



Welcome

MEMORIES ARE SHORT

If you are anything like me you are much too busy dealing with the here and now to have any time left to look back. I say this because if we did I'm sure we'd be shocked at what we put ourselves through, and what we put up with, in previous lives.

I can think of extended periods in the last dozen years when I've worked away from home, living in rented or B&B accommodation through the week, eating less than wholesomely and suffering the consequences of a poorly sprung mattress.

Financially it was crippling and it was compounded by a long drive home on a Friday evening, followed by an early rise and the reverse journey on the Monday. But the thing is I coped and had some very happy times in what were less than perfect circumstances.

The reason I mention it is that there are times now, when stuck in a traffic jam on my relatively short journey home, or I've forgotten to put the Chablis in the fridge that morning, that I think I'm the unluckiest bloke on the globe. The old me would have scoffed at such a lily-livered approach to life.

It's the same with BIGGA as an Association. I can recall in the mid-90s climbing the stairs to my attic office in the old rented building and having to charge down stairs again every time I wanted to print something off my computer or send a fax – no email in those days.

Nowadays we are in the superbly appointed BIGGA HOUSE, and the Editorial department has grown to incorporate an Assistant Editor which makes editing the magazine far less of a seat of the pants operation. Illnesses don't have to be postponed until an appropriate time slot becomes available any more.

Back then BTME had already established itself as a superb event, but compared to now it was a fraction of the size and the busiest day was quieter than the quietest day nowadays.

BIGGA was seen in some quarters as very much as a young upstart in the world of golf administration. Nowadays we punch our weight, have a voice within the game in the UK and talk with other organisations on a regular basis on matters of shared interest.

On a personal level I'm sure many of you would find the same if you thought back. I'm not saying it would be as stark as, "Remember when we weren't even allowed in the clubhouse", although for some of you it may be the case, but there will be quite a number of improvements to your working life which have been introduced in recent times. Some of these will have been down to health and safety legislation but many will have come about as a result of your improved status within the club.

As I say, it does pay to think back on occasions, not just to recall how much we were capable of tolerating, but also to show just how much our lives have improved over the years.

Scott MacCallum
Editor

OLD COURSE VOTED NUMBER ONE

The Old Course at St. Andrews has been awarded the accolade of the best golf course in Britain and Ireland by Golf Monthly magazine.

The panel of judges, composed of golf writers, administrators, course designers and photographers, assessed over 500 courses and rated them according to the challenge presented to players, course condition, visual appeal and off-course facilities.

"It is only fitting that the Old Course stands on top of the pile as it prepares to host the Open once again in 2005," commented Jane Carter, Editor of Golf Monthly. "The off-course facilities for visitors

have improved out of all recognition at the Home of Golf in recent years and there really is no finer place to play."

In a further honour to St Andrews Links, the 107 year-old New Course was voted number 34 in the rankings.

"We are delighted to receive this recognition from so prestigious a source," said Alan McGregor, General Manager of St Andrews Links Trust. "All our courses, including the Old, are open to the public and clearly remain a favourite with golfers, even after 600 years of history and with so much high quality competition out there today."

75 NOT OUT

The STRI celebrated their 75th anniversary with an open day and dinner for invited guests last month.

During the day the Bingley headquarters, the trial grounds and the Bingley St Ives Golf Club played host to 13 "zones" where STRI staff gave demonstrations on their departments and looked forward to what can be expected in the years ahead.

The 170 guests at the evening dinner at nearby East Riddlesden Hall heard speeches from STRI President Lord Griffiths and R&A Secretary, Peter Dawson.



Dr Gordon McKillop escorts the Lady Mayoress around the demonstration area.



Denis Lawson explains his stand to Lord Griffiths in the company of Jeff Parris and David Marsh.

NOMINATIONS OPEN FOR UNSUNG HEROES

Terrain Aeration's unsung heroes Brian Payne and Tim Parker opened nominations for this year's awards as part of the STRI's 75th Birthday celebrations.

Dr Tim Lodge, Senior Agronomist and Southern Area Manager for the Institute, who hosted the proceedings, praised the awards saying that they acknowledged the hard work of ordinary groundsmen and greenkeepers that keeps the entire Turfgrass Industry moving.

