

Award-winning magazine of the British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association



April 2004 - £3.80

# Greenkeeper

INTERNATIONAL



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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

# Greenkeeper

INTERNATIONAL

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

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## Welcome

### TAKE ADVANTAGE OF "BEST PRACTICE"

February saw the birth of a venture which may prove to be one of the most important and useful the game of golf has seen in some time.

The launch of the R&A's Best Practice Guidelines - Website [www.bestcourseforgolf.org](http://www.bestcourseforgolf.org) - gives all those golf clubs, which are looking to do the right thing but are unsure of the direction in which to go, a real steer.

It will also give Course Managers and Head Greenkeepers, struggling to pull their clubs in the right direction, a useful ally and pointer when it comes to tackling those in the club who feel they know best.

Many people within the game had felt that the R&A needed to provide a lead in such matters and it was R&A Chief Executive, Peter Dawson, who three years ago grabbed the nettle, formed the Golf Course Committee and challenged its members to come up with a method of helping clubs to go about things in the correct manner, not just in Britain, but in large chunks of the world as well.

"Best Practice" is defined as "Management of golf courses in an environmentally and economically sustainable way".

As you will have seen from last month's magazine what has been produced is a user-friendly website which gives assistance in five areas of real importance to golf clubs - management, greenkeeping, environment, planning and development and advice and research.

Of course, you can have the most useful tool in the world but if people don't take advantage of it the benefits are rendered null and void so it is pleasing to hear from Steve Isaac, Assistant Director of Golf Course Management at the R&A, that the first month on-line has been very successful.

A total of 337 clubs have registered from 40 countries with 62% of them coming from Great Britain and Ireland. Of these, 18 clubs have actually started the process laid down by the site, in showing the commitment to bring Best Practice to their clubs.

In addition 15 national Golf Unions and Federations have signed up. Also encouraging is the fact that 3,442 visitors have taken a look at the site and there were over 150,000 hits in the first month.

"Our Committee is delighted with the response in the site's first month on line but would encourage more clubs and Federations to register," said Steve.

I would endorse that. It costs nothing to take a look and I'm sure that if you were to register and get involved in the site, three things can happen, all good:

1. If you are struggling with a particular problem the site should be able to help you towards a solution.
2. The R&A name carries a lot of kudos and clout and it might be the catalyst needed to move the course in the direction you wish.
3. It might just rubber stamp the fact that you are on the right lines. Having that in your back pocket when you next attended a Green Committee would be a nice little piece of insurance.

Scott MacCallum, Editor

### THANK YOU FROM THE THOMAS'

My family and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all friends and colleagues who gave us such incredible support during Neil's illness and ultimately his death.

Many thanks to all who attended the funeral which was a truly memorable occasion and a wonderful tribute to Neil.

I would also like to thank everyone for the many cards, messages, letters and donations which were very much appreciated.

We received over 300 cards, and donations to St. Michael's Hospice have amounted to over £1,500.

As many of you will be aware, Neil received the most wonderful care for the six weeks that he was a patient at the hospice so I know this money will be put to good use. Many thanks to you all once again.

Elaine, Scott, Grant, Adam, Natalie and family.

### BIGGA'S NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR APPOINTED



John Pemberton has been appointed BIGGA's new Executive Director in succession to Neil Thomas, who died in February.

John, who had been Acting Executive Director during Neil's

illness, was offered the position by the Board of Management after the March Board meeting.

"John has done a superb job for the Association during a very difficult time," said BIGGA National Chairman, Andy Campbell.

"John enjoys the full support of the Board of Management and I know that with his

experience, drive and enthusiasm the BIGGA membership can be sure that the Association is in safe hands. BIGGA is very lucky to possess high quality staff and you can be sure that John will get the most from them and move the Association forward."

John joined BIGGA in 1993 as Finance and Administration Manager and was promoted to Deputy Executive Director last year.

"I am delighted to have been given the Board's endorsement and am sure that with the team we have at BIGGA we will continue to move the Association on from strength to strength," said John.

A profile of BIGGA's new Executive Director will appear in the May issue of Greenkeeper International.

### THE RUNNING MAN

Pennard Golf Club Course Manager, Peter Lacey, is in full training at the moment for the gruelling 26.2 miles of the London Marathon.

Peter has already lined up £700 worth of sponsorship and if that is not sufficient encouragement for him to complete the race he has vowed to tail Nell McAndrew for the length of the race.

"I want to break four hours and with a real effort, and in Nell's slipstream, I'd love to complete it in three and a half hours," said Peter, who has already worn out three pairs of trainers in gearing up for the race.

"I'm currently training for at least four and mostly five or even six nights per week and alternating running with cycling in the gym.

"On each run I cover between eight and 12 miles, mostly off road, while I do a big run of between 16 and 20 miles on a Sunday. With a little luck and a load of cod-liver oil and glucosamine sulphate pills I'll stay injury free in the run up.

The race is at the end of this month and anyone who wishes to sponsor Peter, who is running in aid of the British Heart Foundation, can contact him on 01792 233923.



## SCOTTISH NATIONAL CONFERENCE

The BIGGA Scottish Region Greenkeeping Conference was once again held at the Business Learning Centre, Lauder College, Dunfermline in early March.

With 168 delegates in attendance this was the second year in a row there have been more than 160 people attending, including a cross section of the fine turf industry, greens convenors and members.

Scottish Region Education Convenor, Robert Hogarth, Course Manager, Cardrona Hotel and Golf Course, chaired the morning session.

He opened the Conference by introducing the

gave a talk entitled "So you think it's easy selling machinery to golf courses". He covered aspects of selling machines and also the benefits of top dressing.

Finally, to end the morning session, Rex Kimberley, from Terralift Earthsafe Turf Nutrition spoke of his early work in research programmes on ruminant digestion on soil fertility and expanded to speak about liquid products that proved very capable for sports turf grasses and soils.

After lunch the session was chaired by Scottish Chairman, Iain Barr, Course Manager at Largs Golf Club.

His first task was to present the 'Harry Diamond Quaich', which is given annually to the Student Greenkeeper of the Year. The 2003 winner was Paul Todd, of Lanark Golf Club.

The first speaker in the afternoon was to have been Neil Baldwin, of AmegA Science, but unfortunately he was taken ill that morning and was unable to present his talk.

At short notice both Duncan McGilvray and Richard Minton stepped in and presented a short 10-minute talk to the Conference. The Association is extremely grateful to both these gentlemen

for helping out at such short notice.

Following them was David McLay Kidd of DMK Golf Design who extended his talk and spoke about his progression from early education at College through to Golf Course Architect.

David's talk highlighted the many and varied projects he had been involved in from Nepal, USA and the UK. He displayed a great passion

for his work and this was evident in his designs and attention to detail.

Finally Ian MacMillan, Course Manager, Murrayshall Hotel and GC gave a talk entitled 'Simply Divine'. No doubt delegates were all wondering what Ian would conjure up and they were certainly not disappointed.

From his black bin bag he produced his tools for the talk. Twigs, crystals, maps and a divining-rod. He spoke about his search for water and how he had used his newly acquired skills in tracing water at his club. Useful for drainage and tracing bursts etc. The talk, delivered in Ian's own inimitable style, finished off the Conference on a high note.

The Board would like to extend their thanks to Andy Campbell, National Chairman from Carden Park and Scott MacCallum, the Magazine Editor, for taking the time to travel up for the day.

Thanks also go to the Patrons of BIGGA Scottish Region for their continued support. The patronage enables the Region to provide a first class venue at the Business Learning Centre in Lauder College, which in turn helps to attract speakers from throughout the country to Dunfermline every year.

Finally the board of BIGGA Scottish Region would like to place on record their thanks to the delegates for their support and attendance at the Conference. The Region is now in the process of organising next year's Conference and is looking forward to welcoming everyone back in 2005.

**Peter J. Boyd**

**Scottish Regional Administrator**



▲ Paul Todd receives the Harry Diamond Quaich from Iain Barr

first speaker, Duncan McGilvray, Course Manager, Potter Bars Golf Club, who spoke on 'Our Profession' and the need for leadership and control of courses. It proved a most informative and interesting talk.

Next to speak was Richard Minton, from Complete Weed Control. He opened delegates eyes to the necessity of safe and controlled Pesticide application. After a break David Briggs

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## ACCOLADE FOR JAMES

Greenkeeper James Plant (23) is De Vere Dunston Hall's Employee of the Year 2003. Staff are nominated for the accolade by their colleagues with final judging by the joint staff consultative committee.

James received his award, £300 of De Vere vouchers plus a clock for winning his departmental nomination, at a ceremony at Dunston Hall, compered by former Norwich City goalkeeper, Bryan Gunn.

"I was shocked and overwhelmed by the award. It was really unexpected. I love coming to work and hope to eventually become a Head Greenkeeper with the De Vere group," said James

## CLOSURE ON A DEVASTATING INCIDENT

June 17, 1998, is a date which will forever be imprinted on Gary Potter's brain.

That was the day when his life changed completely. It was the date when the roof of the maintenance facility of Skipton Golf Club collapsed on top of him, smashed his back and left him counting his lucky stars that he is still around to tell the tale.

Last November, five and a half years after the accident, compensation won by BIGGA-appointed lawyers, was finally agreed ensuring that while Gary is still in permanent pain, the Potter family are now financially secure.

Gary was the Course Manager at Skipton and was driving a compact tractor into a shed which was no longer quite big enough for all the machinery required to be locked away.

Gary did as was always done and drove in slowly requiring to touch the back wall to ensure no space went to waste. On this occasion though he was just about to dismount the tractor when he heard a noise, looked up and saw bricks and a concrete lintel falling towards him.

Instinctively he pulled back hoping the roll bar would come to his rescue and his actions did help. The lintel just missed his head, flicking off his baseball cap, but unfortunately it bounced back towards him landing on his lap, pinning him while the rest of the rubble came tumbling down on top of him.

Remarkably, despite the searing pain, Gary was able to reach for his breast pocket and his mobile phone and call the emergency services himself.

He then called the pro shop and got hold of the club handyman, Jack Parker, a useful weightlifter,

who came to his rescue. Jack was able to lift the lintel from Gary's lap, a task which subsequently required three men.

"I think adrenaline helped Jack and ever since I've called him my saviour," said Gary, whose attitude to an accident which might destroy lesser men, couldn't be more positive.

He was taken to hospital where tests confirmed that he'd shattered his 12th vertebrae and crushed the muscle on his right leg.

But they said they could rebuild him and a fortnight later he was learning how to walk again, a task made more difficult with two seven and a half inch titanium rods holding his back together, a role they will fulfil for the rest of his life.

He was unable to work for two-and-a-half years relying for much of the time on his BIGGA Personal Accident Insurance and state benefits, while the lawyer, Bristol-based Lyon Davidson, appointed by the BIGGA Legal Helpline fought his case for compensation.

"The late Doug Bell, the Northern Regional Administrator, was wonderful, he brought flowers for my wife and told me to fill out the forms necessary to pursue my case whenever I felt fit enough to do so.

"My lawyer, Kevin Morgan, was also superb. I only met him once in person, most of the time it was over the phone and by e-mail but he couldn't have been more thorough."

It is customary in the case of major accidents for at least a three year sabbatical before a pay out with most being settled in five to seven years and in Gary's case the five and a half years was about par for the course.

Unfortunately, as the driver of the tractor Gary was held to be one third responsible for the accident and as a result lost one third of the compensation pay out, but the £200,000 he received has enabled him to pay off his mortgage and plan for the future with some optimism.

"I can't believe it when I hear people complain that BIGGA does nothing for them. I'm a prime case of what BIGGA can do for you.

"Had I pursued the case myself I would have lost around £25,000 of my compensation in legal fees but it cost me nothing, while whenever I was in contact with people from BIGGA they couldn't be any more helpful," said Gary, who is now an Associate Member.

"You never know when something similar might happen to you and while BIGGA offers so much to its members, if there was nothing else but the Personal Accident Insurance, it would still be worth every greenkeeper in the country becoming a member."

Unable to carry on working as a greenkeeper, Gary initially worked part-time for Myerscough College as an assessor but for the last three and a half years he has been a Technical Advisor for Vitax.

"I love my job but I really do miss greenkeeping. It was in my blood but I'm delighted that, although in constant pain, I can walk, drive and carry on my life."



## TOP JOB FOR EUAN



▲ Euan Grant

St Andrews Links Trust has appointed Euan Grant as Head Greenkeeper in charge of the Old Course, following the recently-announced departure of Eddie Adams to become a Greenkeeping

Consultant with the PGA European Tour.

Since joining the Links in June 2002, Euan Grant has been Head Greenkeeper in charge of the New Course. He previously worked as Head Greenkeeper at Marriott Forest of Arden Golf and Country Club where he was involved in course set up for two English Opens.

He also worked on the construction and subsequent management of two 18-hole courses in Surrey. Highly qualified, Euan won the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Award in 1994.

In his two years at the Links he has made a number of improvements to the New Course including the creation of new championship tees to

bring the course to 6,769 yards.

"Euan has impressed us with his management skills and dedication," said Gordon Moir, Links Superintendent at the Links Trust.

"We have every confidence that under his management the Old Course will continue to go from strength to strength and to be presented in the traditional way."

Eddie, 35, had worked for St Andrews Links Trust for 19 years.

He became Head Greenkeeper of the Old Course in 1993 at the age of 24, making him the youngest person to hold that position in the course's 600 year history.

He had overseen course preparations for two Open Championships, 10 Dunhill Championships and 10 Links Trophy events, making more changes and adding more new tees to the course than any of his predecessors with the exception of Old Tom Morris, Custodian of Links for 40 years.

"Naturally the Old Course is very dear to me but I am looking forward to a brand new challenge," said Eddie, who will continue to be based in his home town of St Andrews.

"The focus will be course preparation for tournaments and I will be using all the knowledge and skills which I have developed at the Home of

Golf."

His new position as the only full-time Greenkeeping Consultant employed by The European Tour will involve him in liaison with courses which are staging Tour events.

"The Tour's greenkeeping support team is a vital service to many of our venues and I am delighted that we have

secured someone of Eddie's knowledge and experience to complement our existing staff," said David Garland, Director of Tour Operations for the PGA European Tour.

Gordon Moir added, "It is generally recognised that the condition of the Old Course has improved year after year and this is thanks to the efforts of Eddie and his team. However, I am delighted that he has been offered this great opportunity to work on the Tour and wish him every success."



▲ Eddie Adams

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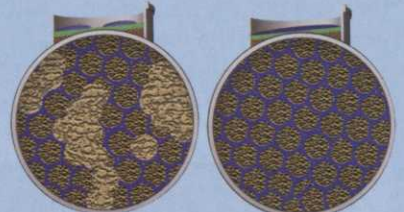
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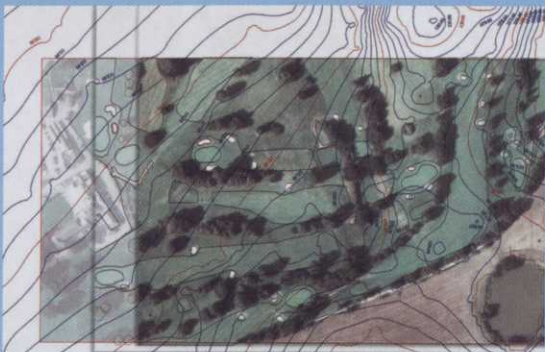
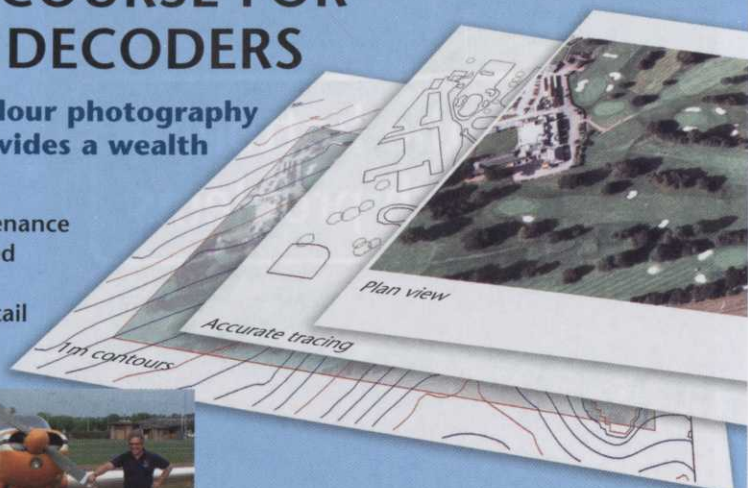
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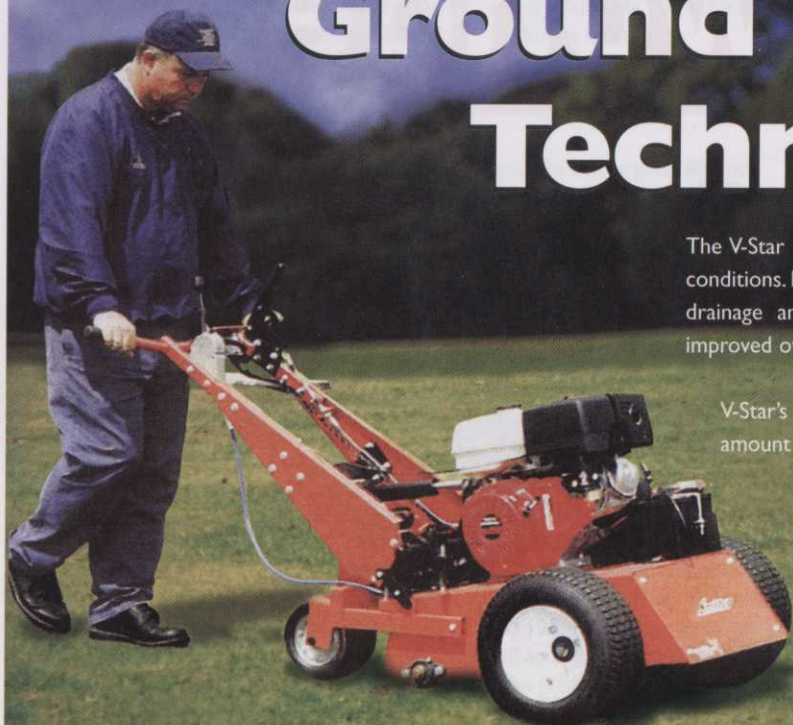
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# Education Update



As this spring's regional training courses draw to a close, it is time for members to start thinking about the training they require in their Regions and Sections for autumn 2004 and spring 2005.

If you have a particular training need then speak to your Section Secretary/Regional Administrator or contact Sami or me at BIGGA HOUSE. Thanks to contributors to the BIGGA Education and Development Fund, we are able to keep the cost of training down to £50+VAT for a one day course and £100+VAT for a two day course.

## BIGGA Golf Environment Competition

Final negotiations are taking place to secure a third sponsor for the, annual, BIGGA Golf Environment Competition. Thanks to the continued support of Scotts UK Professional and of Syngenta Professional



Golf Environment Competition

Products the introduction of a third sponsor will ensure that the Competition will continue to attract high quality entries from Golf Clubs in Great Britain, help golf clubs to manage their golf course with the environment in mind and spread the word that golf courses are environmentally friendly.

The 2004 Competition will run on similar lines to previous years and details will be sent out later this month. Entry forms will have to be returned to BIGGA House by the end of May when the Competition judges, from STRI, will look at nine areas of environmental management:

- Nature Conservation
- Energy Efficiency
- Landscape and Cultural Heritage
- Education and Training
- Water Resource Management
- Turfgrass Pest Management
- Communications
- Public Access and Awareness
- Waste Management

Those clubs judged to meet the criteria best will be selected to progress to the second stage of the Competition while clubs not selected will receive extended feedback on their entry.

Clubs selected to progress to the second round will be visited by the judges who will, subsequently, select the prize winners for 2004.

The National Winner will receive a cheque for £2,000, a Scott's Weather Master Weather Station and the BIGGA Golf Environment Trophy.

