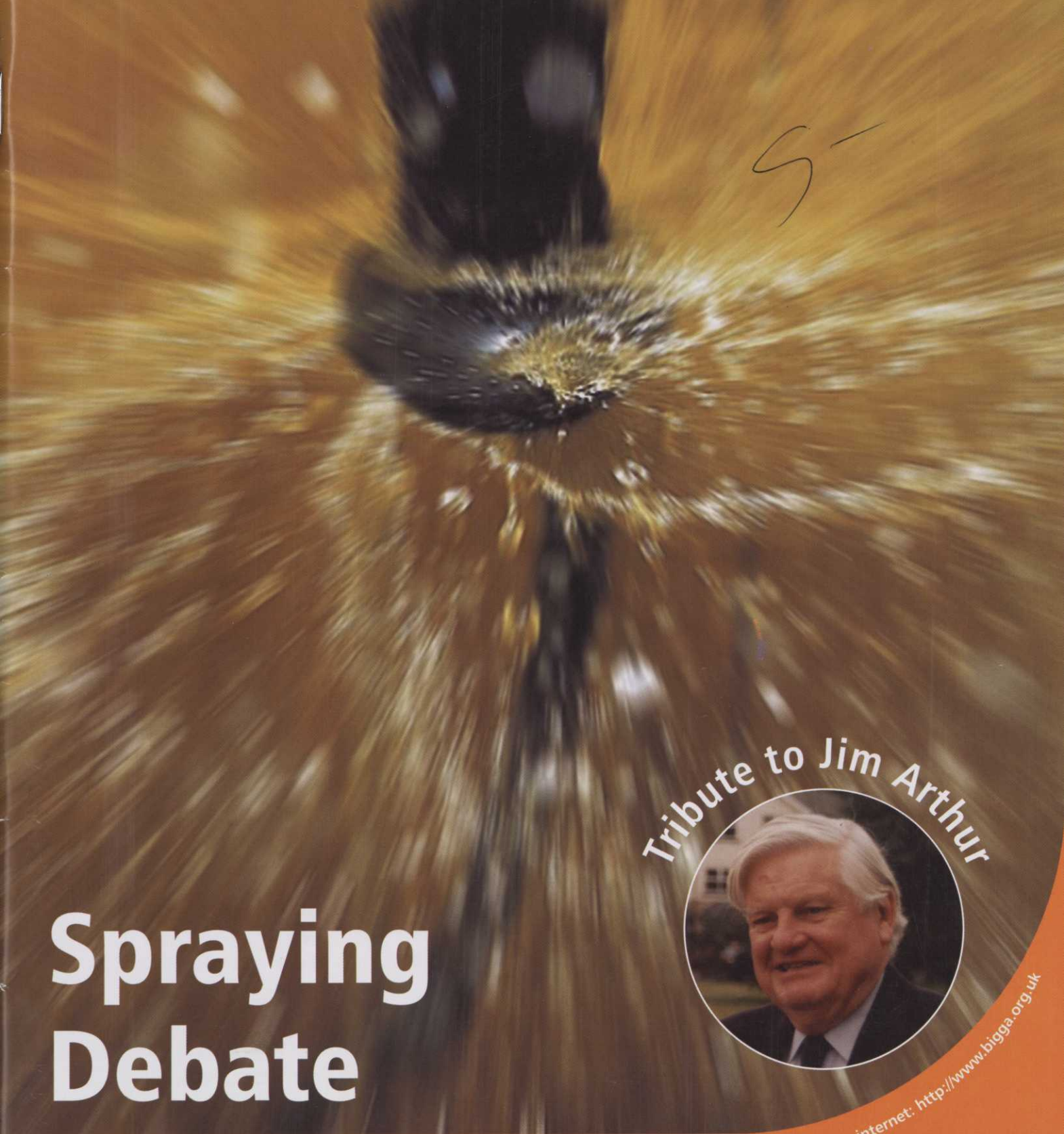




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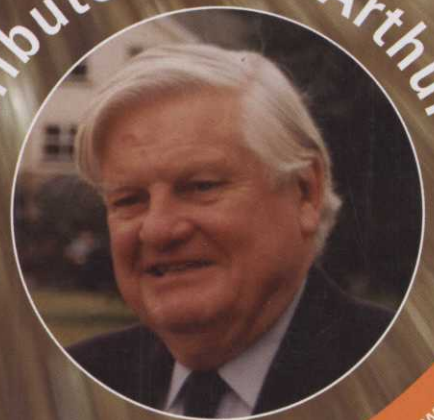
Greenkeeper

INTERNATIONAL



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Tribute to Jim Arthur



Spraying Debate

For quality course construction and maintenance ...

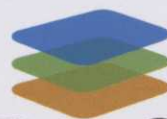


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Most people associate Rufford with quality top dressing and rootzone materials. That's probably because we've spent the last eighteen years putting research & development and quality control at the heart of everything we do.

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For more information and tips on construction and maintenance visit our technical pages at www.rufford.com



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sports surface technology

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Greenkeeper

INTERNATIONAL

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

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Greenkeeper International:

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Circulation is by subscription. Subscription rate: UK £42 per year, Europe and Eire £55. The magazine is also distributed to BIGGA members, golf clubs, local authorities, the turf industry, libraries and central government.

ISSN: 0961-6977

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Front cover an Internal Tank Sprinkler courtesy of Toro

NEW THIS MONTH!

Check out the Buyers' Guide on page 48-52
For ways in which Terraqua Environmental
and U-Install Irrigation can help you!



Welcome

JIM ARTHUR

The phone would ring and I'd be told, "It's Jim Arthur". I knew then that the next 20 minutes or so would be taken care of and that I'd have to be on my game.

Every conversation with Jim was like a contest, thrusting and parrying, interspersed with a chance to towel down, take instructions from the corner and move onto the next topic. If I wasn't defending myself I'd be defending others, attempting to put across the alternative view. But, of course, there wasn't an alternative view and Jim was well skilled at dismantling the considered arguments of others. If he hadn't been the foremost agronomist of his age he'd have made a great courtroom lawyer. His mind was as sharp as a tack and even well into his 80's his brainpower hadn't seemed to have diminished. That, coupled with his incredible strength of personality, was enough to carry most arguments.

I always knew when putting the magazine together which articles would cause steam to explode from Jim's ears and have him reaching for the phone. There was a long list of no-nos when it came to topics we should be covering in Greenkeeper International and he was most concerned that young greenkeepers shouldn't be exposed to articles on that list. Indeed, his ideal scenario would be for him to see every article before it reached print so he could vet, or more likely, bin. We had many conversations about this very subject and while I agreed to differ, I don't believe Jim ever did.

While there are many, myself included, who have been the subject of some less than kind comments and temporarily scratched his name from the Christmas card list it is impossible not to admire a man whose passion for the subject remained undiminished for well over half a century. If I can muster even a fraction of that passion in my 80's I shall be a very happy man. I felt, like many others, that Jim should relax and enjoy the fruits of a well earned retirement, but such a thought was totally alien to him.

He stood over the world of greenkeeping like a colossus. I would wager that if you were to listen in to any group of British greenkeepers talking about their jobs the name of Jim Arthur would be mentioned at some stage in the proceedings.

I have no doubt, despite his passing, that his name will continue to echo around Seminar Rooms and Lecture Theatres, not to mention bars, for many years to come and in his book, Practical Greenkeeping, he produced a publication which will act as his legacy, a must read for young greenkeepers for years to come.

It is the end of an era. Never again will I be told that it is Jim Arthur on the line but his philosophy on traditional greenkeeping will never be ignored or forgotten.

Scott MacCallum, Editor

GORDON BOWS OUT

Gordon Huddy, the GTC Board of Directors' Chairman, has retired at the company's AGM held on May 19. Gordon has been working with the GTC for 11 years and has spent half of that as Chairman.



Bob McLaren, who chaired the Committee during the eighties when it had no funding, was still at the helm in 1993 when the 'new' GTC was born. From 1993 much progress had been made, especially in the area of qualification reviews and development, and the introduction of work-based training was firmly in the hands of the employers and Course Managers.

Gordon took over from Bob as Chairman in 2001 and GTC Education Director, David Golding, paid tribute to the outgoing Chairman: "Gordon was the R&A Representative and that link has proved so important and his support and encouragement to the committees and staff has been tireless.

"Both gentleman, like all those representatives who sit on committees within golf, are the people who often are in the background and their work and commitment goes unrewarded and we would like to thank Gordon for all his hard work as he bows out."

Read Gordon's GTC Column, as he reflects on his time on the GTC and the enormous developments made.

SALES COMPLETE LINE UP



Karen Russell is the latest person to join the BIGGA ranks at Headquarters, as she takes on the role of Sales Administrator, bring the Association's sales team back up to full strength.

Karen, 34, joins BIGGA after an eight month stint with Barker Brooks Media, which is based in Harrogate. Karen only moved up from her beloved Bedford to Yorkshire 18 months ago to be with her husband, Allan, with the couple marrying in February 2004.

Previously to her move to the blustery winds of the north, Karen worked for multi national giant 3M for 14 years, in the Customer Services Department.

"I started with BIGGA at the end of April, so I'm now really developing into my new role. I have been looking forward to taking this job on, as it brings me back to my roots of daily contact with clients, which I really enjoyed when working at 3M," said Karen.

The BIGGA employee enjoys travelling, competing with her hubby as to who has visited the most countries, and she describes China as the most interesting place she has gone to. Her claim to fame is performing at Wembley Arena in the early 1990's at the British Youth Band Association Championships, where she played the trumpet.

INTENSE TIME AT HAWKSTONE

Hawkstone Park has made one of the first orders of the Sisis Aer-Air System, fitted to a Sisis Javelin aerator.

Paul Hyde has been Estate and Golf Course Manager for just six months but is already making his mark. During the winter the drainage system on the Windmill Course was extended and refurbished, along with several of the tees on the Hawkstone Course, but Paul's priority for 2005 is an intensive programme of aeration on all three courses.

He is a strong advocate of regular aeration and studies new techniques as they come along. "We will continue to hollow core in the autumn, and use a vertidrain a couple of times a year, but in addition, will use the Aer-Aid constantly on the greens and tees," said Paul.



NEW KUBOTA DEALER

Kubota has enhanced its UK dealer network with the appointment of Farmstar's branch at Long Bennington, near Newark, as a full line Kubota tractor and groundcare machinery dealer for Nottinghamshire and parts of Derbyshire and Lincolnshire.

"Farmstar is determined to build a solid business for Kubota products among golf and sports clubs and landscape contractors throughout the area. Our newly appointed specialist groundcare Sales Manager, Simon Hall, will be working hard to extend the benefits of Kubota ownership to individuals and organisations," said Graham Leach, Manager of Farmstar's Long Bennington branch.

From August, Kubota will have a new southern area machinery demonstrator and trainer within its tractor and grass care division. Having joined the company in April, Phil Brooks is currently shadowing Mike Hawkins, the current holder of the position, who will retire officially on August 19 after 17 years' service.

Phil is no stranger to the Kubota product range having worked previously with Kubota dealer, Globe Organic Services, Solihull. When he takes over formally on August 22, Phil will be responsible



Phil Brooks, left, and Mike Hawkins, who retires from the company in August

for demonstrating Kubota tractors and ride-on mowers to prospective customers located south of a line from the Wash to mid Wales.

Mike has worked as an engineer and machinery demonstrator since 1955 when he left school to join equipment manufacturer Twose of Tiverton. Despite official retirement in August, Mike plans to assist Devon based Kubota dealer, MST, on a part-time basis.

"Stepping into the shoes of Mike is quite a daunting prospect. However, I am delighted to be taking over an area which contains a very large number of satisfied Kubota customers and an excellent dealer network," commented Phil.

SEOUL SALES OVERHAUL

Since relocating to Birmingham, Seoul Nassau has spent the last two years reviewing and restructuring their business to provide a better level of service to the industry.

Crucial to this has been the full review of the external field sales team. With numerous company acquisitions over the past five years the spread across the UK of sales teams was uneven.

Seoul Nassau now have an external rep force of 25 and that has been broken down into three geographical areas - North, Midlands and South, which are managed by Regional Sales Managers

Mark Wilton, Dave Murphy and Dave Rahman. New sales representatives have been appointed in the form of Darrin Urquhart, Scotland, and Mark Lunday, South West, who have both joined the company direct from their previous roles as Head Greenkeepers.

"Essentially, the driving factors behind recent changes have been to reorganise the rep force, streamline internal administration, improve product quality and deliveries," said Gerard O'Driscoll, Sales Director.

INAUGURAL CHALKY MEMORIAL TROPHY

The inaugural Colin White Memorial Trophy was played for in May at Highcliffe Castle Golf Club by the South Coast Section. A great turnout ensured the day was a huge success and Colin's mother, Jill, and two brothers, Steve and Rob, were welcomed by the Section.

The first winner of the trophy was Shaun Whittle, of Moors Valley Golf Club. The picture shows Shaun receiving the trophy from Colin's mum, Jill, and Avoncrop's Chris Briggs. A raffle on the day raised £280 for Macmillan Cancer Relief.



HARRY WALSH

It is Greenkeeper International's unfortunate task to advise of the death of Harry Walsh.

Harry was a former Chairman of BIGGA in 1972. He had previously been Secretary of the North West Section for



many years and continued to keep an interest in the affairs of BIGGA right up to his death. Indeed it was only a few weeks ago that Harry asked his son, John, to inform BIGGA of his change of address so that he could continue to read the magazine.

He collapsed and died of heart failure on May 3 2005 at the age of 95. We can all deduce that greenkeeping is a healthy form of work.

He retired at 65 from the job of Head Greenkeeper at Bolton Old Links, Chorley Old Road, Bolton, and previously had been Head Greenkeeper at Manchester Golf Club, Middleton. John Walsh passed this information to us with much sadness but also much pride for his father.

THE HARD LIFE

Anyone who thinks topdressing is tiresome should talk to Tony McLure, Head Greenkeeper at Whickham Golf Club, in Northumberland. Since the club bought a Dakota 410 Top Dresser nine months ago, the task has become a delight.

Previously, it took five staff 40 hours using shovels and brushes. Now it is a one man operation taking just two - four hours.

"It used to be such an arduous job that we only topdressed twice a year. It was difficult to maintain an even depth with shovels," recalls Tony.

The Dakota top dresser, distributed by Campey Turf Care Systems, was supplied to Whickham GC via their dealer in the North East, Greenlay Grass Machinery Ltd.

FOREIGN CHALLENGE

David Ashley has been appointed Golf Course Manager at Tsada Golf Club, Paphos in Cyprus. David, 36, worked at Great Barr Golf Club for eight years before moving to Aston Wood Golf Club as Head Greenkeeper in 1994 and then onto Lea Marston Hotel as Golf Course Manager.

David has just completed a HNC in Golf Course Management and Sports Turf Science at Morton Morrell and is looking forward to his exciting new challenge abroad.

A CUT ABOVE

Construction is well and truly underway at The Carrick at Cameron House with the first cutting on the 8th green having taken place recently. With many bunkers almost complete and the seeding of all holes occurring in May, the course is just months from reaching its championship standard.

In total, five sets of tees and greens have been seeded, with the 8th green the first to be cut. Head Greenkeeper, Paul McLearn, commented: "The cutting of the green on the 8th has been a real milestone in the construction of the course. It's fantastic to see the course progressing and taking its world class shape".

The 8th is the longest hole on the course and its fairway was seeded in May, along with the other holes south of river; the 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th. The 7th fairway is currently in the process of being destoned with a further nine holes having full drainage constructed. The remaining holes are due to be seeded over the summer period.

THE FORM OF HIS LIFE

David Coupland, an Assistant at Boston GC, thought he was in for another so-so round in the recent East of England Section event held at Sleaford GC. The two handicapper was out in 39 having used up all of his shots when he came to the 10th tee.



What happened next he will remember for the rest of his life - he came back in 28 shots with eight birdies and a solitary par to win the competition, ironically on a better inward half.

PRECISION GRANT

Blair Precision Engineering of Carnoustie have received a four figure grant from the Angus Grant Scheme towards the purchase of a CNC lathe allowing the business to undertake a more varied and specialised manufactured components programme. The Business Gateway Angus helped the business access the grant from the fund, which was established with monies from Angus Council, Scottish Enterprise Tayside and the European Regional Development Fund.

The business specialises in the manufacture of replacement metal tines. Over 450 golf clubs across the UK are currently supplied with over 150 product lines to suit both original and customised requests.

"The support of the Angus Grant Scheme was crucial to our decision to make this major investment in CNC equipment at this time. This provides us with a solid foundation for future expansion," said Owner, John Jeans.

RICHMOND DIG DEEP

The Richmond Golf Club is in the process of a two phase bunker reconstruction project with course constructor MJ Abbott.

30 bunkers have been completed this winter. Work on another 20 is set to start in October, with the club opting to do the project in-house. Each bunker has new external drainage with its own positive outfall or soakaway chamber.

"With 100 year old bunkers we thought it vital to reconstruct them in strategic places using modern techniques. As a result, location, as well as the playability of the bunkers, has been dramatically improved. They now look spectacular," said Course Manager Lee Strutt.

"The club struggled with wash down of sand on the face of the bunkers. There was also a problem of poorly draining bunkers, so since the reconstruction they now drain well," said Nigel Wyatt, Contracts Director for MJ Abbott.

Work started with the stripping out of old turf and bunker sand, followed by reconstruction of the bunker in subsoil. A combination of Inturf dwarf rye and fescue bent was used to marry in with existing and was sanded with Topsport Kingsley Number One Sand.



LEESE GETS IN THE ZONE

Kevin Leese has been appointed Zone Sales Manager for central England by Kubota UK Limited's tractor and groundcare division. Covering an area stretching from South Yorkshire down to north London and from

Worcestershire across to Essex, Kevin brings to the position more than 20 years' sales experience within the agricultural and horticultural industries.

His day-to-day responsibilities entail all aspects



of dealer support including stock control, product demonstrations and the training of dealer staff and their customers in the care and operation of Kubota tractors and diesel ride-on mowers. He will assist also at local and national shows and events where there is a Kubota presence.

"This is an important additional appointment for Kubota's tractor and groundcare division. Kevin's long experience and extensive knowledge of the industry will be of great benefit to Kubota dealers and their customers throughout central parts of the United Kingdom. We are very pleased to have Kevin as a member of the Kubota team," commented Sales and Marketing Manager, David Roberts.

ITALIAN PLANT IMPRESSES

New Holland equipment dealers from the UK and the Republic of Ireland recently went on a three-day fact finding trip to Jesi, in Italy, to see the manufacturer's modern factory.

Participants were able to appreciate first hand the build quality of New Holland's specialist tractor line-up, which illustrates the brand's commitment to innovation and modern styling. Of special interest to the groundcare industry were the TND-A, TNS-A and TCE tractor ranges in the 40 - 75hp class.

Delegates were shown how equipment is designed to meet end-users' exact requirements in terms of performance, high work rate and comfort. Amongst the dealers attending was Richard Campey, Managing Director of Campey Turf Care Systems, based in Macclesfield. "The Jesi plant is certainly impressive and the whole operation confirms New Holland's dedicated approach to technological development and an awareness of users' specialist needs," he said.

CRUCIAL AERATION

Aeration on the golf course is the single most important job, that is the message from Ian McMillan, Course Manager at Walton Heath Golf Club. Ian made the comments after recently taking delivery of a Terra Spike XF, the latest deep aerator from Wiedenmann UK.

"I'm a great believer in aeration of all kinds. It promotes healthy root growth and that, in turn, provides healthy and strong grass plants. Deep aeration helps with drainage, allows water and air to the rootzone and provides compaction relief to heavily used areas," said Ian.



The Walton Heath Team

ROCKY ROBIN

It was with some interest that the Royal Guernsey Golf Club team noticed recently a Robin flying in and out of their maintenance building. It wasn't long until Head Greenkeeper, Marcus Hamon, and his right hand men were following the bird's flight path and found that their feathered friend had built a nest in a wooden cabinet at the back of the building.

"After informing the staff to be careful and not to disturb the Robin we then kept a careful eye on it hoping for some further development," said Marcus.

Those developments soon came, as just week's later the Robin gave birth to three chicks and, as the photo shows, has been busy flying in and out of the building to feed them.



TOUGH TERRAIN TACKLED



Tom Hooper, Course Manager, left, and Steve Bush, Ernest Does & Sons

South Bedfordshire Golf Club, Luton, has recently purchased a Wiedenmann Greens Terra Spike and New Holland tractor combination from local dealer Ernest Doe and Sons of Bennington.

The newly arrived equipment will be used on the 18 hole Galley course and the 9 hole Warden Pay and Play course at the 1,000 member club, to help improve drainage and relieve compaction. Predominantly situated on chalk, there can be as little as 25mm of rootzone on the fairways.

"We are beginning a five year course modification programme in here. The terrain is tough and we are looking to increase root growth across both courses and reached a depth of 200mm on the first pass across the greens. If we can get down to 250mm, then that would be ideal," said Tom Hooper, Course Manager.

BUSY DAYS FOR FAIRWAYS

The Aspire Golf Centre situated on the outskirts of Aberdeen has recently taken delivery of wide selection of Ransomes Jacobsen golf course maintenance equipment to prepare for the final stages of growing in and the opening of the new 9 hole golf course in early summer. The machinery has been taken on a five year contract hire agreement from Fairways GM of Kinross, Ransomes Jacobsen's dealer for Scotland.

"We have great aspirations here. The Jacobsen TR3 and the super light fairway mower, the SLF 1880, can be used on the golf course fairways and also the target range. Likewise, the out front rotary HR 4600 will be used to maintain the rough and semi-rough and also the outfield on the range," said Roddy Mess, Head Greenkeeper.

Pumpherstons Golf Club of Livingston, West Lothian is another club that has turned to Fairways GM of Kinross for its golf course maintenance equipment. The club has just received a Jacobsen greens and tees mowers.



Aspire's greenkeeping team with their new equipment

TURFCARE APPOINTED DISTRIBUTORS

The TurfCare Group has been appointed the new UK distributor of The Andersons range of turfgrass fertilisers. The Andersons' fertilisers will be sold by group company TurfCare Solutions as well as through TurfCare's other UK based distributors.