"They are the absolute opposite of the self promotion that so often leads to less than ideal individuals occupying the limelight," he continued.

Dr. Lodge is one of a three man judging panel, including Gordon Child, of BIGGA, and Derek Walder, of the IOG, which will send one groundsman and one greenkeeper to the South of France next year for a week's holiday with their families.

Terrain Aeration's Unsung Hero Awards are open to all UK practising greenkeepers and groundsmen, judged by their contemporaries or clubs to regularly put in that little bit extra.

Nomination forms can be found on the pitchcare website or with Lynda Green at Terrain Aeration Tel: 01449 673783.



From the left; Brian Payne, Tim Lodge and Tim Parker open nominations for Terrain Aeration's Unsung hero Awards 2004.



NEW MD FOR RANSOMES JACOBSEN

David Withers, a well known and popular figure within the industry, has become the new Managing Director of Ransomes Jacobsen Ltd.

He takes over from Steve Chicken, who continues in his role as Managing Director of Jacobsen International, Ransomes Jacobsen's holding company.

David has been with Ransomes Jacobsen – through the Jacobsen side of the company – since 1992 and for the last two years has been Sales and Marketing Director.

Following on from David's promotion, Alan Prickett has been promoted to Sales Director from the position of UK Sales Manager.



CHANGING TIMES AT AMENITYWISE

Amenitywise are pleased to announce the appointment of Stewart Jeffs as their new Amenity Manager.

Stewart, who has over 20 years experience in the industry, previously worked for Rigby Taylor, as a Technical Sales Representative, and prior to that worked for Jacobson, in a similar role.

"I felt that I needed new challenges and Amenitywise seemed a very positive and forward thinking company," said Stewart.

His 'challenge' is to take Amenitywise forward, making them a market leader in the industry.

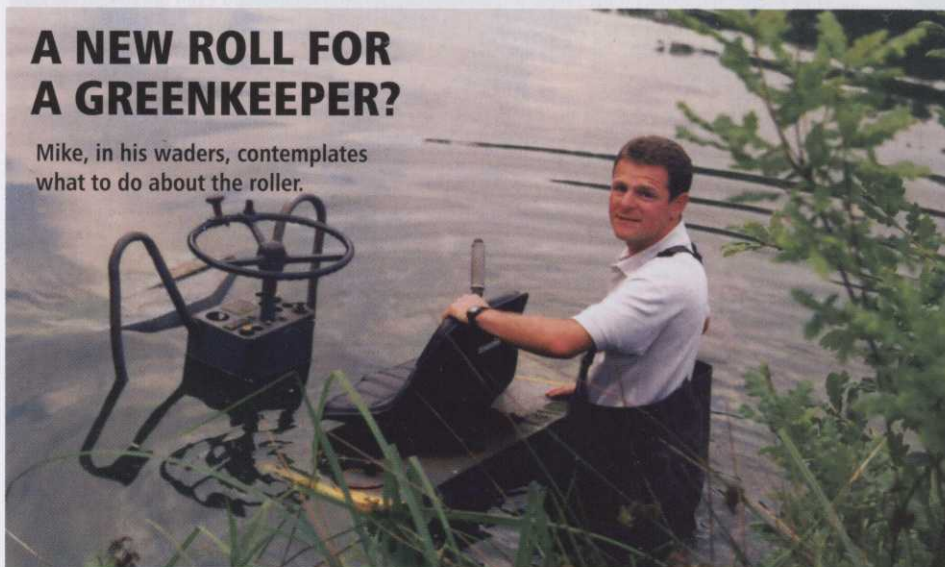
"Although Amenitywise have been in the market for several years now, the time has come to really push the business forward and one of our strengths is technical support we are now able to offer all our customers, along with an improved product range."

To help him in his new role, Amenitywise have also taken on Catherine Butler as the Amenity Administrator.

Previously from a marketing background, Catherine has been brought on board to assist in the marketing and running of the business.

A NEW ROLL FOR A GREENKEEPER?

