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Greenkeeper

INTERNATIONAL

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Welcome

PRESERVE THIS PIECE OF GOLFING HERITAGE

A call came into the office a few weeks ago from a guy wishing to drum up support for a campaign with which he was involved. It's not an uncommon occurrence but on this occasion Ian Colville, of Musselburgh, was pushing at an open door.

Old Musselburgh Links is regarded by many as being the oldest golf course in the world, but it is currently fighting for its very survival. The reason? The course is in the centre of Musselburgh Racecourse and a planning application has been lodged for the extension of the track and the installation of a new all-weather track and floodlights.

The plans call for the historic 1st green - which records show having been in place as early as 1832 and has been used for Open Championships - to be destroyed and replaced with a replica while the integrity of the entire golf course would be severely compromised. Indeed under the proposed plans with 60 new race meetings added to the current 25 access to the golf course would also be extremely limited. It would, in effect, ruin one of the most significant venues in world golf.

Now it may be that calculations have been made displaying that there is far more revenue to be made from racing than golf but I'm sure I'm not alone in despairing.

If the oldest golf course in the world were in any other country it would be revered. Indeed it would be treated as a living museum and a town would get as much as it possibly could out of what it was lucky enough to have within its boundaries. Any council worth its salt would hang its hat on the fact that the pioneers of a game which is now played all over the world had started to swing a club on their patch.

I visited Old Musselburgh Links and wrote a feature on it for the magazine in the mid 90s and I was surprised then, that not more was made of the history of the course, but I was pleased at the passion and commitment of the people then involved in the maintenance of the course and the preservation of it however little interest the council, even then paid to it.

More information on the campaign to save the course can be found on www.hool.org.uk and letters of objection should be sent to the Director of the Environment, East Lothian Council, John Muir House, Haddington, EH41 3HA.

Talking of golfing "antiques" I'd also like to pay tribute to BIGGA Past Chairman, Gordon Child, who complete with two new hips and a rejuvenated ticker, beat his age for the very first time recently. Gordon shot a 73 around Churston bettering the target by one. Gordon has always been a fine player but it's a rare feat for anyone to beat their age under any circumstances so for him to do so is even more noteworthy. It's not a record Tiger will match for a while anyway!

Scott MacCallum, Editor

HITTING THE MARK

Billingham Golf Club was the winner of the annual Blazon 'See Your Way to a Better Spray' promotion and, as has been custom over the past 13 years, the winner attended a BIGGA presentation ceremony at Saltex.

From a high number of entries across mainland UK, Billingham's name was the first to be drawn and the club will receive a 300 litre tractor mounted Gambetti Barre amenity sprayer.

The prize was presented to Bob Lawton, the

club's Course Manager, by BIGGA Chairman Kerran Daly together with John Pemberton. In attendance also was Richard Aitken Jnr, representing Aitken's Sportsturf who distribute Blazon, Bill Oliver, from Gambetti UK, and Richard Fry, from GreenLink International.

In addition to receiving the sprayer on his club's behalf, Bob Lawton was presented with a top of the range Toshiba laptop computer and carry-case for his personal use.



NEW FACILITIES

Kees Bleeker, CEO Royal Barenbrug Group, has officially opened the new production and warehousing facilities at Barenbrug UK's headquarters in Bury St Edmunds

Barenbrug's UK business has seen sustained growth in recent years, and to cope with the increased business and improve customer services substantial capital investment into new specialised storage facilities for certified seed, new packing lines and customer service facilities have been made.

The requirements were to house 2,500 tonnes of cleaned and certified seed, to have five dedicated packaging lines, install a full under cover unloading canopy to house 30ft articulated trailers, new meeting and training rooms and production staff wash and rest rooms.

"In our discussions with the UK company it had become very clear that if they were to meet their objectives this extension was essential. The company has already claimed an important position in the UK market and our aim is to make Barenbrug the undisputed number 1 in the UK grass seed industry," said Kees Bleeker at the opening.



L-R: Kees Bleeker, CEO Royal Barenbrug Group, Rob de Vries, Director Royal Barenbrug Group, and Paul Johnson, Barenbrug UK Managing Director

GOLF INDUSTRY SHOW MOVES AGAIN

After determining that Houston, Texas, would be unable to deliver previously agreed upon services, GCSAA and NGCOA have moved the Golf Industry Show and their respective education conferences to Atlanta in February 2006.

Although the events were to be held in New Orleans, the Associations were forced to look for a new site after Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast. Officials then announced that Houston would be the new site, but it turned out the convention centre would not be available as had been communicated.

The show and conferences are now set for Atlanta, which was one of the cities examined for

the original relocation. Atlanta last hosted the GCSAA International Golf Course Conference and Show in 2003. The dates for the 2006 conferences and show will remain the same as were originally planned. The GCSAA Education Conference is February 6-11, the NGCOA Solutions Summit 7-10 and the Golf Industry Show 9-11.

"Our experience in Atlanta in 2003 was beyond expectations. The convention centre and hotels will be convenient locations for education, networking and exposition activities. Unlike Houston, there are no other events that will conflict with our ability to conduct the conferences and trade show," said GCSAA CEO Steve Mona.

RANSOMES HELP SCHOOL



It might appear to be a simple gesture but the enthusiasm and effusiveness of the thanks from the school in Ghana that received a donated rotary mower to maintain their sports field, was humbling indeed. It all began when Rupert Price, Commercial Manager at Ransomes Jacobsen was approached by Oakfield Primary School in Rugby, Warwickshire.

Ronnie Carvell, a teacher at the school, asked if the company could donate a mower as part of the School's Link programme, established to assist

schools in Ghana with support in the form of teaching and the procurement of much needed equipment. A couple of phone calls later and Rupert 'found' a Ransomes Bobcat walk-behind rotary mower that appeared to fit the bill perfectly. Oakfield gratefully accepted the machine and it was shipped to Ghana, to coincide with the arrival of Ronnie, who was running a summer school in Pampawie.

"The mower was presented to the Chief amid much banging of drums, dancing and there were wild celebrations because this wonderful machine had come to their village. The men of the village were especially interested, all wanting to touch it. We finally got it going and it did a superb job of cutting the playing field and the children were leaping around and all the men had a go. It was mayhem," said Ronnie.

MURRAY SHOWS VERSATILITY

Sunningdale have officially announced the appointment of Murray Long as Courses and Estate Manager, who started his new job on September 1.

Murray, 35, has been Course Manager of Coombe Hill Golf Club since 1994, joining the club from Berkhamsted Golf Club. He was educated to NVQ Level 3 in Greenkeeping and Sports Turf Management and subsequently attended the University of Massachusetts Turf Grass School.

Murray is a former Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year and his bunker renovation programme at Coombe Hill was awarded Course Renovation of the Year by Golf World magazine.

Murray has already shown his versatility at the club by delivering his third child. The ambulance that was meant to come to collect his wife, Penny, never turned up and the midwife was stuck in traffic, leaving Murray to step up to the plate and oversee the safe birth of Charlie.

FRANCIS JOINS HYDROSCAPE



Graeme Francis has joined Ringwood based Hydroscape and will be involved in general management and sales operations. Hydroscape specialise in the importation, distribution and installation of a range of water related

products for the golf and sports turf market.

Mi-T-M biological wash down water treatment systems, Aqua Control lake aerators and fountains and Sweetwater sulphur dioxide generators form the core of the company's product range. Other activities include systems for removing iron from borehole water and Strike Guard lightning warning systems.

Graeme has worked within distribution and contracting of golf, sports and landscape irrigation for over 20 years, much of which has been at senior management levels. He will work to develop and consolidate Hydroscape's business throughout the UK and European markets.

PRAISE INDEED

Recent improvements at St Enodoc Golf Club, in Cornwall, received glowing praise recently from the best amateur golfers in England. The English Men's County Finals 2005 were held in late September at the classic links course, which was remodelled by Weller McEvoy in the spring of 2005.

"The course is a great test for a good golfer, and over the five days every player I spoke to thought the golf course was fantastic. It looks so natural, like it's meant to be there, and to be honest none of us noticed the changes so they were obviously very sympathetic to the layout. It's the best links course I've played for a long time, and in superb condition," said Iain MacKenzie, the Captain of the winning Yorkshire team.



INTURF SELL WALES OUTLET

Turfgrass Services International, which trades as Inturf, has sold its business in Wales for an undisclosed sum. Alex and Stephen Edwards, joint Managing Directors of Inturf, will retain substantial shareholdings in the new company, Turfgrass Enterprises Limited trading as Inturf Wales, and remain as non-executive directors.

"The sale is excellent news for customers in Wales and for the business as a whole. We retain the sales of Turf and Topsoil in Wales in the knowledge that the new management team led by Gareth Rees are very keen to grow the business by developing relationships with existing customers and forging new ones," said Alex Edwards.

PAGE HITS HEIGHTS



Troon golf enthusiast Ross Page has reached the highest levels in greenkeeping thanks to Greenkeepers Training Committee (GTC) approved training centres.

Ross started his greenkeeping career as a trainee at the municipal courses in Troon in 1995. During this time, he took part in the South Ayrshire Council Skillseeker programme and after three years, gained his National Certificate in Greenkeeping. This led him to a position at The Wentworth Club, where he learnt to apply his skills in order to prepare courses for world class tournaments. These included the Volvo PGA, World Matchplay Championship and the Edinburgh Senior Masters, under the expert tutelage of Course Manager Chris Kennedy.

Ross enrolled at the GTC approved training centre at Elmwood, Scotland, to study the HNC and HND in Golf Course Management. This usually takes two years to complete, but Ross decided to challenge himself again and completed both courses within a year. He is only the second person to achieve this feat.

"This was an important decision for me as I needed to further my education but also wanted to get back into the industry quickly. The main reason to complete it so quickly was to ensure a placement in the MSc Sports Surface Technology course at Cranfield University," he said.

OATES AT TERRAIN



Steve Oates has joined Terrain Aeration Services as Right Hand Man to the Managing Director. Responsible for overseeing site visits, operating the Airforce deep, compressed air de-compaction machines, liaising with customers and organising transport and machinery maintenance, Steve will be directly involved in all aspects of the company.

With over 15 years forestry experience behind him, he also brings tree surgery and horticultural skills to the post, as well as familiarity with a vast selection of machinery.

"I'm looking forward to moving around the country and meeting people already involved in horticulture. It is a completely new side for me, working on football pitches and golf courses," commented Steve.

THREE ON THE TROT

The Scotts Company did themselves proud again this year when they treated the finalists of the Midland Section Greensomes Knockout to an unforgettable day out at Wentworth.

The finalists played the famous West Course on September 29. Ed Stant and Paul Woodham held on to the trophy for a third consecutive year after a coming out on top at the 19th hole.

"We had an unforgettable day and our thanks go to Mark Rayner and Scotts for the terrific day out, and to Chris Kennedy and Wentworth for allowing us to play on such a wonderful Golf Course. It was in immaculate condition as always," said Ed Stant, who is also the Midland Section Chairman.



L-R, E. Stant, P. Woodham, M. Rayner, Scotts, M. Gash and J. Ganley

ALL ABOUT THE TURF



L-R, John Brindley, Hazel and Paul Frith

Lindum has appointed All Turf Ltd. as their new distributor in Cheshire. Based in Knutsford, and covering a 30 mile radius, the company will have sole rights to the Yorkshire growers' complete turf range, providing an efficient delivery, laying and

after sales service to landscapers, golf clubs and private clients. Directors, Paul and Hazel Frith and John Brindley, are looking forward to expanding the golf course and landscape side of the business having built a sound reputation within the local domestic market.

"We used to supply all our own turf until we needed a large amount in a hurry and Lindum were recommended. The quality was first rate and as demand from customers grew we became more and more interested in working with them," said Hazel.

"Their approach to the job is right, and they have a sound understanding of the business. This is also a great opportunity to open up the market for RTE, the new shade and drought tolerant turf containing rhizomatous tall fescue," stated Lindum's MD Stephen Fell.

INDUSTRY BACKS CHAMPS



Three well-know companies, Tarmac Topsport, Nickerson Seeds and Inturf have helped Mike Seward, MD of Wigginton based Seward Turf Maintenance, ride into fifth place in the final round of the European Enduro (motorcycle) Championships in Germany, awarding him the trophy for fourth place overall.

Leading a six man team and competing in a strong international field which included five times world champion Gianmarco Rossi, who won the title, Seward was lying seventh until the final day when he managed to pull up three places.

Four weeks later, the same sponsors supported Seward in his bid for the international title. Heading a three-man team he took part in the International Six Day Enduro (ISDE) Championships in the Slovak Republic, and although he had to withdraw following a technical breakdown, his team mate, Jim Wright from Ripon, took his first bronze medal.