Each of the other four area winners and the runners up in the winner's region will each receive a cheque for £500

Prizes of £500 will be awarded for:  
**The Best Environmental Initiative**  
**The Most Impressive Newcomer**  
**The Best Use of Recycled Materials**

All prize winners receive a plaque to display in the Clubhouse.

Whether your course is large or small, it provides an important link in the environmental chain, helping to achieve long term ecological benefits.

Let your members, local residents and the World see what you are doing by entering this year's competition.

Who knows, it may be your turn to join this year's winners at the BTME & ClubHouse Exhibition in Harrogate next January.

Watch out for details of the Competition Sponsors in the next edition of Greenkeeper International.

Continue to learn

Remember that copies of each talk given at Harrogate, complete with Powerpoint slides are available on DVD.

Each DVD contains four talks and costs £20. Contact Sami or Ken at BIGGA House for further details.

# Toro. Riding high with John Shaw

Groundscare equipment specialists John Shaw Machinery will next year celebrate 20 years unbroken service as a Toro commercial products dealer.

This is just one of many statistics that confirm the depth of knowledge and experience that John Shaw Machinery offers Toro customers throughout its area covering the South East of England. Another is that five of the company's personnel have more than 100 years combined Toro working experience between them.

Chairman and proprietor John Shaw tops them all with 29 years of Toro; while managing director David Cole and sales and marketing director Steve Vogels each boasts 23 and 16 years respectively. Area sales manager John Colebrook weighs in with another 26 years. Finally, commercial director Miranda Meaden, John Shaw's daughter, also chips in with 14 years.

David Cole said: "John Shaw Machinery was founded as the Toro dealer for Sussex in 1985 and has been one ever since. This is a business that tries hard, has a lot of experience and knows a great deal about Toro."

The company was set up to provide sales and service to professional users and larger private gardens and estates of commercial groundscare machinery, compact tractors and allied equipment. Since 1987 it has been based at Holmes Hill, which is located on the A22



*Riding high: John Shaw Machinery directors with Toro distributor Lely personnel. From left, Steve Vogels, John Pike, Jeff Anguige, John Shaw, David Cole and Peter Mansfield, John Pike is Toro area manager covering the South East.*

between Hailsham and Uckfield, in East Sussex.

About 70 per cent of the business is in golf, 20 per cent in sports and the rest spread across amenity, leisure and private estates.

From its roots serving Toro customers in Sussex, John Shaw Machinery has expanded its operations, which now extend to cover Kent, Surrey, south London and east Berkshire.

David Cole said that as the firm's business area has grown, measures have been built-in to ensure that wherever they are located Toro customers will receive the best possible service.

"These days, being a successful

machinery dealer means investing heavily to meet the level of commitment and quality of resources that manufacturers such as Toro are rightly seeking for users of their products," said David Cole.

"John Shaw Machinery has invested heavily in its infrastructure. For example, in August 2002 we opened a new 6,000sq ft warehouse. This trebled our parts storage area, substantially increased our whole goods facilities and gave us a much larger area for our PDI department, which trebled its staff. Then there is our £1/4 million demonstration fleet. You need a territory of substance to pay for all that."

## A range to count on

John Shaw Machinery sells and services the complete range of quality Toro golf course machinery. This starts with the renowned Toro Greensmaster pedestrian and ride-on (pictured below) greensmowers, and includes Reelmaster fairway units, Groundsmaster models for roughs, plus tees mowers, as well as aeration equipment and Workman utility vehicles.

Toro has recently been busy introducing many new products. They include the revolutionary new DPA cutting system. This enables ride-on Greensmaster mowers to shave golf greens closer than ever before – to just 1/16th of an inch, which is 1/32nd of an inch lower than previous units.



The firm has also just given its Workman 3000 and 4000 heavy-duty utility vehicles a stylish new appearance and a host of new features for greater driver comfort, easier operation and better control.

Toro's new 6ft cut Reelmaster 2000-D triplex unit is being hailed as the most economical diesel trim mower on the market and delivers a superior quality of cut on golf courses.

Also new is the ProCore 648 self-powered, pedestrian greens aerator. It cores faster than anything else in its class and the wheels are located in front of the tines so it never runs over the cores.

You can count on Toro and John Shaw Machinery to serve you well...



## First choice for sales, parts, service and finance

Setting up three Toro-approved service centres was a key part of John Shaw Machinery's strategy to ensure quality customer service in all parts of its dealership area. They are located at Sittingbourne, Kent (Mobile Mower Services), Shepperton (Turf Machinery Engineering), and West Sussex (LRS Mechanical Engineering).

Managing director David Cole said: "We still serve the whole territory ourselves and our customers can deal with us personally. But the service centres are there to give additional support and more choice where customers

prefer it. Between us, we now have 18 service technicians covering the area."

On parts, a carriage-free service is offered. Orders received before 4pm are despatched that day for next day delivery to customers. A new bespoke courier service is also available in emergencies.

The company through its finance partners can offer all the usual kinds of finance deals at attractive terms, including operating lease, hire purchase and finance lease agreements.

Rachael and Gemma from Membership Services would like to welcome 70 new members to the Association.

# Membership Update

## BREAKDOWN COVER HAS NEVER BEEN BETTER

Silver Knight Rescue is being relaunched this month and now offers three different levels of cover that provide even better value than before.

The levels of cover available are as follows:

### PREMIUM

ONLY £36.00

- Roadside Assistance 24 hours a day, 365 days a year anywhere in the UK
- Recovery to a garage, your home or your original destination
- Overnight accommodation for the driver and passengers in the event that they cannot get home
- Cover for flat battery, loss of keys, puncture and running out of fuel
- Free route maps for the UK

### PLUS

ONLY £49.50

Everything provided under Premium with the addition of Home Rescue if the breakdown occurs at home

### ADVANCE

ONLY £62.00

Everything provided under Plus with the addition of European Cover



Whether you drive to your local shops or you regularly drive long distances Silver Knight Rescue gives you peace of mind along with the knowledge that because of your BIGGA membership you are enjoying one of the best breakdown deals available. Just take a look at the price comparison chart below and see how much you can save.

Silverknight		AA*	RAC*
PREMIUM	£36.00	£84.00	£81.00
PLUS	£49.50	£149.00	£149.00
ADVANCE	£62.00	Additional cover must be purchased	Additional cover must be purchased

\* Nearest equivalent cover - prices correct on 11/03/04

## For further details please call 0800 068 1893

Please note the original Silver Knight package launched in November 2002 is no longer available. The special deal available when Rescue and Repair are purchased at the same time no longer applies as current deals are now cheaper than the original offer.

### BIGGA welcomes...

#### SCOTTISH REGION

Fraser Cochrane, Central  
Gary Douglas, Central  
Colin Finlay, East  
David Goldie, Central  
John Harvey, West  
William Lewis, West  
Iain Macdonald, Ayrshire  
Joseph Maloy, West  
Martin McKenzie, East  
John Mitchell, Central  
Stephen Nelson, West  
Graeme Petrie, West  
Mark Rae, North  
Barry Ross, Central  
Dale Stephen, North  
David Stephen, North  
Allan Syme, West

#### NORTHERN REGION

Daniel Adams, Northern  
Gavin Barker, North West

Arthur Brown, Sheffield  
Richard Bull, Northern  
Stephen Byrne, North West  
Gary Catley, Sheffield  
Kevin Clarke, Sheffield  
Christopher Cole, North Wales  
Mark Cooper, North East  
Richard De Vall, North Wales  
Michael Gillett, Sheffield  
Mark Grice, North West  
John Hammond, Northern  
James Hopkins, Northern  
Charles Poulter, Northern  
David Sales, Sheffield  
Jonathan Schofield, Sheffield  
David Stokoe, North East  
Dylan Williams, North Wales

#### MIDLAND REGION

Chris Carey, BB&O  
Lee Cooper, East Midlands  
John Cox, Mid Anglia  
Paul Crooks, BB&O

Marcus Davis, Mid Anglia  
Richard Dimmock, Midland  
David Harcombe, East Midlands  
Christopher Hindle, East Midlands  
Daniel Hodkin, Mid Anglia  
Ian Holborn, Midland  
John Jarrel, East of England  
P Lawrence, Mid Anglia  
Gary Matthews, Midland  
Niki Megarity, BB&O  
Steven Payne, BB&O  
Timothy Reynolds, Midland  
Simon Rhodes, East Midlands  
James Robinson, BB&O  
Simon Walthers, Midland  
Dean Wingfield, Mid Anglia

#### SOUTH EAST REGION

Mark Wright, Essex  
Daniel Breen, Surrey  
Peter Brudenell, Kent  
Sam Butler, East Anglia  
Gerard De Wolff, East Anglia

Tommy Drewett, Surrey  
Steven Dyne, Kent  
George Grimes, Essex  
Paul Newnham, Sussex  
Peter Lee, London  
Andrew Taylor, London  
Terence Simmonds, London  
Daniel Simpson, Kent  
Jay Wall, Surrey  
Barry Williams, Surrey  
Matthew Winter, East Anglia

#### SOUTH WEST/SOUTH WALES

Andrew Webber, South West  
Antony Moore, South West  
Matthew Worster, South West  
Lee Baddeley, Devon & Cornwall  
Terrance Burke, South Coast  
Stephen Christopher, South Coast  
Paul Evans, Devon & Cornwall  
Scott Gaylard, Devon & Cornwall  
Graham Hastie, South Coast  
Simon Johnstone, South Coast

Robbie Kingman, South Coast  
Paul Moore, South Coast  
George Morgan, South West  
Richard Peters, South Wales  
Gary Pither, South West  
Martin Saunders, South Coast  
Christopher Sherrington, South Coast  
Phil Smith, South Coast  
Derek Waters, South Coast  
Brian Wheeler, South Coast

#### INTERNATIONAL MEMBERS

James Timmins, Southern Ireland  
Jens Andersen, Denmark  
Nick Bosholdt, Denmark  
Jeppe Kristensen, Denmark  
Christen Lassen Schmidt, Denmark  
Jason Law, Southern Ireland  
Bart Cash, USA  
Jim Ramey, USA  
Mark Aitken, Other America

Nicholas Weller, Middle East

#### ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

John Shepherd, North Wales  
Robert Cassells, Northern Ireland  
Roger Walfe, Surrey

#### CORPORATE MEMBERS

Simon Watson, Northern

#### STUDENT MEMBERS

Mathew Sparrow, Sussex  
Gavin Lowe, Central Scotland  
Donal Kearney, Essex  
Andrew Henderson, Northern Ireland  
Adam Champion, Canada  
Matthew Howes, East Midlands  
Brian Noble, East Scotland  
Matthew Schiffer, East Scotland  
Kevin Whalley, Northern  
Jake Gibbs, East of England

### APRIL'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 an 0.5 litre isolating flask suitable for hot and cold drinks and soups. Our congratulations go to Marcus Phelps from Marlborough Golf Club who wins a digital clock.

### Message of the Month Winner

The best message on the BIGGA Bulletin Board, this month is Robert Sandilands from Kenwick Park Golf Club whose message was posted on the 15th March 2004 under the 'Talk about Turf' section. Congratulations, and you will receive an 18 litre Gelert Rucksack featuring a multi function organiser, 2 mesh pockets and a grab handle

# Golf's Sweetspot

Bernhard's Scholarship Delegate Will Bowden reports on a successful trip to San Diego

On Sunday the 8th of February at about 12 pm the 10 successful applicants of the 2004 Bernhard and Co. BIGGA delegation left London Gatwick, and embarked upon almost 13 hours of travel en route to San Diego and the 75th GCSAA Tradeshow and Conference.



▲ Of special interest was the wastewater wash down area in operation



▲ Pictured are the members of the delegation with Jose Garcia on one of the greens

It's fair to say that the many hours of flying took their toll on most of the delegates. However much of our tiredness was swept aside by the impressive sight of an illuminated San Diego as we descended in to the city's airport at about 7.30pm local time.

Immediately the grey, drizzly England we had left behind became a distant memory as we stepped off the plane and in to a place of palm trees and suntans!

We were met by the Bernhard team and a local taxi driver who insisted we were Australian, his only reason for this being that Melbourne was the only city he'd ever visited outside the US and therefore we must be Australian!

We were taken to our hotel which was situated in the district known as Mission Valley, a short shuttle-bus ride from the conference centre.

The next morning we awoke to glorious sunshine and clear blue skies.

San Diego is just 50 miles North of the Mexican border, it's the sixth largest city in America and the place where Americans like to holiday most! The area is rich in cultural, geographical and climatic variety.

There are four different climate zones: coastal, inland (where summer temperatures often exceed 90c), mountain and desert. With a population of 2.8 million San Diego benefits from a temperate climate averaging just 15 wet days a year. (a bit like Manchester!) During our stay temperatures averaged about 66f.

From a golfing perspective there are approximately 90 golf clubs in the area, equally divided between private and public.

Our week began with an eight hour educational seminar entitled: 'Turfgrass Stress Management'. The lecturers were Karl Danneberger and Joseph M. DiPaola.

The seminar focused on the various cultural systems and turf responses to environmental, cultural and biotic stress conditions. The aim was to highlight various methods of preventing or minimising stress injury to turf.

The topics ranged from the intensive use of PGR's in the battle to reduce Poa infestation, through to strategies for reducing the occurrence of summer dry patch and even methods to eliminate tissue damage from winter chilling stress.

Not all the information could easily be applied to our situation in Northern Europe. Elements of the presentation were interesting, not least when we were assigned group tasks.

This allowed us to discuss among our American colleagues typical maintenance strategies both in the UK and US. Some of the philosophies and levels of detail were eye opening to say the least!

The following day of the tour was one of the most memorable. We were taken on a field trip to two destinations in the area. Accompanied by Stephen and Sam and the rest of the Bernhard team our first stop was the Golf Club of California, an impressive facility situated just 25 minutes from downtown San Diego.

The course was opened in 2002 and designed by an American architect called Johny Pott. The primary objective was to create a layout that would integrate naturally in to its surrounding environment. Upon arrival we were greeted by the Course Superintendent, Jose Garcia. We were immediately impressed by his new maintenance facility and its level of cleanliness.

The course was young in establishment, however the pure bent greens were impressive as they felt firm and responsive under foot. Designed for the higher end of the market the club has a limited membership of just 160 and impacts approximately 10,000 rounds per year.

Jose explained how he had an operating budget of \$1.3million per year and a staff in excess of 20. Some of these statistics were put into perspective when he claimed that 20% of his budget went on water and power supplies with a staggering \$15,000 per night for water in times of extended drought! It was also surprising to hear that in the two years he had been working at the club, he had taken just three days holiday.

Also interesting was the method of Poa control being employed on the course. It was noticeable that the fairways took on a light brown tinge, this was in part due to the transition of the Bermuda grass, but also the application of diluted paraquat to all fairways and approaches. This is a practice used extensively in the US and with increasing frequency in Britain.

After leaving the Golf Club of California we travelled to the Taylor Made and Adidas Headquarters. Here we were shown around this impressive facility

by the Superintendent Patrick Waymire. The facility not only provides an exclusive club fitting and swing analysis service for some of the World's top players, but also produces every Taylor Made club distributed throughout the World at its assembly plant.

Over 600 employees assemble and pack each club in approximately two to three minutes churning out 20,000 clubs every day! The shop floor spanned over 220,000 sq.ft. with the atmosphere inside the workshop being intense to say the least.

Aside to just club production, the facility also has its own ball testing laboratory and an extensive practice facility of which Patrick was in charge.

As we toured his workplace we soon became united in the conclusion that his was without doubt THE best job in the World!

With a three man team under him and a budget in excess of \$160,000/yr to look after just 10 acres of turf. Added to this were the perks; \$2000/yr golf equipment and apparel allowance, new clubs every season, free health insurance, free meals, no weekend work and a new fleet of machinery almost every year! On top of this we were told how Patrick had just negotiated a years free trial of fertiliser. I think its fair to say he will be going no where fast!

The practice facility encompassed: One driving range, two putting greens (both Bent/Poa) and three bunkers. Patrick had previously worked as a Course Superintendent but he was without a doubt the most laid back man we'd meet on our trip!

Toward the end of our visit we were fortunate to bump into John Daly. The immediate thought of the group was for a team photo. However all notions of this were cast aside as soon as Paul Jenkins decided to introduce himself as the person who'd been the bunker raker for Daly during The Open.

Unfortunately it conspired that Daly had that day visited just about every bunker on the Royal St. George's while on his way to shooting himself out of the Championship. Not a particularly cherished association. Consequently I have a very distant shot of John Daly's behind as he strode away from us... Cheers Paul!

The week was passing us by and by Wednesday we were just getting acclimatised to the Californian weather. We spent the day as part of a Turfgrass field seminar which took us on a pit-stop tour of a range of facilities in the area.

First stop was the newly constructed home of the San Diego Baseball team, the San Diego Padres. The facility, known as Pecto Park, was 90% complete and not due to open until March. It was quite an experience for the group as many of us had never stepped foot inside a baseball stadium before.

We then moved on to the Del Mar race track, where we gained an interesting insight into the various maintenance and damage limitation techniques employed to maintain turf on a race track that is in use for up to 80% of the year.

In the afternoon we were treated to visits to two of the region's most prestigious golf courses: The Bridges Golf Club in Santa Fe, and The Fairbanks Ranch Country Club.

The Bridges Golf Club is described in their literature as 'A place lost in

time'. The concept was to create a little piece of Tuscany in California! The results were surprisingly impressive, with an intimidating Tuscan' style Clubhouse overlooking an awe-inspiring golf course.

The course was opened in 1999 and designed by Robert Trent-Jones Jr. A full time staff of 32 (that swells to 45 in summer) intensively manicure its 300 acres of immaculate turf. The greens were particularly impressive, sown as a G-6 Bentgrass and taking up a total of three acres they are maintained to stimp all year round at 9.5-10.5 on the metre.

The fairways encompassed 26 acres of once, if again, immaculate turf. The TifwayII mix was dense and natural in colour. There was a policy of no overseeding with Rye, which is a unique concept in this climatic zone. The justification for this was pure playability, the members didn't mind the discoloration of the dormant Bermuda and preferred its all year round playing characteristics.

The Bridges derives its name from the two stress ribbon suspension bridges that link the 10th and 11th holes. These 285 foot bridges were only the second and third to be completed in the US. Among its 250 members is Phil Mickelson and with a substantial membership fee of \$380,000 per year and on top of this a monthly fee of \$1,000 its expected not to grow much higher!

What I think we all found refreshing was that this was not a typical run-of-the-mill American golf course. The Bridges is highly unique and really does sit well among its surrounding arid landscape.

To contrast we then visited The Fairbanks Ranch Golf and Country Club. Again a private members club with roughly 500 members who pay a fee of \$85,000 per year for the privilege.

Designed by Ted Robinson Snr, the Club opened in 1984 and among other things was a site for the equestrian endurance event in the 1984 summer Olympics. The course was built on a riverbed and placed on top of this was over one million yards of imported soil. This allowed the grade of the site to be raised by 20-30 feet in an effort to reduce the occurrence of seasonal flooding.

The primary reason for our visit to Fairbanks was that in the past the course has been irrigated with second grade well water which has an exceptionally high dissolved water content.

Under recommendation all tees, fairways and roughs were therefore overseeded with Seashore Paspalum grass (Excalibur). This was regarded as the only way of maintaining quality turf coverage under such high salt conditions.

The advantages were high wear tolerance, good summer colour and consistent density. The disadvantages were a long dormant season, a sensitivity to many herbicides and significant thatch accumulation.

Consequently the Superintendent is moving away from this species and introducing a more traditional Bermuda/Rye mix, with tall fescue roughs.

Aside from these issues the greens were some of the finest pure Poa annua surfaces imaginable. However with up to 36 staff on 27 holes and just under 35,000 rounds per year it was obvious why!



▲ The picture shows the effect this highly diluted application has in stressing out the Poa, whilst the surrounding Bermuda/Rye mix is unaffected



▲ Pictured is a typical hole at The Bridges. Taken from the tee with a carry over a scrubland ravine



▲ The group pictured at The Bridges

The following is a typical summary of the greens maintenance schedule at Fairbanks:

- Greens fed once a week with foliar feed.
- They receive 6-7lbs/sq.ft. of N and P/ yr.
- PGR's applied weekly.
- Greens toppedressed every three weeks.
- Verticut as required and rolled three times per week.
- Double cut and rolled for tournaments.