Mike, in his waders, contemplates what to do about the roller.



Mike Gash, of Moseley Golf Club, had an interesting problem to solve recently after vandals set a cricket roller running. The machine then ran over the cricket pitch, over the golf course and into a pond.

"Fortunately it avoided our greens otherwise it could have caused much more damage than it did

but it didn't prove to be easy to get out of the pond," said Mike.

When it was finally removed by a crane, the problems were not over as the pollution left by the roller caused the water to turn a particularly unpleasant colour.

A SAD FAREWELL FOR TERRY

Broadstone Golf Club said farewell to one of its long-serving greenkeepers recently when Terry Elborn left to become a Conservation Officer and Ranger with Poole Borough Council.

The 30 year old had been at the club since 1990 and such has been his dedication to conservation on the course that Broadstone was presented with an environmental award in 2001.

"Terry was instrumental in us winning that award," said Club Secretary Colin Robinson, "He has done tremendous work on habitat projects, building dew ponds for dragonflies, installing bird boxes, making reptile and bat surveys and many other things.

"He has also organised course walks for members and visitors and been instrumental in aiding all the wildlife we have here."

After being presented with a commemoration plate by the Club Captain, Ian MacFarlane-Thompson, to mark his 15 years at Broadstone, Terry said, "The club has been very supportive with my conservation work. I've also had cooperation



Terry Elborn (middle, left) receives a commemoration plate from Club Captain Ian MacFarlane-Thompson and the greenkeeping team.

from my fellow greenkeepers which has sparked more interest among them about conservation. This has made the job so much more enjoyable.

"We are lucky to have so much land around the course which enables the wildlife to thrive. We have all three species of snake here as well as all the native reptiles. There are also many types of insect while we also have bats and many birds including nightjars and buzzards."



A WIDER VARIETY FOR DAVID

Amenity Technology have appointed David Evans as their new Area Manager for the South Wales, Somerset, Wiltshire and Bristol regions and the M4 corridor to London.

David has been involved in the turf market for more than 12 years, with the majority of his time spent with Maxxi-Crop, and his vast experience will service his new company well.

"I'll be servicing the same sort of clients and I expect to continue along the same lines as I always have.

"What is different though is that I am able to offer a few ideas and avenues into a wider variety of sports turf.

"Yes, I am pleased to come on board and widen the scope a little bit," said David.

SAFETY ON GOLF COURSES

A recent statement by Master of The Rolls, Lord Phillips stated that, "Many Councils are no longer providing everyday leisure activities because of the fear they will be sued if people hurt themselves."

This has presented a big question about the future of municipal sports provision, in particular golf courses.

Lord Phillips said that Councils were effectively 'blackmailed' into paying compensation because it was cheaper than fighting false claims.

However, he did warn that it would become harder for people to sue councils successfully if they were hurt pursuing a risky leisure activity, such as golf.

"What's called for is for the population as a whole to have a reasonably balanced approach to indulging in these pastimes.

"They should not expect if they have an accident, which is always liable to happen, that there must automatically be somebody else who carries the can.

"If you are too obsessed about the risk of getting sued, you can take steps which stop

people enjoying the kind of pastimes that people always have in this country," said Lord Phillips.

In the Best Value analysis demanded of local authorities, the future of local sports provision is likely to be affected by the consequences of accidents, as Councils decide whether to retain or dispose of the facilities they provide. Too often they cannot afford to fight claims and it is cheaper for them to settle.

With more proprietary pay and play golf courses and driving ranges they are bounded to ask themselves, is it right and proper to continue to own and operate our own golf courses and driving ranges?

PGA Design Consulting Ltd, the technical design and consultancy advisors to the PGA frequently act as Expert Witness. Bob Hunt, Managing Director said, "Recently, we have seen a considerable growth in accidents at golf courses and ranges and even greater increases in the level of claim settlements being awarded by the Courts. These accidents do not restrict themselves to municipal courses and ranges but are experienced at all types of facility including members' clubs and proprietary golf facilities."



Course Care's Area Manager, John Harwood, hands over the special barrel to Ian Pullan.

