



## Welcome

### MORE THAN JUST NAVAL GAZING

As I promised last month the July magazine looks at how you, the greenkeeper, are perceived by others. It may appear to be an exercise in little more than navel gazing but it is actually extremely important. If you don't know how well, or otherwise, you are considered by the people around you then you are in no position to do anything about it. It's as simple as that.

And let's face it even your biggest supporters, those who fight the greenkeepers' corner when push comes to shove, don't always really know the levels of expertise required to do the job to its fullest. They may know that there is more to it than cutting grass. They may even know it involves identifying diseases and introducing the cultural practices to prevent them. But very few will know the complete range of skills required to produce a well maintained golf course.

And no, the complete greenkeeper doesn't - or to put it into the language of my birth "disney" - attend "Mickey Mouse" courses in the country's educational establishments and pick up meaningless qualifications. I've harped on about it on more than one occasion but when the former Chief Inspector of Schools, Chris Whitehead, routinely devalues the work of greenkeepers by grouping the training courses with those of Beer Making, Flower Arranging and Circus Studies, it shows the size of the task we have ahead of ourselves when it comes to increasing the respect you should have for doing such a complex and involved job.

The people who have kindly taken part in the "See Yourself as Others See You" feature are all golf people and they do have a positive opinion of your work but they are aware of the problems and I would bet that if you were to ask them detailed questions even those who spend their lives writing about golf and golfers would struggle a little.

A concerted approach to promoting the qualities and skills of BIGGA members is what is required, and over the next few months plans will be put in place to make that happen.

Please take part in the exercise. If you have any examples of greenkeepers being treated badly by golfers, or indeed the converse, please write to me at BIGGA HOUSE or email me at [scott@bigga.co.uk](mailto:scott@bigga.co.uk). It will all help when it comes to putting a campaign together. Obviously anonymity will be respected if requested. We don't want to make too many martyrs!

I genuinely believe that this is the key to everything. If you are identified and seen as professionals you will be treated as professionals

I close with some good news. Gordon McKillop, of the STRI, is back behind his desk in Bingley. Doesn't sound too significant on the face of it but Gordon suffered a health scare recently and the fact that he is back shuffling papers around his desk again is very good news indeed.

**Scott MacCallum, Editor**



The Devon and Cornwall Section held a Machinery Maintenance Workshop last month at Seale Hayne College, Newton Abbot. Over 60 members were in attendance, in what proved to be a tremendously successful event. All attendees received certificates from Toro and Ransomes Jacobsen. The Section would like to thank Clive Pinnock and Toro, Alan Dommet and Devon Garden Machinery, Glen Forsdyke and Ransomes Jacobsen and Patrick Flegg, of P.J.Flegg Ltd, for their contributions in making the day such a success.

### HISTORY LESSON

New guidance on golf courses in historic landscapes is to be produced by Land Use Consultants for English Heritage. This will review the past, present and future effects of golf course development on historic landscapes, provide criteria for assessment of golf course developments and best practice advice on design, management and planning control and policy.

The project will question assumptions on developments such as golf courses in the historic environment and will thoroughly examine the current situation and future trends to produce a positive and practical guidance document of use to a wide audience from golf course architects to developers, local planning officers and golf course owners and managers.

The study will focus on golf within nationally designated landscapes in particular those on the English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest, but it will also consider best practice within the wider historic environment including World Heritage Sites, Listed Battlefields, Conservation Areas, National Parks, and on the

settings of Listed Buildings within these landscapes.

Working with Land Use Consultants on the project will be the landscape historian David Lambert, formerly Conservation Officer for the Garden History Society, and golf course architect Tom Mackenzie of Donald Steel and Company.

Consultation will be an important part of the process of developing the guidance and initial input is sought from individuals and organisations involved in golf course development, management and the historic environment.

