at Elmwood.

Stuart McColm, Course Manager of Kings Barns Golf Links, said, "This is something that helps both parties, and the support Elmwood students provide through a very important week for us is invaluable."

Bjarni Hannesson, currently studying for his HND in Golf Course Management, said, "It was an exciting week, and it has broadened my horizons with regard to working on the very top golf courses."



## UNSUNG HEROES



There's still time to give one of your colleagues the chance of a week's holiday in the south of France.

As a practising UK greenkeeper or groundsman you can nominate your chosen unsung hero, putting him or her forward for Terrain Aeration's special award which offers the hire of a house in Languedoc, plus flights to Montpellier or £150 towards car travel.

Situated in the small village of Neffies, surrounded by vineyards and 40 minutes from the Mediterranean, the house sleeps up to six and is fully equipped with washing machine, fridge freezer etc.

Designed to recognise the hard work and professionalism which often goes unsung in our industry, the nominations will be judged by Gordon Child, BIGGA; Derek Walder, IOG, and Tim Lodge, STRI, and the winners, one greenkeeper and one groundsman, will be announced at BTME & ClubHouse 2004.

The judges will not necessarily be looking for turf care skills (there are awards for these already), but individuals whose dedication either to their jobs or their colleagues has improved the quality of working life at their particular work place.

You know these unsung heroes so call Linda Green now on Tel: 01449 673783.

## COUNTRYWIDE ROLE FOR MARTIN

Countrywide has appointed Martin Townsend as Turf and Amenity Sales Manager.

Martin Townsend joined the company several months ago from Scotts UK, with a wealth of knowledge in the industry stemmed from his early days in the 1970's as an apprentice cricketer and groundsman at Lords Cricket Ground. From 1976 until 1989 Martin held posts of Head Groundsman and Head Greenkeeper.

He then moved into the Amenity Distribution side of the industry, a natural transition for a man who is always up for a challenge, during this and subsequent roles. Following 10 successful years as a Technical Sales Manager working predominately in the south west of the country Martin joined Scotts UK Professional four years ago as Senior Sales Manager for the South West, South Wales and the Channel Isles.

Martin's remit is to build a sales and distribution Turf & Amenity business that will run along side and compliment the portfolio of Countrywide's products and services available throughout the midlands, southern England and Wales.

## NEW APPOINTMENT



Claire Kilmurray has joined Vitax as Technical Representative for East and Central England, covering the area from East Anglia to the Cotswolds.

As a Technical Sales Rep. and Local Authority Manager with Rigby Taylor, before taking a similar post with Sherriff Amenity, Claire has accumulated over 23 years experience in the industry.

"I've just had a year away from the business and found that I missed it, I'm looking forward to meeting old contacts, re-establishing links with the private turf and golf sector and generally getting out and about again," she said.

Clive Williams, Sales and Amenity Manager for Vitax said that the company needed someone with Claire's experience to develop the demand for the company's new products in this geographical area.

"We've a good customer base in Claire's new territory and she has the expertise to handle it professionally," he commented.

## Royal Inverdivot GC...

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



## OFF TARGET!

John Shaw, Head Greenkeeper at Styrrup Hall Golf and Country Club, in Doncaster, bit off more than he could chew when he bet his staff that he could rake every bunker by hand in two hours. He trailed in an hour after his target time - still not a bad effort, but his staff, who put together this photograph, got their own back!





## 25 YEARS GREENKEEPING



Anthony Davies MG, Course Manager at Prestbury Golf Club has been recognised at his club for achieving 25 years in the greenkeeping profession.

Anthony, who was the first ever Greenkeeper of the Year, has been one of the most prominent Course Managers in the country for a number of years and he will surely go close to clocking up another 25 years before he hangs up his spurs.

## NEW MAN AT LASTEC

Keith Elliment has been appointed European Sales Manager for Lastec UK heading the company's UK and European dealer network.



Keith introduced the Lastec Articulator range of rotary mowers into Britain in 1990 as sole UK distributor, before becoming Southern Regional Sales Manager for Lastec UK. He brings over 15 years experience to the post and is looking forward to capitalising on the burgeoning European market.

"Golf in Europe is growing at a rate of 40 to 50 new courses per year, as opposed to about 10 new courses here," he says. "We're at the stage now where we can take full advantage of the exciting opportunities available."

John Millen, formerly Operations Manager for Lastec UK will remain with the company for the foreseeable future in an advisory capacity, providing insight and direction into future European sales.

## NEW RECRUIT



Rigby Taylor has appointed Peter Bridgewater as Business Development Manager for their Mascot line marking products, with particular emphasis on expanding and developing the new Duramark range launched

recently by the company.

Peter has a broad range of experience in the amenity market including having worked for Supaturf Products where he gained considerable expertise in line marking products and joins Rigby Taylor from the Turftrax Group where he was Area Sales Manager.

## KIM MACFIE JOINS LELY

Toro's, professional turf equipment and irrigation products' distributor Lely UK, has appointed one of the leading figures in the machinery industry to head up its new Toro Consumer Products Division.

Kim Macfie, formerly Sales and Marketing Director for Hayter is to take charge of the Toro consumer business from January 1. This follows Lely's recent appointment by The Toro Company to distribute its garden and lawn products in the UK from this September.

Lely is already the exclusive distributor in the UK for Toro professional turf maintenance machinery and irrigation products. Now with consumer it handles the complete set of all three Toro product lines.

"When Toro asked Lely to distribute its consumer products, there were two elements that had to be present before I could agree. I had to have continuity from the previous organisation's core staff – but I also had to find someone of sufficient experience and stature to lead the new division through the early years of transition," said Lely UK Managing Director, Graham Dale.

"So I'm delighted that Kim Macfie has agreed to take the lead role from January 1st."

Graham said that he was also glad to say that the experience and enthusiasm of two key members of the previous regime had been retained in the shape of area sales manager Clive Shepherd and after sales manager Dave Jackman. The appointment of another area sales manager had been made and details would be announced soon.

"The scene is now set for us to move forward with confidence and enthusiasm and I am relishing the prospects," he added.

After almost 20 years at Hayter, one of the principle suppliers of top-end consumer lawn and



garden products, Kim Macfie brings to Lely a wealth of experience and knowledge of the industry. He like Graham Dale is also a past president of the AEA.

Kim, who lives at Bishop's Stortford, becomes General Manager Consumer Products.

"I'm delighted to be joining Lely at this exciting time. Toro and Wheel Horse are great brand names with a great pedigree and a superb product range and we intend to ensure they have a bright future.

"A wide-ranging review is being undertaken to support the formation of the new division to the fullest extent and to invest in the strength of the brand. One of our top priorities is to give Toro consumer dealers a much higher level of support and ensure we've got the correct coverage in every part of the country."

## THE NORRIE WHYTOCK TROPHY



The Norrie Whytock Trophy was once again held at Auchterarder GC.

Every Section was represented and this event has now become a regular fixture in the BIGGA golfing year in the Scottish Region. The event consists of teams of four from each Section within the Scottish Region taking part on a Stableford basis with the best three scores counting. At the beginning of the tournament the weather was very favourable but during the latter part of the day the tail-enders experienced horrendous showers, however this did not detract from the quality of the scoring.

Once all the scores had been returned the North Section returned to winning ways and emerged as winners with an aggregate of 97 points. The winning team comprised of Stewart McBain, Ken Anderson, Patrick Wood and Steve Sullivan. Central Section finished in second spot with a total of 93 points.

Once again our thanks to David Drummond and Bayer for supporting and hosting this event and once again providing the prizes. All, who took part, would like to pass on their appreciation to David and Bayer for a most enjoyable day and are eagerly looking forward to next year's event. To Archie Dunn and his greenkeeping staff our thanks for preparing the course and to the club and committee of Auchterarder Golf Club for the use of the clubhouse and facilities.

Peter J. Boyd  
Regional Administrator  
Scottish Region

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## YOUR LETTERS ARE NEEDED!

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### Sycophantic Article

Having just read your article on Woodbury Park Golf Club, I thought I was reading "Hello" magazine and not the Greenkeeper. It was in my opinion totally sycophantic throughout with only a passing reference at the end of the article as to what the greenstaff actually did and then what fantastic knowledge did we glean from that "we cut fairways, tees and greens and semi rough" etc. Oh yes the greens are cut and bunkers are raked at weekends. Is that the sum total of knowledge that can be passed on, apart from if the Atomic bomb went and some staff survived they would still be prepared to die for him, I suppose from radiation poisoning preparing the course, "in much less time". If nothing else, it gave us all here a good laugh at break time.

Come on Editor, we deserve better than this.  
Guy Woods, Course Manager, Bath GC

### Unbelievable!

Having just read October's edition of Greenkeeper International and, in particular, the course feature I must say it was unbelievable, and not in a good way either.

He (Nigel Mansell) is phoning up his Course Manager on a daily basis for such mundane things as height of cut and fertiliser use! He also thinks that quote "There isn't a guy on Ian's team who wouldn't die for him." Die for him? Nigel, you need to get out more. It's a golf course you're talking about, not liberating Iraq.

Also Ian Chenery. It's not big and it's not clever to have a 12 man team working 100 hours each. I only hope the HSE hasn't read it!

Stephen Eccles, Preston, Lancs

### Congratulations Keith!

May I through the letters pages of your publication write to express my congratulations to Keith Scruton on his recent success as Toro Student of the year for 2003.

I have known and taught Keith for three years now during his time at Myerscough College studying for a Higher National Diploma in Turf Grass Science and Golf Course Management - from which he successfully graduated in June of this year.

During this time Keith proved to be an excellent student bringing to his studies the value of his experience as a practising Greenkeeper.

Undertaking a higher education course on a part time basis while working in the sportsturf industry is no easy task - yet Keith brought both dedication and enthusiasm to his studies. Difficult times leading up to his final year tested Keith to the limit but with support from BIGGA and from the Sportsturf team at Myerscough, Keith went on not only to pass the course but to be awarded a top academic prize.

His success in achieving the Toro award is testimony to Keith's knowledge, experience and professionalism. I know that he will be an excellent ambassador for the British sportsturf industry.

Congratulations Keith.

Colin Stanfield, Programme Leader  
Sportsturf, Myerscough College

### Thank You

Having just participated in the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Award, I must congratulate Toro and BIGGA for a truly wonderful experience, when everyone met in the Manor on Sunday evening all eight finalists looked very nervous, but as the night continued we all began to relax.

The next day was again a nery tense day, but when everyone met up in the bar after their interviews, the tension began to disappear. After the results everyone met up for a most enjoyable night and I also had the pleasure of meeting the previous year's winner Murray Long, who is a really top guy and along with, Robert, Paul, and Scott, we had a game of ten pin bowling none of us will forget for a very long while.

I would also like to wish Keith all the best on his trip to America and a personal thanks to Peter Mansfield and Andy Brown for an experience of a life time along with all the staff at BIGGA HOUSE. I would also like to wish all the finalists all the best in there careers and hope to see you all in the future.

John Talbot, Head Greenkeeper,  
Ravensworth Golf Club

### Working Abroad

While reading the Education section in the October 2003 issue of "Greenkeeper International", I came upon the article, entitled "Overseas Exchanges". Having read it, with its reference to foreign greenkeepers working in the United Kingdom, I considered what would be the reverse process in obtaining a job not just in Europe but beyond.

My enquiry, open to anyone who could assist. What are the requirements in working aboard, where do you find out where these jobs are advertised i.e. publications, web sites, etc. and are there any recruitment agencies who could help?

Gavin Townsend, [townsendgavin@aol.com](mailto:townsendgavin@aol.com)





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Autumn seems to be with us at last and we have even had some rain in sunny Yorkshire. Colder nights and days remind me that it is less than 11 weeks to our annual event in Harrogate with Continue to Learn alongside BTME & ClubHouse providing a full range of activities for greenkeepers, golf course managers, golf club managers and groundsmen.



You should all have received a copy of the Continue to Learn brochure in last month's edition of Greenkeeper International. The brochure gives full details of the Continue to Learn Programme, in association with the Greenkeepers Training Committee, and includes a booking form. Remember, that several changes will take place in January 2004.

## In Association with the Greenkeepers Training Committee

The National Education Conference, supported by the John Deere Team Championship, will be held in a purpose built theatre within Hall D of the Harrogate International Centre.

The Continue to Learn Workshops will be held in the Harrogate Moat House Hotel.

Conference and Workshops Reception can be accessed via the Main Entrance to HIC opposite the Moat House Hotel

BTME & ClubHouse Seminars will also be held in the theatre within Hall D of the Harrogate International Centre.

The BIGGA Annual General Meeting will be held at 5.15pm within the theatre in Hall D of the Harrogate International Centre.

However, the Education Dinner and the Exhibitions Banquet will both be held, as usual, in the Majestic Hotel.

Presentation of BIGGA Awards and prizes, including the Golf Environment Competition prizes and the presentation of jackets to at least three new Master Greenkeepers will take place at 10.30am on Wednesday, January 21, followed by our Keynote Speaker for 2004, Alvin Law. This session, which is supported by Ransomes Jacobsen, should make us all think about the Power of Positive Mental Attitude. Take your seats at the theatre in Hall D by 10.20am

Hall D and the Seminar/AGM/Presentations/Keynote Speaker theatre are accessed via the escalator in Hall Q.

Extra events are being planned for the week in Harrogate and you can find out about the workings of the Futures Sub Committee by attending a free Seminar, which will take place prior to the AGM, on Wednesday, January 21 in Hall D. Watch out for more details of this and other extra educational events in future editions of Greenkeeper International and in Golf Club Management.

Make sure of reserving your place at Harrogate 2004 by filling in and returning the booking form in the Continue to Learn brochure.

The image shows a 'Continue to Learn 2004 - Booking Form' with sections for Delegate Details, Package Selection, Payment Details, and a table for booking fees. The form is partially filled out with handwritten information.

## Regional/Section Training

The autumn range of Regional/Section Training Courses has commenced with several courses fully booked. There are still two places left on the following course:

### BASIC COMPUTER SKILLS

BIGGA House, 25 and 26 November

Sami and I are busy preparing for the spring 2004 courses and full details will be sent to all members soon.

If you want a training course in your Region or Section in the autumn of 2004, then contact us as soon as possible.

Remember, that these courses are subsidised by the BIGGA Education and Development Fund, which gains its income from our Golden and Silver Key members. Their kind contributions enable us to present high quality training courses at minimum cost to BIGGA members. For example, each one-day course costs members just £30 +VAT whereas it costs BIGGA a minimum of £700 to organise and run. This means that each one day of training attended receives a minimum subsidy of £30 per member.



# The best packages on four wheels for all BIGGA members

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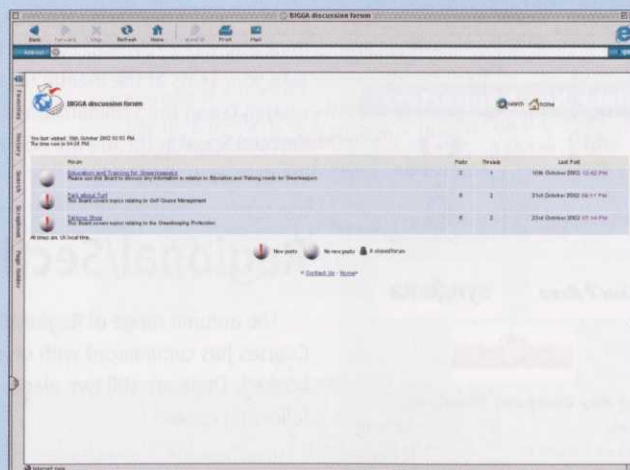


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## BITE THE BULLET!

**CHAT through the Bulletin Board and you could be a winner of a fantastic desk-top BIGGA radio**



**VISIT: [www.bigga.org.uk](http://www.bigga.org.uk)**





Rachael and Gemma from Membership Services welcome 64 New members to the Association.

## SilverKnight Products



Launched a year ago I thought it would be a good time to remind you all of the value of the SilverKnight packages available to the membership.

**SilverKnight Rescue** is a fantastic value car breakdown and assistance package. The following benefits are all covered for only £49.50.

- 24 hour roadside assistance
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If you compare the cost of SilverKnight to similar packages offered by the AA and RAC then the amazing value of this offer is truly appreciated.

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- The cost of repairs up to £200 on internal and external plumbing, central heating, electrical supply and your security systems

For further information call 0800 068 1893 and quote your BIGGA membership number.

## NVQ's

We have had feedback which suggests that many of you believe that you cannot join the Association unless you have an NVQ Level 2. This is not the case. Those who haven't yet attained NVQ Level 2 or equivalent are still able to join the Association as Unqualified Members. Their membership card carries the wording "Member" rather than "Greenkeeper Member". The benefits are as those for Greenkeeper members except a member will not be allowed to vote or take up office at Section, Region or National level.

## Time to Renew

If you are one of the many members who renew their membership in December then your new renewal pack should be arriving with you shortly. If you have not received it by the end of November then please call Membership Services for a replacement



## 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](http://www.bigga.org.uk), receives an FM desktop scan radio.

Our congratulations go to November's winner, Jon Wiggett from Rhonegreen AG in Switzerland whose message was posted on the 6th September under the 'Talking Shop' section.

## NOVEMBER'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 Stuart Grace of West Kent Golf Club.

## DIGITAL CAMERA WINNER

Our congratulations go to Neil Faubel of East Herts Golf Club who has won the digital camera draw for introducing two new members to the Association in September.

## USEFUL CONTACT NUMBERS:

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### BIGGA welcomes...

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George Hamilton, West  
Douglas Lambie, North  
Kenneth Quinn, West  
James Wilson, West  
Michael Wood, North

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Lewis Birch, Sheffield  
Thomas Cullen, North West  
Jamie Fletcher, Northern  
Andrew Gunn, North East  
Keith Ratcliffe, Northern  
Simon Rothwell, Northern

#### MIDLAND REGION

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Simon Brown, Midland  
Robert Clay, East Midland  
Adam Gray, East Midland

#### SOUTH EAST REGION

Clinton Jackson, BB&O  
Lee Murfin, Midland  
Brian Rice, East Midland  
Dylan Stokes, Midland

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Andy Bleach, Surrey  
Robert Brady, Essex  
Dean Bull, London  
Sam Burton, Kent  
Ben Chamberlain, East Anglia  
Ben Freeman, East Anglia  
Ian Garfield, Kent  
Eric Greenaway, Kent  
Michael Hill, Surrey  
Reginald Holmes, Kent  
Paul Kitchen, Kent  
William Lacey, Kent  
Mark McAvoy, Essex  
Neil Miller, Surrey  
David Miller, Surrey

#### Peter Oliver, Surrey

Peter Sparks, Kent  
Sean Walford, Essex  
Michael Wigston, Kent

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James Henderson, East Scotland  
John Taylor, North West  
Alexander Walker, East Scotland  
Andrew Whyman, South West  
Jason Broom, South Coast  
Stephen Challis, South Coast  
Mark Clissett, South Wales  
Martin Cooper, South Wales  
Mark Emberley, South Wales  
Simon Hooton, Devon & Cornwall  
Jack Kirby, Devon Cornwall  
Michael Lake, South Coast  
Samuel Lindsay, South West  
Adam Matthews, South West  
John Sterry, South Wales

#### INTERNATIONAL MEMBER

Michael McCarron, Norway



# Course Feature

## Traditional Values

Scott MacCallum travels to Temple Golf Club to meet two men with outstanding records in the crusade to preserve traditional golf.