Leached every month during times of low rainfall and high irrigation months between June-November. (Leaching helps to maintain low soil salinity)  
Typical pest problems: Anthracnose, Rapid blight, and Fusarium.

The remaining three days were predominantly taken up by the show.

At 9am on the Thursday morning we attended the official opening session. The event was hosted by the then President Jon Maddern with golf commentator Jim Nantz as the featured speaker. During this one and a half hour session there were more backs slapped and proclamations of love made than in any episode of Dynasty I could remember!

This aside there is no doubt that the GCSAA have continually raised the bar in terms of their associations image and stature and as a result the members are justly proud.

The tradeshow was phenomenal, a total of 19,317 delegates attended with 684 exhibitors covering a floor space of 240,000 sq.ft.

It's hard to draw comparisons with our own show at Harrogate. We are poles apart in every sense. The media coverage of the event was intensive, Superintendents were being interviewed with the entire golf industry seemingly aware of the events importance.

The dress code of collars, no denim and no trainers was refreshing and the no smoking or drinking policies within the show were strictly enforced.

Exhibitors were both friendly and well informed, sadly many of the more innovative products in the stands were as yet unavailable in the UK. It was good to see two British colleagues represented at the show and of course the BIGGA stand, where Andy Campbell and the team were ever present to advise



▲ Pictured below the San Diego Convention Centre, home to the 75th GCSAA tradeshow



▲ A view from the Clubhouse at Fairbanks G&CC

visitors with any queries they may have had regarding the association.

On the Thursday evening Stephen Bernard hosted the Prestige Club Dinner which provided us all with a great forum to either catch up with old friends or make new ones, while enjoying a first class dinner.

We all took the opportunity to gain a further insight into the profession as it is in America and discuss a wide range of topics.

During the last day of the show many of us took the opportunity to drive out to Torrey Pines GC and watch the third round of the Buick Classic.

I believe those who went were fortunate to meet the Superintendent who showed them the facility and answered their questions relating to the staging of the event.

It was also a relief to see that "The Jenkins' Curse" was not repeating on John Daly, as he eagled the last to set up a famous victory and banish the memories of Royal St George's forever!

As the week came to an end it was clear that we all took different experiences from the tour. We were all astounded by the style of greenkeeping 'stateside' but we were also impressed by the general image and obvious high regard the greenkeeping industry enjoys in America.

On a personal note one of the most memorable moments for me came on the last day of the show when we attended a seminar focussing on how a golf course should be set up to host a major event.

In attendance was the esteemed golf course architect Rees Jones. When he was asked what his views were on the future management of golf courses he replied: "Brown is good, we need to get out of this Augusta Syndrome and start producing sustainable golf courses with firm, fast surfaces"....wise words!

Finally I know all the delegates would like to thank Stephen and Sam for all their efforts, plus of course Kim and the other Bernhard staff who helped make our stay so special. Our thanks also to BIGGA and their support to the delegation. This is an opportunity, that as members, we should all take advantage of and I would urge others to apply for the Scholarship later this year!



▲ Pictured are a couple of the tour delegates benefiting from a practical demonstration from one of the Bernhard staff

# Your Letters...

## A Lost Friend

What does one say when one loses a friend? Neil Thomas was our Executive Director and our friend. He directed our association from the hotch-potch conglomeration it was to the elevated and respected position we now hold.

He opened doors for the greenkeeper that no matter how we tried as three separate associations we could never have moved.

His educational programme alone entitles him to a place of honour in greenkeeping annals. When we look back to when he took us in hand and pulled our profession up by the boot-straps and told us we had to stand up and be counted if we were ever to become the association he envisaged. We realised that here was someone who could lead us to a place in the big expansive world of golf and make a niche for the unsung, unseen and under-estimated greenkeeper. Neil Thomas never looked back – I don't think he knew how to – BTME is the proof of that.

In the beginning of Neil's time with us we did get a push up the ladder from the R&A but only so far, the exceptional progress was made by Neil.

One could honestly say, considering he had no money, no premises, and most certainly not a lot of prospects when he took on the job, he made the transfer from rags to riches for BIGGA.

Those of us who had the privilege to work with him will remember when he got the bit between his teeth there was no holding him. His aims were high and he and he alone instilled in the early guard of Management a forward drive which still prevails.

What I have written here only scratches the surface of what Neil has done for greenkeepers. I am sure many others will elaborate on his achievements.

As I look back over the years and as we move forward, probably into realms of which we can only dream, we can always hope Neil's guiding hand will be at the wheel of our great adventure into the future.

Cecil George  
Lenzie

## A Debt of Gratitude

In 1986 the three Greenkeeping Associations, The British Golf Greenkeeping Association; The Scottish International Golf Greenkeeping Association and The English International Golf Greenkeeping Association had meetings that were hosted by the Royal and Ancient, out of which, in 1987, was formed the British and International Golf Greenkeeping Association.

I can remember attending the first Annual General Meeting, which was at Wetherby Race course, and was talking to another Greenkeeper colleague and saying to him, "Wouldn't it be a marvellous sight to see all the Greenkeepers in the Association blazer?" This appears to be the norm now at AGMs as we produce a really professional image and make a real contribution in the world of golf.

Looking back on the formation with the appointment of Neil Thomas as the Executive Director no-one would believe we have come so far in such a short time. This is down to the Board of Management and the R&A who have given their time freely for the benefit of the Greenkeepers.

Neil Thomas guided the Association from the headquarters of the STRI at Bingley and brought credibility and worldwide recognition of the Association. Casting my mind back, we now have an Association we can be proud of, with a host of benefits for the Members that can be found in your membership package.

We have a Magazine that we own, a highly successful Trade Show and the Greenkeeping Association that is profiled in the Open Championship with a Support Team and at the Volvo PGA Championship at Wentworth.

Words seem inadequate for what Neil Thomas brought to the Association. I feel we certainly owe him a debt of gratitude for making it an Association that we can be proud of. He has certainly given the Association a springboard to continue the work that he has started.

I would like to pass on my sympathies to his wife Elaine and family. They can be extremely proud of his achievements and I offer my condolences and those of the Northern Region at this sad time.

Neil had a vision from the very outset of the way he saw the Association growing in stature. From the very beginning it must have been a very daunting task, from the humble beginnings to the lasting legacy that he has left the Association. This is a great testament to a very quiet gentleman.

Ian Holoran, Northern Region Chairman

Letters continued  
on page 32...

**YOUR LETTERS ARE REQUESTED!**

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)

# The Greenkeeper and the Rules of Golf

Tim Hudspith, of the PGA's Tournament Department outlines some of the rules with which greenkeepers should be well acquainted

For a greenkeeper to set up a golf course that is well defined for not only the player but also the Committee administering an event, an awareness and understanding of a number of Rules of Golf issues is of prime importance.

The rules of the game revolve around honesty and integrity and every greenkeeper must endeavour to provide all golfers who step on to their course with an opportunity of applying them fairly and consistently.

This article will attempt to identify a number of on-course rules issues that are frequently misunderstood and applied incorrectly by many greenkeepers up and down the country.



▲ The golfer is entitled to stand outside the markers - always assess the ground around each marker



▲ The teeing ground is two club lengths in depth - always assess the ground within that area

## THE TEEING GROUND

The game of golf begins at the teeing ground and this is one area of the course where many misjudgements are made. The Rules of Golf defines it as 'a rectangular area two-club lengths in depth', therefore when setting the tee markers, greens staff should always ensure that they are positioned **at least** two club-lengths forward from the back edge of the tee.

Additionally, the area surrounding the teeing ground must also be considered. A golfer should be able to make an unobstructed swing even if he tees his ball at the extremity of the two club-length area. Therefore, any trees, artificial obstructions (e.g. tee boards) or advertising banners that may obstruct the golfer when taking his stance or swing should be identified and the markers adjusted if necessary. Much emphasis is placed upon setting up the course at its full length, but accurate rules interpretation should not be compromised for this to be achieved.

Regarding the width of a teeing ground, it is suggested that the markers are placed approximately six paces apart. By doing so, turf is protected and it can also be argued that if any wider, the player may inadvertently breach the rules by teeing his ball in front of the markers, due to difficulties in assessing alignment.

Because Rule 11-1 states that 'a player may stand outside the teeing ground to play a ball within it', it is also recommended that the markers are thus set that if a player wishes to take advantage of this option, his stance will be on the same level as the ball. A golfer may wish make full use of the teeing ground in order to gain a particular view of the hole – he will not be impressed if by doing so he will be standing on a bank one foot above his ball!

Although not strictly a rules of golf issue, the direction of the tees must also be considered. It sounds obvious but a golfer will be much better prepared to play a hole if the tee is pointing straight down the fairway rather than towards the trees or worse still, out of bounds – not an uncommon sight!

Effectively, the line between the two markers should be at a right angle to the drive zone or putting green if the hole is a par 3. The simplest way to establish this is for a greenkeeper to stand on the tee, extend his arms at a 90 degree angle to the intended target on the hole (e.g. drive zone) and place the markers in line with his arms.





▲ When setting tees, ensure the markers are pointing in the right direction!



▲ When defining out of bounds, stakes should be clearly visible and continuous

# teeing

# ground

Finally, lefties should not be forgotten! There is no doubt that they are in the minority, but it is important to ensure that on the teeing ground a left handed golfer is afforded the same room to manoeuvre as a right handed player.

## WATER HAZARDS & OUT OF BOUNDS – HOW SHOULD THEY BE MARKED?

All golfers from time to time encounter water hazards and out of bounds (OB) and because penalties are involved, clear and accurate definition of both are vital.

With regards water hazards, if stakes (and in some cases, lines) are installed, the Rules of Golf advise that they should be 'placed as nearly as possible along the natural limits of the hazard', i.e. where the ground breaks to form the depression containing the water - not on the water line itself. All too often, stakes are installed at the bottom of banks, as close as possible to the water. However, if the course is subjected to heavy rain and the hazard overflows, the player would be entitled to a free drop if his ball has come to rest in such overflow – advantageous for the player, but not what the rules of golf intend!

When marking water hazards, it is also important to visualise where a player would be dropping his ball after hitting his ball into water. For example, with a lateral (red) water hazard, a player is entitled to take relief within two club-lengths of the point where the ball last crossed the margin.

As the player is already subjected to a one shot penalty, it would be unfair to penalise him further by expecting him to take his drop on a sloping bank, with a difficult shot ensuing. Therefore, stakes and lines defining lateral hazards should be marked on as flat a ground as possible.

With regard to OB stakes, they should be clearly identifiable from post to post - ideally placed approximately 15 paces apart and avoiding intervening bushes and trees etc. They should also follow the natural boundary of the course – ideally following as straight a line as possible.

If the stakes and/or lines 'wobble' or 'zig-zag' their way up a hole, the Committee (and then the greens staff!) are likely to be leaving themselves open for an ear bashing from disgruntled players! For example, a golfer whose ball has unfortunately crossed such a line will naturally be upset if he has to return to the tee, whilst his playing partner who is further from the fairway, but in bounds due to poor marking, avoids penalty.

When marking water hazards and OB, it is vital that all stakes and lines must have a logical 'beginning' and 'end'. All too often, they do not 'tie up', whether it be with one another or a boundary wall etc. In this situation, the golfer may not be sure whether his ball is in/out of a water hazard or out of bounds etc, and may therefore adopt the incorrect rules procedure and be subject to possible penalty.

It should never be assumed that a certain area is 'out of play' – golfers of all standards take on risks when playing, golf balls end up in strange locations, and a player will invariably argue that even though his ball is lying in Mrs Jones' back garden, due to the fact that there are no white stakes nearby, then he must be in bounds! This scenario represents a highly uncomfortable situation for a greenkeeper (and rules official!) to find himself in. Therefore, the whole playing area MUST be clearly and continuously defined.

A current trend amongst greens staff is for water hazard and OB stakes to be cemented into the ground. This obviously reduces wanton course vandalism and theft, but from a rules perspective it can cause confusion for the player.


The rules state that stakes defining water hazards are obstructions and ideally, they should be movable. If not, the player (a) would not be able to move the stake if interference exists, and (b) if the ball is lying in the water hazard, he would not be entitled to free relief. In addition, with OB stakes, although the rule states that a player is not entitled to move them in order to play a stroke, if the Committee wishes to redefine areas and therefore relocate them, the course would be subjected to damage by doing so.

## WATER HAZARDS – YELLOW OR RED?

The difference between a yellow water hazard and a red (lateral) water hazard is also worth highlighting – the colour a hazard is marked will influence the players dropping options if his ball ends up in the water.


Quite simply, a water hazard is marked yellow if it is practical for a player to drop a ball behind the water, keeping the point where the ball last crossed the margin between himself and the hole. However, instances will arise, where it is not practical or even possible for a player to physically drop a ball behind. For example, a hedge or a building may border the hazard, or alternatively, the immediate dropping area comprises of thick woodland or even out of bounds!

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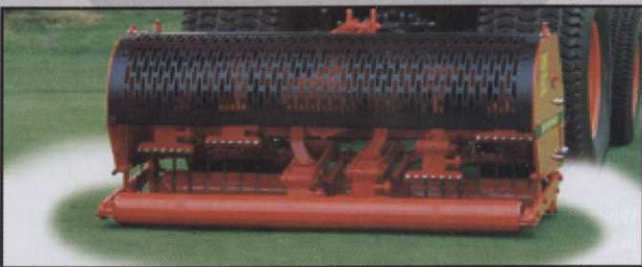


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## The Greenkeeper and the Rules of Golf



In these instances, the hazards should be marked with red stakes or lines, thus enabling the golfer to drop the ball **laterally** within two club-lengths of the point where it last crossed, or if possible, on the opposite margin equidistant to the hole.

### GROUND UNDER REPAIR

Finally, the subject of ground under repair (GUR) causes much discussion in clubhouse bars – usually sparked off by a disgruntled golfer who had the misfortune of experiencing a particularly nasty lie in the rough!

However, it is worth noting that many areas of the course that are classed as GUR under the Rules of Golf need not be marked. It is a common sight when arriving at a tournament, for the course to look more like a murder scene than a golf links due to a paint gun happy/GUR obsessed Greens Chairman!

For example, casts, holes or runways made by burrowing animals



or birds do not require white lines, nor does casual water, material piled for removal or **ANY** hole made by a greenkeeper. By remembering this, the greenkeeper will promote consistency in his marking of GUR. Additionally, the aesthetics of the course are not compromised, whilst the club will save themselves a fortune on paint!

In conclusion, under Rule 6-1, 'the player is responsible for knowing the Rules'. However, if a greenkeeper pays special attention to the above pointers, his course will be presented to a highly professional standard and will fall into line with recommendations outlined in the Rules of Golf.

Additionally, it will aid the competitor in applying the rules both fairly and consistently – and may well even help to improve relationships with any 'difficult' Greens Committee or rules 'boffins' at the club!

*All photographs taken at the DeVere Belfry.*



water



hazards



▲ 3 photographs above: The Committee should be sure whether the water hazard is to be marked red or yellow

# Putting the Record Straight

The majority of golf clubs and courses never get the opportunity to host a European Tour Tournament and, as such, there are a number of misnomers about the Tour and course conditioning, the set-up of the golf course and its 'agronomy/greenkeeping' support staff. I hope to clear up some of these.

*Continue  
to learn*



▲ Aerial view of the 18th at Wentworth during the Volvo PGA Championship

One of the strengths of the Tour is that it plays on a variety of different types of courses – links, heathland, parkland and many new, modern creations. Each is treated uniquely, as every one has different grasses and a different climate, so the 'set-up' of the courses is different.

Our aim is for the golf course to provide a tough, fair challenge for our members, who are some of the best players in the world. To assist the club in achieving this, we do have 'course preparation guidelines' and we do have an 'agronomy/greenkeeping' support team who work with the resident course staff.

Before discussing our guidelines further, I would firstly like to state that our 'agronomy' department (Richard Stillwell, Jack McMillan, Graeme MacNiven, Dirk Thelen with Eddie Adams, joining the Tour from The Old Course shortly) is there to assist the Course Manager and staff.

Our personnel do not take over the running of the course.

We advise and support as much as we physically can to ensure the best playing surfaces we possibly can. This might mean our staff being on-site for a couple of weeks (though we have had instances where staff have been on-site for 10 weeks).

Through our contract with Toro – the official supplier to the Tour – we are able to support the venue with additional machinery. While via our association with Bernhard we can send in a mechanic and grinding technician to ensure all machines are cutting perfectly and at the exact heights.

**PUTTING GREENS** get the greatest scrutiny and criticism of any area of the course (just like at your own course). In our guidelines we have three main criteria. In order of priority they are:

1. Smoothness of putting surface which will allow a ball to run straight and true without 'snaking' or 'bobbling' and remain in contact with the surface at all times.

2. A good green will be firm (not hard) and will accept a well-struck iron shot and will reject a poorly struck approach shot or a shot from the rough.

3. Pace of the greens should be as fast as possible provided that the surface smoothness is never sacrificed in order to produce speed. Obviously each venue will vary in pace depending on putting green construction, grass type, machinery available and climatic conditions. But speeds between 9' 6" and 11' are desirable.

As you see, we are not ruled by the stimpmeter! Yes, we do have venues where the greens run faster than 11' but only if the quality of the surface can take it. Our guidelines highlight top dressing, aeration, verticutting and water control to achieve the desired quality.

Regular light dressings of dry, fine sand, well matted in, will assist in giving a smooth surface for the ball to run on. The increase in number of cuts of the tournament green will also help the roll of the ball on the greens. In some circumstances the use of rollers (such as a Turf Iron) can aid the levelling of the putting surface but care should be taken not to negate the pre-tournament aeration by over-rolling.

Firm and fast greens provide the best test for both approach shots and putts. A sound programme of using as little water as necessary can help produce championship greens and a well-struck medium iron from the fairway should be able to grip and hold. (The desired effect lies in a layer of thatch or fibre not thicker than 10mm.)

The great tendency is for clubs to over-fertilise and over-water too near to the event which apart from creating growth, promotes the build-up of thatch. Green (colour) is not always best. Apart from not rewarding the skilful well-struck shot, soft greens tend to footprint and mark.

Ideally the green conditions and speed at the beginning of the tournament week should be nearly identical on the final day.

We do not stipulate a cutting height for greens, as much care needs to be taken to ensure they are not put under much stress by too much cutting at low heights, particularly when tournaments are played at sensitive times – ie, spring, autumn or periods of excessive heat. The frequency of cut during an event can vary greatly, from double cutting to six times between rounds. Again the programme is agreed between the Course Manager and the Tour, normally the Tournament Director, and will change daily if required. Hand mowing or cutting by triplex are both acceptable to the Tour.

We do ask that the direction of cut is changed for every cut to help reduce nap or grain.

Naturally any treatment that the greens undergo should also be applied exactly in the same way to the practice putting green.

For the most part, **COLLARS AND APRONS** should be treated as the greens. It is useful to have the cutting heights the same as the tees (ie, 8-9mm) as generally the same mower is used to cut both. It is important, however, that the apron is cut in a diamond pattern and that the collar is cut in reverse direction each day to prevent the build up of nap. (Players have

By David Garland, Director of Tour Operations,  
PGA European Tour



▲ Wentworth's 1st



▲ A well prepared practice area

commented in the past that the collars have been cut only in one direction and that this then may favour a player who draws or slices the ball!)

The collar width guideline is 1.2m (1.3 yds) and that this should be maintained at this width around the entire outline of the green.

In the weeks prior to the tournament, and even during the practice rounds, the championship **TEES**, especially Par 3 tees, should be rested.

Tees should be level, firm and maintained at a height of 6-8mm. It is very easy for championship tees to become soft through lack of play and lack of aeration. This must be monitored.

In the event of strong winds, or purely to give variety, the Tournament Director may request that a couple of teeing grounds on a particular hole are prepared ready for play.