Commenting on the recent distribution agreement, TurfCare General Manager, Frank Dargan, said: "We are very pleased to have secured this agreement for the UK. Having sold The Andersons products in Ireland for some years now, we have confidence in their quality."

In addition to The Andersons, TurfCare Solutions also sells Floratine, Gro Power Organic and the Plant Marvel range of water soluble fertilisers.

INTURF HIT 20

Inturf are celebrating 20 years in business with further growth. The business is now launching new turf centres at York and Grantham as part of its continued commitment to meeting the needs of landscapers and leisure gardeners.

"We've tried to be innovative from the outset. We introduced custom growing, rootzone turf, big roll turf, fibre reinforced turf, lay 'n' play turf tiles and brought modular moveable turf to the UK," said Derek Edwards, founder of Inturf.

Since 2003 the day to day running of the company has been in the hands of Alex and Stephen Edwards, Derek's twin sons, both of whom have worked their way up the company from production, distribution and installation.

As part of the company's growth Nicky Burt, pictured, has been appointed Manager of Inturf's new lawn centre at Grantham. The centre offers unlimited supplies of freshly lifted turf to landscapers in Lincolnshire, Nottingham and Leicester. Nicky has worked in sales for a number of years and is from a farming family.



SPANISH HUNTER

Hunter Grinders Ltd was one of several British machinery manufacturers who recently attended the Spanish Machinery Trading Company, Atica, Trade Open Days, held at the Montanya Hotel, near Barcelona, in Spain, in March.

As Atica has only been the appointed distributor for Hunter Grinders since early 2004, this was the first time Hunters had attended this event, which is held every 18 months.

"Our relationship with Atica is still in its early stages and we are very keen to develop an awareness of our products within the Spanish Golf and Local Authority Markets. It was encouraging to see such a lot of enthusiasm for our product range. This was a very useful exercise," said Keith Cann-Evans, Hunter Grinders MD.

MONARCH OF THE GLEN



Kevin Fish, right, receives his award from Michael Rayment

The Secretary of The Glen Golf Club in North Berwick, Kevin Fish, has been named the first ever Secretary of the Year.

Kevin was picked ahead of five other finalists at a gala dinner in front of more than 200 of his peers at The Adelphi Hotel, Liverpool. He wins a trip for two to Australia with £500 spending money, five cases of Hardys Wines, a visit to Hardys' vineyards in South Australia, and a round of golf at the Royal Adelaide GC.

"The five judges felt that Kevin was the clear winner. The clubhouse at The Glen was so antiquated that it wasn't fit to be associated with the stunning course the club offers. Unfortunately Kevin couldn't do much about it, as the local authority owned it. However, after lengthy communication with members and professionals, he raised subscriptions and promoted the club as a tourist destination, raising enough revenue to buy the clubhouse," said Alistair Dunsmuir, Editor of Golf Club Management.

Kevin added: "I'm most pleased with the recognition I received from my peers. To be told by them that they think I'm doing a great job is an amazing feeling."

FROST AT NOVOZYMES



After the acquisition of Roots in 2003 and pursuing its expansion in the UK Amenity Market, Novozymes Biologicals has appointed Hugh Frost as their new Technical Manager.

Hugh previously worked for the John Innes Centre, in Norwich, as the Horticultural Manager of field trials and landscape amenities.

Hugh will have the whole technical responsibility for the UK/Ireland market, including customer assistance and training, contacts with research institutes and technical bodies, management of field trials and exhibition attendance.

SCOTTISH SLAY SECRETARIES

The annual fixture between the Secretaries Association and BIGGA Scottish Region took place at Ralston Golf Club, Paisley on Monday April 4.

The Secretaries Association were the hosts and had high hopes of recording a victory. The top pairing, our Chairman, Iain Barr, and Dennis Tweddell led the way and secured a halved match against Bill Crighton, Captain of the Secretaries Association and local Secretary, Joe Pearson. This was the only half in the match.

BIGGA suffered only two losses in the contest, Colin Black and Eddie McGee losing and the Regional Administrator losing at the 18th. He made the excuse that he had to play the two members of the Secretaries team on his own and this was the reason for his defeat and he is sticking to this story.

Wins for A. Dunn and A. Philp, G. Morrison and D. Wilson, M. Lothian and S. Higgins, S. Sullivan and S. Robertson, D. Scott and A. O'Hara, S. McTaggart and B. Aitken and K. Hodges and G. Wood combined to secure a convincing victory by 7 1/2 points to 2 1/2.

Our thanks to Alex Beveridge and the members of the Secretaries Association for organising this year's fixture and we look forward to next year's match.

Finally, thanks to the Captain, John Haining, the Committee and Joe Pearson, Secretary of Ralston Golf Club, for the courtesy and hospitality on the day.

Peter J. Boyd
Regional Administrator

BARENBRUG CONTINUES GROWTH

In a move to grow its business in Scotland, specialist grass seed breeder, Barenbrug UK, has appointed Stewartsturf as a new distributor. Based in Dalkeith, near Edinburgh, Stewartsturf is the new sole distributor for Barenbrug products in Scotland.

Established in 1894, Stewartsturf employs 50 people and has an annual turnover of £5 million. It supplies a range of products such as grass seed, fertilisers, tools and equipment to golf courses, local authority and sport and landscaping customers and offers a seeding, turfing and drainage contracting service.

Managing Director, Graeme Forbes, commented on the appointment: "We have been looking at Barenbrug for some time. Their good reputation in the UK and their status as an independent company fitted us perfectly. We know there is a very strong market for Barenbrug products in Scotland and we're looking forward to growing the business together."

Barenbrug UK Managing Director, Paul Johnson, said: "We are very pleased to have Stewartsturf on board and working with us to expand the business in Scotland, alongside our new sales team and the new Falkirk facility."



Left to right, Kenny Archibald, Graeme Forbes, Jayne Leyland and Billy Nimmo

SCOTTS STRENGTHENED

Scotts has strengthened its UK and Ireland Professional Turf and Amenity Division sales team with a number of personnel changes.

Simon Bamaby has been promoted to Technical Product Manager for the business. In this role, he is responsible for the ongoing technical development and product marketing of the Turf and Amenity Division's product range, and providing support for business growth. He also continues to provide specific key agronomic field support to the UK and Irish markets.

Scotts has appointed a new member to the team, Ed Carter, as Northern Area Sales Manager. Ed joins from Alpha Amenity, where he worked for nearly four years as a Technical Sales Representative in Northern England. He has over



Simon Barnaby, left, and Ed Carter

eight years' experience in the professional market, holding positions in greenkeeping, parks maintenance and forestry.

GTC News



Retiring GTC Board of Directors' Chairman, Gordon Huddy, reviews his time with the organisation and what has been achieved in a short period.

After 11 years on the GTC Management Committee, half of them as Chairman, David Golding, the Education Director, asked me to write a short piece, before my retirement, on how things have changed over the years and what the prospects and challenges for the future are. Certainly a lot has changed in that time and most has been for the good in the training of greenkeepers.

If I look back to the early to mid nineties, one can recall the heated debate of the idea of vocational qualifications, the way they were taught and how they were assessed. At that time many people challenged the modern methods and were in favour of assessment by exams with pass and fail standards. There was much resistance to the idea of Course Managers and Head Greenkeepers as assessors and a great deal of debate about the use of these assessors, where they were allocated and how much they were used. It all seems a long time ago and now the work-based delivery and assessment is well accepted and the GTC has trained over 1000 assessors all over the country, with plans to train a further 200 this year.

It has also standardised the syllabus - learning materials - which are taught as the underpinning knowledge elements both for NVQ2 and NVQ3. There is work to be done however on the delivery of these syllabuses and the GTC will be looking into this in the future.

On the operational side of the business, the GTC has moved out of its rather old temporary accommodation into a new modern, well equipped office with the full range of modern office equipment. The GTC's status had been changed to a Limited Company by guarantee and the structure of the organisation has been changed to include a Technical Committee reporting to the Board. Their function is to provide a constant input of new ideas to the Board for approval and finance. BIGGA has a strong representation on the Committee and their input is vital to the current and future work of the GTC on behalf of the sector.

Outside the regular income from its supporting bodies there is now a provision to finance special projects, with Board approval. Our thanks are due to Dr Mike Canaway for chairing this Committee so ably. All this progress has been the result of the work and dedication of David Golding and his loyal but limited staff. They are to be congratulated for all their hard work, often done in difficult circumstances and their ability to work together and overcome problems. I would like to thank not only David himself but also Fiona and Yvonne for their invaluable contributions.

What about the future? There is work to be done. We are living in an age of electronic communications and already it is possible to learn the underpinning knowledge for VQ's and, more recently, the Foundation Degree on the Internet. I was visiting Augusta for the Masters a few years

ago and made contact with Wendy O'Brien, currently a greenkeeper at the Carden Park Resort near Chester. She was on an assignment as a greenkeeper at Augusta and she was actually doing her NVQ 3 via the Internet during her time off work at the golf course. Extraordinary but this may well become normal in the future!

The changes in the game in the future will impact on the technology of greenkeeping and, in time, on the syllabus to be taught and the skills to be learnt. Global warming and resultant climate change are probably going to call for grass to be cut throughout the year and for the development of alternatives suitable for doing this. Increasingly members of golf clubs are not going to be satisfied with their course being closed for a lot of the winter months and having to play off temporary tee and temporary greens.

They will want their course to be playable on the finest grasses possible for the whole year. Drainage will become a key factor. Pay and play courses are going to spread and grasses to withstand the heavy wear and tear are going to be needed.

There will be further developments in combating the effect of improving skills and improving equipment on the top players in the world, bunker design and maintenance, control of rough and course design are due to change in the future. All of this will expand the syllabus of knowledge and practical skills needed by the greenkeeper and the GTC's job will be to ensure that training will not only keep up with the changes but actually to lead the way forward. I feel very confident that David Golding and his staff will be up to the challenge.

There are some excellent competent greenkeepers and Course Managers working on our golf courses and if I was to leave one message with employers it is to invest in your staff's training and your members and visitors will be rewarded by a better maintained and managed course.

Finally, having spent so much of my time with the GTC listening to the importance of skills training and having the related knowledge, I am now able to go off to cut my fescue/bent lawns at the right height for the time of year with a machine correctly set and wearing the appropriate clothing and footwear!

Yours aye

Gordon Huddy

Chairman, Board of Directors GTC

Education Update

Ken Richardson looks at the difference between education and training, who should pay for it and the help available towards the cost of education and training.

Education and Training

BIGGA regards the training of greenkeepers as its number one priority but what is training? Training is the process of teaching or learning a new skill. In other words it gives a worker the skills and competences to be able to do their job.

Education is the imparting and acquiring of knowledge through teaching and learning. In other words it gives people a wide range of knowledge that they can use within a job and within their everyday life.

It should also give them the ability to analyse facts and data to enable them to determine 'best practice'. All training should include some education, but education may or may not include training.

WHO SHOULD PAY FOR GREENKEEPER TRAINING?

The easy answer is the employer, i.e. the golf club. The reason for this is to ensure that all greenkeepers are capable of performing their duties to the standards required by the club in a safe and responsible manner.

Moreover, the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER) 1998 include a regulation that says that employers should give adequate information, instruction and training to employees to ensure that they are competent to operate work place equipment. Therefore, it is a legal requirement that all employers, including golf clubs, ensure that their staff are properly trained and are assessed as competent to operate machinery and work equipment.

However, the cost of training may be met by the government and could be offered free of charge. Contact your chosen training provider/college for details.

Should golf clubs train all greenkeepers to the highest possible level? The answer to this is no. Training should be provided to enable greenkeepers to do their current job or to prepare them for promotion.

All greenkeepers should be given Induction Training, e.g. information on Health and Safety, Working Hours, Etiquette, Uniform etc, when they commence their employment. This training can then be followed by formal, on the job, training that provides them with basic greenkeeping skills, e.g. Cutting, Raking, Brushing, Setting Up the Course etc.

Induction training need not take a long time nor need to be expensive but any costs should be borne by the golf club. As stated above, formal training can be subsidised by the government and can, in some cases, cost nothing.

Further, formal, training is available for those greenkeepers wanting to move into supervisory and management positions and this training can, in some circumstances, also subsidised by the government.

BIGGA can help its members through its Education and Development Fund. This Fund can provide a refund of up to £350 to any member who has had to pay for his/her training. However, as I have stated above, there

is no excuse for golf clubs refusing to pay for appropriate training required by law.

Formal training and assessment can lead to the award of National/Scottish Vocational Qualifications and to other qualifications such as Foundation Degrees.

WHO PAYS FOR GREENKEEPER EDUCATION?

The answer to this question is 'it depends'. It depends on the reasons for the education course, whether the course is relevant to the greenkeeper's job or future job, whether the golf club has a budget for further education and even on the greenkeeper's country of residence.

Higher education in England/Wales, in Northern Ireland and in Scotland is bound by different rules. For example, Scottish residents studying for a higher national diploma at a Scottish college may not have to pay any tuition fees, whereas students in England may have to pay.

Some golf clubs pay all tuition fees, some pay some of the fees and some pay none of the fees. Those clubs that pay some or all of the tuition fees may stipulate that they require the greenkeeper to remain working at the club for a set time after completing a course. This should be included in the greenkeeper's terms and conditions of service (contract).

WHY BOTHER WITH EDUCATION AND TRAINING?

For the golf club, education and/or training ensures that their greenkeepers are trained and competent to prepare their golf course to the highest standards within an allocated budget. For greenkeepers, education and/or training gives them the skills to prepare golf courses to the highest standards.

Education and training costs money but, as I have outlined above, financial help is available from the government, from BIGGA, from the GTC and from the R&A. All golf clubs should have a training budget, especially as Health and Safety law states that training is a must.

Remember, that if you think that training is expensive try ignorance.



Greenkeeper Education and Development Fund

Unlock the doors to progress through BIGGA's Education and Development Fund - the key to a great future for greenkeepers, golf clubs and the game of golf.

Golden and Silver Key Membership is available to both companies and individuals.

For details, please contact Ken Richardson on 01347 833800 or via ken@bigga.co.uk

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Rachael and Gemma from Membership Services would like to welcome 99 new members to the Association.

Membership Update

Enjoy the Summer with BIGGA - Everything you need for the perfect holiday

EUROPEAN MOTORING ASSISTANCE

If you are planning to take your car abroad this year it may be worth your while looking at the European Motoring Assistance offered at a very competitive price to BIGGA members by Europ Assistance. The cover includes protection prior to your departure if your vehicle is lost, immobilised or rendered unroadworthy as a result of fire, theft, accidental damage or breakdown.

Roadside assistance and transportation to a garage is also covered as well as transportation home if repairs cannot be carried out abroad.

Peace of mind and a relaxed holiday for only **£63.66**. Call 01603 828255 and quote BIGGA for further details. Terms and Exclusions Apply. Cover is not valid if your trip is planned to exceed 31 days.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

Travel Insurance has traditionally been bought through travel agents or tour operators when booking a holiday or making travel arrangements. Heath Lambert Affinity Partnerships offer both single trip and annual policies to BIGGA members and their families. You will find that the rates compare very favourably to what is available elsewhere in the market and that cover limits are very generous. For a competitive quote call 01603 828255 and quote BIGGA.

GET KITTED OUT FOR THE HOT WEATHER

If your summer wardrobe is in need of an update than why not take advantage of your privilege card. Burton offers **10% discount** on production of your silver Premier Privilege Card at the till. You can also shop online and still get a fantastic **10% off** at www.burton.co.uk/premier.

PERSONAL ACCIDENT INSURANCE

Although you'd rather not think about it, accidents do happen. Your BIGGA membership provides 24 hour cover for accidents which occur at home, work and on holiday. To make a claim call 01277 251000 and ask for Ira Mullish or Michaela Edwards.



CAR HIRE

Europcar are offering a **10% discount** for UK and Overseas rentals to privilege card holders. Call 0870 607 5000 and quote contract.

AIRPORT PARKING

One of the inconveniences of a holiday abroad is the car parking charges at the airport. Save money this year by pre booking through APH and receive up to **35% discount**.

Call 0870 737 7671 and mention you are a Premier Privilege Card holder.

STAYING IN THE UK?

Your membership also gives great value if you're planning to stay at home this summer. Megabowl has a great offer for BIGGA members of buy one game get one free. Vue cinemas give discounted rates on Mondays to Thursdays, just right for those rainy days when the kids are driving you round the bend.

If you wish to go away then HotelStayUK gives up to **60% off** if you mention you are a Premier Privilege Card holder, call 08708 747 106. You can even get **20% discount** at Moto services areas, excluding petrol and tobacco, so you can make savings travelling to your destination.

These offers require you to show your Premier Privilege Card. If you have misplaced your card call the membership team for a replacement.

BIGGA welcomes...

SCOTTISH REGION

Ross Anderson, Central
David Bunting, West
Peter Finlay, Central
Kevin Gillespie, East
Dougie Lynn, East
David Merchant, North
Sean Quinn, West
Derek Ross, Central
Philip Watson, North

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Craig Benson, Sheffield
Travis Buckley, North Wales
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Kevin Butterworth, Sheffield
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Sam Lupton, Northern
John Mcloughlin, North West
Alan Miller, North East
Gareth Pearson, North East
Steven Pickering, North West
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Andrew Willis, Northern

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Matthew Bell, Mid Anglia
Gareth Blinko, BB&O
David Coupland, East of England
Janet Everett, Midland
Simon Fisher, Midland
Susan Gooding, BB&O
Stephen Guest, Midland
Roger Miller, Mid Anglia
James Piper, BB&O
Paul Putman, BB&O
Paul Reeve, BB&O
Andrew Ross, Midland
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Matthew Tietjen, East Midland
Richard Wood, Midland
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Martyn Bowen, Surrey

Richard Evans, Sussex
Ashley Filmer, Kent
Tony Hawes, London
Jay Innes, Kent
Duncan King Spooner, Sussex
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Edward Fox, South Coast
Matthew Gale, South West
Gary Giles, South West
Jeremy Harris, South West

Declan Healy, South West
David King, South Coast
Denis Linnell, Devon & Cornwall
Gavin Morgan, South Wales

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Aaron Fulton
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JUNE'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 a DIGITAL FM SCAN RADIO/ALARM, with a detachable speaker and headphones. Our congratulations go to Ian Stephens of Retford Golf Club.



Sprayer Advances Benefit All

There was a time when there was little hygiene in our hospitals. Surgeons were even bloodstained! It was also not so long ago that, after use, a sprayer would be parked up, with obvious encrusted deposits inside and out. Time has taught us that good hospital hygiene is critical. But does it really matter about sprayers? Yes. Which is why they have undergone a design revolution aimed at minimising internal and external spray deposits. But why?

*Continue
to learn*

As in any activity - whether on the golf course or at home - we're now all under great pressure to keep the workplace cleaner. Spraying is no exception to this rule and, in the last few years, huge advances have been made. So that greenkeepers now have few excuses not to improve their practices; practices that are directed to ensure we should better clean our sprayers inside out.



1. Today the focus is on your machine's hygiene and meeting this important need immediately after you've finished spraying on the course.

INTERNAL CLEANING

Once spraying is finished, and even though no more spray can be seen coming out of the nozzles, some spray solution is still likely to remain in your sprayer. Just how much liquid is held back will depend on the amount of thought given to minimising the quantity by engineers who built your machine. But the next time you mix up you can be reasonably sure retained liquid will be mixed with new solution. It will, of course, then be contaminated.

If you are using the same mix as before this may pose little risk to, say, your greens. But if it's not you have a problem in the making. A problem that's not just expensive for your club, but one that could put your greens out of action for months.

To avoid such a catastrophe, advances in sprayer design now minimise amounts of spray solution retained in the tank. For example, tanks are now made of free draining material, such as polyethylene, and there's now an obvious sump that's effective even on slopes.

2. Engineers have made enormous advances to both minimise spray 'carry over' and remove it from areas where spraying has just been carried out.

Dead end appendices, like pressure relief pipes, are now designed to bleed to keep spray liquids moving so they are not held back until operators accidentally or otherwise open the relief valve. But despite such advances there will still be some traces of liquid within. But at least what remains is now minimised - an advance critical to the next stage of engineering development!

Now it is possible to remove small residual volumes without even having to leave the green or fairway you have been spraying. This is because sprayers can now be fitted with dedicated, clean water tanks that direct water to tank sprinklers that flush the inner wall surfaces. Credit dishwasher technology for this! Dishwashers do not require large water volumes nor are they filled with water.

Today it's the same with sprayers. Time was when operators had to return to where the sprayer was being loaded, fill it up three times with water and safely dispose of the rinsings. This need for responsible disposal has become an ever more serious problem.

For where today can you safely dispose of large volumes of contaminated water? But - at a stroke - spray tank sprinklers have made it possible for greenkeepers to clean their sprayers right in the area they have been working.



Bill Taylor, of Hardi, charts recent advances that will ensure sprayers are cleaner, bringing important benefits to all



3. Small volumes of clean water are enough to sprinkle inner surfaces of the main tank to effectively remove harmful residues.

Because only small volumes of water are needed for the purpose, it makes it possible to transport it on the sprayer and, in turn, to spray out products exactly in the area being worked, leaving a clean sprayer ready for its next job. We can also take a tip from arable operators here.

They calculate very precisely just how much spray solution is needed for the job and then, cunningly, reduce the volume so that a small area is left unsprayed. Then they use this area for both their internal and external cleaning routines. But, you ask, do I really need to bother with this routine if I'm always using the same types of products?

Remember. Any spray liquid remaining in the sprayer may also harm the materials of which it is made. It's not unknown, when sprayers are parked up in the sun, for solvents used to dissolve pesticides to re-condense as a concentrate onto internal surfaces. Such undiluted solvents can and do cause structural damage. So even where there may be little threat from spray liquid carry over, there still remains a risk to the fabric of the sprayer.

EXTERNAL CLEANING

This technology is much more recent and, as I write, firm guidelines for its use are still emerging. But there are already some ground rules!

Every time a car is taken on the road it gets some dirt on it. Each occasion a sprayer is used it too inevitably gets some external deposits on it. If those deposits are left on the outside and it rains or anyone leans on it or touches it, then there is a risk of contamination.

