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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Greenkeeper

INTERNATIONAL

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Welcome

HOPES FOR 2005

As I sit here it is just before Christmas and, with the January magazine almost complete, my mind is wandering. What hopes do I have for 2005?

Well obviously Harrogate is at the forefront of all our minds here at BIGGA HOUSE, so wish number one must be for everyone to have a successful week. That of course is easy to say but when you arrive at the beginning of the week what do you want to achieve from your trip so that you can say it has been successful?

From a visitor's perspective I would imagine it is to update yourself on what the marketplace has to offer and perhaps arrange for some new equipment to be tested at your club. Of course, it is also an ideal time to whip out the club chequebook and buy, buy, buy. Companies are more than willing to take your money and there may be some special show discounts to make it even more tempting. Away from the Halls the Workshops and Seminars could provide a solution to a problem you've been wrestling with for a while and the chance to catch up with colleagues is always eagerly accepted.

From an exhibitor's point of view Harrogate is a superb opportunity to influence and expand your customer base. Many of the top Course Managers, not just in the UK but also Europe and the rest of the world, will pass the front of your stand, eager to be impressed by what you have on offer. A proactive approach to dealing with them could reap its own rewards. Wouldn't it be great if you left Harrogate having made contact with 50 Course Managers you hadn't previously dealt with; already an arrangement with a percentage of them to trial machinery and, with luck, some firm orders.

For we, the BIGGA staff, if all, or even part of the above comes true for you we will all be happy and if you are pleased with your week we will have had a successful week too.

Elsewhere, next year The Open is back at St Andrews and for the benefit of Gordon Moir and Ewan Grant I hope the weather in the lead up to the Championship is conducive to producing a fast running, burnt out links so that the famous Old Course will be a genuine test of golf.

Then I hope The Open produces some spectacular sporting theatre. The last two years have been fine, and it is great to see an underdog win, but I'd love the top players in the world to be battling it out on the final day and for one of them lift the Jug. What I want is an "I was there" moment from this year's Open.

Finally, as a long suffering Scottish rugby fan, I'd love our national team to produce some exciting moments in the Six Nations Championship and perhaps even register a win or two. Of all my hopes that's probably the least likely however.

Have a super 2005.

Scott MacCallum, Editor

GOLF CLUBS WARNED OVER NEW FIRE REGULATIONS

Golf clubs across the UK are being urged not to penny pinch when it comes to new fire regulations soon to be introduced.

Michael Shaw, National Secretary of the National Golf Clubs Advisory Association (NGCAA), explained, "All golf clubs need to have a Fire Certificate in order to operate. These have always been supplied free of charge by the local Fire Service but from January 2005, such certificates will no longer exist.

"Instead, clubs will become responsible for their own fire risk assessments. Most clubs will need to rely on the expertise of an external consultant to undertake a review and this could cost quite a lot of money depending on the size of the club."

Although a system will be implemented to penalise clubs who fail to undertake assessments and implement suitable precautions, the NGCAA is concerned that many will flout their obligations.

"I'm certain that many clubs won't want to pay for an assessment and will just carry on without commissioning a fire risk assessment. The harsh reality is that these clubs could be jeopardising the health and safety of their members and guests in their bid to save a few pounds."

Shaw also added that further problems may arise on any conversion or variation of the club's registration certificate or licence when the new licencing regulations take effect in February next year.



FOUR OUT OF SIX AS NORTH WIN AGAIN

The Norrie Whytock Trophy was once again played over the Auchterarder Golf Course and for the fourth time in six years the North Section ran out the winners.

Our thanks to our sponsors Bayer, for their continued support and to David Drummond, their Scottish representative, for his support on the day.

As usual Archie Dunn and his staff had the course in excellent condition despite the trying weather conditions that has prevailed this year. Our thanks also to the Captain and committee of Auchterarder Golf Club for allowing us the use of the facilities at Auchterarder.

With all five Sections competing the usual format applied. Four man team with the best three scores to count in a Stapleford format.

The North Section again run out the winners with a total of 99 points, with Ayrshire Section runners up on 93 points.

The winning team comprised Steve Sullivan, Craigie Hill GC, George Mitchell, Newmachar GC, James McCormack, Kirriemuir GC, and Mark Main, Moray GC.

Next year's event will be played at Auchterarder Golf Club, on August 22 2005.

Peter J. Boyd, Regional Administrator

PALMER TEAM UP WITH WIEDENMANN



Palmer's Groundcare premises at Selby (Inset) Dick Palmer.

Palmer's Groundcare Ltd, of Selby, North Yorkshire, has been appointed as the Wiedenmann UK dealer for the region.

Commenting on the appointment managing director Dick Palmer said, "We are delighted to have been appointed as the Wiedenmann dealer for this area of the UK. With the Terra Spike range, their blowers, rotary decks and grass collectors this will enable us to provide a complete service to the industry."

Bruce Alexander of Wiedenmann UK added, "We offer a warm welcome to Dick and his team. They have excellent facilities at Selby and are able provide the high service levels expected by our customers."

"We look forward to a long and mutually beneficial working partnership."

AWARD FOR EDITOR

Greenkeeper International Editor Scott MacCallum has won the Writing category of the Communicator in Business (CIB) North Awards.

Scott won the prize for his "A Racing Certainty" article on Nigel Mansell and his Woodbury Park Golf Club in Devon, which appeared in the magazine in October '03

The Award ceremony was held in the world famous Cavern Club, in Liverpool, and to mark the occasion, and in keeping with a venue made famous by The Beatles, each of the category winners was presented with a specially made Gold Disc by CIB National Chairman, Ken Runicles.



ETESIA CELEBRATES NEW PARTNERSHIP AND DEALER SUCCESSES

Etesia UK Ltd have entered into an agreement with Kramp UK, appointing them as official replacement parts distributors to Etesia's specialist outlets.

The announcement was made at Etesia's 2004 Dealer Awards event, when over 50 representatives from the company's UK network were invited to visit Kramp UK's 70,000 square metre headquarters in Biggleswade, Bedfordshire.

Speaking at the launch of the new initiative, Managing Director, Patrick Vives, said, "Kramp have been successfully handling Etesia's spare parts for some time, so this is just an extension of that service."

At the awards dinner Burrows GM Ltd received the UK Dealer of the Year Award.

Other award winners included: Alex McDougall Mowers – Best pedestrian mowers sales; Parks & Grounds Machinery Ltd – Best new professional dealer; Tom Williams Garden Machinery – Best new domestic dealer; Dean Mowers received the plaque for Best increase in turnover.



Bill Nelson, MD of Burrows GM Ltd (left) receives his UK Dealer Of The Year Shield from Etesia's MD Patrick Vives.

CLARKE PLANS WORLD CLASS GOLF RESORT

GML Estates Ltd, part of Channel-Island based Orana Group, has agreed terms to acquire Gilford Castle, in Gilford, Co. Down. GML intends to submit plans to renovate the Castle and outer buildings and to convert the grounds into a world-class 18-hole golf course and golf club, with the first Darren Clarke Golf Academy.

It is believed that the total investment will be around £25 million and will create approximately 100 full and part time jobs.

Darren, with ex-pro golfer David Jones, will be designing his first golf course in Northern Ireland specifically for the Gilford Castle project. It is intended that the course will rank among the best in Europe and be of a standard high enough for international competitions. He will also help to set up and oversee the first Darren Clarke Golf Academy, which will encourage and train young people from all over Ireland.

GML plan also to provide a first class clubhouse, with restaurant, bar, golf shop, and other facilities. The golf course will be 7,000 plus yards in length and designed to both preserve and to take advantage of the existing mature woodland, with the River Bann providing a major water feature to challenge the world's best golfers.

"I am very excited about doing my first course at home, especially somewhere as good as the Gilford Castle estate. The landscape is beautiful and we will create a stunning course, said Darren Clarke.

"My mindset going into it is to create a championship golf course, but also one that amateurs can enjoy as well. We have two fantastic golf courses in Northern Ireland, Royal Portrush and Royal County Down, which are known worldwide. My ideal would be to make Gilford Castle every bit as good as those two – to have it right up there so that we have three of the world's top golf courses in Northern Ireland. We want people not only from Ireland travelling to play it, but people from all over the world."

NEED A LIFT TO BTME?

BIGGA have placed a new discussion forum on the BIGGA Bulletin Board for members to arrange transport to BTME & ClubHouse, in Harrogate, on 18 – 20 January.

Entitled 'Car Share Scheme to BTME & ClubHouse' the forum is designed for members to organise transport arrangements with other members in their Section or Region.

So if you need a lift to the Exhibition or if you have spare space in you car, and are willing to offer your services, then get on the Bulletin Board, which is located in the members' section of www.bigga.org.uk.

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SGM SCORES WITH OPEN DAYS

Around 200 customers attended the annual Scottish Grass Machinery Open Days in December, at Dunfermline's East End Park, who SGM sponsor.

Customers from across Scotland attended the event at the Scottish Premier League stadium where they viewed the latest groundcare equipment and talked to technical experts. This included representation from three of SGM's new partners, Shibaura, Kioti and Claas.

Guest speakers at the SGM open days were Des Murray, principal advisor, APSE Scotland, who spoke on "Liveability - Creating integrated service delivery function", and Duncan Peddie, Head Greenkeeper at Alloa Golf Club, who spoke on "The benefits of contract hire to the user".



IAN'S FA CUP FOOTBALL FANTASY

While most young boys dream of playing in the FA Cup, the original and still most romantic Cup competition in the world, unfortunately not many of us get to live out that particular fantasy.

Ian Cambridge is one fellow who has actually tasted the glory of an FA Cup run. Ian, a greenkeeper at Saffron Walden Golf



Ian Cambridge scoring after four minutes in FA Cup first round against Shrewsbury.

Club, is the top marksman for South League Premier side Histon, who reached the FA Cup second round, played on Saturday December 4.

Histon, who were on a 13 match winning run, hosted high-flying League Two side Yeovil at Bridge Road.

Despite a three division gap between the two clubs, the result was only settled in the final minute. 0-0 at the break, Yeovil grabbed two early second half goals before Ian whipped in a superb cross for team mate Neil Kennedy to head home and put the contest back in the balance.

It was only in injury time, when Histon had thrown everything forward in search of an equaliser, that Yeovil broke to secure their progression to the third round, where they will play Rotherham.

"We gave as good as we got. We played well, and can really hold our heads high. In the end the main difference between the sides was that Yeovil were more organised, as you would expect from a professional team," said Ian.

"We are a very fit team, and in the FA Cup adrenaline gets you through, so we matched Yeovil for the majority of the game. We did ourselves proud. It was a great day, and a wonderful payday for the club as well."

Ian, 30, spearheaded Histon's six match cup run, firstly helping Histon through four qualifying matches. His side beat Hampton and Richmond Borough 2-0 in the first qualifying round, where Ian claimed both goals, Redditch in the second round, coming from 2 down to win 3-2,

Horsham at home 5-1, and finally Wealdstone 2-0, where Ian was again on the score sheet.

In the first round, they were drawn against another League Two side, Shrewsbury, and won 2-0 with Ian once again banging one in to see them through to face Yeovil.

"This was the biggest match of my career. We lost in the first round last year to Working, but to get to the second round and play a higher league team this year is even bigger."

Despite the defeat Ian is looking forward to the rest of the season. "We are fifth in the league, just four points off top spot with games in hand, and promotion is our main focus now.

"We are also in the third round of the FA Trophy, and that is something we are looking to win."

With a promising season still ahead, it will be a busy 2005 for Ian.

"My job suits me, as we start early so finish early, so that means I can always make training. It is tough sometimes if you have played a mid week match away and don't get back until very late at night, then have to be back up at 6am to work, but I get by.

"The golf club and the lads at Saffron are great to me. We run a shadow staff at weekends, and Ray (Goodsall, Course Manager) always schedules it so that I'm free if Histon are away.

"If the game is at home, I'll do a morning shift then go straight to the ground. They cater for my football."

SHERRIFF AMENITY ANNOUNCE NEW APPOINTMENT

Sherriff Amenity, turf care and sports equipment suppliers in the UK, have appointed Tim Combs as an amenity specialist responsible for covering South Wales and the South West.

Tim, who has a degree in turf management, has spent fourteen years in the turf care industry including spells at three different golf clubs in the New York metropolitan area, the last as Course Manager.

"Tim's appointment continues the growth and development of Sherriff Amenity in the UK", said Mark Pyrah, Director of Sherriff Amenity.



CHAMPIONSHIP SUPPORT

RANSOMES JACOBSEN
A Turf Company

BIGGA acknowledges the support of Ransomes Jacobsen for the BIGGA National Golf Championship, held at Alwoodley Golf Club in Leeds in October.

Unfortunately the Ransomes Jacobsen logo was missed off the review of the Championship in the November issue of the magazine and we would like to rectify that omission this month.

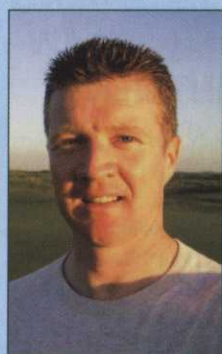
Tip of the Month

This month by Gordon Irvine MG,
Course Manager – Royal Cinque Ports GC



BIGGA's Master Greenkeeper Gordon Irvine MG provides his tip to help you in your course management.

Planning for the future



Always remember that the most important part of being a Greenkeeper is not how much grass you can grow during a few short summer months.

It should be the production of healthy, dry, firm and consistent playing surfaces for as much of the year as possible.

A sensible programme to improve the sward composition will be for the benefit of generations of future golfers to enjoy.



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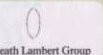
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Education Update

Education and Training Manager, Ken Richardson, highlights the forthcoming education opportunities in 2005.

Sami and Ken wish all of you a very happy new year and hope that you will make your resolution to use any opportunity to expand your skills and knowledge.

The first opportunity is at Harrogate, later this month, followed by the Golf Industry Show and Conference in Orlando. This is quickly followed by the Scottish Conference, the North West Seminar, the South Coast Seminar, Regional Training Courses and by BITMC.

Continue to Learn 2005

Sunday January 16 starts a very busy week at Harrogate when three two day Workshops, supported by the GTC and by the John Deere Team Championship, commence in the Majestic Hotel.

The Grass Roots Level, Learn the Process of Effective Communication and Negotiation and the Golf Course Design Workshops are almost full but you may be able to book your place if you contact Sami.

Monday January 17 sees the continuation of the two day Workshops, the start of the one day Workshops and start of the AGCS Seminars. The one day Workshops, also supported by the GTC and the John Deere Team Championship, are almost full but, again, you may be able to book a place by contacting Sami. The one day Workshops are, The Principles of Irrigation and Course Preparation Techniques at the Professional Tour Level. The AGCS Seminars will be held in Hall D of the Harrogate International Centre. Contact the AGCS on 01934 641166 for more details.

Tuesday January 18 is another busy day. BTME & ClubHouse Seminars, supported by the GTC, begin in Hall D, BTME & ClubHouse opens its doors and a Master Greenkeeper Tutorial takes place in the Restaurant of Hall D. Golf Club Managers are catered for when ClubHouse seminars take place on Tuesday afternoon in Hall D. All Seminar sessions have places available and may be booked by calling at Stand Q8.

Wednesday January 19 is a special day for BIGGA, for our President Sir Michael Bonallack OBE, for three new Master Greenkeepers and for the winners of prizes in this year's Environment Competition, sponsored by Scotts Professional UK, Syngenta Professional Products and Wrap.

Sir Michael will receive the BIGGA Lifetime Achievement Award. Ken Ingram will travel from the US to join Stuart Hogg and Les Howkins to receive their Master Greenkeeper jackets and plaques.

Minchinhampton Golf Club is the winner of the BIGGA Golf Environment Competition, supported by Scotts UK Professional, Syngenta Professional Products and by Wrap.

They will be awarded the Environment Trophy, a cheque for £2000 and a Scotts Weather Station, with Hankley Common Golf Club winning the runners-up prize of £500. Regional Winners, Brighthouse Bay, Fulford Golf Club, Garnant Golf Club, Hollinwell Golf Club and Thorpeness Golf Club all win a cheque for £500. Prizes will also be awarded to Bath Golf Club (Best use of

recycled products), Taunton and Pickeridge Golf Club (Best Initiative) and Felixstowe Ferry Golf Club (Best newcomer).

Our Key Note Speaker then takes the stage. Lesley Everett is an expert in personal branding. She will use her experience to tell us all what we should be doing to ensure that we are projecting the right image.

Lesley is closely followed by our next series of Seminar Sessions that look at the environmental impact of golf courses. Don't forget the Annual General Meeting takes place in Hall D at 5.15pm.

Our final day of seminars starts at 10.45 on Thursday January 20, again in Hall D. An early finish at 1.30 will enable delegates to make a final visit to BTME & ClubHouse before the Exhibition Banquet.

The BIGGA Careers Fair, sponsored by TORO, will be running for all three days of the Exhibition in Hall Q. Brin and Frank will be there to give advice and guidance on how to get that elusive job and how to negotiate your salary package. Many jobs will be advertised on the 'Job Wall' alongside the Careers Clinic.

The OnCourse Management Package will be demonstrated throughout the Exhibition on the BIGGA Stand, in Hall Q, and you can order your copy at the reduced price of £600.

BITMC

You should have received your copy of the BITMC programme in the December Edition of Greenkeeper International.

BITMC, supported by Syngenta Professional and by the John Deere Team Championship, will be held at the Staverton Park Conference Centre, Daventry. Staverton is in the heart of the country with easy access from the M6, M1, M42 and M40. Birmingham International Railway Station and Birmingham Airport are 20 minutes away.

Places on this are high - level managers conference are strictly limited so if you want to go make sure that your application is in the post.

The Golf Industry Show

Lovers of Mickey Mouse should be thrilled to know that the Golf Industry Show, organised by the GCSAA, will be held in Orlando in February. The Golf Industry Show is similar to BTME & ClubHouse but on a much larger scale.

North West Seminar

The North West Section Seminar will be held at Mere Golf Club on February 22. Full details may be obtained from Bert Cross.

South Coast Seminar

The South Coast Seminar will be held once again at Canford Magna Golf Club on February 24. Full details can be obtained from Alex McCombie.

Scottish Conference

The Scottish Conference will be held at Lauder College in Dunfermline on Tuesday March 1. Full details can be obtained from Peter Boyd.

GTC News



As we enter a new year David Golding, GTC Education Director, looks ahead to the coming months with his usual optimism for greenkeepers and golf club employers.

While the GTC spends much of its time on reviewing greenkeeping qualifications, developing new initiatives to support the golf clubs and greenkeepers it represents, one aspect of our work is often undervalued albeit vitally important to ensuring employers are tempted into engaging in staff training.

Funding or, more specifically, subsidised training courses have been a tradition in our sector for many years and I believe this must continue if we hope to ensure the golf club employers are willing to train their staff.

While in many industries thousands of pounds are invested in staff development we in the sports turf sector have had a tradition of seeing training as a necessary requirement rather than seeing it as an investment in staff development.

It has often been a frustrating aspect of my work when attending meetings, representing the sports turf sector, and hearing training providers, often the college representatives, pleading for more Government funds to make the education and training courses cheap, or better still free, otherwise employers will not train their staff.

It is true that if the Government in establishing apprenticeship schemes and national frameworks for qualifications invest millions of pounds in the development and delivery of the various awards, we should be in the frame fighting for our slice of the financial cake.

I think we have made great strides in this area, not only gaining the respect within the land base sector but much admired by other industries who are only now "tapping" into the national framework of qualifications.

Having attended many meetings representing the sector I have to say that because we now know and understand the "system" of funding I truly hope we take up the current opportunities available to educate and train staff or if you are a greenkeeper please climb on board the continual professional development (CPD) train!

I know you will be thinking hear goes David again down the jargon road, but OK if you want to take advantage of the education and training opportunities now available in greenkeeping one of the necessary "evils" is that you have to know the buzz terms!

Sorry, but I will try and keep you up to speed with them as they appear. I can assure you it is a small price to pay for the return you will receive from the training providers.

'The GTC approved training providers can access funding support from the appropriate Government agencies on your behalf'

CPD is a very common term and by reading this magazine you are contributing to your own CPD.

Attending events such as BTME are all part of your development and we must keep ourselves up to speed in the area of our work – for my part I have to read the Government websites daily, just to see if there has been a new acronym "launched". Sad but true!

Joking apart I could list many, many examples of where we now access Government funds to make

greenkeeper education and training affordable, but in this article I just want to highlight the fact that the GTC approved training providers can access funding support from the appropriate Government agencies on your behalf.

Apprenticeships, Skillseekers, National/Scottish Vocational Qualifications, Higher National Certificates, Foundation Degrees and NPTC Certificates of Competence are the most popular formal education and training awards and carry the Government's accreditation and in turn training providers can draw down funds to offer some, if not all, of these awards.

As I have mentioned in previous articles, the GTC works closely with the various Awarding Bodies to police the training providers in our sector as quality of provision is still our number one priority.

The GTC works within the Government framework to ensure that the range of qualifications are relevant to the sportsturf sector, therefore please take advantage of the courses on offer.

The optimistic view is that from vocational training to a Master Degree, from Certificates of Competence to BIGGA regional training courses and national events there is something there for everyone and the cost should not be preventative in taking up at least one option.

BIGGA has a scholarship scheme available for its members and more recently the R&A has approved a Bursary scheme for Greenkeeping.

All in all greenkeepers can be well prepared for the challenges ahead in terms of all the reports expecting greater "movement" of the golfers to the clubs who are offering the best services, which must include the condition of the course.

'There is something there for everyone and the cost should not be preventative in taking up at least one option'

For all the up to date information on which course, which qualification or which training provider please contact the GTC.

Telephone: 01347 838640,

Email: david@the-gtc.co.uk

Visit the GTC website at www.the-gtc.co.uk

Visit the GTC STAND at BTME 2005. Stand Q130 within the ClubHouse Exhibition.

'Having attended many meetings representing the sector I have to say that because we now know and understand the "system" of funding I truly hope we take up the current opportunities available to educate and train staff or if you are a greenkeeper please climb on board the continual professional development (CPD) train!'

Rachael and Gemma, from the Membership Department, would like to wish you all a Happy New Year. 44 new members are welcomed to the Association this month.

Membership Update



BTME and ClubHouse will soon be upon us and once again both Gemma and I will be on the BIGGA Stand Q123 to answer all your membership queries. Why not visit us and we can answer all your questions to do with your membership package including the recent changes to the car breakdown package and personal accident insurance cover. Samples of our popular merchandise range recently highlighted in the magazine will be available to try on, alongside the usual videos and books for sale.

Rachael and Gemma will be on hand to:

- Collect membership renewal forms.
- Hand out replacement renewal forms.
- Change Personal and Golf Club details.
- Collect new membership application forms.
- Hand out membership information.
- Hand out field guides on production of your membership card.
- Answer questions on your membership package.
- Hand out details of the direct debit scheme and tax relief forms.

Haztek International launch NEW member benefit at BTME and ClubHouse



BIGGA have joined forces with Haztek International to bring a new Health and Safety benefit to members.

Haztek will be offering a 24 hour hotline offering help, advice and information on all aspects of Health and Safety in the golf environment. If a member's golf club takes up a

three year Maintenance Plan then they will receive a fourth year free!

The helpline will be launched at BTME and ClubHouse and members are invited to visit the Haztek International stand at Q120 (opposite the BIGGA stand) to find out more and pick up a free Health and Safety pack.