Tees should be cut in a diamond pattern as a tee cut directly towards a fairway can be misleading to the players, especially if the teeing ground is set at an angle to the line of play.

**FAIRWAYS** should be between 22-32 metres in width depending on the difficulty of the hole. If a course is being used for the first time, the Tournament Director may narrow or reshape the fairways in line with the distances the professionals hit the ball.

The fairways should be cut at a height of 8-12mm. Fluffiness in fairway turf is undesirable and the tendency should be towards firm, tight turf. Mowing heights for tournament play should be established one to two weeks in advance, as last minute reductions in mowing heights create excessive loose grass cuttings on the fairways and could cause 'yellowing' and scalping.

But wherever possible boxes or grass collectors should be used. Small hollows should be hand-cut if fairway mowers cannot produce a uniform surface and all loose grass should be removed. Small hollows should be levelled, if possible, prior to the tournament.

Wherever possible, all fairways should be cut in the morning prior to play, boxing the clippings off. Where it is not possible to obtain boxes, it may be necessary to cut some or all fairways after play and in this instance we would require fairways to be swept before play (normally by dragging a hosepipe) to remove dew.

Ideally all fairways should be cut in a diamond pattern, with regular reverse cutting to prevent nap.

The long stripe cutting pattern or half light and half dark pattern favoured by links courses are acceptable, though players do feel their ball gets a better forward bounce when the grass has been cut with the direction of play.

Whatever mowing pattern is chosen, reverse cutting is vital to stop nap, as on thatchy, soft fairways nap does affect the striking of the ball.

The Tour does and will implement the preferred lies rule if it feels it is necessary. In the majority of cases, it is only introduced if the ball is 'picking up' mud, as the flight of the ball is adversely affected when struck.

A complete programme of divoting should be carried out at least four weeks prior to the tournament.

Around the fairways there should be a strip of semi-rough 3-4 metres wide, which should be cut at a height between 25-35mm. All semi-rough should be cut in the same direction.

The height of **ROUGH** will vary depending upon whether or not it is maintained, and the type of grass. Normally maintained rough is 100mm (4").

If any new sand is required for the **BUNKERS**, it should be applied at least two months in advance of the tournament so it can become well settled.

We prefer that bunkers are maintained by hand and are raked in the direction of play.

Two areas that are vital to the success of a tournament but are sometimes overlooked are:

**THE PRACTICE AREA.** This is where the modern professional spends hours and hours. Therefore the teeing area should be prepared in the same way as those areas on the course and is required to be a minimum of 10m deep to accommodate seven days of practice.

**RAIN PREPARATION.** Many believe the Tour follows the sun but I can assure you the Tour ends droughts when it arrives in town! The course must be prepared for the worst.

In concluding, I must stress our aim is to have the best quality playing surfaces possible week in week out, venue to venue, and this can be achieved only by working very closely and in tandem with all the host venues' staff.

A well-presented course in first-class condition benefits all parties involved in the Tournament.

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# Where Do You Think You're Going?

Scott MacCallum talks to signage companies about the good, the bad and the ugly.

How many of us have teed it up on a course we've never played before, got out to the edge of a green having three putted yet again only to find ourselves lost, unsure of where the next tee is? Or worse still, taken it a bit further, and played the wrong hole?

As grown adults we do feel a little bit silly. Surely it can't be so complicated? We know that the 2nd tee is fairly near the 1st green and the 3rd near the 2nd so on all the way round to the 18th, and hopefully the 19th but so many of us find ourselves aimlessly searching around for the next tee that something must be wrong.

Surely it can't be beyond the wit of man to come up with a solution.

Well there is one. It's called the "sign" That's "S", "I", "G", "N" and although they are catching on there are still many clubs which could make much more use of them to help golfers around their courses.

How simple it would be for clubs to provide a sign at all holes where the next tee is not obvious just as a consideration for those visitors and guests who are playing the course for the first time.



Additionally, and perhaps even more importantly, signs warning golfers of possible danger – "Caution. Possible stray balls from opposite fairway" or "Don't play until adjacent green is clear".

Rebecca McGuire, of Eagle Promotions, also highlighted the benefit of temporary signs, like 'Spraying in Progress' to warn golfers that a course maintenance practice is being carried out, which brings to mind the age old warning, 'Golfers should refrain from licking their balls'.

These signs do help if legal actions is pending following an accident as it does demonstrate that the club has made a point of making golfers aware of potential dangers.

However, Chris White, General Manager, of Ken White Signs, doesn't believe legal action should be the catalyst for creating an awareness that there needs to be quality signage around the course.

"Nevertheless, with the current culture, I guess it does have an influence," he admitted.

He also felt that legal actions may have been prevented by the presence of clear signage, but obviously there won't be any evidence of such.

"Prevention is better than cure."

The problem with signage is that if a club gets it wrong, it's not exactly a mistake which can be hidden away. And golf clubs do make mistakes.

David Fairclough, of Signs & Designs Ltd, felt that too many clubs go for the cheaper option, which almost invariably turns out to be a false economy.

Rebecca is of the same opinion citing cheap materials which don't stand up to the elements. She could point to one golf club which has changed its tee signs three times in 12 years.

When posed the question about golf club errors, Chris felt the biggest mistake was too much one-off purchasing leading to a mish mash of style and colour.

"I can't emphasis enough the need to forward plan when purchasing signage. It doesn't affect current budgets to look ahead and a good reliable supplier will offer advice."

But signage has moved on in so many ways a golf club has many decisions to make.

Granite is becoming more popular, lasts indefinitely and is easy maintenance, while special requests can also be handled.

Eagle Promotions have recently supplied signage for Disneyland Paris who required a number of unusually shaped signs, portraying various images.

First impressions count and with an array of well thought out and attractive signs a golf club can display its attention to detail and provide golfers with the information and support they need when out on the course.

For further signage companies see page 48.



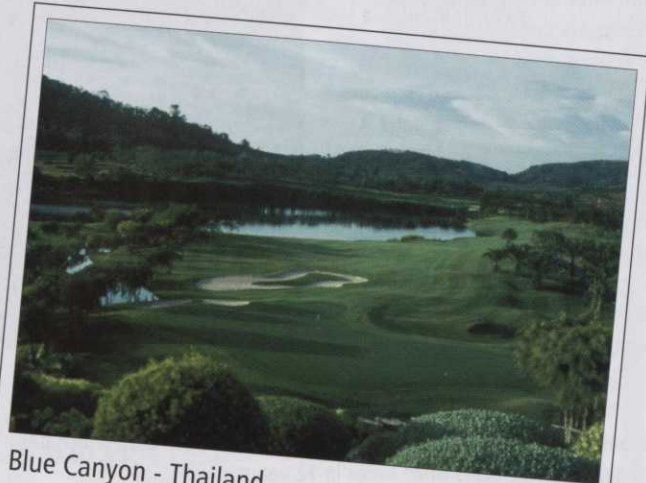
# Fancy Working Here?

Golf is fortunate to have secured some of the most beautiful plots of land in the world for playing the game and golfers know that if their driving or putting happen to be a little off there can often be some stunning views to take their mind off a mounting score.

But these courses also offer places of work to greenkeeping staff which must make the Monday morning blues much easier to deal with.

Feast your eyes over these majestic golf courses, photographed by world renowned golf course photographer, Brian Morgan. If a job were ever to come up, you never know you might be packing your case and joining some of the luckiest greenkeeping squads around.

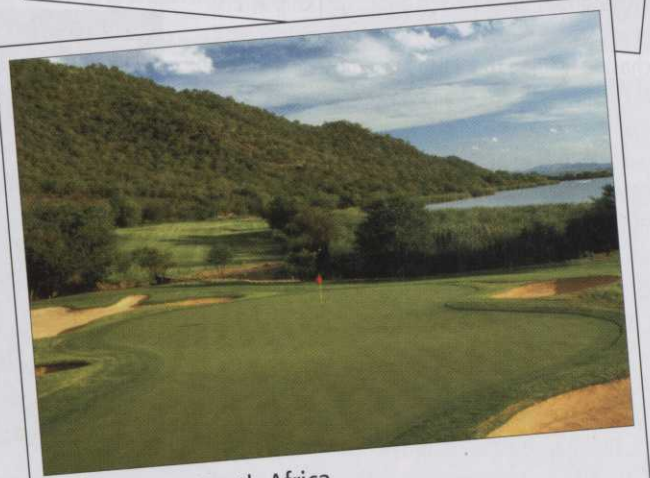
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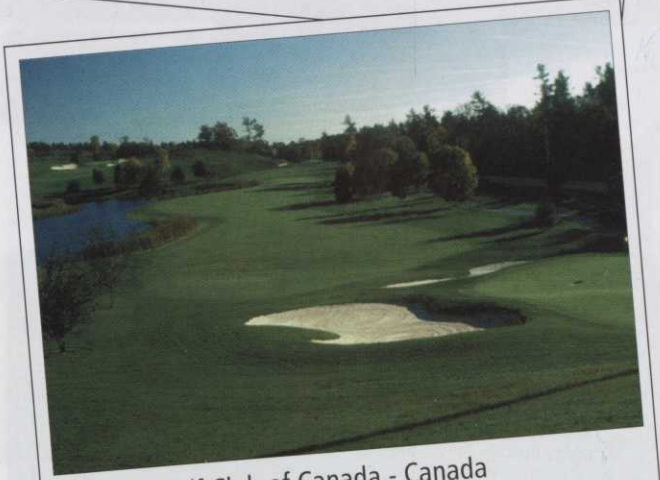
Gary Player - South Africa



Mariya - Japan



Royal Mougan - France



National Golf Club of Canada - Canada



# Landmarks in Greenkeeping

Jim Arthur files through his memory banks and identifies the landmarks he has witnessed in the greenkeeping industry

At regular intervals, and I have succumbed myself, greenkeeping writers are tempted by offers to write on the milestones of greenkeeping history. There are enormous pitfalls in the path of those who blithely fall into the trap.

The first point that must be accepted is that very little of these epoch-making greenkeeping revolutions were specifically invented for the purpose of the better management of recreational turf.

The second is that these developments had often been in existence, though neglected, for years before being adopted. Thirdly until there was a demand, there was no market. Fourthly such revolutions were often adopted very slowly and by no means universally, not only because there was no universal need but because of inborn reluctance to change – when often the change meant poorer results until the methods or machines were refined to deal with their side effects on fine turf.

A classic example is that of the use of tile drains on golf courses. It has been said that until the introduction of powered trenching tools in the early 1900s the use of tile drains was not widespread. What nonsense!

Many, many thousands of acres of heavy clay land were drained in the post Napoleonic war period to enable home food production to be stepped up to meet the needs of an expanding population nearly two centuries ago.

The first cylindrical tile drain making machine was invented (by Switzer) in the UK in 1787, but demand was poor because then food production was just about adequate – despite the knock on effects of the industrial revolution and a mass migration from the land to factories in towns.

Then came the agricultural demand first met by hand made tiles (see Chapter 13 Practical Greenkeeping for full details) and then in response to the huge demand in 1845 by Scraggs machine.

Some of this very old drainage is still working, because it was laid very deep (one metre at least) laboriously by hand. There was no demand from golf because in 1857 there were only 17 golf courses – all of them naturally free draining Scottish sandy links. Even in 1888 there were only 138 in the U.K. – virtually all on heath or links.

However in the 1890s there was a vast explosion in golf to cope with the new demand from the big cities. Courses were constructed on often "unsuitable" heavy land where intensive drainage – and earthworm control – were essential to achieve tolerable playing conditions, even during the few summer months to which inland golf was restricted a century ago.

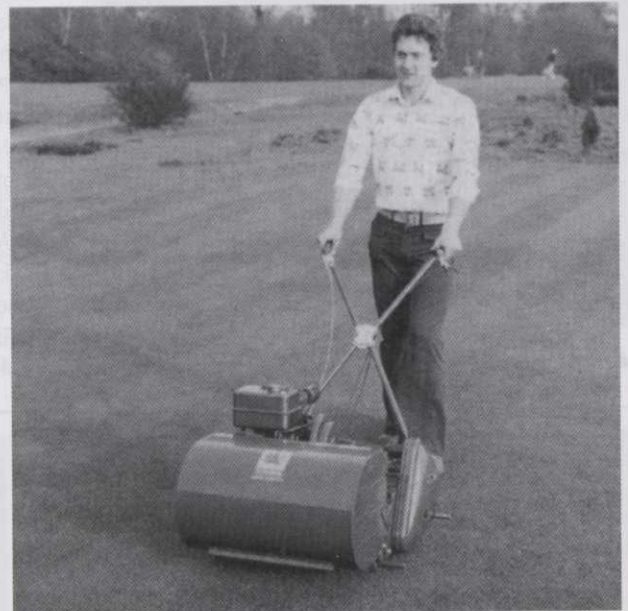
Remember Ber-'nard Darwin's comment in the 1930s that "golf was a game played by a few gentlemen and most Scotsmen" and that "no gentleman played golf before the first of May". His words – not mine!

Tile drainage of golf courses took off because the need was there and remained dominant until plastic drains took over in the 1950s, (much more easily handled).

We have to accept that golf has never generated a big enough market to make specific research let alone production economically worthwhile. The only exception has perhaps been the mower.

Edwin Budding's mower developed in 1832 from a reel type shearing machine designed to remove 'nap' from woolen woven tweeds was not widely adopted save by wealthy estate owners trying to mechanise the presentation of their expensively maintained 'lawns' surrounding their mansions, until the early 1900s.

This was largely because the finish left by these huge, heavy, clumsy early machines was far inferior to that provided by skilled greenkeepers with scythes.



▲ The Ransomes' Auto Certes - natural progression

Even I can remember such men scything wild white clover out of golf greens! It is worth remembering that the first hand Certes mower by Ransomes, specifically designed for use on golf greens was not introduced until 1924 and the first powered Auto-certes not until 1950! This was not because there was any criticism of design or finish – just that there was no money in golf.

Where there was money – in the States – and therefore a market, there followed great strides in the development of, for example, triplex mowers and trailed, then mounted, gang mowers for fairways.

Another 'agricultural' development slowly adopted by golf was the small tractor, with a power take off, which revolutionised small scale farming (because of manoeuvrability as well as low cost). Until Harry Ferguson's invention tractors were used as horses, trailing machinery.

As he told me himself, he modestly disclaimed the credit that was his due because he said that he was merely the first to realise the basic difference between a horse and a tractor, which was that "you can't bolt anything to a horse's backside!" Now mounted equipment is standard, but it all started with that inventive Ulsterman.

Another development from another (agricultural) market which was enthusiastically adopted (for a change) by golf was that of selective weedkillers. These derived from war-time work in producing defoliating sprays to attack and destroy the enemies' field crops.

Our first selective in 1946 was powder MCPA (on a lime base!!) and then a year later liquid 2:4D. What a joy advisory work was in those early post war days, explaining the miraculous eradication of the prevalent weeds of



▲ Hand operated Turfman aerator, circa early 1930s

## Landmarks in Greenkeeping

those days – starweed and daisies. The sceptical approach was soon replaced by joy.

Apart from a few pioneers – largely greenkeepers not research bodies – working e.g. on the application of such things as sodium chlorate (with very small safety margins), weed control was almost entirely by hand weeding.

I can still remember the sight of a line of a score or more of potato pickers in the East of Scotland advancing across a links green, 'howking out' starweed – and the resultant damage. Wise advisers did not exchange badinage with such redoubtable characters!

We now have virtually an effective selective weedkiller for every weed but despite the investigating work carried out by firms and STRI it was not research for which we have always had to rely on agriculture.

This applies today with pesticides where products are being withdrawn rather than being banned, simply because the market is too small to justify the huge costs of EC registration and regulations.

There were a few areas where invaluable introductions were aimed at and funded by the sports turf market. One of these was the mechanisation of aeration produced in the middle of the worst economic depression of the last century by a small firm, Sisis, run with foresight and engineering skill by Wm. Hargreaves in the 1930s.

Prior to the Turfman (1934) aeration was by hand forking. Admittedly the motorised version the Auto turfman was not marketed until 1964.

Naturally, developments in aeration machinery were being made in America, but as so often happens conditions there are not relevant to our different climatic and soil conditions.

All their machines were too shallow penetrating. They were admittedly sophisticated. I asked Sisis engineers to develop a machine costing under £500(!) capable of penetrating 6" deep and of aerating a golf green in an hour.

This resulted in the Autocrat in 1971, which held sway until replaced by the de Ridder's Vertidrain (again my introduction) in 1980 – which could penetrate 15" and



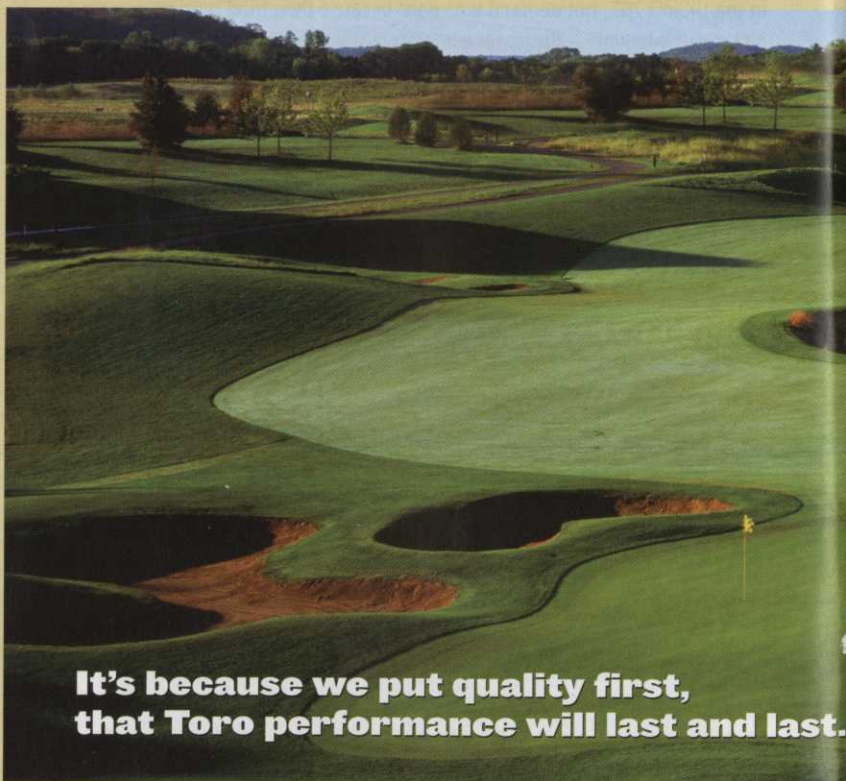
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more, with a lifting action akin to the old raise forking with 'graips\*' which was the inspiration for this really deep aerator, now being used worldwide.

I have left the most important milestone until last, partly because it is the essence of sound management of fine turf and partly because it has undisputed worldwide application for the management of bents and fescues through all the temperate zones of the world.

This of course was the precept of Dr Murray, published in 1913, based on his work over the ten years earlier in the winter rainfall areas of South Africa, on turf dominated by bents (*Agrostis*).

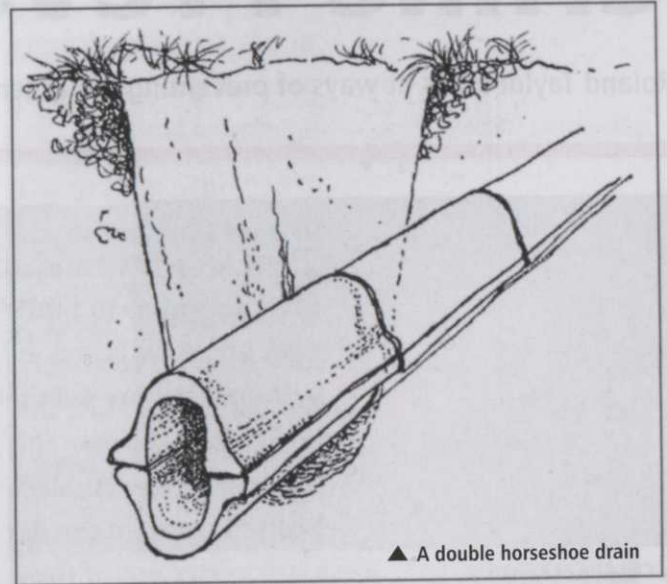
His work has lasted unchallenged and proven over the century by countless research projects, here and in the States. In his own words his system has "the object of providing an adequate supply of nitrogen in an acid medium, with a very limited amount of phosphates and potash, the only source of the latter being such as is contained in the usual compost. The real object of the compost is not so much the provision of plant food as to supply humus". How perspicacious?