Indeed, arable sprayers can get so contaminated with herbicides that, if it rains when they are parked up, it kills off the vegetation below. But the overall picture is much worse than that. Environment agencies, water supply companies and regulators are telling our industry that 'inappropriate cleaning' may be the single greatest source of ground water pollution. The area underneath a dirty, parked sprayer may be exposed to dose levels that far exceed that for which the product is approved.

Imagine then if a sprayer is parked on concrete close to a ditch. Very easily, some pesticide will get washed off it onto the concrete and into the ditch. Clearly we all have to do better than allow that and ensure external,

as well as internal, deposits are also removed; and removed in the field of use, just as should be the case with internal cleaning activity.

4. External deposits need to be removed after your internal cleaning routine. Remember - regular cleaning brings benefits to all.

Greenkeepers can use the same clean water supply for both internal and external cleaning routines. Clean internal surfaces first but leave about a third of the water for outside. Pressure hoses and lances can be fitted to the sprayer ready for use on greens and fairways.

Keep your booms open, pull out the hose and then pressure wash the booms and rear ends of the tanks first. This is where most deposits are found, so it's best to start there. Doing this small, quick job regularly

minimises deposits and leaves the sprayer so much safer for you, as well as looking its best to your playing clientele.

Can you reduce build-up levels on the outside? Yes, by using the coarsest spray advised on the label. If the product you use offers the choice of medium/coarse sprays, then choose coarse and, as with drift control, try and avoid the use of fine sprays.

So do remember that just a few minutes spent on these important routines at the end of spraying will not only help your sprayer last longer, it will minimise environmental risks and ensure you make best use of all the spray you've bought. It makes sense for us all to keep our sprayers clean.

More information on sprayer cleaning and all the latest spraying news is on the Hardi International A/S website, www.hardi-international.com.



Your Letters...

Jim's Poem

*'Twas in the county of the bard, where first I heard the holy word, where
NPK and all its herd were put asunder
Vile meadowgrass cut to the ground and trampled under
At Warwick where you held court, with young pretenders played some
sport and even breached the sacred fort of ancient Bingley.
Excaliber you doubled up or took them singly*

*They battled back, but all in vain, great blows upon them you did rain
the lights that flickered in my brain, you struck the matches,
And lit a beacon 'cross the Downs with plain dispatches
So having heard the word firsthand, I joined the loyal, trusty band who
rode throughout this cursed land with honest reason
To feed or water meadowgrass would be high treason.*

*We rallied South we sallied North, from Dornoch down to Perranporth
foolhardy Captain's spouting forth did feel thy sting,
And when the sword was fully weighed, you plunged it in
Then from the West the darkest deeds did thunder in on ghostly steeds
delivering malicious seeds of discontent
And introduced the snivelling, crawling creeping bent*

*Your knights who once had been so loyal, did quickly smell
the lustrous spoil
so soon they did from you recoil and shift their ground,
They mustered round the dollar flag and shunned the pound.
They that once had pledged their lives did scabbard up their poa knives
for mobile phones and four-wheel drives they left their champion
Alone amidst the barren fields like bonnie campion*

*Cold winter blew its bitter blast, the creeping bent it breathed its last,
its glory days were over fast as you predicted,
It could not bear the chilling blows that you inflicted
Next rye sails in upon the breeze and plants his standard on the tees,
then spreads to fairways his disease, that dwarfish snail
His slime now licks around the cup, our holy grail*

*The battles will not be in vain, proud fescue will return again, as we
foreswear to make your aim our lifelong quest
And let you pass with sweet refrain unto thy rest
And we will place a guardian there, a linksie-man to shield your lair, his
single charge to have a care, the rye to slaughter
'T will be one tomb no-one would dare to feed or water*

*So fare thee well my honest friend, on time and tide you may depend,
your legacy will long extend across the land
For honest truths at journeys end alone shall stand*

Kerran Daly

Jim Arthur

It was with great sadness that I heard of the death of Jim. Until about 12 months ago we had an ongoing friendship built on my respect for the great man's knowledge and above all his ongoing crusade for us all to stick to the basics of good greenkeeping.

Sadly when I was trying to explain the reality and pressures that today's Course Managers have to work under, despite knowing that his principles of little fertiliser, little water and plenty of aeration were correct to produce a better surface which reduces the need for chemicals etc, he didn't want to listen to my support of the modern world of golfer's demands! Down went the phone as it has so often to his 'friends' in recent years - but I hope I speak for all those of us who fully support his beliefs when I say Jim, despite his frustrations with us in privileged positions in golf knew that we all had the greatest respect for him.

I was proud to be part of the R&A's Golf Course Committee some years ago when funding was approved to allow Jim to coordinate all his works and with the assistance of his chosen co-writers produce Practical Greenkeeping. This book will long be the very basic 'bible' for all aspiring Course Managers setting off on their greenkeeping careers. I know in terms of greenkeeper education Jim's beliefs and support of the tried and tested methods of a programme to encourage the fine grasses will continue to be taught for generations to come.

David F Golding
GTC Education Director

Tribute to Ian Ormond Taylor

It is with great sadness that we have to report the death of Ian Taylor, a Scottish Greenkeeper, who was really proud of his roots and trade. Anyone who came into contact with Ian during his greenkeeping life at Bothwell Castle, Cambuslang, Glasgow Gailies and finally Powfoot will have good memories of his enthusiasm, sense of humour and dedication. We also remember his quiet calm as he sat back and pondered with his pipe in one hand and his favourite tippie in the other.

Ian will be remembered as one of the stalwarts who formed the Ayrshire Section. We owe him a debt of gratitude for his selfless endeavours. When he did something he always put his full heart into it, as people who knew him remember. Ian's fondness for Country and Western, wearing full regalia or latterly his caravan days. There is no truth in the rumour his bad feet were caused when putting his gun back in its holster.

Ian's many friends in the golfing community will remember his presence and mourn his passing. Ian's funeral service took place on Thursday March 24 at Ecclefechan Parish Church and was attended by many friends and former colleagues. Our thoughts are with his family in their sad loss.

Robert T. Bruce

YOUR LETTERS ARE REQUESTED!

Send to: Scott MacCallum, Editor,
Greenkeeper International, BIGGA HOUSE,
Aldwark, Alne, York YO61 1UF, or email
them to: scott@bigga.co.uk

Course Feature



▲ Paul Worster

God Gave this Place for Golf

Scott MacCallum visits BIGGA Environment Competition winner Minchinhampton Golf Club and meets a Course Manager, whose environmental work acts as a real stress buster.

There are some parts of the country where golf seems to be a much bigger part of the community than others. There are some places where it seems that everyone and his pet dog are involved in the game in some way or another and its not just skateboarders you have to be wary of when you walk the pavements, but caddie cars.

St Andrews and Gullane spring to mind immediately as just that sort of place but there is another, not quite such an obvious name, to add to that list.

Minchinhampton, in Gloucestershire, is not the biggest place in the world, but Minchinhampton Golf Club boasts 54 holes with the Old Course resembling an inland version of some of those in Fife or East Lothian. Cut from the common land the course passes backwards and forwards across public roads with golfers holing out just a few yards from the through traffic. The other two courses, complete with a magnificent clubhouse converted from a stone built barn, are more conventional and under the stewardship of Course Manager, Paul Worster, represent fine challenges for the 1400 playing members - the Old Course - which is almost a club within the club, has another 600 playing members. Both clubs have thriving junior sections, encouraged by the club, as an investment in the future.

The three courses are maintained by a combined staff of 11 - nine on the New Courses, consisting of the Avening designed by Fred Hawtree in 1972, and the Cherington designed by Martin Hawtree in 1992, which cover a combined 250 acres, and the other two on the Old Course - but despite the obvious hefty workload the team still has had time to become the 2004 winners of the BIGGA Golf Environment Competition, sponsored by Scotts, Syngenta, and WRAP.

"People do ask - haven't you got enough to do without bothering about environmental matters, but it isn't a case of that," said Paul, who is a superb ambassador for his profession and the environmental lobby.

"It takes a lot of the stress out of the daily grind of preparing a golf course. I'll bet I was the only Course Manager in the country who was transplanting buttercups and reeds at the beginning of the week. We've produced a little marshy area and are making sure that it develops".

Of course, its not just therapy for the staff, the Minchinhampton membership also benefit. "It brings a whole new perspective for the members. They are not wholly focussed on lightening fast greens and criss-cross cut fairways they realise there is something more involved and it takes their attention when they are playing" said Paul, who along with officials from the club received the Environment Competition trophy at Harrogate in January.



A combination of 11 staff maintain the three Minchinhampton courses

Golf began at Minchinhampton in 1889, when the Lord of the Manor was introduced to the game by a friend from Scotland. It is no surprise that when you take on board the introduction to this article, or indeed the name of the first course, that the friend came from St Andrews.

"The friend actually said, and we've included the quote in the club handbooks, that 'God gave this place for golf'."

The Lord of the Manor, being a golfer - albeit a recent one - and as a result a decent sort, appreciated that he couldn't just ride roughshod over the community and take over common land to indulge his latest hobby - the relatively new sport to the area of golf - so he made his Great Park at Minchinhampton available for graziers and public use in exchange for the rights to play golf over the commons. However, the game quickly caught on and Paul produced a framed picture, which hangs in the Mess Room, showing women in long skirts and bodices playing golf over the Old Course with horses and carts travelling along the tracks which are now busy B roads. At that stage, in much the same manner as courses were maintained up and down the country, it was a Pro\Greenkeeper who was in charge of the upkeep. In the 1960's and 70's the common started to get a lot busier and many more people were playing golf so the club realised that if it was going to develop they have to move. To that end they sold their only tangible asset, a pub called the Old Lodge, previously an old Coaching Inn, which acted as the clubhouse, and used the money to finance the land for the Avening Course on farmland a couple of miles away.

Course Feature



This water feature is a haven for various wildlife



"There were, and still are, some pretty astute financial people running this club and 20 years after building the Avening they were able to build the Cherington course to cope with the yet more demand for golf in the area.

Although built on modest budgets father and son Hawtree both did remarkable jobs on limited budgets - Martin who is retained as the Club's resident architect to oversee any design project which is undertaken, also had to comply with regulations which dictated that the course could only rise or fall by no more than one and a half metres. The swales, mounds and contouring he put into the course means it looks anything but a flat golf course and the greens are very undulating and can stimp at up to 11," said Paul who is a category one player himself.

To assist with the development of the Cherington course trees were transplanted from the Avening to add character and definition as quickly as possible.

"We transplanted 8,000 trees using a JCB or tree spade and if we lost 50 I'd be surprised. We had the right operators who know how to dig a tree without ruining it."

Ironically, some of those trees are now being repatriated to the Avening Course as there is a feeling it needs to be tightened up.

"We employ an arboriculturalist who advises us on each and every tree and we can look at strategy, species and health of trees. We are thinning out about 180 trees this year and there was quite a bit of disquiet among some of the members as some of them can remember when they were planted, indeed some of them were members of the planting parties and actually planted the trees and to see someone taking a chainsaw to them has been a bit of a shock," said Paul.



The Old course is common land and is split by public roads

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Course Feature



Wooden trays are positioned throughout the courses to store grass clippings



A place to rest for the local buzzards



With Marking Day approaching the Old course's grass cannot be cut for two weeks

"If you get the right professional advice it carries the day. That's what we do. If we feel we haven't got the knowledge, we'll go out and get it rather than making it up as we go along".

The bunkerless Old Course is looked after by Senior Greenkeeper Nigel Crewe and his Assistant, Ian Shaw, and their job has some interesting elements.

Cattle and horses roam free on what is still common land and the first job of the day is to repair the damaging cattle and horse prints from the greens - a task that can take up to three or four hours.

Bizarrely, although all Minchinhampton's courses are run by Paul, the Old Course is a separate section and any time that materials or labour are transferred from one to another, a paper trail has to be left, and invoices drawn.

"At the moment, we're on the eve of Marking Day when the cattle are branded and we are not allowed to cut any grass other than greens or tees for two weeks before or after Marking Day. The idea is that the livestock get the first cut so it can get pretty tough," said Nigel, who added that a few beasts are lost through accidents on the roads around the common each year.

Marking Day also signals one of the highlights of the Minchinhampton golfing calendar - Cow Pat Night!

Among the touches which impressed the judges in the Environment Competition were holes left in a new drystone wall to retain badger runs, wooden perches which attract the local buzzards, wood construction frames and trays which have been placed discreetly on every other hole on both new courses to take grass clippings. "The guys are now fanatical about finding one to empty their boxes and from there we can shovel the clippings easily off the ply and return them to compost. We did the whole job for £250."

Composting is another extremely important element of their work and there is a massive compost heap on the edge of the Maintenance Compound measuring about 30 Metres Square and nearly two metres high.

"A fan is used twice a day to get some oxygen into it to aid decomposition and we reuse what we produce in about nine months."



Paul and his team created this hole to retain a badger run

Paul believes that golf clubs are far more environmentally aware now than in the past. "We are all a lot more conscious of environmental matters than we were, but we are also far more active and as a result have a far greater potential to pollute. We can all do our little bit to help," said Paul, who is slowly changing some of his machinery fleet to electric or LPG.

"We are not just providing a wildlife sanctuary. We are operating a business while trying to minimise the effects of environmental damage. The environment belongs to us all, and its up to all of us to help look after it."

He is also aware of the "bad press" that golf gets from some aspects of the media, which fuels a low public approval rating for golf.

"Ninety percent of the UK population lives in big towns and cities so for a lot of people sport is playing snooker and darts in the pub and going to football matches. Golf has unfortunately been perceived as damaging, polluting, and therefore expensive and elitist - people still think that there is an arsenal of chemicals and fertilisers wantonly thrown at golf courses because some of the courses they see on TV lead them to believe that to be the case.

"If we can get the point across that we've got some wonderful habitats out here and that this sport does little or no harm to the environment, we shall be preserving the game for generations to come."

Paul's first involvement with environmental matters came at his previous job at Lilleybrook golf club, on which a SSSI site was designated just before he left to join Minchinhampton 13 years ago. "What was involved came as a bit of a shock to me at the time, but when I came here there was so much work involved in building the Cherington Course that we didn't have much time to devote to the environmental aspects."

That all changed when one of his staff, Samantha Kennedy, began to take an interest in the environmental well being of the site. "Sam was critical to what we were doing so we sent her on training course to improve her knowledge. She helped me to create a methodology statement for the maintenance of the golf courses, and produced a booklet for the members to read in the clubhouse explaining our approach.

When Samantha left for Bowood Golf and Country Club, her role was taken by another member of staff, Martin Didcott, who was employed primarily for his environmental knowledge but also doubled as a greenkeeper.

"He coordinated the environmental work because I've got a lot of other things to think about - budgets, committees, competitions, Health and Safety, Risk, COSHH, staff appraisals, training, the list goes on and on.



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The club have been busy transplanting and thinning out trees



A feature like this highlights why the BIGGA Environmental Competition judges were so impressed



The compost heap has a fan which blows air into it everyday to assist decomposition



Golf Environment Competition

Quite frankly, none of these things, the environment included, are easily managed without the support of a good team, and at Minchinhampton the focus is very much on the team, and a partnership between staff, management, and the members themselves.

"The environment is very much an opportunity to reward a member of staff with more responsibility. It can be easy for Assistant Greenkeepers to become frustrated at an apparent lack of rapid career progress - you can take a member of staff from outside your "core team" and give them the environment as a big important project.

"Do not underestimate the pressure that Course Managers are under. I have been there and felt it. The R&A Best Practice website is an example. People don't have the time to visit it as regularly as they should to get the full benefits of the information available. Making that commitment is a difficult thing".

Minchinhampton entered the Environment Competition for the first time in 2003 and it says much for the quality of the work being carried out that only a year later they were picking up the top prize.

"We were running along competition lines for some time but felt that we weren't ready for that final step of putting in the entry form. I'm so glad we did because it wasn't nearly as invasive or time consuming as we'd feared."

The club held a presentation dinner for the staff and their partners during February in honour of winning the competition.

"I was so proud when the guys were applauded into the room by about a hundred members. I followed it up after the meal with a PowerPoint presentation on the work we had done to win the competition and this was really well received. I've since had some rebookings, and done the presentation for the ladies, three BIGGA and company seminars in the south, and an advance booking from the Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust."

What advice could he give to other clubs thinking about becoming more environmentally active? "I'd sit down with anyone and everyone who's interested. Itemise the things that need to be done, put someone in charge, give them a budget, and let them run with it."

Paul is also concerned about the threat to remove more and more chemicals from the greenkeepers armoury.

"I firmly believe that before I retire routine chemical applications will have been withdrawn from use on Amenity Turf. While I have no intention of suddenly and completely ceasing the use of chemicals here, what I want to do is to understand how best to manage without. Golfers have got to appreciate that it is not necessarily best practice to exterminate every single weed just because they don't happen to like the look of it, but we are in a competitive business and I don't want to fight it on the back foot."

You can't see Paul Worster or Minchinhampton Golf Club ever being caught on the back foot and the Club will continue to thrive.

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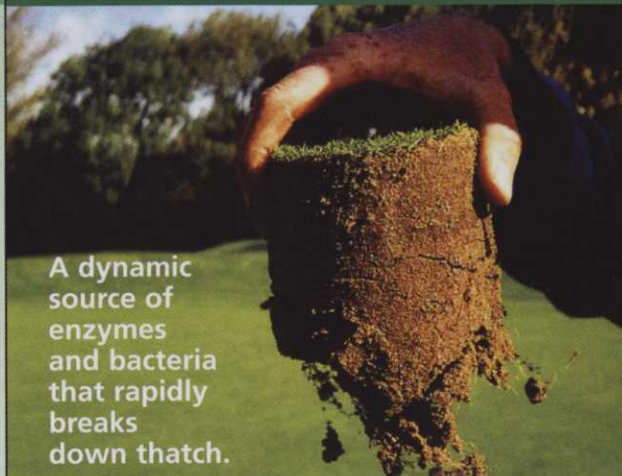


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The Physics of Aeration

In his last article, before his death, Jim Arthur explores the history of vertidrainage and the best aeration practices.

One might have thought that everything that needed to be said about aeration of golf courses had been written. Maybe, but obviously it has not all been read by all!

Clearly all good greenkeepers and perhaps most mediocre ones will accept that one cannot successfully manage any turf subjected to traffic without aeration. The old true story of what course management at all levels is up against bears repeating - for the umpteenth time! In my presence, many years ago, an irate peppery member accosted the respected Head Greenkeeper about slits in the green. "Can't you leave the greens alone for five minutes," he complained. The response, made in a measured and polite manner was: "Certainly sir, if you stop playing on them."

Aeration is primarily, of course, to correct the consolidation caused by traffic, both pedestrian and machines, and with ever increasing play, this has never been more intense. Such compaction destroys soil structure; reduces pore spaces, which roots as well as air and water occupy; impedes drainage; discourages root growth, causes stagnation and moss invasion but above all it encourages that age old enemy of consistent all year round good playing conditions, *Poa annua*.



Wiedenmann's Terra Spike XF is now a regular on many golf courses

This is acceptable where there is little or no winter golf, tell me where that is, save on courses where tarting them up in summer to produce those shaved, overfed and watered monstrosities - the Green is Great School pampering the professionals and so admired by many television viewers. *Poa annua* is really good for less than half the year and too often is unplayable in late winter.

The mark of excellence is to play to full greens all year round. In passing, we do seem to have progressed from my early advisory days, when it was standard practice on many inland courses to switch automatically to temporaries in late autumn and not to go back until just before Easter. Then of course few played winter golf except on links and heathland.

Of course, deep frequent regular aeration is probably one of, if not the most, important routine management tools but there is much more to it than merely sticking holes in the turf. For one thing there are very varied



Toro's ProCore 648 can aerate 18 greens in just over seven hours according to the company

types of 'hole makers' and it may be helpful to discuss what tines should be used where, when and how deep.

Perhaps the most misused form of aeration is hollow tining. The first tine to extract cores of soil was designed and produced by Paul's of Paisley in 1919. It was a great improvement on the old solid tining by hand forking which compressed the soil laterally, even if it did break up compacted layers and improve stratified soils, showing root breaks at changes in the soil structure derived from changing the type of top dressing. In passing, deep sections taken with a hole cutter reveal the past history of any green as effectively as the examination of annual rings exposed when trees are cut down.

Aeration was always recognised as vital, even a century ago.



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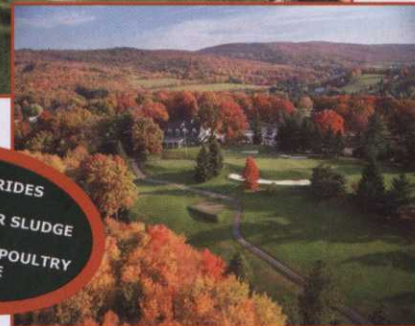
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The Physics of Aeration

Until the entry of Wm. Hargreaves into the manufacturing of aeration machinery - he started Sisis in 1932 - such work was slowly and laboriously carried out by hand. Long lines of stalwart greenkeepers progressing backwards over greens in a rhythmic pattern of thrust, lever and withdrawal.

This is exactly the pattern on which the vertidrain was designed by the de Ridders in 1980. Though few remember it, I am proud to have been the introducer of this now universally used and valued deep aerator - with the help of a small plant hire firm, Charterhouse, who then had a small factory a mile or so from where I then lived. I well remember getting the first few courses, including Sunningdale and Walton Heath, to aerate all their greens.

Let us revert to the problems of aeration and especially the limitations of hollow tining. More harm than good results in using hollow tines at the wrong season or for the wrong reasons. You may guess that I use hollow tines only for specific reasons. Used at other times or as a routine hollow lining often does far more harm than good. I am naturally a great advocate of the benefits of aeration and also believe that what is discovered, as the best programme for one course is not necessarily the best for another.

What then are the snags as opposed to the benefits? First and foremost is that hollow lining was invented 85 years ago as a soil exchange procedure. When greens were unimproved and generally on heavy soils, it made sense to extract a small percentage and replace it with sandy compost. On sandy soils, e.g. links and heathland and on perched water table sandy rootzones, one certainly does not want to remove physically ideal rootzones. It is not only very wasteful even if cores are broken up and brushed back in, but alters the consistency of rootzones.