**In recent months the Temple Golf Club doormat has become the resting place for a growing number of letters of commendation on the excellent condition of the course.**

Not surprising you might think for one of the country's increasingly better known and best run clubs but all the more pleasing for Course Manager, Martin Gunn, as the letters are focussing on the quality of the greens and fine grasses, and not merely praising the club's renowned ecological work.

"I'm particularly delighted because when articles are written on Temple there is rarely any recognition for the work we've done on the course, as the emphasis is virtually always on our environment work," said Martin.

And he's right. Thanks to the sterling work carried out by the management team, Temple has been known primarily as an example of what good environmental practice can achieve - the club won the BIGGA Golf Environment Competition in 1999 - and the fact that the golf course has come on by leaps and bounds over the last 13 years is sometimes overlooked.

But by using traditional British greenkeeping methods Martin and his team are in the process of returning Temple to a haven for people looking to play traditional British golf. However, while you would think that this would have been a vision shared by the vast majority, in fact it has not been easy to 1. get to, and 2. maintain the standards achieved.

While Malcolm is no longer an official of the golf club he still takes more than an active interest in the golf course and his work and support over the majority of the last 13 years has certainly helped Martin.

"I was Chairman of Green for six years and then the club appointed me Course Consultant for another five, to ensure that the policy document we had put in place wasn't changed. Above all, I was there to police it," explained Malcolm.

Martin, who became Course Manager around the time the work began, is quick to credit his colleague for ensuring the continuity required to achieve while both are also keen to credit the four Chairmen of Green who have followed on from Malcolm.

"The Club is soundly managed and carefully selects those members nominated to hold important positions within the club.

"Without continuity the chances of achieving anything are virtually nil, because change management is so painful in terms of policy and resources."

Malcolm also added his praise to his successors in the post of Chairman of Green.

"Each of them has been excellent and none of them has tried to rock





Martin Gunn and Malcolm Peake

the boat, supporting and carrying on the work of the policy document," he added.

So what was the catalyst for moving the club forward from where it was in 1990 to where it is now?

"In 1990 this was like a pseudo American course, lush, soft and ideal for what a friend of mine calls golf by numbers," recalled Malcolm, adding that it was his firmly held belief that it was the introduction of an irrigation system, and its subsequent overuse, in the 70s which led to the change in the course's playing characteristics.

A student of the game and keen to return the course, previously known as Temple Links, to what architect Willie Park Jnr had intended it to be, Malcolm and Martin worked on how to achieve this aim.

"We wanted to give people what we wanted based on what we'd learned from talking with people within the industry; from going back through the history of the club and from studying pictures of how the course once looked. The Temple Board and the President, Nicky Oppenheimer, whose family owned the course supported this strategy."

At Martin's suggestion an agronomist was brought in and the club was fortunate to forge a long standing friendship with Jeff Perris, who has been agronomist to the club ever since. In addition they sought advice from BIGGA, English Nature, the Forestry Commission and highly regarded architect Donald Steel, some of which came free and some they gladly paid for.

"One of the best pieces of advice Jeff gave us, and he also gave at an Open Forum, was that the medicine we were taking wasn't going to be pleasant and that things could deteriorate before they got better.

"That was a very, very strong message and it was soundbites like that which helped us win the battles... although we know we will never win the war," said Martin.

Malcolm added that he had inadvertently contributed to some of the difficulties by thinking there would be a time limit to the work.

"I said to everyone that we'd turn the course around in five years. It sounds like a hell of a long time to the average golfer but in fact it took a lot longer than that."

A more realistic time span was ten years and there were many headaches and heartaches along the way, often

caused by droughts and frost ridden springs.

"This isn't a club, although well resourced, that can throw money at projects and it has very sensible views on how much money to put into projects and what the cost benefits will be. However, there are variables like weather, pests and diseases which slow you up," said Martin.

After about five years the silent majority in the club were becoming a little more vocal in their support of what was being done. There followed an article four years ago written in The Daily Telegraph by Colin Callander praising the course and the work that has been done to earn it a place on the "A" List of British golf clubs, highly regarded by the golfing establishment. Since then it has become a port of call for nearly 200 golf clubs, colleges, scientists and universities keen to see what it is like and learn how it has been achieved.

So what has happened since turning the course around from a lush "American-lite" affair to a traditional British course?

Well, surprisingly there are still people who try, however well meaning, to knock Temple off course.

"This year is a classic example. Like everyone we had a very cold dry spell early in the year, but we are also a north facing course so are very slow to warm up. Pretty much every course in the area was away before us and there was a group of members who were very unhappy and made their views known," said Martin.



The 11th Fairway



# Course Feature

"We are using some alternative methods and the members felt that these obviously hadn't been paying dividends and that we should be using more conventional chemicals, fertilisers and water. But it wouldn't have made any difference because the temperature was too low.

"It is all about perception and people perceive an awful lot about greenkeeping and particularly the greenkeeping at Temple. In fact we held a Forum called Myths and Legends at the club and tried to dispel the incorrect perceptions that some members hold.

"For example I bumped into one guy recently who asked me where I played my golf. I told him and he said 'I know all about Temple. That's the first all organic golf course since the war, isn't it?'"

Martin is realistic enough to know that these things don't go away and that the job involves constant fire fighting, while Malcolm added that he knew why these particular issues arose.

"It was a mistake talking quite so much about ecological and holistic management because people were thinking we were going down a very green route. In fact we were going down a traditional greenkeeping - Jim Arthur - route," he said.

"There was once a note in the Suggestion Box that this is a golf course not a wildlife park. We'd never said that, but the way we were managing the golf course was taking it back to pre 1970s with meadow, managed woodland, reinstating hedgerows etc. This to me framed the golf course and made it much more stimulating to play but perhaps we over emphasised it and gave the wrong impression," admitted Malcolm, who joked that there were occasions when he and Martin had to walk back to back so they could see the knives flying.

But Martin, a man of strong views, is of the opinion that he doesn't feel that problems begin and end with the golfer and feels that greenkeepers are often not strong enough to deliver the job they've been employed to do.

"It is pointless to bury our heads in the sand and say it is the management of the golf club or the media which is at fault. It is a lot of things and we are part of it. We must recognise that, as in most businesses, there are a number of ways of doing a job but only one way which is suitable."

But does he have any sympathy for the greenkeeper who retains the status quo because he has a mortgage to pay and needs continuity of employment?

"Very few of us don't have those needs but out of the 250 people who have come to see Temple some greenkeepers will have been given the opportunity to initiate change management strategies but won't take it.

"But do I have any sympathy? If there is someone who finds himself in a Course Manager's position when he is really a Head Greenkeeper, then no.



Composting clippings

Do I have sympathy for someone who is doing a Course Manager's job but who has been employed as a Head Greenkeeper, then yes, absolutely."

Malcolm agrees with these sentiments.

"I would say that if members just allowed greenkeepers to get on with it, and not bog them down with politics and monthly meetings they would generally have a golf course in better health. He could then be judged by his own results."

At this point Martin chips in.

"That's fine if the evaluation is made by someone other than the employer and is independent."

In that Martin meant the agronomists report which he feels could be made much more of.

"People have an annual agronomy check and not a lot else. What we do with Jeff is treat him as our independent auditor and he checks what we have achieved and whether it is cost effective. He also assesses whether we have sufficient resources to do the job. In many ways it's a little like the OFSTED inspection which schools go through."

Malcolm agrees that this is the way to go.

"When I started as Chairman of Green I would never miss the agronomist's visit. For a start I'd be learning a lot, but as the club's representative I'm paying for it and should be involved. What you are paying for is an audit," said Malcolm, who has started work on a follow up book to his very successful Confessions of a Chairman of Green, under the working title of The Best Course for Golf, which is R&A supported and will be published by the STRI.

"It is obviously going to be slanted towards traditional British greenkeeping and no-one whom I've contacted has mentioned money and are all keen to do their bit for the good of the game.

"If courses don't follow best management practices we could be in danger of losing the character of all our priceless national heritage courses - heathland, links and downland and this would change forever the way we play traditional British golf."

It's a salutary thought.



Divot mix



# CHANGING TIMES

**TORO**

**Count on it.**

Agronomist Bruce Jamieson, who runs his own consultancy, is well known in the greenkeeping industry. In this month's feature, he looks back over three decades at how greenkeepers have learned to embrace and adapt to constant change that has propelled them into a position in which... "Today's Head Greenkeeper is better educated in grass maintenance and golf course management than even the advisors of the 70s".

*Continue  
to learn*

I can almost hear the groans: "Not another old die-hard"... "When I started in the industry"... "Save us!" But times have changed and greenkeeping has come a long way. In the early 1970s most Head Greenkeepers had not even heard of utility vehicles with multi-attachments, while mechanisation arrived with the first ride-on greens triplexes, sold in the late 60s.

Back in the early 70s the committee of a nine-hole golf course employing two greenstaff delightedly showed their Head Greenkeeper a new triplex greensmower and explained that, using this time-saving machine, the greens could be cut in an hour – which would leave enough time for him to then be able to cut the rest of the course!

Having this new machine would also mean that when his assistant retired they would not need a replacement greenkeeper. At which stage, the Head Greenkeeper suggested that the

committee buy two machines as he had decided to retire also!

Cutting machines have evolved, with wheel-driven cutting units being first replaced by belt drives and then by hydraulically-driven units. Where previously greensmowers had only one type of bottom blade, today different types are available for tournaments and normal maintenance.

The power units themselves are now lighter and more reliable, and petrol has given way to diesel, with alternative power sources continually being sourced. Electric power units have been around for several years but battery technology is quite old and until new lighter and more powerful batteries are developed their use on golf courses will remain limited.

Greens aeration in the early to mid-70s consisted of two-yearly hollow-core operations with machines that were cumbersome and slow. Cores had to be brushed up, and then removed by hand, and top dressing was applied using wheelbarrows and shovels. The whole operation could take five to six men at least a week, providing the weather held.

Slit-tine aeration was implemented at least three times a year using the same machine, but fitted with chisel tines. Top dressing would be applied during the spring and autumn, and possibly five to six weeks prior to a big tournament. Again several men would be involved with each operation.

Cutting heights have come down significantly over the years through improved machinery

Picture courtesy of Practical Greenkeeping by Jim Arthur



Hollow coring today can be implemented, cleaned up and top-dressed by three men within five hours of starting. Similarly, aeration programmes today are intensive with verti-draining, hollow and slit tining to various depths being implemented regularly throughout the year. Improved machinery and implementing tasks faster has, however, resulted in reduced staffing levels.

Many previously used chemicals, such as Maysan (Mercurial Chloride) Fungicide and Sydan (Chlordane) used in the early 70s to mid-80s have been removed from the market because, although effective, they were also extremely toxic and damaging to the environment.

Since the introduction of the Pesticide Legislation (1986) all new chemicals must go through detailed and stringent testing before the Pesticide Safety Directorate will give approval for use. The introduction of this Act therefore made it mandatory for course managers and head greenkeepers to record accurate chemical usage, together with obtaining appropriate certificates such as, PA1, PA2 and PA6 to be able to apply the chemicals safely.



# CHANGING TIMES

Thirty years ago Head Greenkeepers learned by experience as, prior to the introduction of City and Guilds in the early 70s, college courses were rare. Today qualifications have improved significantly. They include The National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ), The Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQ) 1, 2, 3, and 4, The National Certificate (NC), The Higher National Certificate (HNC), The Higher National Diploma (HND), Master Science (MSc) to name a few. This makes the Course Manager and Head Greenkeeper of today well-educated and highly trained.

People such as Jim Arthur, Walter Woods, Bill Lawson, Nick Bissett, Martyn Jones, and many others, have been instrumental in driving education forward, making the average Head Greenkeeper of today better educated in grass maintenance and golf course management than even the advisors of the 70s.

Companies such as Toro have also provided valued student programmes such as the MAST Programme (Minnesota Agricultural Student Training) in Golf Course Maintenance, enabling students to spend 18-20 months working on an American golf course during which time five months is taken up attending courses at the university. Toro of course also

sponsors the annual Student Awards Scheme with BIGGA.

Impact of The Health and Safety (1974) Act on all UK industries was not fully recognised until the mid-80s. New Safety Legislation (1992) covered The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations, The Manual Handling Operations Regulations, The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulation, The Personal Protective Equipment at Work (PPE) Regulations, The Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations and The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations.

These six sets of regulations are wide-ranging and generally apply to all places of work, including golf courses.

The main change was to write one piece of legislation and apply it to all places of work, rather than as previously giving each individual workplace its own legislation – ie, Factories Act, Construction

Regulations, etc. The main change within this approach was to identify the person responsible and make them answerable in a court of law. For example, The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1985 (RIDDOR), and The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH).



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...and whilst none of this may have concerned Mrs Jones here too much, today's customers tend to be slightly more discerning.

  
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Toro Sidewinder

The job description relating to the Head Greenkeeper of the 70s was not concerned with maintaining detailed records, implementing health and safety issues, planning budgets, working within the Employment Law, COSHH, RIDDOR, or dealing with committees, colleges, members and green-fee players. Rather it was simply to maintain a golf course. Today knowledge of the above and where and how to access further information when required is an essential part of the job.

Cutting heights have always been a contentious point with committees, owners and golfers who demand faster greens for longer periods of the year. In the early 70s it was commonplace to cut the greens at 3/16 of an inch (4.69 mm) every other day. Daily mowing was reserved for tournament presentation and double cutting reserved for particularly important events. A lowered cutting height of 1/8 on an inch (3.125 mm) would only be sustained for the event and then was raised to allow the greens to recover.

Now greens are cut daily with mowing heights maintained at 3.5 to 4mm throughout summer.

In the 70s Verti-cutting was implemented once every eight to 10 weeks during the growing season and now some greens are Verti-cut once a week.

Deep scarifying, implemented during the spring and autumn, practically dropped out of use. But now, interestingly, it has again become fashionable, particularly since the phrase 'linear aeration' was coined.

Similarly, applications of a fine grain charcoal following spring and autumn hollow coring in order to 'sweeten' the ground was implemented on many of Scotland's West Coast courses during the early 70s and this is also likely to return as it can assist in reducing Black Layer and is relatively inexpensive.

The first verti-drain machines were introduced in the early 80s, and these deep aeration machines breathed life back into many old, heavily-compacted greens which otherwise would have been dug up and replaced. The first machines were extremely slow, with operating speeds of 400 metres per hour. But gradually over the years these machines have been redesigned and improved with slightly higher operating speeds.

Recently 'Drill and Fill' machines have been developed to remove old rootzone material with 20-35 mm drill bits to depths of 30cm and then fill the holes with kiln-dried sand, improving surface and subsurface drainage.

Aeration machines are available which use pulses of water at high pressure for work during the summer months, and subsurface injection machines have been developed to inject insecticide in to the ground to the same depth at which grubs are found, which reduces chemical requirements.

Considering the vast changes that have already occurred, you can bet that changing times for the next 30 years should prove to be just as, if not more, exciting and challenging.



Bill Lawson. Made a huge contribution to greenkeeper education





Golf Environment  
Competition

# IF AT FIRST YOU DON'T SUCCEED...

Andrew Wood of STRI's Ecology Unit assesses The BIGGA Golf Environment Competition 2003

The anxious wait is over for the Nation's greenest Greenkeepers as its time to announce the winners of the BIGGA Golf Environment Competition 2003. The competition has undergone a slight revamp this year largely due to the introduction of two new sponsors, Scotts and Syngenta along with the competition's patron the R&A. The additional financial support that these two companies have provided has enabled an increased level of feedback to entrants and the introduction of some new prizes.

As ever the standard was high and all entrants this year are worthy of reward for the commitment they are showing in terms of ecological management. Yet even with the introduction of new prizes the format of the competition ultimately dictates that there are more disappointed clubs than successful ones.

What is interesting, however, is to see how clubs react to this disappointment. In the past there have been clubs who, after not winning at the first attempt, have taken their bats home and never entered the competition again. However, other clubs such as Kenwick Park, St Andrews Links Trust and Thorpeness Hotel have taken the knocks, assessed where they can improve, made improvements and re-entered year after year. These clubs are well aware that success in this competition, just as in ecological management is rarely gained instantly and that perseverance is the key.

It is therefore fitting that all three of these clubs have been rewarded with success this year with Kenwick Park taking the Overall Winners title.

The Ecology Team at STRI studied all this year's entries and made a shortlist of 16. Those clubs which didn't make the second round were given advice on how to put together a stronger entry in future years. The next task was then to carry out site visits to the selected clubs with a view to choosing the prize winners.

## SCOTLAND

The best new entrant in Scotland was Brighouse Bay Golf Club in Kirkcudbright. This Club is privately owned and functions largely as a facility for the Gillespie Leisure Holiday Park complex. The Club's main nature conservation projects thus far have been the improvement of rough grasslands through the annual cutting and removal of vegetation and the creation of a number of ponds and reed beds. These water bodies have a great conservational value, they enhance the character of the course and the reed bed areas clean up waste water from the holiday park before it is re-used for irrigation on the course. Solid waste management and energy efficiency are exemplary at the Club and this has been a major factor in the holiday park gaining a number of environmental tourism awards including the David Bellamy (Gold Award).



Establishment of a reed bed filtration system that cleans up waste water from a holiday park before it is re-used at Brighouse Bay Golf Club. This is also an excellent conservation initiative

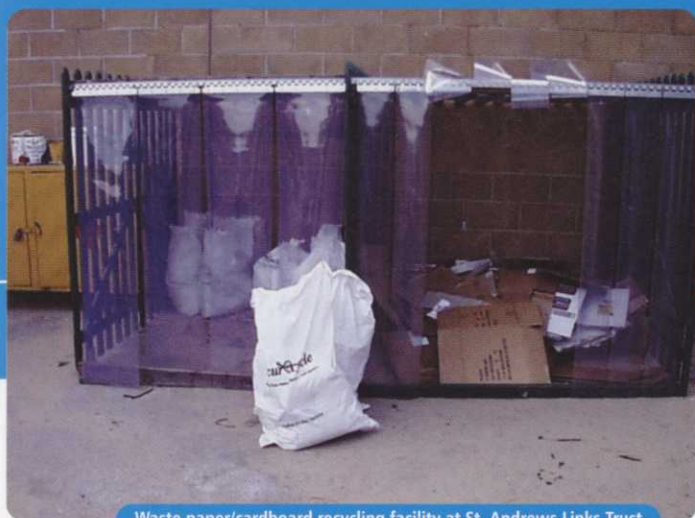


Ecology Notice board adjacent to 1st tee at Gog Magog Golf Club

Although St. Andrews Links Trust encompasses 99 holes, the diversity of habitats on the five courses is limited. That said, a comprehensive Ecological Management Plan is being developed to ensure that everything possible is done to conserve the links which act as a stable habitat for locally important, nationally scarce and declining species such as swift, whitethroat, song thrush, yellow hammer, linnet bullfinch and grey partridge. In just a few years under the guidance of Links Superintendent, Gordon Moir, the Trust has become major contender in this competition. All of the Trust's employees now appear to be pulling strongly in the same direction both on and off the course. In terms of waste management, all organic waste is composted and programmes are in place for the re-cycling of bottles, cans, paper, waste oil and printer cartridges.