DUE TO POPULAR DEMAND...

The privilege card is back! Last month we announced that we had withdrawn the privilege card, however, such was the response in favour of the card that we have decided to re-instate it.

You will all be receiving a card with your membership renewal as usual.

Why not take advantage of the card over the winter when planning what to do with the children.

Show your card at any Megabowl and buy one game get



one free. This offer is available at any time and is for up to six people.

Visit Vue cinemas between Monday and Thursday and receive discounted rates.

Feeling peckish? Dominos Pizza are offering a 30% discount on collected orders.

All these offers are available on production of your privilege card.

Don't forget to bring your card with you to BTME and ClubHouse and ask at the BIGGA stand Q123 for special offers during the week. For further information and offers call 0800 587 8800.



BIGGA welcomes...

SCOTTISH REGION

Robert Finnegan, Central
Greg Kilgour, Central
Stuart Martin, East
Kevin Neilson, East
Kevin Simpson, Central

NORTHERN REGION

Andrew Merry, North West
Michael O'Keefe, North West
David Taylor, North West
Tracey Woollam, North West
Andrew Yates, North West

MIDLAND REGION

Robert Cass, East of England
John Cunningham, Midland
Michael Cunningham, Mid Anglia
Oliver Hemblen, BB&O
Chris Meadows, BB&O
Edward Mutch, Midland

Andrew Ross, BB&O
Ben Timms, Midland

SOUTH EAST REGION

Graham Case, Kent
Jamie Cushing, London
Nicholas Morton, London
Martin Parsons, Sussex
Aaron Percival, London
Darren Reed, London
Gary Turner, East Anglia
Graham Warn, London

SOUTH WEST/SOUTH WALES

James Coverdale, South West
Steven Gillett, South Wales
Michael Gulliver, South Coast
James Keeley, South West
Daniel Rowlands, South Coast

INTERNATIONAL

Lars Friberg, Sweden

Jan-Ake Tyllman, Sweden
Andrew Dalton, USA
Stephen Lording, Australia

STUDENT MEMBERS

Daniel Smith, South West

GOLDEN KEY MEMBERS

Ashley Bennett, North West
Peter Griffiths, South Wales
Ian Jennings, South Coast
David Johnston, East Scotland
Darren Mugford, Mid Anglia
Jim Scott, West Scotland
David Stoner, Surrey
Andy Ward, BBO

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Derek Cowell, Ayrshire
Richard Barter, Devon & Cornwall

JANUARY'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 Stewart McBain, of Hazelhead Golf Club.

Course Feature



Priceless Parkstone

Parkstone Golf Club is in the middle of a massive heathland restoration project and Gareth Jones discovered how the developments are going.

With housing values at an all time high and space to build extra accommodation at a premium there is a certain area of land located on the south coast of the UK that is reported to be the third most expensive land in the world. Situated nearby is a golf club that is worth more than all the money in the world to its greenkeeping staff.

Parkstone Golf Club is to be found comfortably nestled in between the numerous multi million pound, brightly coloured houses, most of which you expect to see running alongside a Californian beach rather than Poole Harbour.

However, it is not these glamorous dwellings that catch the eye of passers by, it is Parkstone and the attention to detail and sheer hard graft that is being put into the course is what makes it truly stand out.

The club has a dedicated staff of eight who are undertaking a massive restoration project that has consumed their working lives. The greens staff is currently restoring the course to its original heathland state, which has witnessed the removal of vast amounts of trees from around the entire course.

Parkstone has always been considered to be a heathland but, as time went on, in reality it resembled more of a parkland course. Like all major projects, this restoration programme has certainly not happened overnight, in fact it had been started just before current Course Manger, Bill Garner, joined the club back in 1998.

"This project is important to the golf club. The heathland must not be lost, that is crucial. We are taking great strides to regenerate the heather and it is important we do as much as possible," said Bill.

"I have been at Parkstone for seven years and in that time lots of manpower, time and money have gone into it and the course is now showing signs of all that hard work."

Wonderful shades of heather are now appearing across the course and you get a real sense that there is plenty more to come, and success to be gained, from the project. The team is certainly not resting with what they have and plans are afoot for more trees to be taken out and more of the course's natural heather to return.

The club has had to work closely with various organisations during the



Course Manager, Bill Garner, (right) with Deputy Alex McCombie and, to the right, with their team.

restoration process, in particular English Nature, The Forestry Commission and Poole Borough Council.

"All three have really helped us out and played their part in restoring Parkstone to its rightful state. It was difficult when we first started as we all had different views and ideas and fought our own corner. But now, with the results that we are seeing, we are all pulling in the same direction and it is working well.

"Everyone has agreed that there is a balance needed between heathland and woodland, it is about getting that balance right and I'm sure we are getting it right here. We had our last meeting in early December and as we walked around everybody agreed that the course was looking great."

The club, who's professional between 1957 and 1970 was Ryder Cup player and BBC commentator Peter Alliss, is involved with the Woodland Grant Scheme, run by the Forestry Commission, which has pushed the development further forward with specialist advice available to the club and also helping them gain approval to remove certain trees.

"The whole project is ongoing and we are now ready to move it on to the next step. We have taken out two major woodland areas and now we plan to take out the small blocks, which are dotted around the course. We need to take the canopies back and that will be quite a job, but we are encouraged by the work so far and we aren't going to stop until we are happy," stated Bill, who looked both extremely proud of the work completed so far and excited about the upcoming plans.

Major heathland regeneration work, such as Parkstone's, can never run perfectly, results are not always guaranteed and typically they are influenced by uncontrollable factors. Heather reestablishment is not a certainty and growth from one area to another can vary dramatically. Between holes 12 and 13 the heather has developed significantly more than the area between 11 and 12, but that is something Bill always expected.

"No part of the course is the same, so you are never 100% sure what is going to happen. In certain areas heather wouldn't grow back at all, while in others it will flourish. You don't really know before hand what the result will be. For example, you never know how the ground has been tampered with in the



past and what has been done to it. You just have to work around it and in most cases you have to try and regenerate the seed bed before you can do anything else at all."

Despite the odd problem here and there the project has been very successful, to such an extent that the club won the Outstanding Achievement Award, given by English Nature. The awards have been running for five years and just 10 are handed out each year.

"I believe we are the only golf club to have won this award and it is an honour. Bill and myself went to the Warwickshire Royal Agricultural Show and the Chief Executive of English Nature presented us with the award there," said Alex McCombie, Deputy Course Manager of Parkstone, with a thoroughly satisfied tone in his voice.

"It came out of the blue really. We don't do all this work for awards, we do it for the club, its members, ourselves and most importantly, for the course. However it is always nice to receive accolades like this and it just helps prove we are heading in the right direction and carrying out the correct procedures, it is nice to have that type of backup," said Bill.

The award also endorses Parkstone's credentials as a top 100 ranked golf course in the recent Golf Monthly rankings. With more courses popping up around the country Parkstone briefly slipped out of that top 100, but with all the hard work that has been put into the course from the team, the club is now firmly rooted back in that elite band.

"There are a lot of nice clubs around this part of the world, and there is a major new one being build down the road, but I wouldn't say we feel the pressure of having to compete with them for green fees and membership numbers. We just get on with our jobs and all I ask from my team is that we all





give 100% and work as best we can. You can't ask for more than that and I have found that with that attitude you can't go far wrong," insisted Bill, who benefits from having a solid team and a low turnover of staff.

"We must be doing something right as the lads enjoy their work here and because of that they are happy to stay. This heathland restoration has given them another side of greenkeeping you don't always get on other courses.

"We don't encourage the grass to grow here and, in fact, it doesn't grow fast at all, it is not that type of course. This allows the team the time to experience other areas of golf course management and that is great for them."

The magnitude of the Parkstone project can not be underestimated and to be completed successfully a whole number of factors have had to be right, from staff to machinery the club has had to get it spot on.

"The club is very good, the staff are very good and the machinery is very good. Everything has had to be top notch in order for us to be successful. It all combines to make the job easier and the results better. There is no point having good staff but poor machinery that is not up to the job, and vice versa. The club recognise that and do what they can to make this project as successful as possible."

Parkstone, which is a 6,254 yard par 72 course, keeps Bill and his team up to date with all the latest machinery, and if it is needed then it is brought, while also providing numerous education and training opportunities for the staff. The club's team of eight boast two qualified assessors, with Tim Rockey, who is bound for the US in early 2005 as part of the BIGGA Delegation trip, supported by Bernhard, to the GCSAA Show, a NPTC assessor.

"As a club Parkstone has a really positive approach to greenkeeper education. They are always keen to push us forward and enter us on to courses, conferences and seminars, and that is really important and beneficial to all the staff. It is a major reason they enjoy working here," said Alex, who is clearly a big advocate of greenkeeper training.

As well as the restoration programme, the education side of the club has helped the green staff to tackle their other major work, drainage. Parkstone, which is split by a single road, is just a drive and a nine iron from the English Channel and, with some of the course at sea level, numerous drainage troubles have been created. The 11th and 12th, in particular, suffer and located just off the fairways is a waterway that runs down to the Channel. This is tidal, which has caused the course to be flooded on occasions.

"A lot of people don't think we have a problem with drainage, but we suffer quite badly at times. We have gravel banded and also just drilled and filled with Eco Solve on seven of the greens, so that should help us out, even though, typically, we haven't actually had any rain since we did the work," quipped the Head man.

The secret to the course's success is Bill's philosophy of keeping it simple. He keeps a diary of every year of his working life as a greenkeeper, which contains information on all the work he has done on a particular day and he records all

the important stats, such as rainfall. It is this method he then uses to plan what he has in store for his course.

"I don't plan too far ahead, and I don't have a year long planned out schedule that I must stick to. I look back in my diaries and see what I was doing this time last year, and think well maybe I should be doing that again about now.

"We are dictated to by the weather conditions. For instance, it has been a surprisingly dry December so far, so the lads are out there verti-draining. If it was wet, and we had planned some major work, we would just do something else instead and wait until the time and weather is right. We are adoptable here and this kind of approach works very well for us, each course is different and so is each greenkeeper."

Bill, who started his greenkeeping career at Wilmslow Golf Club before moving onto The Grange in Dublin, honed his simplicity method in Holland. Course Manager at the Hilversumsche Golf Club, a regular venue for the Dutch Open, Bill was responsible for testing the cream of the golfing world, while also taking up the education opportunities provided by the developing FEGGA.

"FEGGA put on some good education conferences for greenkeepers and I attended quite a few. The education is strong over in Holland and well supported. Because chemicals are banned over there it puts more emphasis on leaning other ways to cope with disease and things like that.

"That is probably the biggest influence working in Holland had on me, I am more relaxed when we have a problem such as getting a disease at Parkstone. Fusarium is nasty, and leaves a horrible scar on the grass, but we don't panic about it. We just do what we can and get on with it, we don't go over the top and spray like mad," stated Bill.

"We just get on with things here, each day is different, and we all enjoy what we are doing here to make Parkstone as good as possible."

So while the building developers fight it out for the third highest valued land in the world, close by will be a team of dedicated greenkeepers making sure their Parkstone Golf Course remains priceless.

Parkstone Golf Club Machinery Inventory

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1 X Toro GM 3200D
2 X John Deere 220
2 X John Deere 220A
1 X John Deere 3235C fairway mower
1 X John Deere 3245C rough cut
1 X Greentech thatchaway units
1 X Greentech vibrating rollers
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1 X Richard long scarifier/collector
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1 X Groundmaster turfcutter
1 X Long equip top dresser
1 X John Deere top dresser
1 X Turfmech stumpgrinder
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1 X Farmura F25 sprayer
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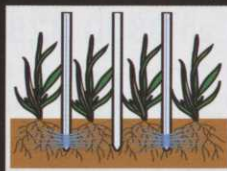


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Clerk of Works,
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An Extraordinary Life in Golf

The first recipient of the BIGGA Lifetime Achievement Award, Sir Michael Bonallack OBE chats with Scott MacCallum about his life in the game.

Visit Sir Michael Bonallack's home, near St Andrews, and you can spend a few moments taking in the vast array of photographs which adorn the walls.

Like many who have been fortunate to meet and even play with some of the top players and legends of the game there are pictures of Sir Michael in the company with all sorts of notables, including several Open Champions.

However, unlike the rest of us who have been lucky enough to have had our picture taken in the company of celebrities, in Sir Michael's case it is just as likely that those very stars have the same image on their walls. The fact is that they are just as anxious to have their picture taken with him as we would be with them.

Sir Michael Bonallack OBE is a man who has reached the top in two spheres of the game. As a player he has been described as the finest British amateur of the 20th Century and a player who could hold his own when measured against the top professionals of the day. As an administrator and, more specifically, Secretary of the R&A, it was his hand on the tiller as the game developed and increased in popularity through the 80s and 90s.

Just a mild probing of his life uncovers a man who has dined with Bobby Jones; played in The Masters with Ben Hogan; The Open with Gary Player and Lee Trevino; won five Amateur Championships; been Playing Captain of a winning Walker Cup team.

He also had another celebratory Walker Cup winning dinner interrupted by a US Sheriff serving him a writ for over \$100 million. He was also Captain of the R&A in Millennium year.

While most lives tend to be humdrum with the occasional splash of excitement this particular life can only be described as extraordinary.

There can therefore be no more deserving first recipient of the BIGGA Lifetime Achievement Award, which is presented by the Association in recognition of Sir Michael's achievements within the game of golf and his contribution to the greenkeeping profession.

A 60 year involvement in the game began on a Devon beach close to Saunton Golf Club during the summer holidays, when Mrs Bonallack sent the sports mad Michael, 10 at the time, and his brother on to the sand with some clubs and balls.

"We seemed to take to it pretty well and when we got home my mother and father, who was just back from the war, made us members of Chigwell Golf Club," recalled Sir Michael.

Often success can be traced back to being in the right place at the right time and, in the case of the young Michael Bonallack, Chigwell certainly seemed the right place.

"It was a remarkable club, extremely forward thinking, particularly when it came to junior golf. We had our own committee, our own junior Captain, organised our own competitions and had our own organised lessons every week with the Pro, Bert Hodson, a Ryder Cup player from the early 30s," he explained, chuckling that his long committee room service had actually begun at the age of 12.

When Bert Hodson left Chigwell the lessons continued under Eddie



Whitcombe and when Michael joined another exceptionally enlightened club in Thorpe Hall, Cecil Denny made his contribution to the development of the Bonallack swing.

His golfing hero as a youngster was Bobby Jones, widely regarded to be the greatest amateur ever to play the game... if not the greatest full stop. However, the man who had clinched the original Grand Slam in 1930 was not all that he seemed to the young Essex golfer. Bobby Jones had a shock in store.

To be honest, it was nothing like the baseball star, Shoeless Joe Jackson, banned for life for betting on the game, who had to listen to a young fan memorably plead with him, "Say it ain't so, Joe". But to Michael, while he never actually uttered the words, "Say it ain't so, Bobby", it was a shock nonetheless.

"I always thought he was English. It wasn't until my mid teens that I suddenly realised that he was American," said Sir Michael, who had the honour of sitting beside the great man at the traditional Amateurs' Dinner held during The Masters.



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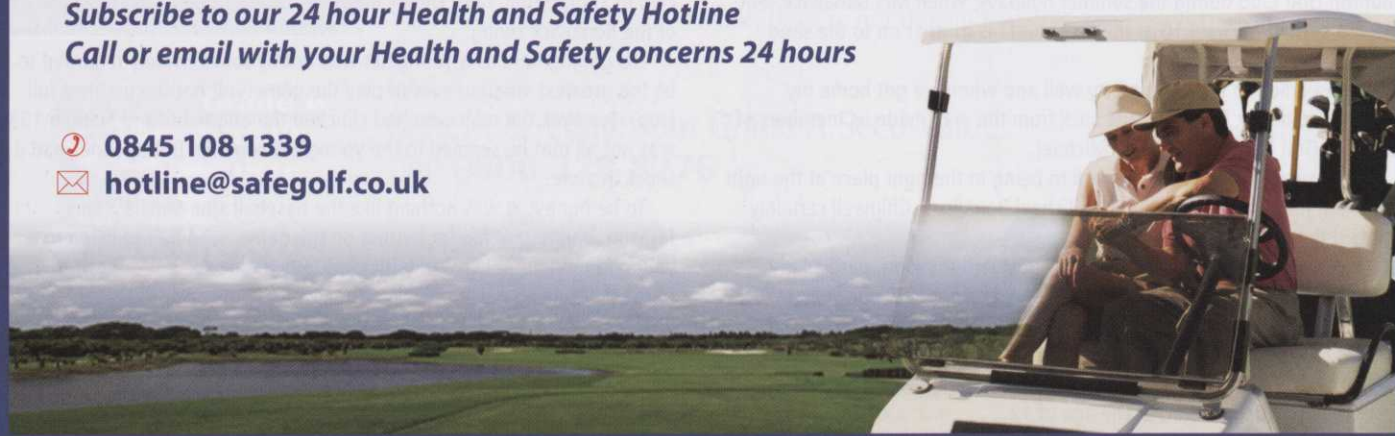
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"He was very sick by that time (he endured a degenerative spinal complaint from a relatively early age) and could only drink soup through a straw, but his brain was 100% and he had great recall," he said of an occasion that will stay with him forever.

Michael started to win junior competitions at Chigwell and Thorpe Hall and then, aged 13, won the handicap prize at the Essex Boys' Championship when was still playing off 15 or 16.

From then on his handicap came down very quickly. He became Essex Boys' Champion and played in his first British Boys' in 1951 at Prestwick, being knocked out in the second round."

The real breakthrough came the following year and in Sir Michael's own words it was a bit of a fluke.

"I'd always played many sports, and in particular cricket, and just before the British Boys' I was playing for my school at Lords against Cheltenham.

"I then travelled straight from Lords to Formby, but I hadn't played golf for the entire summer term and I was terrible. So I went to nearby Birkdale and met with the pro, Bobby Halsall, who gave me a couple of lessons.

"Back at Formby I just concentrated on keeping the ball in play. I had a good short game and suddenly found I'd won the British Boys'," he explained.

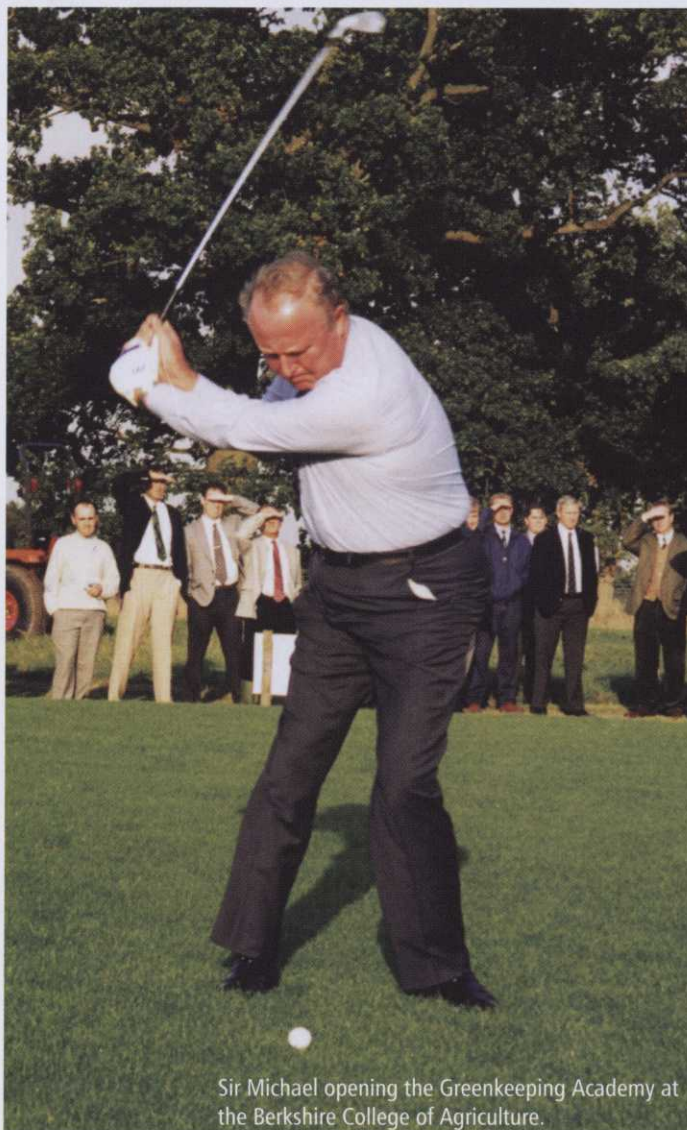
With cricket now well and truly overtaken, his golf, based on a mercurial short game, went from strength to strength.

"I never thought about missing a putt. Now I never think of holing one! I was just able to see a line on the green and then play the ball along that line," he explained, making it all sound ridiculously easy.

"We used to chip and putt a lot as youngsters and that sharpened up my short game. Thorpe Hall was a narrow course with very small greens so if you missed a green you had to have a good short game to score."

The roll of honour is long but the obvious highlights of his playing career are five Amateur Championships - Turnberry, 1961; Royal Porthcawl, '65; Royal Troon, '68; Hoylake, '69 and Royal County Down, '70 - and playing on nine Walker Cup teams including St Andrews in 1971 when, as Player Captain, he led his team to a first win for 33 years.

He pinpoints his first Amateur Championship win, at Turnberry in



Sir Michael opening the Greenkeeping Academy at the Berkshire College of Agriculture.

1961, as particularly significant and also that Walker Cup success in 1971, against a team which included Tom Kite and Lanny Wadkins.

"Ever since I'd played amateur golf my ambition had been to be on a winning Walker Cup team and to win it for the first time in 33 years, at St Andrews, as playing Captain, made it even more special."

Pushed on any particular Amateur Championship memories he recalls the final of the 1965 Championship at Royal Porthcawl, where he was pitted against former BBC commentator, Clive Clark.

"I was six down after 12 holes of the 36 hole final but got it back to three down by lunch when, just to pass the time, I started sticking sixpences into the fruit machine.

"On about the fifth pull I won the jackpot. I made sure Clive knew about it. 'Must be my lucky day' I told him," he said, smiling at the memory of the eventual 2&1 win.

Then, as now, winning The Amateur Championship brought an invitation to the Masters; that dinner in the company of Bobby Jones and partnering Ben Hogan during the opening two rounds.

"That was a tremendous thrill. He was very pleasant to play with and spoke with me on the way round, not excessively, but you wouldn't expect him to particularly during a Major."

Asked if he ever made the cut and he just laughs.

"Nowhere near it. In those days you didn't play golf in the winter. In fact the Masters used to be my first competitive round since the Home Internationals the previous September. I had no chance."

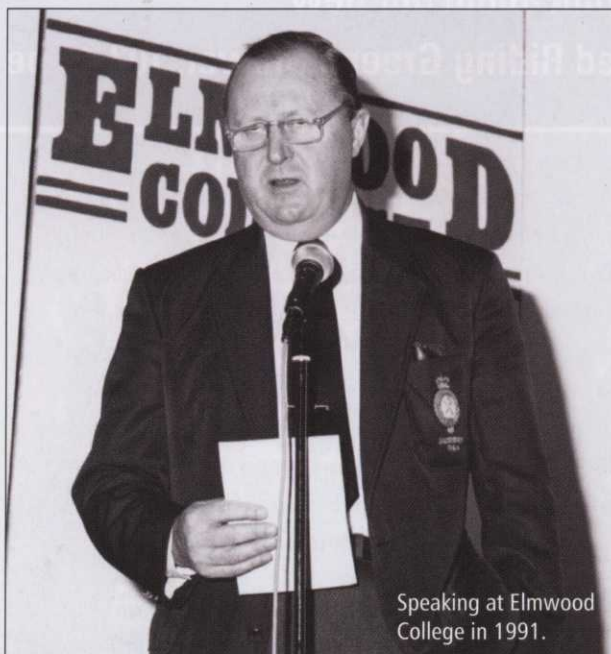
It wasn't quite the same in The Open and he won the Silver Medal as leading amateur on two occasions.