A second problem is that the holes are necessarily large. If they were not, breakages of very thin tines would be prohibitively expensive. These large holes provide ideal invasion points for weeds but especially for *Poa annua* to enter erstwhile tightly knit turf that effectively barred seeds getting a foothold. Far too often I have seen previously 'pure' bent/fescue greens spotted like dominoes with small seedling *Poa annua* growing in every tine hole - yes even years ago at St. Andrews' Eden Course, when unadvisedly hollow tined in spring, just when *Poa* is starting to seed vigorously.

If you must hollow tine for soil removal reasons, it must be in winter, given suitable soil and weather conditions. One sees greens being intensively shallow hollow tined prior to overseeding with bents and fescues. Yet the optimum conditions for establishing introduced seed are exactly the same as for *Poa annua* to gain a foothold.

I often question the cost effectiveness of such overseeding programmes, special cases excepted, and often they are counter productive in 'letting in the *Poa*' as many an old links greenkeeper told me so many years ago - just as true today. All in all, there are so many



An early Sisis tractor mounted aerator. Scant protection from the elements both above and below



Sean Reilly, Loch Lomond Golf Club, tackles compaction with a S500 pedestrian aerator manufactured by Dennis of Derby

snags, including poor depth because hollow tines are structurally weak and snap if too 'pressurised' that I would reserve hollow lining only as a rare part of a soil exchange programme.

It is unproductive to compare aerators because the only criterion is that they should be capable of piercing very deep without damaging the turf or the tines. The main requirements with aeration are to carry it out frequently, regularly, periodically and at varying depths. Aerating at the same depth all the time risks creating a 'plough pan' - a consolidated level just below the depth of aeration, which has to be broken up and lifted by deep vertidrainage.

If you want to explode air under the surface, inject high pressure water by jets or even, in extremes, correct compaction by lifting, rebuilding and relaying, then used in conjunction with tried and tested deep solid/slit lining - never on its own - then I am the last to object.

Remember however that one always has to achieve a balance of depth with minimum disturbance to surfaces; maximum air exchange, which is why slits are favourites with their greater soil/air interface, and frequency, with some of the members getting hot under the collar over marks on putting surfaces which cannot affect their putting for more than a few hours. As with all things in greenkeeping there are more ways than one of achieving the desired aim.

There are no set rules, only predictable results from specific actions, which have to be balanced, good against bad. All I ask is that all those making decisions know what the downside is. I can but repeat that good greenkeeping is common sense, it is not rocket science and is based on botany with a little physics and no chemistry. Aeration is physics! Get stuck in there!



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APPLICATION RATES

A normal spring or autumn top dressing application would be around 3-6 kg/m². This would equate to around one and a half to three tonnes for a golf green of around 300 square metres. Three and a half to seven tonnes for a football pitch.

Jim Arthur 1920-2005

Past BIGGA Chairman Gordon Child pays personal tribute to his friend and mentor Jim Arthur.

The world of greenkeeping and the turf industry as a whole lost a giant of a man on Saturday May 14 2005. I first met Jim Arthur in 1952, when he still worked for the STRI. He was one of the lecturers who came into Leeds College of Art and Technology, and I was sitting a turf culture course at the time, we have been in contact ever since. I was sad to see him on the morning of his passing, fighting to the end.

It is impossible to go through Jim's life in full as I would need a book to do him justice, but briefly Jim was trained at Reading University to be a farmer and then went on to be a Captain in the forces before joining the STRI. Here he changed tack and concentrated on fine turf and one of his sayings to greenkeepers was: "Listen to the farmer and do exactly the opposite."

He briefly managed a seed company before becoming a freelance agronomist advising over 500 golf courses and being advisor to the R&A. I write this as a personal tribute to a very good friend.

Although I had known Jim for over 50 years, it was the last 25 or so we became very close, living only 30 miles apart. We were very often in daily touch either by phone or meeting, and I have spent hundreds of hours in his conservatory putting the world to rights. Those who knew him well would know how much he disliked grey squirrels, and he always had his air rifle at the ready.

He would jump up in mid sentence to take a pop at one in the garden, though I never actually saw him hit one. So it was ironic that the first day he moved into the hospice, the garden was full of them, but after a day or so none were to be seen. The word must have got around.

The enthusiasm for his work never left him, and his beliefs never changed from the time I heard him in 1952 to the day he died. Jim was a traditionalist and he fought everything and everyone vehemently who opposed those ideals. Few people in our industry escaped a tongue lashing at some time or other, so strong were his beliefs, but one thing you could always rely on was that Jim, if asked, would always try to help.

I well remember that when I was fighting at Cannington College to build a golf course to train young greenkeepers on and being told: "We'll give you the land, but we have no money." So I turned to Jim for help and, within a short time, with his expertise and persuasive manner, the course was built, a course that hundreds of students have benefited from over the years.

Jim was a very generous man, I know lots of greenkeepers who rang him for help and without hesitation he would offer free advice. He would give talks to greenkeepers, Sections and Regions without ever charging a fee, such was the stature of this man. He was equally at home talking to top experts as he was to students and he enjoyed every minute of it.

Some of my fondest memories of Jim came during the time he started

to write Practical Greenkeeping, a book which had taken us years to persuade him to do, but once started it took over his life and some others too. He would ring three or four and even more times a day, not just to me but a few others, just to run something past you.

His dedication was unbelievable, and when you take into account his age and the fact that Audrey, his wife, was ill and needed constant attention, it was amazing that the book was completed. Practical Greenkeeping was funded by the R&A, and that is a measure of the high esteem in which his knowledge and expertise were held. We must all be thankful that the book will always be there to refer to and I am sure it will be used as a tool in the education of greenkeepers for a long time to come.

Jim Arthur's name is known the world over; his advice was sort after by the best. He had many critics, particularly from those who wished or tried to make a fast buck from encouraging the wrong grasses, which he waged constant war on. Jim was also very fond of making predictions, and what was irritating to many was that he was nearly always proved right.

He always said that in time the bulk of golf clubs would have to go back to traditional management of courses because finances would not be available for the high cost maintenance methods some used. How right he was. Finances in most clubs have now dipped and this, coupled with pesticide and chemical legislation, are forcing greenkeepers and clubs to go back to the more austere methods that Jim always called for. So it is sad in some ways that it has come about at this time.

He had many interests outside that of agronomy and one such interest was wildlife. His love and knowledge for animals and birds, apart from grey squirrels, was excellent. Not very long ago he correctly identified two Egyptian Geese, which came into our field at home, when no one around seemed to know. So I think it is fitting that I should end this small tribute to him with this little story from his son, Richard.

Jim always used to feed foxes which came into his back garden and when he was taken into the hospice they had not been fed for five days. When on the Saturday, the day Jim passed away, Richard went out to feed them and for the first time a young fox cub came to the dish to feed. A new life came in as one went out.

Jim Arthur will be sadly missed and I for one will always be very grateful for his friendship and help over so many years. We who were his friends were very privileged.



Dressing to Thrill

Mike Brear explores the important process when it comes to top dressing.

WHAT IS IT?

Top dressing is a blend of hydraulically classified silica sand and organic matter, which is normally in the form of a sandy loam soil and sometimes peat, which has been heat treated and to all intents and purposes sterilised.

WHY USE IT?

In order to affect the playing characteristics, as well as turf grass quality, frequent applications of an appropriate top dressing will assist the greenkeeper in the aim of providing a top quality surface by the following.

1. Helping to preserve a true and level playing surface.
2. Assisting in thatch control.
3. Enhancing the underlying rooting medium.
4. Improving drought tolerance.
5. Alleviating poor surface drainage.

The choice of which top dressing to apply really depends on the construction type of your greens. Do you have a modern green based on a sand and soil/peat rootzone or an older soil based green? A compatible material has to be the most important factor to consider when deciding what to use.

You must ensure that you choose a compatible top dressing for the greens. Take time to have samples taken from the greens for laboratory analysis, as this is the only way of choosing the most suitable top dressing. Reputable suppliers can offer this service free of charge.

By doing this it will, without doubt, help in your decision making and even more importantly prevent the build up of disruptive layering which would sequentially impede water movement through the profile and cause rootbreak. This is something that would not be apparent immediately. It would be a problem in the coming years.

COMPOSITION AND CONSISTENCY

The type of sand used in top dressing is the most important factor with the soil type following close behind. The dominant particle size range for the sand should be a medium grade that is between 0.25mm to 0.5mm in size.

Soils throughout the UK do vary in quality and not all soils are good for use in top dressing. Out of 10 different soils tested, probably only one is suitable for use as an organic fraction of a top dressing or a rootzone. The poor quality soils may appear and feel good but they have a tendency to become cohesive when wet and this causes the soil to attach to the sand particles and consequently block up air and pore spaces, which adversely affects the hydraulic conductivity of the material.

A copy of a laboratory analysis should be sought to confirm the performance of your chosen top dressing with particular emphasis on the hydraulic conductivity result. If the particle size distribution is acceptable, then the hydraulic conductivity should be well above 125m per hour, assuming the chosen blend is a 70/30 sand/soil mix or above. If not it would indicate that a 'poor quality soil' has been used and should be refused.



The importance of using a reputable supplier cannot be over estimated. In terms of a consistent top dressing the manufacturer must have a quality control system in place for checking specifications. Be aware of the quality system - ISO 9001. Any company manufacturing under this quality system can offer assurances of both quality and consistency, giving peace of mind to the end user. A lack of this kind of quality control system may be a reason for that unusually cheap price.

WHEN SHOULD I USE IT?

Spring and autumn applications are the normal times when you would apply top dressings, but as maintenance techniques develop other factors influence when you can and do apply further dressings.

The matter of 'surface hygiene' is a key issue on any green and can be managed effectively by the modern day greenkeeper. Scarification and verticutting should be carried out throughout the growing season to combat any excessive build up of organic matter, which could lead to a major thatch problem, and in turn encourage tillering of the plant.

This procedure should be followed by an application of top dressing that will help in the battle to keep the surface of the green free of any organic build up. This would mean light and frequent applications throughout the summer on top of your usual spring and autumn applications.

APPLICATION RATES

A normal spring or autumn top dressing application would be around 3-6 kg/m². This would equate to around one and a half to three tonnes for a golf green of around 500m² and three and a half to seven tonnes for a bowling green of around 1200m².

Lighter applications throughout the summer or growing season would tend to be around 1-2kg/m² equating to approximately half to one tonne for a golf green and one to two tonnes for a bowling green. In golf this lighter dressing could be applied as much as four times throughout the summer.

DELIVERIES

More often than not, golf clubs will take the deliveries of their top dressing in the form of bulk tippers ranging from 10, 20 and even 29 tonne loads. That is not always the case at bowling clubs. Access is usually poor and therefore the larger tipper vehicles would not be able to gain access in order to tip.



The most popular format for bowling green deliveries is in 25kg or one tonne bags. These are both covered and hence protected from the elements which is important when considering that in most cases not all the top dressing would be applied on the day of delivery if the greenkeeper were working alone.

The size of vehicles can still be a problem for bagged deliveries if the access is poor. To combat this problem check if your supplier's bagged deliveries come with an off load facility, such as a 'moffett mounty' - an onboard fork lift truck. This can deliver virtually anywhere and can save you

the problem of having to carry 200 or more 25kg bags of top dressing to the green.

An effective hassle free delivery service, the merits of which cannot be overstated, combined with a quality product. What more can a greenkeeper ask for?

Mike Brear is Northern Area Sales Manager for Rigby Taylor Limited and can be contacted on 01204 677777.

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Seeing the Green

A look at the stewardship of pesticides and the shared responsibility of the whole turf industry in this.

Maintaining good quality, high performance turf is not an easy task. To do it well requires a greenkeeper with excellent training, personal dedication and resourcefulness. It also requires commitment to integrated turf management programmes and access to suppliers and products, which support and add value to greenkeepers' efforts and management skills.

While greenkeepers' techniques around the world may vary, they all share the same goal: To create an exceptional golf experience for their customers. But it is also a shared goal - one shared by turf industry suppliers.

A SHARED CHALLENGE - RISING INDUSTRY PRESSURES

Well maintained greens, tees and fairways enhance the playability of a golf course and, in the end, lead to improved player satisfaction. Studies have also shown that properly maintained golf courses have environmental benefits, offering a sanctuary for local flora and wildlife. Despite these benefits, the golf course industry continues to come under pressure from environmental and misinformed groups. At the same time, pressure to ensure golfers satisfaction also continues to grow.

Recognising the value of turf as well as greenkeepers' need for unique solutions to these industry issues, pesticide manufacturers have committed to investing the necessary resources to bring to market new products and technologies. These are specifically developed, formulated, and packaged for professional turf management so that they are useful, practical, reliable, cost effective, and pose negligible risk to applicators, consumers and the environment.

A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY - TURF INDUSTRY STEWARDSHIP

Pesticides have proven that they can contribute and play a valuable role in an overall disease, weed and pest management programme. However, to make certain that pesticide manufacturers can continue to invest in the development and support of turf products and that greenkeepers can continue to deliver on the full value of well managed turf requires stewardship.

Correct stewardship of turf pesticides is a responsibility shared by pesticide manufacturers and greenkeepers alike.

COMMITTED TO BRINGING PRODUCTS TO MARKET

For pesticide manufacturers, stewardship comes in the form of product innovations, regulatory compliance, industry involvement and customer support and education. New active ingredients (AIs) are difficult to find, time consuming and costly to develop. On average, a new AI may cost in excess of £85 million and take 10 years to get from research to the marketplace. On top of this already substantial investment, there are specific additional costs associated with the development of turf products.

Before they can actually get into a greenkeeper's hands, new turf products must meet strict regulatory guidelines related to toxicity to non-target wildlife and lack of short or long term environmental impact, including surface



water, drinking water and soil. As stewards of the turf industry, pesticide manufacturers have invested significantly to ensure that turf products meet these requirements - a benefit to the environment and to customers.

Turf specific formulations are another way in which pesticide manufacturers act as industry stewards. Specifically designed for turf use, turf products are formulated so that they remain stable during storage and are easy for greenkeepers to mix and apply. These improvements in the formulation and packaging of products make them more convenient for greenkeepers and improve safety in handling.

Pesticide manufacturers also continue to seek performance and technical advancements, which extend the range of pests controlled or the range of situations in which existing products can be utilised. While these enhancements and additional testing require further investment - regulatory authorities require that any new uses are registered in every country where they are to be used - pesticide manufacturers continue to innovate because such use extensions increase the value of turf products for greenkeepers.

DELIVERING VALUE BEYOND PRODUCTS

Pesticide manufacturers know it isn't enough to deliver innovative, dependable turf products. A high value, intensely managed market, like turf, also demands expertise, continuing education and innovation. Pesticide manufacturers support professional turf management in a variety of ways, providing both financial support and the expertise of their staff. This investment - helping to ensure the future of the industry - is a necessary part of doing business.

As mentioned earlier, new turf products are hard to find and expensive to develop. Once available, it is important that they be used wisely and

knowledgeably. To that end, good stewardship on the part of pesticide manufacturers includes commitment to building greenkeepers' professionalism through provision of technical training, information on integrated turf management practices and overall support for the professional turf industry.

Leading pesticide manufacturers sales and technical representatives are well equipped to provide greenkeepers with product training, problem solving skills, integrated solutions to turf management issues and the ability to resolve product use issues. Manufacturers also sponsor other educational resources for greenkeepers, including industry and university research with the aim to develop the best turf agronomic practices.

In addition to providing continuing education opportunities for greenkeepers as well as scholarships to help prepare the next generation, pesticide manufacturers' active membership in professional organisations, such as BIGGA and other turf organisations, aims at ensuring the turf industry a voice before the various audiences upon which its future depends.

At the same time, non governmental organisations (NGOs) seek to influence public opinion such that regulatory authorities are challenged to restrict the use of turf care chemicals. As a result, regulatory authorities may demonstrate reluctance to approve the use of products specifically designed for turf care, even though these products may be more effective and more environmentally beneficial than alternatives. Working in concert with trade associations, pesticide manufacturers endorse reasonable, science based solutions to these regulatory issues.

GREENKEEPER STEWARDSHIP

Pesticide manufacturers are committing significant resources to support the future of the turf industry. However, greenkeepers play an equally important role. Stewardship on the part of greenkeepers falls into two primary areas: responsible use and industry support.

Good stewardship requires support to maintain the effective products already on the market. It also involves improvements to those products and investment in new turf products, all of which frequently hinge on informed and responsible use.

RESPONSIBLE USE

Pesticides are just one tool in a greenkeeper's integrated turf management toolbox. In order to get the maximum benefits and results, turf products should be incorporated into an integrated management programme that includes: irrigation, fertility, mowing management, cultural practices and use of pesticides.

Great demands are placed on greenkeepers to deliver the full value of the turf that they manage. That value can only be fully realised through safe and effective control of diseases, weeds, and insects. But with that control - most often achieved with pesticides - comes responsibility to comply with the regulations governing their use.

Regulation of professional turf chemical products varies from country to country, but includes these basic elements:

- It is a requirement in all countries that every turf pesticide product must be registered according to local rules. Although European countries have their individual schemes, they are all based on the principles of 91/414/EC, the European legislation covering use of pesticides.
- Applying a product outside of its approved uses or using a product not labelled for turf is illegal unless a "specific off label approval" (SOLA) exists. Off label use is only given where there are no products already registered for the particular situation; SOLA's are not based on any biological performance data and are not supported by the manufacturer. They are used at the user's own liability; crop safety is not investigated.
- Products should only be applied by those well trained in their use and, in the case of the UK, specifically licensed to apply the products.
- Maintaining accurate records of product applications.
- Products should only be applied to the areas intended for treatment.
- Application in inappropriate weather conditions can result in spray drift to nearby gardens and into other non target natural areas, with the possibility of unintended side effects. Incidences like these may be publicised as a justification for banning pesticide products or challenging the professionalism of the operators.
- Application equipment should be well maintained and recalibrated regularly to ensure accurate application. Over application of a product not only risks increasing disease resistance but also the cost per application of the product.
- Products should be stored under lock and key and empty packaging and any unused product disposed of according to local rules and in an environmentally friendly way.



INDUSTRY SUPPORT

In the UK regulations governing the use of professional turf care products are quite specific. Only professional products having specific approval for use on managed amenity turf can be applied and, as stated above, only by those certified in their use and holding a Certificate of Competence.

Regardless of location or specific regulation, the most common argument used to justify using unapproved products is cost. However, any short term economic benefits are far outweighed by the risks. Pesticides approved for use on turf have been developed and formulated to be effective and are also fully supported by the manufacturer.

A Turf Manager's investment in and responsible use of approved turf products not only improves the course's playability, but also acts as insurance to protect the high value of the turf and to reduce the potential for liability. Off label use is not the answer. Correct product use and healthy competition between approved turf pesticides are the most effective ways to ensure effective turf control and competitive pricing.

A PRICELESS VISION

The real value of turf products is considerably more than just the price. The benefits in increased player satisfaction, alone, are invaluable. The purchase and appropriate use of every turf product drives the delivery of new, innovative turf products and formulations, funds the highest levels of knowledge and service to customers and the industry, and supports a wide array of integrated turf management resources to help greenkeepers optimise the value of the turf they manage.

By working together and by supporting one another, greenkeepers and pesticide manufacturers will achieve their shared goal to enhance the appearance and playability of their golf course in order to create an exceptional golf experience for their customers.



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The Pesticide Debate

John Allbutt, Chairman of the Amenity Forum, discusses the future of pesticide use and the current forward steps the fine turf industry is taking.

It is very good to see the current active debate about the future availability of pesticides in the UK, the possible negative effect of our EU membership, and whether we might end up with little or nothing to use in the future. However it is very important that the debate includes an up to date picture of what is actually happening in the UK at the moment and what is likely to be happening in the near future.



Agriculture and amenity horticulture, this group includes sports and leisure as well as parks, gardens and amenity woodland etc, were threatened with a Pesticides Tax. The industry responded by suggesting that this be deferred while an attempt was made to voluntarily reduce pesticides use and seek ways of achieving 'best practice' where the use of a pesticides is considered to be necessary.

This became the Voluntary Initiative - the VI - that initiated a series of projects seeking to achieve the primary objectives of reduction and to achieve best practice when pesticides are used. It is true that the biggest area of VI activity has been in mainstream agriculture because the agricultural sector remains the biggest user of pesticides.

However amenity horticulture was never exempted and we were always included in the projects, e.g. the National Register of Spray Operators (NRoSO), www.nroso.org.uk, the National Sprayer Testing Scheme (NSTS), www.nsts.org.uk, and the formation of the Amenity Forum (the AF).

To date, the membership uptake of NRoSO by certificated spray operators in the amenity sector has been very poor - due in part to the low level publicity. NRoSO is an ideal way of maintaining your PA Certificates up to date and to know about the changes since you originally took your test.

NRoSO is an ideal way of maintaining your PA Certificates up to date and to know about the changes since you originally took your test. Having a rusty pesticides certificate is definitely not regarded as evidence of competence.

Having a rusty pesticides certificate is definitely not regarded as evidence of competence. There have been many changes since the introduction of certification in 1986; in fact a new Foundation Module (PA1) is in the final stages of development and will be launched this year.

The voluntary National Sprayer Testing Scheme (NSTS) is an ideal way of being certain that your applicator is in good condition and will deliver a precise amount of pesticide, with an accurate spray pattern, at the set pressure, and won't burst a pipe in the process! Local test centres are in your area and ready to carry out this sprayer 'MOT'.

The formation of the Amenity Forum was an ideal opportunity to achieve a first in our industry - to bring together the many diverse sector interests, organisations and businesses that have, in the past, made it almost impossible to discuss, debate and cooperate in areas of common interest. Not only have we achieved this but we have also attracted as members the very government departments involved in forming the policies and regulations that could restrict our use of pesticides in the future, e.g. The Health and Safety Executive, Pesticides Safety Directorate, Environment Agency.

I am currently the Chairman of the Amenity Forum and am very lucky to have around the table representatives from across the amenity industry, including BIGGA, STRI, IOG, GTC and many more. To see our full membership look log onto www.amenity.org.uk. We exist to represent the amenity industry up to ministerial level for consultation and to lobby on behalf of our industry as a whole - a first!