On arriving at the Duke's Course, St. Andrews, the course was as impressive as last year but there were a number of areas of concern regarding a major change in direction as to how the ecological management of the course is to be managed, with the aim of redirecting maintenance to increase sward density and create more visually appealing surfaces.





Waste paper/cardboard recycling facility at St. Andrews Links Trust

The main focus for nature conservation at the Loch Lomond Golf Club continues to be the programme of woodland enhancement. Prior to course construction the woodlands were ecologically poor yet through the employment of two fully qualified woodland officers their quality is improving rapidly. In addition to enhancing existing grassland rough through an annual cutting and removal programme, the Club constantly review opportunities to expand areas of rough. The Club are progressing with the initiation of a formal composting system. Grass clippings, formerly stockpiled on course, are now collected using trailers that tow behind the John Deere triple mowers. The clippings are brought back to a composting area which is about to be extended. The Club also has a state of the art Waste 2 Water system that allows water to be recycled within its impressive wash down facility.

#### NORTHERN ENGLAND

Marriot Worsley Park Hotel And Country Club was one of three new entrants visited in the Northern England region. The Club is a great example of how relatively young golf clubs can be managed ecologically. Some 40,000 whips, planted during course construction four years ago have thrived and thinning is now a priority in addition to other ecological management such as Rhododendron clearance from mature woodlands and pond re-instatement. With such a large ecological work schedule it is important that the Club prioritises correctly and it has sought expert advice from sources such as the English Nature/EGU/STRI free ecological advice service and the assessors of the Green Globe Environmental Awards Scheme. The Club is one of the first in the Country to gain this award. The Marriot group which owns the club has excellent environmental credentials which promote the virtues of sustainability and therefore this Club is outstanding in terms of recycling and energy saving.

Separating Fulford and York Golf Clubs was the most difficult decision in this year's competition. Their close proximity to each other meant that both supported very similar habitats and the Ecological management at both clubs is driven by extremely enthusiastic Chairmen of Green. In addition both clubs share their greatest ecological management problem. Until recently they were in danger of losing their original lowland heath character, due largely to tree invasion. Today on both courses programmes of woodland enhancement are in full swing with large scale Silver Birch removal a priority. This has produced many benefits in addition to ecological ones. Greenkeepers have found that the turf quality has improved dramatically where felling has increased light and air movement around tees, fairways and greens. The golfer too appreciates the increased aesthetic appeal of the course and the heightened sense of anticipation created by rides which have been cut through the woodland. While both clubs have created habitats specifically with fauna in mind, Fulford leads the way with the erection of over one hundred bird boxes which range in size to suit different species. These have had a great deal of success but the crown jewel is the use of two owl boxes by a pair of nesting Barn Owls. It is testament to the positive link between golf and wildlife that this rare species (only 3,200 pairs nationwide) is successfully breeding at Fulford.

Wilmslow Golf Club supports a large number of habitats with a high conservation value. Each year our judges note how the programme of grassland improvement is eliminating rank grasses such as Yorkshire Fog from



One of the boxes at Fulford Golf Club used by a pair of nesting barn owls in 2003

the sward and encouraging finer grasses which require less management, aid ball retrieval and have a greater species diversity. For areas out of play Course Manager, Steve Oultram, has purchased a hay bailer so that when the rough receives its annual cut he can easily remove the vegetation from site, thus lowering the nutrient level of the soil.

#### SOUTH EAST ENGLAND

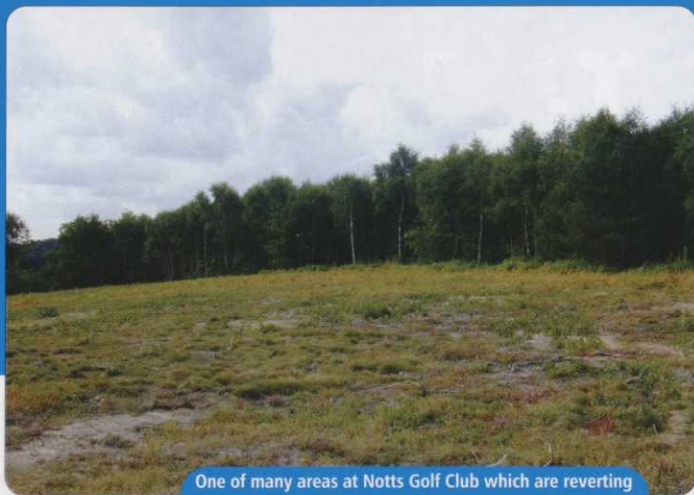
Beaconsfield Golf Club has excellent management programmes in place to enhance the quality of woodland, grassland roughs and water bodies throughout the course. Communication throughout the Club is excellent. Indeed on the day of the visit Bill Paterson, the Head Greenkeeper was creating a photographic display for the Club's Open Evening. This is a well attended annual event which educates members in the principles behind the Club's turfgrass and ecological management objectives. Bill also writes ecology based articles for the Club notice board and promotes golf's green credentials to the local public by taking the local walking group on guided walks of the course.

Wildlife recording by keen ecologist Ray Hardinge continues to be the backbone of ecology management at Thorpeness Hotel and Golf Club. When his lists are compiled the location of species is taken into account when Course Manager, Ian Willett, plans the management of the course. Such is the conservation value of this course in terms of bird life alone that the hotel has launched bird watching weekends as a new business venture. The course continually suffers from rabbit damage despite control through shooting, yet this problem is reduced by the filling of scrape holes with organic chicken manure. The strong odour deters the rabbits from areas where the manure is applied.

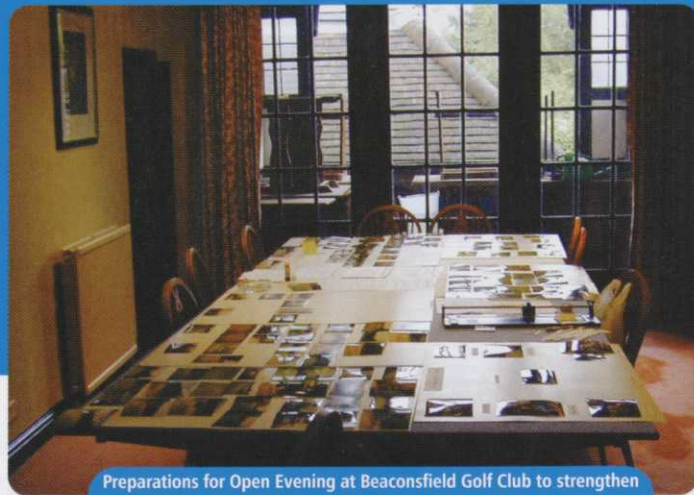
The year 2002/2003 has seen the introduction of an environmental sub-committee at Gog Magog Golf Club. The Course Manager, Kerran Daly, together with the new committee has developed a highly impressive and comprehensive Environmental Management Plan, which encompasses communication, conservation, landscape, turfgrass management and waste disposal. Communication is good and the membership appears to be supportive of the club's environmental objectives. The main emphasis of ecological work has been the improvement of chalk grassland through cutting and removal of vegetation and the felling of invasive scrub, primarily Hawthorn. The Club acts as a responsible custodian for a number of locally, nationally, and internationally rare plants such as Kidney Vetch, Perennial Flax and Moon Carrot.

Cottesmore Golf and Country Club is the first Club from the "American Golf" stable to enter the BIGGA competition. It has recently had an environmental management plan drawn up by employee, Abbey Miller. The plan is of a high standard and should stand the club in good stead for the future. Indeed it is also possible that it may be used as a template for the other 23 American Golf Clubs in the UK. The Club has carried out much work on the course in terms of improving grassland, woodland and water bodies. This work along with the erection of many species-specific nesting boxes is testament to the influence Abbey has had on this course. Yet the true test for Cottesmore is to see whether it can continue improving now she has departed.





One of many areas at Notts Golf Club which are reverting to heathland following large scale tree removal



Preparations for Open Evening at Beaconsfield Golf Club to strengthen communication between greenkeeping team and the membership

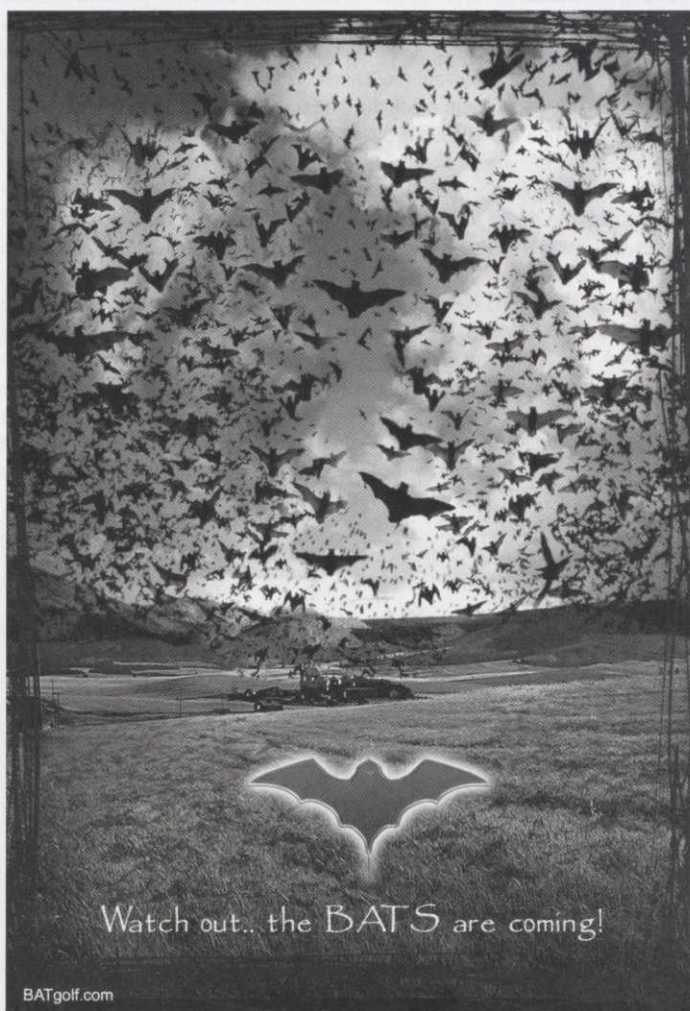
#### MIDLANDS AND SOUTH WEST

Kenwick Park Golf Club came extremely close to winning the overall competition last year. Since then the club has addressed some remaining few problems and is now the perfect example of how golf courses can be successfully managed for both golf and as havens for wildlife. This has been achieved over many years by bringing together all the things the judges are looking for in this competition; organisation, education, communication, consultation and most importantly dedication.

Charnwood Forest Golf Club was the only nine hole course that made it through to the last 16 of this year's competition. While the size of the Club means there are constraints on funding for ecological management, the enthusiasm of the Chairman of Green, Gary Thurman, and the greenkeeping team more than compensates for this. The Club has developed a five-year management plan which ensures that the enhancements of the many habitats on the course are long term. Head Greenkeeper, Tim Allard, has

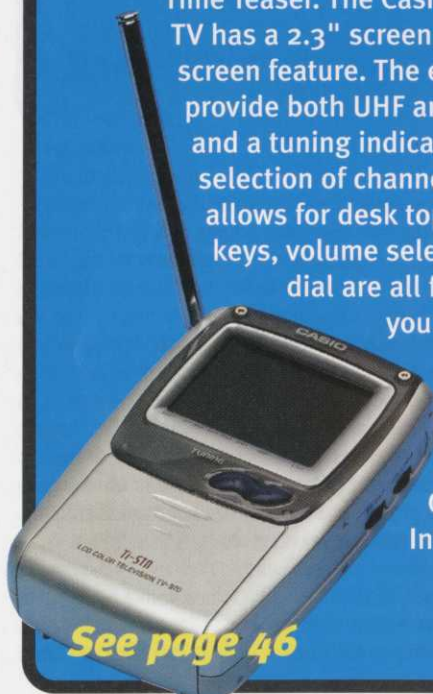
experimented with a number of different techniques for heather restoration and is now getting good results from turf stripping and the spreading of brushings, harvested from other stands on the course.

In terms of sheer scale of physical improvements on the course, no club could match Notts Golf Club, Hollinwell this year where the work has to be seen to be believed. Vast tracts of low ecological value woodland have been cleared and turf stripped to encourage the restoration of heather and gorse. Aftercare treatment involves sapling removal and the use of a roller as a bracken basher. Yet some of the areas of tree clearance are simply too large to manage and therefore the Club have recently embarked on a sheep grazing scheme. With works occurring on such a dramatic scale it is crucial that there is good communication between the Greenkeeper, the Greens Committee and the membership. This appears to be the case and the membership are fully supportive of the push to re-capture the course's original heathland character. The benefits are obvious when one considers



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See page 46

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the improvement that has occurred in the Club's "Golf World" ranking over the past five years. During this time, the Notts Club has jumped from 47th to 25th and the magazine's assessors have stated that one of the major factors behind this has been the enhancement of the natural areas of the course.

At Minchinhampton Golf Club the Courses Manager, Paul Worster has assembled an enthusiastic team who work with a comprehensive Ecological Management Plan, which prioritises non-native tree removal, the enhancement of grassland rough and the competent management of hedgerows and water bodies. The relatively new Cherrington course has been built on a site with long stretches of dry stone wall which were in a poor state of repair. The Club fully appreciates the cultural value of these walls within the Cotswold landscape and has made strides towards its objective to re-build all 1.5km. The club is excellent in terms of energy saving

and waste management. Through consultation with the composting association it has arrived at a novel and cost effective composting technique. This along with the Notts Club's sheep grazing scheme and other worthy projects will be described when the best new initiative results are announced in the January issue of Greenkeeper International.

Minchinhampton were among many clubs that have stated just how much benefit they had got from entering the BIGGA competition this year in terms of knowledge, pride and as a way of assessing what they have achieved and what is still to do. In essence then all entrants are winners, though the clubs listed below take the prestige and the prizes. Congratulations to the winners and to those not amongst the prizes a message from the Clubs at Kenwick Park, St. Andrews and Thorpeness: "If at first you don't succeed try, try, try again."

#### And the Winners are...

AWARD	CLUB	PRIZE
Overall Winner	Kenwick Park Golf Club	£2000 and a Weather Station
Scotland	St. Andrews Links Trust	£500
Northern England	York Golf Club	£500
Runner up in winners region	Notts Golf Club	£500
South East England	Thorpeness Hotel and Golf Club	£500
New Entrant Prize	Minchinhampton Golf Club	£500
Best New Initiative Prize	To be announced in the January issue of Greenkeeper International.	

Kenwick Park Golf Club will be featured in the magazine sometime next year.

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# THE WORLD OF DRAINS

Roland Taylor explores the underground world of the drain

At the time of writing this the temperature, had for a number of weeks, been well up in the 20s and the landscape was beginning to take on the look of those dry, dusty prairies that were often part of old cowboy films.

Drainage was probably the last thing most readers would have had on their minds as they struggled to keep their greens alive. By the time you read this, things could have drastically altered and areas around the course, which had resembled a dried up 'billabong', may now either be very wet or under water. Nature usually has a way of quickly redressing the situation.

Having the right drainage in place is a key factor in modern turf management. With our present climatic conditions it is very easy to get caught out.

Some courses have natural drainage, but these are likely to be relatively rare and even then there may be odd areas which present a problem. While visiting a course last year, the greenkeeper explained they had had a drainage system installed in a fairway because a spring had suddenly become established where previously there was not one.

## WHY DRAIN?

At this point it is worth considering the benefits of efficient drainage:

- The most obvious is to establish a surface that dries out quickly. This is important for two reasons; it maintains playing levels and enables course maintenance schedules to be carried out.
- The turf is more healthy and durable. Imagine, if you were the grass plant, what it would be like to stand in the middle of a fairway barefooted in a bowl of water. In hot weather it might be pleasant for short time, but eventually your feet will resemble prunes. It certainly would not be the same in cold or icy conditions. Grass plants have no choice; they suffer if the drainage is poor.
- The soil structure is improved if there is free movement of water through it and nutrients can more easily reach the areas where they will be of most benefit, the root system.
- Water can do a lot of damage in the form of soil erosion if it is lies on the surface too long.



The installation of gravel bands on a green. As you can see the green has been hollow cored prior to the bands being installed

As part of understanding the need for drainage, it is necessary to look at the behaviour of water within the soil structure.

Through absorption and capillary action water moves through the soil in all directions including upwards. On entry, water is immediately attracted to the dry particles of soil, which they then proceed to soak through the process of absorption. The molecules then move on, seeking out any dry surfaces to hang onto, and in doing so pull more droplets behind them. As the droplets are joined together, capillary forces are created. From this, it can be seen that providing there are dry soil particles all around, the water droplets can virtually move in any direction. At the point when all the particles have become saturated, the soil will then be holding a large water mass and the only places for the remaining droplets to go are in the air spaces. These then fill up and as there is nowhere else available the excess water either floods to the surfaces or enters the drainage system, if one is available. The amount retained in the soil particles acts a reservoir for the plants.

The soils profile is another important factor. Compared to sand and gravel the flow is much slower on heavy clays or where there is compaction.

There are two basic forms of drainage, primary and secondary. On new courses a primary system, in all probability, was installed at the time of construction. Whether it is sufficient or satisfactory is another question. An older course may also have had one laid originally, but depending on how deep it was put may have a bearing on its present day functionality. As pointed out previously in the case of the spring, situations can change, these then require alternative systems to be installed that will alleviate the problem. The primary system forms the main infrastructure for removing excess soil water, through pipes, to an outflow.



A trench being cut on a green prior to the installation of a 60mm pipe. Note the turf has been removed along the line of the drain. Bands running at 90 degrees to the pipe are 25mm trenches cut with a wheel trencher and filled with Lytag



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A wheel trencher cutting a narrow trench to install 60mm pipe. Compaction is minimised with low ground pressure turf tyres fitted to the tractor and a 4 wheel in line trailer to carry away arisings

The secondary system is for dealing with surface water and channelling it down to the primary system. This is usually achieved by slit drainage which relies on the water flowing freely through a coarse material which has pores big enough not to restrict its movement. The slits or narrow trenches are directly linked to the underground system, so the run off is not slowed down in the soil profile. A small diameter flexible drainage pipe, which is perforated, can be installed in the bottom of the slit and this is connected to larger outflow one. The slit is then filled to just below the surface with a coarse free draining aggregate.

These days virtually all machinery for laying drains is laser guided. A guidance beam controls the depth of the machine's cutting wheel through a hydraulic system. This means that the pipes are laid on a preset slope to ensure the water will flow away. These units can install drainage efficiently and with minimal surface disturbance.

Banding is another form of drainage, which is often used, especially on greens, to remove surface water as soon as possible. A series of thin trenches are cut from 40 cm up to 100 cm apart. These connect to the lateral drain system. They are then filled with either gravel sand or another aggregate, that has now become popular - Lytag. This is a by-product of the coal burning power stations and consists of pulverised fuel ash (PFA) which is made into rounded pellets by heating at very high temperatures. The result is a very light material, that does not degrade and it is said that because of its rounded shape and grading, excellent hydraulic conductivity is achieved. Because of its light weight it can also be transported over relatively soft surfaces, with less damage, than if it was gravel.