He was actually in the hunt for the Claret Jug itself on the final day a couple of times.

"My best finish was 11th, at Muirfield in 1959, but I'd been second equal going into the final round.

"I was also close at Carnoustie in 1968 when I was lying third with nine holes to go but took three to get out of a bunker at the 10th and had a horrendous back nine," said Sir Michael who also played with Lee Trevino, the eventual winner, at Royal Birkdale in 1972, during another fine Open campaign.

Sir Michael had become a member of the R&A in 1960 and as his playing schedule reduced he sat on an increasing number of committees and became



Speaking at Elmwood College in 1991.



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Chairman of Selectors.

"I was President of the EGU in 1982 when Keith McKenzie (the then Secretary of the R&A) announced his intention to retire.

"I was with another R&A official one evening when he suggested that I apply for the job. I really hadn't considered it, but I went home and started to think about it and the idea became very appealing."

At the time he was running the Leisure Division of construction and property developer company Miller Buckley based in Rugby. Among his roles was Chairman of Cotton Pennick & Lawrie, the Golf Course Architect company, who had been acquired by Miller Buckley.

"I still lived in Essex at the time and when I got the job in 1983 we sold up, bought this house and we've been here ever since."

The first Open Championship he presided over was a real cracker - St Andrews '84, when Seve Ballesteros memorably pipped Tom Watson and pumped his fist excitedly on the 18th green.

It's not a question you get to ask very often but, "Did you get as much of a buzz running The Open as you did playing in it?" produced a positive response.

"I used to love it. I thoroughly enjoyed everything about the game, the atmosphere and the people you meet in it."

Perhaps not included among that number was the Sheriff who presented him with a writ during the Post Match Walker Cup dinner at Peachtree Golf Club in Atlanta in 1989 as the "Square Groove" dispute reached its peak.

"We'd just won the Walker Cup when I got a tap on my shoulder and there was a Sheriff serving me with a writ for myself as an individual and the R&A for \$100 million tripled. It put me off my meal a bit," he said.

The case was settled a few months later.

Sir Michael also saw the famous R&A document "The Demand for Golf" published in 1986, which said that 700 more golf courses were needed by the end of the century.

"We were not far out, but what it didn't say was where those clubs were needed and what type of golf course it was that was required.



Image supplied by Getty.

"People started building very high profile, so called 'Championship' golf courses, when it was pay and play courses that were needed to get more people playing the game."

Through his Cotton Pennick & Lawrie connections Sir Michael first got to know Jim Arthur.

"We used to have the most tremendous arguments but he has the game's interests at heart and if it wasn't for him the Greenkeepers Association wouldn't be what it is today. He was the catalyst for everyone working together.

"I think BIGGA has come on tremendously since it became one unified body. Now, through training, greenkeepers are completely different to the old style greenkeepers, who were very good at their job but who didn't have the scientific knowledge.

"Now greenkeepers are virtually qualified agronomists as well as greenkeepers and they are starting to be regarded as professionals by the golf club members."

Having retired from the R&A in 1999 Sir Michael is finding himself as busy as ever. In addition to his Presidency of BIGGA he is a Non Executive Director of the European Tour; President of the Golf Foundation; Chairman of the World Ranking Committee and he has just

finished a two year spell as President of the PGA of Europe.

"I thought when I retired from the R&A I'd have more time to play the game and have a quiet life but I seem to have got involved in more and more things."

He is delighted to have become the first recipient of the BIGGA Lifetime Achievement Award.

"I'm very honoured to have been given this award because when I grew up I was always friends with the greenkeeper. We had a great man at Thorpe Hall called Jock Glass who used to chase us around the course if we hadn't raked a bunker or put a divot back.

"It has to be remembered that the golf course is the biggest asset a club has and the greenkeeper is the person responsible for looking after it."

Sir Michael will be at Harrogate later this month to be presented with the Award.



Image supplied by Getty.

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Your Letters...

How did you get into greenkeeping?

For me it was pure luck.... Or, on a freezing cold day in mid January, the day fate kicked me squarely in the nether regions.

I'd never heard of greenkeeping, let alone considered it any sort of career. The primitive life form that I was at 16, having the cognitive ability of a retarded sheep, has through nurturing, encouragement, not to mention a little hard work and application from myself, produced (I hope) a competent greenkeeper. In between time, I have observed similar scenarios from the perspective of trainer/supervisor, dealing with trainees ranging in ability from those with special needs to an academic on a gap year destined for Cambridge and a Master's Degree in particle physics. It could be argued that neither of these extremes would provide the ideal raw material for creating a good greenkeeper. In practical terms, it's a futile exercise and a misappropriation of time, energy and resources.

In retrospect, my perception of the process involved in the identification, training and development of the next generation of Course Managers has been and still is, like having your teeth pulled... excruciatingly painful and ultimately unsatisfying. I concede that there are those tiny oases in an otherwise barren landscape but they are few and far between and the

journey saps ever last drop of your energy, much to the frustration of her in doors.

However, for the potential rewards I am prepared for the journey, but feel that greater assistance should be available from the wider industry and is an area where we are missing the boat. I feel we need to develop a format of presentation for introducing greenkeeping as a career option in schools and Universities and at career events. This format should be accessible and portable as it would be a valuable tool for Course Managers to encourage and enthuse potential candidates.

I think it would be a little presumptuous to make a sweeping statement like, "the standard of potential trainees is poor", it's more a case of the number of potential trainees becoming less and less. Our local college don't have anyone to offer us and yet, there is a school leaver out there, possibly with a greater cognitive ability than that of a retarded sheep, keen, enthusiastic, looking for direction and inspiration. But lost to the greenkeeping profession because he or she has never heard of, nor considered the idea of, a career in greenkeeping.

It's a shame really, because by my reckoning, there was a half decent greenkeeper there for us.

Name and address withheld

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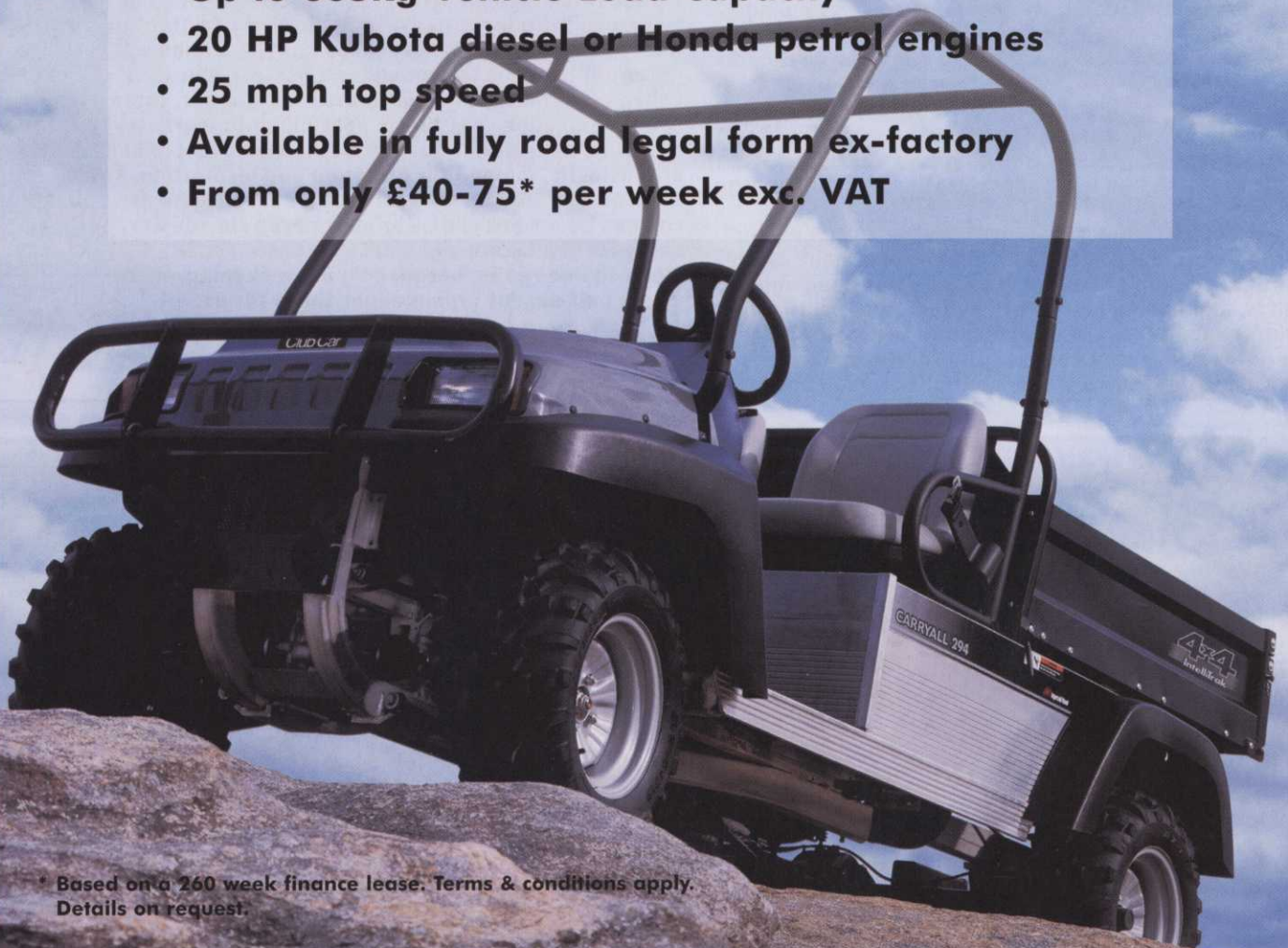
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Russell Walsh explains the ins and outs of studying a foundation degree in sportsturf online.

I have been studying for a foundation degree qualification since September 2003 and will now try to give readers some insight into what is involved in trying to achieve this.

I am the Head Greenkeeper at Bacup Golf Club, in Lancashire. To study for a foundation degree on a full time basis would not have been feasible so when I saw the advert in the press about distance learning online I thought I'd give it a go.

I am now in my second year of study, with the course running for three years from September through to May. The learning material is put together by tutors based at Myerscough College although the students are registered at the University of Central Lancashire, based in Preston.

Students are given their own pass number to access the online learning material.

Once you have entered the site your home page informs you of the subjects of study on which you are enrolled. Last year's subjects were:

Soil science and land management.

Plant biology and physiology.

Golf course presentation and management.

Turfgrass establishment and maintenance.

On the soil science subject students were asked to take samples from a place of interest within their own golf course, or sports facility, as one of the projects. These samples were then sent to Myerscough College for analysis.

The results from hydrometer readings, sand fractions, content of organic matter present, soil potassium, soil magnesium, soil phosphorus and soil extract absorbance were then sent back to the students who would then enter their results in a logbook and various calculations and graphs were created to show the student what condition the soil was in and what classification their soil could be placed under, ie, clay loam, sandy loam, silty clay, etc.

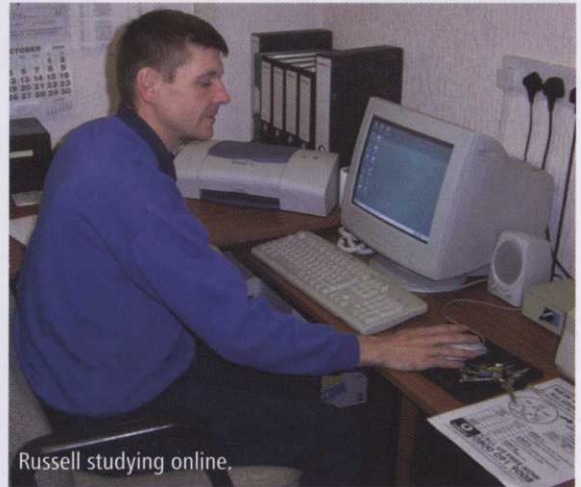
Many calculations were performed to determine the characteristics of the soil from the site chosen by the student.

This was a very in depth study that lasted several months and it enabled the student to understand the soil type they were dealing with at their workplace and its condition.

A mock report on the chosen site's results was then written up under the headings of intended use, structural characteristics and textural associations, water characteristics and drainage, fertiliser regime and nutrient retention, liming programme and management considerations.

Plant biology and physiology was covered by the release of a series of session booklets that could be downloaded and printed for studying purposes, as was the case for each subject of study.

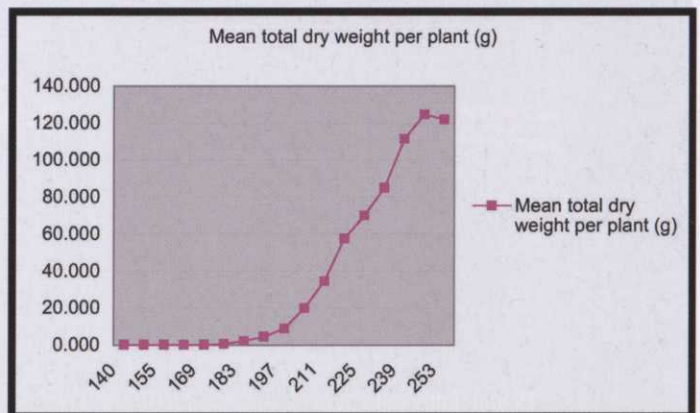
Assignments were set on the subjects of plant form and function, plant



Russell studying online.

genetics, plant cells, plant chemistry and plant physiology. Each assignment was worth 20% of your final mark for the subject.

On the plant form and function subject we studied the external and internal structures of plants that included roots, stems, leaves, flowers and seeds and whether or not the plants were monocotyledons or dicotyledons.



We were asked to draw specimens of plant cells, with drawing definitely not being one of my strong points I managed to get by, after a little encouragement from the subject tutor.

In assignment two we were given a method of determining glucose and stored glucose (starch) levels in a leaf.

From the results that we were given we were asked to plot graphs and were also learnt how to calculate results using spreadsheets.

Some of the topics covered in golf course presentation and management were bunker development and design, facility types, mowing and manicuring and tournament preparation, to name but a few. The tournament preparation topic covered different levels of competition right from local club level through to national level.

I found this topic most interesting and learnt just how much

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preparation goes into organising a top golfing event. The final section that was covered was turfgrass establishment and maintenance.

We learnt about turf quality, establishment of turf from seed, plant growth regulators, thatch development and management, soil compaction and aeration and fertilisation.

The fertilisation session booklet taught the students about the annual nutrient requirements of turfgrass, nitrogen release fertilisers, quick and slow release fertilisers and how they are released into the soil. The booklet explained, for example, that sulphur coated urea (slow release) is manufactured by spraying preheated granules with atomised molten sulphur. The majority of manufacturers seal the sulphur coating with a thin coating of wax.

A conditioner is also added to help the product absorb water, which will eventually break down the product over time after microbes have destroyed the wax coating. The thickness of the coating will determine the length of time the granules take to break down and release nitrogen.

Although I did enjoy the studies of the first year, the summer break was very welcome when the busy cutting season at work was in full swing.

This year's semester one consists of the following topics as shown on the sample homepage.

Cultural practices in Sportsturf.

Ecology, conservation and sportsturf management.

Turfgrass Growth and Development.

Part Six: Slow Release Fertilisers - Coated Slow-Release

The next stage of development in slow release 'technology' was the development of coating slow release granules or pellets of urea or other highly soluble sources of nitrogen (eg ammonium nitrate) with an impermeable coating. The coating prevents the wetting of the nitrogen source so that the release of nitrogen from the product is delayed even further, enhancing the longevity of the product.

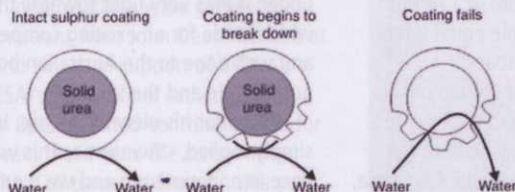
The most common types of coating are Sulphur Coated Urea (SCU) and Resin Coated Urea (RCU).

a) Sulphur Coated Urea (SCU)

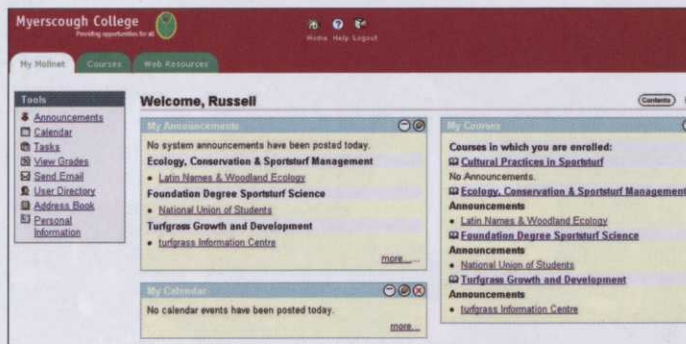
This is manufactured by spraying atomised molten sulphur on preheated urea pellets or granules. The sulphur provides an insoluble barrier that prevents the immediate dissolution of urea. As the sulphur coating cools and solidifies, cracks, pinholes and imperfections develop. In most manufacturing processes, the sulphur coating is then sealed with a thin coating of wax, consisting of a combination of polyethylene and heavy weight oil. A conditioner, composed of diatomaceous earth (calcined diatomic silica material), is added to help reduce stickiness and to make the product hydrophilic (ready to absorb water). The final product contains 30-38% nitrogen, 13-22% sulphur, 2-3% sealant and approximately 2% conditioner.

Microbes will gradually destroy the wax coating of particles and expose the imperfections in the sulphur coating, allowing water to enter and enhance the speed of release of urea. SCU rapidly releases urea when water enters the particle through these cracks and imperfections.

SCU granules release urea into the soil when the sulphur coating finally fails, allowing water to dissolve the urea.



The thickness of sulphur coatings can vary amongst particles and in uniformity on individual particles. The thinness of the coating on any area of a particle will determine the release of nitrogen from it. Others will have a coating so thick and resistant that the urea remains locked in and unavailable for long periods of time.



My homepage from the mollnet system showing this semester's subjects of study, on the right of the page.

The cultural practices in sportsturf session should prove quite interesting as we are at present studying engine types, fuel systems, lubricating systems, cooling systems, ignition systems and electrical systems of most engine types.

For the first assignment in this area of study we have been asked to carry out a critical appraisal of any item of groundcare machinery of our choice. This must include a minimum 2500 word document that can include photographs and drawings.

So far in the Ecology, conservation and sportsturf management section we have covered ecological principles, which includes scope of ecology and ecosystems - both land and aquatic.

It is intended that the students learn how to establish a conservation programme at their place of work. Sand dune ecology on links courses and grassland ecology have been studied as examples of a project that the students are expected to cover, as part of this section that must be in the form of a written document of an advisory brief that will inform the golf club committee to make decisions on conservation issues and an intended plan of action to help them carry these through.

Also, Health & Safety issues are to be covered in the brief.

In August of last year each student on the course was sent a package that contained many grass seed cultivars from several breeding companies.

These separate packets of seed were to be split into two and sown. One sample is to be kept cut at specified height and the other to be left to grow on.

These cool season grasses will then be used to help the students understand how turf grasses develop and grow and study morphological features that will help in identifying different sportsturf grasses.

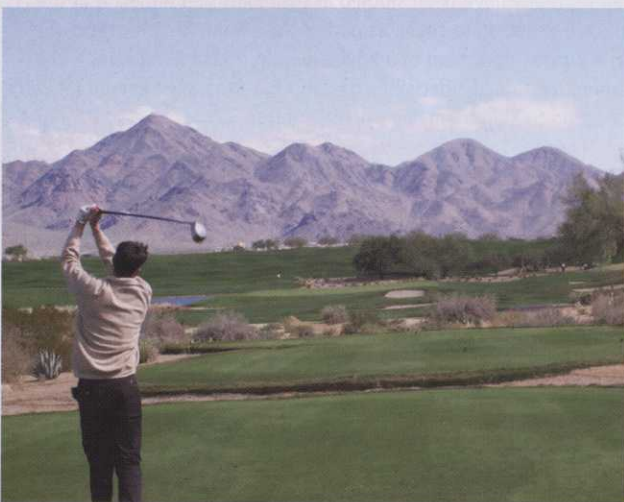
At present we are studying warm season grasses that are best suited to temperatures of between 27 and 3°C. These grasses are widely used across North and South America, West Indies, Asia, Africa and some parts of Europe. We have learnt that the cool season grasses grow best at temperatures of between 16 and 24°C.

I do hope that this has covered the main delivery areas of the subjects and has been of interest to any persons considering studying for a foundation degree qualification as it has so far certainly helped me to understand a lot more about what is happening around me and under my feet at work!

A special mention must go to all the online tutors at Myerscough College who are always willing to help and Ransomes Jacobson for their continued financial support through BIGGA by helping students continue to learn more about our industry.



Winning team from Branxton Golf Club, Australia.



Worfield Golfers and Ireland in US

Worfield Golf Club, from Shropshire, represented Great Britain and Ireland in the World Finals of the 2004 John Deere Team Championship, held in November in Arizona.

31 teams from six nations took part in two days of competition at the world renowned Grayhawk Golf Club, in Scottsdale, playing on the prestigious Raptor and Talon courses.

Worfield's overall score of 114 put them in a very respectable equal tenth place, eleventh on countback.

The John Deere Team Championship title went to the Australian team, who finished on 103, narrowly beating the American team, from Hesperia, California, with a total score of 104. This is the first time a team outside North America has won the Championship.

The competition got off to a great start for the Worfield team - made up of Club Chairman, Trevor Williams; Secretary, William Weaver; Professional, Steve Russell; Course Manager, Mike Fowkes

and John Deere dealer salesman, Pete Worthy, of John Osman Groundcare, Oswestry, Shropshire - with a first day score of 16 under par.

"Then on the second day we were absolutely flying round, and after nine holes found ourselves 12 under," said William.

"Unfortunately the back nine weren't so good and we finished the day two 14 under. It was very tight towards the end, which made for an exciting competition, and well done to the Australian boys who got the title and the trophy."

Asked for his view of the trip, William simply replied, "Awesome. This was a once in a lifetime trip and we were determined to make the most of it. In the end we played six days of golf altogether."

In addition to the two days of practice and two days of competition at the John Deere World Championship, the team managed to squeeze in a day at Troon North on their first day in Arizona and



Left to Right: Howard Storey (John Deere), Eddie Donlon (GCSAI), Pete Worthy (John Osman Groundcare), Mike Fowkes (Worfield Golf Club), Steve Russell (Worfield Golf Club), David Hart (John Deere), William Weaver (Worfield Golf Club), Trevor Williams (Worfield Golf Club) and Andy Campbell (BIGGA).



Gregg Breningmeyer, of John Deere, with Andy Campbell, of BIGGA.

fly the flag for Britain finals

finished their trip with a round at TPC, Scottsdale before, catching the flight home.



The team was accompanied to America by BIGGA Chairman, Andy Campbell, and by Eddie Donlon, President of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of Ireland (GCSAI).