Just one recent example of the effectiveness of the Amenity Forum is our involvement in the decision by the Pesticides Safety Directorate (PSD) that the new Approved Code of Practice for Safe Use of Plant Protection Products - a provisional title - will for the first time incorporate amenity horticulture. This means that there will be a single Code for all pesticides use; it will be free and allow us, the amenity horticultural industry, to discontinue our own industry Orange Code. The new Approved Code is in the final draft stage and is expected to be published this year.

In a recent review the Minister said he was pleased with the progress of the VI and had no immediate plans to introduce a Pesticides Tax. However he also said that he was looking for the VI to have some new initiatives up to the end of the three year project, the end of March 2006.

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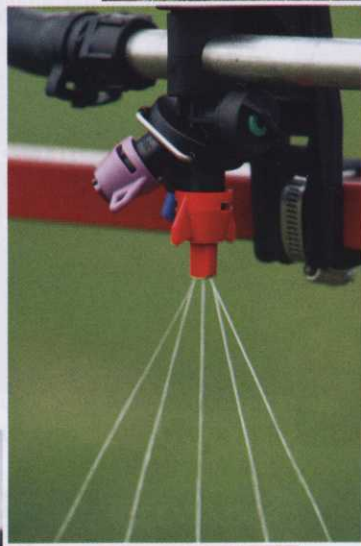
Although agriculture will again be very much in focus, current discussions are also pointing towards the amenity industry sector and the Amenity Forum have already put forward some views.

In addition to all of the above, there are also two very important consultation papers currently under discussion that are likely to have an impact on amenity horticulture in the future.

The Pesticides Safety Directorate is seeking views on their document "The Sustainable Use of Pesticides". This is a very good document and is likely to help with forming future policies and initiatives. The Amenity Forum is commenting on the 'Amenity Action Plan' section and we are hopeful that our suggestions will be incorporated in the final document.

A working group of the Advisory Committee on Pesticides is also consulting on their document "Alternatives to the use of Pesticides". Unfortunately this document deals almost exclusively with agricultural matters and the Amenity Forum are making representations to include many of the excellent alternative practices that have been in use for many years.

The traditional practices by greenkeepers to manage a healthy pest and disease resistant sward of turf are now regarded as a brilliant new approach! Minimising inputs



of fertiliser and pesticides - out of necessity - is now the 'new' approach in many aspects of land management.

In parallel with all of the above activity the UK/EU pesticides review process continues and is resulting in the withdrawal of approval for more pesticides. There is no question that this is having an impact in our industry sector; we have lost an effective worm killer, chafer grub control and with the likely withdrawal of chlorpyrifos in the future, we will lose our main means of controlling leatherjackets.

But this does not mean that it is an unstoppable process with the loss of more and more pesticides until we reach the situation that exists in some other member states. Many of the severe restrictions imposed by other European member state pre-date their membership of the

EU; there is also evidence that some of these have been 'rolled back' in recent years.

It is also very unlikely that we will see the introduction of local control of pesticides use where a professional greenkeeper has to seek written authority to apply a herbicide or a fungicide.

On a more positive note we are seeing some new fungicides being introduced and in the near future there will be a new insecticide for the control of soil grubs, mainly chafers.

Nobody in this process can stand aside and pretend that it is nothing to do with them. If we are to continue to have approved pesticides available we must all ensure that we embrace the principles of best practice. Golf clubs must have best practice policies within the course management document; greenkeepers must be encouraged to further develop existing best practice strategies; golfers must be patient and accept that some scarring of the greens is inevitable together with the odd weed here and there!

Committees must work harder to understand and support these important strategies and make sure that the members temper their criticisms, especially those who suffer from Augusta Syndrome.

Nobody in this process can stand aside and pretend that it is nothing to do with them. If we are to continue to have approved pesticides available we must all ensure that we embrace the principles of best practice.



Health & Safety Legislation - Friend or Foe

Having worked as a greenkeeper, Course Manager and latterly assisted in the overall management of a golf club, whenever the words 'Health & Safety' came up they brought a mix of fear, dread, and loathing.

Fear because I could not understand much of what was being said or written. Dread because if I could not understand what was required what chance did I have to ensure the safety of the environment in which we worked and, more importantly, managed? Loathing because I had enough work to do without anything extra.

The purpose of this article is to convince those who may still have any, or all, of the above negative viewpoints that there is no need to fear, dread or loathe this area of management and just accept that it is part of the job we do.

• FEAR & DREAD - THERE IS NOTHING TO FEAR OR DREAD

The Health and Safety Executive want everyone to understand what is involved and have made great strides in simplifying legislation to that end. In modern speak their aim is to make it all more 'user friendly'.

If you know you have a problem pick up the phone and ask for help - their attitude would be entirely different to you at that stage than if they were forced to call because of an unfortunate incident - it's too late then, the damage has been done.

• LOATHING - DON'T LOATHE IT, WELCOME IT

Any perceived extra work is soon incorporated into the daily work routine. In the same way that we incorporate the assessment of staff in NVQ training we do the same thing for Health & Safety.

To be honest I thought I would have to sit down for hours every day and fill in paperwork but in reality that could not be further from the truth - as long as you have a simple Health & Safety system in place.

The system is managed in three simple categories or steps.

• COMPLIANCE CHECK

Audit all you have in place and match it to current UK and EU Health & Safety legislation - this will tell you exactly where you are.

• FILLING THE GAPS

The compliance check will highlight what you do not have - you will find that you have a lot in place already thanks to advisors in our Industry/Profession in the past explaining the need to observe a safe working environment - in a lot of instances you will find what you have already just needs updating.

• MONITORING/MANAGING/MAINTAINING

If any new legislation comes into force, e.g. the recent Disability Discrimination Act, or you make any changes following a risk assessment in any area, e.g. changing the design of a golf hole, you must have a simple system in place that will alert you to update as necessary.

An annual audit - a sort of mini compliance check - will ensure you continue to comply with all relevant legislation.

IN SUMMARY

As soon as you decide to take the first step - the compliance check - the Health & Safety Executive will be happy because you are demonstrating that you recognise the need to set a system in place to ensure you manage a safe working environment.

You will find all relevant information you need through the Internet, HSE, GTC, BIGGA, etc or if all else fails give us a call and we will our best to help.

Tip of the Month

Geoff Coggan MG

Vice President of Golf Course Operations - Jan Stephenson Inc



EXPANDING UNDERSTANDING

All too often we as Superintendents, greenkeepers become immersed in our own little world. The golf course becomes 'ours' and anyone that cannot see our point of view or does not immediately gives us the resources we want becomes an adversary. This may sound a little far fetched but if you look closely at your operation you may find more truth to the statement than you first realised.

My tip is to try to become involved in the course operation as a whole. Develop a better understanding of the problems that other department heads face. If you receive financial statements don't just look at yours and disregard the rest, ask questions, try to understand how their budgets work.

How many members do you have? How many rounds of golf are you doing? How can you help make the club more successful, after all you do want that extra person on the crew or that new piece of equipment right!

Approach the powers that be and express your desire to be involved more, if possible try to spend some time with other department heads in their arena so that you get a feel for what they go through. You will probably find the golf pro to be more of an ally than you thought.

Who knows, you may take the reins at your club someday.

Do you have a tip that has helped you in your day-to-day work on the golf course? If so, why not share it with other greenkeepers. Please send any tips you feel would benefit your fellow readers to us either by post at BIGGA HOUSE or by email to gareth@bigga.co.uk.



WOW!

There are some statistics which, if they don't exactly blow your mind, make you go "Wow!" That was the very expression which left my lips when Rigby Taylor Managing Director Andrew Robinson told me how many deliveries the company made in the course of a year.

No, I won't tell you yet. Have a guess. Now bear in mind that this is not just golf clubs, but all of RT's customers but also appreciate that golf does represent a significant proportion of the business.

I can hear your minds working. Roughly 2,700 golf clubs in the country, not all Rigby Taylor customers but those who are probably make a number of orders during a 12 month period. Plus the other non-golf orders to football clubs, local authorities etc.

Not easy is it? Let's go all Bruce Forsyth for a minute. 20,000. Higher or lower? All those who said "Lower" sit down. 40,000. Higher or lower? Again all those who shouted out "Lower" take your seats. Now, those of you who are left - not that many I note. 60,000, you know the drill. Again those who said "Lower," got it wrong. The actual number of orders delivered by Rigby Taylor annually is 75,000.

That just shows the scale of the operation at one of BIGGA's founding Golden Key Supporter companies. It does tend to get forgotten but every time an order is phoned through or placed through the Internet a lot still has to happen to ensure it arrives at its destination and Rigby Taylor spend a lot of time and effort making sure it runs smoothly.

"We are spending over £800,000 on carriage alone every year and this is not passed on to the customer, provided they meet minimum order requirements," explained Andrew, as we sat in the recently-acquired Horwich Headquarters on the outskirts of Bolton.

It is a hidden cost however and Andrew is keen to work closely with the customer to ensure costs can be reduced and the savings passed on or invested in new products.

"I would estimate that we could save £250,000 tonne miles just by cutting down on distribution and getting some of our customers to bulk up on some of their orders," he revealed.

"With good forward planning golf clubs should be able to operate on four deliveries a year. We have nine vehicles and that normally covers most of our haulage but in busy times when people contact us with an order that's needed straight away we have to go outside our own distribution and hire in vehicles and that is extremely expensive.

"It's trying to be efficient and environmentally friendly. Having a decent lead time helps us because we can programme it in and deliver it when the customer wants it whether it be in March, April or whenever. Ordering early doesn't cost the customer any more as they aren't billed until they get it and we do offer 12 monthly payment plans where, at no additional cost, their anticipated annual spend is divided over the year," said Andrew,

adding proudly that the company had recently received a prestigious environmental award from one of their clients - Manchester United.

Andrew is also extremely proud of the company's customer service and believes the latest innovation will make a significant difference to what can be offered to Course Managers up and down the country.

"All our new vehicles are fitted with fork lift trucks and our drivers will be fully trained in using them so when a delivery is made we can store it wherever the Course Manager wants it, even if it's the top shelf. Ultimately, our objective is to deliver it to the 15th green if that's where the order is to be used.

"We've just taken delivery of our fifth one and at £85,000 a time they don't come cheap but we feel it is offering the customer another service. In our book customers come first," he said.

Andrew took over as Managing Director three years ago from Bernard Hedley, who continues as Executive Chairman, and since then has been involved in a programme of continuous improvement.

"We look at our product range on a day to day basis and are continually asking our suppliers to improve what they give to us. They love us to bits because what we do is help them to make the products better, we don't charge the customer any more but we all see the benefit from extra sales.

"For example with 'Breaker Triple' we've seen sales almost double in two years and with 'Activate', the extra rooting agent that has been added, has improved rooting by 30% at no extra cost to the customer."

The company was formed in 1919 when Herbert Rigby and Robert Taylor - the fine turf's equivalent of Mr Rolls and Mr Royce - got together in what has always been a rich industry heartland to sell degreasing solvents to the cotton and textile mills.

"Seeing that the textile industry was in decline they looked to diversify and set up a paint division," explained Bernard, who joined the company following a management buyout in the early 1980's.

A fertiliser division followed and the company's reputation was forged following the STRI man around the area making up fertilisers based on the advice given.

"We continued to extend the range of products including chemicals and grass seed and launched our own Mascot range in 1981," said Bernard.

What launched the company to what it is today was the brave decision to look beyond the natural boundaries of a regional company and open up in competition with a company in the south east and then subsequently

Scott MacCallum travelled to BIGGA Golden Key Supporter, Rigby Taylor's headquarters, in Bolton, to meet MD Andrew Robinson and Executive Chairman, Bernard Hedley.



Left to right, George Johnstone, Manchester United FC, Martin Gibbons, Evirowise, Andrew Robinson and Brendon Gott, Rigby Taylor



Rigby Taylor has invested in new vehicles with an onboard fork lift to aid and further improve in the delivery of their products to the customer

the midlands. Ironically, the company which had previously considered the south east to be their patch, Parkers, were later bought by Rigby Taylor.

The company now has six product divisions - fertilisers; pesticides; grass seed; speciality product like wetting agents and plant health products; white lining and top dressings. There is a staff of 150 with 35,000 square feet of warehousing at the Bolton base, another 20,000 square feet at the company's Guildford base and another 10,000 square feet at their Newbridge site, just outside Edinburgh. That's 65,000 square feet in total.

Servicing the products is a UK sales team of 50, recently expanded from 40.

"A high proportion are ex-greenkeepers. What we like to do is take users of turf products and teach them how to sell rather than take someone from outside the trade and teach them about greenkeeping. It's the better option," explained Andrew.

"It takes about three years to take a new rep and train him to become a salesman but they talk the same language as the greenkeeper. We take him up to almost the same level as an agronomist in terms of training. That's not to do away with the agronomist but to work with him and empathise with the problems being faced."

The extra 10 staff have been brought on board to help expand the customer base and service existing customers more effectively.

"It's the old 80-20 rule, 80% of the business is done with the top 20% of customers and a the new staff were taken on to work under our Area Managers to service and build up the smaller accounts," said Andrew.

Looking to the future Andrew feels that chemicals will develop to the extent that the quantities required will be much less than today. Indeed Rigby Taylor have just launched its first new fungicide in 12 years.

"Without giving too much away it offers a much greater cleanliness of

label, will be much safer and a minute amount of chemical will be used in comparison to the old style of fungicide. Compared with existing fungicides we'll be putting on a tenth of the amount of chemical.

"It is the way chemistry is going but the legislation on chemicals is helping to encourage the research," he revealed.

Andrew did admit that the biggest worry was still worms.

"The problem with the new legislation is that if it says on the label that it kills worms it's going to be put on one side. Chemical companies are working on it but the cost of developing is so high and golf is pretty much the only industry that doesn't want worms.

"There are other ways of getting rid of worms but they are all detrimental to the turf, reducing the pH for example."

Andrew did make a plea for greenkeepers not to be sucked into using off label products.

"BIGGA and the industry need to work together to try and stamp out the buying of agricultural pesticides. Yes, they save money but they are taking money away from the companies which are investing in this industry. And, of course, it is illegal.

"If a greenkeeper were to use a non-amenity product and a golfer were to be taken ill the golf club would be in for a serious claim and the greenkeeper could personally be fined.

"We are delighted to be Golden Key supporters of BIGGA because we feel education is the best way to ensure greenkeepers don't make the mistake of taking short cuts which are illegal and could cost them their jobs," said Andrew.

So the next time you take delivery of a Rigby Taylor product just think about the fact that it is just one of 75,000 the company will be delivering this year.

Does make you go "Wow" doesn't it?

NEW PRODUCTS

SCORPIO KING

A brand new class of fungicides has been introduced with the launch of Scorpio from Bayer Environmental Science.

The product uses a unique Mesostemic mode of action that defines a new class of fungicides, oximinacetates. Oximinacetates have a high affinity with the plant surface and are absorbed readily by the waxy layers of the plant. The product redistributes at the plant surface by superficial vapour movement and penetrates the plant tissue.

The product embeds into the waxy layer of the blade/leaf, by absorption by the waxy layer giving longer lasting disease control. Scorpio is in Water Dispersible Granule form and has an ultra-low dosage application rate.

Scorpio is sold in 250gm re-sealable packs, sufficient to treat the equivalent of two bowling greens or approximately seven average sized golf greens. The pack is supplied with a unique measuring and pouring cap for accurate application and facilitating no contact with the operator.

For further information Tel: 01992 784270.



HAYTER'S LT324G

Hayter believe there is a promising future for LPG powered products and have already made improvements to their LPG powered 4 wheel drive triple, the LT324G. The Hayter LT324G is powered by 4 cylinder 1600cc engine built by General Motors.

This develops 40 hp at normal operating speed and ensures the machine has more than enough power to cope with tough municipal applications and yet is quiet and smooth in operation. The fuel is contained within two LPG tanks, one either side of the engine compartment immediately behind the operator.

The LT324G has all the features that you would expect from a Hayter ride on machine. High output, ease of maintenance and low running costs. It also bears the same modern distinctive styling that is now common across the whole range.

For further information Tel: 01279 723444.



GOING UNDERGROUND

The Mona Plant System (MPS) is a modular underground watering system, which provides effective and easy to manage irrigation for both internal and external landscaping of any size.

MPS uses a series of linked water reservoirs to optimise soil moisture and oxygenation, thus helping ensure that plants have the perfect soil conditions in which to bloom stronger and longer.

It also provides significant environmental advantages - it uses up to 80% less water than top watering and 75% less fertiliser, requires no electricity and is made from recyclable polyethylene.

MPS is produced by Tricor International, a UK-based manufacturer and supplier of products to both the consumer and professional sides of the outdoor living sectors in the UK, Europe and US, and the company is launching a free design planning service to help local customers develop tailored plans for their individual requirements.

For more information Tel: 01642 482000.



SMALL BUT EFFECTIVE

MiniMat is designed by Fi-Cord International and has been created to solve the problem of playing on wet ground on golf courses. The unique two-piece technology absorbs club head impact, yet the mat stays in position using only golf tees - in really soft conditions the provided extra-length tees can be used.

The divot mat component moves forward, like a grass divot, causing minimum resistance and reducing shock to elbows, wrists and hands. The divot automatically returns to its original position for continuous shots without re-fastening.

The anchor component absorbs return shock in one direction only while the elastic bungee absorbs tension in the opposite direction, minimising the push pull effect, which would otherwise loosen the securing tee peg fixings.

The photo shows golfer Mark James using the equipment. "It's excellent, has overcome divot nightmares and does everything claimed for it. I'm using it regularly," said Mark.

For further information Tel: 01625 829627.



FULL SIZED COMPACTS

The Massey Ferguson 1500 Series compact tractors offer users a highly versatile, feature packed machine in a compact package. The compact's lightweight but rugged design makes the three new MF 1500 Series models, from 32hp to 46hp, ideal for work in a wide variety of municipal, horticultural, arboreal and local authority applications.

All tractors in the series feature stronger, quieter emissions compliant engines providing high power and torque across the working range, synchronised 12 forward/12 reverse speed transmission with synchro-shuttle, simple arrangement of four synchronised gears in three ranges offering speeds from 0.37km/hr to 30km/hr, hydrostatic transmission option, two-speed, independent PTO with Soft Start switch, powerful hydraulics with high lift capacity to handle heavy implements.

Operator comfort has been a top priority in the design of the MF 1500's. A wide entry to the flat platform on the MF 1547 and semi-flat floor on the smaller models, combined with a tiltable steering wheel, makes for easy entry and exit from the tractors.

For further information Tel: 02476 694400.



DRAMATIC DIESEL PROGRESS

Dramatic progress has been made in the production of diesel engines over the last few years with new models being quieter, smoother and more efficient, yet still complying with tough emissions legislation. One such engine - a 25hp water-cooled 3-cylinder Lombardini - is at the heart of Etesia's new ride-on rotary mower, the Hydro 124DN.

This latest 124cm tractor has the powerful delivery necessary to achieve working speeds of up to 16km/h. High performance levels are enhanced by Etesia's patented cutting and collecting system which will not clog, even in wet or long grass.

Beneath the Hydro 124D's cutting deck, two synchronised contra-rotating blades are angled at 90° to create a powerful vacuum that lifts the grass before it is cut, resulting in a 124cm wide quality finish. High-lift emptying combines with direct rear-ejection and integrated collection, ensuring high productivity and mowing efficiency, especially on larger sites and wide open spaces. The 600 litre collector is hydraulically emptied and holds more than 100kg of grass.

For further information Tel: 01926 403319.

IMPROVED WORKMAN

Toro has given its Workman 3000 and 4000 heavy-duty utility vehicles a stylish new appearance and a host of new features for greater driver comfort, easier operation and better control. The versatile, highly manoeuvrable vehicle can be fitted with a wide range of bed mounted attachments for all kinds of tasks.

In addition to a smart, restyled body, the two and four wheel drive units have been redesigned with significantly more legroom and fitted with adjustable seats for even more space and comfort. A fully hydraulic steering system has also been added to make it easier to turn the improved Workman.

Greater value has been built into the new Workman with the introduction of eight-inch brakes on all four wheels, remote hydraulics as standard, plus longer-lasting tyres.

Other features include a 540rpm rear PTO, optional mid-point PTO and high/low, three-speed synchromesh gearbox giving six forward and two reverse gears. Good weight distribution means that loads up to 2,725lbs can be carried with minimum compaction to surfaces, while the vehicle design virtually eliminates turf scuffing or skating - even on greens when the Workman is fully loaded.

For further information Tel: 01480 226800.



THE BIGMOW

A fully automatic robotic mower designed for unattended mowing has been launched by Turfmech. Suitable for regular maintenance of grass areas of between half an acre and five acres, the battery-powered Bigmow frees up valuable time and labour.



This is achieved through Bigmow's ability to work safely and silently on its own enabling the grass to be cut far more frequently. Powered by rechargeable dry cell batteries, the computer controlled Bigmow is designed to work within a pre-defined area bounded by a low voltage perimeter wire.

For optimum safety during work, Bigmow is equipped with a sonar and safety bumpers enabling it to detect, slow down and steer around obstacles within the cutting area. When Bigmow's batteries need recharging, the machine returns and connects automatically to its charging station.

Equipped with five fully shrouded rotary cutting heads fitted with retractable blades, Bigmow is able to maintain the grass at any required length from 22mm to 95mm, adjusted on a 12 position height control rod. The 1.05m (42in) wide fully-floating cutting assembly incorporates an anti-scalp system for a clean, even finish.

For further information Tel: 01889 271503.

NEW HERBICIDE LAUNCHED

Sherriff Amenity has launched Astalavista, a brand new selective herbicide. Astalavista can be used for the control of a wide range of broad leaved weeds in established amenity turf such as golf courses, playing fields, roadside verges, parkland and lawns.

With its unique formulation of ioxynil, bromoxynil and mecoprop-P, Astalavista has excellent activity on annual broad leaved weeds from seedling to flower buds visible stage and can be used throughout the growing season. It gives a high level of control on problem weeds, such as Speedwell, Clover Yarrow, as well as many others.