There is machinery now on the market capable of producing microbands. The main advantage of these, is said to be that play can resume almost immediately after the work has been carried out. They are designed to work on the three-point-linkage of a compact tractor and consist of a coulter disc which cuts the turf. This is followed closely by a vibrating stainless steel trench opener. A vibrating hopper is mounted above the unit and this feeds a permeable infill into the narrow trench that has been created. The infill is either brought to the surface or settled down by means of a depth adjuster. At the rear of the unit is a presser wheel that flattens the turf, ready for play to recommence.

Good soil drainage does not just rely on a series of underground systems. These can all be in place, but it is only working a relatively low level of efficiency due to compaction. Aeration and vertidrainage also play

an important role in moving water through the soil profile and they need to be a major part of every turf management programme.

There is now an alternative method of removing water from playing surfaces. These pedestrian operated machines act like giant sponges, soaking up the water in the turf. They are said to be able to remove approximately 3,410 litres (750 imperial gallons) of water per hour, so play can commence very quickly after a downpour.

Drainage is a highly specialised operation and requires specialist knowledge as it can be both highly expensive to install, and if wrong, to rectify.

For this reason it is recommended that experts are called in, immediately the subject of replacing or improving an existent system is raised. This action can save a lot of problems and possible expense at a later stage. There are plenty of highly experienced drainage companies available and the best source of tracking down one of these is through the Land Drainage Contractors Association, who is based at NAC Stoneleigh Park, Kenilworth, Warks, CV8 2LG. Members are from all sectors of the drainage industry.

For readers who would like to find out more about the latest developments, the Association is staging a seminar and demonstration on Thursday, November 13, at the Sport England National Sports Centre at Bisham Abbey, Berkshire.

The programme will include papers by the leading figures in the industry and will cover the principles of sports turf drainage; contract management; drainage design and construction systems; turf establishment and aftercare.

There will also be working demonstrations of the latest machinery for pipe installation, gravel banding and sand slitting, plus vertidrainage and spoil conveying and back filling.

BIGGA members who attend this course will qualify for three CPD credits.

The cost is £111.62 per delegate and booking a place can be done either by telephoning 01327 263264, or emailing; [secretary@ldca.org](mailto:secretary@ldca.org) alternatively go to the website [www.ldca.org](http://www.ldca.org).

Incidentally, as this article was being completed it had started raining regularly. No doubt drainage systems throughout the country will soon be working at full bore, so now is a good time to check that the outfalls are clear and working, otherwise where is the water going to go to?



# Getting Better Every Year



Justin Waddell

"The standards keep going up and up and the decision was a difficult one." How often have you heard those words from a judge just before he announces the winner of a competition.

So often, in fact, that to say, "It's a cliché to say 'The standards keep going up and up and the decision was a difficult one.' is a cliché itself."

However, just to say it's a cliché doesn't detract from the truism that is being spoken and that was very much the case with the final of the 2003 Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Award, which was contested by eight evenly matched and extremely talented individuals.

The final judging was carried out by John Pemberton, of BIGGA, David Waldon, Chairman of BIGGA's Education Sub-Committee; Andy Brown, of Toro, and Pete Mansfield, of Lely UK.

As it was Keith Scruton, Head Greenkeeper of Colne Golf Club and Myerscough College, emerged as the winner and John Talbot, Head Greenkeeper of Ravensworth Golf Club and Askham Bryan College, and Justin Waddell, Assistant at Fortwilliam Golf Club and Greenmount College in Northern Ireland, runners-up.

Keith wins an eight week trip to the United States incorporating a six week course at the University of Massachusetts and visits to the Toro Headquarters in Minneapolis and California and the GCSAA Conference and Show in San Diego. John and Justin win trips to Harrogate next year for BTME & ClubHouse and access to all the educational events which make up the Continue to Learn programme.

The other six Regional winners were Paul Todd, Deputy Head Greenkeeper at Lanark Golf Club and Oatridge College; Dylan Jones, Pwllheli Golf Club and the Welsh College; Bobby Vining, Assistant at Mendip Spring Golf Club and Cannington College; Martyn Gray, Assistant at Bramley Golf Club and Merrist Wood College and Robert George, Deputy to last year's winner Murray Long at Coombe Hill Golf Club and NESCOL.

The competition continues to go from strength to strength and Toro must be thanked for providing such an incentive for the country's greenkeeping students.



John Talbot

# Life is a Rollercoaster

**Keith Scruton has experienced the lows and highs of life over the last 12 months but, as Scott MacCallum found out, he has certainly ended the year on a high.**

"A year ago this Friday I was called to a meeting at my golf club and told that I was being made redundant," said Keith Scruton.

This isn't the start of a harrowing tale of a Head Greenkeeper who becomes disillusioned with the industry and begins to look for a job outside greenkeeping, but the story of a man who spots a silver lining around a potentially very black cloud, picks himself up and within a year has triumphed.

More of a Stephen Spielberg style "Against all Odds" film script than an Eastenders "Doom and Despair" story line.

A bit over the top?

Well, you be the judge. A mere 12 months on from being the recipient of bad news from a golf club which treated him poorly, Keith has a new job as Head Greenkeeper at a progressive golf club and has just become the 2003 Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year.

"It is just starting to sink in now but when my name was announced I was just dumbstruck," said the 29 year-old Head Greenkeeper of Colne Golf Club, in Lancashire.

Keith is a character full of perseverance as highlighted by the fact that he had been an entrant in the Toro Student of the Year Award about 10 years before but failed to progress beyond the first stage. But the new resilient, tougher than teak, version took it all in his stride and can sit the



# TORO STUDENT GREENKEEPER of the year AWARD

trophy alongside the Ernest Jones Award he won for being the top HND Student at Myerscough College earlier in the year. He was the first part-time student to win that particular prize.

The Toro Award brings with it an opportunity to spread his professional wings further as the six weeks study course at the University of Massachusetts will build on his knowledge immensely.

Although delighted to have reached the final eight from an initial field of 3500 applicants, and extremely impressed by the qualities of the seven other finalists Keith had told his family that he was heading to Aldwark Manor to win.

"There is no point in going to the FA Cup final and not lifting the trophy," said the Blackburn Rovers fan.

"But when he arrived at Aldwark for the final and found himself in a formal dinner on the Sunday evening with his fellow finalists and the judges it was not a football analogy he came up with.

"Sitting in the Barnes Wallis Suite in the Hotel with the huge chandeliers it was all very surreal and I couldn't help but think it was a bit like Fame Academy."

Having "sung for survival" and won over the judges he is now ready to take advantage of the superb prize.

"Nowadays everyone is looking for that extra five percent and the sort of experience and knowledge I will pick up in the States will be invaluable in enabling me to do that."

Keith was able to quiz the outgoing Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year, Murray Long, Course Manager at Coombe Hill GC, at BIGGA HOUSE after his win had been announced and what Murray was able to tell him increased his excitement still further.

"He said that if he hadn't won the prize he would have gladly paid to go on the course himself, he had got such a lot from it. There can be no greater recommendation than that," said Keith.

"One other piece of advice he gave me was to get a warm coat and some warm gloves because Boston is freezing at that time of year," added Keith, of the trip which begins in January and also takes in a trip to the GCSAA Conference and Show in San Diego, California and the Toro Headquarters in Minneapolis and Irrigation Headquarters in California.

A great time lies ahead and all too different from the gloomy prospects which faced him when he lost his job the year before.

"I must admit I was delighted with the support I received from BIGGA. It was fantastic and I can't speak highly enough of the staff who, from the moment I got on the phone, couldn't do enough for me in taking on my case for unfair redundancy."

But he soon realised that BIGGA wasn't just there for a rainy day.

"I've also made full use of the BIGGA library in studying for my HND and also got hold of the BIGGA field guides which are really invaluable.

"I suppose I didn't have any particular perceptions of BIGGA before last year other than wondering what we got for our money. It's only when you look below the surface that you see how hard everyone works on behalf of the members."

He has also taken advantage of the Association's Ransomes Jacobsen Scholarship Scheme which helped him fund his HND.

Keith began his greenkeeping career at Darwen Golf Club where he was a junior member.

"I did some summer work during my holidays and getting good money for a 16 year old.

I told my dad that I wanted to be a greenkeeper and he wasn't happy as he wanted me to become an electrician, a plasterer or a brickie. There were a few arguments, particularly when I turned down some jobs."

Not to be dissuaded Keith wrote to Myerscough College for their greenkeeping package and with that in hand he was able to persuade his dad that there was a career to be had in greenkeeping.

"I was keen to learn the theory so if things went wrong I had that to fall back on."

One thing very much in Keith's favour was Darwen Golf Club which had a history of looking after its young greenkeeping staff - another of them Ryun Holden, now Course Manager at Oakmere GC, featured in the magazine earlier in the year.

"Darwen had a magnificent Chairman of Green, Len Sharples, who went through everything with me when I started in a two hour meeting. He told me exactly what the club would do for me with regard to college and my wages.

"I was on a YT Scheme six months trial to begin with and I remember my first wage was £36 and I remember thinking I'd need to save for two weeks just to get a pair of Levi jeans. Still I didn't question it because I enjoyed the job so much."

With the trial period successfully negotiated Keith saw his wages increase and in the end he remained at Darwen for eight years having spent six of them as Deputy.

Indeed one year Keith was the Level 3 Student of the Year and Ryun, a year younger, was Level 2 Student of the Year at Myerscough which reflects extremely well on the golf club.

Keith has been at Colne Golf Club since January and he is delighted to have joined a very supportive and progressive club whose previous Head Greenkeeper, Andrew Eddison, did his job in a very professional manner with good practices and procedures in place.



Keith Scruton





Standing L-R. Bobby Vining, Dylan Hughes, Murray Long, Ken Richardson, Pete Mansfield, Andrew Brown, John Pemberton, David Walden, Andy Campbell. Seated. Robert George, Martyn Gray, Justin Waddell, Keith Scruton, John Talbot and Paul Todd

"I have put my stamp on the course but it is very much fine tuning, evolution rather than revolution."

A nine holer Keith has developed his practices around the need to manage wear and concentrate on traffic routes more than on an 18 but he, along with his two staff, feels able to give more TLC to a course spread over 70 acres than one over 150 acres.

"There is a temptation for the golfer to go for an 18 hole course but we have a lot of quality and some excellent holes some of which are tackled from different tees on the back nine. There is talk of possibly increasing to 18 at some stage but we'll just have to see."

Few people have been in quite such a good position to appreciate the support the industry gives to greenkeepers and he is particularly indebted to Toro for supporting the competition.

As he prepares to head to the States he is thankful of the overwhelming support he has received from his wife Louise, who will be left in charge of three year old Matthew and the latest member of the family, Joshua, who was just four months old when his dad lifted the crystal bowl confirming his success.

He will no doubt grow up to be very proud of a father who turned his life around in the space of 12 rollercoaster months.



The 2003 Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year flanked by the two runners-up



Every one a winner



## YOUR LETTERS ARE NEEDED!

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

### What does the future hold

The STRI has indulged again in its love of writing ill informed comments about the use of soil biology to help greenkeepers produce better playing surfaces.

Based on out of date information, using results generated by a trial, the protocols of which any student with a basic grounding in healthy soil could see were seriously flawed and could not give a quantifiable result, Bob Taylor wrote an article that is many years out of date, full of contradictions and factual errors.

The whole point of using microbial inoculants and biostimulants is to reduce chemical use and toxic residues in the soil. This allows you to recreate, as far as possible, the microbial food chain of bacteria, fungi, mycorrhizal fungi, protozoa and beneficial nematodes that inhabit healthy soil.

Grass has evolved over millions of years to rely on microbial associations for growth and no amount of wishful thinking by the STRI will change the basic processes of nature. Plants will grow in a sea of chemicals; but if pesticide use is to be reduced, then methods of applying and maintaining the microbes essential for plant growth to become viable in intensively used sports turf must be used.

When the soil food chain is complete nutrients are recycled, thatch is converted to humus, and the natural growth promotion and disease suppression properties of the soil can be used to benefit the growth of sturdy, fine grasses for a good playing surface.

Cleaning chemically saturated soil takes time, incredible results can be seen in weeks or it can take a year or more, which is why all reputable biotech companies work out individual programmes and provide technical support to ensure constant improvements.

Recent research has shown more about the mechanics of disease suppression, which microbes favour poa annua and how fine grasses can be promoted, how to use thatch to produce humus, improve CEC and nutrient retention and more importantly how all this works on golf greens and tees.

Using microbial additives to develop healthy soil using natural processes to recycle nutrient, promote fine grass growth and disease suppression is now part of the modern greenkeepers management strategy, hype it most certainly is not.

Symbio will be holding a series of free seminars, covering the latest developments in creating and managing healthy soils to the greenkeepers advantage, to which all greenkeepers and STRI consultants are invited. At the time of writing the following venues have been fixed.

Three Rivers Golf Club, Chelmsford, Essex, 12th November  
St Andrews, Fife 13th November (12.30 start)  
Marriot Tudor Park Golf Club, Maidstone Kent, 19th November  
Stamford Golf Club, Stalybridge, Cheshire, 26th November  
Hinskey Heights Golf Club, S, Hinskey, Oxfordshire  
27th November

Each Seminar will start at 2.00pm if you would like to attend please call Symbio on 01372 456 101.

Martin Ward, Managing Director, Symbio

### What does the future hold 2

I read the article you published by Bob Taylor of the STRI "What does the future hold" with some dismay. The general tone and unscientific nature of the article seems to quite unnecessarily set out to damage a growing biotechnology industry which, in my experience, has a lot to offer Course Managers.

At Radcliffe we first started working with microbes in 1995 because we were desperate, with thatch, black layer and disease problems; we had tried all the cultural practices mentioned by Mr Taylor without success.

The STRI advised us that the solution was to rebuild our greens. The cost of doing so was prohibitive so we looked for another solution and in the end we trialed a solution developed by Symbio on five greens. The results were so good that within a month we treated all the greens and microbial additives have been a central part of our course management ever since.

Thatch and black layer quickly degraded and the greens dried out in winter, but most importantly the total programme was paid for in savings to our fungicide budget because fusarium and other diseases almost disappeared.

The improved percolation, root growth and grass cover permit play for at least an extra 30 days a year on the main greens, bent grasses are replacing poa annua and as far as I can see there is no hype, at Radcliffe all claims made for the microbial additives have been met.

Les Wake, Secretary, The Radcliffe on Trent GC

### What does the future hold 3

I read Bob Taylor's article "What does the future hold" in the October issue of Greenkeeper International.

From his comments he seems to be knocking Symbio. I used Symbio products when I worked in Greece, from 1997 until I left at the end of last year. I used them under very difficult conditions, temperatures on greens in June, July and August were 40 degrees plus. My irrigation water came from the hotel's sewage treatment plant, with the only good thing about that, being I did not need any additional NPK.

I believe you feed the soil and not the grass and everything that Martin Ward of Symbio told me about his products and what they would do for me worked.

I cannot speak highly enough about Symbio's products and their employees.

In his article Bob states we still need to use aeration, and I agree with him. However, in the trial the STRI conducted between May and November, which I make that a six-month period they only aerated once, I aerated 12 times a year, and I am sure I am not alone in believing in aerating every month.

Symbio never told me that I could get better results by using their products and I could also stop aeration. If the STRI were going to conduct a trial I would expect them to conduct it as any sensible Head Greenkeeper would.

Anybody reading this article who had never used bio products, would think that all of us forward thinking Greenkeepers had wasted our club's money. Oh, how wrong they would be.

J.H. Bragg, Ex Head Greenkeeper, Porto  
Elounda Golf Club, Crete, Greece

This debate will continue in next month's issue



# Trees

## Trees on the Golf Course - Friend or Foe?

**Simon Marrington, woodland consultant with John Nicholson Associates Ltd examines the role of trees on a golf course.**

Landscapes are constantly evolving. It is nature's law that everything on a golf course grows and where it is not kept in check by nature itself, then managerial control becomes essential. It is all too rarely accepted by 'preservationists' (as opposed to conservationists) that change is inevitable and that positive management is required simply to maintain the status quo.

A good example is Flackwell Heath Golf Club in Buckinghamshire where work has recently been completed in the form of a three year programme of scrub clearance and woodland management operations. As with many of the more established clubs, the age of the course was beginning to tell. Recent decades had seen a natural increase in tree cover as regeneration occurred away from the manicured playing surfaces. Ingress had affected the strategy of several golf holes, as the woodland and scrub expanded and trees had grown up in places which were not appropriate. Tees and greens had begun to suffer due to the heavy shade cast, with dense crowns restricting both light and air circulation.

Furthermore, large areas of valuable chalk downland habitat were being eroded due to the succession of hawthorn dominated scrub and other associated vegetation. Most members' clubs are fortunate to enjoy well documented histories and a wealth of historical pictures. Having studied photographs of Flackwell Heath across the decades it became clear to Course Manager Dean Jones that the course had previously benefited from an open aspect and that management intervention was imperative. He recalls 'heathland communities (as suggested by the golf clubs name) from the upper reaches of the course had already disappeared and we were faced with losing another part of the club's heritage'.

A management plan was commissioned with John Nicholson Associates. The existing tree and vegetation cover was surveyed and management prescriptions which would ensure their sustainability were identified. A holistic approach was adopted, with the overall aim being to create, or to maintain a mosaic of grassland, woodland and scrub habitat within the framework of the golf course.

Numerous benefits are achieved by adopting conservation management on the golf course. By producing a management plan for instance, a better understanding of habitats, soils and ecology is likely to come hand in hand with improved relations with statutory bodies, such as the Environment Agency, English Nature and local authorities. Most golf clubs share common interests, with management objectives being landscape and conservation based. Clubs which demonstrate a firm



Marbled white butterfly



Orchid

commitment to nature conservation are far more likely to secure funding through the range of grants that are now available. The work at Flackwell Heath was part funded by the Forestry Commission under the Woodland Grant Scheme.

Large areas of scrub were removed completely, using a tracked excavator based mulching unit. Such machines have incredible work rates and are capable of clearing up to a hectare per day. The woody material is shredded and stumps reduced in one pass, yet the machine is manoeuvrable enough to ensure desirable stems may be marked and retained.

Existing woodland was selectively thinned by 30% ie. nearly one third of the total number of trees was removed. This may sound drastic, but it must be remembered that there are literally thousands of trees on most inland golf courses and once thinning is complete club members are amazed how little the woodland has changed to the layman's eye. The woodland edge was cut back completely where encroachment had occurred. Poorly formed, suppressed or defective stems were targeted for removal. The opportunity was also taken to reduce the proportion of exotic or non native tree species within the woodlands.

The result? Reclaimed chalk grassland has been colonised by spotted, pyramidal and bee orchids, a variety of wildlife (including marbled white and chalk blue butterfly species), flowers and grasses during the first growing season after scrub clearance. These areas are complemented by patches of scrub retained for habitat and landscape diversity and large areas of managed, predominantly native high forest, where future growth will now be concentrated on the better, more attractive trees that remain. These stems will now be able to develop unhindered and reach their true potential. Adjacent playing surfaces will benefit from improved light penetration and air circulation. Course agronomist Andy Cole (PSD) agrees, 'fine leaved grasses such as bents and fescues are simply not shade tolerant and the grass sward had deteriorated as broader leaved grasses started to prevail around the woodland edge.'

From the player's perspective, Associate Consultant at John Nicholson's, Ken Brown, concludes.





Mix of wild flowers



Original scrub understorey

"It is important to remember that good golf is easier to play off finer turf. Consequently there is a natural conflict between trees casting shade and the development of quality playing surfaces."