Both organisations were presented with donations from John Deere Limited at the World Finals, in support of BIGGA's and GCSAI's educational activities.

John Deere Limited contributes £25 for every team that enters the competition and, with 426 teams taking part this year in Great Britain and Ireland, this amounted to a total of £10,650.

In Britain, this funding will be used to support BIGGA's Continue to Learn workshops at Harrogate in January, and the Turf Managers' Conference at Staverton Park, Northamptonshire in March.



Worfield Golf Club - William Weaver, Steve Russell, Trevor Williams, Pete Worthy and Mike Fowkes.



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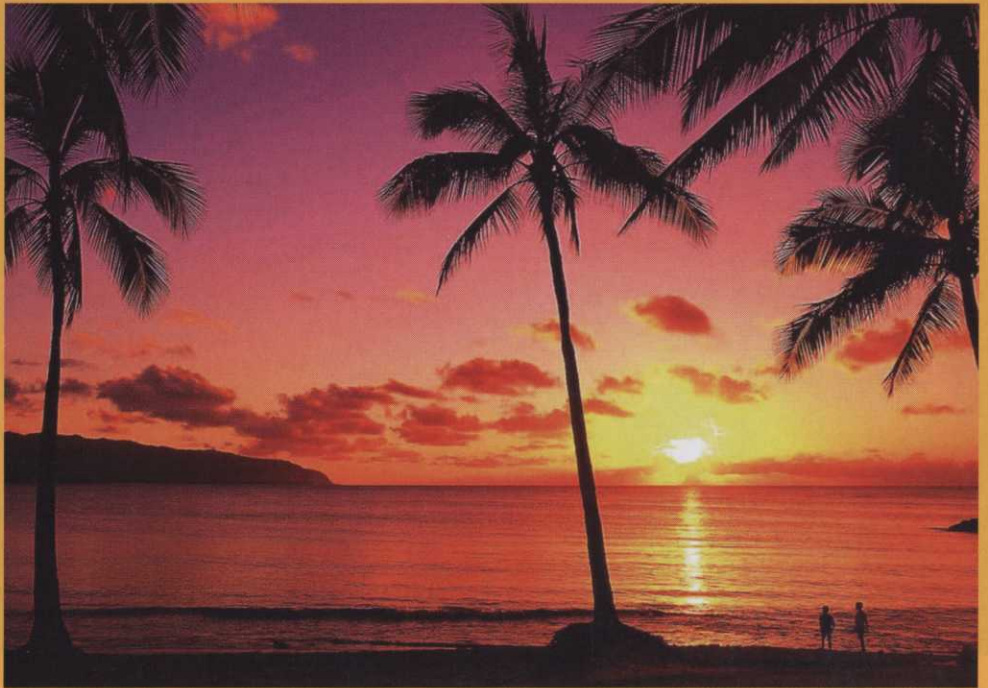
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Simply visit these stands to get the card stamped. Once you have had all 18 holes stamped, fill in your details and post in one of the entry boxes on the BIGGA stand - Q123 or at any exit in Halls A, M or Q.

The winner will be selected at random and announced in the February issue of Greenkeeper International.

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How to Negotiate Your Pay Package



Frank's 'Negotiating Skills' clients include BT.

In the final part of his series Frank Newberry provides a range of useful ideas to help you get the pay package you deserve.

Recently a Course Manager called me, "I have a pay review with my boss tomorrow and I think I'm worth more, what do I say to him?" he said. I told him don't be like Oliver Twist. Don't just say, "More please".

Negotiating is different. It is not about asking, it is about trading. You have something your employer wants, and the value of what is wanted has not yet been agreed.

I recommended a strategy to him and when we spoke later it seemed to have worked. He was very happy with his new pay deal.

Some greenkeepers tell me their employers do not want to negotiate; they just want to 'announce' the new pay rates every year. The thought of a proper negotiation can make people defensive. If this is the case then call it by another name.

Maybe you could call it a 'review meeting'. I know that if one of my people said to me, "I'd like to discuss my future, when would be a good time to meet?" it would really get my attention, especially if I had to wait a day or two before meeting them.

At 'the meeting' begin by sincerely asking 'how are things' for them before saying that you have 'some concerns' you would like to discuss. Indicate that you 'want to stay in the job' but you 'need some clarity on your future prospects'. You can then get a discussion going about your future which could include your future pay and how it is negotiated.

Always go into a pay negotiation with two 'shopping lists'. One list is of items that will cost your employer money (to keep you from looking elsewhere for a job); and one list of 'no cost' or 'low cost' items.

10 Items that cost money

Pay rates – how much you earn.

Pay increases – how much your increase will be.

Cost savings incentives – where you get a share of savings you make.

Company car.

More pay for extra qualifications/responsibility.

Overtime/extra hours rate.

Annual holidays.

Training and development budget, including attending BTME and regional courses.

Travel expenses to get to BTME and regional courses etc.

Private Health Plan/Dental Plan.

10 Items that are 'No cost' or 'Low cost' to your Employer (but are of value to you)

You attend all club management meetings.

You take charge of all greens staff 'hiring and firing' decisions.

You become a member of the group that devises the business plan.

You take charge of all greens budgets.

Contribution to and 'sign-off' of club policy documents.

You visit other clubs to monitor 'best practice'.

You take over and run meetings with members' representatives.

You take all purchasing decisions for greens purchases.

You take charge of the greens staff pay budget.

You take over the club completely for a week at a time (as career development).

Now that you have your shopping lists you will need to find a way to pay for them, so be clear on what are you trading in order to get what you want. For example are you offering:

Cost savings?

Greater productivity?

More leave, in lieu of a pay rise?

Set pay budget that you control?

Greater flexibility, e.g. hours worked?

To take on additional responsibilities?

Long term pay deals in return for loyalty?

To give up some 'perks' in return for cash?

To reduce your overtime rate for a higher basic salary?

Additional vocational qualifications and the better work that comes from them?

In your preparation you will need to anticipate what the employer wants from you and likely reactions. You might consider having what are known as 'positions' i.e.

An optimistic position – the most you think you can get.

A pessimistic position – the least you will accept.

A realistic position – what you think you will actually get.

It is important to ask for more than you want. This is so that your employers can 'knock you down' and feel that they have 'won' the negotiation.

You should move politely from discussing 'concerns' to making tentative proposals at the same meeting, or at another time, to suit both parties. Make as many tentative proposals as you can so that you can 'trade' them later on.

Listen carefully and note reactions and counter proposals. Give understanding nods when you hear your employer's concerns and summarise their views saying that 'you want to get this right'. Once you are clear on both sides' tentative proposals, suggest that you are, or will soon be, ready to offer concrete proposals and make a fair deal.

From this point onwards it is vital to preface every firm proposal with the words 'if you then I', as in 'if you (agree to an increased training budget), then I (will report clear benefits to the club of every training course attended)'.

Tackle 'easy to agree' low cost items first and save the important stuff until later on to give you a chance to trade up at the end. If you can get more 'little ones' you will feel better if you did not get the entire 'big one' (your pay) this time around. Always consider phasing the 'big one' over time, it worked well for the guy who called me.

At the end congratulate the other side on a job well done and immediately write up your understanding of the deal. Finally, remember there is no win or lose in negotiation, just more negotiation next year and the year after.

■ To learn more about negotiating ask Sami Collins at BIGGA HQ to put your name down for the next course. In the meantime if you are visiting BTME drop into the Careers Fair for some coaching.

If you want a negotiating questionnaire to check your approach you can request one at my website, www.franknewberry.com, Good luck with your negotiating!

Performing 'Triage' in Today's Golf Market

The current golf market in the United States offers challenges to those of us that make a living in the golf business. The opening of many new golf courses has created a lot of choices for the slowly growing golfing public. In some cases, too many choices. The fallout is upon us.

In this newly competitive market it behoves those of us in the business of golf to examine how we should respond to these challenges. All of us find ourselves in the business of 'golf triage'. Just like in medical practice, those of us who successfully perform triage will be the ones that survive.

Golf courses in the Midwestern United States have seen a steady decline in their play from peaks of 50,000 rounds a year in the mid-Nineties to the 35,000 – 40,000 range today. Golf course operators are searching for answers. They are collectively asking themselves what they need to do to return to the glory years.

The natural reaction might be to reduce the operational costs of the golf course. 'Cutting operational costs' might suggest cutting staff or cutting budgets, which means reducing services, or reducing the quality of the golf course. This may be very tempting, but I offer adamant, DON'T DO IT, to those considering this path. In a highly competitive golf course market, service and quality are even more important than ever.

Golf courses may be feeling the crunch for a variety of reasons. The first responder on the scene of a struggling golf course must perform triage and ascertain the reasons behind a drop in play. From a golf course architect's perspective the following glaring issues must be considered in the triage assessment:

Infrastructure

In the Midwestern United States, successful golf fiscal years are made or broken by weekend play. Poor weather on several key weekends can ruin a season. Very little money is ever made when the golf course is closed.

The bad news is that Donald Ross himself couldn't design a weatherproof golf course. Nonetheless, the infrastructure and design of the golf course directly impacts on the operator's ability to get golfers back on the golf course after bad weather.

Drainage improvements, grading to improve surface drainage and installation of cart paths are all capital improvements that will enhance the ability of the golf course to recover. Adding subsurface drainage suggests \$500,000 – \$1,000,000 in renovation. Regrading and constructing drainage ponds and renovating greens and tees suggests between one to three million in renovation costs. Adding a cart path to establish a close-to-full-length golf course cart path system could range between \$100,000 - \$250,000.

Turf Quality/Maintenance

The perceived quality of the golf course is most directly affected by maintenance. Irrigation, though technically infrastructure, is the backbone of the maintenance of the golf course and the superintendent's ability to maintain quality turf. From a turf management and labour allocation standpoint an



*Continue
to learn*

outdated irrigation system is a losing proposition. Triage analysis: take the bitter economic pill upfront to save the patient. A new irrigation system costs \$450,000 – \$1.2 million.

Maintenance headaches such as poorly drained bunkers, maintaining steep slopes, and tree/turf conflicts need to be eliminated. An assessment of labour allocation to problem areas will quickly suggest where changes should be made. Generally a minor upfront cost will be more than offset by the saved labour costs from eliminating these problems.

Opportunities may exist to reduce maintenance. Many golf courses could eliminate 10 – 20 acres from their mowing operation. Fescue or native grasses can be planted as a complement to the manicured turf areas. Done properly, natural areas can enhance the look of a golf course such as at Shinnecock Hills Golf Club and The Ocean Course at Kiawah Island. Done improperly, the golfing public sees un-maintained weed patches.

CASE STUDY PROJECT

Highland Park Golf Course is an 18-hole course owned and managed by the City of St. Paul, Minnesota. The golf course opened in 1927. It was a parkland style golf course with small greens and tees. There were major drainage issues. The outstanding physical characteristic of the golf course was the significant number of mature deciduous trees on the property.

The course is located in the Highland Park neighbourhood of St. Paul. The neighbourhood takes a keen interest in the value of the forested green space that the golf course provides.

A key landmark at the Highland Park Golf Course is the clubhouse. Constructed in 1929, the building was designed by Clarence Wigington, the first licensed African American architect in Minnesota. Mr. Wigington was an employee of the City of St. Paul from 1915 – 1949.

Background to improvements

Highland Park Golf Course had three major issues:

- Major drainage problems throughout the entire northwest portion of the course.
- A small practice range.
- Poor operations from the historic clubhouse.

Design solution

As a result of its triage process, which involved a golf committee that included the golfing public, Highland Park residents, city staff and the golf course architects, the City of St. Paul elected to take bold action to resolve their golf course issues. The redesign of the course allowed the City of St. Paul to accomplish the following:

- Develop a safe practice range that grew from 15 practice stations to 45 in number.
- Eliminate drainage problems with the construction of nine ponds and major subsurface drainage installation.
- Increase green size from 4,230sq ft average to 5,800sq ft average.
- Increase overall tee size by 36,000sq ft.
- Increase golf course yardage from 6,200 yards to 6,600 yards.
- Re-establish the historic clubhouse as the centre of golf course operations with visibility of 1 and 10 tees and 9 and 18 greens.
- Upgrade the turf on greens, tees and fairways.

Paul Miller, from Woodbury, Minnesota, USA, writes about current golf issues from his perspective as a golf course architect.



Count on it.

- Install a new irrigation system.
- Upgrade the playing challenge with added sand bunkers and strategic golf course design.
- Provide multiple tees that allow the course to be played at varying playing lengths.
- Use the existing trees as dramatic features on newly routed golf holes while removing poor quality trees that were aesthetic and maintenance headaches.

Drainage

The drainage improvements at Highland Park resulted from a hydrology study that indicated a high level of ground water in the area downhill from two leaking city water tanks. The design solution was to construct a series of 10 interconnected ponds that drain by gravity to the lowest pond that overflows into the city storm sewer. In a double-the-bang-for-your-buck solution, the irrigation system is connected to the ponds to use the excess groundwater as an irrigation source.

Greens

The greens were designed to provide maximum pin settings and variety of challenge at their average of 5,500sq ft. The greens have improved bentgrass species. Drainage was installed at 20 feet on centre. All 18 greens were rebuilt with 12in of USGA greensmix.

Tees

All the tees were rebuilt with 4in of USGA greensmix. The tees were designed to provide challenge at a variety of playing lengths for the golf course. The tees were sized to allow improved maintenance. The tee space for each golf hole averages 5,200sq ft. This is an increase of 2,000sq ft of tee space per golf hole.

Bunkers

38 new bunkers were constructed to update the playing challenge at Highland. The bunker square footage increased from 14,000sq ft to 69,000sq ft. The new bunkers provide playing cues for tee shots and add strategy to the approach shots.

Low Maintenance Areas

Almost eight acres on the golf course will be designated to low maintenance fescue areas. The natural areas will complement the features of the golf course.

Practice Range

An exciting new practice range is part of the improvements at Highland National. The range will be a major revenue producer. The practice range has



45 practice stations. It is serviced by its own parking lot so that golfers not playing golf can easily access the range. Two practice greens were constructed that double the amount of practice putting green area.

Clubhouse

The new routing takes advantage of the historical clubhouse. Hole 18, a new par 4, plays directly towards the clubhouse. A new clubhouse veranda takes advantage of a view into the green of Hole 18. A future clubhouse renovation will update the interior of the clubhouse for golf course operations.

Summary

The major goal for the Highland Park renovation was to develop a championship level golf course that will be the jewel of the City of St. Paul's golf offerings. To achieve this aim, the City of St. Paul was willing to expend the money and labour resources to accomplish this objective.

The resulting golf course will significantly update the challenge of the golf course, improve the infrastructure and improve the quality of the turf. The new golf course routing, the improved greens, tees and bunkers and the expanded practice facility should allow the newly dubbed 'Highland National Golf Course' to forcefully secure its position in the competitive golf course market that we in the United States golf course industry find to be the reality in 2005.

Those of us in the golf triage business have a vested interest in the results. Here's to a 'healthy' golf market in 2005!





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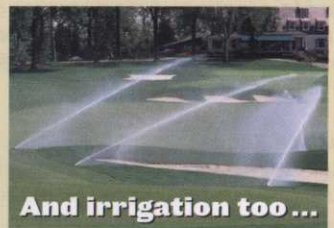
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Recycling - The Proof is in the Product



INSET: The driving range prior to the use of a recycled plastic drainage system and, main picture, afterwards showing the dramatic results when the drainage system was introduced.

Bronnie Allen, Materials Sector Manager (Glass) at WRAP, explains what steps the organisation is taking to encourage greenkeepers to make the switch to recycled products.



We are all bombarded with advertising slogans offering 'a money back guarantee' or 'a free home trial' - tactics aimed at persuading people to try different products. However, unless consumers have had a strong recommendation from their peers, they are unlikely to make a firm commitment to switch. It is no different in the greenkeeping industry.

With so many products available, it can be tempting to just stick with what you know. However, doing so means that greenkeepers are not taking the opportunity to purchase recycled products that can deliver excellent performance benefits.

Looking around a golf course, there are many areas where recycled products can be used – bunker sand, top dressing, divot repairs, mulch, signage and temporary tees to name but a few.

Recycled products, made from everyday items such as glass, plastic, wood and organic material, are an excellent way for golf courses to demonstrate their environmental credentials without compromising performance characteristics or quality.

In fact, in many cases, recycled products have been found to perform better than traditional materials in comparative tests.

To spread understanding about the opportunities and benefits offered by recycled products, WRAP (the Waste & Resources Action Programme) has been working with a number of key industry bodies, such as BIGGA, to ensure that the facts rather than the myths about recycled products are reaching greenkeepers and Course Managers.

Spreading the word with BIGGA

During 2004, WRAP contributed to a series of regional environmental seminars, which have been an excellent way for BIGGA members to find out more about the range of recycled products available, as well as a way of speaking directly to WRAP about the work they are doing. Feedback from the seminars has been very positive.

WRAP also co-sponsored the 2004 BIGGA Golf Environment competition. The standard of competition entries proved that environmental issues are very important to many clubs and WRAP sends its congratulations to all the winners.

Over the next 12 months, WRAP will continue to work closely with BIGGA and its members in a drive to spread the word about recycled products.

To give greenkeepers the opportunity to see many of these recycled products for themselves, and get a feel for the benefits they can provide, WRAP is also exhibiting at the BTME Exhibition in January.



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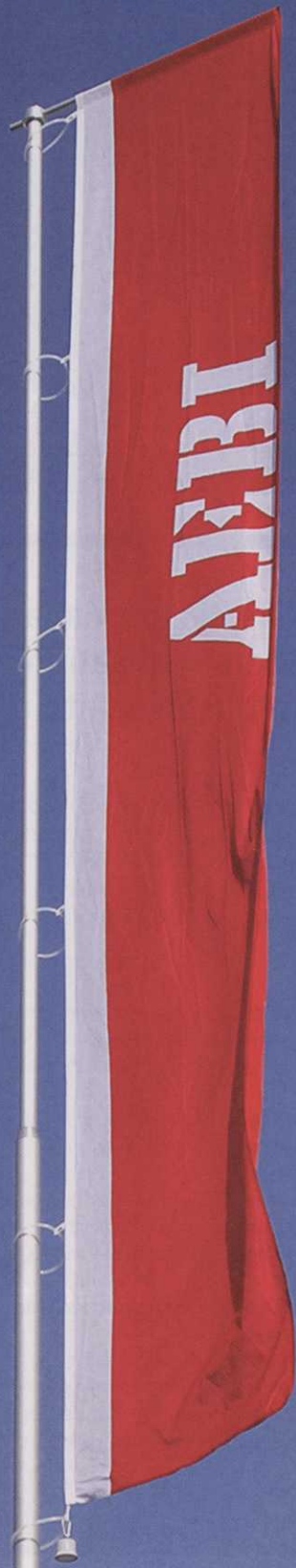
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Delivering tangible benefits

Proof of performance is critical to encouraging people to switch to recycled products and WRAP has been working closely with the Sports Turf Research Institute (STRI) and The R&A to demonstrate exactly how these products can bring real benefits.

STRI – trials of processed sand

In conjunction with WRAP, the STRI is currently undertaking trials comparing processed sand (derived from recycled glass) with conventional sand. To date, the findings have been excellent, showing that processed sand provides a good alternative to conventional sand for use in bunkers.

The natural angularity of the processed sand means it rests at a steeper angle, provides a firmer underfoot stability and reduced golf ball plugging on impact than many conventional sands. The second phase of trials is currently underway, testing a variety of mixes of processed sand with conventional sand for use in bunkers.

Commenting on the latest phase of the trials, Andrew Owen, Soil Scientist at STRI said, "By combining the slightly more angular grains of the processed sand with the paler coloured conventional sands, we should produce mixes which can still provide some performance benefits over many conventional sands, but have a toned down colour.

"The results from all the trials of processed sand for use in bunkers have been very promising and the obvious next phase of work should involve clubs incorporating processed sand on their courses.

"A relatively easy option for greenkeepers who wish to trial processed sand would be to try some in a practice bunker in the first instance – something which a number of golf clubs have already expressed an interest in. This way greenkeepers can get immediate feedback from their members without changing any aspect of their main playing course."

The STRI trials are due to be completed by March 2005 and the full results will be available from WRAP and STRI shortly after.

Best Practice Guidelines from The R&A

In early 2004, The R&A launched a website offering best practice guidelines for all aspects of golf course management and development. This website is soon to be updated with information from WRAP regarding the use of recycled products around the golf course.

The guidelines, www.bestcourseforgolf.org, have received very positive feedback from users and more than 850 clubs have registered from 72 different countries.

Steve Isaac, Assistant Director of Golf Course Management for The R&A, says, "The website provides the opportunity for clubs across the world to compare their own operations against the basic principles of best practice covering course, clubhouse and environmental management.

"Although many clubs already have their own environmental policies, these guidelines will help them to focus on what perhaps is missing. They are also making clubs sit up and take note of the environmental responsibilities they have.

"Making the decision to purchase recycled products is just one of the many areas where clubs can make a difference. As with any product, we would recommend a thorough investigation into the performance benefits. If clubs are satisfied with the quality and fitness for purpose, then environmental benefit should swing the decision in favour of using the recycled product, provided that the cost differential is within budget.

"Finally, seeing is believing. We encourage any greenkeeper considering making the switch to visit other clubs and share experiences of using recycled products."

Update from WRAP

As well as funding research and working with industry bodies, each of WRAP's material programmes is involved in activities designed to promote the availability and performance benefits of recycled products.



BAS PAS 100 Compost provides many nutritional benefits when spread as a top dressing on the fairways.



Processed sand, which is derived from recycled glass, is suitable for use in bunkers providing firmer underfoot conditions.

Compost - Product trials

WRAP has been instrumental in helping users to see for themselves the benefits of using composted products through demonstration trials. The most recent of these centres on the use of BSI PAS 100 composted material in the maintenance of sports and amenity turf grass.

The aim of the trials is to evaluate the performance of recycled compost against the materials currently being used. The trials will provide robust performance data to potential end users ensuring that confidence can be placed in the product.

Trials will be commencing in early 2005 and run through to October 2005, and will incorporate site visits so that greenkeepers can see for themselves how the compost is performing. When applied to a golf course, compost can provide many benefits such as improved regrowth in divots on tees and fairways and the suppression of turf diseases.

'Recycled wood - working wonders'

Making the switch to recycled products can be very easy to implement and a new campaign launched by WRAP will be promoting the benefits of using recycled woodchip in a variety of landscaping applications.

It is perfect for landscaping given its low maintenance requirements and ability to suppress weeds. For courses that have challenging steep inclines, the woodchip adheres effectively to slopes as it knits together well.

This is also beneficial for courses that are exposed to windy conditions, as the woodchip is not blown away as easily as traditional surfacing materials. The material also has the benefit of not sticking to the spikes of golf shoes.

Blending into the surrounding environment is a key criteria for new and existing golf courses. Recycled woodchip can help with this too, as it is available in a variety of colours, including light natural shades that highlight plant foliage.

Specialist products from recycled plastics

Recycled plastic can be used for a number of different golf course applications such as winter tees or artificial tees, signage and walkways and drainage products. Water logging can be a common problem on golf courses, especially within golf bunkers or along path edges.

One recycled plastic product that has been used very successfully on approximately 70 golf courses, including Loch Lomond and Royal Dublin, is Aquadyne. The recycled plastic acts as a capillary and effectively soaks up the water before releasing it gradually into drainage channels.