CHARITY BEGINS AT CLUB

The green staff at Stoneleigh Deer Park Golf Club recently raised over £1000 for the NSPCC by competing in the 2005 Wellesbourne & District Lions Club annual charity raft race, which was held on the River Avon.

The race took place on Sunday September 25, with over 50 rafts setting off on the gruelling seven and half mile course. This included tackling two weirs and battling through hail and thunder storms. The Stoneleigh Steamer entered the six man survivor class and finished 30th out of the whole field, with a time of 4 hours 12mins.

"We have raised over £1000 in sponsorship, which includes donations from the members at Stoneleigh Deer Park Golf Club, Browns Groundcare Ltd Daventry, The Scotts Company and the friends and family of the raft crew," said Richard Biggs, Head Greenkeeper at Stoneleigh.



Front to back: Richard Biggs, Head Greenkeeper, Chris Mallett, Rob Weaver, Paul Trafford; Back seats, John Lewis and Chris Dougill

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A DAY TO REMEMBER

On a mild day, in ideal fishing conditions, the BIGGA Midland Section members gathered for their third Annual Angling Match. Within minutes of the start rods were being bent into action by hungry carp. By the finish all but two rods had very decent fish to weigh.

The winning bag was caught by A. Shore and prizes were also awarded to runners up and to E. Perry for Largest Fish and Best Specimen to S. Yates - a 21b Perch. Steve also took some very fine Crucian Carp, which were of equal merit.

After the weigh in the members assembled in the summerhouse for the presentations in the charming garden of our host, which on being open to the public for a weekend earlier this summer yielded over £1,000 for charity. Hearty thanks are due to our sponsor, N. Tyler of Alpha Amenity, and gracious host, Roger Perks, the Proprietor of Rubery Building Supplies Ltd. Also thanks go to Sean McDade's father, Kerry, for securing the venue and pre baiting the pegs the evening prior and preparing the very enjoyable refreshments.

This event was certainly a fitting end to a fine summer for the Section and will provide warm memories during the short, cold and wet winter days ahead to all who took part.



Sean McDade, left with winner A. Shore

CELEBRATING 21

Burgess Hill based Tracmaster Ltd, manufacturer and distributor of the Camon 'Built-for-Hire' range and the BCS ranges of Power Scythes, Two-Wheel Tractors and Professional Mowers has celebrated their 21st Birthday this year.

Established in 1984 by Stephen Pitt and Alan Robinson, Tracmaster started business as a distributor of mowers and small pedestrian-operated tractors. Now, 21 years on, their manufacturing output has increased to include

more and more machines that are designed and built 'in-house'.

"We're thrilled to be celebrating 21 years. After some particularly difficult times for manufacturers in the UK, we have managed to increase our product range and extend our customer base dramatically. We owe a great deal of our success to the magnificent staff we are fortunate to employ and we look forward to the future with relish," said Stephen Pitt, Managing Director.



IOG APPOINTS

The Institute of Groundsmanship has appointed Geoff Webb as it's new Chief Executive, effective from November 7. Geoff replaces Patrick Gosset, who announced his retirement from the position in June.

Geoff, 43, is a former Head of Grass Roots, then Director of Facility & Stadia Development at the Football Foundation, and before that Head of Major Projects at the Lawn Tennis Association. At the

Football Foundation Geoff was responsible for developing the grass roots facilities and football stadia grant aid programme, managing an annual budget of £52 million.

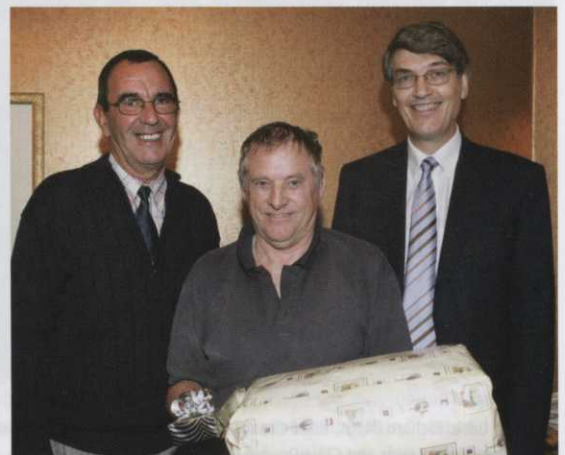
"During my tenure at the Football Foundation I utilised every opportunity to make the governing bodies and Government aware of this vital component of the sports industry," stated Geoff.

THE END FOR JOHNNO

Victor Whitbread, affectionately known as Johnno by his fellow team members, has retired after more than 18 years' service as part of the green staff at Wyboston Lakes golf course. During his career he has seen many improvements to both the course and golfing facilities, and Wyboston is now rated as one of the top venues in the country.

Wyboston's Leisure Services Manager Dave Little, said: "Johnno has been an extremely loyal and popular member of our team, always cheerful and ready to lend a hand. He was particularly adept at manoeuvring the unwieldy self-propelled rough cutting machine and took pride in maintaining a high standard of both the driving range and fields within the Wyboston complex."

At his retirement presentation Group Managing Director, Nigel Hollis, presented Victor with gifts on behalf of the company and he also received several gifts from his fellow green staff team members.



WHITE EDGE OUT THE REST

Devizes-based T H White has been awarded £10,000 after being crowned the South West's best large sized employer for practical learning. T H White was awarded the honour after winning the regional heats of the Edge Employer Award; a joint Jamie Oliver and Simon Woodroffe backed initiative to recognise the best employers in England offering practical learning opportunities to 14-25 year olds.

T H White will now go head to head with eight other large sized organisations for the chance to be recognised as the country's best practical learning employer and receive a staggering £200,000 investment.

"We are delighted to have won an Edge Employer Award. Gaining hands-on experience under the guidance of qualified staff helps school leavers understand the relevance of academic study and makes their work more interesting, resulting in them becoming self-motivating and valuable members of the community," said David Scott, Managing Director at T H White.

DIPLOMA TOUR

Sisis Equipment was delighted to welcome a party of National Diploma students from Myerscough College, to their factory at Macclesfield in September. The photo shows students with their tutor, Tommy Givnan, far left, and Sisis Sales Manager Keith Vertigan, far right.



REDEVELOPMENT AT ST ANDREWS

Constructed in 1995, The Dukes Course, St Andrews, is currently undergoing a massive multi-million pound redevelopment programme with works being carried out by contractor MJ Abbott.

Extensive irrigation works include a complete upgrade of the irrigation system - changing from a Watermation system with pvc pipe to a Rain Bird computer-controlled system with polyethylene pipe work.

Water is fed from a borehole and an internal reservoir, fed by the borehole, can also be tapped into. Greens, tees and fairways are to be covered - which will eventually involve MJ Abbott in the fitting of more than 1,000 sprinklers - and a weather station is also to be installed along with a new pump station.

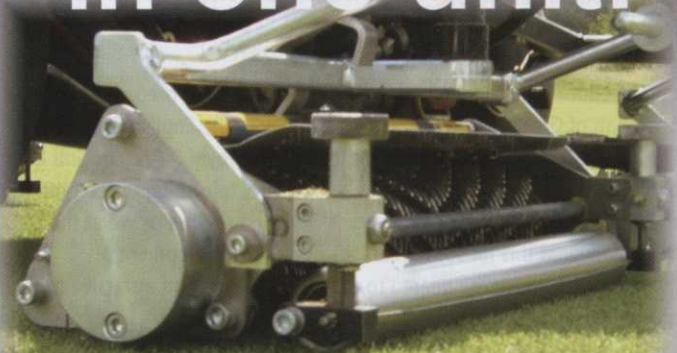
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The GTC's Education Director, David Golding, looks at the education programme at Harrogate Week 2006 and states why the representative bodies are united in their objectives to ensure staff development.

Having been involved in the development of the early turf exhibitions in Harrogate and now seeing how the Show has evolved I can only encourage readers from all sectors of the golf course and clubhouse to attend. In fairness to the trade, they have listened to Course Managers regarding what they would like in terms of equipment development and more often than not, within a very short space of time, low and behold a machine appears.

Whether it is a machine to perform quicker or aerate deeper there is a fantastic range available to assist greenkeepers to maintain the course to the standards their employers request. A visit to Harrogate just to keep yourself up to speed with what is available in the equipment and materials field is in itself the reason why employers should endorse your request to attend this major event.

I very often hear Greenkeepers say "my club won't let me go to BTME," I don't think that is often the case. I feel that if the employer was made aware of the benefits to the club and attended the Exhibition themselves this would be very beneficial for both parties. All this before I explain why we at the GTC feel golf club employers as well as greenkeepers should attend.

The education programme for 2006 really has been prepared to attract Chairman of Green and Secretary/Managers with the English Golf Union, The Association of Golf Club Secretaries and the Royal & Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews all involved in Seminars. It is very refreshing to see both the employer and employee bodies of golf working together as we at the GTC have pioneered this for some years, through the development of qualifications, which are geared to employers' needs and attractive to the greenkeepers themselves as they are relevant to their job.

The Wednesday seminar 'Working Together in Golf Club Management' has a little of everything for the Chairman of Green and Secretary Manager. While Thursday's 'Maintaining the Sustainable Golf Course' presented jointly by the R&A and BIGGA is followed on Friday morning by an Open discussion.

There are some very topical subjects on the agenda and some excellent speakers will give delegates some real food for thought. There will also be the opportunity for those of us in a position to ensure greenkeeper education and training in the future addresses current and future requirements of the employers.

All together the GTC is pleased to sponsor the event at which there really is a sense of all the various bodies within golf pulling together to ensure golf courses and clubs are managed in a profession manner, which in turn gives pleasure to the golfer. Greenkeeper education, as ever, is very well covered and with workshops and seminars covering a vast range of subjects there must be something there for you.

The GTC has, in association with Plan-it Training, its own workshops with three options. For those assessors who achieved the D32-D33 award but feel they need an updating session this will be held on the Monday. If you are responsible for the training and assessment of staff as a Course

Manager or Deputy and have not achieved the assessor award (A1) then a two day workshop is available on the Sunday and Monday. For assessors who wish to achieve the Coaching Award (L12) then a one day workshop will be held on the Monday.

All these courses are funded by the GTC with support from the European Social Fund. As all of these workshops are limited to the number of delegates early application is recommended.

For further information on these seminars visit the dedicated website www.harrogateweek.org.uk.

If you wish to discuss the coach and assessor training course please do not hesitate to contact the GTC on 01347 838640 or email David on david@the-gtc.co.uk.





EXHIBITION 24 - 26 January 2006
EDUCATION 22 - 27 January 2006

GTC is supported by:





Greenkeeper Education and Development Fund

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

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John Deere Ltd	01949 860491
Kubota (UK) Ltd	01844 214500
PGA European Tour	01344 842881
Rigby Taylor Ltd	01204 677777
Scotts UK Professional	01473 830492
Ransomes Jacobsen Ltd	01473 270000
The Toro Company/Lely UK	01480 226800

Golden Key Individual Members

J H Fry; J H Greasley; WJ Rogers; David S Robinson; Stuart Townsend; Andy Campbell MG, CGCS; Chris Yeaman; Iain A MacLeod; Bruce Cruickshank; John Crawford; Stuart Cruickshank; Frank Newberry; Terence Welch.

Silver Key Supporters



Silver Key Company Members

Company	Tel: Head Office
Bernhard and Company Ltd	01788 811600
Ernest Doe & Sons	01245 380311
Gem Professional	01254 356611
General Legal Protection Ltd	01904 611600
Hayter Ltd	01279 723444
Heath Lambert Group	0113 246 1313
RainBird	01273 891326
Symbio	01372 456101
Syngenta Professional Products	0041 613 233 028
TurfTrax Group Ltd	01722 434000

Silver Key Individual Members

Clive A Archer; Douglas G Duguid; Robert Maibusch MG; Elliott R Small; Steven Tierney; Richard Lawrence; Clive Osgood; Roger Barker; David Robinson; Richard Stillwell; Stephen Dixon; Ian Semple; Paul Jenkins; Robert Hogarth; R Steele; Lee Relf; Raymond Warrender; Nichollas Gray; Trevor Smith; Iain Barr; Richard McGlynn; Alex McCombie; Paul Murphy; Tom Smith.

Education Update

Ken Richardson highlights the additions to the Education Programme at Harrogate Week, including Fringe Seminars and much, much more.



You should all have received a copy of the Harrogate Week 2006 brochure, supported by the GTC, with last month's copy of Greenkeeper International. If you did not receive a copy contact BIGGA HQ and we will send one out to you.