This work, started at the beginning of the last century, is the basis of all traditional austere greenkeeping designed to favour bents and fescues. Where his rules are ignored or reversed, *Poa annua* invades and dominates at once.

I know of few good greenkeepers who will openly assert that their ideal grass is this highly successful weed. Many erroneously say it is unavoidable.

There are hundreds if not thousand of examples proving the reverse. Dr Murray was certainly a man before his time and perhaps (certainly in my view) the most important milestone in the history of golf greenkeeping.

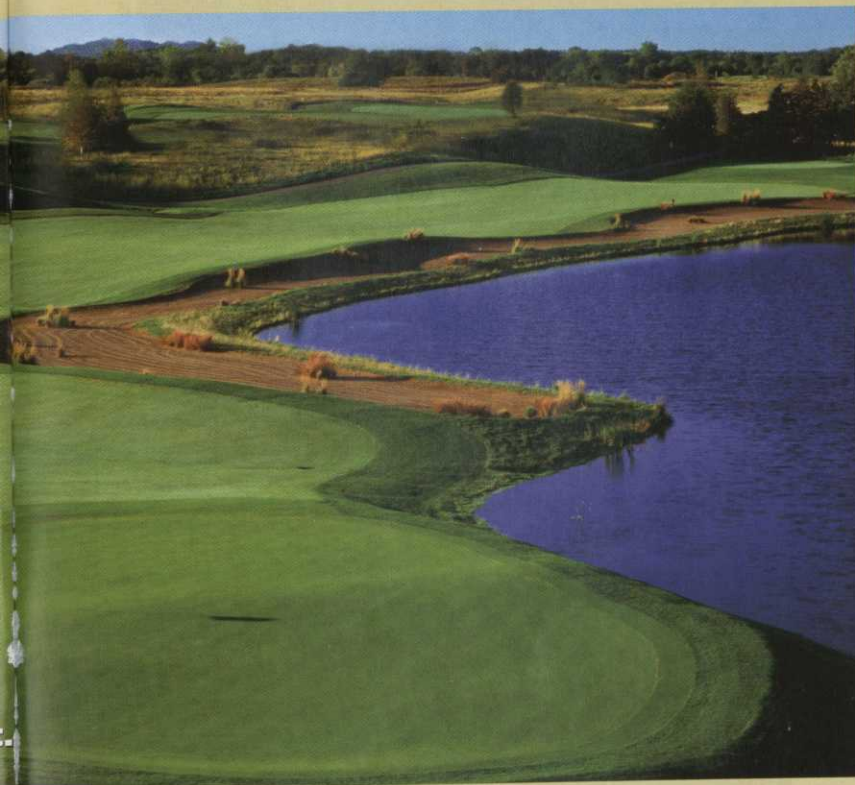
This in no way denigrates the sterling work of many links greenkeepers, even before him, who learnt by observation and from their ancestors, that



▲ A double horseshoe drain

the best way to look after their greens was to use soot (a nitrogenous fertiliser) and local sandy soil (with rotted seaweed) and deep spiking. Nothing new in greenkeeping – except in the minds of eccentrics and salesmen.

*Jim Arthur will be happy to personally sign a copy of the Second Edition of Practical Greenkeeping and send to anyone postage free who contacts him. (Book price £29.95). Tel: 01395 442966.*



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# Crime Prevention

Roland Taylor looks at ways of preventing the greenkeeper's worst nightmare



▲ Close up of Ramlok

With the considerable investment that now has to be made in course equipment tight security needs to be high on the list of priorities.

The loss of any machinery is very stressful and considerable costs are incurred. Replacements have to be found at short notice.

Valuable time is taken up, dealing with the police and the insurance company and if a prosecution is made then days will be lost giving evidence at court. Insurance payment delays can occur, putting further strain on resources. A hefty increase in premiums is likely to follow and in some cases there is the possibility that the company will no longer insure the equipment. All this results in considerable inconvenience and hassle.

There is not a 100% solution for stopping thieves, but plenty of deterrents are available and a combination of these plus vigilance may be enough to make them have second thoughts.

Generally, courses cover large areas of open countryside and often the machinery stores and workshops are located in remote places, far away from the main buildings. This makes them highly vulnerable, so protection is essential.

There are three types of thieves, the professional, small scale and opportunist.

## THE PROFESSIONAL

The chance of being hit by professionals is relatively smaller compared to the other two, but this fact should not be ignored as many of the security systems cover all aspects of robbery.

Larger equipment is usually targeted and is likely to be stolen to order, possibly for abroad. Considerable planning is needed for his type of robbery and will involve a number of people, who have made themselves thoroughly familiar with the course and buildings. Because of the machinery's size having suitable transport has to be part of the plan.

## SMALL SCALE

These are less likely to be planned. A weakness in the security system is spotted and advantage taken of this flaw. The thieves are more likely to make a quick entry and grab whatever is available. They may well have been reconnoitring a target for a while.

## OPPORTUNIST

They take any opportunity that presents itself and this is the most common form of theft. The haul is mainly small items, although cars, vans or tractors are often taken in this manner, because they have been left unlocked with the key in the ignition.

It is tournament day and an early start is necessary if the course is to be immaculate for the first tee off. The greenkeeper arrives at the machinery storage buildings and is immediately aware there is something wrong.

He swings open the doors to find the building empty and a large section of the back wall gone. This fictional situation would be any greenkeeper's worst nightmare, but it could happen to anyone, at anytime.

There are numerous ways of protecting against theft, but all situations are different, so it is necessary to determine what is best in each individual case.

## BUILDINGS

No thieves like hanging about for too long, trying to get inside, so the objective is to make it as difficult and time consuming as possible to gain entry.

Whatever type of building is used must be of sound construction. It is pointless to bar the windows and doors if the walls can easily be breached. Thieves will not hesitate to ram a wall. Windows should be heavily barred inside and the door hinges impossible to get at from the outside.

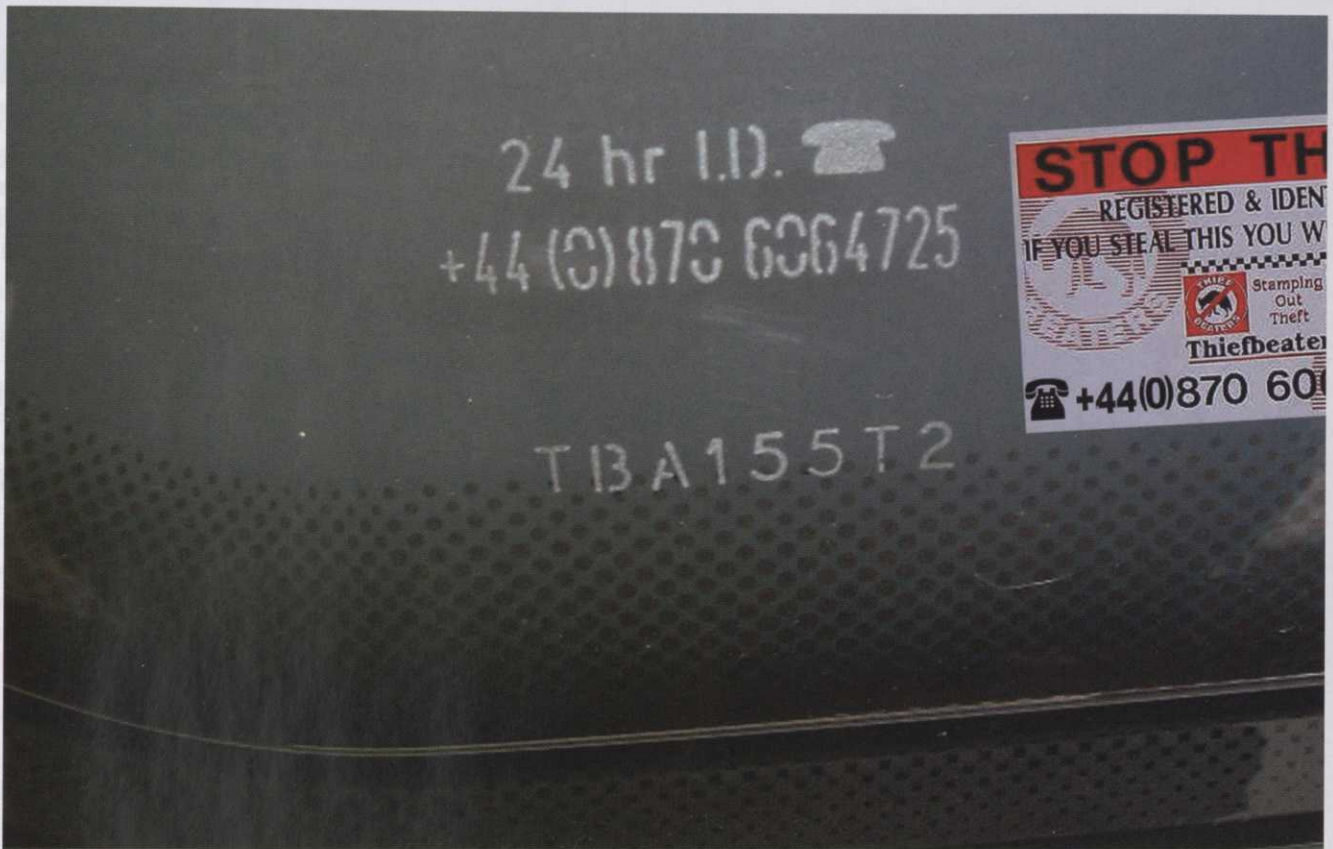
There are plenty of purpose built units on the market for storing equipment and it is worthwhile contacting one of these specialist companies who can advise on the most appropriate to specific requirements.

There are steel units, which are said to be extremely secure and with the host of interior options that are available they can be tailor made.

For existing building these companies also offer cabinets or cages constructed from heavy-duty steel for interior storage of smaller equipment. While this type of unit is ideal for secure storage what happens when the smaller machinery or tools are out on a course? No one is infallible and there are going to be occasions when equipment is left exposed in the back of a trailer or truck – a temptation for the opportunist thief.



▲ Trailer drawbar warning



▲ Thiefbeaters warning

An all-steel truck or transport box will overcome this problem as long as it is left locked. In addition to the security these units are weatherproof, so the tools and your sandwiches will not get wet.

**LOCATION**

If there are plans for a new machinery store then it needs locating as near to the clubhouse or hotel complex as possible. Wherever the store is sited the area around should be free of trees and shrubs as these provide ideal cover for thieves to go about their activities unnoticed. In addition heavy-duty, perimeter fencing, topped with razor wire will make potential intruders think twice about gaining entry.

Security posts are another form of protection. These are anti-ram and theft resistant, so they can be used to form a major obstacle in front of doors or across gateways. Signage should be displayed in prominent positions, warning the public to keep out of certain areas and informing prospective intruders that a high level of security is in place.

**ALARM SYSTEMS**

These come in all shapes and sizes. The wire free ones send radio signals to a central control panel that activates either an audible alarm, flashing lights or fills the building with dense smoke. There are also acoustic systems, which emit a high-pitched signal that disorientates any intruder within the vicinity.

Exterior lighting is another deterrent and these can be fitted with infrared sensors that automatically detect when someone is about and switch on the lights.

If the buildings are miles from the nearest habitation, some of these systems may not provide much protection as no one is going to see or hear them.

**MACHINERY**

All ignition keys should be removed and securely locked away when the machinery is not in use. To immobilise equipment there are a number of devices on the market. For a tractor fitted with backhoe and front loader leg locks – fitted to the stabiliser leg with the machine's rear wheel lifted off the ground, are ideal, as they make it virtually impossible to move the unit. There are also ram locks that are fitted to a full extending hydraulic steering ram.

Towing eye locks enable a number of units to be chained together. Wheel clamps, wall and ground locks are also useful for securing equipment. Whatever type of system is used it is important to fit recommended security chain and padlocks.

One of the biggest problems for thieves is the disposal of their ill-gotten gains and the ability to identify stolen property is a deterrent because they then become far less saleable. If the property is recovered it is necessary to identify who owns what?

This is an area that has been addressed by some highly specialist companies and the latest development is a system that involves applying a unique designated number to 50 random locations on a piece of equipment as well as electronic tags and microdots.

All the sites are recorded together with photographs of the machine and the information is then stored on a central database. If a stolen

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Town **Towcester**  
County **Northants**  
Postcode **NN12 8ZJ**

Tel **0870 794 0111**

## DETAILS OF PROPERTY

Manufacturer **JOHN DEERE**  
Model/Type **LTR. 166**  
Year **2001**  
Colour **GREEN**  
Reg No **N/A**  
Serial No **E092224**  
Vin No **N/A**  
Engine No **GH47-1984536**  
Est Value **£3160.00**  
Other



**UNIQUE IDENTIFICATION NUMBER: TBA89TIF**

MARK	LOCATION	INSTALLED
ETCHED	REAR PANEL	23/05/99
ETCHED	REAR MUDGUARD	23/05/99
ETCHED	INSIDE ENGINE COVER	23/05/99
ENGRAVED	RH REAR CHASSIS	23/05/99
ENGRAVED	TOP LHS RADIATOR	23/05/99
ETCHED	LHS ENGINE BLOCK	23/05/99
ENGRAVED	FRONT AXLE RHS	23/05/99
ENGRAVED	ALL WHEELS	23/05/99
ETCHED	DRIVER SEAT REAR	23/05/99
ENGRAVED	REAR AXLE BACK RHS	23/05/99

DEVICE	CODE	INSTALLED
ID100A	DC00058Y90	23/05/99
MD0001	ID00006328	23/05/99

**EMERGENCY PHONE NO:**

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**Thiefbeaters Limited**

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**Towcester**  
**Northants**  
**NN12 8ZJ**

**Tel: 0870 794 0111**  
**Email: info@thiefbeaters.co.uk**  
**Web site: www.thiefbeaters.co.uk**

### ▲ Thiefbeaters Passport

machine is recovered it can be quickly matched to its rightful owners.

Plenty of signage displayed around the storage areas and on the machinery warns that they are security marked and registered. This system is definitely proving a deterrent in the thieving fraternity. There is little point in nicking it if you cannot sell it on. When a piece of marked machinery is legitimately sold then the registered information passes to the new owner.

### STAFF

Personal possessions left in view are vulnerable. For example, it is a warm hot day and a member of staff is out on the course cutting greens, he takes off his coat and leaves on the grass.

He then moves on to another green. On returning to pick up the coat he finds his mobile phone or wallet are missing.

Another example is that the rest room door is left unlocked; when the team breaks for lunch they find personal items missing. These are just two situations that could occur if staff are not vigilant.

If strangers are seen wandering about in areas where they are not supposed to be or a vehicle is parked in an unusual spot then these incidents need to be reported. In most cases they will probably be harmless, but someone maybe reconnoitring the course and its buildings.

One human error could undo everything a security system, costing several thousands of pounds, was designed to achieve. Staff awareness is essential. It is easy to forget to close and lock doors, leave tools in the open or keys in an ignition.

As far as security is concerned if something is amiss communicating with other local greenkeepers is a good idea. In rural locations it is also worthwhile being in regular contact with the members of the local Farm Watch Scheme. Having a good rapport with the local police is important.

Their Crime Prevention Officer is a mine of information and can outline the best possible security for your establishment.

Robberies will continue to happen, but by seeking the best advice and correctly securing your equipment you will reduce the odds, that your course will be targeted.

To contact Security Companies see Security in the Buyers' Guide.



▲ HD Hitchlok and HD Security Chain

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## Your Letters...

### Missing Thanks

I have just read Greenkeeper International and the Cleveland Section notes written by Terry Charlton.

Terry missed out thanking Turfcare, of Leadgat, for providing the bus to take greenkeepers and IOG members down to Harrogate. Without this free transport for greenkeepers etc a lot of members would not be able to go.

It's not just the ride down to Harrogate, it's the breakfast Turfcare provide, the free quiz, not to mention the video.

I know there are always things to put in the Section news, but this type of thanks should not be missed – even if Mr Charlton does own Turfcare, it should still get a thank you.

Kevin Heslop, Head Greenkeeper  
Brancepeth Castle GC, Durham

### Thanks for the Opportunity

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Peter Mansfield, and his team, at Lely/TORO and John Pemberton, Acting Executive Director at BIGGA, for their support in enabling both Keith Scruton and myself to attend the GCSAA show and Conference in San Diego, as part of the TORO Student Greenkeeper of the Year Award.

I know that Keith has found the whole experience to be invaluable and it has been a whirlwind tour of study and visits while in America. I am sure he will have many stories and experiences to share with us upon his return.

The TORO Greenkeeper of The Year awards are an excellent example of strengthening links that will continue to support the development of BIGGA, the industry and education and training, which Myerscough College is keen to support and will continue to do for many years to come.

Our thanks, support and congratulations must also be extended to Andy Campbell, the new BIGGA Chairman, who worked tirelessly during the event to increase and raise the presence, not only of BIGGA, but the British Sports Turf Industry as a whole. Well done Andy!

If any Student or Greenkeeper is considering applying for this year's award, then do it without hesitating, it could be you.

Wayne Roberts, Team Leader,  
Sports Turf and Mechanisation, Myerscough College





## Bernhard Delegation to San Diego

*I would like to take this opportunity to thank all involved in making this year's delegation to the GCSAA Show such a memorable experience.*

*I would like to thank Stephen Bernhard for again supporting the trip and all the Bernhard's staff, but particularly Sam and Kim, for their hard work in making the trip a success. I would also like to thank John and Sami for their support.*

*I would encourage all BIGGA members to support this annual trip. The experience is defiantly one not to miss. Finally, I would like to say a big thanks to the other nine delegates who made the trip such an enjoyable one. I hope to meet up with you all soon.*

*Peter W. Cross, Deputy Head Greenkeeper, Woolton Golf Club*

## It's not only the weather we greenkeepers are up against...

*The popular perception of the golf course greenkeeper – that of the laid back gentle countryman who is responsible for both the long and short term condition of the golf course – has changed, and not for the better.*

*Many of these individuals, who are highly qualified, are now of a frame of mind that given the opportunity to change career direction, they would gladly do so.*

*One main reason, for this can be identified – “television” is responsible for the ultra high expectations of the ordinary member summer and winter – the use of frost holes or temporary greens is seen by many as what kind of mood the greenkeepers is in rather than the conditions that prevail on the day.*

*There is also the aggression of some members who believe their opinion is unchallengeable. These bullies dominate today's committees to the extent that the committed individuals who once filled the main positions within the structure are becoming fewer and fewer resulting in “mob rule OK”.*

*Working for a committee which has very little or no continuity, can be very frustrating. All too often there are serious clashes of personalities, often caused by strong willed, misinformed, yet well-intentioned individuals, who believe they know better than the professionals – unfortunately this is sometimes true – and expect Loch Lomond standards for a fraction of the cost.*

*All too often they instigate serious mistakes and very seldom are they around to answer for them when the errors come to the surface.*

*This can only result in a downward spiral of morale and attitude that will affect all staff and which may lead to poorer performance. Ultimately it is the course that suffers.*

*What can be done to rectify the situation? The problem is too complex for individual committees to solve! I believe the governing bodies (the R&A, BIGGA and the home golf unions) need to address and stipulate the roles and thresholds of personnel who have been trained as well as those who are elected.*

*We also need direction for clubs on the changes required to their constitution to allow the business of a golf club to be run on a more professional basis.*

*How can club staff be expected to have respect for their employers if every year we have to answer to a different Captain, Vice Captain, Greens Convenor etc, who are often elected for their social standing rather than for their business credentials?*

*Indeed, in many cases the Secretary or the Club Manager has no idea of the complexity of the position. Often after two or three years, of jumping through hoops to please those who will never be pleased they vacate their position, only for a different committee to employ someone else who will again need to be replaced within a relatively short period of time.*

*So the same negative circle starts again. Allowing interested, caring man managers to remain in position longer can only improve the situation.*

*I also believe that the tiny percentage of members who are not happy, and will never be, and who cause constant major disharmony, should be invited to attend a committee meeting and asked to explain their reasoning or actions.*

*If rational explanations are not accepted and the same scenario continues, some kind of discipline should be imposed. I believe only this type of positive management can address the growing problem of dissent amongst the rank and file.*

*Strong and positively directed committees instructed by a professional administrator who consults with the relative line managers of the club to make knowledgeable and common sense decisions could achieve this.*

*In this day and age, a Golf Course Manager must be a golfer, self-motivated, trainer, scientist, agronomist, economist, diplomat, administrator, book-keeper, mechanic, communicator, environmentalist, and a good man manager with a proven track record.*

*If you put all this together with the love for his course, nature and the game, then you have a good Golf Course Manager, worthy of an employer's concern. The best wages and conditions of employment should be made available to them.*

*It is heartening that the R&A now recognises the problem and through their new Best Practice website have set about offering solutions to golf clubs who might not be operating in the most effective manner. Interested parties should check out the R&A Course Management Best Practices, website on, [www.bestcourseforgolf.org](http://www.bestcourseforgolf.org)*

*Name and Address withheld*

## Two Qualifications - One Set of Study

Mark Zealander has been taking a Certificate of Higher Education and BSc at Cannington College.