Details of good practice in design, planning policy and practice and landscape management would be particularly welcome. A consultation form is available to be downloaded from [www.landuse.co.uk](http://www.landuse.co.uk) or [english-heritage.org.uk/parksandgardens](http://english-heritage.org.uk/parksandgardens) or by contacting Jane Wilson of Land Use Consultants on 020 7383 5784.

A full consultation on the draft document will take place in Autumn 2004, with final publication planned for early 2005.



The Kent Section held a well attended golf day at Hever Castle GC, hosted by Course Manager, David Wood. For report and results see Around the Green.



## DE VERE SIGN UP WITH TORO

Leading hotel and leisure concern the De Vere Group plc has awarded Toro a multi-million-pound contract to re-equip all its golf courses in the UK with new turf maintenance machinery.

Under a new five-year deal - valued at up to £500,000 a year - Toro will supply a comprehensive range of turf equipment to all seven of De Vere's existing hotels with golf courses. These include four-times Ryder Cup venue The De Vere Belfry, Warwickshire, De Vere Slaley Hall, in Northumberland, and De Vere Carden Park in Cheshire.

In addition, Toro machinery will be supplied to one other site that will become part of the De Vere portfolio over the next few years - The Carrick on Loch Lomond, which is currently under construction.

"We are delighted to be working with Toro," said De Vere Golf Operations Manager, Robert Maxfield.

"The company has an excellent reputation in the industry and we are looking forward to a very successful five years," he added.

Toro's European Director of Sales, Bob Buckingham, said: "Toro is very pleased to have been chosen by De Vere as their partner for the maintenance of their portfolio of golf properties. We believe together we can introduce significant efficiencies and productivity gains that will



augment the local management of the group's high-class golf courses spread across England and Scotland.

A vital part of the agreement is the high-level of after sales service and tournament support that will be provided through Toro distributor Lely UK and its network of local dealers. Toro has also created a web-based user-guide especially for De Vere. This will log all specifications, service and other details for all of the machines so that Course Managers can see at a glance their complete history.

Peter Mansfield, Toro General Manager at distributor Lely UK, said: "Lely is delighted to be working on a flagship account with such a high-profile group as De Vere. This deal also brings great benefits to us and our dealers and we eagerly look forward to being of service."

## NEW STYLE...



David Fellows, Head Greenkeeper of Cocks Moor Woods Golf Club, (Birmingham), rose to the challenge when Midland Section Secretary, Sean McDade, made the wearing of a BIGGA tie compulsory at Section events. The fine for non compliance being £1 with proceeds going to the Christmas Event's Captain's Charity.

David had long preferred the bow tie to the more conventional version so, as the Association doesn't supply the bowed variety, Sean thought he would have a ready supply of £1 coins before the year was out. That was before David, turned up at the Spring Tournament at Trentham Park GC sporting a BIGGA bow tie which was tailored by a friend of his, from an old style standard BIGGA tie.

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## NEW IOG PRESIDENT

Derek Walder has been elected President of the IOG. Well-known in the industry as a former Chairman and as the IOG Saltex Site Operations Manager, Derek had a long career in horticulture and sportsturf management before his retirement three years ago.

He was handed his chain of office by retiring President Bob Corbin at a board meeting in Milton Keynes.

"This is a tremendous honour and I will continue to promote and work for the IOG with renewed vigour.

"The IOG has a bright future. To follow in the footsteps of Bob Corbin is going to be a difficult act to follow," said Derek, who is a holder of the BEM.

## FRIENDS REUNITED



Suzanne Barrett (left) has been appointed Marketing Co-ordinator at Ransomes Jacobsen.

Reporting directly to Selina Flynn, Communications and Promotions Manager, Suzanne will be responsible for assisting in the planning and implementation of Ransomes Jacobsen's international marketing activities throughout the UK.

"We are delighted to welcome Suzanne to the Marketing Department. The experience she has gained through working in the Human Resources department has equipped her more than adequately for the responsibilities she will face in her new role," said Selina.