For further information Tel: 01638 721888.

FALCON FLIES FORWARD

Bomford has introduced a new forward arm version of its Falcon flail mower, designed to provide greater operator visibility over the flail head. The Forward Arm Falcon can be mounted using either an axle bracket or a three-point quick hitch system. This makes it suitable not only for tractors, but other utility type vehicles.

One particular option that has been particularly successful is to use the new Forward Arm Falcon mounted on the back of a Merlo Multifarmer materials handler. With its hydrostatic transmission, good visibility and four wheel steering the Merlo has proven to be an ideal power unit and allows the versatility of this machine to be fully utilised.

The Forward Arm Falcon can be specified with either a 1.2m or 1.5m wide Pro-Cut flail head, which features a double helix rotorshaft to which a wide range of flail types can be fitted. The Forward Arm Falcon has its own self contained 250 litre hydraulic oil tank, with the option of a cooler.

For further information Tel: 01789 773383.





News from the Chief Executive

"Can you ring Jim Arthur," words that you sometimes did not want to hear from Rachael or Brad who run reception at BIGGA House, especially on a Friday afternoon. Your thought processes went into overdrive wondering what could be the matter this time.

On rare occasions calls were simple, however the majority of the time Jim was set to put his thoughts forward on the content and quality of a seminar, not always BIGGA related, or perhaps comment on an article in Greenkeeper International. He was always consistent in his views and I would imagine that he has forgotten more about greenkeeping than some people will ever know. I have spent many a good hour listening to Jim extol the virtues of his book, putting greenkeeping back on the right track or just condemning 'chemical' companies. Most of us have been there!

He spoke with a passion for the job he loved doing and was always guaranteed to attract a good audience when on the public platform, if only because he was usually controversial. Love him or not his passing is a sad loss to all and in my opinion he was one of the great characters in an industry that has changed so dramatically since he first started out as an agronomist.

He could not have been more different to that other member of the greenkeeping fraternity who recently died, Derek Green. One quiet and unassuming the other quite vocal in his views but both masters of their craft, good friends and a part of greenkeeping history. In a strange sort of way I will miss those telephone calls, life will never be the same for so many of us.

At BIGGA House we have taken delivery of two new purpose made oak bookcases, one financed by a donation from the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America in memory of Neil Thomas, the other bought by BIGGA.

These have been placed in the Board Room to house the ever growing collection of books in the member's library. We are also developing a small museum in the reception area and would welcome the donation or loan of either books or artefacts for these facilities.

John Pemberton

SECTION NOTES INFORMATION

In order to improve the sending and receiving of Section Notes, where possible can all future notes be emailed to gareth@bigga.co.uk by no later than the 5th of the month prior to publication please.

You will receive an email back to confirm receipt of your notes. If you do not receive this confirmation please get in touch with BIGGA Headquarters.

SCOTTISH REGION

Ayrshire

Hello again, just a couple of things to report this time. Our spring outing, held on April 12, over the Kintyre Course had another excellent turn out. The weather was kind to us on the day and all agreed that Jimmy Johnstone and his crew had the course in great condition.

Special thanks to Stuart Selbie, General Manager, and George Brown, Greenkeeping & Estates Manger, for allowing us courtesy of the course. Also to the clubhouse staff for all their help in providing a great day.

Results were as follows: Scratch Prize. S. McBlain, Prestwick St. Nicholas, 75. 1st Class. 1. D. Wilson, Irvine Bogside, 32pts; 2. J. Mair, Hamilton Golf Club, 31pts; 3. K. McCartney, Dumfries & Galloway, 31pts; 4. R. Fulton, Prestwick St Nicholas, 29 pts; 5. D. Tweddell, Turnberry, 28pts.

2nd Class. 1. G. Haughie, Southernness, 36pts; 2. I. Barr, Largs Kelburn, 29pts; 2. D. Gray, The Pines, 29pts; 3. R. Bunting, Ballochmyle, 26pts; 4. J. Irving, Lockerbie, 26pts. Trade Prize. K. Brunton, Greentech, 34pts.

Following the prizes George Brown and Iain Barr presented Ian McKay with a vintage Sisis 3 hole hollow tiner, along with a framed picture to remember the day. We all wish Ian well on his retirement from Sisis and hope to continue seeing him at our outings. He's got one cool motor as well!

Any news call me on 07939 104701.

Denis Tweddell

Central

We have another four new members joining us this month and they are Derek Ross, St Andrews Links, Hugh Davidson, Charleton Golf Course, George Pendrich, Gleneagles Hotel, and Sean Fotheringham, from Dunfermline Golf Club. As usual we extend a warm welcome to them all from everyone in the Section and we hope to see them at some of our future events.

Speaking of future events I sent a list of the educational events, which can be organised on your behalf, and asked if you would list the events you were interested in and return the form to me. So far not one of you have bothered to return any forms, so I take it that you are all so well educated that you don't need any more or that you are just not interested!

The first golf tournament of the season was held at The Golf House Club, Elie, in April and our sincere thanks go to everyone there for making it a most successful day. Special thanks to Brian Lawrie and his staff for having the course in such excellent condition, Vice Captain, Allan Mackie, for presenting our prizes to the winners and also to the bar and catering staff who kept everyone fed and refreshed throughout the day.

Prize winners on the day were: Best Scratch, Daval Trophy. David Simpson, Crieff GC, 69. Best Nett, Greentech Trophy. Michael Love, Grangemouth GC, 64. 1st Class 1st H/cap, Toro Trophy. Hayden Chambers, St Andrews, 68. 1st Class 2nd H/cap, Kenny Mitchell, St Andrews, 68. 2nd Class 1st H/cap, Section Trophy. Euan Grant, St Andrews, 64. 2nd Class 2nd H/cap. Douglas Barr, Dundee CC, 71. 3rd Class 1st H/cap, Section Trophy. Malcolm Lowe, Tower of Lethendy, 73. 3rd Class 2nd H/cap. Donald Gardiner, Scoonie GC, 79. Stewarts Quaich. Euan Grant and Hayden Chambers, St Andrews, 132.

Patrons. Mike Dennis, Rigby Taylor, 71. Guests. Stuart Archibald, St Andrews, 69. Longest Drive, Daval Prize. Kevin Brunton, Greentech. Nearest the Pin, Daval Prize. Mark Inglis, Muckhart GC.

John Crawford

North

This report is shorter than normal but a full report will appear in next month's magazine. One new member this month, Philip Watson, Westhill GC.

The outing at Murcar went very well with the course being in excellent condition and the weather also being first class. Our thanks go to Brian Anderson and his staff. The winners were: Scratch. M. Maclean, Fraserburgh GC. Class 1. N. Kidd, Keith GC. Class 2. D. Mitchell, Cruden Bay GC. Class 3. M. Main, Moray GC. Apprentice. S. Mackenzie, Royal Aberdeen GC. Veterans. Roy Donald, Oldmeldrum GC. Trade. M. Dennis, Rigby Taylor. Committee Winner. Steve Sullivan. Guest. J. Gordon, Tarbet GC.

Iain Gunn

NORTHERN REGION

North East

Ponteland GC was the venue for the spring competition on April 14. As far as April showers were concerned that was way off as from the tee off at 9.30am with light rain followed very quickly with atrocious weather for the remainder of the day, it kept the scores fairly high.

Many thanks to Paddy Hetherington, Head Greenkeeper, and his staff for the excellent condition of the course and also the Committee for giving us permission to play there, hopefully we may get the chance again to play the Autumn Competition there in the near future.

Thanks also to the following sponsors: Shorts of Whitburn, TurfCare Supplies, Greenlay, Border Turf Services, Hayter - Carrs - Billington, Stocksfield GC. Many thanks to those companies who helped us out, without you we would be kind of pushed for quality prizes because that's what they were.

On a more personal note I am going to keep an eye on other Section's golf days and just look out for who sponsors them. I do know that some companies seem to prefer other parts of the country to aid the Section golf competitions, which seems a bit unfair. So beware, I'm watching closely.

The leading scores are as follows: Best Nett. R. Hetherington, Ponteland GC, 91-17-74. Best Gross. 1. A. McLure, Whickham GC, 78; 2. A. Dalby, Warkworth GC, 83-7-76; 3. J. Hood, Alnmouth GC, 81-5-76; 4. J. Storey, Alnmouth GC, 82-6-76.

Altogether about 30 players took part, it seems that the Spring Competition attracts more people than the autumn one these days. Let's hope we have the same number at Alnmouth GC on September 29.

Jimmy Richardson

North West

Due to the fact that we have no fixture list this year, which is partly my fault and partly due to the fact that venues were late being arranged, I will remind you of the fixtures for the year.

Summer Tournament, Childwall GC, July 27; Autumn Tournament, Prestbury GC, September 1; Whitelaw Bowl, Penrith GC, September 14; N/West v Golf Club Stewards, TBA; Presidents' Day & AGM, Wilmslow GC, December 5.

Duncan Smith informs me that he will have a job going soon, so anyone interested contact Duncan at Dean Wood GC, on 07799776048. Another person on the move is Peter Cross, Deputy at Woolton GC, is now Head Greenkeeper at Blundells Hills GC. I understand that the Links Manager's job at Royal Liverpool has been offered to the First Assistant from Muirfield, Craig Gilholm.

Well The Open will soon be upon us, and we have a few members from the N/W Section in the Support Team. I hope you all enjoy being part of the support team and the opportunity to see how the course is set up for the world's best players.

No more news for the moment but if you have any news you can contact me on 0151 724 5412 or 07761 583387.

Bert Cross

Northern

I'll start this month by welcoming all the new members who have joined the Section since my last note. A congratulations must go to the new Head Greenkeeper of Cookridge Hall, John Watts, on firstly his move and, secondly, amazingly dropping his handicap from 24 to 14 in four months, and then knocking me from the prizes in the Spring Tournament. Thanks John, I appreciate that!

April 20 saw the first tournament of the year. The Spring Tournament was scheduled to be held at Northcliffe Golf Club, but due to the ever unpredictable weather, Head Greenkeeper, Ken Christie, was forced to close the course. Not to be beaten, the fools amongst us travelled over the road to Shay Grange for a quick nine holes.

The results for the day were: Scratch Cup. A. Slingsby. Division One. 1. A. Baxter; 2. D. Collins; 3. P. Judd. Division Two. 1. F. Stewart; 2. R. Armitage; 3. J. Watts. Division Three. 1. J. Baxter; 2. L. Graham; 3. K. Christie. Trade. 1. M. Brear; 2. D. Smith.

A very big thank you to Ken and his team for their efforts in the run up to the day. Also, thank you to all those who got their names and payments in early. It is much appreciated.

The next tournament is President's Day and it is to be held on June 15, at Scarthingwell Golf Club. Tee off is booked for 1pm. Again, please let me have your names and payment at least a week before; if not the price for the day to latecomers goes up to £20.

A date has at long last been set for the barbecue night. It will be taking place on Saturday July 16, at Otley Golf Club. The events we have organised in the past have been poorly attended, nevertheless they have always been fantastic nights. So lets see as many of you there as possible this year. These events are arranged for you all, please try to show your support and come along for a burger and a beer! If you are interested in coming or would like more details, please do get in touch.

Well, that's about it for this month, apart from welcoming Derek Chew and Andy, new additions to the Otley Greens staff. If anybody has any news or gossip then do pass it on so I can share it in any future notes.

Tel: 01274 638366; Mobile: 07739 319060.

Adam Speight

Cleveland

Yes, yes, yes, I am proud to announce that my team won the annual Barry Walker quiz, held at Dinsdale Spa Golf Club, in March. I am certainly not one to gloat but the 20 point winning margin was the highest ever recorded. I answered only two questions correctly out of hundreds asked, but I was an inspiration to the other five team members.

The Wearside mafia were blown out of the water and blamed the missing Phil Hargrave for their demise. Poor losers! The turn out was again poor but those who attended had a great night and many thanks go to Baz and Allie for all their hard work yet again. Thanks also go to Dinsdale Spa Golf Club for their excellent hospitality and superb pie and pea supper. Cheers to Tony Mears and his staff.

The Teesside branch of the groundsmen also entered a team and didn't disgrace themselves. It was felt that these joint activities are a good idea. The groundsmen have invited the Section members to their annual flat green bowls and quoits matches that will take place on Thursday July 14,



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



Peter Larter
NORTHERN & MIDLAND
 Tel: 01476 550115

7pm, at Durham City Bowling Club. Further details from TC on 07831 214879. They are good nights, so let's support them!

The spring outing took place at Cleveland Golf Club, on Tuesday April 19. Results as follows: 0 - 9 handicap. 1. Phil Hargrave, Crook GC, 42pts; 2. Richie Hood, Mount Oswald GC, 34pts; 3. Martin Woods, Bedlington GC, 30pts. 10-18 handicap. 1. Chris Spence, Crook GC, 35pts; 2. Alan Shaw, Crook GC, 33pts, back 9; 3. Stan Shotton, Durham City GC, 33pts. 19-28 handicap. 1. Ian Pemberton, Bedale GC, 30pts; 2. 'Titch' McGeogh, Richmond GC, 29pts; 3. Dave Jobey, Consett GC, 28pts. Trade Winner. Jamie Applegarth, Rigby Taylor, 28pts. Longest Drive. Martin Woods, Bedlington GC. Nearest the Pin. Tony Smith, Teesside GC.

Congratulations to all winners. Many thanks go to Cleveland Golf Club for the courtesy of the course. Craig Pollock and his staff produced a great links course, a challenge for us - well done! The food was excellent too, so thanks to the Steward and staff.

We were well supported by the trade on the day. Many thanks to Liam, from Amtec, for being our main sponsor for the day. Prizes were also gratefully received from East Riding Horticulture, Rigby Taylor, Tacit, Tower Chemicals and Turfcare Specialists.

Well, with spring approaching, here's wishing for a good season.

Terry Charlton - El Prez

Sheffield

Not a lot to report this month, just a few things to notify you of. The Committee is this year arranging a one day seminar to replace our winter

lecture program, in an attempt to flag our failing attendances at our lectures. This will be held on Monday October 24.

The actual line up of this has yet to be confirmed but I will keep you all informed of its progress and when we learn more. In association with this, we will be running a separate winter lecture in the New Year with a different start time and maybe even a different day to see if this also helps attendances.

Our President, Neil Maltby, has been granted Life Membership of the Association. Well done Neil. Two new members this month joining our Section are Ben Hardwick, from Brough Golf Club, and Thomas Joyce, from Silkstone Golf Club. We all welcome you to the Section and hope to see you soon!

It is with great sadness that I have to inform you that David Wadkin died recently. David was a very active member of our Section and, before his retirement in 2001, he worked at Hallamshire Golf Club for 22 years. David leaves his wife, Margaret, to whom on behalf of the Section I extend our condolences.

Our summer competition is to be held at Renishaw Golf Club on June 27.

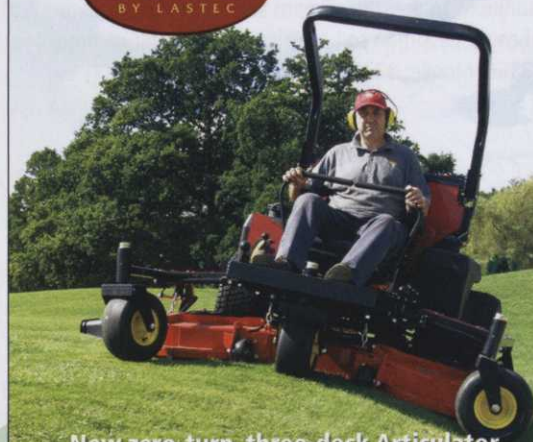
Once again may I ask you if you have any newsworthy of putting in the magazine please feel free to get in touch with me via email, on jv.lax@tesco.net, or the old fashion way on 07793111845. I am sure some of you have some news out there!

John Lax

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North Wales

Shady's back, Shady's back, Shady's back, will the real Slim Shady please stand up. The spring tournament at Upton-by Chester GC took place on May 25, all results will be in next month's issue.

The North Wales vs. North West was lost by our good selves 3 1/2 to 2 1/2. We took along a strong team from our Section but, after a hard fought battle on The Open qualifying course, it proved we were not strong enough. Our thanks go to Steve Oultram and his staff for presenting a great golf course for the time of year, April 5, and thanks also to the club and caterers for fine meal, which just makes losing that bit more bearable.

I then journeyed over to Liverpool Airport for a flight with the BIGGA Regional Administrator, Peter Larter, to do a support mission over in the Isle of Man, staying overnight at the fine Castletown Links Golf Hotel where we were made most welcome. We spoke with the golf clubs and members on the Island about the benefits of BIGGA membership and any questions they had.

One of the suggestions was they would like a golf event for the greenkeepers from the mainland to come over and savour the delights of the courses across there. So come on Bert, they are in the North West Section, and with your contacts at Liverpool John Lennon, can we see it on a future fixtures list?

There is a new man at the helm at Hoylake, Craig Gilholm, ex Deputy from Muirfield GC. The 33 year old takes over this month, starting on June 6, bringing down his wife and two children to live on the course. Craig also bringing lots of links knowledge with him and is looking forward to hosting next year's Open Championship, of which the R&A have said women will be allowed to play in, now that's a first.

Congratulations go to Jeff Jago, from Sutton Hall GC. He and his wife, Dawn, gave birth to a beautiful baby boy and David, a future North Wales Greenkeeper perhaps? Or possibly a train driver, bank manager, airline pilot or footballer, we don't know yet!

Shaun Pritchard has moved back to Llanynymech GC, from Henlle Park, and Gareth Woosnam, from the Ian Woosnam clan, takes over the Head job at Oswestry, as John Humphreys takes an early retirement after many great years at the course and we wish them all well.

Prestatyn GC is getting back to normality after the vandalised greens of last year, due to Dave Parry's attention to detail and the slow process of overseeding with a slotter dressing, and that little touch of fertiliser. Dave hosted a Tamsel Tour event and had his first big Welsh Championship on the links last month. It can be done, he said, and it was.

I know I always ask the question, but after four years of writing the Section notes and trying not to repeat myself, if there is any news, views or comments you would like to put in a future issue, please contact me or email me, andrew@acorngolf.co.uk, with your stories.

See you next month

Mesen Cymru

Andrew Acorn

MIDLAND REGION

Midland

I shall begin this month's notes with that all important issue of H&S. In my infinite wisdom and obviously due to my vain attempt at following the latest fashions, I have been sporting a rather distinguished beard. Following a month of growing this fur, all was set for styling and trimming. While at work I had to employ the use of a butane gas torch, of which during use suddenly went from a sharp blue flame to a cloud of fire.

The fireball erupted in my face, thus singeing the beard, eyebrows, hair, and the end of one's snozzer. Consequently, after putting my head out, I was rendered with a reverse Mohican beard, half a left eyebrow and a distinct guise resembling Rudolph the red nosed reindeer.

I have thus another synonym, 'Singe'. The above only occurred due to the fact that the gas nozzle had become a quarter turn off fully butted-up. It would have taken five seconds to have checked, complacency is a very dangerous beast. Food for thought I hope!

It gives me great pleasure to welcome six new members to our Section this month. Such being: Simon Fisher, Stephen Guest, Alan Turner, Paul Smith, Richard Woods and, finally, Janet Everett. It is very encouraging to be able to welcome a lass to the Section, as there are too few within our industry. As lasses have integrated within other fields and improved them, so shall the greenkeeping industry benefit likewise.

Now for a question. If you were to choose a 25 years' of service gift, what would it be? Maybe a gold watch, a holiday, or even a piece of furniture to rest those weary bones! No, a toolbox, and just the box mind you, no tools. Come on Tony, have a word with yourself man. But seriously, congratulations to A. Luckman, the Head Greenkeeper at Harbourne GC, for 25 years of service. Only 24 left mate.

It is with disbelief that I must report that after what must have been much psychological badgering, Emma has finally agreed to go through with the marriage to Steve Wenlock, on August 6. About time to Steve, must feel like checking out with a 170, you lucky git. Wishing you both a wonderful day and a happy fulfilling life together.

Don't forget, our summer tournament is to be played at Redditch GC, on July 22, start time 13.30. Please get your entries to Gary Cunningham by June 10. Should anyone require an entry form please call me on 07816 410 552.

Finally, to finish this month's notes, an occurrence that is a new one on me. While at work I received a call from one of the lads saying that he was stuck. After finding out where, I told him that I'd bring a rope to pull the machine out. He responded by advising that a chainsaw might be better as he was stuck in a tree, yes a tree. I could have sworn that, not mentioning any names, Phil 'I'm in a tree' Nixon, went out on the Toro Sidewinder, and not our Harrier Jump-jet. I can't wait to see the risk assessment on that.

If you have a similar story or any other news please let me know. Remember that these notes can only be written with your help and input.

Sean McDade

East of England

Well, boys, the season has started with a bang, if the May Day weekend was anything to go by. That was serious weather, hope you didn't have too much bunker washdown. We even had problems at Milton, I wouldn't say we are flat but our members get a nosebleed on the 18th tee.

The results from Sleaford are as follows: 1. D. Coupland, 67-2-65, BB9; 2. R. Moody, 80-15-65; 3. I. Mawer, 73-3-70; 4. I. Batty 75-5-70; 5. T. Shinkins, 94-23-71. Trade. J. North, Burdens, 86-18-68. Nearest the Pin. A. Astle, M. Brear.

Unfortunately, I couldn't make the golf day due to a previous double booking, i.e. twins and their mother returning to work, but various members that played have reported that the course was in excellent condition and the meal was good too. So our thanks go to Ian and the catering staff.

The day was also marked by an incredible score by young Mr Coupland, of Gross 67, with a back nine of 28 - see the news pages. A tremendous effort and perhaps a pretender to the throne of National Champion. Our thanks also go to Rigby Taylor, M. Brear and S. Dickinson.

I also believe a deputation of turf cutters played in the AmAm at Spalding, ably led by our beloved Secretary, Les Howkins. They also had

the audacity to win, so well done lads and I hope the course will recover in time for the start of the season - only joking. The winning team comprised: P. Wilkinson, G. MacDonald, R. Welford and L. Howkins.