Those who did get their copy will have seen that the brochure contains a wide range of educational opportunities for all those who wish to attend. From workshops and seminars to a one-day conference and debate, greenkeepers, groundsman, golf course managers, grounds managers, golf club secretaries and golf club managers and officials will find something that appeals and, more importantly, increases their knowledge.

Added value can be obtained from the Careers Fair and Student Forum, sponsored by Toro, half-day workshops, sponsored by Ransomes Jacobsen, a Women's Forum, the Keynote Speaker and Presentations, the Banquet, networking and formal meetings. This all adds to BTME & ClubHouse, plus a series of Fringe Seminars presented by a range of exhibitor companies.

Wednesday January 25 sees a full day of seminars presented by the English Golf Union and the Association of Golf Club Secretaries, aimed mainly at golfers, golf club officials, golf club secretaries and secretary managers. However, golf course managers could also benefit from attending.

A further addition to Harrogate Week is a series of talks devoted to Sustainable Golf Course Management, that is supported by the R&A. These take place on Thursday afternoon, January 26, followed by what is sure to be a lively debate on Friday morning.

FRINGE SEMINARS

Many exhibitors at BTME & ClubHouse have taken the opportunity to present a seminar during the Show. Full details will be published soon but the following companies have confirmed that they will be making presentations.

Tuesday 24 January

Toro
WBB Minerals (Rufford and Pro-Sport)
Headland Amenity Products
Rigby Taylor Ltd
Otterbine
STRI
Lloyds and Co Letchworth Ltd
Complete Weed Control

Wednesday 25 January 2006

Toro
Aqua-aid Inc in association with Tower Chemicals Ltd
Aquatrols in Association with Vitax
Hunter Industries Inc
Thursday 26 January 2006
Premium Credit Ltd
Toro
Terrain Aeration Services
Headland Amenity Products

All of the fringe seminars are free of charge and do not need to be booked. They will all take place in the Queen's Suite at Harrogate International Centre that can be accessed via Halls B and C or from the covered walkway.

STUDENT FORUM

Thursday January 26 is Student Day at Harrogate Week 2006. Visit the show, network with employers, discover what career opportunities are open to you, attend the Student Forum and enter the Student Quiz when you could win an I-Pod. Details of the day and quiz entry forms are being sent to all training providers in the UK and Ireland.

BIGGA CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

Congratulations to the following list of members who have been awarded their Diploma in Continuing Professional Development.

Ian MacMillan MG
Nigel White
Stuart Hogg MG
John Quinn MG
Kerran Daly MG
Andy Campbell MG CGCS
Mark Broughton MG
Alex McCombie
Richard Whyman
Seve Schmitz MG
Lee Strutt MG
Ian Willett
David Hannam MG
Kevin Kenny



TORO STUDENT OF THE YEAR



A close fought Final held at BIGGA HOUSE on September 26 saw Alan Pierce, from Ham Manor Golf Club, selected as the Toro Student of the Year 2005, with David Newton and James Lindsay selected as the two runners-up. More details appear

elsewhere in this magazine. I would like to congratulate all eight finalists who were well prepared, were immaculate in their presentation and showed that the future of greenkeeping is in good hands.

Alan attended Plumpton College, in Sussex, and as part of the first prize, his Lecturer, David Blackmur, will join the BIGGA party at the Golf Industry Show in Atlanta in February 2006.

Thank you to all those who took part, to their golf clubs for supporting them, to the judges for giving their time and especially to Toro for continuing to sponsor this worthwhile event.

Tip of the Month

Ivan Killip

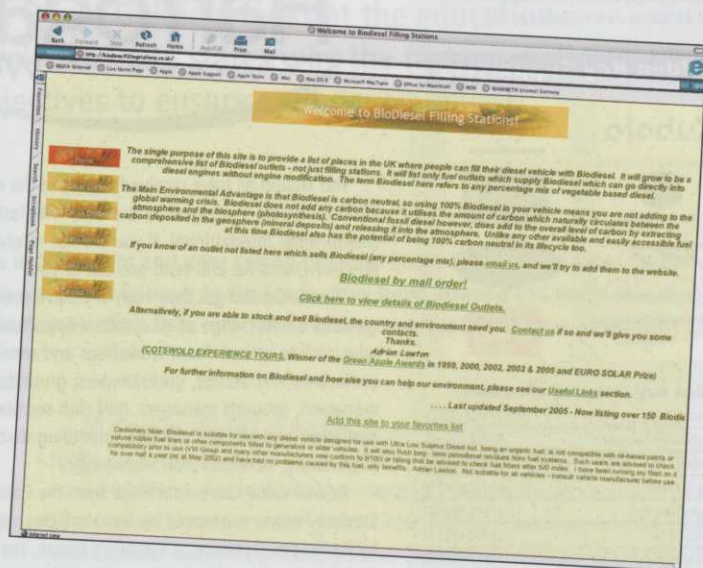
Deputy Head Greenkeeper, Gatton Manor Golf Club



As there is more and more demand on golf courses to become environmentally friendly, with the EU putting more pressure on our government to meet targets. It's no wonder we have to find new ways to manage the golf course in a symbiotic relationship with nature and ourselves.

My tip is running your diesel engine mowers on a product called biodiesel. Biodiesel is basically vegetable oil or filtered fat. You can have the product delivered to your door, and if you run out you can always use regular diesel. You can also run your personal vehicle with biodiesel on the roads, as some petrol pumps supply this alternative fuel.

It is totally clean to the environment as it produces no carbon gases, you will also be using up a waste product that would normally be discarded. To find the nearest supplier to you, and to find out more about biodiesel check out their website at www.biodieselfillingstations.co.uk.



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Call Us Today For A Demo

Rachael and Gemma would like to welcome 61 new members to the Association and talk about time off for dependants.

Membership Update



WIN A WEEKEND SURVIVAL COURSE FOR TWO



Our congratulations go to Nigel Robins of Whittlebury Park Golf and Country Club who wins a survival weekend for two.

Nigel will spend the weekend building his own shelter, learning about edible plants and survival medicine and receiving instruction in navigation.

DID YOU RECEIVE YOURS?

The new 2005/2006 Membership Handbook was launched with the October Magazine. The handbook is an, all encompassing one stop guide, which offers easy access to information on many organisations and individuals. If you did not receive your handbook or would like extra copies please contact Rachael or Gemma on 01347 833800.



BIGGA welcomes...

SCOTTISH REGION

Kenneth Liddell, Central
Alexander Macdonald, North
Shaun Macdonald, North
Euan Macdonald, North
Andrew Mackay, North
Craig Mackay, North
Nicholas Marsland, North
David McLeish, Central
David Ronaldson, East
Alastair Ross, North
George Simpson, North
John Smith, East
Matthew Thomson, East

NORTHERN REGION

Peter Colley, Northern
Richard Cook, North West
Mark Finley, North West
Adrian Hallatt, Sheffield

Philip Jordan, North West
Paul Judd, Sheffield
Neil Kenyon, North West
Martin Kirby, North West
Spencer Lloyd-Pye, North West
Geoff Marchant, North West
Stuart Mason, Northern
Adam McColl, North Wales
Adam Moore, North West
Andrew Scaman, Northern
Dominic Skinner, North West
Dave Squire, North West
Mike Wiszniewski, North West

MIDLAND REGION

Michael Boyes, Mid Anglia
Daniel Kendle, East of England
Matthew Pratt, East Anglia

SOUTH EAST

Simon Barber, Essex
Tony Barker, Essex
Gary Brayshaw, Surrey
Christopher Evans, Surrey
Michael Goodyear, Surrey
Stuart Hazleton, London
Benjamin Jeavons, Surrey
Elaine Kelley, Surrey
Christos Kyriazis, Kent
John Lynch, Surrey
Lee Mayhew, Surrey
James Murphy, Surrey
Philip Ryder, Surrey
Paul Skuse, London
Chris Young, East Anglia

SOUTH WEST/WALES

Anthony Clarke, South Coast
Christopher Dawe, South West

Peter Gilbert, South Coast
Matthew Lane, Devon & Cornwall
John Osment, South Coast
Stuart Ross, South Wales
James Yeates, South West

INTERNATIONAL

Thomas Ijland, Spain
Michael Lee, USA

STUDENT MEMBER

Craig Spruce, Northern

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Adrian Handbury, Midland
Lodewijk Klootwijk, Netherlands
Nuno Sepulveda, Portugal

NOVEMBER'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. The radio can stand alone or can be clipped onto a belt with headphones for when you're on the move. Our congratulations go to Eoin Riddell of Royal Dornoch Golf Club.

Quick Guide to Time Off for Dependants

This right allows employees to take a reasonable amount of time off work to deal with unexpected emergencies and make longer term arrangements. The emergency must involve a dependant of the employee.

WHO IS A DEPENDANT?

A dependant is the spouse or partner (living at the same address), child or parent of the employee. It can also be an elderly relative living at the same address. In case of illness, injury or where care arrangements break down a dependant may also be someone who reasonably relies on the employee for assistance. Such as, if the employee is the primary carer or is the only person who can help in an emergency, such as when an elderly neighbour living alone breaks a limb.

UNDER WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES CAN AN EMPLOYEE TAKE TIME OFF?

- To deal with a death of a dependant
- To deal with an unexpected disruption or breakdown of care arrangements for a dependant
- To deal with an unexpected incident involving the employees child during school hours
- If a dependant falls ill, or has been injured or assaulted
- To make longer term care arrangements for a dependant who is ill or injured
- When a dependant is having a baby (this does not include time off after the birth as this is covered by paternity leave)

HOW MUCH TIME OFF CAN YOU TAKE?

The legislation does not specify the amount of time off which is reasonable since this will vary according to circumstances of the emergency. In most cases one or two days off should be enough to deal with the immediate crisis and make alternative arrangements.

IS THE TIME OFF PAID?

The right to time off does not include an entitlement to pay. If it is paid it is down to the employer's discretion or to the contract of employment between the employer and employee.

This information should not be treated as a complete and authoritative statement of the law. For further information go to the department of work and pensions website www.dwp.gov.uk.

Coming up next month : Quick Guide to Parental Leave

This Time it's for Real!

**RANSOMES
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Scott MacCallum reports on the National Championship, sponsored by Ransomes Jacobsen, which produced a case of *deja vue* for the winner.

If there is such a thing as fate Noel Crawford could certainly vouch for it. Last year he was leading the BIGGA National Championship, held at Alwoodley Golf Club in Leeds, but had to leave early to catch a plane back to Northern Ireland. So that we had a picture for the magazine he posed with the Trophy before heading off. While he was in mid air though Graeme MacDonald, playing towards the rear of the field, came up on the rails to take the top prize.



Above: National Chairman Kerran Daly dusted down his clubs and defeated Bert Cross

This year, thanks to some fine golf and a change in the rule which meant the top gross score won the top prize, he got his hands on the trophy for real. And what do you know when it came to the photographs the battery on BIGGA's camera went dead just before the top prizes were presented and if it wasn't for the quick thinking of Arnold Phipps Jones and his personal digital camera, we might have been relying on the picture taken the previous year for this year's magazine.

"I won the gross prize three out of the last five years and I was delighted when the rules were changed so the person with the lowest gross score became the National Champion," said the Royal County Down greenkeeper and +1 golfer.

"I think it's quite right that the lowest score should win and hopefully it will encourage some of the top golfing greenkeepers to take part - I saw that the runner-up in this year's Amateur Championship (John Gallacher) was a greenkeeper," said Noel, who despite his undoubted skill very rarely practices.

"I think I've practiced twice in the last five years," said the man who is a former Ulster Youths' Champion and a multiple winner of the Royal County Down Scratch Cup.

Noel is part of quite a golfing dynasty with his brother, 2 handicapper, Eamonn, also a regular attendee and winner at the National Championship, although not this year, and his nephew, Gary, currently the Northern Ireland Section Chairman, is also a regular visitor.

"I always enjoy the National Championship. Everyone is very friendly and the golf courses are excellent. I hope to be back to defend at Burton Golf Club next year."

The event proved to be an superb two days of golf with Worksop and Sherwood Forest fine challenges and a credit to Course Managers, Barry Lax and Kim Kirkham, respectively.

The first day was remarkable on a number of scores.

None more so that the emergence of National Chairman, Kerran Daly, as a real golfing force. Noel Crawford may not have practiced much for five years but Kerran hadn't picked up a club at all in years. He proved rustiness was merely a state of mind as he defeated his fellow National Board Member, Bert Cross, 2&1 in a hastily organised bounce game at the back of the field. The fact that Bert had spent three hours on his feet as Official Starter before quickly changing for the match shouldn't deflect from the achievement.