Having read the above and given further knowledge that the author trained in forestry, is a mediocre golfer at best and is frequently frustrated by an awkward lie beneath or behind an offending branch or trunk, it would be easy to assume it is written by someone (if you'll forgive the pun) with an axe to grind. In order to redress the balance I should point out some of the benefits that trees may bring to the golf course.

Trees can be used to define and orientate a golf hole. They can be used to frame a fairway which cannot be seen due to the topography. They can emphasise a dogleg by exaggerating the orientation of the fairway, or strategically to add interest as a heroic carry. Trees can be used to screen unsightly views or neighbouring roads or properties in the interests of safety. They may also contribute significantly to the character of a course, either by creating a feeling of seclusion, stability or simply by forming an attractive backcloth to the game of golf. Aside from the shelter they afford us in the winter winds and rain, only woodland will provide unique habitats for native wildlife such as badgers, deer and bluebells.

Put simply; trees have incredible potential to make either a positive or negative impact on the golf course. What is undeniable is that they grow and then they die. They must be viewed as dynamic, living entities with a limited lifespan. They require long term management and planning with an objective or balanced approach. To conclude, while there will always be debate it should be the aim of course managers, greens committees and consultants alike to adopt the maxim 'the right tree in the right place.'

John Nicholson Associates are an environmental consultancy firm who specialise in golf courses. Management proposals are based on sound ecological principles, but trees are an emotive subject and a broad spectrum of opinion should always be anticipated!



*For further information please contact:*  
**John Nicholson Associates Ltd, 24 Dagmar Road,**  
**Tivoli, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL50 2UG,**  
**Tel/Fax: 01242 253 502 Mobile: 07968 301 890**



Poor understorey



Wildflowers and fairway



# Swing Low...

A master of the oval ball showed he was equally adept with the small round one by winning the National Championship, supported by Seoul Nassau.

Chris Lomas, Course Manager at The Berkshire, has become the BIGGA National Golf Champion at his first attempt. Chris, playing off a handicap of 5, shot net rounds of 72 round each of Coxmoor and Hollinwell to be the only man to break par in the 87 man strong field.



BIGGA's National Golf Champion for 2003, Chris Lomas

Multi-talented Chris, is a former English Under 21 rugby internationalist and he will no doubt be glued to the television hoping that his colleagues down under can replicate his own success. He raised his game to match the superb tests of golf laid before him. In conditions not conducive to low scoring - Coxmoor was dull and windy with some rain while Hollinwell was bright and windy - Chris was able to beat his handicap by a shot.

"I'm still in shock," said Chris, a couple of days after he lifted the magnificent trophy.

"I'm delighted that the decision to give up rugby to concentrate on golf, and work of course, has paid off," he explained.

Chris had been lured north by the quality of the two venues and the chance to play competitive golf on two of the best courses in the country.

"I've always been impressed with the standard of courses BIGGA have staged the Championship on and these two have been no exception. The greens were as true as they were quick and they were almost too quick when the wind blew. I had heard a lot about Hollinwell from various people and it still exceeded all expectations."

He was also full of praise for the two Course Managers, Kevin Atherton at Coxmoor and Philip Stain, at Hollinwell, and their teams.

"The Course Managers and their teams at both courses excelled themselves. I feel a little lucky to win the tournament at my first attempt."

"I played well and that shows by the fact my handicap has come down by about .7 to SS but Alan Strachan, John Watts, Elliott Small and Kenny Mackay will all tell you I escaped very well. Almost Seve like! I wish!"

"It was not until afterwards that I found out that the trophy used to be News of The World Trophy held at Walton Heath."

The best gross score was 150 came from two 75s from scratch player and St Andrews Links Trust man, David Leith, who arrived in Nottinghamshire as the recently crowned Scottish Champion. Totally phlegmatic, David's demeanour when he came off the course was such that there was no way of knowing whether he had shot 65, 75 or 85.

The Regional Trophy saw the Midlands break the South East stranglehold on the competition thanks, in no small part, to some fine rounds around Coxmoor by Graeme MacDonald, of Newark GC and Past Chairman, Richard Barker.

A welcome visitor to the two courses was Walter Woods, who spent a happy time as Course Manager at Hollinwell and as a member of Coxmoor before heading to Fife and St Andrews.

As always there were some sob stories to report.

Defending Champion Ian Semple put up a stout defence of his title but, two days before he and the family headed to the Dominican Republic on holiday was somewhat distracted by a lost passport drama back home.

Paul Conway got lost on the way to the Hollinwell on the second day and missed his tee time by 15 minutes. Disqualified he was slotted in later so was able to enjoy the course.

Elliott Small had to withdraw from his Coxmoor round after nine holes through hip problems but doped up he too was able to complete his round at Hollinwell.

## RESULTS

### BIGGA National Champion for the BIGGA Challenge Trophy

- Chris Lomas, The Berkshire, 144 (nett)  
2. David Hood, Wexham Park, 147 (On last 18)  
3. Graeme MacDonald, Newark GC, 147

### BIGGA Scratch Champion for the BIGGA National Cup

- David Leith, St Andrews Links, 150  
2. Mark Nelson, Renishaw Park, 153  
3. Ian Semple, Old Fold Manor, 155

### Coxmoor

- Scratch - 7  
Richard Barker, Longcliffe GC, 72  
8-15  
Derek Cunliffe, Old Thorns GC, 74 (BIH)  
16-28  
Frank Stewart, Leeds Golf Centre, 77

### Notts GC

- Scratch - 7  
Richard Andrews, Highgate GC, 74  
8-15  
Matt Folka, Hawkestone Park, 73  
16-28  
Nick Bird, Kings Norton GC, 74

### Nearest the Pin - Coxmoor

Ross Wilson, Parasampia

### Longest Drive - Coxmoor

Andy Peel, Bull Bay GC

### Regional Trophy

Midland - 595  
Graeme MacDonald, Richard Barker, David Hood, Steve Wood, James Dair, Chris Brown, David Salisbury and Fred Cobb

### Runner-up

South East - 601  
Chris Lomas, Ian Semple, Derek Cunliffe, Stefan Antolik, Stuart Abbott, Steve Holmes, Ian Willett and Steven Helmsley.





Kevin Atherton with his Coxmoor team



Phillip Stain with his Hollinwell team



Richard Barker accepts the Regional Team Trophy from Coxmoor Captain, Adrian Hill, on behalf of the victorious Midland Team



David Leith, the BIGGA Scratch Champion



The prize winners with George Brown, left, and Hollinwell Captain, Michael Sault, centre





# Sandy McDivot

## Girl Power!

**I do adore those old examples of a golf clubs ladies section, don't you? You know the ones, that old Ladies' Captain whose life belongs not so much in a different age but on a different celestial body.**

I once was walking my dog (Duff McDivot) in a local village where the populace appeared to be made up almost exclusively of golf obsessed retired military hierarchy and their wives, when I was accosted by an old Seniors' Section President whose wife had recently vacated her seat as the Ladies' Captain.

"Come in Sandy" he said, "you must have a look at my lawn". And so we toured his estate before venturing into their palatial residence for a recently exhumed can of double diamond stamped "best before 1978". It was at this point that his wife walked in and asked, "Have you seen my husband's erection"? A disturbing question to which there appeared not to be an answer until I managed to quickly deduce that this was "Old Lady Captain's" speak for the recently constructed garden shed, which he had indeed shown me. "I am very excited by it," she went on to say, in even more embarrassing detail.

But the merriment of the Ladies' Section does not end with their eccentric use of the English language. I once worked at a club that regularly experienced the visual horror of a masked flasher who principally peddled his meagre wares on ladies day. It was during one of these exhibitions that the recipient of his proffering asked of the flasher "Are you a member?" A question that draws the further enquiry as to what the reaction would have been if he had replied, "Well yes madam, I am in fact the Chairman of the Green committee." Would the response have then been, "Well that's alright then. So long as you have paid your subscription on time."! When recounting the episode to the other members back in the clubhouse, she apparently stated that despite there being no answer to her question, she did not feel that this reprobate was a member. This then warrants another enquiry as to how she came to such a conclusion given that the traditional means of identification was hidden from view. Perhaps there is more to the Ladies' Section than we at first thought.

Another source of endless amusement to us greenkeeping folk is the quality of ladies' golf. Of course I am not one for condemnation and so must point out that not all lady golfers are atrocious at the game in fact many would give us a sound thrashing, but years of study have constantly resulted in the ritual asking oneself of the question, "Why on earth do they bother?" I am sure you can all recall your own examples of bewildering golfing standards but just recently I observed one of our regular lady exponents of the game reach the very edge of our 10th green (a short par four) in a mere five shots, but then without any intervening hazard betwixt ball and hole she somehow managed to end up seven shots later in a lost ball situation some 20 yards in an adjacent forest. Don't ask me how it happened, it just did. I managed to remain a distant observer on that one

but more recently I lived the horror that is, when you stand aside with the mower on tick over while they confront you with a display of golf at its most hideous. The episode in question was perpetrated by the one of the dignitaries of the Ladies' Section when faced with a shot of some ten yards over a bunker to a generous green. Where does one look when they then produce three consecutive complete duffs without the ball ever actually moving before shanking into the sand? She then went on to systematically circumnavigate the bunker with some ten further hacks each bringing with it another level of buttock clenching embarrassment to herself, her partner and me. Her partner meanwhile had seemingly made matters worse by saying to her "Bad luck" on the first couple of failed attempts

before realising that luck had nothing to do with it, at which point she ceased further comment and joined me in the painful pretence of not having noticed.

Then there is club selection as deployed by the lady golfer. I have never quite been able to fathom it out. I recall an episode recently where one of our regulars had a shot of about 70 yards to our 17th green. So what club would one take? A wedge, a sand wedge, or perhaps a subtle push with a nine iron. No the choice of the day was, you've guessed it, a three wood. In fact the 3-wood is generally deployed for all shots over 50 yards and the putter taken on all occasions when 30 yards or less of ground needs to be covered, which rather begs the question as to why they keep a full set of irons onboard the electric trolley. An old professional golfer once told me of how in a mixed foursomes, his partner was left to tee off on a hole requiring 90 yards of carry over a gorse filled rocky chasm. She turned to the Pro and came out with the classic confidence boosting line "I have never made this carry before in my life"! So the Pro not willing to engage in abseiling at this point in the round replied, "No problem. Just miss the ball all together and I'll take it from there." And her response to this brilliant stratagem? "But what club shall I use?"

Talking of which, have you ever experienced mixed foursomes golf? I did once, but never again. The problem is, one is suddenly thrown into a situation where etiquette moves from being simply desirable to totally critical. Now I don't know about you but when playing with fellow greenkeepers or ones mates, things such as breaking wind on the top of the opposition's backswing are not so much seen as appalling manners but more, a treasured skill to be envied by all. But I decided early in the round that applying this element of the game to our Lady Captain would not be a good career move. In fact one is forced to eliminate many facets of the game considered normal practice among the male species, such as swearing profusely, voluminous belching, scratching ones nether regions or



detailing ones drinking/puking achievements of the night before. The mixed foursomes situation I found myself in arose many years ago when I was an assistant at a posh London club and along with the first assistant, I was asked to join in the annual staff and ladies get-together. We rather naively agreed on the basis that we may be drawn to play with the one or two girl members of the club who happened to be quite attractive. Our totally pathetic reasoning behind our decision being, that at the end of the round one would get to kiss ones partner and that given our natural irresistible greenkeepers allure, this would inevitably progress to that ultimate erotic experience; the snog. But it transpired that our confidence was misplaced. I was partnered with the conventional battleaxe, but our first assistant got a member of the Ladies' Section that we referred to as 'The Major', a fairly elderly six footer whose real name was Judy. Not that terrible you may think but the reason we referred to Judy as 'The Major' was that she walked with a slight limp caused by an injury sustained in the last great conflict while serving on the front line. "But women did not serve on the front line" I hear you say. Exactly, at that point in her career, Judy was a 'man'. Of course from a competitive point of view, getting Judy as his partner was no bad thing as despite her advancing years she could still pump out those 250 yarders off the tee and unlike most women, the irons in her bag were given a full workout. However the first assistant, due to his rapid calculation that victory would result in not only the end of round kiss having to be administered, but also the compulsory one in full view of all of his peers during the prize giving ceremony, held competitive instinct distinctly in check. His performance levels were further lowered when early on in the round he slotted a 15 footer only for Judy to run across the green and plant a smacker on his right cheek. Needless to say that following this incident, all putts over two foot were steered well away from the target area. But to end my little sojourn through the Ladies' Section may I end on a positive note.

Yes the ladies have got so much more to offer than just entertainment. How about all those delightful little planting schemes they come up with. For example, I once remember being advised by a contingent of the women at an environmentally sensitive heathland course, to plant a nice collection of tulips in front of some selected teeing areas. Also, as their game is played principally along the ground, they are a great means of preventing the insertion of those stupid water hazards in front of greens that the alpha males of the club would like to put in so as to prove their virility.

But by far the biggest advantage the ladies have over their male counterparts is the complete lack of wear they impart on any golf course. After all, when have you ever seen a worn out ladies tee?

### **Sandy McDivot**

Head Greenkeeper  
Sludgcombe Pay & Play





# NEW PRODUCTS

## NEW LAUNCH FROM TORO

With a big, near-lift cutting width and a powerful 60hp engine, the new Toro Groundsmaster 4100-D offers top productivity and quality of cut.

Its all-out-front cutting deck - it's the only all-out-front machine in the lift rotary segment - greatly increases visibility for enhanced manoeuvrability and operator control.

Toro says the three-section deck represents the latest evolution of its contour-mowing technology and lifts standards for productivity and quality of cut.

As such, the GM4100-D gives a beautiful aftercut appearance at high work rates on a wide variety of turf, from sports grounds to golf course roughs and semi-roughs.

It also has outstanding ground-following capabilities for a consistent height of cut (adjustable between one and five inches) on all terrain.

Operators enjoy a comfortable, high seating position that gives an unobstructed view of the front deck, the turf being cut and obstacles, for safer working. The machine can mow a swathe nearly 11 feet wide. But it is only six feet wide with its side wings flipped up for transport.

Its 60hp engine is a Kubota two-litre turbo diesel unit; and there is full-time, hydrostatic four-wheel drive so it can mow thick, wet grass and on slippery slopes. A mowing speed of up to 8mph can be achieved, and a transport speed of up to 15mph.

The machine has a tight turning radius and, at full turn, it will leave no turf uncut. So it can be used for efficient back-and-forth mowing. It can also mow around and close to obstacles, thereby minimising the need to follow up with trim mowers.

For further information Tel: 01480 226800.



## CHIPCO RECOMMENDED

With traditional Autumn weather finally with us and winter on its way, Bayer Environmental Science is advising groundsmen and greenkeepers to prepare to move to fungicides more suited to the wetter conditions as part of their year-round turf management.

The company recommends that Chipco Green, with its multi-site contact fungicidal properties and extreme rainfastness, for use in the winter months, with systemic fungicides Mildothane Turf Liquid or Capricorn applied in the growing seasons (rotating fungicides with different modes of action will significantly reduce the risk of developing resistance). The rainfastness of Chipco Green means there is no need for dew switching on turf for 2 weeks after application.

These combinations are ideal for year-round disease control in all sports turf, and particularly in the fine turf on golf course greens.

The recent (much needed) wetter weather has caused an increase in the occurrence of various fungi, much to the distress of groundsmen and greenkeepers alike. However, not all turf fungi are a nuisance.

Mycorrhizal fungi develop a mutually beneficial relationship with turf roots, for effective nutrient exchange and increased resistance to drought, insect pests and disease. As a result, turf associated with Mycorrhiza tends to be healthier and these fungi are unaffected by Chipco Green.

For further information Tel: 01992 784270.

## SUCK AND BLOW

The 2003 Autumn range of Billy Goat outdoor vacuum sweepers and blowers now have optional 'on board' hose kits with no tools fixings so no more rushing back to the workshop for hoses and/or spanners.

The line starts with the Little Billy. A 20in (50cm) sweeping width and powered by a 4hp Briggs & Stratton Quattro engine makes this machine ideal for the domestic or occasional hire user with an area of perhaps half an acre to clear of debris such as leaves or pine cones and needles.

An optional wander hose is available.

The larger commercial KD models all feature 12in wheels and the 'on board' hose kit option.

The KD410 has a 27in (68cm) sweeping width and a 4hp Briggs & Stratton Quattro engine and a large 10 cu ft (282 litre) collection bag.

A self propelled model is available in the shape of the KD512SP.

This sturdy professional quality vacuum uses a 5hp Briggs & Stratton IC commercial grade engine. A simple but proven front wheel drive system really helps on slopes and uneven terrain. Again all the features of the previous machine are incorporated in this machine.

With the TKD512SP Billy Goat a 2in (5cm) chipper is built in for sticks and small tree limbs.

Billy Goat also offer a range of commercial blowers using new 'Quiet Blow' technology. This features a patented exhaust design that condenses and controls exhaust air into a tight pattern, providing the best air control and velocity at the industry's lowest noise levels.

Robotically welded 12-gauge steel housing and engine base also means these blowers are designed to take heavy use, but horsepower for horsepower they are the lightest wheel blowers on the market.

A 14 blade nylon fan reduces overall vibration and gyroscopic forces common with metal fans.

Briggs & Stratton and Honda engine options ranging from 5hp to 13hp, Quiet Blow blowers provide hurricane-force air speeds up to 180mph.

For further information Tel: 01932 788799.



## NEW ELEMENTAL SUPPLEMENT REDUCES PH LEVELS

High pH levels can now be reduced by a new elemental supplement from Vitax.

Sulphur 95 is a micronised prill, which is ultimately converted to sulphuric acid by microorganisms within the soil. Applied to sand based golf greens (or any other turf areas with a high pH substrate) the product ensures a steady supply of plant proteins throughout the season in a form that can be readily absorbed by the sward.

"As sulphur deficiency reduces the plant's ability to utilise applied nitrogen. Sulphur 95, could almost be likened to an indigestion tablet," says Clive Williams, Sales and Amenities Manager for Vitax.

The plant functions more efficiently and fewer nutrients are wasted."

"Bringing down pH levels discourages Poa Annua, unlocks nutrients such as Copper, Iron, Manganese and Zinc promoting the health of the finer grasses, and makes the soil less attractive to worms," he continues.

"By combating Sulphur deficiency and reducing pH levels at the same time, this new product has twin benefits."

For further information Tel: 01530 510060.



## HELP TO COMPLY

With Pollution Control and water recycling high on the agenda, Course Care chose Saltex for two product launches; ClearWater, a below ground water recycling system for washdown areas and a bundled Mini Fuel Station for under £1000.

"It was very clear that we have products to answer current needs and help our customers comply with the latest legislation. Many know they must install bundled fuel tanks and are looking for quality and value. Our new tanks range offers just that. Demand for washdown area water recycling is growing too and our competitively priced below ground system is proving very popular," said David Mears, Course Care's Managing Director.

The water cycling system has four distinct plus points.

- It is below ground
- It has a silent operation appealing to hotels and clubs in residential areas.
- It uses proved interceptor technology developed over 15 years
- It is "bespoke", designed specifically to the needs and demands of the customer.

The bundled tanks on show attracted much attention. They are packed with features such as bund alarms, overflow protection, remote controlled contents monitoring operated by ultrasonics and easy to use dispensing. It simply plugs into an ordinary plug socket and provides an instant read-out of contents.