It's coming up to the halfway point in my qualification, so I thought it is a good time to report on my progress under the BIGGA and Ransomes Jacobsen Ltd sponsorship scheme.

First I will explain the route I am taking in the search for a BSc Hons. My original route was to study a Foundation Degree in Soil Science and Technology at Cannington College as a year part-time course. I was advised by my tutor to study the first two years at Certificate of

Higher Education (C of HE) level and bridge to the third year of the foundation degree. This way I would achieve two qualifications without extra study. So from September 2002 I started the C of HE part-time. The Certificate of Higher Education breaks down into the following modules:

### Year One - Golf Course Construction

- Grass Establishment and Sward Maintenance
- Foundation Science
- Statistics

### Year Two - Ecology

- Plant Protection
- Machinery

Each module comprises of two written assignments and one end of module exam. The overall grade breaks down as follows:

- Assignment 1 = 30%
- Assignment 2 = 30%
- Module exam = 40%

### GOLF COURSE CONSTRUCTION

This module is self-explanatory and covers the history and background of construction methods, site and soil surveying, aspects of golf course design and construction of golf course features.

The first assignment required me to research the methods of greens construction and produce a report for a committee, recommending a suitable method and display the costing.

The second assignment involved assessing the layout of two golf holes and redesign them to test the modern high and low handicap club golfer.

### GRASS ESTABLISHMENT AND SWARD MAINTENANCE

This module covers the science behind the daily course maintenance, such as aeration, top-dressing and nutrition.

Assignment One was aimed at the definition and meaning of many greenkeeping terms, allowing me to thoroughly research each one.

Assignment Two was based around:

- Understanding the causes of wear and tear.
- Ways of reducing the problems.
- Design and layout assessments.
- Compaction problems.

### FOUNDATION SCIENCE

This was the more intense module as I looked at elements and atomic structures, chemical bonding and analysis, organic chemistry and biology.

The first assignment required me to analyse soil macro nutrients and why they are important to healthy plant growth. I also researched into the damaging effects of soluble fertilisers when over used.

In the second assignment we researched the structure of a plant cell and the role of each organ.

### STATISTICS

This module is included for progression reasons and is needed when going on to do a BSc. It includes distribution, regression, and general data processing.

### ECOLOGY

In ecology I have been looking at woodland and hedge management and planting, techniques of grassland and heathland maintenance for habitat management.

I am currently working on the first assignment, which requires me to assess a golf course for new tree planting and recommend a suitable design. Including a maintenance plan and any problems over the next 50 years.

### PLANT PROTECTION

This looks at Integrated Pest Management (IPM), the use of pesticides on the golf course and the health and safety implications.

In the first assignment I researched into pest and disease management and cultural, chemical and biological methods of management.

### MACHINERY

As I have been in greenkeeping for over eight years I was able to get full credit for this module and not have to study it. The module includes all aspects of machinery management and health and safety.

I have received good grades throughout the modules, and I am on target to complete the C of HE this summer. I am now considering the option of completing the Foundation degree online as distance learning. Once this is complete I can start the BSc qualification. I would like to take this opportunity to thank BIGGA and Ransomes Jacobsen Ltd for the sponsorship, which has helped me with the tuition fees. I am also fits grateful to my former tutor Mr Phil Sharpies for his help and support and wish him success in his new post.

# My Experiences on the MSc in Sports Surface Technology Course

Barry Dore has been taking a MSc at Cranfield University.



I have been involved in the greenkeeping industry for the last 10 years. Four years were spent in full time education. I worked at the Hertfordshire Golf and Country Club for five years where I gained valuable practical experience of golf course maintenance.

I enjoyed my time at The Hertfordshire and learned a lot from the Course Superintendent Richard Sheppard, and American Golf who managed the club. However, I reached a point

where I felt I needed to improve my technical knowledge of turf management. I wanted to learn about the management of other sports surfaces such as cricket pitches, grass tennis courts, football pitches etc. I also wanted to widen my career options within the sportsturf industry.

As a result of a conversation with Andy Pledger, who was assistant greenkeeper at the Hertfordshire at the time, I discovered that Cranfield University had just begun a degree course in sports turf agronomy. I made some enquiries and found out that the course was in fact a Masters degree and not a Bachelors degree as I first suspected. Suddenly the challenge seemed to increase dramatically, however, following an interview with Alex Vickers, the Course Director, I felt more reassured that I would be capable of completing the course.

The next issue I had to address was raising the finance required to complete the course. The university was able to provide a bursary to cover part of the course fees. I then discovered that Ransomes Jacobsen were providing a Higher Education Scholarship for those wishing to further their education. I subsequently applied to BIGGA for the award, and was very pleased to find out that my application was successful. The award that I received paid for a substantial amount of the tuition fees.

Students have the option of completing the MSc course full time over a one year period or part time over a two to five year period. I chose to leave my position at the Hertfordshire and study for the course full time from October 2002 to September 2003.

There are four major components to the MSc course:

a) Taught Modules – This section took place between October and March. It involved going to lectures, doing assignments and undertaking tests set by the university. Each of the ten modules were completed over a two week period. I found this period of the course quite intensive and realised that I had to improve my time management skills especially to complete the assignments on time. Modules included subjects such as Human Resources Management, Soil Science, Sports Surface Playability and Irrigation Management and Optimisation. Taught modules are worth 30% of the total mark on the course.

b) Written examinations – At the end of April, I was required to complete two written examinations which were worth 20% of the total mark for the course. These exams were designed to test our general knowledge of sports turf management.

c) Sportsturf Construction module – By May, I had completed half of the coursework and was feeling relieved to have finished the written examinations. The last taught module was the Sportsturf Construction module. Coming from a predominantly golf background this module was very informative, as I learned about the construction of natural and artificial sports surfaces, such as football, tennis and cricket. The assignment for this module was worth 10% of the total mark.

d) Thesis – As part of the course you are required to undertake a research project on a given topic or on one of your own choosing. The aim of my project was to find the optimum level of nitrogen application for a grass tennis court, that would minimise slip on a grass tennis court while still allowing for good growth and presentation. I carried out an experiment on the cricket square at Cranfield University using four different amounts of nitrogen. I conducted a number of assessments such as slip measurement, grass coverage, surface hardness, colour and tissue analysis on each of the twelve plots of turf. With the data obtained from these assessments I had to statistically analyse the results in order to draw out objective conclusions to include in the report. The research project took about three months to complete and was worth 40% of the total mark of the course. This was a completely new experience for me as I had never had the opportunity to do any research in the past. It gave me an insight into the processes involved in developing new ideas and theories which aim to make improvements in the sportsturf industry.

## Benefits from the course;

- It improved my IT and report writing skills.
- It improved my technical knowledge of sportsturf science.
- I feel more equipped to do whatever job I will involved with in the future.
- It gave me the opportunity to meet new people in the industry.
- The course has given me new options as to what type of career I could pursue both in golf and in other sports.
- It gave me a rewarding sense of achievement at having successfully passed a course that I never thought I would be in a position to do.

## Some difficulties experienced during the course

- I found the period of time during the taught modules very intense, with assignments to complete, lectures to attend and tests to sit.
- Some of the modules highlighted the need to improve my knowledge of mathematics, particularly the modules on soil science and the thesis.
- I found that I needed to be self motivated, as it can be quite isolating at times when you live off campus as I did.

I am glad to say that I successfully passed the course in September 2003. I would without any hesitation, recommend the MSc in Sports Surface Technology to anyone in the sportsturf industry who is considering developing their knowledge and wishing to widen their career prospects. I believe the course is a real breakthrough for education in sportsturf science, and will help to raise the profile and the standard of professionalism within the sports turf industry as a whole. I will be starting a new job as a Grounds Supervisor at the Hurlingham Club in London in the near future, which I am really looking forward to. The Hurlingham Club is a highly prestigious sports club situated in west London. The club has a number of fine turf surfaces including tennis, bowls, croquet and cricket.

I would like to thank Ransomes Jacobsen for giving me a Higher Education Scholarship which was a great help in financing the course. In particular, I would like to thank David Withers, the Sales and Marketing Director of Ransomes Jacobsen, who send me letters of support throughout the year. I am also grateful to Ken Richardson, the Education and Training Manager at BIGGA, who recommended me for the award and also kept in contact with me throughout the year. Finally, I would like to thank Alex Vickers for his encouragement and his enthusiasm throughout the year.



# Sandy McDivot

## It's Tough on Tour

Sandy McDivot relives the occasions when he came into contact with Tournament golf.

Last year I briefly sampled the delights of what has become a commonplace activity in the land of the influential. We are talking, corporate hospitality. My transitory visit to this world took place in a hospitality suite at a European Tour event, where as an interlude between the *consomme truffe* and the *saumon et langoustine au sauce champagne*, I was granted the high honour of being introduced to the host club's Superintendent, a man who is regarded as famous within our industry. My only defence for getting his name entirely wrong was that apart from this introduction taking place during the gastronomic enchantments of the day, it also came midway between a 1988 Cotes du Roussillon and a 1999 Saint-Nicolas de Bourgueil, a wine that our hosts - all of whom were present during my foot insertion moment- described as being an especially lively young thing, whose impertinence they found amusing.

All I can say is, I don't think the assembled entourage were too amused by my insane blunder, especially as I mistook this unfortunate person as one of his shall we say, more illustrious peers. It's kind of like Tony Blair referring to that Bush bloke as my old friend Bill Clinton. Either way, at that instant it felt like a diplomatic catastrophe of global proportions that brought with it the consideration that my instant departure from this world would be an altogether more desirable alternative to existence.

But tournament golf can be the source of so many examples of psychological trauma.

Despite my best efforts I have total recall of an incident at a European Tour event that resulted in myself experiencing the collective derision of thousands. I was watching a group tee off from the adjacent 17th tee while perched in the upper reaches of a grandstand around the 18th green. I was forced to stand up for a more advantageous view because the person next to me was also standing. It became clear as to why he was adopting a vertical attitude when he took a quick snap shot of the players on the 17th tee with the noisiest camera 1970's Britain could produce. He then displayed an amazing piece of swiftness and dexterity by sitting down and concealing the camera and all within the time span of a micro second. This resulted in Bernard Gallagher taking his own quick snap shot out of bounds down the left. Bernard then immediately turned his attention to the direction of the noise that had cost him the average man's annual salary and set eyes on who else but moi, the only person standing and high above him and directly next to a prominent sign stating, "No Cameras".

I remember that sickening feeling of terror as I turned to my left to see the sign, then below me to engage a scowling Bernard, then to my right to witness about 4000 spectators all collectively identifying myself as the half-wit from Hades.

One of my favourite stories involving shame and tournament golf was the classic Arnold Palmer and the 'Portolet' incident. To explain, let me transport you back to the mid 60s when Arnie was the greatest name in global sport and where he commanded a following rarely witnessed before or since. The victim of this incident was innocently watching a golf

tournament when he was overcome with the desire to spend a penny, or cent as it would have been. He looked down the fairway and could see the advanced guard of Arnie's Army making their way up the fairway. Our friend spotted one of those awful portable conveniences called a 'Portolet' behind him and calculated that he just had time to nip in before Arnie was due. So he popped inside and did what he had to do. Having done that and being in a hurry to witness the great man, he somewhat regrettably opened the door in a rather flamboyantly theatrical manner only to find that to his sheer horror he had in the interim become encircled by a mass of TV camera's, overexcited spectators and Arnie, who had tweaked one off the tee and was about to do one of his Howitzer jobs from a mere ten feet distant. So what did our friend do? He immediately closed the door to the piercing accompaniment of squeaking rusty hinges and sat inside to contemplate the unfolding nightmare. He then waited for the sound of persimmon on balata only for there instead to be silence, followed by an eerie murmuring sound. Then there was the dreaded knock on the door. It was Arnie who asked, "Excuse me but I am finding it real tough to play my shot with you in there, could you please come out?" "Err no, Mr Palmer," replied our friend. "You just go right ahead, I'm ok here". Of course that was not an option and so after a minute or so of negotiation our poor comrade of agony was forced to face the bright sunlight, the TV cameras, the sniggering spectators and Arnie himself.

I must now describe the exploits of a friend of mine who follows the vocation of professional golfer. I thought I was a connoisseur of the cock-up but this man is a walking 'foot in mouth' epidemic. There was the unforgettable one where he was attempting to sell a second hand, slightly iffy electric trolley to the Lady Captain when he heard himself utter the line, "If you get a bit vigorous with this knob, it will jerk off."

Then there was the time when he arrived a tad late for a pro-am, hurried to the tee, met his team who had all invested £100 to play with this elite golfer and promptly proceeded to completely miss the ball with his first effort. His rather lame excuse was that he had just come out of a three month teaching stint where the only club he had swung had been a 5-iron and the shock of swinging 45 inches of driver had resulted in the

ground being struck approximately one foot ahead of schedule.

But I got involved as a caddie when he managed to get an invitation to a Tour event that was being staged within his PGA Region. St Mellion to be precise. This he achieved by the combination of a good run of form, aggressive networking and some serious wool pulling exercises. It all started to go wrong when a week before the event he got a bout of what true golfers refer to as 'the Lucy Locket's', 'the J Arthur's (and I don't mean Jim), "the laterals', 'the unmentionables', anything in fact to avoid the dreaded word "shank". Practice day arrived and we made our way to the range where he found a quiet spot at the far end well away from the masses. No problem until Seve and Nick Faldo decided to surround him. Several shanks followed, interspersed with the odd total duff for effect. Confidence now at an all time low, he shuffled off to the 1st tee for a practice round where he made up a three with Paul Broadhurst and another Ryder Cupper of the day. On the 4th fairway he stood at an approximate eight over par and proceeded to shank a vicious wedge that had Mr Broadhurst diving for cover.

Nine holes were enough before we made our way home. The next day and with several thousand spectators already enjoying the glorious weather, my friend got an early start on the 10th tee with a couple of monster hitting Swedes. A ghastly 1st tee shot off a previously undiscovered spot on the club face played in a state of advanced paranoid schizophrenia was followed by a chop with a 4- iron well short of the green. However, a scabby chip hit the pin and a tap in par managed to hoodwink the spectators into believing that there was some sort of control to his game. There then followed a half respectable par three followed by a birdie on the par-5 12th that was only achieved through a thinned second that managed to bound merrily over the stream fronting the green. Another couple of scrambled pars were interspersed with the odd stroke of merit that managed to get my friend to the entirely unplanned predicament of being joint leader when he stood on the 18th tee, which was his ninth. But of course, to those aficionado's among us that have taken the relentless pursuit of accidental disaster to the higher levels, the occasional moment of triumph has only been attained so as

to make the downfall all the more calamitous. And so it proved to be. A 'God Bothered or 'Gladice' as it is sometimes known, got him 160 yards off the tee and about 150 yards short of his Swedish companions. He then necked a 3-wood to a position right and well short of the green and in the perfect position to exhibit to the waiting world the full beauty of the well-executed shank into the crowd, a shot that according to the record books had never been pulled off by a tournament leader.

We have often discussed the moment when we were deciding how the shot would be played. As we watched the cameras pan across and zoom in on us, our main focus of attention was not on how we would attack the pin or the subtle intricacies of Mr Nicklaus' slopes but on how we could actually safeguard against spectator loss of life. In the end a lunge with a 7-iron, even though we were only 70 yards from the green, seemed the best way out as a hastily executed risk assessment reasoned that the shattering of a spectators knee cap would be preferable to permanent brain damage or worse. But to his eternal credit the shank was averted and the utter joy of a double bogey was enough to get my friend back to the sanctuary of total obscurity.

But enough of my negativity, a golf course is a place to enjoy oneself, unless of course you are like myself of Scottish descent, in which case a golf course is a place where a man must suffer. Still, coming from a race that believes that pleasure is epitomised by a brisk walk through sub arctic winds dressed in little more than a mini skirt and whose idea of haute cuisine is a boiled concoction of animal waste and oatmeal stuffed into a sheep's bladder, I shouldn't take such sentiments too seriously.

### **Sandy McDivot**

Head Greenkeeper  
Sludgecombe Pay & Play



# NEW PRODUCTS

## NEW TURF TENDER FROM CAMPEY

Campey Turf Care Systems, the specialist distributors of grounds care machinery, have added a new model to their popular line-up of Dakota Turf Tenders in the form of the Dakota 412. Like its counterparts, the high work-rate unit allows grounds professionals to move materials, apply top-dressing, spread fertiliser and sow grass seed.

With a 2 cu yd (1.6 cu m) hopper capacity and a spread pattern that is variable between 3.5m – 9m (10 – 30 ft), the tractor-trailed 412 shares the same dimensions as the established Dakota 420.

It also benefits from having twin sets of floating wheels which further reduces the risk of ground compaction and allows contours to be followed accurately.

The Dakotas have proved highly successful owing to their efficiency and ease of use. Powered by a tractor of 30 hp or more, the 412 has an optional vibrating mechanism which agitates material in the hopper for even flow. Wide turf tyres are fitted to the unit as standard.

Using a Dakota Turf Tender, grounds care professionals can undertake several tasks with the one machine and boost productivity. This is an important feature for local authorities, contractors and large golf courses where considerable areas have to be treated quickly and efficiently.

For further information telephone 01260 224568.



## ONE STOP SHOP

Tines Direct has been established as a single source of supply for tines and blades of all kinds, for the major machinery brands. This makes it easier and more cost-effective to buy tines for all the different makes of equipment in the typical aeration fleet.

The comprehensive range includes hollow tines, solid tines and cross tines for Ransomes, Jacobsen, Ryan, John Deere, Toro, Sisis, Wiedenmann and Coremaster aerators.

Conventional hardened tines are available, along with carbide-tipped versions for even greater resilience and durability, even when operating in the most compacted conditions.

In addition, Tines Direct are offering verti-cut blades for leading machines, including models manufactured by Sisis and Graden.

The company also supplies replacement brush sections for popular sweeper/collectors, including equipment manufactured by Sisis, Wessex, Tomlin and Dennis.

The Tines Direct offering extends to workshop items, including Cougar greases formulated to keep equipment working longer. These include general-purpose grease, semi-synthetic extreme pressure grease, and a formulation designed to resist shock loading and pounding action.

For further information telephone (freephone) 0800 083 0216, or by email at [sales@tinesdirect.com](mailto:sales@tinesdirect.com)



## SIMPLY DONE

US manufacturer Simplicity has upgraded engine specifications on their range of Grand Baron and Conquest garden and estate tractors.