Another match, just ahead of Kerran and Bert, saw Rupert Price



Right: A spectacular Seve-esque escape from a bunker

Below: The attractive par 3 4th at Sherwood Forest



Right: The devilish Sherwood greens produced some knashing of teeth





Above: Gary Rowe collects the prize for Best Nett



Right: Yes he does look younger, Champion Noel Crawford with the trophy last year!

Below: Kim Kirkham and Barry Lax, Course Managers at Sherwood Forest and Worksop respectively



Above: The victorious Midland Region

Below: Champions all!



and Sean Winn, representing Ransomes Jacobsen, sponsors of the National Championship narrowly lose out to John Pemberton and Scott MacCallum for the Worksop plate which was donated to the Association on the morning of the match by Worksop Secretary, David Dufall.

These were merely golfing side shows not to deflect from the serious stuff being played up ahead and when the dust finally settled the first piece of silverware to be decided was the Regional Trophy which went to the Midland Region with a score of 595 the eight man team comprising - Simon Woolley, Nigel Colley, David Fellows, Carl Small, Neill Smith, Charlie Milbourn, Russ Moody and Brian Robson - finishing 11 shots ahead of the South East and their team of Keir Grimwood, Gary Rowe, Adam Marrable, David Beale, David Badham, Robert Kemp, Tony Bremer and Chris Wells.

The form men of the opening day in the individual event were 1 handicapper George Mitchell and 2 handicapper Shaun Richards, who both shot two over par 74s. Noel Crawford was just one shot behind after a 75.

Leader of the nett competition was Gary Rowe, who shot a nett 70 off his 10 handicap, and Kier Greenwood, who also shot a 70 off a handicap of 12.

Worksop Golf Club did everyone proud at the Championship dinner after the first round during which Kerran Daly thanked and paid tribute to Ransomes Jacobsen, the sole sponsor of the event. The Team prize was presented to the Midland Region, as was the Nearest the Pin to Carl Small, (39 inches to the final hole followed by a missed putt) and Longest Drive to Gary Burgess, who needs to be tested for performance enhancing drugs!

John McLoughlan obviously had moderation at the forefront of his mind at the dinner as the next day at Sherwood Forest he produced the best round of the entire Championship, a one over par 73, posting a two round total of 152. That hauled him up to third place overall one behind Shaun Richards, who added a 77 to his opening 74. The eventual Champion, Noel, playing with John and another scratch man David Coupland, added a second successive round of 75 for an unbeatable total of 150.

In the nett competition Gary Rowe added a 71 to his 70 for a 141 total two ahead of Simon Woolley and a further clear of David Fellows.

Everyone was extremely impressed by the quality of greens at both venues and particularly Sherwood Forest's that were cut at three mil and in perfect condition. They were so slick many people fell foul particularly if they found themselves on the high side.

Next year the National Championship will be held at Burton Golf Club on October 2&3.

Additional photography by Arnold Phipps-Jones

Course Feature

The Three Musketeers

Gareth Jones took a trip to the highest part of Oxfordshire and found three men implementing critical change at Chipping Norton Golf Club.

At the highest point in Oxfordshire you will find three men united. A trio battling the old golf ethos to ensure a future for their beloved golf club. These three individuals are the Head Greenkeeper, Chairman of Green and the General Manager at Chipping Norton Golf Club and they have formed a formidable alliance to rival that of the Three Musketeers.

Head Greenkeeper David Sturgeon, Committee man John Taylor and management expert Neil Clayton have all brought their vast skills and considerable knowledge together as they strive to steer Chipping Norton along the path to a healthy, secure, successful future. Crucially, the trio have concentrated their efforts on the club's most valuable asset - the par 71, 6316 yard, 18 hole golf course.

To allow them to do just that, change and modernisation had to be implemented at the club by the two founding fathers of this alliance, David and John. The Chairman of the Green Committee has been the power behind the winds of transformation at Chipping Norton, ensuring the correct procedures are installed within the club to allow David and his four man greenkeeping team to do their job to the best of their high ability.

The major issue tackled has been one of greenkeeping's ancient problems. A difficulty so old that it no doubt stretches back to the time of Old Tom Morris himself - the lack of continuity caused by the conveyor belt system of Green Chairmen.

"Most greenkeepers will have experienced it at one time or another. The problem with having a new Chairman of Green in each year is that there is no structure to the developments on the course. Each one, rightly or wrongly, wants to make their own mark on the course, but with everyone having different ideas you have dramatic swings in direction year on year. That's not good for anyone, but the course is especially affected, negatively. We needed a long term, sustainable plan, but it wasn't possible under the old system," confessed David, who has been at Chipping Norton for over six years.

This is where the benefit of a strong ally within the membership came into play for David. John, who had already been the driving influence behind the construction of a new clubhouse in 1995, set about instilling a new management style within the club. The hard work of David and John ensured that their vision was realised. Instead of a yearly cycle, the Chairman of Green now serves for three years, heading a committee that shares the same long term views for the golf course.

John, a Chipping Norton member for over 28 years, currently heads the Green Committee. Unlike some Chairman of Green, he has spent his time learning the science of greenkeeping rather than dictating his desires to David and his team.



David, front right, John, far right, and the four members of the greens staff

"John is a problem solver and he has been very useful for me, he's got really stuck in. When he became Chairman he went about improving his knowledge, reading Greenkeeper International and building up the club's library. He didn't come in and tell us what to do, he came to shadow and learn from us. It's that respect he shows for us that is important, as he has earned the backing of my greens staff," said David.

The final piece of the Chipping Norton jigsaw was put in place just nine months ago, with the employment of Neil as General Manager. The former RAF man, who had previously worked at The London Club, has come in to oversee all aspects of the club and to provide that vital communication link between the committees and employees.

"The whole change in system was the result of a steering committee, some three years ago, which was then accepted and adopted by the membership. Now that has been implemented we realised that we needed a middleman. Three years for a Chairman of Green is certainly not forever, when I step down we don't want to lose momentum. We needed a General Manager in place who could guide the next person into the job and keep the overall objectives on route. Neil can make sure everything is in place for the next Chairman of Green. That should make it easier and will benefit the club as a whole," explained John, who, now retired, devotes a large amount of time and support to both the club and David, lending his background in Industrial Management to the cause.

Importantly, Neil's role has opened up the communication channels within the picturesque club. He sits on all committees and will liaise closely with David to ensure the Course Manager is fully in the loop. The General Manager position has also meant that certain jobs, such as material

Course Feature



costing and sourcing, can be taken off David's shoulders, to allow him to concentrate his attention on the course.

"My responsibility is the future of the club. I can step back and look at the long term issues affecting us, such as the environment and irrigation. It's seeing the bigger picture and realising how it all fits together with the concepts at Chipping. We have a template in place so everyone can see clearly the direction we are going in. It is my job to make sure we don't divert off this too severely, whatever positional changes may occur," stated Neil.

An example of the trio's foresight is the reservoir that has appeared behind the neatly hidden greenkeeping facilities. While a concept created by the previous Chairman of Green, it is a project being taken to the next level now. Affectionately known as the lagoon by the team, it highlights that the future is never far from the mind of the present. Currently taking rain water from the clubhouse roof, it will also be delivered off the car park, the waste water system and from the wash down area, which is in the process of being built.

"It's using common sense and doing the bits and pieces that might not be a major concern now, but will be soon. A lot of investigation has gone in to it all. We are installing a reed bed at the entry into the lagoon and taking water from these extra sources will be a great advantage.

"We've needed more water on the course for a number of reasons. We've modified, and in some cases enlarged, the older greens, which are on limestone brash, so have very strong drainage. Also, being up high means we are drier for longer periods. The conservation of water means, hopefully, we wouldn't have to rely on the limited mains supply," said David, who works closely with his Deputy, Adrian, who has been at the club for 30 years, man and boy.



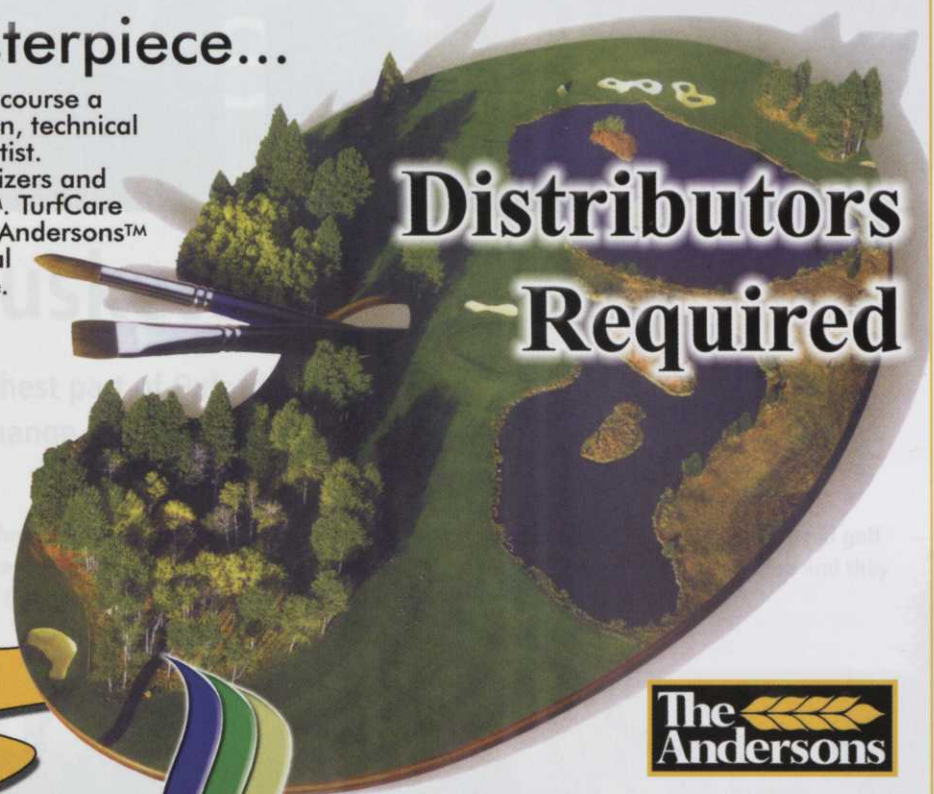
Look closely and you can see the course suggestion box that David placed on the island for the members

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Course Feature



The 3rd hole at Chipping Norton



Artificial winter mats have been inserted within the actual tee

"When David came here he brought in more expertise and a new level of refined professionalism. New ideas and practices have come in from David, which have moved the greens staff and course on. We would be foolish to interfere and try and tell him how to do his job. It is about asking and listening to his reasoning. I've learnt a lot from him, so I can answer some of the questions asked in the clubhouse, instead of having to go and bother David about every little aspect," said past Captain John.

It is all adding up to the completion of the three men's aims of a secure, prosperous future for Chipping Norton. This winter will see the finishing touches to their existing improvement plans, the removal of 160 trees from the back 9, after 250 have already been taken out. Schemes like this don't always go down well within a golf club, but a clear sign of the Musketeers' success has been the reaction from the 800 strong Membership and visiting players.

"We have the confidence and trust of the members here, which I feel is 90% of the battle. When I joined, it was a 'them and us' mentality, especially with the committees. Now everyone is united and working towards the common good. Little things help that, like bringing in the rest of the team to try out new equipment and allowing them to influence the decision on it. On the other side, it is talking with the members and answering their questions with real reasoning. It makes everyone feel part of something, which is very important," commented the experienced Headman, who has been in the profession since 1976.

"We are not the Sunningdales or Wentworths of this world, but what we can offer is a 'Gem in the Cotswolds'. We aimed to get to a standard where visitors could take something good away with them every time they played the course and we have done that now. It's not just financial investment, it is commitment to the enduring quality and presentation of the course - something I like to call 'invisionment'. Enthusiasm is our biggest asset here," stated the hard working, determined Chairman of Green.

"Both the club itself and the course have gone up in standard. It is about taking it all forward now and making sure we have the correct equipment and knowledge to improve the longevity and quality and then maintaining that. In terms of health, presentation and challenge the course is currently the best it has ever been," concluded Neil.

This last statement is accompanied by agreeing nods from all three men. You get the impression that the rest of the Chipping Norton membership would do the same when hearing that quote, proving change is not always a bad thing, but an essential necessity in many cases.



John sourced the materials and David did the installation of these stairs



The 'lagoon' will provide a crucial water supply in the summer

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Maturing with Age



2005 Toro Student of the Year Winner, Alan Pierce, has learnt from his youthful experiences to become a successful Deputy, as Gareth Jones found out.

What image flickers into your mind when the word student is mentioned? A soap dodger, a tax avoider, a cider drinker, an apple polisher or a hard grafter studying in the library until the wee hours? Whatever the description that has been conjured up in the old grey matter, good or bad, no doubt the character created takes the form of a teenager, a spotty, hormone driven young gun.