For further information Tel: 01535 611103.

## OF WHEEL BENEFIT

A unique device for standard pull golf trolleys has been designed and manufactured by Golf Innovations (UK) Ltd.

The special parabolic shaped studs fit over the trolley wheel and when used in winter conditions leaves little or no impression on the fairway. A quote from a greenkeeper college states, "the principle involved in using this wheel attachment is innovative and should help the greenkeeper avoid excessive compaction and smearing on turf surfaces during the wetter months of the year when golfers are wanting to use trolleys."

The Hedgehog fairway protector is available from Golf Innovations (UK) Ltd via professional golf shops.

For further information telephone 01737 649911.



## KAWASAKI RECALL

Kawasaki is currently recalling all units of their KVF300 and KVF400 ATV models manufactured between 1997 and 2000. The tightening torque of the steering pinch bolt on some units may not be sufficient to prevent the ball joint moving in the steering knuckle. In extreme cases this could lead to steering malfunction.

All known owners are being contacted by letter and asked to contact their local authorised Kawasaki ATV dealer in order to organise a free check and repair of the affected parts. Owners of affected models who do not receive a letter should contact their dealer or Kawasaki's customer care hotline (01628-856750) to check eligibility and arrange the recall work if it is required.



## SHORT CHASSIS USE

Spraytech's new DM range is especially effective on short chassis trucks such as the Jacobsen Cushman, where transverse mounting keeps the weight forward of the back axle and keeps booms tight to the back end, ensuring perfect weight distribution and a kinder treatment of fine turf.

Spraytech has stripped out all the disjointed plumbing and miles of tangled hoses that you often find on other demounts. The brand new compact plumbing module and clean water tank are mounted beside the 107 lpm triple diaphragm pump and hydraulic drive on two uniquely removable trays in a specially created cavity within the envelope of the tank that leaves only millimetres to spare, conserving space, but which makes servicing a dream.

Power and output control options for the DM range include a pto pump with hydraulic drive or petrol drive (for flat bed trucks like the Hilux) with manual / electric controls and electric pumps (for trucks with belt drive) with computerised output in-cab control options for perfect accuracy of application.

But to put the DM range in a class of its own, its modular design as a component of the Spraytech range offers unparalleled flexibility for the end user. Boom options include any of Spraytech's three zero-emission covered booms; the Hurricane, Tornado & Typhoon, or the standard open boom. And the Chemlok sealed filling system, built to the highest world standard for handling chemical concentrates, BS6356 Part 9, that ensures there is no operator exposure and no need to wear any protective clothing, cuts the foil seals, measures in 25ml increments and power washes containers completely clean.

For longitudinally mounting on trucks with a longer chassis, the sub frame is simply rotated through 90 degrees and the mast mounting assembly is relocated. The DM can be fitted on most trucks and load/unload options include jack legs, floor crane or hoist.

With mast and boom tight to the back end and all the weight forward of the back axle, our DM sprayer is very kind to turf.

Chemlok Pro-mix can be sprayer, wall or stand mounted. The pipe work & clean water tank, pump & hydraulic drive are mounted side by side on removable trays for ease of maintenance, enclosed behind a wrap around guard.

Tank sizes 400, 600, 800 lts.

For further information Tel: 01932 26 94 95.

## FLYING THE FLAG

Acorn Golf UK in conjunction with British Manufacturing Solutions have developed a revolutionary new accessory to add to your existing hole cups 'The Cosgrove Cup Spike'. It can self thread to your hole cups and has a standard screwdriver size hole near to the base (similar to a large scale 'dart stem') so you can tighten it directly on to your polymer hole cup base.

This spike has been designed to prevent taller flag poles in high winds leaning the cup to one side and prevent the pole blowing out. It will also prevent the ingress of sub soil coming up through the centre of the cup and especially for newly laid sand greens where the sub layers take longer to 'firm up'. Available in 2 sizes UK & USA in boxes of ten. Come and see the launch of this miniature rocket shaped spike at the 2004 BTME and ClubHouse show in Harrogate.

For further information Tel: 01925 757005.



## KIOTI LOADERS

Reco unveiled the latest addition to its range of quick-fit front-end loaders at Saltex.

The Kioti loaders include a three-step quick-fit system that makes fitting and removal extremely quick and easy. Three models are now available in total, with lift capacities from 350kg to 1103kg.

The latest model has been designed for use with the 21 hp CK20 Kioti tractor, the smallest in the range. It has a bucket capacity of 0.137m<sup>3</sup>, a maximum lift height of 2236mm, a maximum dump height of 1756mm, and it can lift 350kg to full height. Control is precise, comfortable and simple, with twin double acting rams included for both lift and crowd functions.

Kioti tractors, now available with power ratings from 21 hp to 50hp, are also being shown by RECO at Saltex, as well as a selection from Reco's range of mowers, scarifiers, aerators, sweeper-collectors, hedge-cutters, verge mowers, rotary cultivators, power harrows and fertiliser spreaders.

For further information Tel: 01480 455151.





**SCOTTISH REGION**  
Peter Boyd  
Tel/Fax: 0141 616 3440

## Central

The final golf tournament of the season was held at Alloa Golf Club (not Ailao) on September 25 when over 40 members enjoyed a relaxing day away from work and meeting friends old (some older than others) and new. It must be the first time for a number of years that we have had good weather conditions for both the Spring and Autumn Tournaments.

With the course in excellent condition there were a number of good scores resulting in keen competition for the prizes, the winners being as follows: Best combined nett. Spring & Autumn. T. Harris, Cupar GC, 148; Best Scratch. K. Mitchell, St. Andrews, 68; Best Nett. M. Graham, Green Hotel GC, 69 bih; 1st Class 1. W. Woods Retired life member, 69; 1st Class 2. E. Small, Tulliallan, 72; 2nd Class 1. T. Harris, Cupar GC, 69; 2. D. Scott, Scoonie GC, 72; 3rd Class 1. B. Needs, Tower of Lethandy GC, 82; 3rd Class 2. M. Lindsay, Scoonie GC, 83; Patrons. K. Brunton, Greentech, 73; Guests. C. Payne, Alloa GC, 71.

Our sincere thanks go to everyone at Alloa GC for the courtesy extended to us, especially Duncan Peddie and his staff for the excellent presentation of the course, Margaret and Ron in the clubhouse for their first class catering and service, greens convenor, Tom White, who joined us on the day along with Club Captain, Colin Payne, who did us the honour of presenting the prizes to the winners. I would also like to thank our patrons for their continued support of our events and everyone else who assisted on the day.

Congratulations and every success for the future go to Trevor Harris, from Cupar Golf Club, on his appointment as Head Greenkeeper at Arbroath Golf Club. (Have we found another venue for future golf events?)

The proposed Educational Workshop has been arranged for Tuesday November 11, at Elmwood College, Cupar, and everyone should have received notice of it. If you haven't and wish to attend please just give me a ring on 01577 865 607. This event is organised for your benefit so please make an effort to support it.

Details of the AGM and your Section committee for the coming year will be in next month's report. At the time of writing I have 18 members who have indicated that they will attend, this is nearly double the number who attended last year so perhaps we will have some new faces on the committee. We can always live in hope!

Hopefully I will have confirmation of the venues for next year's golf tournaments in time for next month's report. On the subject of golf tournaments we are always seeking out new venues, so if you would like to host a future event just get in touch with any committee member.

John Crawford

## North

No new members to report this month, but overall we have done alright for members this year so hopefully that trend will continue

The section AGM took place at Peterhead GC, on October 16. There were one or two changes in the committee in that John Geddes, of Ellon GC, is now the Chairman of our Section and Steve Sullivan is now Vice-Chairman. Dale Robertson of Newmachar GC is now the Secretary taking over from Dougal Duguid, of Westhill GC. Dougal has put many years of service into the running of the North Section and is going to remain on the North committee for another year to help out. I would like to thank Dougal on behalf of the members of our Section for all his efforts over the years and wish him all the best when he begins his new role as the Scottish Vice Chairman. Donald Patience of Tarbet GC has joined the committee and is a welcome new face. Donald and Hugh McLatchie are this year's patron winners and will attend a luncheon in Stirling and also Harrogate in the spring. Their support to the Section is much appreciated.

There were 34 at Peterhead and they all had a good days golf and were well fed. Our thanks go to Hugh McLatchie and his staff for the condition of the course and for the hospitality of the club for the day. The day took the form of an outing and this produced more people turning up for the AGM than in previous years. A first for Peterhead is the installation of electricity to their

worksheds, this came as a major shock to Hughie and his staff.

Scotsturf is again coming around this month and it does not seem any time since last year. Hopefully there will be a good turnout for the show as usual from the north as it is an important part of the greenkeeping calendar.

I would like to thank Campmuir for their open day at Nairn GC. The day was very well attended and we were all well fed and watered, very important for the under nourished of our profession. It gives the greenkeepers a chance to catch up on what's new in the product range, plus it gives a great opportunity to speak to other greenkeepers about the trade in general.

On behalf of Dale Robertson, of Newmachar GC, I would like to thank Alpha Plus who invited Dale on a trip to the States with their company. An enjoyable time was had by all.

I hope all your renovation work goes well and the weather stays decent.  
Iain Gunn

## Ayrshire

If at first you don't succeed..., after losing out on countback in last year's Harry Diamond Memorial Quaich Paul Tulloch tried again, this time securing victory in another close finish. Congratulations Paul!

Twenty golfers attended the Autumn meeting played at Beith Golf Club on a pleasant summer's day, Marshall Sloss and his team had the course in great shape with reports confirming a good day was had by all.

Our thanks to the captain and club at Beith for allowing use of the course and facilities, also to the catering staff for looking after us.

Results on the day were as follows: Harry Diamond Memorial Quaich, P. Tulloch, W. Kilbride GC. Scratch Winner – J. Mair, Beith GC; 1st class. 1. M. Wilson, Moffat GC; 2. D. Wilson, Irvine Bogside GC; 3. W. Mercer, Skelmorlie GC; 4. B. Aitken, Turnberry GC; 2nd Class. 1. P. Tulloch, W. Kilbride GC; 2. I. Barr, Largs GC; 3. S. Mercer, Skelmorlie GC; 4. M. Sloss – Beith GC

For the few unable to make the AGM this year there will be a brief report in next month's issue.

Finally a warm welcome to two new members, Stephen McBlain, at Prestwick St. Nicholas GC, and Barry Crate who after several years on the courses at Belleisle and a season in Ireland, now plies his trade at Turnberry.  
Dennis Tweddell

## NORTHERN REGION

### North Wales

I always have a smile on my face when it comes to the Section notes. Here I am, brain in second gear, and a host of mental notes from around the region and two days past the deadline for the November issue! If only I had jotted them down they may read in some kind of context. Anyway here we go regardless.

Our Autumn Tournament was held in October at the De Vere Carden Park, a strong field of just under 70 took part on the challenging Nicklaus course. Playing a little 'short' at just over 6,700 yards, from the tee, the greens looked about two drivers and a 3-wood away and for most of us they were. A big thank you to Andy Campbell and his team for presenting the course to PGA European Tour standard, recently hosting the Pre- Qualifying for the European Tour. Carden Park came to the rescue after a last minute change of venue and we thank all involved for the courtesy and the fine catering that gave us a choice of five different dishes to sample for the meal.

The results of the golf were as follows: Six players tied at the top with 31 pts each and after a card play off the winner was Kevin Lewis, of Machynllych GC; 2. Marc Brute, of Abergele GC; 3. Jez Hughes, from Vale of Llangollen GC, who gave up the third prize to accept 'best gross' with a score of 80 – 3. with Andy Peel, of Bull Bay GC, also winning 'best haircut'. Best guest with 31pts Garry Carr; Nearest the Pin member was Trevor Johnson, of Eastham Lodge GC, and Nearest the pin Guest was P. Treacy, Sutton Hall GC; Best trade with 32 pts was Terry Adamson, of Alpha Amenity, (this shows some of us are out selling tee mats) although I did manage an eight dart round the board finish at the Carden Arms later on.



On behalf of the committee I would like to thank all the patrons of North Wales BIGGA for their generous donations and sponsorship.

The AGM followed the meal 26 members were present and one change to the committee was the standing down of Stuart McCall, his place being filled by Darren Anderson, of Abergele GC, (the venue for our Christmas competition on December 3). Welcome Darren.

Entry forms will be posted later this month.

Just a note on future golf days. The organisers of these events give a lot of their free time to make the day run smoothly and enjoyable for everyone, sadly it has been noticed that not all the winners have been present to receive their respective prizes, so a decision was taken to award the prize to the next in line. This will be implemented starting at the December golf day, as you can appreciate it is no fun saying "and the winner is... Oh, he's gone home".

A couple of congratulations, firstly to Dylan Hughes, of Pwllheli GC, for reaching the final of Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year and to Sion Pritchard leaving Llanynymech GC and going to Gob Owen, I hope he will be alright (Owen that is.)

Any Views please call. Home: 01925 263394 Fax: 01925 269622  
Mobile: 07778 162162 e-mail acorgolf@supanet.com

Mesen Cymru  
Andrew Acorn

## North East

On September 25 we had our Autumn competition at Bellingham GC. This was the first time we have had a competition there and what a pleasure it was too.

Bellingham is situated about 17 miles north west of Hexham so for mostly everyone who played they had quite a long and tricky journey but they turned out in greater numbers than we have had for a couple of years.

Our thanks to Head Greenkeeper, Matty Crofton, and his staff for the outstanding condition of the course considering their location and the summer we have had this year and also to the committee for the courtesy of their course.

This year's sponsors were the following, Shorts, Greenlay, Aitkens, Sisis, Thorntree Amenity, Turf Care Supplies, Stocksfield GC, John Moutrie, of Hexham GC. Thanks lads, much appreciated as these days fewer companies are sponsoring us. It must be because of our location as I see in other Sections some companies we all deal with tend to give us a miss.

Thanks also to John Pemberton, from BIGGA HQ, for calling in on his way back from a short holiday break. Keep practicing John for the Spring competition. We look forward to seeing you at Matfen Hall in April.

Best Gross. S. Quince, Parklands GC, 71; Best Nett. Ransomes Cup G. Gainford, Prudhoe, 82-13-69; Best Nett. Greenlay Cup. J. Richardson, Hexham GC, 76-7-69; Best Nett. A. Parkin, Beamish Park Hotel GC, 93-22-71; G. Lauder, Slaley Hall GC, 75-5-70; S. Pope, Tyneside GC, 88-16-72; J. Gibson, Northumberland GC, 74-2-72; R. Reid, Prudhoe GC, 80-7-73; J. Storey, Alnmouth GC, 79-6-73; B. Wilson, Stocksfield GC, 82-9-73. These are just the leading scores as there are too many to print.

The Spring Competition is already booked to play at Matfen Hall on April 22 2004. Thanks to Craig Parkinson, Course Manager, on his swift action. Hopefully we will have the Autumn competition booked soon.

Jimmy Richardson

## Cleveland

Firstly, I have to apologise to all members for the lack of Section notes in the last few issues. Some personal family problems and a lack of phone calls to me with news being the main reasons! However, here are some up to date items. The Section's Summer Knockout is reaching a climax as Martin Woods, of Bedlington GC, plays Anthony 'Titch' McGeough of Richmond GC. The other semi matched two of the Section bandits — Mark Brown, the "Manc of Brancepeth", who pitted his skills against George Salabank, of Eaglescliffe but lost. You should have taken a dive like your hero Ruud, Mark! Details of the final outcomes next month!

The Wearside boys are in the process of building a new bridge over a beck. 'Sir Alec' Walker has got the lads some khaki overalls and they are practicing 'Colonel Bogey'.

On a more serious note I've heard about the severe flooding problems suffered by Teesside Golf Club. During the recent thunderstorms the course received 25mm of rainfall in 15 minutes. Several trees were uprooted during the torrential downpour. The mole believed that Mr. Smith was away on holiday at the time. He's always been a lucky beggar!

The dry spell has certainly seen the wetting agents and hose pipe flying off the sheds, dry patch still abounds!

The Autumn Tournament took place at Middlesbrough GC on October 8. Many thanks go to Brendon Brown, of Norlube Waste Disposal, for sponsoring the whole day. The turnout was a little disappointing with only 15 members playing. However, the course was in excellent condition considering the continued dry spell. Congratulations are due to Stewart Vickers and the lads for presenting the course so well while George was away in Germany. Ian Pemberton of Bedale GC won the Stableford competition with 34 points. How he wins things using that 'upside down' swing I'll never know! James Atkinson, also of Bedale, was second with 33 points and Steve Hagar of Brancepeth Castle was third with 32 points. Pembo also won the Par 3 competition, which was kindly sponsored by Border Sports Services. Alan Cordingley, formerly of Ritefeed, won the trade section prize. It was nice to meet Peter Larter, our Northern Region Administrator, whose area has been expanded. Good luck in your new post, Peter.

Thanks must go to Middlesbrough GC for their hospitality. Special mention must be made of the catering staff for the excellent meal — the beef served in the carvery was mouth watering! Pembo wore a kipper tie during his meal — this wasn't to look good, it was to hide the gravy splatters after he finished a monstrous plateful of scan!

George Malcolm's trip to Germany was made to visit his son, David, who is working at a golf club over there. The courses are suffering very badly with drought conditions. However, George told me that, during a storm, many cars were severely damaged by hailstones the size of golf balls.

Two dates for the diary lads - firstly the section AGM takes place at Darlington GC on Thursday, November 20 commencing at 7.45pm. Secondly the Annual Turfcare 'Greenkeepers versus Groundsmen' quiz will take place at Mount Oswald Golf Club, Durham, on Wednesday, December 3, commencing at 7:30 pm. Come along and have a good laugh!

Finally, can I suggest that Section members start getting fit for the annual Rigby Taylor soccer tournament taking place at Hurworth early next year. Pembo has decided to enter two teams next year, a golden oldies side and a young 'uns team. Pembo is hoping to skipper the young 'uns side - ha ha ha!

Please ring me with some stories, tales or downright fibs — anything will do!

Terry "El Prez" Charlton

## North West

September has been a busy month in our golfing calendar. Firstly we had the Whitelaw Bowl which was played at Penrith Golf Club on September 3 which I reported on in last month's magazine. On September 8 we had the annual match against the Golf Club Stewards. This was played at Fishwick Hall GC and an excellent day it was, weather wise. After early morning rain the sun shone for the rest of the day but unfortunately the result was a win for the Stewards 3.5 to 2.5.

The course was in fine condition thanks to Paul Eddlestone and his trusty team and I would like to thank Fishwick Hall for allowing us courtesy of the course, the caterers for a cracking meal, and also the Stewards for an excellent day. I would also like to thank Amenity Technology for sponsoring the greenkeepers at such short notice, I can assure you it was much appreciated.

On September 24 the Autumn Tournament was played at Birchwood GC in Warrington. The weather once again was very kind to us and the course was in great condition thanks to Aidy Holt and his staff. We had 26 competitors including the Vice Captain, Dave Nicholson, and the Chairman of Green, Tony Milburn. The long course proved to be quite a test of golf which was reflected in the scores, but it was enjoyed by all. The winners were; Best Nett. Peter Hogan, 72; 2. Chris Sheehan, 73; 3. Mark Hillarby, 75; 4. Dave Macevoy, 76; Gross Winner. Bill Merritt, Vet's Prize, Brian Turner, 76. Guest Prize. Dave Nicholson, 75.