A little bird tells me that a certain Committee Member didn't wear a BIGGA tie at Sleaford. I'm sure this honest upright character will pay his fine, won't you R***!

Finally, a warm welcome to the Section for Gareth Rodgers, the new Head Greenkeeper at Grimsby Golf Club. We look forward to meeting you at Section events.

Allan Walker

BB&O

The pollen count has gone ballistic and so has the grass. Summer is here and we will be following the fairways as we are off to our next event at the home of the Henley Royal Regatta, which was first held in 1839 and has been held annually ever since, except during the two World Wars. Originally staged by the Mayor and people of Henley as a public attraction with a fair and other amusements, the emphasis rapidly changed so that competitive amateur rowing became its main purpose.

With this in mind, on June 30 this year, the BB&O will hold the Gem Summer Rose Bowl Golf Tournament. This is an event not to be missed - a must for your diary. Your hosts, Mitch Stewart, our Treasurer, and Steve Shaw, Course Manager at Henley GC, will be on hand to welcome you to an exciting time when Henley Town comes alive right in the middle of Regatta Week.

Henley GC, designed by James Braid in 1907, is a parkland course with many trees and the course features a new state of the art full irrigation system. So, why not down your tools and come along to what will be a great day for all. Closing date for your entry will be June 23. For any further information and details contact John Scoones on 07880 550 380.

Results from the Rigby Taylor knockout have filtered through and victorious in the first round on home turf was Barry Holt, from Burford GC, and playing partner Sid Arrowsmith. Gracious in defeat were the beach boys, Brian Payne Jnr and Ray Rosser, from Burnham Beeches GC. More to follow next month.

Phil Beale is leaving Bearwood Lakes GC and is making a fresh start close to the Blue Mountains, near Sydney, in Australia. Phil has secured a challenging position running a new build operation and from all over the BB&O we wish Phil and his family the best of luck in emigrating all the way down under.

Hop a Long Cassidy, Brian Payne, is no longer in pain! On April Fools' Day this year Brian had a very successful hip operation. With six months of convalescing and free bus tokens to look forward to, and with the latest NHS super duper crutches, he is fully on the mend. Brian's spirits are high and in no time he will be back at Burnham Beeches GC.

Last year we held a clay pigeon shooting day at West London shooting grounds, which proved successful, and this year we are going to repeat this event. So get your blunderbusses out of the cupboard under the stairs and start polishing your shooting skills. Format and details will be mailed out later in the year, but keep this date, September 20, free and stick it in your diary before you forget. Another event planned for November 8, subject to confirmation, is the BB&O's Section educational seminar. More details will be published in next month's report.

If any member has any news or views they would like to share, or would like more information about the Section and forthcoming events you only have to call John Scoones on 0788 550 380.

Mark Day

The BB&O's Chairman's Message

During early November this year your Committee are intending to run an educational seminar on the lines of: 'How climatic change has affected our operational procedures'. Pencilled in already we have some wonderfully talented individuals who are well equipped with an abundance of knowledge for such events.

Obviously your support is vital for its success and future, and I therefore request that you watch out for details in the magazine and at our golf days. As always, the well travelled Mark Day will be a key source of information when he comes knocking on your door.

I do hope that you are all having a good greenkeeping season so far and enjoying the early surge of grass growth.

Good Luck.

Sid Arrowsmith MG

Mid Anglia

Greetings fellow workers. April 27 saw our first event of the year and Royston Golf Club was the host. 27 players took part in 18 tough holes up on Royston heath. As usual big thanks go to all involved at Royston, especially to Tim McCreddie and his staff, for making the day run smoothly and presenting a great golf course.

Also thanks to Rigby Taylor, who were sponsors for the day, all the trade reps for their raffle prizes and to Ernest Doe & Sons for providing a drinks buggy, manned by Julian (hic). Some say he's still driving about the heath, I expect we'll see him when he runs out of drinks!

The results were as follows: 1. R. Saunders: 2. G. Hainsworth: 3. F. Scullion. Trade Prize. S. Crossdale. Longest Drive. S. Mason. Nearest the Pin. R. Saunders. The top two will be entered into the National Competition, more information about that soon.

Just a quick notice, from June 7 - 11 Heydon Grange Golf Club, near Royston, will be once again hosting the PGA Euro Pro Tour. Come along and see these guys play, five of last year's entries are now playing on the European Tour. It's free to get in and is also being covered by Sky Sports, so you may also get your mug on the box.

That's all for now, what's that I can hear? A snipping noise? It's ok, it's only Richard's handicap!

Bob Butfoy

SOUTH EAST

Surrey

It's that time again; the day before this magazine's deadline and my stock of information, results, local news and Surrey gossip was at an all time low. Luckily, in the past few days I've managed to gather some bits and pieces of interest and on these I now report.

Cuddington GC have appointed a new Course Manager and Simon Osbourne will be moving from Wild Wood GC to take up his new position in the near future.

Dan McGrath is now the Course Manager at Pyrford and Traditions GC, having moved from Deputy at King's Hill GC, in Kent. Dan, we welcome you to Surrey and hope you will be changing your BIGGA membership to Surrey Section.

Daren Wales, Deputy at Clandon Regis GC, has been promoted to Headman and we wish well in his rise to power and fortune.

Enough of promotions let us now congratulate one of our members and his wife, Donna, on their first adventure into parenthood. Isla was born on April 22, 7lbs 3ozs, and is now making Paul Howard, from Bletchingley,

realise that up until now, getting up at 5am was really a lay in.

Our next golf day is at Sunningdale GC for the McMillian Tankard on July 18 and results from Banstead GC will appear in the next edition.

Brian Willmott

Kent

Well, here we are halfway through the golfing year already but still I can't get my handicap down! I think I should have been a Sales Rep, they seem to be at a different Section event every week. Mind you, I've only had one full round this year so that could be a factor.

Our first major golfing day is fast approaching. We tee off at 12pm, on June 9, at Broome Park Golf Club. Please arrive in plenty of time for the early festivities. Also, as I've said in the past, please remember that these days are a very informal outing where all levels of greenkeepers are welcome. I'm sure all attendees will have a great day at this lovely club and virtually everyone can guarantee not coming last because I'll be there!

A few new faces we hope to welcome in person on the day are: John Donnelly, who has recently returned to Kent from Denmark to take on the Course Manager's role at Chislehurst. Also welcome are Matt Macklin and his team of four Head Greenkeepers, from the Altonwood group of courses. We thank you for your support and hope you become regular members of our Section.

Two people from our Section who have recently moved on are Dan McGrath, who has moved from being Deputy Manager at King's Hill to Course Manager at Pyrford, and Steve Suttill, of North Foreland Golf Club, who has decided to hang up his boots after many years of long service. The Section wish them all well.

Latest in the list of companies we owe our gratitude to are Drake and Fletcher. We are very grateful to all our sponsors for the support they provide.

Don't forget! Please be forthcoming with any news from your areas. You can contact me directly on 07843 410755 or online at grassyards@hotmail.com.

Best of luck guys.

Rob Holland

Essex

Here we go again! It does not seem five minutes since we all descended on Orsett GC at the end of the 2004 golfing calendar and already the Essex countryside air is filled yet again with the roars of laughter arising from the first tee banter, which has become synonymous with our golf days. Thorpe Hall Golf Club, in sunny Southend, played host to our spring meeting, for which our thanks are extended to the club and Secretary, Gary Smith.

The spring meeting is probably the most challenging of all the meetings for a greenkeeper, and I take my hat off to any man brave enough to offer his course at this time of year. That said Course Manager, John Sinclair, Deputy, Ian Gordon, and the lads at Thorpe Hall did us proud, presenting a challenging course in great condition. Well done.

The number of greenkeepers attending lead itself perfectly to two handicap categories 0-13 and 14-28, the winners of those categories were: Cat.1, 0-13 h/cap. 1. Richard Linnen, Upminster, 39pts; 2. Anthony Kirwin, Colchester, 39pts (countback last 9); 3. Richard Dunmow, Channells, 39pts (countback last 9). Cat.2, 14-28 h/cap. 1. Craig Serafin, Colchester, 41pts; 2. Sam Cook, Colchester, 37pts; 3. Andrew Cracknell, Orsett, 36pts. Trade Prize. Steve Crosdale, Headland Amenity Ltd, 36pts. Guest Prize. Jamie Hughes, 39pts. Nearest the Pin. James Rattenbury, Colchester. Longest Drive. Anthony Kirwin, Colchester. Overall Winner. Craig Serafin, Colchester. Seems to be a pattern developing here!

A special mention must go to our lowest handicap golfer and recent representative of the Essex Section at the BIGGA National Championship,

David Beale, who managed to lose every ball in his bag on the way to amassing a blistering 21 points. Dave has just been promoted to Deputy Head at Orsett GC, well done mate.

After the evening meal the Chairman of our Section, Arnold Phipps-Jones, thanked Steve the Chef and the staff for the delicious three course dinner and, once he had remembered where we actually were that day, handed over to our main sponsors of the day, Tacit.

Mark Day made his usual well presented speech, thanking the club and staff then proceeded to award the prizes. Our thanks go to Mark and Tacit, as well as suppliers of the raffle prizes: Avoncrop, Headland Amenity, Vitax, Rigby Taylor, Collier Turf Care and Tuckwells, who we also thank for producing this year's fixture list, cheers Neil.

Adrian Cornell, who has recently moved from Gosfield GC to Stockbrook Manor, is organising more tractor driving courses, which I understand may be compulsory to anyone wishing to use these in the future. You can contact Adrian for details on 01376 562835.

The South East Regional Conference will be taking place on November 9 at Benton hall GC, Witham, Essex.

Finally I am sure the whole Section will join me in sending condolences to Colin White's family. Colin sadly passed away in March. He was a great supporter to our Section in the early years and will always be remembered for his big smile and happy go lucky character.

Hope to see you all at the summer meeting, which is at Abridge Golf & Country Club, on June 8. This is also our National Qualifier, so get practising.

Steve Crosdale

SOUTH WEST & SOUTH WALES

South West

Have you ever noticed how the grass never takes the bank holiday off? I'm writing this after the early May holiday on May 2. When we left work on the Friday the course was pretty tidy - greens fast, fairways cut, tees nice and clean - when we got back on the Tuesday the fairways needed the Amazone flail mower to get them back in check, try that on 54 holes sometime.

The bunkers looked like someone had held a Speedway meeting in them, and as for the rough - well. It'll probably take until the next Bank Holiday to get things back under control. Thanks again for the feedback from the last issue regarding winter conditions and general stress. I was almost glad to find it's not only me.

Two forthcoming events. Matt Maryon, Courses Manager at the Gloucestershire & Woodspring Golf Club, has a new course partway under construction on a landfill site. Matt has very kindly offered to show a party of greenkeepers around the new site, covering such subjects as construction of new greens and tees, installation of irrigation, how to deal with difficult terrain and difficult materials and a host of other related subjects. Thursday June 30, at 2pm, at the Woodlands' golf clubhouse for Matt's guided tour. No charge, please confirm numbers by dropping me a mail at paul.worster@tesco.net.

Jon Jarvis, Course Manager at Lansdown, has invited members to 'an evening at the races'. Jon is very kindly going to organise a party booking, on August 26, for an evening meeting at Bath racecourse. Meet at the golf club, which has the twin advantages of cheaper beer and free parking. Then enjoy very preferential rates of entry to the races, more drink and food, plus a flutter on the gee-gees, should make for a relaxing experience.

Smart casual clothing for the golf club, and the members enclosure at

the races - racing from 5.15 to 7.45, music and dancing after the racing. Send a cheque for £10 to Jon Jarvis, at Lansdown Golf Club, to reserve your place. Many thanks from the Section Committee to both Matt and Jon for their ideas - it's now up to the rest of us to support them.

There are matches coming up against the Welsh Section at St Pierre, in August, and against the South Coast Section in September. Please telephone John Keenaghan, 07779 479869, if you wish to represent the Section.

Congratulations to eight of the South West members for being selected for the greenkeeping team at St Andrews this year. Paul Jenkins, John Keenaghan, Catherine Walls, Mark Lewthwaite, Justin Austin, Jamie Acton, Colin Woakes, and Chris Watts. Well done and have a good week.

A cautionary note - there are walk-in thieves operating in the South West. Marlborough Golf Club recently lost a significant amount of small equipment, such as strimmers, blowers, etc, which were taken in broad daylight when the lads were out on the course. Someone has sussed that every golf club has a maintenance base, which is often well tucked away, open all day, full of portable goodies, and not necessarily manned. I'm locking ours now - you have been warned!

A warm welcome awaited all competitors at our spring meeting at Forest Hills GC, Coleford, on April 25. As I took the long, dark road through the Forest of Dean, avoiding grazing sheep, negotiating the sharp bends around rocky outcrops, catching the odd glimpse of an isolated dwelling through the trees and undergrowth, I was struck by a single thought: "Christ, I hope I've brought plenty of balls." Happily, the trees opened out to reveal the very tidy 6500yds par 72 course, which was beautifully presented by Paul Gibson and his team.

The original course opened in 1992, with an upgrade masterminded by Paul, in 2002. The addition of some 10 hectares of new land gave the opportunity to expand the course into the challenge it is today. I had the pleasure of playing with Paul, and his Assistant, Gary Daunter, whom we just managed to pip by a single point, and Paul was explaining some of the set up of the course.

For the greens he has a Ransomes G-Plex together with John Deere pedestrian mowers and they had been cut at around 4mm on the day. He had had a problem with an application of lawn sand some three weeks previously, when the weather had turned, and the material had built up on the wheels of the drop spreader causing some scorching. That apart, the greens really were in fantastic condition. The fairways are Gary's department, and he cuts every week, striping them with a Ransomes Fairway 305.

Many thanks to Forest Hills - this is a thriving, busy club, yet we were made so welcome right from the moment we arrived - apart from the muppet who gave me completely the wrong combination for the gents when we got there. Talk about desperately pressing buttons after an hour and a half in the car; I've never been quite so pleased to hear something go clunk-click.

The full results were: 1. E. Rowland, Forest Hills, and Sean Richards, Taunton, 49pts; 2. Paul and Matt Worster, Minchinhampton, 44pts; 3. Paul Gibson and Gary Daunter, Forest Hills, 43pts. Nearest the Pin, 14. Paul Gibson. Nearest the Pin, 18. E. Rowland and Sean Richards. Again, many thanks to Forest Hills staff and committee for the day.

Finally, it was very nice to see Jane Jones, our Regional Administrator, on the course, partnering Chris Sealey. Unfortunately I don't think they were having the best of days, because Jane remarked to me as we passed on the 10th: "What a game, I couldn't hit a barn door today." This was odd because I'd been watching, and was quite sure she'd managed to hit several on the front nine. Thanks for all the feedback - keep it coming. Tel: 01285 651908/07768 394593, email: paul.worster@tesco.net.

Paul Worster

South Coast

Spring is almost over now, although with the current low overnight temperatures you'd never believe we're almost in summertime. It's certainly bringing us another set of problems as our courses don't know quite what to do and the current spell of strong breezes hasn't helped, changing our golf course in a space of a couple of days. But surely that's the beauty of our courses?

They should change with the weather and its well to remember we play on a surface and not colour. The Masters saw the re-emergence of Tiger Woods in the Majors or did it? Only time will tell but his battle with Chris Dimarco was compelling viewing. As usual the Augusta Syndrome hit many courses with Course Managers donning the flak jackets to help cope with the usual onslaught of misguided complaints and comparisons.

Peter Alliss made several excellent points in his commentary about how unrealistic it is to compare our courses to Augusta. One point he failed to mention is why should we strive to want to be like Augusta? As wonderful as Augusta is and looks, all of our traditional courses have their own beauty and charm that should never be overlooked.

Off the soap box now and onto Section news. We must congratulate the Section's finest athlete, Ian Nobel, for his latest run in the London Marathon. Even with a knee injury, Ian finished the course in a very creditable four hours, although he wasn't too happy with his time. Cancer Research was certainly happy as Ian raised £800 for them on the day. Well done Ian and only time will tell if he will be racing on the streets of London again next year.

The draw has now been made for the Jim Fry Pairs and please ensure all matches are played promptly and that you phone all match results through to Phil Wentworth. Good luck to you all!

May 10 was a very special day for the Section as it saw the inaugural playing of the Colin White Memorial Trophy. This was our first golf day without Chalks and with his brothers, Rob and Steve, playing and his mother, Jill, attending the dinner he was always going to be with us in spirit.

Highcliffe Castle was the venue and Mike Buckle and his team were busy preparing the course as the field of 60 arrived to contest the trophy, which was a 27 hole Stableford. Jane Jones travelled across to be a part of the day, although she conveniently left her clubs at home. Never mind, it was great to see her.

It seemed so apt that sponsors on the day were Avoncrop and Vitax and as usual Joe Crawley was on hand to ensure that everyone started off on time. Joe really is the South Coast's Mr Starter, he does a fantastic job and is always treated to an array of different opening shots, which I'm sure makes the job all the more interesting. I am still yet to persuade him to play but I won't give up.

The weather was beautiful although there was a stiff breeze just to make those long par 3's even more interesting. I had the pleasure of playing with Chalks' brother, Steve, and was treated to some excellent Chalky stories, which helped me forget about my golf, thankfully! The scoring on the day was excellent and the first winner of the Colin White Memorial Trophy was Shaun Whittle - see the photo in the News Section of the magazine.

Other winners on the day were: Division 1.1. Brian Forder, 53; 2. Alan Magee, 53. Division 2.1. Joe Cooper, 60; 2. Brian Green, 59. Division 3. 1. Shaun Whittle, 61; 2. Wayne Norris, 61. Trade Prize. Barry McCloskey. Longest Drive. Andrew Wood. Nearest the Pin. Steve Christopher.

A huge thanks to Highcliffe Castle Golf Club for their superb hospitality. General Manger, Graham Fisher, was an enormous help and couldn't do any more in making us feel so welcome and help make our day such a special one. Mike Buckle and his team must be congratulated on producing a first class course, where there was not a blade of grass out of place.

His course has a reputation for being in superb condition and how that reputation was right! I know that the team had worked so hard in preparing the course and they were extremely proud to hold the golf day. Well they can all hold their heads very high and feel very proud, well done all!

Malcolm and Sue, the Stewards, along with all the catering and bar staff looked after us so well and gave us a feast to remember. Matt Blake, who sat next to me at dinner, eyes lit up when it was announced that we could eat as much as we wanted. Still with the physique of a racing snake I suppose he could do with putting some weight on! Trouble is, no matter what he eats he just doesn't. Don't you just love people like that!

Chris Sturgess, as always, came up trumps in organising the day and we are extremely thankful for all his hard work. Also thanks to Alan Magee for his help with the scoring. I must also thank all the sponsors who donated the fantastic raffle prizes. With Alan Magee's hard work we raised £280, which was donated to Macmillan Cancer Relief, thanks for everyone's generosity. I have left our thanks to our sponsors last for a specific reason.

To our sponsors, Avoncrop and Vitax, a massive thanks for a truly superb prize table. Joe Crawley and Chris Briggs put a great deal of thought and effort in choosing the prizes and it was much appreciated by the winners. Chris Briggs also announced that Chalks' replacement will be Joe Crawley. What a fantastic move for both Joe and Avoncrop and we wish Joe every success in his new post.

I'm sure Chalky would be delighted that Joe has succeeded him. It was lovely to see so many trade representatives during the day who all wanted to be a part of such a special occasion. Thank you so much for attending.

Before presenting the trophy to Shaun Whittle Chalks' mother, Jill, thanked the Section for all their support and reminded us that as long as he lives in our memories Chalky will always be with us. How true those words are.

As we said our goodbyes, Jane Jones remarked on what a great Section we have. She was made to feel so welcome and remarked on how well and professional the day was run and what great support we received. Long may it continue! As the sun finally set it was time to head home. Was it a good day? In those immortal words, it was all lovely!

Our next golf day is Rushmore on July 7. It's an invitation day and all entries along with a cheque for £18 per person, made payable to BIGGA South Coast, should be sent to Chris Sturgess at his new address: 31 Bay Road, Sholing, SO19 8EZ.

Until next month.

Alex McCombie

Devon & Cornwall

This is the month that I have to scratch the old brain box to think about my report for this month's issue. Our autumn/winter monthly BIGGA meetings are in the past and I have not heard any gossip on my travels to write about, or at least none that would past the eye of the Editors' censors at HQ. Like the rest of the UK Greenkeepers we are all working flat out as we are now into the competition season.

One bit of news to report; Alan Potter has joined Dainton Park Golf Club, near Newton Abbot, as Deputy Head Greenkeeper. Alan departed Exeter Golf Club, where he had been for 16 years. Previously he had worked at Royal St Georges Golf Club for nine years. Alan has joined Dainton Park so he can take over from Buster Lewer when he retires in a couple of year's time.

Looking towards the future, plans are going well with dates and venues for our future meetings for our Section, so find your pen and diary and mark them in now, then you have no excuse for missing any meetings. They are as follows: June 15, Mid Summer meeting, Launceston Golf Club, sponsored by Symbio; October 12, Mullion Golf Club Cornwall; November

3, Soil Science Workshop, Padbrook Golf Club, with PSD and Irritech; November 16, Saunton Golf Club, AGM; November 22, Cannington College, Regional Seminar, December 6, Okehampton Golf Club, Christmas Dinner; January 11, Bude & North Cornwall Golf Club; February 15, Warren Golf Club, Dawlish Warren. March to be confirmed at a later date.

So gentleman you have no excuse for missing the above meetings. I will send out the details of each meeting well in advance to all members.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the Head Greenkeepers from the above clubs who have assisted me in making the above venues, without your help I would find it a lot more difficult.

I would like to remind the Committee members that our next meeting will be held at Launceston Golf Club after the golf and dinner. We look forward to seeing you at the next meeting.

Donovan O Hunt - Events Coordinator

NORTHERN IRELAND

Our Section enjoyed a visit to the Royal Belfast GC on March 31 to view the recent improvements to the course. Head Greenkeeper, Jim Eager, and Deputy, Harry Creighton, gave us an interesting walk around the course featuring the extensive drainage improvements carried out by White Horse Contracts.