The 2005 Toro Student of the Year Final went some way to dispel that young ideology as Alan Pierce won the competition by a nose, with David Newton, 47, and James Lindsay, 27, claiming the runners up prizes. While at 25 years of age Alan is not exactly preparing to draw out his pension and sizing himself up for a nice pair of comfy slippers, he, along with David and James, have gone a long way to prove that education and professional development is not just for the youth of today.

Alan, who currently plies his trade at Ham Manor Golf Club as Deputy Course Manager, has been in greenkeeping since 1995, starting at the tender age of 15, but the education side of greenkeeping has only been part of his life since 2000, when he took on his NVQ Level 2 in Amenity Horticulture. He has since gone on to tackle Level 3 Sportsturf Management and also complete factory training with Kubota and John Shaw. He is quick to point out that age should be no barrier to studying.

"I don't think age matters at all. It is easy to think that the eight finalists are all young and all from the top clubs. The fact is that they were from all over, from big private clubs to municipals, from Deputy Course Managers to Assistants. It doesn't matter what age you are, what club you work at or what position you hold, you always have the chance to learn, further your career and possibly win Awards like this," said a smiling Alan, who was shocked just to be nominated by his tutor, Dave Blackmur at Plumpton College, to enter the competition, let alone to lift the famous Toro Shield.

Alan has learnt the hard way that a youthful thirst for knowledge and keen attitude is not always a recipe for success. He took on the Deputy

Course Manager position at Wellshurst Golf Club, returning to his first ever club, at 19 and soon realised that he had not developed the key skills needed for such a role of responsibility. Working with colleagues older and more experienced than himself proved difficult, while dealing with members' problems and criticism was something Alan had not faced before.

"I was just too young. I knew the greenkeeping side of the job inside out, but I didn't have the people skills or the man management ability. I didn't understand the importance of the way you treat people, the way you talk to them and the way you portray yourself and how much of a big difference it made to your job. You are an ambassador for your club and must act accordingly. "It is as important as the actual greenkeeping. You can be the greatest greenkeeper in the world, but if you are rude to your staff or members it is never going to work. I used to listen to members' complaints and just walk away, ignoring their reasoning. Now, with more experience under my belt, I know that is the wrong way to go about it. I'd rather admit that I'm not good at something and let someone else have a go at it, rather than stick at it and make a total mess," confessed Toro's Student of the Year.

This case of 'too much too young' is an experience that could have lost Alan to the industry forever. Winter had set in by the time he had made the decision to move on, he didn't want to move back down to an Assistant at the club and greenkeeping jobs were scarce. It resulted in a move into the oily world of a turf machinery technician.



The eight finalists



Using the mechanical skills gained from employment at Wellshurst Alan worked for John Shaw Machinery covering Kent and Sussex undertaking servicing, fault finding and repairs at golf clubs in his territory. However, it wasn't long until the pull of greenkeeping had the Greenock born man back where he belonged - on the course, this time at Royal Eastbourne as an Assistant.

"I needed to get back into greenkeeping and Eastbourne gave me that chance. It's nice to look at my CV and see things are getting better. Although I've moved sideways at points I haven't moved backwards. I was back as an Assistant at Eastbourne, but it was a much bigger club than anything I had worked at before. Plus Jim Simmons was an Assessor, so was keen on me getting qualifications, so I was still progressing, which was a bonus."

Moving forward is what Alan has done within the last six months, and it was one giant step as he went for the vacant Deputy job at Ham Manor Golf Club. Alan was ready to tackle the demons that haunted him from his previous Deputy post and, despite a competitive short list, Ham Manor grabbed their man.

"Again I'm working with people older than me. But 25 is a big difference from 19. I don't have anyone looking at me now and thinking I'm too young, I show more respect now and have the same returned to me. I have extra knowledge and skills to do the Deputy job successfully," stated the still smiling winner.

In his new position Alan is working under Jon Budd, who has been at Ham Manor for 14 years and was elevated to Course Manager after the departure of George Barr. Along with Jon and Alan is a team of five greenkeepers, three of whom have been at the club for over 10 years. The role is just what Alan needed to prove his development.

"Every day is a test. It's great for me to look back at my time at Wellshurst, at the things a Deputy had to do that I hated and the bits that scared me. Now I enjoy those elements and taking on the problems that come with responsibility. It helps that I have such great support too," said Alan, who admitted that none of his achievements would have been possible without the encouragement and loyal support of his wife, Becky, who moved both job and house when Alan signed the Ham Manor contract and will now prepare herself for eight weeks without her husband as he studies at the University of Massachusetts, USA, as part of the Toro prize.

"As a Deputy here I'm doing many jobs that would be done solely by a Course Manager at another club. They want the position to be something where the Deputy can actually play a major role in the course management day to day, rather than someone who just takes over the running when the Course Manager is away. I'm getting involved in budgets, purchasing and course design."

It's a far cry from when Alan started on the winding road of greenkeeping in 1995. Living in Scotland, the teenager needed to find a week's work placement during his final year of school. He took the opportunity to travel down and see his brother in the south east of England, who, in turn, found his visiting baby brother employment at Wellshurst GC. The week saw Alan fill up drain trenches by hand, but the Scot was hooked.

Alan had impressed and took up the club's offer of summer work. He left the position at the end of the season, before being offered a full time Assistant position four weeks later. While the club's facilities, budget and equipment could not match that of Ham Manor, it was an equally important time for the up and coming greenkeeper.

"I wouldn't be in greenkeeping if it wasn't for my original time there. Les Shrubbs, the Course Manager, was great to me. He showed so much trust, not many people would let a 16 year old out on an expensive greens mower. He encouraged me to learn as much as possible and that's why I have the mechanical side of things under my belt.

"Les gave me great advice when I needed it. When a position came up at Chartham Park he told me that if I wanted to progress I should go, that's what you have to do to develop. He made sacrifices for my growth. I still speak to him now, not as a professional but as a friend," commented Alan, with a hint of emotion in his tone.

If his time at Wellshurst had gone differently Alan would certainly not have been at BIGGA HOUSE competing for the Toro Award. It highlights how important those early days are.

"It's the only job I've ever wanted to do. But I think it is hard to get school leavers into the profession, because people don't like doing manual work anymore. It is also about keeping people in the industry. I feel Awards like this and holding training courses and social events are very important in making greenkeepers feel part of something special, which greenkeeping certainly is," concluded the 2005 Toro Student of the Year.



L-R: David Newton, Lely's Peter Mansfield, Alan Pierce and James Lindsey

A Fine Vintage

Gareth Jones witnessed another close, tense final at BIGGA HOUSE, which saw Alan Pierce become the 2005 Toro Student of the Year.

During the presentation of the 2005 Toro Student of the Year Award, judge Peter Mansfield, of Lely, commented that although the competition was now in its 16th year, due to its relatively young age it could not yet be classed as vintage. However, he recognised that the Award was continually growing and the standard improving year on year. If the competition is not a vintage in terms of age, it certainly is in terms of quality, as once again the eight finalists who congregated at BIGGA HOUSE set a superb standard, leaving the judging panel to do a lot of head scratching to decide the eventual victor.

Alan Pierce was eventually announced as the winner with David Newton and James Lindsay claiming the runners up prizes. Both David and James win a trip to Harrogate Week, January 22-27 2006, where they will attend workshops, Continue to Learn Seminars and the Banquet. With both the winner and runners up coming from the older end of the eight finalists, both David and James proved that age is no obstruction to furthering your career and knowledge.

At 47 years of age David was the oldest finalist and showed that it is never too late to make a career change into something for which you have a passion. The First Assistant at Arrowe Park Golf Club, Birkenhead, which is a municipal course, only took up greenkeeping at 36. Since then he has set about gaining his PA1 and PA6 and completing an NVQ Level 2 at Reaseheath College. He has just finished his NVQ Level 3 and plans to continue his rapid development and work on a Links course one day.

James is Deputy Head Greenkeeper at The Bedfordshire Golf Club, which boasts a 6,565 yards, par 70, Championship course. James cut his greenkeeping teeth at 14 at Ringdufferin GC, Northern Ireland. He has studied NVQ Level 3 in Sportsturf at Merrist Wood College and has previously earned a National Certificate in Amenity Horticulture and a National Diploma in Turf Science. After his achievement in the joint BIGGA and Toro competition the Deputy is keen to test his abilities at the highest level by eventually becoming a Course Manager and hosting a Major event.

The final highlighted the importance of support and encouragement and also the number of people submerged in the background who play such a vital part in the success of rising greenkeepers. All eight finalists thanked their club, college tutors and bosses for the help they had received in making their participation in the final possible. Alan Pierce summed this up best when he produced a long list of all the people who had aided him in his quest to become a successful Deputy Course Manager and 2005 Toro Student of the Year.

"I have to thank everyone from Ham Manor, particularly Jon Budd, the greenkeeping team and the Committee, Roy Brown, Secretary, Tom Lance, Club Chairman, David Cloughley, Club Captain, Wallace Grace, Vice Captain and Alan Calder, Greens Chairman, along with my tutor at Plumpton, Dave Blackmur, Jim Simmons, at Royal Eastbourne GC, and Les Shrubbs, my first boss. From the final itself I must thank all the judges, the seven other finalists, who were great, Alex Shore, the 2004 winner, and all at BIGGA and Toro for making this important competition such a success," finished Alan.

The five other finalists, Darren Leith, Tommy McFadden, Emmet Reilly, all from Elmwood College, Alastair Ogilvie, The College of West Anglia, and Daniel Spencer, Oaklands College, echoed the winners' comments.

"The support you get is crucial and you have to thank your golf club and the Course Manager, in my case Stefan Schon at Haga Golf Park in Norway, for sticking by you. You can't forget the colleges either, they do an excellent job, as Elmwood did with me, and I'm grateful for that," said Darren.



Judge Peter Mansfield, left, and 2005 Winner Alan Pierce



A well planned, modern maintenance department is a vital link between all members of staff. It helps foster good communication between those that use various items of equipment and, where applicable, those that maintain it

Servicing Your Facilities

James de Havilland looks at ways to save money by spending it when it comes to your workshop.

As anyone who visits golf courses up and down the UK will know, there is no such thing as a 'typical' course workshop. What is clear, however, is that an increasing number of clubs have professional workshop facilities while a significant minority still seem to muddle through. Although good service personnel will always seem to be able to deliver reliable equipment servicing despite their working environment, those with the best facilities have a head start.

It is easy to spend others money when writing an article, suggesting that the only way to service modern mowers and related course maintenance equipment is to carry the work out in a well lit and heated workshop. The reality is that some clubs still expect staff do some demanding repair and maintenance tasks when working out of a lean-to with a mud floor. In many cases, the kit being looked after may also be well past its first flush of youth. This is just the sort of kit that needs a great deal of TLC and a decent place to work on it.

What is often overlooked is that modern working practices will soon make it difficult to recruit good workshop qualified staff to a club offering poor facilities. A good workshop, well stocked with tools, spares and an office in which to handle the paperwork is taken for granted at some clubs. But those without such facilities may find it tough to retain any in-house maintenance ability when the current generation retire.

So, is the central argument of this article that courses with good facilities can rest on their laurels while those without should throw in the towel and have all major servicing done by third parties? Emphatically no. What we all need to be aware of is the need to keep up investment in servicing facilities. An ongoing programme to develop workshop facilities is an investment.

PLANNING FOR EXPANSION

It is tough and expensive to get planning permission these days, this hurdle often leading to problems when trying to modernise workshops. Clubs that have adapted old, and on occasion listed buildings, to house workshops and related equipment face an even bigger hurdle. However, the problems of getting improvements made are all too easy to use as a reason for not doing anything.

Again, it is easy to make suggestions. A new, single span building could well be used to re-house everything under one roof, modern industrial units providing relatively economical accommodation that has the flexibility to provide rest rooms, offices and workshops all under one roof.

This assumes there are the funds, space and, of equal importance, planning consent that would allow a new unit to be erected in a suitable position. This is simply not an option for everyone and can, in part, explain why some clubs appear to be muddling along. It is not for the want of trying.

In these cases, it takes a degree of lateral thinking to come up with a solution. Is it possible to relocate the workshops and greenkeepers buildings off site? Are any other existing buildings suitable for economic conversion? Can workshop, equipment storage, office and rest facilities be divided to fit in different locations? Can workshop facilities be shared with a third party to reduce costs? Does a local third party have workshop space that can be rented?