The changes are part of a policy of constant product development and have been announced by UK importer Claymore Grass Machinery in time for the 2004 season.

The Simplicity Baron has been upgraded to a 17hp Briggs and Stratton Intek OHV engine and the Grand Baron 18/40 now has a 20hp twin-cylinder Briggs & Stratton power pack.

The Grand Baron 16H/40 tractor will continue to be available fitted with a 16hp twin-cylinder Honda engine.

Hydrostatic transmission is standard on all Grand Baron models as is cruise control and 325 litre capacity grass collector. A grass deflector is available as an optional extra.

Cutting width is 102cm (40in) with height of cut infinite between 2.5cm and 9.1cm.

The Simplicity Conquest tractor has hydrostatic drive, cruise control and an 112cm (44in) side discharge cutting deck. In addition an 18hp Briggs & Stratton Vanguard V-Twin engine now powers the Simplicity Conquest.

For further information telephone 01789 490177.

## NEW MODELS FROM LLOYDS

Lloyds has increased its range of pedestrian operated self propelled Rotary Mowers, with the addition of two new models, the RL1480 and the one metre Twin Deck RL Samson.

These machines give an excellent finish but have the ability to cut high grass and brushwood. They are ideal to cut large areas. available in several formats and cutting widths from 533mm (21") to 1 Metre (40"), with forward single, 2, 3 or 4 speed models and options of reverse operation with parking brake, making the mowers suitable for all conditions.

Fitted with powerful engines, ranging from 5 to 15 hp, a perfect job is guaranteed even in tough places. Fully adjustable handles are mounted with controls and easy differential lock operation.

The machines give perfect stability and the best traction for any working condition (wet grass, slopes etc.). Engineered to withstand the rigours of today's demanding conditions, these machines give an uncompromising performance.

For more information telephone 01462-683031.



▲ RL 1480 Rotary

▲ Twin Deck RL Samson

## COURSE CARE'S CLEARWATER SYSTEM

Much has been said recently about the Groundwater Regulations and many clubs are now bringing their wash-down facilities up to specification with the installation of closed loop water recycling facilities incorporating micro-organisms.

While these systems are the ideal solution (and, many believe, will be the only one when legislation is tightened!) oil separators (interceptors) can be installed.

As the law stands at present, you may discharge into a foul sewer via a standard full retention separator. If washings are to go to a soakaway or watercourse, however, then a Class 1 separator must be installed.

Course Care has been installing separators and sewage plants for over 15 years now, so have considerable experience in this field. They progressed into water recycling plants in 2003 when demand became apparent and are now installing systems up and down the country.

Unlike other systems, Course Care's ClearWater systems are unique in that they are below ground, out of sight, silent and, with prices starting below £6,000 for a standard recycling plant, affordable. The company offers installation and wash-pad build services too.

The Control of Pollution (Oil Storage) (England) Regulations 2001 affects those storing over 200 litres of oil above ground (this includes diesel fuel and petrol!) and that means most of you!

Old single skin fuel tanks must be replaced by 1st September 2005 by new double skinned ones, preferably with an integral electric pump and the Course Care range probably covers the needs of most.

Of course, if your tank is 10 metres from a watercourse or 50 metres from a borehole or well, you should have replaced it by 1st September 2003! All other oil containers (bottles, drums and barrels) should stand on sump pallets also to avoid the possibility of pollution and likely prosecution.

The carriage and storage of petrol is the third concern. Many greenkeepers and groundsman are often, unwittingly, breaking the law and risking prosecution by collecting petrol from local garages in unauthorised containers.

Carrying more than 2 x 5 litre properly designed petrol cans in a vehicle is illegal.

A range of petrol storage and transport items are available on the market now, including the keenly priced transit box special from Course Care, which can be used to transport petrol legally and holds 4 x 20 litre jerrycans.

Don't risk prosecution and hefty fines, check your facilities, speak to the suppliers and get the right equipment in place so you comply.

For further information telephone 01535 611103 or fax 01535 611546.



## NEW THIEFBEATERS SYSTEMS TURF OUT THIEVES

The theft of mowers, chippers and trailers can be a nightmare for greenkeepers, leaving them with spiralling insurance premiums and the headache of replacement.

But now theft risk management consultants, Thiefbeaters, have developed a range of theft deterrent solutions that are literally causing thieves to walk off empty handed.

"The Thiefbeaters Permanent Identification System has been applied to thousands of high risk items and to date less than 1% has ever been reported stolen", said Andy James, Director of Thiefbeaters. "We have had cases where thieves have even moved 'Thiefbeater' property out of the way to steal identical unmarked property".

The Thiefbeaters Permanent Identification System is at the core of all Thiefbeaters products and deters thieves by alerting them to the fact that it is impossible for them to conceal the identity of the property.

Effective theft risk management is fundamental to any business and being able to identify recovered property is a key consideration for insurers and often



results in lower premiums for the policyholder because of the reduced risk of theft.

For enhanced protection, the Thiefbeaters Gold System combines permanent identification with physical immobilisation, which provides an additional visual deterrent.

Where greenkeepers want an even higher level of protection, the Thiefbeaters Platinum System combines permanent identification with a new tamper-proof tracking and recovery solution that alerts the owner to any unauthorised movements.

The Thiefbeaters systems are well worth the investment, costing as little as £179 (inc. VAT) to protect a trailer and only £234 (inc. VAT) to protect a professional ride-on mower; a small price to pay for lifetime protection.

For further information about Thiefbeaters or your nearest supplier visit the company's web site at [www.thiefbeaters.co.uk](http://www.thiefbeaters.co.uk) or contact the sales team on 0800 083 3066.



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SCOTTISH REGION

**West**

Welcome to this month's West Section Report. Time is moving so fast, the season is just around the corner.

I attended the Scottish Annual Conference during March at Lawder College and once again it was a first class day. Peter Boyd has to be congratulated on his choice of speakers and the running of the day in general. It was nice to see our Chairman, Andy Campbell, in attendance.

There are several things happening during April with the greenkeepers v greens conveners match at Killermont Golf Club on the 15th. I am sure everyone is looking forward to playing Stuart's fine course.

The spring outing will be held at Renfrew on the 28th and I look forward to seeing a few of the boys on the day. Hopefully the weather will be kind, if not I am sure we will still enjoy ourselves.

On another note the West Section would like to wish Neil Stevenson all the best in his future career. Neil is leaving Bishopbriggs Golf Club after 28 years service. Gary Divers, from Ralston Golf Club, has joined us on the committee and hopefully he will have many successful years on board.

We hope to arrange some Educational days throughout the year. Stay tuned. Hopefully all members have received their fixture diary.

Well that's all for now all the best for the spring.

Any news or articles give me a call at home 0141-886-3721, mobile 07970366355 or e mail me at karen.ross@tesco.net

Fraser Ross

**Ayrshire**



Hello everyone, hope your winter work went well and you are now geared up for the season. It will be an exciting time for Ayrshire courses with Royal Troon hosting The Open and others qualifying events, not to mention all the visitors flocking to Ayrshire's other fine courses.

On to the news. Boro' won the cup, Yeah, that's right Boro' won the cup! Anyway, I digress, the

Scottish National Conference, held at Dumfermline, on March 2, went well again this year and I'm reliably informed all in attendance had an enjoyable day.

On to the news. Boro' won the cup, Yeah, that's right Boro' won the cup! Anyway, I digress, the Scottish National Conference, held at Dumfermline, on March 2, went well again this year and I'm reliably informed all in attendance had an enjoyable day. The Spring Outing will be now be played on Spring Tournament is now on April 20 and not April 29 as originally agreed, at Prestwick St Nicholas. Tee times begin just after mid-day, remember this event doubles as the first leg of the Harry Diamond Memorial Jug.

Tuesday, June 15 is the date set for the Scottish National Championship to be held at Kilmalcolm Golf Club. Let's hope we can get a good turnout and perhaps win a few trophies after our dismal showing last year over the Kintyre Course. I believe only Duncan Gray saved us from complete annihilation.

Auchterarder Golf Club hosts the annual Norrie Whittock Trophy on August 23.

Our AGM this year will take place at West Kilbride Golf Club with Hamilton Bros generously offering to demonstrate their wares and answer any questions regarding course machinery before the start of the meeting

itself. I will pass on more information as it becomes available.

Lastly, our football match vs. the West Section should have taken place and the details will be in next month's notes.

Phone me on 01292 478606 if you want.

Dennis Tweddell

**Central**

The new date and venue for the Spring Tournament is Thursday, April 29, by courtesy of Crail Golfing Society, Crail, Fife. Entry forms are already out for this event, so if you wish to participate, please return your form as soon as possible.

The Scottish Conference at Dunfermline last month was another excellent event organised by Regional Administrator, Peter Boyd, with the first class speakers keeping the capacity audience interested for the full day and it was heartening to see Central Section members supporting and participating in the conference. Here's looking forward to next year's event!

A man on the move recently was James "Sevi" Sievewright, who has moved from being assistant to Archie Dunn at Auchterarder Golf Club and has been appointed Head Greenkeeper at the King James VI Golf Club on Moncrieffe Island in Perth. Best wishes from everyone in the Section go to "Sevi" for a very successful future in his new position.

New members who have joined over the past couple of months are Kenny O'Donnell, from Muthill Golf Club; Stephen Mitchell, from Carnoustie Golf Links; Graeme Black, from St Andrews Links; Darren McKenna and Douglas Smith, both from Drumoig Golf Club. As usual we extend a warm welcome from everyone in the Section to them all and hope to get the chance of meeting them at some of our future events.

If you know of anyone who is completing an application form for membership of the Association, could you please ensure that you clearly indicate which section they wish to join, as according to head quarters the central section extends as far a field as the South of England and Northern Ireland!

Following on from the success of our Workshop/Seminar which was held last year at Elmwood College, your committee are in the process of organising further educational events, so if you have any subjects you wish to include in the programmes, please get in touch with any committee member.

John Crawford

NORTHERN REGION

**North Wales**

April in the greenkeeping calendar and Augusta fast approaches, the first big televised major of the year, and this is the time you need to have surplus "flack jackets" from the recent war over in Iraq, as your members will be on the Augusta Attack..."

Is it spring, or just an extension of winter? Are we lulled into a false spring at the end of March and, if so, do we then start watering when the weather is cold and cold water is showered on cold grass.

Then, if the members expect you to water, ask them how would they feel jumping into an irrigation tank in the middle of April with no clothes on! But then, with modern technology, shouldn't we have thermatically





**Peter Boyd**  
**SCOTLAND & NORTHERN IRELAND**  
 Tel/Fax: 0141 616 3440



**Peter Larter**  
**NORTHERN & MIDLAND**  
 Tel: 01476 550115

controlled heated irrigation tanks the type that we can set via our mobile phones while sitting on the settee at home (watching The Masters).

Perhaps we should also sprinkle a little lawn sand on, sulphate of ammonia (nitrogen) to give them that little perk up. Spring can be cold and dry or cold and wet, it's a fact grass only grows in soil temperatures of five to six degrees, and dry soils warm quicker than wet ones. You have to be careful as the cold east winds blow and the berries on the trees are "big" – it's going to be a dry spring.

This time of year greekeepers fear for their livelihood and wonder if they are doing the right thing at the right time, but you need not worry as everyone else is in the same boat, and you only get billiard type putting surfaces in brilliant green colour over in Georgia at this time of year.

Moving on we have a 'Pest Management' training course at Carden Park hosted by BIGGA, the cost is £70.50 including VAT for one person for a day. If you or any of your staff wish to attend please contact Ken or Sami at BIGGA House 01347 833800.

A sad note to end, the untimely passing of BIGGA Executive Director, Neil Thomas, in February was a shock to us all. His character and strength of passion for the Association will be his legacy and our thoughts are with his wife Elaine and his family as they come to terms with their loss.

Andrew Acorn

## Sheffield



It was with great sadness to learn that Neil Thomas had recently passed away. He will be long remembered. Our sincere condolences go to his family from all Section members.

I would like to thank all the members that have attended the winter lectures and to pay special thanks, firstly to John Deere for a very enjoyable day back in October, to John Nicholson for his entertaining talk on

woodland management last November and lastly, but by no means least, to Neil Baldwin, of Amega Science, for his excellent lecture on dry patch. A special thanks to Mike Brear for his help in securing Neil's services at very short notice.

Diary dates to remember are: the Spring Tournament to be held at Retford GC, April 26, teeing off at 1.30pm. The annual Summer competition to be held at Sickleholme GC on July 12, tee off time to be confirmed.

Our Chairman, Gordon Brammah, has suggested and is trying to set up a Section Library where members can make use of books, videos, CD roms etc to help them with their education or on any other matters. If you have anything that could be of use please get in touch with either Gordon or myself.

Congratulations to John Davis and to Les Easthope. John, for attaining his new position of Deputy Head Greenkeeper at Wortley GC, and Les for 45 years service at Hillsborough GC. Well done lads!

And finally, Gainsborough GC is to hosting The English Ladies Golf Association Girls' Championships on their Thonock Park course from July 26 -31.

Any news or comments please call on 01427 614175 or 07904 121690 or you can e-mail me at [geoff@wellsy1.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:geoff@wellsy1.freeserve.co.uk).

Geoff Wells

## Northern

Hope that you and all your courses are well?

As some of you may already know, I have taken over from Dave Thackray as Secretary of the Northern Section. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Dave for all his hard work as Secretary over the past few years. Also another thank you to Jim Brown, who has given many years of service to the Northern Section.

Jim has stepped down from the role as Vice Chairman and on the committee. He has passed the reigns to Andy Slingsby (can't wait for the speeches, Andy!).

The next tournament will be at Garforth Golf Club on April 27, tee off time will be at 10am. Please make sure you arrive by 9.15 at the latest. The price will be the usual £16, which includes bacon sandwich on arrival, golf, and a three course meal in the evening. This event will be sponsored by Scotts UK and the winner of the Scratch Cup and winners of each division will receive free entrance to the National Championship at Alwoodley Golf Club, in Leeds.

Welcome to John Hammond, who has joined us as a new member, from the West Bowling Golf Club. Also, congratulations go to Ian Pullan and family, on the birth of their baby boy.

And finally, if you want to play in any tournament, could you please make sure that I receive your name and payment at least a week before the event.

Contact me at 16a Hodgson Fold, Bradford, BD2 4EB. Telephone 01274 638366

Mobile: 07739 319060. Email [adam@speight1156.fslife.co.uk](mailto:adam@speight1156.fslife.co.uk)

See you all at Garforth!

Adam Speight



## North West

I start this month's Section news with the sad news of the death of Neil Thomas, after a long illness. As Executive Director, Neil has done so much for greenkeepers since the formation of BIGGA in 1987.

The Association is recognised throughout the world of turf culture, and golf course management, we have our own headquarters which is a great achievement, and almost 7,000 members. All this is down to the leadership of Neil and the various members of the Board of Management. He will be sadly missed by all and our thoughts are with Elaine and his family.

In February I attended the North Wales Education Seminar at Carden Park which was well attended by 74 delegates. It was an excellent seminar with four speakers, the first being Tony Smith, Course Manager at Teeside Golf Club, who spoke of his Agronomic Year at his golf club. His course floods regularly throughout the year of which I am not surprised as the difference between the highest point and the lowest point on his course is only eight inches. I don't think squeegees would be much help there.

The second speaker was Stephen Cox, Head of PGA Tournaments. He spoke about rules and course markings covering GUR, Out of Bounds, Water Hazards etc. which was very interesting, but to be fair 45 minutes was not sufficient to do justice to this interesting subject.

Peter Jones, Golf Course Consultant, spoke on Preparation for Competitions and Tournaments. Prior to tournaments being played he meets the course manager to discuss width of fairways, height of cut, etc.

Peter Wisbey, Golf Course Manager at Woodhall Spa, covered Managing Tournament Expectations. It was interesting to note that although his course is always busy, they have no temporary greens, and the only time the course is closed is when the frost is coming out of the ground. This is





Derek Farrington  
SOUTH EAST, SOUTH WEST & SOUTH WALES  
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the time, of course, when we all know that damage occurs. All in all it was an excellent seminar and well done North Wales.

Next March it will be the North West turn to host the seminar at Mere Golf Club. So if any of you have any ideas for speakers you would like to hear please let me know as soon as possible.

The first of our golf events this year is the Spring Tournament at Ellesmere Golf Club on Tuesday, April 20. Tee time 1.30pm. All applications to Bill Merritt, The Lodge, Beacon Park Golf Club, Beacon Lane, Dalton, Wigan, WN8 7RU. Telephone 01695 632883. Please include a cheque for £20 made out to BIGGA N/W.

A further competition this year is the Golf Management Trophy to be played at the De Vere Carden Park Golf Club on Monday, August 23. This is a team tournament, which includes the Course Manager, Club Secretary, Club Captain and Chairman of Green. Entry fee is £100 per team to include coffee on arrival, 18 holes of golf and dinner. Anyone interested contact me for an application form asap on 01517 245 412.

One further bit of information is that Anthony Davies, from Prestbury Golf Club, has taken up singing and acting, and can probably be heard at dawn singing, "The Hills are alive with the Sound of Music" as he switches greens.

Any news or views contact me on 01517 245412 or 07761 583387.  
Bert Cross



## Midland

With respect to the late Neil Thomas, our lines this month shall remain silent. He shall be fondly remembered and sorely missed.

The Midland Section

## BB&O

I bring news from afar, I recently jetted to the GCSAA Conference and Show in San Diego, California, with a white knuckle ride on the latest Continental Airlines sardine can. After landing at Newark Airport, New York and changing to yet another sardine can, only a lot smaller, I asked myself, was it worth it amigo. Yes, Yes, Yes.

Discovering tequila, the one the locals drank, taken with salt and limes which gave a whole new meaning to a Margarita and a Mexican breakfast of spicy eggs and beans, with the bite of a rattlesnake and twice as hot as a regular vindaloo. If only Dr Atkins had approved the recipe. Sunshine, perfect climate and good company with the many trade and greenkeepers that managed to jet the huge pond to see what it was all about.

It was gratifying to see that our American counterparts were enthused and interested in discussing British equipment and ideas. The cold grip of landing at Birmingham Airport brought back reality with a bump, as I am sure we all are looking forward to a better climate, and hopefully, as you are reading this, finer weather is around the corner.

Simon Douglas, from Maidenhead GC, will soon be flying his way over land, sea and water to Columbus USA. He has won a working scholarship where he will attend Ohio State University. This will be Simon's first visit to the USA; a fantastic learning experience and a big adventure awaits, as we all wish him Bon Voyage and good luck for the future.

John Gubb, from Goring and Streatley GC, broke his leg while on the staff Christmas bash and spent Christmas Day in the capable hands of the NHS, Chief Fishkeeper Steve Chandler and proud owner of Omar the goldfish (he's a big fish), are part of a fish breeding school at the Golf Club

where koi carp and golden orf are encouraged to flourish. All of Goring's staff take huge pride in their slippery friends and the welfare of the fish is included in the maintenance programme.

Peter McFadden, from Caversham Heath GC, had a Valentine day he will never forget and is now the proud father of a baby girl. Congratulations from us all. Keith Roberts from Farnham Park GC is expected to be following in Peter's footsteps soon and be listening to the patter of tiny feet.

The National Qualifier at Badgemore Park GC is on April 22 this month. Depending when you get to read this article, hopefully there will still be time to enter at the last moment if you fancy a day out with some great golf, good food and company. Contact Mr John Scoones on 07880 550 380.

We join with other colleges in expressing our sincere condolences to the family of the late Neil Thomas, Executive Director, who has done such sterling work for the greenkeeping profession over the years, everyone in the BB&O extends their deepest sympathy.

Mark Day

## East Midlands

Our Section's annual Go-Kart evening took place once again at the Wymeswold race track on February 26. The qualifying heats saw some fierce and intensive battles to gain enough points for the final. After several races the competition had found its best six qualifiers with Steve Randall taking pole position. Apparently from what I have been told there was some serious foul play from Gavin Robson.