Minimum disruption to players is a key consideration for greenkeepers using a new product. These recycled plastic drainage products are very easy to install, can be used on small areas and do not require heavy machinery.

Recycled plastic can also be used to make other drainage products for the golf course, such as twin-walled drainage pipes from Delleve, which take advantage of the lightweight and robust nature of recycled plastic.

Right product, right time

There are many exciting updates to come from WRAP over the coming year and it is a great time for greenkeepers to think about making the switch to recycled products.

For further information about the many products available and the results of trials, please visit the WRAP website, www.wrap.org.uk.

The latest addition to the website will be the re-launched Glass pages which will feature pages on sports turf applications including golf course products and case studies.

THE KEYS TO BETTER TEES

STRI

Alistair Beggs, STRI Northern Area Manager, looks at the key points to practice to ensure year round healthy, playable tees.

Great strides have been made over the last 20 years improving the general quality of golf courses throughout the UK. Quite rightly most of the emphasis has been placed on putting greens.

Here, the average height of cut has halved in this period and the average frequency of cut has quadrupled or more. Nutritional programmes receive great attention, irrigation systems are usually all encompassing and aeration is carried out in a myriad of forms. Unfortunately the same progress has not been made on tees. Little has changed with the way we manage tees, apart from mowing units being better and more efficient than they were.

We still mow twice per week at most, we don't scarify enough, we don't top dress enough, we don't aerate enough and we don't divot enough. Furthermore, some clubs expect the same tees to deliver high standards all year round when for four or five months there is no turf growth at all.

Most tees have no more time devoted to their management than they did twenty years ago. If we want the condition of our tees to improve in line with the greens then larger staff complements or more efficient use of existing resources must be considered.

A great many clubs have spent fortunes in recent years improving and enlarging tees only to see them fall into rack and ruin when the maintenance programme can't deliver the results the membership expects. The result is predictable—bigger, not better tees!! Good construction is, of course, very important but money has to be spent on the day-to-day retention of these higher standards if tees are to improve in the longer term.

I see so many golf courses with good greens but whose tees are uneven, poorly aligned, contaminated with clumps of coarse perennial ryegrass, shaded, and sometimes soft and poorly drained as well. Furthermore these tees often exhibit weak and worn entry and exit points exacerbated by poor design and the absence of adequate path integration.

If we are looking to improve the overall standard of tees we must first of all identify what makes a good tee. There are certain attributes that all the best teeing surfaces offer and they can be summarised as follows:—

Adequate Size and Shape—par 3 tees should be approximately 400 m² in size, with par 4 and par 5 tees at least 350 m². The tees should be shaped to accommodate mowing with a ride-on unit. This has implications for the edges and bankings of the tee as well as the surface itself.

Good Drainage—effective control of organic matter and thatch development is vital. Push up tees might need additional drainage or need to be reconstructed depending on prevailing circumstances.

Excellent Surface Levels—creating a level surface through reconstruction is relatively easy. Maintaining high standards is difficult but so important to the enjoyment of the game. It is also important for spreading wear and tear. No golfer tees the ball on an uneven area!

Appropriate Botanical Composition—the finer grasses are usually easier to manage. They grow more slowly, require less fertiliser and do not need to be mown or scarified as regularly. If tees are big enough the wear tolerance they give should be more than adequate.

Good Accessibility—multiple entrance and exit points linked to purpose built pathways should be the aim, particularly on heavier soils.

Good Aspect and Location—however attractive they may look, tees that are shaded by surrounding woodland where the passage of air is restricted provide poor sites for grass growth. Reduced evapotranspiration and photosynthesis lead to weakened growth and poor wear tolerance in such situations.

Alignment—some tees are intentionally misaligned, others become misaligned through changes in mowing patterns or the development of adjacent trees. Realignment can sometimes be facilitated with the mower alone. On other occasions it needs to be incorporated into the reconstruction process.

A Sound Maintenance Programme—it is impossible to produce good tees without a sound maintenance programme, even if all the above issues are adhered to.

The last point is one of the most important but is frequently the least attended to. What does sound maintenance mean and what does it encompass?

The key issues can be summarised as follows:—

Surface Level Perfection - the development and retention of good surface levels is perhaps the primary aim of tee management. In order to achieve success, the tee must be large enough and sufficiently well drained to cope with prolonged wet periods of weather.

Surface preparation should then revolve around top dressing at least twice per year (spring and autumn) with an approved product and divoting once per week through the main playing season. Divoting should take place with a material similar to the top dressing, although in certain instances the organic matter content will be greater to aid binding and prevent blow-out.

Seed (which should mirror botanical objectives) should be integrated with the divot mix to allow surface recovery through the season. Divoting should be followed by switching to ensure even distribution of applied material. If this important task is omitted, poor divoting can actually contribute to a loss of levels.

Nutrition - basic requirements are for nitrogen only, particularly on soil-



based surfaces. On more modern free-draining sand-based profiles, soil testing may occasionally indicate the need for potassium but rarely phosphate. Nitrogen rates will vary with sward composition, with perennial ryegrass swards more hungry than traditional bents and fescues.

Irrigation - I would argue that it is almost more important to have automatic pop-up irrigation to tees these days than it is to have it to greens. If pop-ups are not available for greens irrigation the management crew irrigate by hand and, although it is time consuming, results are often very good. If pop-ups are not available on tees, the surfaces rarely receive the attention they deserve in droughty conditions.

The turf is often in a stressed condition anyway because of heavy playing levels and insufficient irrigation can be the final straw. The absence of pop-ups on tees also limits divot recovery during the summer season. This can be the difference between well grassed, wear-tolerant, level platforms and scarred, uneven and weed-ridden surfaces.

Mowing and Scarification - we do too little of both on many sites. Mowing frequencies at most clubs are stuck at twice per week. This may be sufficient on links and heathland sites where the finer grasses grow quite slowly.

However on heavier soils or where ryegrasses contribute to the sward (intentionally or unintentionally) frequencies really need to be increased to three times per week at the height of the growing season. As for mowing heights, you should be aiming for between 6 and 8 mm.

The height of cut will be determined by how good your surface levels are. Level tees can be mown tighter and are undoubtedly more pleasurable to play from. Scarification should be carried out at least twice per year (spring and autumn) as a precursor to topdressing.

More regular treatments may be necessary on ryegrass or ryegrass-containing swards but these must be balanced with the inevitable removal of seed applied during the divoting process.

Aeration - routine aeration on well sized, well constructed and well located tees should merely comprise some spring and summer solid tining, some autumn hollow coring (to retain firmness and remove thatch) and some winter slitting. Remedial aeration will probably be necessary at some time on tees that do not fulfil the above criteria. This can take many forms.

Resting - the best summer tees always get a rest in the winter. There are very few clubs (I can think of only one) that produce high quality summer tees playing on them throughout the year. To rest effectively, you must have a reasonable winter alternative.

If space exists, always go for natural turf, although there are now some good artificial turf types, which can be considered on sites where space is restricted. Make sure your winter tees are well located and accessible. Where possible, ensure that their location (in front of, to the side of or even behind existing tees) changes landing areas on fairways to give them a rest too!

Also ensure where possible that they are linked with paths and, most importantly, that they are well sized, well drained and well irrigated (you will be renovating these tees in the spring—no water and seed will die in summer droughts!).

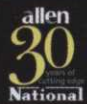
Much of our rainfall occurs in the autumn, winter and spring months so winter tees must perform, as well, if not better than, the summer tees. Get your winter course measured so a standard scratch score can be allocated to it. You can then play winter competitions from it. This will make the change in the autumn more palatable to the members.

Renovation Cycles - summer tees need to be renovated sufficiently early in the autumn to get recovery from seed before winter. The basic aim should be to restore surface levels, alleviate surface compaction and return a full cover of grass by Christmas. To achieve these objectives, renovation work must be completed by the end of October. In the spring, winter tees should be renovated in the same way.

Weed and Worm Control - there is really no excuse for weed infestation on modern tees. If the management programme is appropriate, a healthy sward fights weed invasion very well. If weeds do develop, selective herbicides are able to eradicate most of the culprits. Worm control is a little more difficult.

The loss of materials like chlordane means that modern-day worm control must focus on cultural methods. Organic matter regulation and surface acidification are two methods that work well. Carbendazim also gives some relief even though its benefits are relatively short lived.

Much of the above is commonsense but the frustrating thing is most clubs don't implement it for a host of reasons. Focus on providing the correct staffing levels for your course and give your staff the equipment to manage it. Then and only then will we see many of these routine treatments practiced regularly enough to make a difference to our tees. They are an important part of the game - golf is hard enough without the starting point contributing to our downfall!



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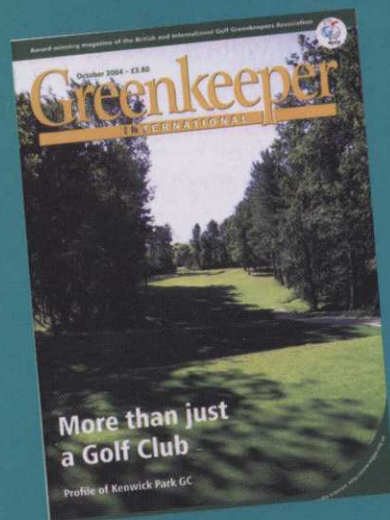
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species and environments and complement existing filtration systems.

There are two versions, full size AquaMats for larger ponds (500 gallons and up) and AquaMats Minis for ornamental ponds, water gardens and koi ponds.

AquaMats have bioengineered surfaces that radically increase the beneficial biological activity of ornamental ponds and water gardens. They are environmentally friendly, manufactured from food-grade polymers with no binders or phthalates, which means no harmful chemicals are leached into the water.

AquaMats don't require cleaning as they are cleaned by the 'grazing' of pond fish (although they can be hand cleaned at the pond side).

At the end of their useful life, they are completely recyclable.

For further information Tel: 0117 9088841

LOW COST WEATHER STATION



With efficient water management being a vital issue for greenkeepers currently, manufacturer of irrigation equipment Rain Bird will reveal their latest Weather Station WS PRO LT at BTME.

"This weather station is very affordable allowing all golf clubs to eliminate unnecessary watering," says Victor Jamieson, Regional Manager for Northern Europe. "Costs can be reduced dramatically, especially where mains water is used either solely or as a back-up."

Designed to be used with Rain Bird central control systems the evapotranspiration (ET) rates

are automatically downloaded from the environmental data supplied by the weather station. Their full sensor array provides accurate measurements of air temperature, wind speed, solar radiation, wind direction, relative humidity, rainfall and barometric pressure.

When an irrigation program is run off ET, having taken into consideration any rainfall the central automatically calculates new station run times to apply only the amount of water lost through evaporation and transpiration.

With changing weather patterns, data reports can be generated to show current and past weather conditions by the hour, day, week, month or year.

For further information Tel: 01273 891326

NEW GREENTEC GRANULE

Headland have launched a new Greentec fine turf fertiliser, which will be on show at BTME.

A homogenous granule (average 1mm diameter), the new formulation of 6+5+18 is designed to replace the existing 6+4+12 product, and, like the rest of the Greentec range, contains all the turf nutrients in one granule, rather than as a blend of individual particles. The result is more uniform coverage across fine turf surfaces.

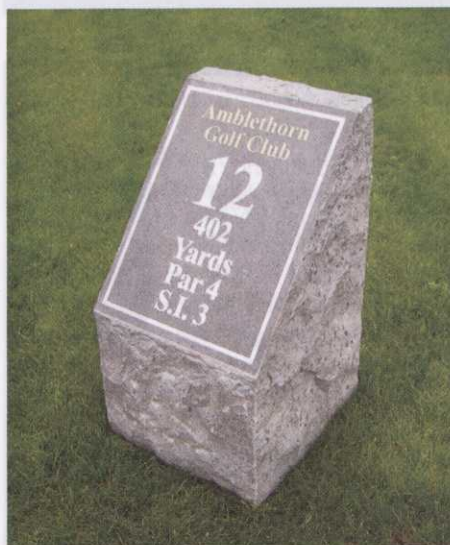
The product's increased potassium content aids winter hardiness, helping reduce stress and the likelihood of disease, as well as improving turf vigour and colour. The inclusion of potassium nitrate means that Greentec 6+5+18 is lower in sulphur, which contributes to "Black Layer" in anaerobic soils.

Potassium nitrate also provides an immediately available source

of nitrogen giving a plant response even under cooler temperatures. For this reason, the new Greentec 6+5+18 is not only ideal as an autumn feed, but can also be applied in early spring.

Designed for all fine turf areas, golf and bowling greens, as well as croquet lawns, Greentec 6+5+18 can also be applied to golf tees, surrounds and approaches plus other close cut turf.

The product's 4% iron and 1% magnesium aids leaf hardness and improves winter colour. For more information Tel: 01223 597834



GOLF TEE SIGNS UNVEIL NEW RANGE

Golf Tee Signs will be launching a number of new products at BTME 2005 including, The Lakes Range, a selection of unique 'Granite only' Tee Signs, and new additions to the Sherwood Range of Hardwood posts and frames.

An addition to the Golf Tee Signs range of Golf Course signage is The Lakes range of Granite Tee signs, consisting of three new products.

The Kendal, an upright Granite boulder, The Keswick, a round Granite boulder, and The Askam, an angled Granite pedestal. These new signs are produced entirely from natural Granite and bring a new meaning to the phrase 'maintenance free signage'.

The new signs blend in naturally with their environment, while withstanding the harshest

weather conditions, to become an integral part of the surrounding landscape.

They will be of particular interest to golf courses that are located in exposed areas and/or in coastal regions. Another benefit, particularly to those courses that get the odd un-welcome visitor, is that they are vandal and theft resistant.

Also on display will be the latest new products which have been added to the Sherwood Range, using the finest quality hardwood. These include Twin and Links posts with granite plates, and a new range of premier outdoor hardwood furniture featuring chairs and tables with hexagonal Granite inserts showing the Club's logo.

For further information Tel: 01422 345990



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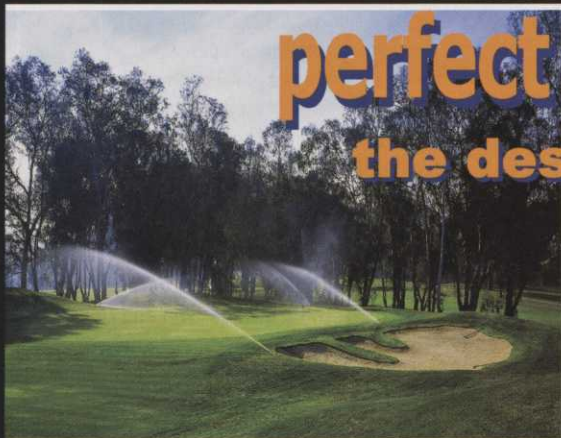
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The AFT Sandbander quickly installs 25mm wide drainage slits, filling them at the same time with consolidated sand up to a depth of 250mm. The unique blade design and fast oscillation create minimal heave and permit even moist sand to be used.

The machine is the ideal tool to quickly drain excess surface water to free draining subsoil or existing drainage system. Using sand rather than gravel ensures that essential moisture levels are retained in the root zones and that no harmful spills can damage mowers or players.

Designed for tractors from 20HP, it can safely work on sensitive areas like golf greens. If required the Sandbander can also be used with gravel or similar backfilling materials.

For further information Tel: 01787 311811



KRISTAL KLEAR APPROACH TO CLEAN WATER

Whether recreational or functional, watercourses have great potential to provide valuable wildlife and visual features.

A constant problem encountered with regard to their management is an effective method of maintaining a healthy and diverse aquatic environment, focusing on algae-free surfaces and control of anaerobic sub-surface conditions.

In the majority of cases a combination of minimal aeration and a build up of de-oxygenating organic sediment results in a stagnant, lifeless water feature. Kristal Klear aerators, created by Trevor Smith Golf Consultancy, work on the basic principle of facilitating a sustainable source of oxygen within the entire watercourse.

Regardless of the size and depth of the feature, Kristal Klear systems can be tailor made to your precise requirements. A feature of the Kristal Klear system is that it can be run off your existing

irrigation system, or stand alone with its own integrated pump.

More than ever it is imperative to promote environmentally responsible management techniques. They are pioneering a move away from short term chemical solutions that treat only the symptoms, by targeting the underlying cause of most water management issues in a way that is environmentally accountable.

The Kristal Klear diffusion aeration system combines pressurised water with oxygen delivered at the lake bottom creating large volumes of air bubbles, which rise bringing the bottom water to the surface.

The diffusers are especially designed to produce bubbles that circulate water to the surface as it picks up oxygen. The diffuser is placed on the bottom of the pond (preferably in the deepest water).

For further information Tel: 01202 824966

TURGOR TOUGHENS TURF

Following rigorous trials on some of the world's busiest winter sports pitches, Floratine have launch Turgor, the company's new protective silicon product, onto the golf market.

Aimed specifically at Creeping Bent greens grasses, Turgor increases the plant's ability to withstand wear, hastens recovery, and reduces pitch marks and the likelihood of devoting.

David Snowden, European Technical Manager for the company, says that Turgor is the only form of silicon that is absorbed through the leaf, and therefore mobile throughout the plant, rather than coating the surface.

"For this reason, Turgor strengthens the plant from the inside," he explains, "not only enabling it to withstand the wear and tear of play, but also rendering the sward less prone to disease."

"We've tested the product at Rasunda, Sweden's National Stadium during the football season, and conditions don't get much tougher than that."

Turgor comes in 2 x 10 litre cans, and for peak protection should be applied every one to two weeks during the growing season. The alternative is to apply two to three days before special events or tournaments. For further information Tel: 01765 658021

HUNTER GRINDERS LOOK TO THE STARS

The Jupiter ATI Relief/Spin Grinder with fully integrated guarding system will be on display at BTME 2005.

The Jupiter ATI combines the solid stability of a cast iron bed, with precision relief grinding for accuracy second to none. The ATI is fully automatic, using a computer programme that allows the operator to leave the grinder unattended while other tasks are completed.

The fully integrated guard is fitted with micro switches which instantly shut off the machine if any of the guard panels are removed.

Speed is often mentioned when looking at short term gains and when set up the ATI will spin grind as quickly as any other machine. However, the long term benefits of having a Hunter Grinder come into play once the mower units are back on the course.

The Jupiter ATI will return all cylinders and bottom blades back to the manufacturer's specification and keep them on cut for up to four times longer than any other method of grinding.

For further information Tel: 01207 270316



Winter maintenance – getting

James de Havilland provides some excellent advice on making the most of your winter maintenance.

Late autumn will see a flurry of mail from dealers advising of their special out of season service deals. Have your mowers and other items of kit serviced during the winter months and save money.

On the surface, this may seem like a little bit of flannel, but if you are not taking advantage of out of season service deals, you are missing out.

Although modern equipment may well be reliable and boost productivity, it still needs looking after. Routine servicing is one thing, and possibly it may remain within the scope of an in-house workshop. But there are some items of kit that can make it difficult to stray from filter and oil changes. Anything else may need the services of a third party.

This is not because equipment, such as a modern fairway mower, is harder to work on. It is more to do with the increasing use of electronics and advanced engine management systems. In many cases, diagnostic checks and software tweaks can only be carried out by trained dealer personnel.

Of course this does not mean it is time to out source all machinery maintenance to equipment suppliers. Although it is tempting to suggest a good winter service and mid-season check will be enough to see a mower go through a season, the reality is somewhat different.

Modern equipment will have to earn its keep on a golf course, and as a result it may well need more care than fixed service intervals can offer. The key is to get a balance, exploiting dealer facilities when they are at their least expensive and using in-house facilities as much as possible to reduce overall costs.

With a fairway mower as an example, routine greasing and keeping the reels good and sharp are obvious priorities. Add a regime that includes cleaning after every use, with a good clean once a week. It is surprising how reliability can be increased when a strict cleaning programme is introduced.

This is not because a clean machine suddenly becomes more reliable. It is simply because routine cleaning helps workshop personnel spot potential problems. The odd loose nut, chafing hose or weeping coupling can go unnoticed if buried under a coating of dried on clippings.


So what has this got to do with winter maintenance? In itself, not a great deal. But what is clear is that planned maintenance is considerably cheaper than ad-hoc repairs. So, only the bravest Course Manager would forgo at least some in-house workshop facilities.

Relying on a third party for every element of machinery repair and maintenance is a risk too far. The key is getting the balance right. Having high capital cost equipment, such as ride-on mowers, given a complete winter service by the supplying dealer makes a great deal of sense.

Maintenance deals are of course increasingly wrapped into purchasing packages and these can make a great deal of sense when it comes to the care of more complex kit, but only if the true costs are properly thought through.

In some instances, it can pay to negotiate a separate maintenance package with a dealer supplying certain bits of kit, such as mowers. Out of season service deals sometimes make a 'bolt-on' service package better than one wrapped into a full lease hire, or similar, purchase plan. On-site mid-season visits to give a mower a service are also worth building into a deal.

Although it is tempting to save a few pounds by cutting a few corners on servicing, well maintained kit tends to be trouble free. For some,



Before signing on the dotted line for a new item of critical kit, take the time to visit the supplying dealer's workshop and parts store. The best tees, greens and fairway mowers are only as good as the people who look after them.

however, this talk of third party servicing is seen as something of a retrograde step. Being able to carry out all routine servicing in-house can save time and money, particularly where trained workshop personnel 'know' the demands placed on a given item of kit.

A modern ride-on fairway mower remains a complex item of equipment, but its servicing needs will not necessarily tax the skills of a fitter who has been working on this type of mower for years. The point, however, is that the number of golf clubs that can support workshop personnel with the necessary experience to look after more advanced kit is limited.

As manufacturers and supplying dealers are increasingly linking in a maintenance package to various sales initiatives, it also follows that for many clubs the need to justify full time workshop personnel also diminishes.

For both manufacturers and dealers it makes sound business sense to ensure a given item of kit is serviced using OEM replacement parts, and it is for this reason that many new equipment sales often come linked to attractive maintenance packages.

the best deal on equipment



A good service contract will include mid-season checks. In-house workshop staff should be involved when considering maintenance packages. The key is getting a good balance between in-house routine maintenance and dealer servicing.



Warranties

Of equal importance, there is a need to ensure equipment is serviced during its warranty period. It is difficult for warranty claims to be handled sympathetically when there is no record of the machine having been serviced in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.

This is of increasing significance as more and more equipment comes with long original or extended warranty schemes.

The issue of warranty claim validation can make in-house servicing regimes a problem. If a hydraulic motor fails on a mower within its warranty period, the end user would expect it to be replaced without charge.

The supplying dealer, however, could quite legitimately reject the claim if they have not been responsible for the mower's maintenance. Why should they, or more relevantly the manufacturer, allow a claim when both parties have no way of knowing servicing has been carried out to the right standard and to schedule?

Supplying dealers in the past would often deal with warranty claims on 'self-serviced' equipment sympathetically, in many cases standing the

cost of repairs of at least part of a manufacturer refused claim. Such are the tight margins under which many dealerships now operate, however, that such largess is increasingly difficult to sustain.

Fixed costs

It is the need to work to fixed costs, however, which can make 'dealer' servicing attractive. As it is now common practice to offer a maintenance package with high capital cost equipment, it follows that more operations will take up what is offered.

As a given package will typically span the period over which the finance is to be spread, a golf club will know in advance what maintenance costs are going to be over a given period. Barring accident, equipment costing is considerably easier if a pre-priced maintenance package is built in.