In some areas it may be possible to share a workshop with a local farmer or haulier. This is not as daft as it may at first appear, particularly if tools and other resources can be shared and there is good access to the course. Similarly, it could be possible to share resources by relocating a neighbouring workshop to a position on the course boundary. Farmers are currently being encouraged to diversify, so those with farming neighbours may find this option worth a look.



It may well take time to recoup the cost of a washing water recycling plant, but such a system demonstrates environmental awareness. This can help when it comes to negotiating irrigation water supplies, particularly in a dry year



Modern vehicle lifts come in a wide range of capacities. Selecting the right design calls for a degree of forward thinking, but it always pays to have a degree of over capacity. Some lifts are more versatile than others



In-house cylinder grinding facilities are not unusual these days, but investing in sets of spare cutting units that are all set and ready to go remains less common. Money spent on good machinery support is never wasted



Modern equipment does not come cheap, nor does its care and maintenance. Facilities that allow stored items to be parked up clean and dry will help control these costs, as well as make maintenance less time consuming

EXISTING FACILITIES

Assuming existing facilities are up to a good standard, it is important to keep them up to date. Modern buildings need to be maintained and kept clean if they are to look good, so it pays to put some money in the budget to allow for this. Similarly it is often the case that the buildings are finished but their surroundings are then overlooked.

Again, a budget to tidy the area around workshops and greenkeeper's 'sheds' can really improve how these facilities blend into their setting and with it the course as a whole. Good staff will always be attracted to a club that demonstrates as much care for its working environment as it does for its tees, greens and fairways.

WINTER SERVICING

So, what has all this got to do with winter servicing? As it happens, a great deal. We have been blessed, in recent years, with relatively mild winters, even in the north of Scotland. It will not be like this forever, and only those clubs with workshops that allow staff to service kit in a good workshop will see the job carried out to a reliable standard year in and year out.

Even in a typical mild southern British winter, where year round play is the norm, clean and dry workshops enable kit to be worked upon more easily. Modern mowers look after the comfort of the operator. Quite right too. It follows that those who look after those same machines should be able to do so in relative comfort as well. Regardless of the weather.

With thanks to Duncan Kelso, of Kings Hill Golf Club, West Malling, Kent for the pictures of the club's workshop facilities.

Sweet Revenge

Scott MacCallum witnesses a superb performance by BIGGA's Scratch Golf Team.

Perhaps it doesn't rank up there alongside Bangladesh's historic one day win over Australia in the summer or Northern Ireland's defeat of England in the World Cup Qualifier but the BIGGA Scratch Team's 6.5-3.5 win over the Combined Services Team at Burton Golf Club was an exceptional effort.



The gallant runners-up Combined Services team



The glorious and triumphant BIGGA team

It is all the more so when you recall that last year, when the inaugural match was played at The Berkshire, the score in the Combined Services favour was 10.5-1.5, so for five of the team who played last year it was a case of sweet revenge.

Playing Captain Gerald Bruce, Mike Hughes, Graeme MacDonald, Andy Unwin and Rob Welford admitted to have been a little shocked by the quality of their opponents last year but they, together with their new team mates steeled themselves for the return match and although man-for-man the Combined Services players were lower handicapped turned it around superbly.

It is not that the Combined Services performed poorly - in one fourball match in the morning BIGGA's pairing were six under par for the round but lost in the final green and the standard of all the play was exceptional.

It was fitting that in the afternoon foursomes it was Mike Hughes, who last year in partnership with Noel Crawford, had supplied BIGGA's only win, lagged a putt on the 17th green which sealed the victory. But the writing had been on the wall from early in the afternoon series with BIGGA up in four of the five matches from early in the respective rounds.

Both sides were equally complementary about the Burton course. All praised the general conditioning, especially as the match was played in mid-October, but the greens as prepared by Course Manager, Gavin Robson, and his team, came in for special plaudits.

Gerald Bruce led the team from the front with two wins, in harness with Mike Hughes in the morning and Andy Unwin in the afternoon with whom he enjoyed the biggest win of the day.

"Going into the afternoon tied gave us real belief. From then we knew we could win it. I was involved in

the match last year when we lost heavily, so I knew it was important that we kept it close in the morning matches. It's great to get such a fine victory this year," said Gerald.

The match had been organised by Northern and Midland Regional Administrator, Peter Larter, a former RAF man himself and he was equally delighted at the way the results fell.

"Five of this year's team were involved in the 2004 defeat, so they were really up for revenge this time around. The Combined Services are an excellent side, the majority are scratch, with a few +1's in there. Our team had players with handicaps up to 3, so it shows what a great effort it was to win," said Peter.

"We were up against it, but the lads came though in the afternoon matches with Gerald leading the team well on the course. It is a great feeling to turn it around after the hammering last year. We hope to face them again in 2006 and that will be another great match up."

BIGGA Chairman Kerran Daly and Chief Executive John Pemberton also attended on the day to provide encouragement when needed.



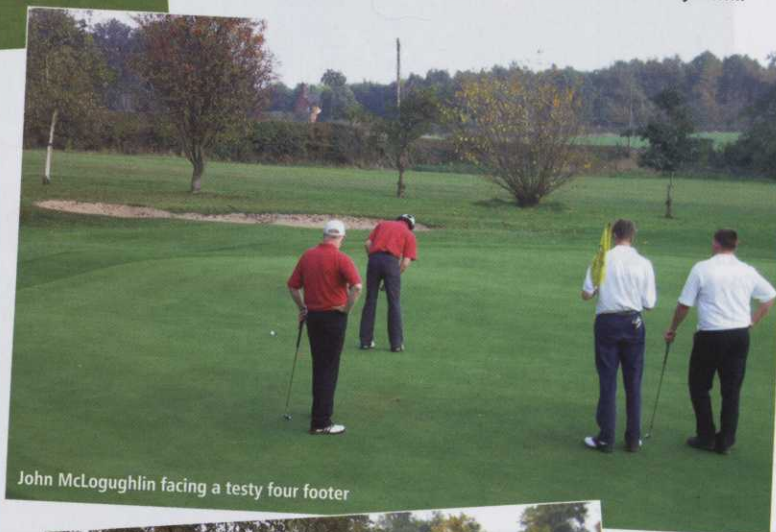
Graeme MacDonald plays to the long uphill par 3 10th in the afternoon foursomes



Job done! Mike Hughes' lagged putt on the 17th produced a concession and the match



Captain fantastic Gerald Bruce and his foursomes partner Andy Unwin



John McLogughlin facing a testy four footer

RESULTS

MORNING FOURBALLS

BIGGA	Combined Services	Result
John McLoughlin Gary Burgess	Ben Churchill Richard Baker	Lost 1 down
David Coupland Graeme MacDonald	Lee McCathie Darren Gould	Half
Mike Hughes Gerald Bruce (C)	Blue Loomie Dean Lewis	Won 2&1
Eddie Ainsworth Andy Unwin	Ned Kelly Mark Snape	Lost 4&2
Ian Mawer Rob Welford	Geoff Ascroft Richard Larratt	Won 2&1

Morning Score 2.5-2.5

AFTERNOON FOURSOMES

BIGGA	Combined Services	Result
John McLoughlin Graeme MacDonald	Ben Churchill Richard Baker	Lost 2&1
David Coupland Gary Burgess	Lee McCathie Darren Gould	Won 3&2
Mike Hughes Rob Welford	Blue Loomie Dean Lewis	Won 3&1
Gerald Bruce Andy Unwin	Ned Kelly Richard Larratt	Won 5&4
Ian Mawer Eddie Ainsworth	Geoff Ascroft Mark Snape	Won 2&1

Afternoon Score 4-1

MATCH RESULT

BIGGA 6.5

Combined Services 3.5



Gary Burgess and David Coupland won 3 & 2



Ian Mawer plays an exquisite chip which partner Eddie Ainsworth went on to hole the resulting putt



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Doing the Math

Martyn Jones switches on his calculator and explains how to work out nutrient requirements of turfgrasses and application rates of fertilisers.

A myriad of products is now available that claim to enhance the growth and health of turfgrasses and many are given names and descriptions that suggest that they are something other than a form of nutrient supply. Turf tonics, soil conditioners, organic dressings, biostimulants, seaweed derivatives, bio-conditioners, growth enhancers and biological disease suppressants are just a few of the terms given to some of them.

Some such products can contain appreciable quantities of plant nutrients; in some cases, as much as 5% or more of nitrogen. Often, nitrogen is added to products to stimulate an obvious turfgrass response and convince the greenkeeper that it is beneficial.



Disease outbreaks can be a consequence of inappropriate applications of nutrients

There can be observable amounts of other major nutrients, apart from nitrogen, in some of the products. Phosphorus and potassium may also be present. Some provide a source of iron, magnesium, manganese or other micronutrients; while some purporting only to contain specific micronutrients actually contain appreciable quantities of nitrogen. A number of them probably entirely owe their stimulating effects to the presence of the nitrogen.

These are, in fact, fertilisers. But because they are given other names, they do not include the nutrient content on their packaging. So beware! Inappropriate use of some such products can lead to disastrous results; unexpected and severe disease outbreaks, scorch, low temperature kill, or weed invasion.

Some greenkeepers claim to use virtually no fertilisers on their greens. However, on further discussion, it emerges that these same greenkeepers are using quite high quantities of some of these 'alternative' materials. Strangely, they don't recognise them as fertilisers because they are not applying them as a nutrient source.

This is particularly the case with the use of organic dressings. It would seem that, to them, fertilisers are only nutrient sources derived from synthetically produced chemicals. Some even refuse to

acknowledge 'lawn sand' or ammonium sulphate in the general term fertiliser. Experienced and knowledgeable greenkeepers know that a nutrient source is still a fertiliser by any other name.

When offered a product, it is prudent to ask for a nutrient analysis and copies of independent research data that may substantiate or disprove any claim. Expensive 'secret recipes' should be dismissed. Things that seem too good to be true usually are.

UNDERSTANDING WHAT IT SAYS ON THE BAG

Having determined if a product is a fertiliser or whether it is totally unrelated to nutrient provision, there are a number of other points to appreciate before we can calculate the amount required. This is assuming that you want control of the fertiliser programme and that you don't just accept the recommended application rates as they appear on the bag.

The first stage of understanding fertiliser calculations is to understand some of the terminology associated with fertiliser materials.



Interpreting the nutrient content of fertilisers is a vital part of greenkeeping

RATIO

This term refers to the relative quantities of the primary nutrients in a fertiliser product. For example, a 10:10:10 fertiliser has a ratio of 1:1:1, as would a 20:20:20. A 20:5:10 product has a ratio of 4:1:2. Ratio provides little information about the actual amount of nutrients in the bag. It is the analysis that provides the most useful information about the fertiliser.

ANALYSIS

This term refers to the percentage by weight of nutrients present in the fertiliser product. The analysis will be shown on the bag, either in prominent numbers on the front of the fertiliser package, or listed as part of the label. Nitrogen (N) is expressed on an elemental basis, whereas Phosphorus (P) and Potassium (K) are generally expressed as phosphorus pentoxide (P2O5) and potassium oxide (K2O).

Therefore, a 10:10:10 fertiliser product contains by weight 10 percent N, 10 percent P2O5 and 10 percent K2O. Consequently, a 25 Kg bag of this product will contain 2.5 Kg N, 2.5 Kg P2O5 and 2.5 Kg K2O.

A frequent mistake is to interpret the analysis as though the last two numbers refer to percentages by weight of elemental P (phosphorus) and K (potassium). This can lead to large errors in the calculation of fertiliser requirements.

Some, but not all, manufacturers include a converted equivalent for P2O5 and K2O. Care must be taken that the following conversions are always used when fertiliser calculations involving P and K are made.

- P2O5 contains 44 %P
- K2O contains 83 %K

CALCULATION 1 - CALCULATING THE AMOUNT OF NUTRIENT IN A BAG

A 25 Kg bag of fertiliser has an analysis of 20:5:10. How much N, P and K does this bag contain?

$$25\text{Kg} \times \frac{20}{100} = 5 \text{ Kg N}$$

$$25 \text{ Kg} \times \frac{5}{100} = 1.25 \text{ Kg P2O5}$$

$$25 \text{ Kg} \times \frac{10}{100} = 2.5 \text{ Kg K2O}$$

The amount of elemental Nitrogen (N) has been calculated to be 5 Kg, but another step is required to determine the amount of Phosphorus (P) and Potassium (K).

$$1.25 \text{ Kg P2O5} \times \frac{44}{100} = 0.55 \text{ Kg P}$$

$$2.5 \text{ Kg K2O} \times \frac{83}{100} = 2.075 \text{ Kg K}$$

Therefore, the bag of fertiliser contains 5 Kg of N, 0.55 Kg of P and 2.075 Kg of K.