The Nearest the Pin and Longest Drive were sponsored by Rufford



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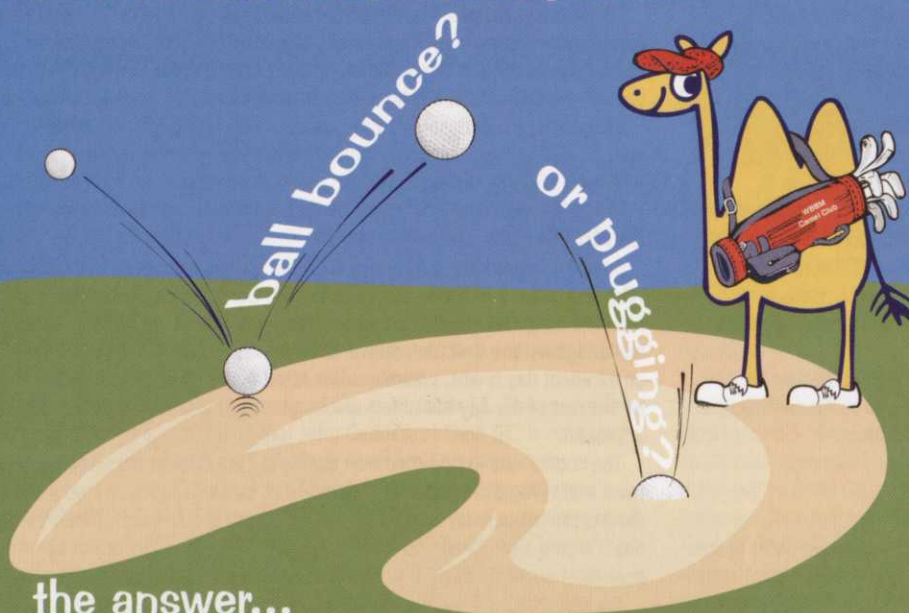
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from

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Technology and were both won by Mark Hillarby.

The Aggregate Cup played for with the Summer tournament and the Autumn Tournament with a score of 71 and 72 total 143 was won by Peter Hogan. Incidentally, Peter has won that many microwaves he took the receipt in order to change it for something else. Many thanks to our patrons for helping to fill our prize table also thanks to Bathgate Leisure for the prize. Many thanks to Birchwood for allowing us the courtesy of the course, also the caterers for a lovely meal.

The next golf will be the President's Cup and AGM to be played at Wilmslow Golf Club on Thursday, December 4. The tee is available from 10am with bacon baps before teeing off. All applications to Bill Merritt, The Lodge, Beacon Park Golf Club, Beacon Lane, Dalton, Wigan, WN8 7RU. Including a cheque for £20.

I will finish with a little news I have just received from Anthony Davies, Head Greenkeeper at Prestbury GC. The golf club realised Anthony had been in Greenkeeping for 25 years, 14 of those at Prestbury Golf Club, and they presented him with a silver salver which has been engraved in recognition of 25 years service, How's that for a nice gesture.

Any news or views contact me on 0151 724 5412 or 07761 583387

Also e-mail bert.cross@btopenworld.com

Bert Cross

## Sheffield

On September 15 the Sheffield Section visited Brough Golf Club to compete in our Autumn competition. Surprisingly we had an excellent turn out of members seeing as Brough is one of the furthest northerly courses in our Section and with the fact that it was still holiday season. The weather was also a surprise being quite warm for the time of year. The course at Brough was of an excellent standard and full credit goes out to Derek Neve and his staff for an excellent job in presenting a challenging course.

Our thanks goes out to everyone at Brough for giving the Sheffield Section full courtesy of the course.

I would like to thank our main sponsor Dick Palmer, of Ransomes Jacobsen, for sponsoring the event, and all our other trade members for the support on the day.

The results are as follows. 1. A. Unwin, 38pts; 2. S. Brown, 38pts; 3. C. Hopper, 31pts; 4. G. Wells, 29pts; 5. S. Currie, 29pts; 6. S. Pickering, 28pts. Best guest C. Edgar 36pts.

On October 2 the Section visited John Deere at Langar, Nottingham. For a visit around the factory. Thanks to Richard Tyas, of Bob Wild Grass Machinery, for organising the event and to our members for supporting the Section.

Our next winter lecture will be held at Rotherham golf club on Thursday, November 6 at 2.30pm, our speaker for the afternoon will be John Nicholson who will give a talk on woodland management. I hope that Section members will still carry on with their support.

And finally, our last golf tournament for the year will also be held at Rotherham GC on November 24. Our AGM will follow the competition and I would like to ask members for their full support in attending the meeting.

If anyone has any news regarding the Sheffield Section please don't hesitate to contact me on: Mobile 07752883290, Home 01709548759 or e-mail chris.astle1@btopenworld.com

Chris Astle



**MIDLAND REGION**  
Peter Larter  
Tel: 01476 550115

## BB&O

Has the rain started yet? It must have done so by now! How long can the dear Lord not shed a tear on poor old Blighty? From my records I have recorded 27mm over the past 13 weeks up until the end of September so I hope to have had at least this amount by the end of October. Is there any correlation between this weather and the huge increase in rabbits? Maybe dry gatherings in dusty bunkers make them all the friskier.

I have started to receive entries for the next golf competition. This is the Turkey Trot held at Frilford Heath Golf Club on Thursday, November 20, starting

at 9am. The competition will be groups of three with the best two scores counting. Avoncrop sponsors the day so let's see some good support at a time of year when any greenkeeper can indulge themselves. If you have no wish to play golf but would like to visit this course, I am sure I could arrange something suitable with the Sid Arrowsmith, the Course Manager. Sid is currently undertaking some impressive ecology work around this marvellous site to improve the long-term outlook for golfers and conservationists alike. The cost for the golf and a sumptuous meal is at the bargain price of £25. Please try to send your payments to me before the day to: 7, Erskine Close, Pamber Heath, Tadley, Hants, RG26 3EP. If you need to speak to me you can contact me on 07778 765021 or email: david@mastergreenkeeper.fsnet.co.uk Looking ahead to spring we have four places to fill for an abrasive wheels course so anyone interested just give me a ring or email and I will put your name on the list. Guess it is time to put away the hoses and make a start on those winter projects so I wish you all a disease-free autumn.

David Haskell-Craig

## East Midlands

This year's Autumn Tournament was held at Overstone Park in Northampton which is a new venue for our Section. The weather was dry and fine and the course was in magnificent condition after all the very dry weather we have experienced and was a credit to Philip Helm and his staff.

The Best Three nett scores were as follows, 1st. Chris Taylor, Willesley Park, 85-24-61; 2. Antony Bindley, Kirby Muxloe, 78-12-66. 3. Carl Chamberlain, Glen Gorse, 81-9-72.

Trade & Associate winner, Simon Hedley, Boughton Loam. 86-11-75. Nearest the Pin. Simon Banks; Longest Drive. Richard Barker.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Philip Helm and his staff for setting up such a marvellous course and to Overstone Park for allowing us the use of their fine course and clubhouse to stage our event, the steward for a really great meal, and to our generous sponsors Banks Amenity Products for sponsoring the prize table. We held two hundred draws as we were unable to make a draw at our Spring Tournament. Draw 1. 1. £60 Peter Larter. 2. £25 Gavin Robson. 3. £15 Antony Bindley. Draw 2. 1. £60 Susan James. 2. £25 Adi Porter. 3. £15 Ian Needham.

On November 4 & 5 at Beedles Lake golf centre we are running a two day course, titled further management skills. The cost for the two days is only £60 + VAT anyone interested can contact myself or Adi Porter.

This year's Market Harborough Am-Am saw The Banks Amenity Products team of Simon Banks, Ian Needham, Adi Porter and Gavin Robson finish in second place with an excellent score of 13 under-par, two shots off the lead.

Finally if you have not received this year's AGM and Christmas entry forms please give me a ring.

Antony Bindley

## Midland

We have a lot to get through this month, so you have been spared my eccentric meandering spiel. Just you wait until next month, the "Mead" should be ready by then!

On September 21 we held our first ever angling event at Middleton Hall. The format being a lighthearted match against the resident Anglers, who were unsurprisingly, but only just, the victors. We also jointly ran a prize event for greenkeepers only. The baggers (steady, I said baggers) being; 1. Peter Johnson, 2. Steven Heath, 3. Alan Shore, with also largest fish. Middleton Hall's Anglers made all 15 of us very welcome, our thanks to you gentlemen. Moreover, our deepest thanks to Mr T. Fellows and Mr A. Southam, of Hanson Aggregates, for sponsoring, providing, and organising such an enjoyable and successful event. Allen, please send our unconditional thanks to Mrs Southam for producing such a fantastic buffet. Your trifle is to die for madam.

The Scott's Doubles Tournament final was held at Wentworth Golf Club on September 18. The victors being E. Stant and P. Woodham. Not surprisingly all players reported that the course was in superb condition and wished that I send thanks to the club, Chris Kennedy for making them so very welcome, and of course Scott's for affording such a sumptuous opportunity. The Section looks forward to next year's event, at Scott's grace.

It gives me great pleasure to welcome five new members to our Section: D.G. Stoves; B. L. Sadler; C. Drewery; P. Goodyear and E.E. Perry. We look





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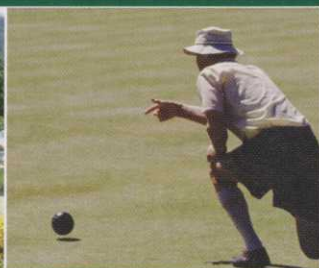
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forward to your input and counsel folks. Don't forget our AGM is to be held at Enville GC at 4.30pm on December 9. So please be there my friends.

The Committee Cup Golf Tournament was held at Brocton Hall GC. The event was a joint affair for both 2002 (inclement weather) and 2003. The victors being: 2002, Mr. Thomas with 27 points on the front nine and nine points on the back nine to win by one point. 2003 was won by Mr Gibbons with 41 points. Great golf, Dave. Our thanks to Brocton Hall GC, Mr R. Hayhurst and his fine greenkeeping team for allowing us the opportunity of using such a superb venue.

Any members wishing for an answer to any query at the AGM must inform the committee in writing beforehand, but obviously the committee welcomes questions from the floor on the day but cannot guarantee an immediate response. Anybody wishing to stand for committee who cannot attend the AGM must give prior notice in writing. Don't forget this is your opportunity to air any queries that you may have and the committee's chance to receive your council first hand. Without your input the Section cannot fully serve you. Look forward to seeing you there.

Until next month folks, enjoy the leaves and worms!

Sean McDade

## Mid Anglia

A list of educational courses was sent by Headquarters to all Head Greenkeepers and Course Managers. The response we had was not overwhelming but the committee will review from the results, what, when and where the most popular courses will take place. The courses will take place during February and March 2004. This year's Christmas tournament will be held at Bocket Hall, so it would be advisable to enter early as this fixture always fills up quickly. The format will be a Texas Scramble as usual in teams of four, but be reminded that at least two of the team must be greenkeepers. On my final note this month I would like to mention that two of our members are getting married. All the best to Gavin Simkins, Mount Pleasant, and Tara, and also to Bob Butfoy, Heydon Grange, and Terri. Good luck and best wishes from the Mid-Anglia Section.

Steve Mason



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## Kent

As I write this report we are experiencing yet another dry month, most of you are having to irrigate and just hoping for rain.

On with the news and I have some great news for the Section this month, I am pleased to announce that on August 30 Rob Holland, Course Manager at Birchwood Park GC and his wife had a new addition to their family, a handsome baby boy which they have named Harry, weighing in at 9lbs 13 ounces. The Section would like to congratulate you both.

As I have been travelling around this month I have been asked to bring to your attention that Norman Croasdale, of Myerscough College, is offering training courses in the area. Courses are available at different levels and can be offered as work-based options, where the student studies in the workplace and is supported by tutor visits and CD/on line material. Should you require any further assistance call 01995 642211.

A date for your diaries, Dec 10 will be the Kent Section Turkey Trot and will be held at Birchwood Park GC.

I am sure that most of you will be starting your winter work programmes as you read this report and I hope that all goes well.

Phil Belton

## Surrey

I am going to start this month's portion of news with a report on an unusual event that took place in Limsfield, a quiet and little explored village in Surrey, just on the Kent border. The date is August 30 and the weather is sunny and warm. Robin Smith, the Head Greenkeeper at Limsfield Chart GC is driving his tractor. He has a smile on his face for his traffic calming is very effective and the

queue of cars behind is growing. Also behind him is his assistant greenkeeper, riding in style, aboard a trailer decorated with flowers and ribbons. His assistant is dressed in flowing white fabric and is looking beautiful. A normal day for some greenkeepers perhaps but for Robin's assistant, daughter Elaine, it is that very special day, her wedding and marriage to Rupert Kelley. Our congratulations and best wishes to them both.

The final of the Bioseed Bowl pairs knockout competition was staged at Foxhills GC on September 10 between Roger Tydeman and Kevin Humphreys, from Croham Hurst GC, and Scott McMurray and Steven Weir, from Wentworth GC. Several of the committee were present and walked the course with the teams to ensure fair play and to encourage with shouts of "Hard luck", "You won't find that." and "It's only a game". The standard of golf was interesting and the eventual winners were Scott and Steve from Wentworth. Many thanks to David Smart, from Bioseed, for sponsoring the event and presenting the prizes after the competition dinner. Comments from the competitors noted during the game were few and not reportable but all agreed the Bioseed Bowl was an important and well supported event in the Surrey Section.

Richmond GC was the venue for our Autumn competition on September 25. It was sponsored by Kestrel Golf and we thank them for the excellent prizes. Lee Strutt and his staff must be complimented on the condition and presentation of the course although some of us wondered what that green substance was between the tees and greens, as on most courses. It is brown. A wonderful day's golf especially for the winners who were: 1, Lee Strutt 42pts; 2, Brian Willmott 38pts; 3, Shaun Whipp, 38pts. Nearest the Pin; Nick Ashman, Ron Christie, Anthony Freeman, Tony Bremer, Mark Harvey. Longest Drive. Nigel Colley. Putting competition. Ian Sellars.

Don't forget the Turkey Trot and AGM is at Epsom GC on December 4. All questions must be received in writing 2 weeks prior to the day.

The Surrey Section committee met on September 16 and it was confirmed that players wishing to enter the Bioseed Bowl must have a BIGGA or official club handicap. Lee Strutt has rejoined the committee as joint regional representative and Tony Bremer will continue as treasurer until the AGM. Nominations for treasurer please in writing two weeks prior to the AGM. Any ideas regarding training courses urgently needed so that members in Surrey can spend the £750 available from BIGGA HQ.

Now news from a member we have seen little of over the past months but he assured me that he will be attending the AGM at Epsom. Hopefully this will be on the same day as the rest of us. John Mathis would like us all to know that his golfing skills have enabled him to win at Southwood GC both the scratch and the nett trophies in the D C Leisure Individual Championship on September 25. Well done John but it's still no excuse for not being at Richmond.

Brian Willmott

## Essex

At the time of writing this article (early October) the first frost of the autumn season had arrived. Added to the poor spring and the long hot dry summer no wonder our stress levels are high trying to produce some type of playing surfaces. The job can become lonely, with us trapped in our own world and to make matters worse unfair knife digging comments from people who have not a clue. Maybe here is the time we should take a step back and not be afraid to telephone a colleague to ask for advice or better still visit each other's courses. I believe this will certainly make you feel better and more confident when answering that next sly comment.

On to our Winter Tournament held at Gosfield Lake GC, on October 1, which was kindly sponsored by Avoncrop Amenity Products and a special thanks to Chris Briggs and Andrew Wood. The day also saw the end of an era with the retirement of that old warhorse Dennis Smith. After many years in the industry. He has become a good friend to many a greenkeeper and to show our appreciation the section presented him with a fly fishing rod and reel to pass the time while waiting for the next Section golf day.

We would like to thank Gosfield Lake GC and in particular Mat Stevenson the President, Greens committee members Chris Green & Joe Warren, Chef Barry on an excellent meal, Club Manager Maggy and the friendly hospitality shown by all of her staff. Finally to Adrian and his greenkeeping team for having the course in the best condition possible under the very difficult weather conditions we are enduring.

On to the prizewinners: Overall Winner. Ian Denny, 41 pts; Cat 1. 1. Anthony



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Kirwin, 34pts; 2. Richard Dunmow, 32pts; 3. Craig Knight, 32pts;

Category 2. 1. Geoff Smith, 37pts; 2. Craig Serafin, 37pts; 3. Martin Forrester, 31pts; Guest. 1. D Wilsheer, 43pts; 2. R Coughlan, 38pts; Trade. Robbie Mitchell, 44pts; Nearest the Pin. Alan Scott. Longest Drive. Richard Hare.

We would like to thank the following for the raffle prizes: CMW, Collier Turf Care, Rigby Taylor, Seoul Nassau, Sea Nymph, Tacit, Eddy (pro shop) and Robert Williams (Greenkeeper, Gosfield).

Good news, the Tractor Driving Courses are now full but we still have plenty of places for the one day communication course at the Bursstead GC. March 2004. For further details please contact me on 01245 603131 or 07984867939.

Martin Forrester

## East Anglia

October 2: Sheringham Golf Club, lovely day out on a well presented course thanks to David and his team. The main sponsors for the day were John Deere, Ben Burgess and Tomlinson Groundcare.

The prizes were presented by David Wakeley, the Club Captain to:- Norman Fenwick, 35pts; Peter Howard, 34pts and Alan (Arthur) Elliot - 34pts in the 0-10 section.

Robert King, 40pts, Richard Plummer, 35pts; Mark Broughton, 35pts in the 11-18 section, and Martin Myson - 39pts, Steve Crabb - 34pts, James Holiday in the 18-28 section.

David Waverley won the guests' prize 36pts and Eddie Baur came second on countback.

Nearest the Pin on the 6th was Colin Rushbrook, who also got the loudest cheer of the day, and rightly so. It only took him 20 years to hit a green on a par-3 let alone win the prize.

Other sponsors were Bartram Mowers, Tacit, Rushbrooks, Sisis, Anglia Mowers, Toro, Textron, Lely UK, Consultant Clarkson, Atterton & Ellis, ETT.

The loo seat was won by Ian Willett who forgot his jacket (shame he didn't forget his tie!) and he tried to take out 'Puffing Billy'. Fortunately he missed and hit the track instead.

All in all a great day out. Thank you Sheringham Golf Club one and all.  
Mick Lathrope

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## South West

Still no significant rain at the time of writing, the smile I said that I had on my face last month is now slowly waning as my thoughts now turn to winter wear, I'm sure that I am not the only one among us thinking that a good dollop of the old white stuff wouldn't go a miss.

A heartfelt thanks to all those who attended the Seminar day here at Bath Golf Club, 46 of you to be precise and even the sun shone for us. A big thank you to Toro for sponsoring the day and also to PSD Agronomy represented by Jay Dobson, John Nicholson Associates with John himself and Roger Davey of Irritech and their wealth of knowledge and time was very much appreciated. Thank you.

Don't forget to ring me with your winter training needs, If what you require is not currently being offered then just let me know, we normally only need a minimum of six to set up a course. Cannington College Seminar is taking place on Wednesday, November 19, and there's a great line up of speakers so please do your best to attend it's always a great day.