SLICK SELLING SEES 5,000 BARRELS SOLD

Course Care has recently sold their 5,000th barrel of oil since David Mears and Andrew Vincent took control of the company in June 2001.

To mark the occasion a special barrel was produced. Finished in a red metallic paint and decorated with extra graphics the barrel was sent out to the 5000th customer.

The lucky recipient was Ian Pullan, Course Manager at Marriott Hollins Hall Golf Club near Bradford.

Said Ian; "I have been buying a number of lines from Course Care for years, but had only just decided to take their engine oil. I was amazed when the fancy barrel turned up!"

FORSYTH THE WHITELAW WINNER

The Whitelaw Bowl was played recently at Penrith GC.

The day was sponsored by Rigby Taylor and there was a belter turnout this year than in previous years.

David Forsyth and his staff had the course in great condition and, after all the rain this year, looking much greener than usual.

The results were:

0 - 13. 1. David Forsyth, 38pts; 2. Aaron Watkinson, 37pts; 3. Peter Hogan, 36 pts.

14 - 28. 1. Gary Tomlinson, 31 pts; 2. Ian Holoran, 27 pts; 3. Tony Smith, 27 pts.



The overall winner of the magnificent Whitelaw Bowl was David Forsyth.

Many thanks to Rigby Taylor and especially John Molt for their sponsorship, which I hope will continue for many more years, the caterers for a superb meal and, of course, Penrith GC for allowing us courtesy of the course.

Barry Heaney, past Chairman of BIGGA, was also presented with a

gift for his support over the years.

There will also be a seminar at Penrith GC on November 25 entitled "Environment Issues". Anybody interested contact Peter Larter on 01476 550115.

Bert Cross

GALLEY TAKES ON AMENITY GRASSES



Keith Galley has been appointed National Product Manager for amenity grasses for leading seed company Nickerson.

He will be responsible for the highly successful Top Green brand, which uses high performing cultivars in mixtures suited to every sports, amenity and landscaping situation.

Keith joined the company in 1990, spending two years in France working for Nickerson's parent company Group Limagrain - the largest plant breeding and seed development company in the European Union.

Keith will work from Nickerson's UK headquarters at Rothwell in Lincolnshire, and the company's seed mixtures production plant in Falkirk, Scotland.

NEW APPOINTMENT AT PLM POWER

PLM Power Products dealerships in the north of England, Scotland and Northern Ireland will benefit considerably from the appointment of Roy Duncan as Area Manager.

Roy has a wealth of knowledge spanning 23 years in both the sales and technical side of the outdoor power equipment industry.

In his new position Roy's responsibilities will include the developing the sales of PLM's high quality outdoor power equipment ranges and providing full dealership support.



Johnny Beck with a tray of his pies.

SO WHO ATE ALL THE PIES?

At Saltex last year we reported how Johnny Beck, of Sheriff Amenity, had successfully passed his catering exams to enable him to man a barbecue for visitors to their stand.

It was a huge success, not least because the wonderful smells and accompanying smoke ensured that everyone knew Johnny was about.

This year a new approach produced slightly less smoke but kept the visitors fed just as well.

Armed with an on-site oven, Johnny dispensed over 1200 pies and pasties of all descriptions over the course of the three days.

INTURF CHOOSE SOUTH EAST REPRESENTATIVE

Andrew Lofting, formerly of Driving Force Leisure, has been appointed by Inturf to service existing clients and sell to new customers in Greater London and the Home Counties Inturf's comprehensive range of products for all sports and landscaping markets.

Andrew's wealth of experience and knowledge in the turfgrass industry is well known and will be a great asset to Inturf in an area that has been relatively untapped, apart from the high profile and prestigious projects synonymous with the turf growers from Yorkshire.

Andrew will be based in Kent and will be dealing with Inturf's general turf sales, the Custom Grown Turf products and the Installation Services available from this fast growing.

TOUGH TEST FOR CENTRAL SECTION



Central Section held its autumn meeting at Downfield GC, in Dundee, and a full field enjoyed facing the demands of one of Scotland's toughest inland courses. The photo shows the cream which rose to the top during the day.