CALCULATION 2 - CALCULATING THE AMOUNT OF FERTILISER TO APPLY

A second more useful type of calculation is used to determine how much fertiliser needs to be applied to a particular area to supply the grasses with a certain amount of the nutrients.

How much of a 20:5:15 fertiliser product would have to be applied to 500 sq. metres of green to supply the grasses with 150 Kg of N per hectare (10,000 sq. metres) per annum?

Note that 150 Kg per hectare per annum can also be expressed as 150 Kg h-1 yr -1.

The application rate of 150 Kg per Hectare of N is already known, therefore:

$$150 \times \frac{100}{20} \times \frac{500}{10000} = 37.5 \text{ Kg of fertiliser is required for the 500 sq. metres}$$

37.5 Kg of the fertiliser product will supply 500 metres² of green with N at the rate of 150 Kg h-1 yr -1. This quantity will, of course, be applied to the green in a number of increments during the year.

Calculating the quantity of P and K that the fertiliser product applies may also be required to determine a fertiliser programme. In these cases, the following additional calculations are made.

37.5 Kg of the 20:5:15 fertiliser product will also supply the 500 metres² with:

$$37.5 \text{ Kg} \times \frac{5}{100} \times \frac{44}{100} = 0.825 \text{ Kg P}$$

$$37.5 \text{ Kg} \times \frac{15}{100} \times \frac{83}{100} = 4.669 \text{ Kg K}$$

These figures will equate to application rates per hectare of:

$$0.825 \times \frac{10000}{500} = 16.5 \text{ Kg per hectare P (16.5 Kg h-1 P)}$$

$$4.669 \times \frac{10000}{500} = 93.38 \text{ Kg per hectare K (93.38 Kg h-1 K)}$$

Therefore, 37.5 Kg of the fertiliser product will supply the 500 metres² of green with Nitrogen (N) at the rate of 150 Kg h-1, Phosphorus (P) at the rate of 16.5 Kg h-1 and Potassium (K) at the rate of 93.38 Kg h-1.

If a nutrient application rate of 150 Kg h-1 N, 40 Kg h-1 P and 120 Kg h-1 K is desired, a further 23.5 Kg h-1 P and 26.62 Kg h-1 K are required from other fertiliser sources.

In the case of P, if Triple Superphosphate (48% P2O5) is to be the P source:

$$23.5 \text{ Kg h-1} \times \frac{100}{48} \times \frac{100}{44} \times \frac{500}{10000} = 5.56 \text{ Kg of triple superphosphate will need to be applied to the 500 m2 to satisfy the additional P requirement}$$



Accurate application of nutrients helps produce high quality surfaces

In the case of K, if Potassium sulphate (50% K₂O) is to be the K source:

$$26.62 \text{ Kg h-1} \times \frac{100}{50} \times \frac{100}{83} \times \frac{500}{10000} = 3.21 \text{ Kg of Potassium sulphate will need to be applied to the } 500 \text{ m}^2 \text{ to satisfy the additional K requirement.}$$



Insufficient nutrient can result in thin, weak turf

To summarise the example, if 500 m² of green is to be fertilised at a desired rate of 150 Kg h⁻¹ N, 40 Kg h⁻¹ P and 120 Kg h⁻¹ K with a 20:5:15 fertiliser product as the principal source of nutrients, 37.5 Kg of the product would need to be applied to satisfy the nitrogen (N) requirement.

In addition, further dressings of 5.56 Kg of Triple Superphosphate and 3.21 Kg of Potassium sulphate would be required to satisfy the overall phosphorus (P) and potassium (K) requirements.

So, the next time you are contemplating using fertilisers or other products on any area of your golf course, be sure that you know exactly what you are using and that you are applying the quantity of nutrients that you want.

Remember, you can't take it off once you have applied it. By then, the damage may have already been done.

Martyn Jones, National Turfgrass Foundation, can be contacted on 01995 670675.

The Global Challenge of Designing Golf Courses

As a general rule, building a golf course is a pretty straightforward task, complicated mainly by two factors: the nature of the site and the state of the weather. On a typical golf course construction project, the golf course architect's duty is to spend a lot of time and effort on the front-end, long before construction starts, with the goal in mind of keeping the uncertainties during the construction phase to a minimum. That's the real design phase of a project.

An occasional additional complication arises when the contractor hired for the project has little or no experience building a golf course. In that event the golf course architect's job suddenly gets a lot tougher.

I once heard a pretty well-known PGA Tour player who had branched into golf course design give a speech in which he said, in effect: "We design the old-fashioned way. We start doing some clearing, kick the dirt around, and see what holes we can find". And I thought to myself: "If you had a toothache, and you went to the dentist, and he started drilling here and there, and on the fifth tooth said, 'here we go - there's the cavity,' your first thought would not be, 'what a wonderful dentist!' " No, you would want and expect him to know how to find the cavity before he started drilling.



That's what professional golf course architects do - they study topographical maps and aerial photos and walk the sites to make sure the golf course is going to fit, and only start clearing and moving dirt when they have clear objectives in mind. It may sound romantic to suggest that communing with the site while the dozers are standing by is the historically authentic way to design a golf course, but all it really accomplishes is the equivalent of drilling in healthy teeth.

It's rare in this day and age for a golf course architect to have any input in site selection, as would have been the case in the so-called Golden Age of golf course design. Give any first-rate contemporary golf course architect the opportunity to pick the site for a new course, without cost

*Continue
to learn*

considerations or permitting issues to drive the decision, and there is no doubt that he or she would create a body of work equal to the master designers of the classical era.

What's amazing today is how many wonderful courses have been created on marginal sites - landfills, brown fields (such as abandoned industrial sites) and degraded agricultural sites. The magic of the modern golf course architect rests on the ability to create an excellent golf course on an indifferent site.

This is not to say, of course, that there is no serendipity in the creation of a golf course, especially during the construction phase. Sometimes excavation will expose a dramatic rock face, or clearing will reveal a backdrop that with a slight shift in the orientation of a fairway will provide a dramatic visual target from the tee. Attentive golf course architects are always open to discoveries such as these, which don't increase the costs of the project but will improve the final product.

But the work overall must be guided by plans which have already been through numerous design reviews and revisions and as a result collect the best ideas of the whole project team, from the developers and the land planners and the golf course builders, and not just from the golf course architect.

You will never control the rainfall, for example, but you can design the routing so it's only necessary to clear the minimum number of trees. The best route plans use the existing topography with care to create natural-looking holes, with the additional benefit that the course will drain well and

provide a healthy setting for turf growth and maintenance. But when I think about the 'typical' golf course design and construction project, it reminds me of the typical Irish summer: there's never been one. And when you're developing a course in a new region, the likelihood of encountering unique problems goes way up.

Robert Trent Jones II, like many golf course design firms which do work outside their home countries, provides the clients with both our Design services per se, the province of our golf course architects, and also what we call our Design Implementation Services, or DIS, the arena of expertise for our full-time on-site colleagues who help co-ordinate the work of the contractors and, in most cases, do the finish shaping and detail work on

John Strawn describes life for the modern day Architect and the experiences of working in Asia.



amplified Korea's adoration for golf, and stimulated the development of a national policy to build more golf courses.

An American investment banker who has resided in Korea for many years once summarised his experience there by saying: "There are two problems in Korea - getting the rock started, and getting the rock stopped." The Korean government does have strict permitting requirements, and expects rigorous oversight of every project.

This seems normal for a contemporary government in a developed country. For example, a golf course architect will submit plans to a Korean engineering firm, which will convert them to detailed drawings for every square metre of the site. These plans are then reviewed by the authorities. All of this is the equal of getting the rock started.

Once construction is underway, however, it can be difficult to persuade the contractor or the owner that the beautiful rock face that was just exposed by blasting or chipping would make a perfect backdrop for a green. The response is more likely to be: "No, the plans show we're supposed to take that out". And if you say: "Well, the course will be prettier and you can save some money," it's not likely to have much impact. That's the 'stopping the rock' part.

Knowing that this dynamic is in place, it's up to the golf course architect to explain to the client how maintaining some flexibility during the construction phase will improve the golf course, and is not an admission that the golf course architect was not paying attention during the design phase.

the courses. At present, for example, we have projects under construction in places as far-flung, for us, as China, Norway, Denmark, Mexico and Korea.

Several problems seem to regularly repeat themselves when inexperienced contractors build courses, no matter where they are. Simply rough grading a fairway, for example, is hard for operators who only have experience with civil engineering projects such as building roads. The contours get flattened, the edges hardened, the angles straightened. That's why it's so important to have an experienced shaper on the ground.

The ideal, of course, is to design a course that looks as if it was created by the same forces of nature which produced the local landscape. Ideally, there is a distant horizon whose silhouette can be 'borrowed' to shape the near views - that is, the mounds and dips in the golf course, particularly in the areas separating the holes - thereby creating the illusion or the effect that the golf course, too, was created by the same geological forces. This requires a careful touch and a good aesthetic sense.

A corollary of the problem of not following the plans is the problem of rigidly following the plans. Korea is a dynamic, powerful, prosperous country with a passion for golf. Korea leads the world in shipbuilding and is a leading innovator in cell phone technology. In recent years, a fascination with Korean pop culture has spread throughout Asia - even to China and Japan, where Korean soap opera actors and popular recording artists dominate the ratings. So Korea now is hot, and the success of its great professional golfers, especially the women of the LPGA, has



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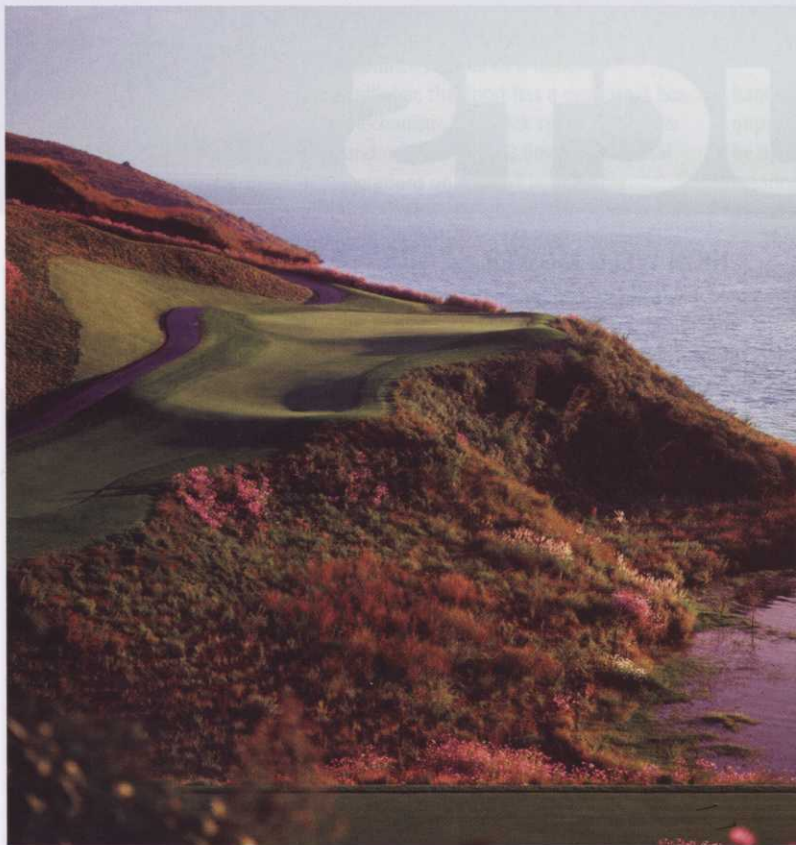
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the 15th hole. Mike Kahler, RTJII's Director of Asian Operations, remembers hearing gunfire occasionally while the course was under construction, and never completely trusting the assurance that it was coming from a nearby military training base.

Royal Springs is but one of the numerous courses in RTJII's portfolio which Kahler has midwived. The Lake Course at Spring City Resort near Kunming, China, is always rated among Asia's best, and it was built with very few hiccups. On the other hand, Kahler heard rumors about a project where the contractor was dredging sand and silt directly from a stream and putting it down as greensmix. When the architect pointed out the sticks and mud, the contractor smiled and said, "don't worry".

Corruption is another problem which every architect has run across at one time or another, which involves such nefarious practices as ignoring specs, substituting unapproved materials, and using counterfeit supplies for everything from slip joints to sprinkler heads. These practices have no nationality, however, and can occur anywhere. Avoiding them starts with picking good clients.

Golf continues to grow in Asia, Europe and parts of the Middle East. The new countries of the European Union, which see golf as a powerful engine for tourist development, will drive the next golf boom in Europe. Low interest rates and a strong real estate market continue to fuel interest in golf development in Scandinavia, Spain and Portugal.