I did a quick survey among my lads and do you know none of them would die for me and when asked what they would do if the Atomic bomb went off they all said that they would prefer to be with their loved ones then here at work. You just can't get the staff nowadays?

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Email: [greenkeepers@bathgolfclub.fsworld.co.uk](mailto:greenkeepers@bathgolfclub.fsworld.co.uk)

Guy Woods



## South Coast

Much to report on this month. At last the weather has broken and we have seen some rain! No doubt I will be rueing those words and will soon be fed up with the deluge that we are bound to get. I have been called a pessimist but I always trust the motto from a friend 'Mother nature always pays herself back'.

What I can say is that many greenkeepers will be hoping for a less stressful year next year. Onto lighter matters! Tidworth GC was the venue for our annual match against the South West Section and our Captain assembled a strong team to face the might of the boys from the south-west. The matches were played in excellent spirit and were very close but we managed to edge the match and won 3-2. Many thanks to Tidworth for their hospitality, to the caterers for an excellent meal, to our sponsor, Clarkes Garden Machinery, and, of course, Head Greenkeeper, Chris Brown, and his team for presenting the course magnificently for us. We look forward to the next year's fixture and hopefully more success.

With greenkeepers looking to the skies it seemed somewhat ironic that after praying for rain for weeks that the day we headed for our autumn tournament we were travelling through driving rain! Thankfully the rain stopped as we arrived at Rowlands Castle GC and our wetsuits were not required.

As a committee we endeavour to host our golf days around different areas of the Section, so that members have at least one event near them every year. So it was very disappointing to see such a poor turn out at Rowlands Castle. We can all make excuses for not turning up. We know we are all busy, but we need to support our Section events! Tacit were our sponsors on the day and the prize table was excellent but how much longer will sponsors continue to support us if we do not make the effort as well? Come on let's not let this happen again! Off my soap box and back to the golf. Bill Davis and his team had worked hard to present the course so beautifully for us and the scoring reflected that. I was fortunate to play with Colin White and Gordon Payne and had a very enjoyable round listening to the latest chants of St Mary's. Colin described my golf quite well. Drives like Tiger Woods, chips like Harry Ramsden! Enough said!

Winners on the day were: 1. Kevin Hensman, 42pts; 2. Tony Gadd, 40pts; 3. Alan Magee, 39pts; Longest Drive. Chris Bittern. Nearest the Pin. Stuart Hooker.

Many thanks to Rowlands Castle for their superb hospitality; to the caterers for an excellent meal and to Bill Davis and his hardworking team for all their efforts in preparing the course so well for us.

We must give a huge vote of thanks to Tacit for their valued sponsorship and the superb prize table! Many thanks to Tim who is becoming a welcomed regular face at our Section events.

The section AGM was held after the golf and ran very smoothly. The Section has had another successful year both financially and with our Section events and long may it continue! Our Section Secretary, Fred Deamen, stood down from his post and has decided to take a less demanding role for a while after many years in the demanding post of Secretary. He has worked extremely hard and played a huge part in turning the Section into the success it is today. As a Section we thank Fred for all of his hard work, look forward to his continued support on the committee as treasurer and hope the extra time he will now have at home will be a rewarding one with his family. We have some new arrivals on the committee too. Chris Bittern, from Stoneham GC; Alan Magee, from Parkstone GC, and Kevan Glass, who has rejoined the Section as Deputy Course Manager at Salisbury and South Wilts GC. A huge welcome to all and in particular welcome home to Kevan after his venture across the border to Loch Lomond. Kevan has always kept in touch during his spell in Scotland and enjoyed his time working under Ken Siems. I'm sure when we see him next he will have many a story to tell. This is how your committee will look for the coming year

President. Jim Fry; Chairman. Tony Gadd; Vice Chairman. Phil Wentworth; Secretary. Alex McCombie; Treasurer. Fred Deamen. Tournament Organiser. Chris Sturgess; Sponsorship. Harvey Tribe. Regional Board. Ian Noble. Committee members. Chris Bittern, Alan Magee, Kevan Glass.

Don't forget to try and get along to Cannington College on November 19 & 20 for the South West Seminar. Details are available from me if you have not already received them.

BTME is just around the corner so let's see some more faces from the Section at what is a great week of education. Our next golf day is the Winter tournament which is at High Post GC on Tuesday, December 9. The cost is £18 and cheques made payable to BIGGA South Coast Section should be sent to

Chris Sturgess, 40 Kinsbourne Way, Thornhill, Southampton SO19 6HB. We look forward to seeing you all there. Any news then contact me @

Tel: 01202 661106. Mobile: 07966 386232. E-mail:

a.mccombie@ntlworld.com

Until next month.

Alex McCombie

## Devon and Cornwall

By the time you read this report, you would already have had our first meeting at Truro GC. Hopefully everyone has had the new fixture card, if not please contact me and I will make sure you get one. As I explained in the newsletter, the details for the BTME trip to Harrogate will be sent out in October. Please book your place promptly to avoid disappointment.

Our next meeting will be held at Bigbury GC, on Wednesday, November 19 which will include our Section AGM so if you have anything you would like to bring up, please come along and bring a mate as well.

The Regional Seminar at Cannington will be held on November 19 and 20. There are some excellent high quality speakers this year and you can book your place by either sending off your booking form or contacting Derek Farrington on 07850 162401.

If anyone wants to contact me they can get me on 01822 617671 or mobile 07740 063025.

Steve Evans

## NORTHERN IRELAND

It's October 2 and summer is still with us. It has hopefully been a good education for young greenkeepers to experience, those who have been in the industry for the last five years or so. Novices like myself would have panicked in drought conditions to see our green grass go white and think never to return. Not so, it has been interesting and reassuring to see the benefit of a good scorch and the benefit it has on grass species. I hope your club members who want it green all the time see the benefit (doubt it). We learn something every day, mother nature is the only one who knows it all.

I would think hay and silage crops would be good, should have high dry matter, I've also noticed the sloes on thorn bushes are plentiful. From experience following a good summer and a bountiful harvest we usually get "you've guessed it".

Well, I am short on news this month. Ian Harrison was taken to Spain he said they were going to a bull fight, I hadn't heard they were short on "bulls" they certainly know how to pick them. Ian would certainly give them something to 'OLE' about.

Our magnificent team went to Coxmoor and Hollinwell to represent Northern Ireland in the BIGGA National Golf Championship and Emmett tells me they were c..p! Emmett, Michael King, Noel Crawford, Eamon Crawford and Alan Strachan stayed at "Fawlty Towers". Emmett and Alan had to share a bunk bed, Alan was on top of Emmett, I am trying to visualise the scene. The missing member of pop group Brothers has been found living in Newcastle, Co. Down under an alias (N.C.) no other clues.

AGM. December 3. 7.30pm. Allen Park – Antrim

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This competition is not open to BIGGA Staff or non-members. The solution to the October Turftime Teaser was 'The Green Approach'. The lucky winner of the fantastic Kodak Easyshare Digital Camera is Mr Melvyn Chapman from Durham City Golf Club - WELL DONE!

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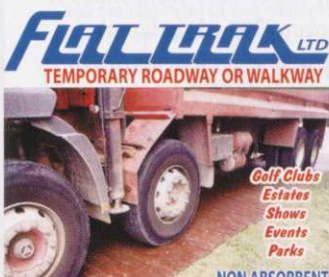


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### Greenkeepers

The Times knows a thing or two about golf courses. When they visited our new course, designed by Kyle Phillips to USPGA specification, it proved something of an eye opener. With state-of-the-art equipment and dedicated staff tending our course – it is little wonder the results are so breathtaking.

We have the latest A4 creeping bent grass for firm, fast putting. We are also one of only two UK Troon affiliated golf courses. If you are an experienced greenkeeper, or just keen to learn about the trade, we can offer you a superb course to learn on, great training, accommodation and subsidised travel. All within 10 minutes of Watford Junction.

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## HARLEYFORD HARLEYFORD GOLF CLUB

Require a

### HEAD GREENKEEPER

Your challenge, should you decide to accept is to ensure HARLEYFORD GOLF CLUB becomes the premier golf course in Buckinghamshire!

**ACCEPT THE CHALLENGE AND BE REWARDED.**

**The remuneration package will meet your skills and experience.**

We require an experienced, hands on, qualified head greenkeeper with managerial control, good operational and communication skills with the flexible approach to working and an extensive knowledge in the presentation of a good quality golf course.

Reply immediately to:

Mr Gary Ivory, Operations Manager, Harleyford Golf Club, Henley Road, Marlow, Bucks, SL7 2SP  
Tel: 01628 816161  
E-Mail: gary.ivory@harleyfordgolf.co.uk

### HEAD GREENKEEPER MIDLOTHIAN, SCOTLAND

Exciting new private golf course designed by famous Swiss architect in Midlothian needs Head Greenkeeper to work with team of approx. 3-5 persons. Present equipment includes new Jacobsen AR250/3200, various Toros, tractors, top dressers etc. Experienced, committed person sought with good mechanical knowledge, ideally non-smoker, aged 30-40. Salary in the range of £20 - 30000 depending on experience.

Please send CV along with hand-written letter to:

S Lacy, Whitehill House, Rosewell, Midlothian EH24 9EG

### WEST HERTS GOLF CLUB

*Founded 1890*

Require a qualified

### DEPUTY HEAD GREENKEEPER

enthusiastic and committed person required to join our energetic and professional team.

Qualified to NVQ Level 2 - PA1, PA2 and PA6 would be an advantage.

Salary is negotiable dependent on qualifications and experience.

Applications in writing with CV to:-

General Manager, West Herts Golf Club, Cassiobury Park,  
Rousebarn Lane, Croxley Green, Rickmansworth, Herts WD3 3GG

ENSIGN  
LEISURE

## Qualified Greenkeepers

Ensign Leisure is an established golf course owner/operator running four courses in West Sussex, Kent and Berkshire.

With our on going expansion and development programme we require confident, self motivated, hard working greenkeepers from trainee through to head greenkeepers/course manager at all levels to join our existing team.

We are a company committed to training and career development and offer the opportunity to progress within our growing business.

Salary is dependant on experience and qualifications.

Please send your current CV to:

**Stephen Blake**  
Director of Operations



Motlands Golf Club, Watermans Lane,  
BRENCHLEY, Kent, TN12 6ND

### SHORTLANDS GOLF CLUB EXPERIENCED GREENKEEPER

Required for a private members club established in 1894.

A good salary will be paid, but the successful applicant will be expected to be sufficiently experienced and qualified to assist our Head Greenkeeper and his staff in all aspects of golf course maintenance and presentation.

Please apply to the Club Manager, Peter May, Shortlands Golf Club, Meadow Road, Bromley, Kent, BR2 0DX (Telephone: 020 8460 8828)

### WESTERHAM GOLF CLUB AND SURREY NATIONAL GOLF CLUB

Require the following:

### HEAD MECHANIC

We are seeking a well organised, experienced mechanic to maintain the machinery at both of our flourishing Clubs. The successful applicant will be conscientious; self motivated and have the ability to deal with two sites.

### ASSISTANT GREENKEEPERS

Positions are available at both courses. The ideal applicants will have two / three years experience and qualified to NVQ Level 2 or equivalent. However, experienced applicants without the above will also be considered.

The Managing Director, Surrey National Golf Club, Rook Lane, Chaldon, Surrey, CR3 5AA



**TORO**

## Technical Sales Support Engineer

**Golf, residential and commercial landscape irrigation**

Lely is the exclusive UK distributor for the world-leading Toro range of professional turf irrigation products and maintenance equipment, as well as consumer lawn and garden machinery, which are manufactured by The Toro Company, of the USA.

We pride ourselves on offering an exceptionally high standard of pre-sale and after sales back-up on all Toro products.

As the UK's leading irrigation products' distributor for golf, residential and commercial landscapes, we are seeking a technical sales support engineer to join our Irrigation Products Division. The position is based at the company's headquarters at St Neots, Cambs. It involves carrying out site and sales visits throughout the UK and Ireland, to support the company's dealers, contractors, specifiers and end-users.

The successful candidate needs to demonstrate a high level of knowledge and experience of the Toro irrigation products' range. Knowledge of Otterbine lake and pond management products would also be an advantage.

The responsibilities of the role are wide-ranging and cover all aspects of irrigation sales and after sales technical support and service training. You will need to be a highly professional, proactive person with good communication skills who can build strong working relationships at all levels. Good computer skills are also a must.

We offer an excellent benefits package that includes basic salary, plus pension and life insurance scheme (after qualifying period).

If you think you have the qualities we are looking for, apply in the first instance to: Christine Wilson, Lely (UK) Limited, Toro Division, Station Road, St Neots, Cambridgeshire PE19 1QH. Tel: 01480 226800 or email [christine.wilson@lely.co.uk](mailto:christine.wilson@lely.co.uk)

**LELY**



## THE KEY FOR GOLF, A.I.E.

Invite applications for the position of

### HEAD GREENKEEPER

Male/Female

Age 30 or older

Minimum of 5 years experience on Warm-Season grasses

Experienced in managing a 36 hole facility

Experienced in golf course construction, renovation and growing

Capable of demonstrating a professional approach to other staff members

Able to lead, motivate and manage an established team

Knowledge of Toro machinery/irrigation, both operation and maintenance

Knowledge of site Pro computerised irrigation system

Understanding of budgetary control techniques

Reasonable golfer

Knowledge of Spanish and English required

Please apply in writing or e-mail together with a full C.V. to:-

Beatriz Fernandez, The Key For Golf, A.I.E., Urb. Mosa Trajectum, Aut. Murcia - San Javier Km 1,4, 30155 Banos y Mendigo (Murcia), Spain  
Fax: 0034 868 050438 Email: [info@thekeyforgolf.com](mailto:info@thekeyforgolf.com)



## ROEHAMPTON CLUB

Invite applications for the position of

### ASSISTANT MECHANIC / GROUNDSPERSON

Roehampton Club is a sports club in south-west London consisting of an 18-hole golf course, 41 tennis courts, 4 croquet lawns, swimming pool complex, gymnasium, 5 squash courts and extensive gardens.

We are looking for an assistant mechanic to work alongside our head mechanic, and to also work in all other areas of the grounds department.

Ideally the successful candidate will have mechanical and grounds experience.

No accommodation available.

Please apply in writing with C.V. by December 1st to:

Anthony Freeman, Course & Grounds Manager, Roehampton Club, Roehampton Lane, Roehampton, London SW15 5LR



## Feature listing from November 2001

**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; Specialty equipment; Thatch removal

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

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

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

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

**May 2002;** BIGGA Report; Nematodes; Caddy 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

**March 2003;** The Berkshire Profile; Meloidogyne; Overseeding Golf Greens; Talking Heads - Health & Safety

**April 2003;** Oakmere Park GC; Spraying; Golf Course Security; Bernhards Delegation; Ransomes Jacobsen Profile

**May 2003;** Cardrona Golf & Country Club; Poa Annua; Rough Mowers; Mole Control; Rootzone; Green Construction

**June 2003;** Irrigation; Ransomes Jacobsen Scholarships; Fertiliser; Fairway Mowers

**July 2003;** Irrigation Water; Greens Mowers; Bent Grasses; Course Management; Rakes

**August 2003;** Aeration; Open Review; Saltex Preview; Waste Water; Toro Student of the Year

**September 2003;** Hanbury Manor; Irrigation; Disease; Integrated Pest Management; Communication

**October 2003;** Construction Machinery; Pay Recommendations; Saltex Review; Pesticide Legislation; Finance



# How fortunate we are!



Golf courses are still very busy with golfers taking advantage of the continuing fine weather. Although we are enjoying the autumn sunshine and the growth rate is easing off, it is almost impossible to carry out our essential autumn maintenance programmes, aeration, hollow coring etc without interfering with the endless streams of golfers. So we will just be slitting our greens and coring one half at a time, by doing just two or three greens a day there is minimum disruption to the golfers. Within a few weeks the work that we have carried out will have almost recovered and then we will carry out the same operation to the other half of greens.

We have been using this method successfully for several years, after all there is not any reason why one should have all 18 greens under repair at one time and then have to listen to all the complaints from the golfers. I fully sympathise with the golfers as more often than not putting surfaces in October are probably as good as they get and it is difficult for them to understand why we have to spoil their fun! Golfers in Britain should think themselves lucky to be able to play throughout the whole year, compared with those from Scandinavian Countries who by now will not be able to play their courses at all, as most will be covered in frost and snow and closed for the next six months.

In my last report I stated that I was visiting Finland where my family joined me for a few days holiday and once there we met up with some friends. An incredible country that seems to have endless lakes (in the region of 200,000) and forests that are so vast and are the home of the black bear and so many elks that the Government issue licences to shoot 100,000 elks per year.

I visited my friend, Lasse, who is a journalist and keen golfer, he was proud to show me the Annilan Golf Course where he is a member near the town of Mikkeli, East Finland. It is incredible how golf has grown in this Country, for example in 1960 there were only six golf courses and 670 players, by 1980 this had risen to 13 courses with over 3000 players and at present they have over 100 courses and 100,000 players. Most clubs have an average of 850 members and increasing, there is a demand for many new courses to be constructed although the playing season is only from May - October, probably one of the reasons that they have not produced many Champions although they have a very promising youngster, Mikko Ilonen, who won our British Amateur Championship and now is improving his position on the PGA European Tour.

My wife and I then went on to Sweden where we were guests of the Swedish Greenkeepers Association, who were celebrating their 25th Anniversary. It really was an eye opener as I did not realise how well supported and large their Association is, and still growing. During their four-day conference/seminar held at JonKoping there were well over 20,000 people in attendance and the whole place was alive with delegates from both Greenkeeping and Ground Care Industries.

The week started with their 18 Hole Golf Championship that is so well supported it is split into three handicap

categories and played over three different Golf Courses. Our former BIGGA Chairman, Richard Barker, enjoyed himself so much last year and made so many friends that he wanted to return this year and play once more, he held his end up well and finished in the top 15. Unfortunately I didn't, but nevertheless we both enjoyed our golf at The Ryfors Golf Club that had huge greens that were slower than we were used to, but that is understandable as within the next few weeks there could be several feet of frost and snow.

The Swedish Greenkeepers put on a superb display in the form of an ice hockey game, the North versus the South, the North winning 6-2, with many of them being former semi-professionals the standard was extremely high for this, their National Sport. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Rolf Lowgren, their Chairman, the board and all the members for their kind hospitality during our stay.

I had only been back to work for one week and then off again to the Nottingham area for our National Golf Championship held over two fabulous golf courses, Coxmoor and the Notts Golf Club, (Hollinwell) both courses being in superb condition with green speeds running in the region of 12 on the stimp and strong winds. Not ideal conditions for a jittery old fart with a broom handled putter. Nevertheless there were some great scores over the two days and our thanks go to the respective Course Managers, Kevin Atherton (Coxmoor), Philip Stain (Hollinwell) and their Greens Staff. We must also thank their Captains and Committees for allowing us to play over their golf courses, that I rank among the top heathland courses in the country.

Since the golf tournament we have had a board meeting at Headquarters where our BIGGA staff are having a busy time preparing for Harrogate among other events, and it was announced that John Pemberton should assume the responsibilities of our Executive Director, Neil Thomas, in his absence. Neil is still undergoing treatment and on behalf of all our members we wish him a speedy recovery.

George Brown  
Chairman





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that count –  
and the external ones.**

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