During the final, Gavin, however was outsmarted by Adi Porter and dumped into the tyre wall, although this was not enough to give Adi victory. That accolade went to Steve Randall, of Greetham Valley, with Stuart Raybould finishing in second place, and Adi Porter third. A complete whitewash for Greetham Valley (I think they must have had their own Go-Karts at work). Thanks should be extended to our very generous sponsors, Toro/Lely and P.S. Marsdens.

If you have not received your entry forms for the Spring Tournament and Wimbledon trip, please let me know.

Antony Bindley



## Surrey

It was with some trepidation that I agreed to go on a secret mission to Lanzarote. My initial fear that this island, by its reputation, was fit only for the dregs of humanity and not a destination for one as naïve and as sensitive as I, was unfounded.

My mission, should I accept it, was to infiltrate the only golf club on the island, kidnap the 'Jafe varde hierba cortadura' (literally translated chief green grass cutter) and force him to join the Canary Island BIGGA Section. The fact that my mission failed had less to do with the sun and cheap booze but more to my inability to concentrate in the midst of tanned topless young ladies.

My return to near arctic conditions in England brought me swiftly down to earth as I realised that the more important task of writing this month's report was still to be completed, as follows...

All Surrey members will now have received this year's programme and

application forms for the first two events. I am sure you have all noticed that the first two golf days are costing considerably less than in previous years, and should therefore attract a large turnout. Surrey Section funds are in substantial credit and your committee has decided to subsidise the cost to the members this year and most events will be charged at £15. If any member has an idea for a Section excursion relating to education, travel or recreation, please contact a committee member.

I am writing this on March 5, one week before the Gentleman's Dinner at Walton Heath Golf Club and I am hoping that the weather will be kinder than the rain and wind of 2003. A report on this year at Walton Heath and results from the par 3 challenge at Duke's Meadow will appear in next month's edition.

The Spring Tournament at Woking GC will now take place on May 20 instead of May 10. We still need a venue for the Autumn Tournament, September/October 2004. If your club can help please contact our Secretary, Ian Sellers.

Brian Willmott

**SOUTH WEST  
& SOUTH WALES**

**Devon & Cornwall**

Our second meeting of the year, The Avoncrop Trophy, was held at West Cornwall Golf Club on Wednesday, February 18 in glorious sunshine. Forty-five members were in attendance with 24 members playing golf.

John Palfrey, of Avoncrop, started the competition on the 1st tee. Head Greenkeeper, Brian Trevenna, escorted the remaining 21 members on the customary Course Walk. Stuart Ashworth, of Amenity Technology, did a demonstration using hydroseeding equipment, seeding an almost vertical bank around a new greenkeeping compound. I have seen this type of seeding used at my previous club with great results and anybody who has some steep banks where you find it difficult to grow grass, it is certainly worth considering.

After an excellent lunch, our sponsor, John Palfrey of Avoncrop, presented the prizes for the Bogey Competition to: 1. Simon Clarke, of St Mellion. +9, Avoncrop Trophy; 2. Craig Ershaw of Dartmouth +6; 3. Paul Newcombe of East Devon +5.

The winner of the Course Walk prize, a copy of Jim Arthur's "Practical Greenkeeping" wasn't Billy Mitchell this time, but brother John! So with all this knowledge the Mitchell Brothers are gathering, we may see an improvement in the Links at Perranporth!

I would like to thank Secretary, Ian Veale, and his committee for the friendly welcome we received and for the use of their excellent facilities. I would also like to thank the catering team and bar staff for a superb lunch and looking after our liquid refreshments. Also a big thank you to Head Greenkeeper, Brian Trevenna, and his team for presenting the Golf Course in fantastic condition. And last but not least, thanks to our sponsor Avoncrop and John Palfrey for once again, supporting our Section.

John Gawman, of St Mellion, has been in hospital recently and all those present at West Cornwall signed a "Get Well Card". This was delivered to John along with a basket of fruit and all at Devon and Cornwall wish him a speedy recovery.

It was with great sadness, we learnt of the recent loss of Neil Thomas. Neil was with BIGGA from day one as Executive Director and worked tirelessly, taking our Association forward, and making it the success it is



today. All greenkeepers, the length and breadth of the country, owe a great debt of gratitude to Neil who raised the standing of our profession immensely. I would like to convey our deepest sympathy to Neil's wife, Elaine, and all of his family.

Steve Evans

**South West**

How sad we all are to hear of the death of our Executive Director, Neil Thomas. Our sympathies to his wife and children.

Results from West Wiltshire Golf day as follows:- 1. Adam Matthews, 42pts; 2. Shawn Richards, 41 pts; 3. Matthew Worcester, 39 pts. Rob Lane and Shawn Richards won prizes for nearest the pin.

A great day was had by all and our thanks must go to Neil Bungay and his team for a superbly presented course, a real treat to see another of our old traditional golf courses managed in a sympathetic way.

Not much else to report on I'm afraid. So may the Spring be kind to us all (for once) See you soon.

Contact me on 01225 333928 or 078123 80936

Guy Woods



**NORTHERN IRELAND**

"Yes I'm still alive"

Sorry about the gap, not all my fault, anyway I'll try and catch up. From memory, two items that didn't get in previous issues are: best wishes to Terry Angus, of Donaghadee Golf Club, on his retirement, after 17 years in charge. There, I hadn't forgotten, Terry. All the best, up the scrum.

I'm also sorry for belated condolences to the Late John Boyd and his family. John had been supplying golf course accessories to the UK and Ireland for many years and was very well respected. Again my sincere apologies to his family for the delay in this announcement.

The Northern Ireland Section would also wish to express our regret at the passing away of Neil Thomas from BIGGA Headquarters. Neil has been over to the Province and I hope he left with pleasant memories of us.

Now then, Godfrey Clarke, from Ballycastle Golf Club, has moved on to a very nice job with his son, Darren, travelling the world (I have offered to carry his bag). Godfrey used to give me "hell" and I loved every minute of it, he has that kind of personality. He has a lot of long time friends in Northern Ireland so I'm sure I will see more of him. From us all Godfrey, the very best wishes.

Our best wishes also go to Mark Farrell, from City of Derry Golf Club, who is now over in England as First Assistant at the London Golf Club. Good luck Mark and "Happy Days".

Nick Webber, from Portstewart Golf Club, has been appointed Head Greenkeeper at Ballycastle Golf Club. Congratulations and best wishes Nick.

Welcome to six new members. Gabriel Loughran, Adrian Morton, Garth Abbermeety, Andrew Walker, Wolsey White and Fergus Scobie.

The two education courses held recently were very well received, thanks to Ken Richardson from BIGGA and Greenmount College.

The first golf day this year will be held at Ardglass Golf Club, on April 6. See you there, I've been practising.

Graham Prosser

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The solution to the March Turftime Teaser was 'Landmaps'. The lucky winner of the Easter Treats Hamper Backpack is Leslie Parry, a retired BIGGA member. Well done!

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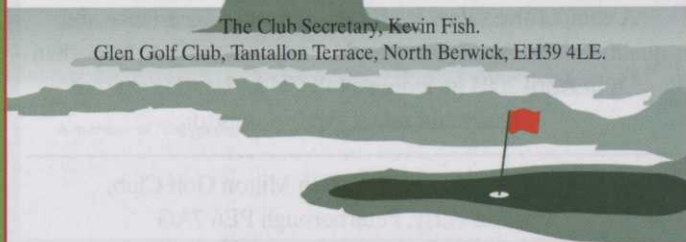
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CLOSING DATE 26 APRIL 2004.

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Oughterard, County Galway, Ireland

# Recruitment

## PETERBOROUGH MILTON GOLF CLUB

James Braid designed, Peterborough Milton is a fine, well established parkland course constructed in 1937.

Required:

### A COURSE MANAGER

To lead an experienced and dedicated team of 5 Greenkeepers in the daily upkeep and development of this fine course.

The successful candidate will preferably have:

- Ten years experience in Greenkeeping
- Experienced in all aspects of Course Management
- A thorough knowledge of the latest course equipment
- Experience in tee, green and bunker construction
- Experience in budgetary and management controls
- Excellent man management and leadership skills

A competitive salary is offered subject to experience and qualifications. Applicants should apply in writing no later than 30th April 2004 including a full CV and stating present salary and salary expectations to:-

The Secretary, Peterborough Milton Golf Club,  
Milton Ferry, Peterborough PE6 7AG



## WESTON-SUPER-MARE GOLF CLUB

Is looking to expand its Greenkeeping workforce, therefore an opportunity has arisen for an

### ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

Established in 1892, this private 18 hole links course prides itself on all year round quality golf.

Applicants should be articulate, self-motivated and willing to work as part of our young, forward thinking team.

Preferably applicants should be qualified to Turf Management NVQ level 2 and hold PA1, PA2 and PA6 certificates.

Closing date for applications is: Friday 30 April.

Please apply in writing, with CV to:

SIMON CRESSER, THE HEAD GREENKEEPER,  
WESTON-SUPER-MARE GOLF CLUB, UPHILL ROAD NORTH,  
WESTON-SUPER-MARE, SOMERSET, BS23 4NQ.

## KENILWORTH GOLF CLUB

Require

### 2 ASSISTANT GREENKEEPERS

to join an energetic and Professional team.

Applicants should be qualified to NVQ Level 2 with PA1, PA2 & PA6 an added advantage.

Salary negotiable.

Apply in writing enclosing CV to:-

Keith Weston, Head Greenkeeper,  
Kenilworth Golf Club, Crewe Lane, Kenilworth CV8 2EA

## MAIDENHEAD GOLF CLUB

Applications are invited for an

### EXPERIENCED ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

We are looking for an experienced, reliable and hard working greenkeeper to join our team.

You should be qualified to NVQ Level 2, hold PA1, 2 & 6 spraying certificates and have 2/3 years experience in Greenkeeping.

Mechanical knowledge and an interest in golf would be an advantage.

Salary will be dependent on qualifications and experience.

Closing date for applications is the 23rd April 2004.

Applications in writing with full CV to:

Chris Mitchell, Course Manager, Maidenhead Golf Club,  
Shoppenhangers Road, Maidenhead, Berks SL6 2PZ

## MID YORKSHIRE GOLF CLUB

Est 1993

This busy 18 hole par 72 golf course and driving range complex requires a

### DEPUTY HEAD GREENKEEPER

A highly enthusiastic and motivated Deputy Head Greenkeeper to join our team in a challenging role.

You are already qualified or working towards NVQ Level 3 with PA1, 2 and 6 and knowledge of Health and Safety matters. A good team player who can assist the Head Greenkeeper in taking the golf course forward and also deputise for him in his absence.

Applications should be made in writing to:

Linda Darwood, General Manager, Mid Yorkshire Golf Club,  
Havercroft Lane, Darrington, Pontefract, West Yorkshire WF8 3BP  
Or email: linda\_midyorksge@btconnect.com

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For further details apply to:

David Morrison, Sales Manager, 29 Mar Place, Sauchie, Alloa, Scotland FK10 3EA  
Tel: 01259 215535 Mobile: 077 3677 3171 Email: davidmorrisonosw@virgin.net

# Recruitment

## STAPLEFORD PARK GOLF CLUB

### DEPUTY HEAD GREENKEEPER

This is an opportunity for a committed, enthusiastic and motivated greenkeeper to join our existing team.

Preferably qualified to NVQ3 or equivalent with PA1, 2 and 6 spraying certificates and construction experience. It would also be an advantage if you have some machinery and irrigation knowledge.

Salary negotiable depending on qualifications and experience. Written applications with full CV and current remuneration to:-

Yves Wencker, General Manager, Stapleford Park Golf Club, Stapleford, Nr Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire LE14 2EF



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(The Times)

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As part of a large team, you will enjoy great training and subsidised travel. All within 10 minutes of Watford Junction.

#### First Assistant Greenkeeper

As an experienced Head Greenkeeper or Deputy Head Greenkeeper, you will be key to the management of this superb course and its surrounding meadows and woodland. High quality accommodation will be available.

#### Seasonal Greenkeepers & Gardeners

We also need experienced individuals to work from April through to October.

Call Louisa Murphy on 01923 296007 or email [louisa.murphy@thegrove.co.uk](mailto:louisa.murphy@thegrove.co.uk)

Alternatively visit [www.thegrove.co.uk](http://www.thegrove.co.uk)

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THE GROVE

### GREENKEEPERS x2 (full time)

The Warwickshire Club, Warwick  
The Club at Mapledurham, Reading, Berkshire

We are looking for two qualified & experienced Greenkeepers. Would suit someone who enjoys working in the outdoors environment and who has a keen interest to progress within this industry.

As a Clubhaus employee, in addition to salary, we offer an excellent range of staff benefits, including pension scheme, increasing holiday entitlements depending on length of service, complimentary use of facilities across the Group and discount on retail goods.

To apply please post current CV (clearly stating which position you are applying for) to Nicola Bouwes, Clubhaus PLC, Bath Road, Knowl Hill, Reading, Berkshire RG10 9AL or email: [n.bouwes@clubhaus.com](mailto:n.bouwes@clubhaus.com).

## WYCOMBE HEIGHTS GOLF CENTRE

Requires a

### DEPUTY HEAD GREENKEEPER

A successful candidate will preferably be qualified to NVQ level 3 / HND with PA, 1, 2, and 6 spraying certificates. Good knowledge of Health and Safety as well as machinery maintenance would be of an advantage

WHGC is a 36 hole golf property within the Burhill Estates Ltd company. Burhill offer training and development within their company with excellent opportunity for progression.

Salary is negotiable based on qualifications and experience. Application in writing, to be sent via post or email accompanied by a full CV, to Mr R Surgey.

Wycombe Heights Golf Centre, Rayners Avenue, Loudwater,  
High Wycombe, Bucks, HP10 9SZ Tel 01494 816686 Fax 01494 816728  
Email [info@wycombeheightsgc.co.uk](mailto:info@wycombeheightsgc.co.uk)

## WALSALL GOLF CLUB

Applications are invited for the position of

### COURSE MANAGER

Established in 1907, Walsall Golf Club is situated on the Walsall ring road, less than 5 minutes from either Junction 7 or 9 on the M6 motorway. The course was designed by Dr. Alistair MacKenzie who also designed Augusta National, Royal Melbourne, Lahinch & Moortown. The tree lined course is one of the Midlands leading Golf Courses.

The successful applicant should (to replace a Course Manager of 23 years standing who is leaving to live overseas) be hard working, self motivated and have excellent supervisory skills to lead an existing team of 6 greenkeepers. He should be capable of continuing an excellent relationship with the Hon. Secretary, Members of the Club Committee, Club Members and the Professional.

The successful applicant should ideally possess:

1. NVQ qualification to level 3 (or equivalent).
2. Experience at Manager or Deputy course manager level.
3. Minimum of 7 years Greenkeeping experience with at least 2 years in a senior position i.e. Deputy Course Manager.
4. A proven ability to prepare and work within an approved Annual Budget.

The position offers an attractive salary with additional benefits, depending on qualifications and experience.

Please apply in writing no later than 30 April 2004 including a full CV. (Applications will be treated with absolute confidence).

Please state present salary and salary expectations. Apply to:

The Honorary Secretary, Walsall Golf Club, Broadway, Walsall WS1 3EY

# Greenkeeper

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## Feature listing from April 2002

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

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

**June 2002;** Finding Fungi; Greetham Valley GC profile; Tyres; Calabria GC profile; Lakes and Ponds; Poa Annuua - 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 Annuua; 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

**November 2003;** Temple GC; Trees; Environment Competition Results; Sandy McDivot; Drainage

**December 2003;** BTME & ClubHouse Preview; Downfield GC; Compact Tractors; Architecture; Bio-tech

**January 2004;** Ipswich GC Profile; Grass Seed; Environment Competition Awards; Utility Vehicles (sit in)

**February 2004;** Harrogate Review 2004; Tyneside GC; Utility Vehicles (sit on); Irrigation

**March 2004;** R&A Best Practice; Trentham Park GC; Drainage; Spraying

# Chairman's Column



## A Roller Coaster of Emotion

**When George Brown asked me to be his Vice Chairman back in the middle of 2002 little did I know that one of the first jobs I would have as Chairman would be to pay tribute to one Executive Director and welcome a new one.**



But that's exactly what I have done, with the premature and extremely sad passing of Neil Thomas and the appointment of John Pemberton, a man known to everyone in the industry, as his successor.

My first recollection of Neil, certainly to talk to, was at the National Education Conference. Sitting alone having breakfast, Neil approached and asked if he might join me. During that short conversation over breakfast Neil made a relatively new member feel that he belonged. It has amused and frustrated me over the years since, that Neil's reputation in some quarters was of aloofness. While an introverted and quiet man in many ways, Neil also displayed to those fortunate to be close to him a compassionate, fair and always resolute manner.

I, like many before me, had occasion to cross swords with Neil and for me it was the National Championship and its future (or not!) at Carden Park. While at the time bitterly disappointed not to have the chance to host the event for a second time I came to realise that Neil's strength and determination to do what was best for the Association, even at risk of confrontation and potential disharmony with a member and creation of stress for himself, came above all else. That was Neil Thomas and, I feel, the one characteristic which has helped this Association flourish.

It would not be overstating the case to say that Neil was the person who ensured that BIGGA is where it is today. He took on the post in 1987 when the three previous Associations came together with a combined membership of around 2500, working out of a small office provided by the STRI in Bingley. From those small beginnings Neil steered BIGGA to a position where it is one of the movers and shakers in the golf industry. You may not be aware but BIGGA is regarded as an important body within golf and, as an Association, we are invited to contribute whenever golfing issues are debated. Relations with the other golfing bodies, the R&A, to whom BIGGA owes a huge debt; the Home Unions; the Secretaries Association; the European Tour and the sister Associations around the world, and in particular the GCSAA, are all flourishing. BIGGA can certainly say that it has grown up.

Couple that with the fact that BIGGA now owns its own headquarters building and you can see why Neil can be proud of the legacy he has left.

No-one will feel his loss more acutely than his wife, Elaine, and children, Scott, Grant, Adam and Natalie, but his passing also left a huge void within the Association.

While they have lost a loving husband and proud

father, I hope that we in the Association can continue to offer comfort, support and friendship to them as they try to come to terms with their situation.

I would also like to thank, all those who have contacted BIGGA to pay their respects and in particular the GCSAA and their Past President, Jon Maddern, who flew in from the States to attend the funeral.

Prior to the normal March meeting the Board met to discuss Neil's replacement. After a frank and open discussion, and using the guidelines for both job and people specification laid out previously by consultants, the Board of Management feels that we have exactly the right man to fill that void in John Pemberton, who had been Acting Executive Director, during Neil's period of illness. John, who had been Neil's right hand man since he joined the Association in 1993, proved to everyone during the difficult last nine months that he has all the qualities necessary to take on the role full time and the Board of Management had no hesitation in offering him the job.


John knows every inch of the Association and those members who have had the privilege of dealing with him over the past 11 years will also know that he would do anything for them.

John will now have the opportunity to use his particular blend of talent, drive and enthusiasm over a wider brief and I am sure BIGGA will benefit.

Having worked closely with John over recent months I am personally delighted with the appointment. He has been a great help to me in recent months and I am sure that the support he has been to me will continue for the remainder of my Chairmanship.

Recent weeks and months have been a real roller coaster of emotion, bitter sweet in the extreme. Periods of real sadness and despair as Neil lost his battle with crippling illness, but also the other side of the coin as we found a more than able successor, who will continue the great work that goes into making BIGGA an Association to be proud of.

**Andy Campbell**  
Chairman



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With added seaweed extract to stimulate growth and tillering once moss is removed as well as improving turf colour.

### **Maxicrop No.3 Pro-K-Plus (2-0-18 + TE)**

For early or late season use to supply high levels of potash where required. Provides good root growth and helps drought tolerance.

### **Maxicrop No.4 Fine Turf Fertilizer (12-0-6 + TE)**

A zero phosphate product with seaweed extract. Ideal as an in-season turf stimulant with nitrogen and potash to provide a rapid fertilizer response.

### **Maxicrop No.5 Plus 17% Nitrogen (17-0-0 + TE)**

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