New tees have also been added, sown out with dwarf rye, while the club also plan to rebuild a number of greens. Many thanks to Jim and Harry for giving up their valuable time and to Royal Belfast GC for their hospitality and the refreshment they provided.

The spring golf competition took place at Carnelea GC on April 14, which is situated outside Bangor Town overlooking Belfast Lough. Conditions on the day were pretty testing to say the least with a strong northerly wind and heavy showers.

Course Manager, Jonny McCabe, and his team had the course in superb condition for mid April, with the quality putting surfaces deserving worthy praise. The conditions suited the Royal County Down lads again, with Section Secretary, Gary Crawford, coming out on top, just beating Dad, Eamonn, and his uncle, Noel, to the first prize.

Results were as follows: 1. Gary Crawford, RCD, 35pts; 2. Eamonn Crawford, RCD, 33pts; 3. Noel Crawford, RCD, 32pts. Nearest the Pin. Gary Murphy, Sliverwood GC. Longest Drive. Lee Cartmill, Malone GC.

Many thanks to our sponsors, Coburns of Banbridge, for their generous support and also Graham Prosser, from Tacit, who also provided prizes. William Cartmill and David Eager, from Coburns, braved the conditions on the day and were on hand to present the prizes. Many thanks also to Carnelea GC and the catering staff for their hospitality, we once again enjoyed our visit to your fine course.

A few guys are on the move this month with Warren Burnside leaving Malone GC to take up the position of Deputy Head Greenkeeper at Bangor GC. Also venturing to pastures new is Kyle Irwin, former Head Greenkeeper at Lurgan GC, who has moved to a Northern Ireland Area Sales Representative position with Turfcare Solutions. Our best wishes go to both these lads in their new positions.

That leaves me to remind all our members that our next two golf days will be on Thursday May 26 at Fort William GC and Thursday June 30 at Allen Park Antrim.

Well that's all my news from this month folks. I hope to see our regular golfing members at our next couple of meetings.

Ken Henderson

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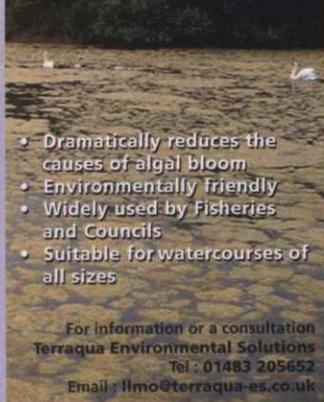
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Symptoms can appear overnight when conditions favorable for the pathogen (>95% relative humidity for >8 hours) are present. The disease generally subsides with the onset of cooler temperatures.

John E. Kaminski, Ph.D.
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The closing date for receipt of completed applications is noon on Friday 17th June, 2005. Interviews will take place on Wednesday 29th June, 2005.

For more details please contact Seaford Town Council on 01323 894870 or write to us at Hurdis House, 10 Broad Street, Seaford, East Sussex BN25 1ND

If you have enthusiasm and commitment then we want to see you - and you'll want to join us.

www.myerscough.ac.uk



Myerscough College
Providing opportunities for all

Myerscough College is an innovative, dynamic and fast growing college - the largest in its sector. We have the following additional opportunity to join our team.

Lecturer in Agronomy to deliver both Agronomy and Sportsturf technology. Course tutorship and administrative work involved. BSc in Agronomy or related subject essential with interest or experience in turfgrass science desirable. Salary £15,731- £21,629 relating to qualifications and experience. Post ref: LecAgronomy

For an information pack and application form for the above post, please send an A4 SAE quoting post ref to Tracy Kilby - Human Resources Officer, Myerscough College, Bilsborrow, Preston PR3 0RY.

Or alternatively, visit our web site to apply on-line.

Closing date: Friday 24 June 2005



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Recruitment

BEARWOOD LAKES GOLF CLUB

require a motivated and ambitious individual to manage their 18 hole championship course and team of 9 greens staff.

Now recognised as one of the best inland courses in the U.K., Bearwood Lakes stands in 250 acres of magnificent Berkshire parkland. The greens have been constructed to full U.S.G.A. specification using the finest provident bent grasses. A comprehensive irrigation system encompassing not only the greens and tees but also the fairways, approaches and surrounds ensures excellent year round condition. The irrigation system is fed by a series of lakes which thread their way through the course coming in to play on 6 holes. The holes not protected by water are guarded by historic pine forest creating what is without doubt one of the most picturesque golfing venues in Europe.

The successful applicant will report directly to Senior Management and adopt a "hands on" approach to their work. They will also possess the drive and determination to take themselves to the forefront of their chosen profession and push Bearwood Lakes on to further national and international acclaim.

Applications in writing with C.V. to:
The General Manager, Bearwood Lakes Golf Club,
Bearwood Road, Sindlesham, Berkshire RG41 4SJ
Website: www.bearwoodlakes.co.uk

Closing date for applications: 20th June 2005



Llanishen Golf Club



Heol Hir Cardiff CF14 9UD

Applications are invited for a well motivated, enthusiastic and experienced

COURSE MANAGER

Llanishen Golf Club, founded in 1905, is a traditional Members Club situated in 75 acres of picturesque countryside of North Cardiff.

The successful applicant will possess the following:

- HNC or NVQ Level 3 Sports Turf Maintenance
 - Health & Safety training
- Ability to plan and deliver a work programme
- A proven track record of achievement

You will be a team leader, motivator and manager as well as a good communicator with at least five years recent experience as an Assistant Head Greenkeeper / Deputy Course Manager.

Salary is negotiable depending on experience and qualifications.

Closing Date 30th June 2005.

Please apply in writing with CV to:
The General Manager, Llanishen Golf Club,
Heol Hir, Cardiff, CF14 9UD

**You care for turf... we care for turf, but will you earn up to £40k next year?
...and £60k the year after.**

There is no doubt the UK market for domestic lawn care has taken off in the last couple of years, and will continue to expand. The American market already exceeds \$29 billion dollars expenditure and the UK market is set to follow suit. There are a handful of Lawn Care franchises available in our sector, many have no formal training in turf care, or any course experience. Lawn Master is a company with a Unique difference. The majority of our staff are highly experienced, and we are the only professional lawn treatment company to have come through the ranks with qualified commercial staff with experience.

Lawn Master has set the standards in the last few years for unrivalled quality and adaptable feed programs. Lawn Master has always refused to use the 'one product' franchise method, which some franchises use because they are terrified of scorching lawns, or know no better. Our customer base runs into thousands, employing our services between our depots, and customers are content in the knowledge that they have real qualified staff dealing with their lawns, rather than an ex-bus driver or redundant bank manager.

The 'Lawn Master franchise masters pack' is the first of its kind to be offered in the UK. Since its launch in November 2004 we have opened two new areas run by fully qualified staff, to run along side our other outlets. The earnings potential is around **£450 pounds per day** per vehicle after business training.



Interested? Read on...

What about turf knowledge experience?

Well you should already have a good idea how to treat lawns - just let us show you how to put your knowledge and training to a more profitable use.

The package includes:

- ✓ full business support
- ✓ training
- ✓ in-depth software package
- ✓ professional machines and equipment

Finance packages are available of up to 66% per cent of the cost of the franchise so you could start with as little as £7000.



Want more information? Then send or call for an info pack to:
Lawn Master, Turnpike House, St. Georges Road, St. George, Abergelle, Conwy LL22 9BN

0845 60 22 054
www.lawnmaster.co.uk

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the lawn treatment service...

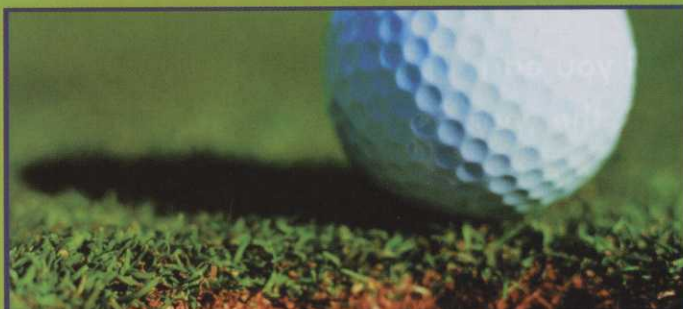


EXCLUSIVE MEMBERSHIP DEAL

UK and Europe Motor breakdown cover from as little as £19.04

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Quote 'BIGGA'



GOLF COURSE MANAGER

Crown require a Golf Course Manager at The Cotgrave Place Golf Club.

This is an exciting opportunity to become part of Europe's largest golf course management company and to help further develop this 36 hole site on the southern edge of Nottingham.

Applicants must have a proven track record to lead a committed greens staff and to help manage & further develop the profile of this popular venue.

The successful applicant should have all the necessary experience and technical ability to manage a modern golf course with sand based greens to a high standard.

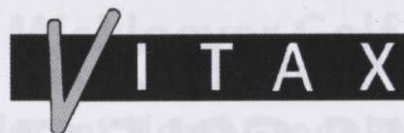
Applicants for the position should have the following;

- NVQ3 or similar plus spraying qualifications.
- A sound knowledge of irrigation systems & machinery
- Health & Safety Awareness
- Excellent man management & leadership skills
- Ability to work within and understand budgets

Salary by negotiation.

Apply in writing by 17th June, with full CV to:

Laurence W. Pithie
Group Golf Courses Manager
Crown Golf
Blue Mountain Golf Centre
Wood Lane, Binfield
Berks RG42 4EX
or
E-mail l.pithie@crown-golf.co.uk



TECHNICAL SALES REPRESENTATIVE - SOUTHERN 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 South 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

Three Rivers Golf & Country Club HEAD GREENKEEPER

Appropriate qualification and experience required

Good man management skills essential

Holidays honoured

Apply in writing with full C.V. and salary required

Arnold Phipps-Jones, Golf Courses' Manager
Three Rivers Golf & Country Club, Stow Road,
Cold Norton, Purleigh, Chelmsford, Essex CM3 6RR
Tel: 01621 828 631 Fax: 01621 828 060

Crane Valley Golf Club require ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

The successful candidate will preferably have:
2-3 years experience in greenkeeping, qualifications to NVQ2 level or equivalent, PA1, 2 and 6 would be an advantage, awareness of health and safety and to be self motivated.

For an application form please contact
Darrel Ranson, General Manager on:

01202 814088

The Clubhouse, Verwood, Dorset BH31 7LE



Grounds Manager/Head Greenkeeper

£attractive + benefits + accommodation

Due to retirement, the Ramada Hotel and Resort / Gloucester Golf Club has an excellent opportunity for an enthusiastic professional with good interpersonal and supervisory skills, to develop their career at this prestigious location.

Together with experience at Head/Assistant Greenkeeper level at a high quality operation, you should be qualified to NVQ level 3, possess PA 1, 2 & 6 Spray Certificates and be conversant with current H&S legislation. Some knowledge of budget control would be an advantage.

The successful applicant will also benefit from membership of our excellent health club, including indoor pool, gym, sauna, dry ski slopes, squash & tennis courts.

Please contact Sarah Boon, Ramada Hotel & Resort, Matson Lane, Robinswood Hill, Gloucester GL4 6EA. E mail: hr.gloucester@ramadajarvis.co.uk. Tel: 01452 874825.



Recruiting? Perfect timing...

If you are looking to recruit new members to your team for the coming year, then **STOP!** Look no further!

The **GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL RECRUITMENT PAGES** are here to help you match the right person to the right job.

With a monthly circulation reaching over 9,000 people, targeted direct to your industry, you will be guaranteed to find a high calibre of candidates to fill your positions.

All adverts placed will go on to our website for a month **FREE OF CHARGE**. Plus all design work is included in the price.

So, how can you take advantage of this?

Simply select the size of the advert you require:

1/8 page = £435

1/4 page = £560

1/2 page = £910

Add 20% to the price if you want a colour advert and then...

Call **Amy** on **01347 833800**
to book your space

Mid-Herts Golf Club



MID-HERTS GOLF CLUB

HEAD GREENKEEPER

Mid-Herts Golf Club is an 18 hole traditional private members Club established in 1892 in wooded heathland near to the village of Wheathampstead, Herts.

The Club invites applications from experienced candidates for the position of Head Greenkeeper

Applicants must:

- be fully familiar with, and knowledgeable about, the game of golf
- be qualified to NVQ3 or equivalent
- possess a full range of spraying and chainsaw certificates
- demonstrate strong organisational skills with the ability to lead, motivate and manage an established team
- have a full working knowledge of current good practice in agronomy, and health & safety

Salary and terms of employment are negotiable.

Applications marked "confidential" with CV to:
The Chairman, Mid-Herts Golf Club, Lamer Lane, Gustard Wood, Wheathampstead, Herts AL4 8RS
www.mid-hertsgolfclub.co.uk Tel: 01582 832242



BELMONT
LODGE & GOLF

QUALIFIED ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

2 Years Minimum Experience
and qualifications to NVQ Level 2 required.

Salary negotiable according to
Experience and Qualification.

Apply in writing with full C.V to:
Wayne James, Head Greenkeeper,
Belmont Lodge & Golf, Belmont, Hereford HR2 9SA

HENBURY GOLF CLUB

18 Hole Private Members Club require an Experienced Assistant Greenkeeper

The successful applicant must be highly motivated and able to work with our existing team of 5. You should be qualified to a minimum of NVQ2 or equivalent. Spraying Certificates Pa1, Pa2 & Pa6 would be an advantage.

Apply in writing with full C.V to:
The Managing Secretary, Henbury Golf Club,
Westbury on Trym, Bristol BS10 7QB

Feature listing from June 2003

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

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

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

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

October 2003; Construction Machinery; Pay Recommendations; Saltex Review; Pesticide Legislation; Finance

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

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

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

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

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

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

January 2005; Sir Michael Bonallack; Parkstone GC; Machinery Servicing; Ransomes Jacobsen Scholarship; Recycled Products; John Deere Team Championship; Tees; Negotiation Advice

February 2005; Harrogate 2005 Review; Meet the Chairman; Environmental Competition; Tyres; Coombe Hill GC

March 2005; Alwoodley GC; Difficult Areas; Drainage; Irrigation; Greens

April 2005; Augusta Syndrome; Thornhill GC; Difficult Areas Part 2; Turf Tonics; BIGGA Delegation; Fescue Grass

May 2005; Hellidon Lakes; Power Mowers; Pest Control; Cutting Heights Survey; Nozzles

BIGGA membership - What's it worth?



I have recently been interested to read members postings on the website bulletin board about the cost of membership and note the varying views on this topic. Some members feel that current subscription rates are too high and that they don't get much for their money, while others feel that they would happily pay double for what they get from the Association.

The cost is a very subjective matter, as with many things in life. What some call cheap, others call expensive. I suppose that value for money depends upon how often you use the service and how useful it is to you personally. Rather like golf club members, those who play regularly get a much better deal per round than those who play only a few times each year.

It may surprise some to know that member's subscriptions make up only about 25% of our income. This means that 75% of our income comes almost entirely from business with the trade, such as BTME and magazine/directory advertising. In other words, if for any reason we were to reduce our reliance on these external forms of income then subscriptions would have to increase fourfold for us to maintain our current services.

While we cannot envisage a situation in which all of our external income would suddenly evaporate, we are aware that such heavy reliance on external revenues is not the healthiest of situations, hence the need to increase steadily subscription rates over and above inflation. It must be borne in mind that our relationship with the trade is mutually beneficial and they prosper from a well organised, ready made customer base. Our steady progress is, I am sure, just as vital to them as it is to us.

Subscription rates for Course Manager/Head Greenkeepers and Deputies have traditionally been based on cost. Direct benefits to these members have been costed out and the rate set to equal that cost. Rates for Assistants and First Assistants are below cost and therefore subsidised by other members. This is because research has shown that they tend to use the services less, they tend to have less disposable income to afford membership and we wish to encourage new, young members into the Association.

So far I have concentrated on the facts about membership and subscription rates and I hope it has given you a clearer picture of why things are as they are but, as I stated earlier, it is really all about what you get for your money. Well, I could list all the direct member benefits such as subsidised education, expert assistance through the magazine and the website, insurance, legal helpline and discount card to name but a few.

For me personally, however, these are not solely what membership is all about. What it is about is camaraderie, fellowship and mutual support. It affords us all the opportunity and great privilege of being able to try to assist young greenkeepers in the way that we were so warmly and ably assisted by more experienced BIGGA members in the past.

Without BIGGA I know I would not have visited so many golf courses and talked to so many greenkeepers willing to share their problems and their expertise. I would not have met so many friendly and genuinely supportive people and I would not have so readily taken on board the values of others that

served to round my education beyond the point of me thinking the world owed me a living.

If you want to know what BIGGA is about, then ask those on the website who have just received invaluable help and support from their fellow members. Ask those young men who have just attended their first Regional seminar or Section golf match and discovered the great bond of camaraderie within our industry. Ask the young greenkeeper who is about to complete a day out raking bunkers at St Andrews in the Open Championship and will be sipping beer with experienced and friendly Course Managers willing to share both their experience and their sense of humour.

Ask the Section Committee members up and down the land what they get out of it? Why do they spend so much of their valuable time and effort late into the night organising events for other people? I guarantee their answers will not centre on money and materialistic values.

I would like to think that we pay our subs, not so much for what we can get out of it but for what we can put into the respectable profession we have chosen to follow. It, rather selfishly, gives me great comfort to know, that some of my subscription is used to support those who need support the most. BIGGA supported me when I needed it and I see the subscription as a small price to pay for the strengthening of our Association whose stated aims are to aid the disenfranchised, reward the diligent and advance the prospects of us all.

When buying a car we make value judgements on whether it is a good deal or not and whether we will end up winners or losers, but what price lasting friendships, mutual respect and the shared bond of our profession?

'For when the One Great Scorer comes
To write against your name
He marks not that you won or lost
But how you played the game'
(Grantland Rice 1880 - 1954)

Kerran Daly
Chairman

Recruitment



Enmore Park Golf Club

Assistant Greenkeeper

Enmore Park Golf Club, founded in 1906, is a private members club with a course situated in the pleasant countryside parkland of Enmore Castle.

The successful applicant will be a qualified Greenkeeper to NVQ level 2, with a minimum of three years practical experience in a golf course environment.

Spraying certificates, PA1, PA2 and PA6 preferred.

Salary will be negotiable dependent on experience. Some relocation costs may be paid also.

Please apply in writing, with your C.V. and details of salary expectations by Monday 27th June 2005 to:

Gary Cook, Course Manager,
Enmore Park Golf Club, Enmore, Bridgwater TA5 2AN

WILDWOOD COUNTRY CLUB

Requires an

ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

N.V.Q Level 2 Preferred.

A knowledge of modern machinery and automatic irrigation systems would be an advantage.

Single accommodation, can be provided at a favourable rate, within walking distance of the club.

Please apply in writing, with full C.V. to:

Philip Harrison, Director of Golf, Wildwood Country Club,
Horsham Road, Alfold, Surrey GU6 8JE Tel: 01403 753255



Kenilworth Golf Club Warwickshire

Applications are invited for the post of

Head Greenkeeper

To manage the continuing programme and day-to-day maintenance of the course.

The successful applicant should have the following attributes:

- A minimum of 5 years experience as Assistant Head or Head Greenkeeper.
- In depth knowledge of turf management, irrigation, drainage and equipment maintenance.
- Conversant with Health and Safety regulations and practice.
- Self-motivation, Man management and Team leadership skills.
- Relevant qualifications.

Attractive remuneration package available for suitable candidate.

Please apply in writing with accompanying CV to:

Mr J H McTavish, The Secretary,
Kenilworth Golf Club, Crewe Lane, Kenilworth, CV8 2EA
Closing date 17th June, 2005.

DE VERE HOTELS

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De Vere have hosted many prestigious tournaments such as The Ryder Cup matches, the Benson & Hedges International Open & the Compaq European Open.

HEAD GREENKEEPER/COURSE MANAGER

The Head Greenkeeper/Course Manager, reporting to the Golf Manager, will possess the following key attributes;

A minimum of 10 years greenkeeping experience, NVQ level III or equivalent, PA1, PA2 and PA6 spray qualifications, A1 assessor award or equivalent, Up to date knowledge of health and safety legislation, strong supervisory and management skills and a good awareness of budgetary and financial procedures.

This position requires an individual with the drive, ability and enthusiasm to oversee the improvement in standards expected by the group.

GREENKEEPERS

We are looking for individuals who are working towards or have achieved NVQ level II and III and who possess spraying certificates. A number of positions are available from trainee through to qualified greenkeeper. All candidates must show an ability to work as part of a team and have a flexible approach to hours of work.

MECHANIC

A minimum of 5 years experience in machinery maintenance would be preferred. The ability to maintain service records and a flexible approach with an ability to multi-task is required. A key aspect of this role will be the setting up of a new workshop facility.

For all positions, please apply in writing with a current C.V to:

Lizzie Bullen, HR Manager De Vere Oulton Hall,
Rothwell Lane, Oulton LEEDS LS13 1HP
Or email - lizzie.bullen@devere-hotels.com



Running smoothly from tee to green

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Product description	Pack size (Litres)	Total pack price
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Castrol Carelube HTG 32	25L	£81.25
Castrol Carelube CBL FE	25L	£110.00
Castrol Agri MP Plus 10W-30	25L	£31.25
2 Stroke chain saw oil	12 x 0.5L	£33.48
2 Stroke chain saw oil	12 x 1L	£47.88
2 Stroke chain saw oil	4 x 5L	£59.80
2 Stroke lawnmower oil	12 x 0.5L	£29.88
2 Stroke lawnmower oil	4 x 5L	£55.00
Castrol horticultural 4 Str lawnmower oil	12 x 0.5L	£29.88
Castrol horticultural 4 Str lawnmower oil	4 x 5L	£57.00
Horticultural 4-stroke en	12 x 1L	£39.00
Horticultural 4-stroke en	4 x 5L	£51.00
Chainsaw chain oil	12 x 1L	£47.88
Chainsaw chain oil	4 x 5L	£39.80
Castrol One Shot	24 x 0.125L	£47.76

18



FREE Castrol Agri polo shirt with every 100 litres ordered.
FREE Castrol Agri fleece with every 250 litres ordered.

Promotion runs from 18th April until 30th June 2005. While stocks last.

For further information on the Castrol Range, or to place an order, contact Becky Bond 01793 452987