For these packages to offer good value for money, it will depend upon how well the terms are worked out between the parties involved. In some cases early schemes got the costs wrong, with some manufactures underestimating the level of work some machines would do in a season and vice versa.

Current schemes remain competitively priced as they can help sweeten a purchasing decision. In fact buying an item of new kit without looking at what can be included in terms of maintenance is, at best, short sighted.

But make sure you know what you are getting. A deal that offers the back-up support of a loan machine if a critical item of kit is taken out of action is well worth looking at. The key is to shop around and discuss specific needs with suppliers.

It is all well and good talking about how all inclusive purchase schemes are offered, but for any maintenance initiative to work all parties involved need to know what is involved.

In some instances, a dealer will allow certain tasks, such as routine oil changes, to be carried out in-house. They will supply the relevant filters and oils to the customer so they can change the fluids themselves. This can help reduce package costs.

More commonly, the dealer will offer a mid-season machine check, this entailing an on-site visit that could see the machine having the fluids and filters changed plus possible adjustment to drive belts etc. A full service is pre-arranged for a period out of season.

The costs are all budgeted for beforehand, so the end user is not going to be presented with a large and unexpected service bill.

As we enter a period where future cost planning is of growing importance, fixed service cost schemes start to become increasingly attractive. But this is not to suggest it is time to close in-house workshops either.

Once these facilities are lost, they are expensive and difficult to re-establish. The key is to combine the two to ensure equipment spends more time earning its keep and less time in the workshop.

A good maintenance package should offer:

- Planned regular maintenance that satisfies manufacturer warranty requirements.
- Enhanced residual values due to service history.
- Fixed servicing costs.

In-house workshops offer:

- On site cover for breakdowns.
- Maintenance schedules to match specific machine use.
- In-house modifications to meet course specific needs.
- Mechanical expertise.



News from the Chief Executive

Plans for BTME & ClubHouse progress with the event approaching at an alarming rate. It seems no time at all since it was April and we were planning the education programme and discussing our marketing strategy with the steering committee.

In June we agreed to host the annual International Summit on Friday January 21 and delegate response to this has been excellent. Demand for space is encouraging, with several exhibitors coming to the show for the first time and others looking to expand their space. Bookings for the extended workshop and seminar packages on offer exceed numbers at the corresponding time last year and the Association feels that it is heading in the right direction.

The event, which provides a vital source of income for the Association, continues to grow as we dedicate more resources and invest more and more time and money in it, in an attempt to secure its future well being.

The management team at Aldwark is conscious that the exhibition is not just about making money for BIGGA or providing subsidised education for its members. It has to work as a showcase for the industry where traditional golf course equipment, machinery and maintenance products can be successfully marketed alongside innovative products to an increasingly discerning buyer.

A buyer who is expected to produce a higher and higher standard of facility while at the same time seeing his or her budget being constantly put under pressure. Latterly the rumblings on the horizon by some of the trade regarding the cost of supporting principally two shows, Saltex and our own, has become a black cloud over the future of both these events. Many of the major machinery manufacturers have indicated they can no longer justify exhibiting at both shows on an annual basis.

Clearly this is cause for concern and we must work with the exhibitors to try to resolve the financial pressures that they are also suffering. The Sales and Marketing staff at these companies are not exempt from the same budgetary restrictions that many Course Managers, Golf Club Secretaries and Chairmen of Green experience.

How we will resolve the matter remains to be seen. Many exhibitors are adamant that they would support an annual show at Harrogate but the logistics of a compromise are difficult to work out. I am sure it will be the subject of much discussion at Harrogate and for some time into 2005. There is one major factor in the whole equation that must not be overlooked and that is the visitor.

All too often we see the same faces at Harrogate, these are the dedicated keen members who take a pride in being a part of what has grown to be a key organisation in the world of golf. What do we have to do to get your colleagues along, if only for a day? Perhaps someone might like to respond via the bulletin board or e-mail me, at john@bigga.co.uk, Sensible suggestions only please!

At a time when all involved in the industry are working more closely together than ever before the clock is in danger of being turned back through lack of funding.

In the past the trade have been very supportive of the Association and this must neither be overlooked nor taken for granted and much of BIGGA's progress and development would not have been possible but for their help. I hope that the excellent working relationship that exists between the trade and the Association can result in a solution being found that favours all parties.

On a more positive note, I would like to congratulate Scott MacCallum on winning the 'Writing' category in the recent Communications in Business annual competition for journalists.

Finally, I wish everyone a Happy New Year and look forward to seeing as many of you as possible during 2005.

John Pemberton



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

SCOTTISH REGION

Annual Conference, Business Learning Centre, Lauder College, Dunfermline.

On Tuesday March 1 2005 BIGGA Scottish Region returns once more to the Business Learning Centre, Lauder College, for their Annual Conference.

This year the Scottish Region have speakers from all sides of the industry coming to Dunfermline to provide interesting and relevant topics, which should be of interest to everyone in greenkeeping.

From the ranks of the greenkeepers we have Frank Ainsworth, Course Manager, Hilton Templepatrick GC, and Kenny MacKay, Senior Course Manager, Marriott UK. Other speakers include Jay Dobson, PSD Agronomy, Neil Baldwin, Amega Sciences, Douglas Shearer, Head of Greenkeeping & Horticulture, Elmwood College and Louise Hollingworth, from WRAP.

All the speakers have confirmed their attendance and full details and application forms will be available in the early part of January 2005 and will be posted to all members in the Scottish Region.

The Conference Centre at Lauder College is centrally located and has easy access from the motorway.

Peter J. Boyd Regional Administrator

NORTHERN REGION

Northern

I have to start the year on a sad note with the news of the sudden death of Telford Jarvis. Telford was a regular attendee at all Northern Section golf events and will be very much missed by all. At the Golf Day in December the proceeds of the raffle, amounting to £200, were donated to Telford's family on behalf of all at the Northern Section. I have been asked to pass on a thank you message to everyone who donated on behalf of Telford's wife, Lisa, and son, Roman.

There was a fantastic turnout for the Christmas golf day on December 2, at Crow Nest Golf Club. Yet again we had a great day, and for a refreshing change the weather was fine and dry. The format on the day was a Texas Scramble with eight teams comprising of four players taking part. The winners on the day were Mel Guy, Henry Bechelet, Adrian Hollroyd and Steve Heaton (I know, I couldn't believe that Steve won either). The golf was followed by an excellent meal and a few light liquid refreshments. A massive thanks must go to Rob Gee, his staff and everybody at Crow Nest for the superb course, meal and hospitality.

After the golf the 'rabble' was let loose in Halifax which turned out to be yet another fantastic night and I'm pleased to inform you that the night ended in just one arrest, but no names will be mentioned!

With Christmas out of the way (hope Santa brought you all that you asked for) it's time to wish you all the very best for 2005, I hope it's a successful greenkeeping year for you all. Next month I'll bring you the details for the spring tournament, which we are currently arranging.

Don't forget BTME 2005, 18-20 January.

Adam Speight 07739319060 - 01274 638366

North Wales

Happy New Year and a warm welcome to the 2005 season for the North Wales Section. Firstly from Royal St David's GC the Kerry bros would like to thank Andy Campbell MG on their recent visit to Carden Park and for the hospitality shown to them. Secondly an apology to Richard Shields who won the Bromborough Autumn Tournament Best Gross with a reported 80 was in fact a 78.

Which brings me to the results from our Christmas Tournament, held at the Prestatyn Links GC, with its ever so cleverly repaired greens from the spate of direct vandalism earlier this year. They are as follows: Greenkeepers. 1. Craig Wheeler, Frodsham GC, 42 pts; 2. Alan Kelsall, Portal GC, 40pts; 3. Andy Peel, Bull Bay GC, 40pts; 4. Brian Taylor, Sandiway GC, 39pts; and with local knowledge, 5. Dave Parry, Prestatyn GC, 39pts. Guests. 1. Islyn Luke, also Prestatyn GC; 2. Paul Lowe, Rhuddlan GC. Two Nearest the Pin prizes, sponsored by BATgolf, went to Andy Peel, 60 inches on the 6th, and Dave Parry, 52" on the 11th. The trade trophy was Dave Austin, from Rigby Taylor, 41pts and the Aggregate trophy for the year went to Alun Lewis, Llanynymech.

A total of 76 players took part and our thanks go to Dave Parry and his team for presenting the course in top condition, for the time of year, to the caterers and the bar staff, for our turkey meal, and the committee, for the courtesy of the course, also to the patrons of the North Wales Section, for their continued support. Special thanks also to TACIT for buying everyone a bacon butty and finally to Stuart Yarwood, who collected just under £140 from the raffle with his unique approach selling the raffle tickets, "£3 for 3 strips," instead of the usual £1 per strip!

We welcome Carl Crocher, from Caldly GC, on to the committee, Carl, who was associated with his former Section in Kent, will help out with all the issues covering North Wales, and one item we discussed was sorting out a race night out at the Chester racecourse, including a meal for later on this year.

Some dates for your calendar this year are: Jan 18 - 20, BTME Harrogate; Feb 22, Spring combined seminar, at Mere G&CC; April 5, North Wales Vs North West, at Wilmslow GC, give us a call if you would like to play; May 25, Spring Tournament, at Upton by Chester GC; July 14 - 17, Open Championship at St Andrews; July/Aug, will



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NORTHERN & MIDLAND
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Clive Osgood
SOUTH EAST
 Tel: 01737 819343



Jane Jones
SOUTH WEST AND WALES
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be the Golf Management Trophy, date TBC; October 4 is at Eaton GC, for autumn, and the Christmas is at Rhuddlan GC in December (7th maybe). If you remember last time rain stopped play on the 12th, so it will be nice to go back and finish the course.

Amenity Technology have again sponsored the coach for BTME and your forms for pick up points, etc will be in the post shortly. Also the Amtec 'do' has changed venues this year and will be on the Tuesday night, 18, 5 – 7 pm, in Wetherspoons in the town. If anyone requires details of the coach or of the show please give us a call.

Look forward to seeing you up in Harrogate. Ps. If you are thinking of visiting the GCSAA, Orlando, in February the pound – dollar rate is really good at the moment, and it might never be cheaper to go, than now!

Mesen Cymru Andrew Acorn – acorn@golf@supanet.com

MIDLAND REGION

East Midland

This year's AGM was held at Rushcliffe GC, on Thursday November 11, on a dry bright autumn day. The event was well supported with 13 teams forming a three man Texas Scramble format. The winning score came from Tim Bloodworth, Ian Needham and Frank Kempster, with a Nett score of 58.4. In second place were Phil Reffin, Simon Brown and Stuart Raybould, with a Nett score of 60.3. Nearest the Pin was won by Ian Needham, with Ryun Holden taking the prize for the Longest Drive. Our thanks should go to all at Rushcliffe GC for allowing us courtesy of their course and special thanks should be extended to Kevin James and his staff for a really great golf course. Finally a thank you should be extended to Vitax for sponsoring the prize table.

Onto the Section AGM, the following were voted into office by the members: Chairman - Frank Kempster, Vice Chairman and Secretary - Antony Bindley, Treasurer - Richard Barker, additional members of the management committee, Stuart Raybould, Tim Allard, Kevin Kinzer, Ian Needham, Adi Porter and Gavin Robson.

Also on behalf of the Section I would like to take this opportunity to thank David James and Jamie Bedford, who have now finished their term as committee members, for their sterling support to the Section throughout the last two years.

Antony Bindley

Midland

As I sit here compiling my usual dross, with hands stained, a rather vibrant blue from pricking Sloes so as to convert Poteen into that wonderful Irish liquor Sloe Gin (it makes a change from them being blue from spray indicator). The Sloe Gin flavour of last year's batch reminds me of playing a spring event some years ago at Harborne GC. During the front nine I bumped into the Reverend Trafford, he offered me a sip from his hipflask, which contained the said beverage. Following this all too small but potent refreshment, I found my legs somewhat unwilling. What a character! Our profession has, and still is deliciously full of them. Please let me know about yours?

Our Autumn Tournament was held on October 22 at that exquisite venue known as Hawkstone Park Golf Club. Now imagine moving into a new challenge and finding that your new club is, in two weeks, to host one of the largest BIGGA Section events. This being the first task presented to Paul Hyde, Course Manager, who has obviously very recently moved into our Section from the North West (Mere G&CC). Paul, with the support of the fine established greenkeeping team provided a course that was not only a joy to play, but also the standard presented enhanced one of the most interestingly visual courses we have had the pleasure to play. From us all very well done gentlemen. Also thanks to the catering team for a superb meal. Furthermore, thanks to the Captain, Mr Tony Harrop, for making us so welcome and for his eloquent after dinner speech. Our thanks indeed Mr Captain.

The results of the day were: Best Gross. M. Hughes. Best Nett. 1. A. Dalton; 2. E. Stant; 3. D. Gibbons; 4. M. Hughes; 5. D. Fellows; 6. P. Rainsford. Our thanks to R. Jones, of Oakleys Ground Care, for the main prize table. Nearest the Pin and Longest Drive went to E. Stant and M. Grestly respectively, our thanks to WWB Minerals.

It gives me great pleasure in welcoming five new members this month. Robert Jones, of Enville GC, Neville Tapp, Ben Essam, Robert Coppack and Daniel Rowe, all from The Warwickshire.

Now for the jammy berks, I talk about the finalists of the Scotts Doubles, of which was played at Wentworth on the West Course, "as you do". The finalists being P. Woodham and E. Stant versus T. Cheese and P. Nixon. The victors being Woodham and Stant. However, all must be considered as winners. Our thanks to Wentworth Golf Club and, of course, Chris Kennedy. I hope that Scotts shall continue to organise and support this great competition. What a wonderful opportunity to play one of the best parkland courses within the UK. How can you not enter with such a prize on offer?

To finish, an admission. I have in the past stated that I do not find links courses appealing, and much prefer parkland tracks. How naive of me. We were lucky enough to hold our Christmas Tournament at Hoylake GC. I've never enjoyed playing golf as much, such was also iterated by the rest of the field. Our thanks to Royal Liverpool and, of course, the splendid greenkeeping team, as headed by Mr D. Green. Words fail me gentlemen, but wow and thanks will have to suffice. Derek was unable to join us as he was away in a warmer climate driving steam trains. I guess he resembled a pander on his return.

The results of the day were: 1. D. Fellows and K. Kinzer; 2. A. Corn and S. McDade; 3. Terry Cheese and R. Thomas; 4. P. Nixon and M. Gash; 5. E. Stant and P. Richmond. Our thanks to Mark Chamberlain, of Tacit, for the great prize table, "hic". Nearest the Pin and Longest Drive was won by D. Fellows and R. Thwaites respectively. Our thanks to J. Skelton, of WBB Minerals, for their kind sponsorship.

Wishing us all a very successful and happy New Year.

Sean McDade

BB&O

Once again with the festive season over, Turkey sandwiches still in the lunchbox with the odd mince pie that has survived intact into the New Year, not forgetting the new South Beach Diet and Silk Cut patches to help give up the dreaded weed, with all this we have finished off 2004 with a bang, and look forward to another prosperous and challenging 2005 in the Chinese year of the Rooster.

On October 12, the BBO held a clay pigeon shooting competition at West London Shooting Grounds. The good, the bad and the ugly turned up with guns blazing and filled the West London air with the smell of gun smoke. After a practice session, three shooting disciplines were chosen and the best number of clays broken out of 25 would test the Beretta's and Browning guns to the limit as 34 budding John Wayne's blazed away (some for the first time) under the tuition of qualified instructors.

Jon Beck's burger bar stood up well in the wind and rain as he served up half pounders to quell our appetite. Thanks go to sponsors Rigby Taylor, Sherriff Amenity, Tacit and Gem for the prizes. The top gun of the day was Ray Roberts with a 21 point victory over Steve Gardner in second place with third prize going to Mervin Downing followed by Lee Robinson in fourth place. Gary Bateman, from The Buckinghamshire, picked up a prize for managing to miss most of the clays.

Next it was off to the home of the Tartan Terminator and Japanese Gardens, in Newbury, for our Annual General Meeting and Turkey Trot, at Donnington Grove Golf Club. All 64 of the good, the bad and the ugly turned up to battle it out with a Texas Scramble format, followed by a roast dinner in the exquisite dining rooms of Donnington Grove GC.

Results were as follows: Steve Garne, from Flackwell Heath GC, feathered a middle iron for Nearest the Pin and Mike Johnson, from Henley GC, jammed straightest drive on the 18th. Mike and his team then took first place with a convincing 56.9.

Second place went to Flackwell Heath GC, with 58, and the Tartan Team, from Donnington Grove GC, managing a well deserved third place with 59. A big thank you to Coreen Wilson for co-ordinating this excellent venue and Donnington Grove GC for providing the Section with fantastic facilities and the courtesy of the course. Thanks too to Roscoe and his team for ensuring preparation of the course, which was first class.

Avoncrop were the main sponsors for the day and Gary Ogilvie presented the prizes in the absence of Colin White, we wish Colin a speedy recovery, back to work, back on the road and back at all our golf days. Thank you to all our sponsors throughout the year, we have had great support from the trade, which have included Scotts, Am-Tech, Sherriff, Avoncrop, Tacit, Vitax, Rigby Taylor, Turner Groundcare, Ely and Gem Professional.

The Annual General Meeting followed and Sid Arrowsmith was voted on as the new Chairman for the Section, followed by John Scoones (Secretary), Mitch Stewart (Treasurer), Vince Riches (Handicap Secretary) and Peter Smith, Frank Booth, Alistair Higgs and Gareth Acteson as committee members and yours truly as the scribe for another year. Wishing you a fantastic New Year!

Mark Day

Mid Anglia

Greetings readers, here's the latest from the buzzing Mid Anglia Section HQ. December 9 saw 88 of us take on the course at Chesfield Downs for the annual Texas Scramble. A great day was had by everyone and many thanks must go to Course Manager, Ed O'Hanlon, and his team for preparing the course to a high standard and for ordering the weather, as the sun came out.

We all sat down to a sumptuous Christmas dinner, served up by the friendly catering staff, so a big thank you goes out to all at Chesfield Downs for making our day enjoyable. Here is the day's results: 1. G. Knight, B. Cox, M. Towler, D. Martin; 2. J. Bondfield, D. Spencer, A. Copland, D. Mugford; 3. M. Read, J. Moorhouse, J. Farrel, L. Cant. Nearest the Pin. J. Bondfield John Chapman walked away with the Player of the Year Award 2004, as well as a few goodies, so well done Johnny!

Our whole day was gratefully sponsored by Avoncrop and was represented by Barry McCloskey, who did a fine job handing out the prizes. Sadly, Barry had news of a long time friend of the Section, Colin "Chalky" White, who is currently very ill. All of us send our best wishes to Colin and hope for a speedy recovery.

Just a couple more things, Gary Carter has left Letchworth to go to Kolven Golf Club, good luck to him and congrats to Gavin Simkins who gave birth to a new born son (well that's not strictly true, Gavin's wife gave birth and did all the hard work).

That's about it for this month, two things to remember guys (and gals), don't eat yellow snow and, as a great philosopher once said, "He who dares . . . wins! Rodgers!"

Bob Butfoy

SOUTH EAST

Surrey

December 6 and only a handful of frosts. The grass is still growing and those winter jobs in the warm shed that used to come with regularity must wait for the cold spell that Michael Fish, if he hadn't retired, would surely have predicted.

Dave Wyborn is still in his shorts so it must be global warming and by the year 2050 USGA greens will be the norm even in Scotland. "Rubbish," I hear you say and, as I fully agree, I'll get on with my usual report from around Surrey.

Jessica Arnold, wife of Steve, from Redhill & Reigate GC, has broken her ankle and Steve, full of sympathy for his wife and a hatred for washing, ironing and housework, anxiously awaits her early recovery. Another Steve, this one from Silvermere GC, is the proud father of his first child, Kai Cooper, 7lbs. 3ozs. His wife, Rayne, who has experience of looking after her husband, has found that having another baby in the family will be no problem. Congratulations also to David Murdoch MG, of Liphook GC, and his partner, Debbie, who have had a little baby girl, 9lbs. 2ozs. Lauren.

The Cooper family now gets another mention as we congratulate that well known Kingswood greenkeeper, Ken, who was 60 in December. Paul Hobden is welcomed into

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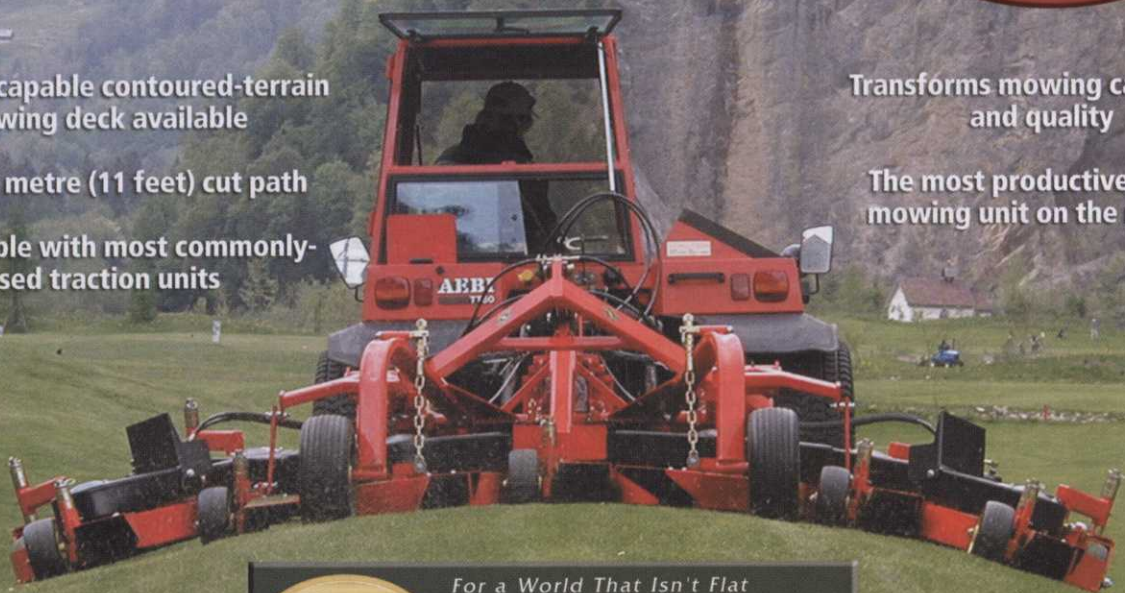
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LASTEC UK

Surrey as the new headman at Pyrford and Traditions golf courses.

Les Coombes, from Windlesham GC, would like to pass on a tip to all other clubs that suffer from invasions of Canada Geese. Les, now known as the Lone Ranger, has found that a starting pistol moves them on and also makes members who see him in the distance keep any silly little complaints to themselves.

The AGM and Turkey Trot, played at Laleham GC, was a huge success. John Ross and his greenkeepers had the course in excellent order, he said, and the meal was a culinary delight. The AGM might have produced many topics for discussion that could have kept us there all night, but fortunately this well run Section has all Surrey members 100% behind the committee, not forgetting that a few drinks usually send them to sleep until the prize giving.

Prizes were won by Gavin Kyle, 40 points, Ian Sellers, 39 points, and John Mathis, 38 points. John Mathis also won Longest Drive and Chris Varrow, Nearest the Pin. Sponsors for the day were Tacit and yours truly, after a disastrous round, grudgingly gave away the Moat Chandon.