This is not Suzanne's first experience of working with Selina; previous to their time at Ransomes Jacobsen, they both attended the same primary school, The School of Jesus and Mary in Ipswich and have in fact known each other since the tender age of four!



The STRI Soil Science team with their USGA accreditation.

## Royal Inverdivot GC...

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





## THE MAGIC OF WENTWORTH



Around 50 greenkeepers from all over the country gave up two days of their Spring Bank Holiday to help out Chris Kennedy and the Wentworth staff for the final two days of the Volvo PGA Championship. They don't all work both days but most do and apart from the shirt and the cap their reward is a season ticket and car park pass for the whole week.

I know that this tournament is dwarfed by The Open but Wentworth really is a magical place. Just walking the course with the odd short cut takes you past houses that take your breath away with their splendour. It's not just the odd one or two but there are so many of them! Walk near the clubhouse and you are never sure who you might see if you are a 'celebrity watcher'.

The weather this year was reasonably kind,

one big spark in the sky on Sunday with just the odd shower or three. Chris Kennedy's warning on the Sunday morning of a heavy storm around one o'clock (that means squeegees out!) did not materialise. This brings me to the magical bit.

David Miller, Merrist Wood GC, had been allocated Scott Drummond's match on the Saturday. Scott had a stormer. His caddie said to David that things were so well that they wanted to keep everything the same and would David be the bunker raker on the Sunday. David explained that the allocation was pre-arranged.

Being so superstitious the caddie (and Scott) were devastated.

David duly went out early on Sunday morning but had finished before Scott Drummond had teed off. The caddie, spotting David passing the 1st tee and asked him if he would come and complete the team. David, after checking that the allocated Greenkeeper, James Lomas from Hadley Wood GC,

didn't mind complied with the request and James and David went out in tandem. The result is now well known, Scott shot a 64 to win the Championship. This brings me to the magical bit.

Being on modest expenses, your correspondent was staying some eight miles away at a very average bed and breakfast and as he had to be on the course so

early in the morning could never get the breakfast. Now Scott Drummond has won but £11,000 this last year on the tour and with family commitments he obviously could not afford the likes of the five star Pennyhill Park Hotel and similar nearby establishments. You've guessed it. Scott, his wife and four week old baby were staying in the bed and breakfast.

Seriously, thanks to all of you who volunteered your services. It made it a great occasion to retire on and it was a wonderful few days.

**Derek Farrington**



## TOP MAN



Anthony Peterson has scooped the top prize of Overall Winner – The Most Dedicated Learner and the prize for Part-time Learner at the Oaklands College Adult Learners' Awards. Anthony was nominated by his tutor Andy Wight for showing an outstanding commitment to his studies and a determination to succeed. He collected his

certificate, a commemorative glass plaque and a cheque for £50 from the Mayor of the City and District of St Albans.

"Anthony is an excellent example of a student who has enriched his life through adult learning and has shown that it is never too late to re-enter the academic environment. His achievement is outstanding and he thoroughly deserves to be our overall winner. We wish him every success for the future," said Helen Parr, Oaklands College Principal.

"When I began the course I was really apprehensive about how I would get on. I didn't do very well at school and left without gaining any qualifications so starting the NVQ was a big step for me. I found the tutors were exceptional and truly supportive and I have really enjoyed my time at the College. I have also found that my writing skills have greatly improved which I am thrilled about as this wasn't strength for me at school," said Anthony

## NEW SALES APPOINTMENTS



Rigby Taylor have made two appointments to its national amenity sales force. Steve Dickinson, previously worked for the company in the 80s and early 90s and has spent the last 10 years working for the European Tour. He will

be servicing local authority and fine turf customers in the East Midlands and East Anglia.

Ryun Holden, started his greenkeeping career at Darwen GC and joins Rigby Taylor from Oakmere Park GC where he was Course Manager for the last five years. He will be servicing customers in the Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire areas.

