



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

New Way Forward?

Recently I have been reading with interest various articles about the new way forward in cutting, namely non-contact mowing and the relief grinding of cylinders.

Have I missed something as relief grinding and non-contact mowing was "sold to me" in 1992 when our Hunter Grinder was installed at our new facility and since then has been our preferred way of grinding and mowing!

As a result during the past 12 years we have experienced the benefits of giving extended life to cylinders and bottom blades and also the reduction in fuel, all in all giving less mechanical stress. Not to mention the agronomic benefit to the turf itself.

Jim Campbell, Senior Mechanic,
Westin Turnberry Resort

Re: Sustainable course management

It is most encouraging to read articles such as those on greenkeeping in Denmark (March 2003 and January 2004) and Cumberwell Park (June 2003), which record successful course management through the implementation of sound greenkeeping principles. We believe these pieces reflect a silent majority of greenkeepers throughout the UK and continental Europe who are practicing both environmentally and economically sustainable course management. Those who achieve this while, at the same time, maintaining course quality and playability should be acclaimed and we offer our full support to all who rise to this challenge.

Steve Isaac, Secretary to the Golf Course Committee, R&A Rules Ltd

Reflections of Harrogate

It seems a very crass statement 'it gets better every year' but as far as I'm concerned this was certainly the case this year with BTME. We arrived under very difficult circumstances with Neil Thomas very ill. There was a show and conference for the HQ staff to organise, but always in their minds, and ours, was Neil.

The full programme of workshops and the conference started on Monday. The conference gave us a wonderful range of presentations, Billy McMillan was the highlight for me. His presentation looked at how course management has changed and highlighted what makes greenkeepers so special. Commitment, passion and dedication were just some of those ingredients and it was covered in an excellent presentation which was sharp, witty and very moving at times. Thanks Billy!

Monday night and the conference dinner which was superb. After dinner speaker Jimmy Bright was in side splitting form reeling off so many stories and gags and the top table were the brunt of much of Jimmy's jibes. Tuesday was back to the conference and another day packed with presentations. Kate Entwistle and Terry Buchen were my pick of the day and then it was time for the show.

Wednesday was key note speaker day, always a highlight of the week. I vividly remember Frank Dick, who was our first Keynote speaker. I never thought I would see a better motivational presentation but it was eclipsed by Alvin Law. His very powerful presentation 'No such word as can't' took us on a rollercoaster ride of emotions and experiences. His determination and will to succeed was a lesson to all of us and the standing ovation was inevitable and much deserved. I will remember this presentation for a very long time, I wasn't the only one in the audience found wiping a tear from my eye. Thanks Alvin!

The seminar programme followed with many excellent presentations covering a wide range of topics from stress management to greens construction. The show was bigger and better than ever and was very busy with much positive feedback from the stands that I visited. Wednesday also saw a glimpse into the works of our 'futures committee' during a presentation. They have identified many areas of concern and are currently working hard to shape our associations future as well as address a directive into the concerns over education within the industry. This was followed by the AGM which run very efficiently and professionally and saw the Chairmanship pass from George Brown to Andy Campbell.

Well done, George, for last year and good luck to Andy in his year in office. The whole week was rounded off by the banquet and the sounds of 'Bootleg Abba' I didn't realise so many greenkeepers were Abba fans. We were treated to a collection of their greatest hits and the dance floor was packed all night. Another great night!

Alex McCombie, Parkstone GC

Available for Work

I am in the process of looking for a job in the UK and would like to know if you can help me. Or put me in contact with someone else that can; I will arriving in the UK in mid February.

I'm a fully qualified Golf Course Superintendent and was working on a 18 hole course with 700 members. The course I worked on is in New Zealand and I had worked there for the last six years. During my time at the Feilding Golf club I helped install fairway watering systems, numerous constructions of new tees and greens.

I love the game of golf and I am currently on 1 handicap. At the moment I am working for a company called Irrigation and Turf. This company took me on knowing that I was leaving for the UK and they were willing to give me the extra experience working on different machines. During my time there I have done a variety of jobs like helping fine tuning the first slit drain machine in New Zealand, laser leveling tennis courts and golf tees, turf work, turf advising, installing irrigations and drainage and spending over 100 plus hours on a digger.

I am 23 years old. I am married and my wife is a primary school teacher. We have no children and are looking to experience life and new challenges.

I would be very interested in an assistant superintendent or superintendent job on a course with 18 holes plus. I recently won Trainee of the Year which is the best trainee in New Zealand.

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