Ian Sellers, after six years as Secretary, has decided that his reign must come to an end and, as he and his partner are expecting an addition to the family early this year, John Ross was voted on to the committee as his replacement, Ian, very many thanks from the Section for a job very, very well done. It was also confirmed that Derek Cunliffe had previously been seconded onto the committee as handicap Secretary.
Brian Willmott

Kent

The Kent Section has now been officially reformed following an EGM held at Birchwood Park Golf Centre on November 25, 2004. The new committee is: John Millen (Chairman), David Wood (Secretary), Kevin Morris and Rob Holland as Greenkeeper Members and also Neil Pullen and Gary Tait as Representatives from the trade.

It was a lively meeting and really encouraging to hear so many of the 46 attendees offering support and ideas to progress the Section's status. Clive Osgood chaired the opening proceedings in his role of South East Regional Administrator. Clive was also enthused by the high turnout and the determination of many who wish to see our Section successful again.

The EGM followed a Turkey Trot golf tournament at Birchwood Park. Many thanks to my staff who helped prepare the course superbly for the day and to the catering department for a great Christmas dinner. The day was won by Ian Garfield, from Tenterden Golf Club, on 48 points, second was Rob Holland, on 47 points, and third Michael Wigstone, from Tenterden, again on 45 points. Nearest the Pin prize went to Andy Pearson, from the London Club, and Longest Drive to Andrew Wood, of Avoncrop Amenity.

The refreshments on course were kindly provided by Ernest Doe's and evening prizes donated by Scotts, Collier Turf Care and Godfrey's. As well as a raffle, we held an auction for two tickets donated by Doe's for the Charlton versus Chelsea match, which raised £46 for the Kent Air Ambulance Trust.

Everyone who attended the day left Birchwood feeling confident that the Kent Section had found its feet and was heading in the right direction again. We do, however, require input from everyone in the Region to elevate it to its rightful status again. Clive Osgood will be visiting all clubs, in time, trying to drum up support but, in the meantime, please contact me with any news. Wishing you all a successful New Year!
Rob Holland

London

The London Section Turkey Trot has just been played over the tremendous Ashridge Golf Course, which I have been told by a number of people was in excellent condition and even more so for the time of year. Well done to the Course Manager and all his staff. The food that followed was also mentioned in great vein and I believe the carvery style dinner was very popular with everyone that attended.

Winners this year were: 1. Lee and partner, from Old Folde, and Bob, from Moor Park; 2. Chris Turpie, Steve Crossdale and Nick Brown; 3. Dave Badlham, Kevin and Dareen, from Stockley.

I would like to thank everyone that made the effort to turn up and the final count of 46 has made the year (on the golfing front) a very successful one for the London Section. After the meal we held our AGM, which was well attended, with the same committee staying on for another year and really a very quick and smooth meeting with no major issues being discussed.

At this point, I would like to thank everyone who has helped out during the year from Turners, Avoncrop, Phil Jones, Textron, Doe's, Headlands, Tacit and there are more, for whom the London Section could not have survived without and we hope to this continues from them all for years to come.

Also thanks must go to Peter Phillips and David Badham who both spent a lot of time organising venues and sponsors. Christmas will have gone by the time this is read, I hope everyone enjoyed it, all the best to everyone for a great 2005. Happy New Year
Alec Macindoe

Essex

Well it's been a long, long time, so much has happened, so much grass has grown, so much grass has been cut, many scalps, many funny stories, many interesting tales, many pieces of advice to share with other greenkeepers, many relationships made, many doses of disease caught (eh Greg), but I have sat by my mobile phone day in day out and nobody has phoned to give me anything to write about. Apart from two golf days to report about I have one piece of news. Steve Crossdale is now a proud new dad, a baby boy, it weighed 5lb 7oz and the rest of his body was 1lb 2 oz. well done Steve, glad he takes after you, a chip off the old block, or sausage off the old meat counter!

Golf days, there's been a few, or then again too few to mention, sorry been watching too much 'X Factor'. Our summer meeting was at the beautiful Saffron Walden, sponsored by Tuckwells, one of my favourite courses; sadly I was unable to attend. I understand from everyone that Ray and his team produced a superb course for everybody; a great day was had by all, and thank you to Saffron Walden Golf Club for their hospitality. Overall winner was Richard Moss, 39 points (back 9). Section 1. 1.

Greg "Hymer" Knight, 39 points; 2. Ian Cambridge, 39 points. Section 2. 1. Craig Serafin, 36 points; 2. Ray Goodshall, 34 points. Section 3. 1. Sam Cook, 38 points; 2. Jon Rattenbury, 31 points. Thomas - dad stop nagging me I can hit a longer ball than you - Fance won the guest prize with a yee ha 44 points, and Mark Day won the trade prize with 41 points. Thanks for raffle prizes from Banks Amenity, Avon Crop. Seoul Nassau, Ernest Doe's, Vitax, Avoncrop, CMW, Rigby Taylor, Sherriffs, Tacit, Collyer Turf, Uncle Tom Cobbley and all!

The autumn golf day was held at The Busted, sponsored by Mark and Craig, from Collyer Turf, again I was sadly unable to attend. I am the first one to moan about people not supporting golf days so I have given myself a good moaning and beating, which I quite enjoyed. Our thanks go to Phil Aibon, Lee Mence and all the staff at The Busted for providing us with a great course and very welcome and excellent facilities.

The overall winner of the day was Sam Cook. Section 1. 1. Rowland Hughes; 2. Greg Knight; 3. George Grimes. Section 2. 1. Andy Cracknell; 2. Ian Wood; 3. Richard Williams. Guest Prize was won by Geoff Johnson and Trade Prize was won by Robbie Mitchell, of CMW. Longest Drive was won by Dave "that makes a change" Beal and Nearest the Pin was won by Andrew Wood. Thanks for raffle prizes from Scotts, Rigby Taylor, Sherriffs, Tacit, Banks Amenity, Vitax, Tuckwells, CMW, Seoul Nassau, Tuckwells and Avoncrop.

Well that's about it from me this month, I don't like to over do it. I hope you all had a dry and Happy Christmas and a rewarding New Year. Finally please send me something to write about otherwise I will have to start writing about Abridge and how wonderful the staff are there.

Geoff Smith

SOUTH WEST & SOUTH WALES

We Need Your Ideas

This year's recently held South West and South Wales Regional Seminar had the theme of "The Environment". This subject was greeted with interest and enthusiasm by those members attending. We are now looking forward to next year's event and would welcome ideas from the Region's members for the next theme. If you have a subject you believe would interest members you can contact me or any member of the Regional Board with your ideas. We look forward to hearing from you.

Jane Jones Regional Administrator

South West

A very Happy New Year to all. Kingsdown Golf Club provided a fitting end to a classic season of events. In fact, the course could hardly have been in better condition for December, and was a tribute to the hard work of Mark Ford and all his team. Many thanks to the club for the courtesy of the course and making us so welcome.

Local estate agents doubtlessly describe adjoining properties as being, "conveniently situated for all the benefits of the golf course," but almost certainly don't mention that hard hats should be worn at all times outdoors. My greensomes partner drove first from the 18th tee with a high slice. The ball landed on the main road, bounced about two hundred feet up into the air, landed on the pitched roof of the first house, and pinged across into the garden of next door. There was a moment of stunned silence, Adrian casually picked up his tee, and said, "we'll take yours."

I may have treated Paul Godwin a little harshly last month. Don't worry mate, you're perfectly safe - we've got bigger fish to fry now. Adam Matthews (Minchinhampton) - now a confirmed serial winner, is well and truly in John Keenaghan's sights. Adam is a fresh faced, polite young man, and a pleasure to play golf with, although he's inevitably in a five-hole lead before you can say, "pass the sombrero," (The phrase "baby faced assassin" springs to mind). I wouldn't mind but he's only been playing a couple of years - however, rest assured everyone, he's got a winter of hard labour in front of him - very hard labour.

The full results of the Greensomes Stableford. 1. Rob Lane and Adam Matthews, 50 points; 2. John Keenaghan and Pete Harvard, 46 points; 3. Robin Greaves and Martin Samuels, 45 points. Nearest the Pin, at the 4th, Wayne Vincent. Nearest the Pin, at the 12th, Mark Ford.

Many thanks to all our sponsors, and especial thanks to our Patronage Partners.

Finally from Kingsdown, one of the nicest parts of the day was to bump into Dan Dobie, now retired after many years as Head Greenkeeper at Marlborough. He was just tutting about the change in seasons, and the amount of grass on the course for December, when a well-used tractor and gangs drove slowly past the window. "Look at that," screamed Dan, "you'd never have seen a gang mower with so much grass all over it in my day." Times were hard then (I think he mentioned something about giving the fairways a light top-off in mid September and then going into hibernation). Times have indeed changed.

The committee for 2005 is: Chris Sealey, Chairman; James Braithwaite, Vice Chairman; Nobby Knight, Secretary; John Keenaghan, Match Captain & Regional Board Member; John Byrne, Vice Captain; Guy Woods, Education Secretary; Paul Worster, Fixtures and Press.

Paul Jenkins stood down as Regional Board member. Many thanks to Paul, for representing the Section for a number of years. This important role now passes into the capable hands of John Keenaghan.

Chris Sealey, as Chairman of the Section, and also the Region, has put in a tremendous amount of work (often behind the scenes) for our Association, in short, for all of us. I am absolutely delighted to announce that Chris has received the South West nomination from Bernhard & Co to join the BIGGA Delegation to the GCSAA show at Orlando in the New Year. This is so well deserved, and we must thank Bernhard for their continued sponsorship.

As a result of the continuing support of our Patronage Partners, an all expenses paid place on the new British & International Turf Managers Conference, at Staverton Park, Daventry, is available to a member of the South West Section. The conference takes



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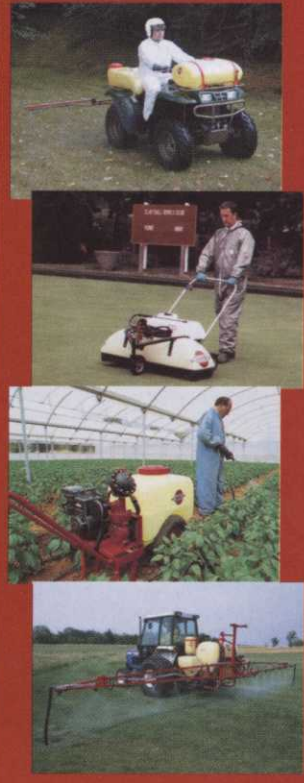
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A warm welcome to Jane Jones, our new Regional Administrator. Jane joins us from managing the admin at Thornbury Golf Centre and is unquestionably a tremendous asset to the Region.

The Regional Seminar at Cannington on the Environment was a really informative day, with many commenting that it was "one of the best ever". Modesty precludes me from too many details, but a big thank you to all the speakers.

Lots of Section members have taken the trouble to contact me after my PowerPoint presentation, and the result of the Environment Competition. One of the nicest comments was actually in the car park at Kingsdown. One greenkeeper, whom I don't know that well, stopped me to say he'd enjoyed the presentation. He went on to tell me that back at work a few days later, he was building a new tee and had ended up with a small corner with nothing particular in it. He thought back to the presentation, and ended up putting in a rockery with flat stones and a few plants. This to me encapsulates the whole point of the competition. It spreads ideas, and breeds innovation.

The next Section meeting will be on February 23 2005 and is the Section Winter meeting at Weston Super Mare. Let's support our Section and sponsors, by ensuring a really good turnout on a great golf course with good dry walking.

A Health & Safety incident now. I was sitting quietly at my desk the other afternoon working on a report when one of my staff limped into the rest room and collapsed on a chair. "Big Rich", six foot six in his socks, who joined us after a long career as a bouncer (or ballroom technician as they prefer to be known), was rubbing his leg but smiling as though he'd won the lottery. "You alright?" I murmured, wondering why he had such a big grin on his face. "Yep, just got hit by a golf ball," he said, proudly rolling up his trouser leg to reveal a nasty purple bruise, with 'Titleist' stamped in reverse on his thigh.

"If you don't mind my saying so," I muttered, "you look mighty pleased for someone that's just been clobbered with a ball." The grin widened, "Yes," he smirked, "It was Tony (the landlord) from The Bell. I'm off home for a shower, this is going to cost him a few pints." As I watched him wobble off on his bike, I did experience a passing moment of sympathy for Tony. Big Rich is one of those accomplished drinkers who can "unhinge" his throat and tip a pint straight down without having to waste time swallowing.

The good news is that Marc Haring has kindly agreed to help input into this column (so normal service will be resumed). Please contact me with any news, people on the move, interesting or amusing stories - in short, anything that will help to brighten up the news. Otherwise, don't forget, there's always my holidays.

Paul Worster 01285 651908, Work: 01453 837355, 07768 394593

South Coast

Happy New Year! I'm not sure about you all but I love January. Ok forget about how bad you feel, because those jeans that have just become unbearably tight around the waist, after the over indulgence over the Christmas period. The crash diets not making you any happier and although you're detoxing you just want a drink. That New Year's resolution you made when you were very merry at midnight on New Years Eve, with the very best intentions, of course, was broken after only a day. And how can I forget the credit card bill landing on the doorstep just to rub salt into the wounds, how can we have spent so much? Yet I still love January.

It may be the imminent trip to Harrogate and BTME, I love Harrogate week. It's great to travel up and meet so many friends and colleagues and share another year's experiences with each other. The show is always good and the seminars are the icing on the cake, it's just a shame more people don't travel up from the Section. I'm particularly looking forward to seeing our former Section Chairman, Kerran Daly MG, becoming the BIGGA Chairman for 2005. Kerran takes over from Andy Campbell MG who has done a tremendous job during some difficult times and has helped move the Association forward. I'm sure Andy will enjoy stepping back from the hectic role of Chairman, so well done Andy, enjoy the rest! I'm sure Kerran will settle in very quickly and continue with the good work that has seen the Association move to a very strong position, have a great year Kerran!

On to Section news. Our last golf day of 2004 was held at Barton-on-Sea Golf Club, in December, and once again we were very lucky with the weather. Tony Gadd and his team had been working flat out preparing the course for our arrival and planning some fiendish pins, ah don't you just love them! The day was sponsored by New Forest Farm Machinery and Sheerwater and it was good to see our sponsors on the golf course, although Rob Crouch wasn't looking too happy. Was it the high spirits of the previous night's Christmas party catching up with him? No. Or was his golf not quite up to the usual standard? Not this either. It was the news that Harry Rednapp had just been introduced as the new Southampton manager. Football, it's a funny old game!

Anyway, on to the golf. We had fantastic support with 75 playing and winners on the day were: Division 1. 1. Simon Ridland, 38pts; 2. Phil Nason, 37pts. Division 2. 1. Mark Zealander, 42pts; 2. Paul Staples, 41pts. Division 3. 1. Peter Stevens, 34pts; 2. Chris Sherrington, 33pts. Reps Prize. Mike Ring, 38pts. Longest Drive. Mark Davies. Nearest the Pin. Steve Privett.

Many thanks to Barton-on-Sea for their superb hospitality, to Tony Gadd and his team for all their hard work in preparing the course so well for us and the caterers and bar staff for providing us with an excellent meal and looking after us so well. A huge vote of thanks to New Forest Farm Machinery and Sheerwater for their continued sponsorship of the day. Many thanks Nick and Mark, we really do appreciate. Thanks must also go to Alan Magee for all his hard work with the scoring and selling the raffle tickets, I don't think anyone escaped Al and his raffle books. Last but by no means least, Chris Sturgess. Chris does a tremendous job organising our golf days and we really do appreciate it Chris. We all just turn up on the day and take for granted all the hard work that has been carried out to make the day possible, so many thanks Chris!

During the presentation ceremony the Jim Fry Pairs Trophy was presented to Dave Hewitt and Joe Cooper after their success in the final over Stuart Hooker and Justin Lewellyn. The final was excellent with both pairings being well up in the match, but

victory was sealed on the last hole. Well played! Entry forms for next year's competition should have arrived to you by now, along with our new fixture cards and the Section seminar flyers. Our fixture cards have a new sponsor this year, Phil Sharp Golf Course Equipment. Phil sells a wide range of course equipment and tools and we are very happy and excited to be forging a close working relationship with him, thanks Phil.

As I mentioned before, our Section seminar is at Canford Magna Golf Club, on February 24. Full details should be with you now and the speakers for the day are; Billy McMillan, Ian Tomlinson, Gordon Irvine, Malcolm Peake, Kerran Daly MG and Stuart Ashworth. Cost for the day is £15 for members and £20 for a non member, which includes lunch, coffee etc. I recommend booking early as numbers are limited and with the excellent line of speakers spaces will go very quickly. If you have any queries about the seminar then please contact me or look at the BIGGA website which has full details.

I would just like to pass on all of the Section's thoughts to Colin White as he goes through treatment for his illness at the moment. We have missed seeing you at both our golf days and courses Colin and we look forward to seeing you back very soon.

Our thoughts must also go out to Ian Greenwood's family after he passed away recently. Ian was instrumental in setting up our original Section and will be sadly missed by all his family and friends.

Alex McCombie Tel 01202 661106 07966 386232 a.mccombie@ntlworld.com

Devon and Cornwall

Time certainly flies by, and just think, as soon as we take all the Christmas decorations down it will be time for the BTME at Harrogate. As most of you will be aware by now Amenity Technology will not be sponsoring the coach from the South West Region in January, this is hardly surprising when one considers that in 2004 only fifteen members travelled on the coach. Instead the company will be subsidising the Hotel, for further information please contact Jane Jones our Regional Administrator.

Wednesday November 17, the South and South Wales Regions held a very successful seminar at Cannington College. The day's lectures were on Environmental Issues and were presented by excellent speakers, something we all have to think about in the very near future. It was very rewarding for all the organisers to see a very good attendance, both greenkeepers and students. At the end of the day we were delighted to welcome our Chief Executive, John Pemberton, and Rachael Palmer. To everyone's surprise John announced the winners of the National BIGGA Environment Awards, and to the delight of all the Region the results were as follows: Minchinhampton Golf Club were the National Winners, and the award was presented to Paul Worster, the Course Manager, Jeff Mills, on behalf of The Taunton and Pickering Golf Club, received the award for The Best Environmental Initiative, and Bath Golf Club won the award for The Best Use Of Recycling Materials. The award was collected by the Deputy Head Greenkeeper. Congratulations go to all that participated in the 2004 Competition.

On Wednesday 10 our Section held its AGM, at Wrangaton Golf Club on the Edge of Dartmoor. The day commenced with a Foursomes Stableford competition in very windy conditions, nothing unusual when playing this course as the greenkeeping staff will tell you, but at least it kept the rain away, and eventually the blue skies appeared and the sun shone.

The winners of the Competition were: 1. Buster Lewer and Garry Tuckett, 34 points; 2. Kevin Yeoman and Justin Austin, 32 points; 3. Kevin Miller and Adam Bridgwater, 32 points. Alan Dommett, of Devon Garden Machinery, whose company sponsored the day, presented the prizes, many thanks Alan.

A big thank you to Wrangaton Golf Club and all the staff that made us so welcome, and of course a special thanks go to Gerald Ayliffe, the Head Greenkeeper, who presented the course in excellent condition, not always easy in the climatic conditions of Dartmoor, which seems to have one of the heaviest rain falls in Devon.

I would at this point like to say how good it was to see Gordon Child joining us again and playing golf, after his hip and leg operations. Last but not least, congratulations to Richard Whyman who will become Vice Chairman next year of BIGGA and to Jeff Mills who joins the National Board well done to both.

Donovan. O. Hunt

NORTHERN IRELAND

Northern Ireland

Our Section AGM was held at Fortwilliam GC, in Belfast, on November 30. The new committee for 2005 was elected and, as past Chairman, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the members who supported the Section throughout the past year. I would also like to convey my sincere thanks and appreciation to our Secretary, Emmett Curran, for all his hard work and commitment over the last couple of years.

The committee for 2005 is as follows: Chairman, Michael O'Neill, Fortwilliam GC; Secretary, Gary Crawford, Royal Co Down GC; Treasurer, Emmett Curran, Downpatrick GC; Magazine and Education Officer, Ken Henderson, Allen Park GC; Match and Handicap Secretary, Noel Crawford, Royal Co Down GC.

This year's winner of our Golfer of the Year Trophy was presented to our new Chairman, Michael O'Neill. Michael played some excellent golf throughout the year and just beat Warren Burnside, from Malone GC.

Moving on to education, it is hoped to run a one or two day course towards the end of February 2005. Headquarters are currently organising the subject, date and venue, so members will be informed over the coming weeks.

There will also be an autumn seminar organised for late October/early November 2005. If any member would like to suggest a speaker or topic they would like to hear, please get in touch with me at Allen Park on 02894429001 or contact any other committee member. Finally I would like to congratulate Terry Crawford, Course Manager at Clondeboyce GC, on his selection onto the 2005 BIGGA Delegation, sponsored by Bernhard, to Orlando, Florida.

Ken Henderson

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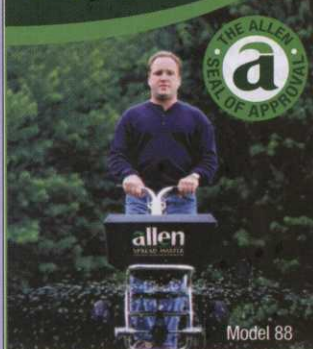
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34 years of age, 18 years experience, eight as Head Greenkeeper of a traditional Links. Appropriate qualifications, SVQ 3 spraying certificates PA1, 2, 6a, budgeting, machinery, man management and communication skills. Also 5 years experience in golf course construction, 2 years as site Forman overseeing construction teams, covering USGA greens, irrigation instalment, drainage, shaping and growing in and aftercare.

Contact: 07810 355 040

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Seeking a position as a 1st Assistant or Head Greenkeeper. A 27-year-old just completed Ohio State Turf Global Management Programme in Florida. Qualified to NVQ 2 and 3 in Sports Turf, Pesticide application PA1, PA2, PA6 and first aid certificate. With 9 years working experience in warm season, cool season and 6 years in turf management. Good experience in man-management, staff training, budgeting, Health and Safety, work planning, irrigation, turf science and leadership skills. Seeking position in Europe and UK.

Contact: iestyncarpenter@yahoo.co.uk

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EXPERIENCED HEAD GREENKEEPER REQUIRED

The construction of this complex will be the first Golf Course in Northern Cyprus which includes 18 holes Golf Course, a 3 hole academy and a 24 Bay driving range will be completed in May 2005.

The maintenance of this wonderful 18 hole Golf course, where the holes are shaped through mature olive and pine trees, will start in April 2005.

THE SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE SHOULD POSSESS THE FOLLOWING QUALIFICATIONS AND ATTRIBUTES;

Experienced, self-motivated hard working and a team player, innovative and have excellent management skills to lead and train the Greenkeepers along with:

- Working experience with warm season grasses
- Experience in grinding machines and mechanical skills
 - Knowledge about PC irrigation system
 - Growing in the golf course
- Identify diseases and treatment in the turf grasses.

Salary will be negotiable and suitable accommodation will be provided.

Interviews will be held during BTME & ClubHouse Show in Harrogate in January 2005

Please apply in writing no later than 8th January 2005, with full CV to:

Sevim Ozkırac, Project Coordinator
100 Bedreddin Demirel Cad. Kat 3, P.O.Box 82,
Lefkosa, Mersin 10 - TURKEY
E-mail sevim@kormancons.com

BRADFORD GOLF CLUB

(Hawthorpe)

Has an immediate vacancy for an

ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

To join the existing team of five. The right candidate will hold a minimum of NVQ2 or equivalent, as well as good knowledge of the game of golf. Ideally the candidate will be enthusiastic, committed and have a high level of motivation.

Competitive rates of pay with training opportunities exist for the right candidate.

Please apply in writing by 31st January to:

David Thackray, Head Greenkeeper
Bradford Golf Club, Hawthorpe Lane, Guiseley, Leeds
LS20 8NP. Tel: 01943 875570

GANTON GOLF CLUB

require an

ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

- Minimum 5 years' golf course experience
- Qualifications to NVQ Level 2 or equivalent
- PA1, 2 and 6 spraying certificates an advantage
- Ability to work as part of an experienced team

Please apply in writing with your C.V to:

The Secretary, Ganton Golf Club, Ganton, Nr Scarborough,
North Yorkshire, YO12 4PA.
Email: secretary@gantongolfclub.com

Closing Date for Applications: 31st January 2005

WANTED!

QUALITY TRAINEE
GREENKEEPERS FOR WORK / TRAINING ON THE
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MUST BE ENTHUSIASTIC AND
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Mike O'Keeffe / John Beardmore

The Ohio Program,

Suite 360, 700 Ackerman Road, Columbus, Ohio, 43202, USA



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www.top.osu.edu

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British Ensign Golf, a subsidiary of British Ensign Estates Ltd, is a new company that owns and operates five golf clubs in the South East of England.

Exciting opportunities exist for enthusiastic team players to join this rapidly developing new company in the positions of:



SLINFOLD PARK
Golf & Country Club

MECHANIC

at Slinfold Park Golf & Country Club, Horsham,
West Sussex.

This is a part-time position of 22 hours per week and involves the maintenance and repair of an extensive fleet of greenkeeping equipment, with full workshop facilities provided. The right candidate will have mechanical experience, preferably with horticultural machinery.

ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

at Mid Sussex Golf & Country Club, Ditchling,
East Sussex.



Mid Sussex
Golf & Country Club

The successful candidate will have qualified to at least NVQ Level 2 in "Greenkeeping, Sports Turf and Sports Ground Maintenance" and have at least one years experience in the industry.

Send a full CV, marked "Private & Confidential", to:

Matthew Orwin
Director of Golf Operations
Slinfold Park Golf & Country Club
Stane Street
Slinfold
Horsham
West Sussex RH13 0RT
Mobile: 07743 877119
Email: mwgo2000@yahoo.co.uk

Stourbridge Golf Club

has an immediate vacancy for a

Qualified Greenkeeper

The following requirements for the post are:

- Minimum of five years experience
- Qualified to at least NVQ2 with PA1, 2 & 6
- Understanding of current Health & Safety regulations
- To be enthusiastic, highly motivated and committed to working in a team environment

Salary negotiable according to experience

Apply in writing with C.V. to

The Secretary,
Stourbridge Golf Club,
Worcester Lane,
Pedmore, Stourbridge,
West Midland.
DY8 2RB

1st Assistant Greenkeeper

required at busy Surrey driving range
and 9 hole golf course.

The successful applicant should have a sound knowledge of basic turfcare, machinery maintenance and irrigation systems as well as PA1, PA2 and PA6 spraying certificates and an NVQ2 qualification.

Temporary accommodation may be available and a basic salary in the region of £16,000 - £17,000 is on offer subject to experience.

Applications including C.V. should be sent to: Mr Philip Fillary, Head Greenkeeper, Pachesham Park Golf Centre, Oaklawn Road, Leatherhead, Surrey. KT22 0BT
or for further details call 07905 895508

ORSETT GOLF CLUB

Open Regional Qualifying Course
Requires an

ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

We are looking for an enthusiastic, hard working greenkeeper who is highly motivated and able to work as part of a team. You should be qualified to NVQ2 and spraying certificates would be an advantage.

The successful applicant will be encouraged to undertake further training to progress within the industry.

Written applications, including full C.V should be sent to:

Don Clark, Orsett Golf Club, Brentwood Road, Orsett, Essex, RM16 3DS

POLARISWORLD

MURCIA, SPAIN

We are currently building several courses with Nicklaus design and are looking for

Qualified Greenkeepers (NVQ2 minimum)

With experience at working on good quality courses for permanent and temporary positions.

With potential to fill positions of more responsibility fairly quickly To help us with the multiple golf course construction projects we have Must be keen, willing to learn Spanish and mature enough to live abroad.

NPTC Chemicals certificate would be an advantage.

We will offer good rates of pay, help finding accommodation, holiday time and a full training programme

Interested applicants should apply in writing with covering letter and C.V to:

Polaris World, Autovia Murcia- San Javier, KM 18 (30591)
Balsicas-Murcia- Spain.

Fax: +34 968 041 770

Email: sylvain.durval@polarisworld.com

michelle.ravase@polarisworld.com

Web: www.polarisworld.com

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The UK's leading golf course construction company
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to commission, service and maintain irrigation systems on golf courses and sports fields throughout the UK.

The person appointed will be capable of working unsupervised and to a high standard. The ideal candidate will be computer literate and have experience with Rain Bird irrigation equipment, although these requirements are not essential as full training will be provided.

Excellent pay and conditions for this permanent position, including provision of a company van (full clean driving licence essential).

Please apply by letter or email giving details of experience and any relevant qualifications to:

**Mr Adrian Abbott, Technical Director,
M J ABBOTT LTD,
Bratch Lane, Dinton, Salisbury SP3 5EB
Email: adrian.abbott@mjabbott.co.uk
www.mjabbott.co.uk**

Recruitment

KIRKHILL GOLF CLUB

Has an immediate vacancy for an

Assistant Greenkeeper

The following requirements for the post are:-

Minimum four years experience
Qualified to at least NVQ2 with PA1,2 & 6
Level 3 would be an advantage
Candidate must be highly motivated and committed

Apply in writing with CV to:-

The Secretary
Kirkhill Golf Club
Greenlees Road
Glasgow G72 8YN
Closing date - Friday 28th January 2005

MICKLEOVER GOLF CLUB



Requires an

Experienced Greenkeeper

An immediate vacancy has arisen for a self-motivated and enthusiastic individual to join our established team.

Applicants should have experience in all aspects of course maintenance work and be committed to working to a high standard.

Salary by negotiation

Applications in writing, with full C.V. by January 24th 2005 to:

Mr G W Finney, Managing Secretary, Mickleover Golf Club,
Uttoxeter Road, Mickleover, Derby DE3 9AD.

Assistant Greenkeeper required at Blackmoor Golf Club

The successful applicant will possess, or be working towards, NVQ2 in Fine Turf, PA1, 2 and 6 spraying certificates and a minimum of 2 years experience in Greenkeeping. Candidates will be highly motivated and able to work as part of a team. Salary is negotiable and based on BIGGA rates.

Written applications including full CV to:

Mr S Robinson, Head Greenkeeper, Blackmoor Golf Club, Firgrove
Road, Whitehill, Bordon, Hampshire GU35 9EH.

Alternatively email steve@blackmoorgolf.co.uk

www.blackmoorgolf.co.uk

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Kent, ME11 5HH. Tel: 01795 580365,
E-mail sales@sheppyfertilisers.co.uk
or visit us on Stand NoB9 @ BTME Harrogate

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We now have depots in Stirling, Scotland; Sunderland, North East and Cheshire, North West England.

Your preferred location should be indicated along with the position you are applying for. Applications are invited in writing along with full C.V. addressed to:

Mr Robert Heath
Souters Sports Ltd
Kell Green Farm
Off Pinfold Lane
Marthall, nr Knutsford
Cheshire WA16 7SL
Or via email to rob@soutersports.co.uk

Muckhart Golf Club

Invite applications for a

HEAD GREENKEEPER

Muckhart Golf Club Ltd. is a 27 hole inland / heathland club set amidst stunning scenery. The club's objective is to be the best presented and most professionally run club in the region.

The successful applicant must have the necessary experience and ability to Manage, Maintain and Develop the courses through leadership and utilisation of all the available resources.

The following skills and experience are required:
Professionally Qualified in Greenkeeping (HND/HNC)
Excellent Man Management & Leadership Skills
Health & Safety and Environmental Management experience
A sound working knowledge of Machinery/Equipment management

A competitive package is available to the successful candidate. Please apply in writing or by email with covering letter and CV to:

Scot Symon, Club Manager
Muckhart Golf Club Ltd.
Drumburn Road, Muckhart by Dollar
FK14 7JH
Scot@muckhartgolf.com

**Closing date for receipt of applications is
Friday 4th February 2005**

Recruitment



TECHNICAL SALES REPRESENTATIVE NORTHERN ENGLAND

AMENITY & SPORTS TURF DIVISION

Vitax is a well established privately owned company supplying quality products to the sports turf and local authority markets. Our well known brands include Insignia, Marathon, LongLast, and the Key Range of sports turf fertilisers.

A vacancy exists for a Representative to take over an established distributor and end user customer base throughout the North of England. Proven success in a sales role or an in-depth knowledge of the sports turf industry is essential. Sound interpersonal skills will also be necessary to communicate effectively at all levels and build strong relationships with both distributor and end user customers. Drive and ambition will ensure success in an interesting commercial environment.

If you feel you have the necessary skills, experience and enthusiasm to succeed in this role, please send your CV to:-

Clive Williams

Commercial Development Manager, Vitax Ltd, Owen Street,
Coalville, Leics LE67 3DE

Tel: 01530 510060 Fax: 01530 510299
e-mail: marketing@vitax.co.uk

The De Vere Slaley Hall

Part of the De Vere Group plc. Set in 1000 acres of rural Northumberland, with 36 holes of Championship golf. De Vere Slaley Hall has an outstanding opportunity for a Golf Courses Manager to join our successful team.

Golf Courses Manager

Preferably the successful candidate will have experience of working within a commercially or proprietary operated golf complex. He/she will understand the course preparation that is required for hosting key events with leading golfing bodies, such as PGA, European Tour and European Seniors Tour.

With a "no problem" approach you will report directly to the Golf Operations Manager, your main responsibilities will include the management and maintenance of our Greenkeeping activities.

Financially astute, you will have the ability to successfully set, manage and control costs within budget. In addition, you will inspire, motivate and drive a large team and have an understanding of all Health and Safety legislation that is essential to this role.

To succeed, you will have at least 5 years' experience in a similar role, you will also have qualifications in at least one of the following: Master Greenkeeper, NVQ level 4, HND, Degree or equivalent, hold PA1-PA6 spraying certificates and a current full driving licence. In return, you will receive an attractive salary, a pension scheme, 25 days paid holiday, private health care and all other associated De Vere employee benefits.

To apply for this position, please send a covering letter together with your CV, to:

Michelle Smith, HR Manager, De Vere Slaley Hall,
Slaley, Hexham, Northumberland NE47 0BX
email: michelle.smith@devere-hotel.com

Closing date: 4th February 2005

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REMEDY OAK GOLF CLUB

Invite applications for the positions of

Course Manager

and

Assistant Greenkeepers

This is an exciting opportunity to become part of the team to grow in and establish a new Private Members Championship 18 hole Golf Course.

The Course is set in an environmentally sensitive ancient Deer Park located on the South Coast and is built to full U.S.G.A specification; including a fully automated irrigation system.

The applicants for the above positions should have the necessary qualifications and a minimum of 5 years in Greenkeeping.

Salary by negotiation. Start date April 2005.

Apply in writing with full C.V. to:

Mr.W.Riddle
Remedy Oak Golf Club
C/O The Manor House, Woodlands Manor
Farm, Woodlands, Wimborne, Dorset.
BH21 8ND



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for there new depot in Birmingham, The successful candidates will need experience with Golf Course or Commercial Grass cutting machinery, tractors or agricultural machinery experience. Product specific training will be available. Salaries commensurate with experience, good career prospects available

Apply in writing or telephone

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General Manager
Turner Groundscare
Unit 18
Erdington Industrial Park
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Erdington
Birmingham
B24 0RD

Telephone 07714 523262 or 01829 741797



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Private member's club • Par 72 • 6,648 yards
Well-established parkland course with mature trees and some water features

COURSE MANAGER

This position has become available. You will report to the club's General Manager and work in conjunction with the Course Chairman. You will have at least five years' continuous experience as a Course Manager or Head Greenkeeper.

You'll...

- have a proven track record in all aspects of golf course management
- have the ability to prepare and work within an annual budgetary process
- have up-to-date knowledge of modern machinery and equipment
- prepare regular in-depth course reports for presentation to the Course Committee
- supervise the club's responsibilities for Health & Safety for employees under your control
- demonstrate communicational and motivational skills
- contribute to and develop a strong team environment

Salary is by negotiation and will be linked to experience and qualifications. Accommodation is not provided.

You are requested to apply in writing, enclosing a full cv to
The General Manager • Glen Gorse Golf Club
Glen Road • Oadby • Leicester LE2 4RF

Closing date for applications is 31 January 2005



THE
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1400 Acres of Opportunity

Few European convention and leisure resorts have such a complete range of facilities as The Celtic Manor Resort, venue for the 2010 Ryder Cup and home of The Celtic Manor Wales Open, a leading event on the European Tour.

The Celtic Manor Resort offers a five star hotel, a Convention Centre and Exhibition Hall, 4 restaurants, and 2 health clubs and spa. The golfing facilities include 2 championship courses plus an Academy course, driving range, coaching bays practice range, Pro shops and short play areas and the finest clubhouse in Europe.

The Celtic Manor Resort is seeking to recruit qualified **Greenkeepers**

Candidates must be highly motivated and enthusiastic, qualified to NVQ Level 2 and have a minimum of 2 years experience. The responsibilities include preparing the course for the annual Celtic Manor Wales Open and the grow in and development of the 2010 Ryder Cup course.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Benefits include discount on the resort's leisure facilities including golf, spa, beauty and accommodation. Uniforms are provided, as well as meals when team members are on duty. Live-in accommodation is also available.

Application Procedure

For an application pack call our Recruitment Hotline on 01633 410282 or online by contacting hr@celtic-manor.com. If you would like to find out more information log on to our website www.celtic-manor.com/jobs.

SUNNINGDALE GOLF CLUB

requires a

Course Manager



Sunningdale Golf Club on the Berkshire / Surrey borders enjoys a unique position in the world of golf with two outstanding Championship golf courses: the Old, designed by Willie Park and the New, designed by Harry Colt. Their heritage includes many prestigious tournaments over the past 100 years including the News of the World Matchplay, where winners included James Braid and Harry Vardon; the Golf Illustrated Gold Vase, where winners included Bobby Jones and Sir Michael Bonallack; the 1980's European Opens of Greg Norman, Bernhard Langer and Ian Woosnam; the Walker Cup in 1987 and the recent Weetabix Women's British Opens of Karrie Webb in 1997, Se Ri Pak in 2001 and Karen Stupples in 2004. International Final Qualifying for the Open Championship will be played over both courses in June 2005, following its inaugural success in 2004.

Sunningdale Golf Club is seeking an outstanding individual to whom it may entrust the management and future development of its Championship courses, practice facilities, woodlands S.S.S.I. on Surrey heathland and its Clubhouse surrounds and gardens.

Reporting to the Secretary, the successful applicant will have demonstrated a successful career that includes the following preferred criteria: appropriate professional qualifications; experience of major tournaments; the management of a significant budget; strong leadership of a large and committed team of greenstaff; verbal and written communication skills at all levels and a practical knowledge of current computer and software systems.

The remuneration package will be by negotiation and commensurate with the seniority and demands of the position.

Please apply in confidence by letter or email with full CV to:

**Stephen Toon, Secretary,
Sunningdale Golf Club,**

Ridgemount Road, Sunningdale, Berks SL5 9RR

stoon@sunningdalegolfclub.co.uk

Feature listing

from January 2003

January 2003; Beedles Lake Profile; Talking Heads - Chemical Application; Rebuilding Golf Greens; Constructive Advice

February 2003; BTME/ClubHouse Review; Royal Liverpool Profile; Irrigation; Nematodes

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

October 2003; Construction Machinery; Play 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

April 2004; Know your Rules; Tournament Preparation; Landmarks in Greenkeeping; Security

May 2004; Goodwood Club; Seed or Turf?; Biological Product Survey; Water Features; Recycling; BIGGA Environment Competition

June 2004; Fairy Rings; Biologicals; The Grove; Kubota Profile; Turf; Sand and Rootzone

July 2004; Royal Troon Open Preview; Mowing; Disease Analysis.

August 2004; Neil Thomas Memorial Golf Day; Open review; Royal Cinque Ports; Irrigation; Mowers (2); Saltex Preview; Best Practice; Top Dressing.

September 2004; Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Preview; Ravensworth Golf Club; Turf Disease; Royal Holloway College; Tractors; The Greener Approach to Greenkeeping.

October 2004; STRI 75th Anniversary; Kenwick Park GC; Ecology; John Deere National Team Championship; Best Practice; Top Dressing; Saltex Review; Aeration.

November 2004; Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Final; The BIGGA National Championship; Comrie GC; CV Advice; Drainage; Construction; Fences.

December 2004; BTME & ClubHouse Preview; Henley GC; Grass Identification; Trees; Environmental Winner; BIGGA Delegation; Interview Advice; College Listings.

Chairman's Column



An Incredible Year

So the end is near! For some of you the last 12 months may have seemed like a lifetime, for me it seems like only five minutes since I took over the Chairmanship from George Brown.



An incredible year, one which started at an extremely low ebb with the passing of Neil but then offered all that is best about our profession. Travel to new places, visits to some truly great golf courses and, most importantly, the friendship and companionship of some outstanding people.

Wherever you go in the world of golf there are individuals who give freely of their time, who share their knowledge and experiences in humble ways and are prepared to offer their support and guidance when necessary. They know who they are and to you all my thanks for everything you have given me.

It would be remiss of me at this time if I were not to mention a few special people who gave me the support, often when times were hard and my brain not particularly well engaged, when the desire was strong but the knowledge too weak, that helped put me in a position that allowed me to accept the opportunity to become Chairman.

Len Sproston, my first Head Greenkeeper at Chester GC, who gave me the foundation on which to build; Bill Lawson, for his continuing encouragement to this day and his passion for BIGGA; Keith Holmes, Terry Adamson and all the 'old boys' from the EIGGA days and lastly but not least my mum (who will be looking down on all this), who sadly didn't live long enough to see her wastrel son do something with his life!

Enough then (at least for now) of the emotional stuff - what of the challenges facing BIGGA? As forecast some of our trade partners continue to threaten the future of BTME and therefore BIGGA itself, with their proposals for alterations of show scheduling or even worse withdrawal from exhibiting altogether. These actions not only have serious implications for BIGGA but also for many of the loyal smaller companies who continue to support BTME and derive good commercial value from it.

Make no mistake, this threat is real although I personally feel misguided. If you want a strong, vibrant Association then you need to show your support and buying power at this year's event. In the meantime, the Board are committed to working positively, not just with those companies involved, but all of the trade to find solutions to the issues, and to provide better value for the pounds invested.

More worrying for the Board is the continuing, and in some cases, worsening apathy at Section level. This Association has at its periphery a number of disaffected individuals who delight in knocking BIGGA and who are not beyond using some of the less happy members to deliver their message.

I ask you simply this: who represents the Greenkeeper and his/her future best and has done so consistently for the last 18 years? I know the answer isn't those who seek to form 'new' associations.

This apathy must somehow be defeated - and yes it's a tough one, but only the members themselves can really make this happen. Sadly most members have never visited BIGGA HOUSE to see the work that goes on or the manifestation of the Association's progress that is the building itself - personally I feel some of the Section,

Regional and, if necessary, Association funds should be made available to correct this.

Thankfully it's not all doom and gloom. The Association enjoys strong relationships with most allied associations around the world and while it frustrates me that some of our initiatives take longer than they should to impact on our members, I'm sure it won't be too much longer before we are able to make real progress.

I'm comforted in that aspect in that the incoming Chairman, Kerran Daly MG, is an honest man, given of great wisdom and with the welfare of our members very much at heart. I look forward in supporting him in the same quiet but strong way that George Brown has supported me. Good luck Kerran and don't worry about buying an atlas, I have one you can use!

You are all more fortunate than you know in that at BIGGA HOUSE you have a dedicated team who work tremendously hard for your benefit. I thank them all on your behalf for their efforts and sincerely hope that sometime real soon we stop treating them in the same terrible fashion that some (thankfully declining) golf clubs treat their greenkeepers. These people are professionals deserving of your respect, if they are treated as such they can and will perform all the better for it. Likewise you have a talented and committed Board who use their intelligence and informed debate to move your Association forward for your benefit.

So I think that's most people in the 'clique' thanked - damn big, all embracing clique eh! In the civilised world it's known as an Association of like minded individuals. What a shame that the negatives at our periphery who put nothing in but expect everything out and who are thankfully in the minority, choose to use the word clique to define us.

It's traditional to thank ones family and employer at this time and for once I will be conformist.

To my boss, Hamish Ferguson, and all at De Vere many thanks for your incredible patience and support. To my team simply I am very proud of you.

Lastly to Cameron and Claire, you know how I feel about the time away and now it's your turn. For anyone out there with thoughts of serving the Association at Board level, do it. It's extremely rewarding to be able to put something back in to our profession, but make sure you have the support of your family - you will need them more than you ever thought possible.

I suppose I should finish with 'I face the final curtain!' I hope not and in any case I would rather just say thank you for your support, and the privilege of being your Chairman, I did it my way (with guidance)!

Best Wishes for the New Year to you and your families.

Andy Campbell MG CGCS



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BTME, HARROGATE, 18-20 JANUARY 2005

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Recruitment

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THEYDON BOIS GOLF CLUB

A friendly members' club requires a

DEPUTY COURSE MANAGER

NVQ Level 2/3, PA1, PA2 and PA6 qualifications and experience in maintaining Golf Course Machinery or equivalent experience.

Salary negotiable depending on qualifications and experience.

Please send C.V. to Club Manager,
Theydon Bois Golf Club, Theydon Road,
Epping, Essex, CM16 4EH
Tel: 01992 813054

Club Managers

golf



The Shropshire Golf Club

General Manager

The Shropshire Golf Club was acquired by Burhill Estates in January 2003 with a £1m investment to improve the facilities throughout and quality overall.

A General Manager is required to take responsibility for the whole operation ensuring that the Club is promoted and marketed to maximise business opportunities.

Ideally you will have a reasonable understanding of the golf industry and be a seasoned operator with a commercial background.

It would be beneficial to have previous experience in the food and beverage industry.

If you are career minded and are looking for a career in golf, this is an excellent opportunity in a forward thinking organisation.

An excellent package is on offer for the right person, including a health scheme, pension and bonus.

All applications will be treated in the strictest confidence. For more information and to register your interest please contact Joy Edkins at Prime Appointments.

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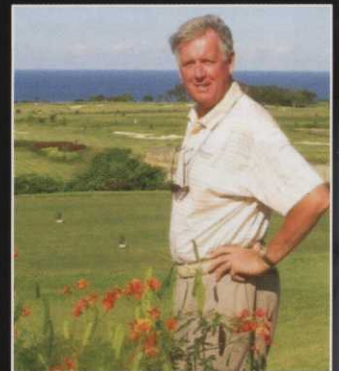
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