Given how few people still play golf worldwide, the potential for growth remains high - especially so long as playing golf is associated with success.

John Strawn is Chief Executive Officer at Robert Trent Jones II, Golf Architects.

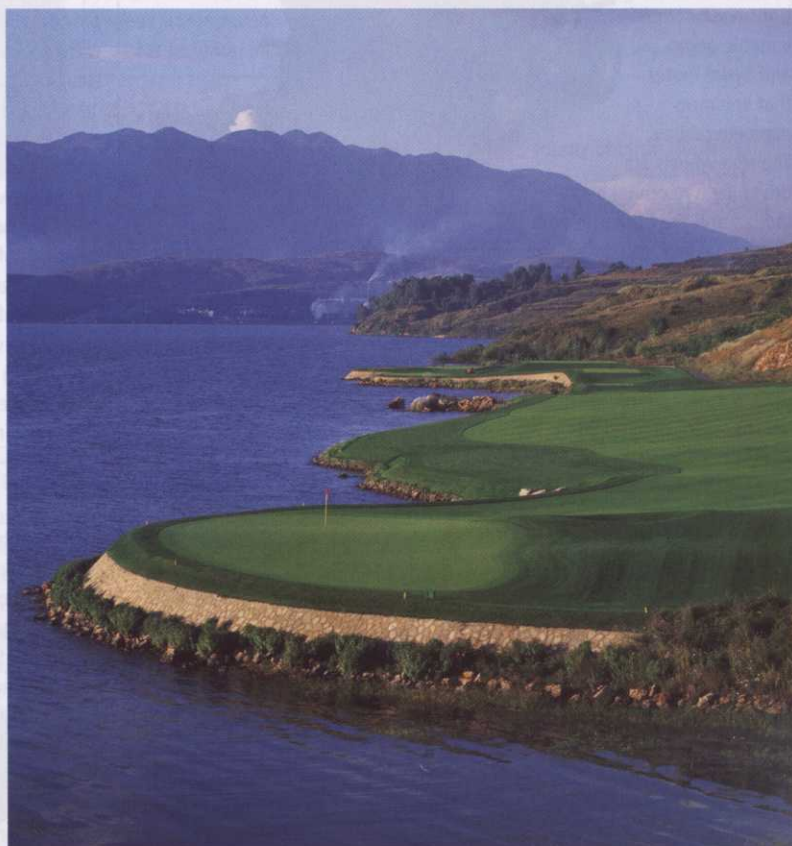
Cultural differences account for most of the variation between the approach to construction in the US and in other parts of the world. The cultural differences between the USA and western Europe are not very great, while working in Asia, the Middle East or Africa can require substantial adjustment. If you've never seen a golf course nor watched the game played on it, for example, understanding just what it is you're trying to accomplish would certainly be daunting.

This is the task project superintendents face on a regular basis - the challenge of communicating with people who have no idea what a golf course really is. Sometimes it's even true of the clients. I once heard of a client who was looking at a route plan and reportedly asked: "What are those little shapes at the beginning and the end of each subdivision?" Meaning, what are tees and greens?

Among the exotic courses designed in recent years by RTJII is the Royal Springs Golf Course in Kashmir, opened in 2001. India and Pakistan have struggled over Kashmir since 1949. A civil war launched in 1989 has destroyed tourism for all but the most daring. Earlier this year the American writer, Rick Lipsey, travelled to Kashmir to play golf.

The 150-year-old "Kashmir Golf Club," Lipsey writes, "is the fourth-oldest club outside the British Isles," so there is a tradition of golf in the region. Lipsey describes Royal Springs as "one of the most beautiful sites I have ever seen.... On one side of the course, a wall of Himalayan rock rises 5,000 feet. On the other side, off in the distance, sits Dal Lake, the shimmering focal point of Srinagar."

What struck Lipsey most at Royal Springs, he said, was "the eerie silence" - he was the only golfer there. He did, however, run into the deputy inspector general of the Kashmiri police on



NEW PRODUCTS

MINI MOSSKILLER

Headland's new Greentec Mosskiller performs double duty as a cool season hardener as well as combating moss. The low nitrogen, high potassium and high iron formulation is ideally suited to nourish the grass plant at lower soil temperatures without encouraging unwanted growth.

A homogenous, mini granule just 1.0 to 1.5mm in diameter, Greentec Mosskiller 4+0+10+9Fe distributes evenly through rotary spreaders gaining optimum contact with moss within the sward. Suitable for use during October until spring, Greentec Mosskiller can be applied to golf and bowling greens, tees, approaches and surrounds, as well as cricket outfields, winter season pitches and general amenity turf.

For technical information Tel: 01223 597834;
Web: www.headlandamenity.co.uk.

TEAMING UP

Gianni Ferrari has teamed up with Briggs & Stratton Commercial Power to incorporate the Vanguard 3/LC Turbo Diesel engine into its new PG270W professional mower.

The PG270W professional mower incorporates a number of innovative features, which significantly enhance the end user productivity. Featuring on the compact 4 wheel drive machine is a hydrostatic transmission with variable pump and hydro motor that enhances manoeuvrability. The rear wheels are driven by two orbital hydro motors and the front axle with differential lock, this ensures maximum power delivery to all four wheels.

Supplied as standard with two different decks for cutting and collecting grass, the 112cm version combines productivity and manoeuvrability in narrow places, whereas the 126cm deck is ideally suited for larger open areas. In addition to the traditional side discharge deck, the innovative rear discharge deck is also available.

For technical information Web: www.gianniferrari.com.



HIGH WEED MOWER

Pinnacle Power Equipment has announced the reintroduction to the Billy Goat fold of the High Weed Mower, a robust commercial quality 24in cut machine designed for cutting grass up to knee high.

A Tuff-Torque 3-speed transmission generates cutting speeds of up to 3.44mph with power via a Kawasaki 6hp four-stroke engine. Big 16in wheels effortlessly roll over rough terrain with the engine being protected by the blade not being directly attached to the crankshaft.

The High Wheel Mower can be used on slopes of up to 15 degrees and with a cutting performance of up to nearly 36,000 square feet an hour.

For technical information Tel: 01932 78899;
Web: www.pinnaclepower.co.uk.



THE WORKS

Launched for the first time in the UK is the new range of interchangeable greens maintenance cassette systems from TurfWorks International, who specialise in providing Turf Managers with mechanical solutions for the management of fine turf.

Intended for all main stream makes of triplex greens mowers and light weight fairway mowers, the range of TurfWorks cassettes are British designed and manufactured using Sheffield Stainless Steel. The manufacturing process utilises integrated laser cutting by means of ferrous and non-ferrous materials to an accuracy of 0.1mm. A broad range of advanced engineering equipment, including the latest and most advanced CNC milling and turning machines, are used on items such as bearing housings and drive couplers.

For technical information Tel: 01260 224 467; Web: www.turfworksint.com.



BOBCAT EXTEND

Bobcat has extended the company's range of heavy duty flail cutter attachments with the launch of the new FC155 model. With a cutting width of 1.55m, the FC155 flail cutter joins the two other model in the range - the FC175 and FC200, providing cutting widths of 1.75 and 2m respectively.

The FC155 flail cutter attachment can be used for a wide variety of applications, from clearing deep scrub to create fire breaks and access areas for overhead powerlines in woods and forests to clearance work at road sides, on new building developments and in pipeline and utility projects. The flail cutters expand the range of groundcare attachments from Bobcat that also includes mowers and rotary brushcutters.

For technical information Tel: 01724 289009; Web: www.amsbobcat.com.

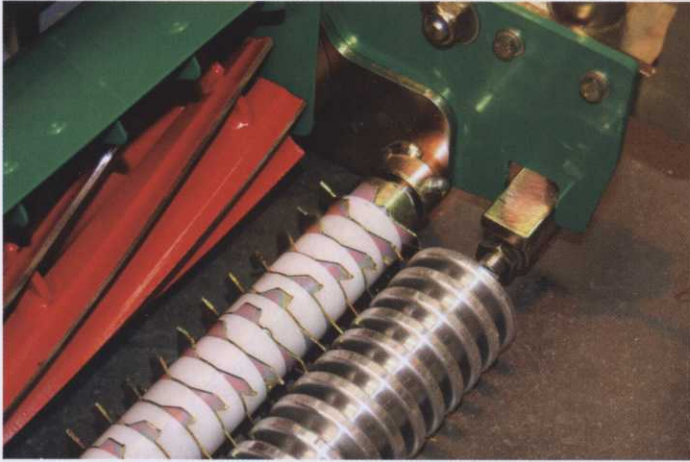
FINE TUNING

Dennis has developed a reputation for being able to fine-tune equipment to meet customers' changing demands. The latest addition to the company's line-up proves this, in the form of the Sport Mk2.

Derived from the existing Sport machine, the 22in cutting width unit has several important new customer driven features. As well as a new, ergonomically designed low vibration handlebar, the Sport has a new grass box and improved height of cut adjustment mechanism. The 'click system', used for several years on the FT range, is now standard. This gives 0.5mm incremental adjustment making accurate, tool free alterations on the turf very simple.

As a further development the Sport Mk2 is also available as the Sport Ultra. The tungsten tipped blades have a dramatically improved life over conventional steel and the spiral configuration ensures smooth operation. To minimise wheelbase of the machine the tungsten tipped blades are interlocking with the grooved front roller design.

For technical information Tel: 01332 824777; Web: www.dennisuk.com.



GREEN TEE

TGT provide truly green solutions for golf all year round in the form of two golf improvement products.

UK grass tee is a winter tee made from UK processed grass cuttings and it can be used to play off short cut natural tee ground and would be ideal for arthritic or back sufferers. In that, once struck by the player's club the tee disintegrates into grass fragments. Simply place, smash and go - no searching or picking up.

Tropical grass tee is more durable and player friendly for those who prefer the feel of wood. This durable, more flexible tee will bend further than a wooden tee before it breaks.

For technical information Tel: 0121 3088647.



ADDING OPTIONS

Lastec have debuted two key new options for the Model 3372 Diesel Articulator - a grass collection system and a striper roller feature. The Model 3372 is a three-deck articulating rotary mower with a 72" cutting width, designed to provide superior manoeuvrability and cut quality than conventional mid-mount and out-front units with fixed decks.

The high-lift grass collector has a 500 litre capacity that can be used to collect grass clippings, leaves, and even aeration plugs on a golf course. It can also be used as a blower to clear autumn leaves or grass clippings.

The striping roller provides a superior finish to the cut swathe. It can be raised and lowered from the seat for transport or be raised for applications that prefer the consistency of colour delivered without the striping kit. The option of raising the striping kit allows a wider range of applications to be managed with one machine.

For technical information Tel: 01622 812103; Web: www.lastec.com.

GET A GRIP

Lloyds of Letchworth has introduced the most advanced operator presence control for their highly respected range of Paladin mowers. Senso Grip is a touch sensitive operator presence control that requires no levers or switches to operate.

The system comprises touch sensitive grips mounted on both sides of the handle, therefore as long as the operator is touching either one of the handle grips the machine will continue to run. The Senso Grip requires no pressure to be applied to operate and with no moving or mechanical parts there are no wearing components to be damaged or replaced, ensuring a trouble free easy operation.

This electrical system is maintenance free and closes down the Paladins' ignition once it detects the removal of the operators' hands. Neither can it be over ridden by taping up controls nor using elastic bands to hold in levers as can be found on more conventional lever operated controls.

For technical detail Tel: 01462 683031; Web: www.lloydsandco.com.

ON THE LINE

Toro has unveiled its Line Painter 1200, which sets a new standard in sports field marking and makes it easier, faster and cleaner than ever before, state the company.

What makes this product so different from other line markers on the market is that it needs no regular manual cleaning between

stops. Its new Express Clean System incorporates an onboard fresh water tank that cleans the line and nozzle at the flick of a switch. So the operator can take a break whenever they want without the line painter clogging up.

Designed with the user in mind, the new unit is easy to fill via a 12in wide opening with strainer. It's also fitted with a generous 12 gallon paint tank. The Line Painter 1200 is powered by a 6.5hp Kawasaki petrol engine and has three speed transmission.

For technical information Tel: 01480 226800; Web: www.lely.co.uk.



A STAR

The Envirostar is already creating waves in its county of birth, North Yorkshire, and is in active service on various sporting estates doing what it does best chipping, mulching, vacuuming, bagging, blowing, power washing and electricity generating.

The machine's multi functional role and robust design essential for the rugged and difficult terrain of moors and steep sided valleys, where it has served its apprenticeship, has already impressed. It's tough Land Rover like design and compact size will fit into the back of a pickup or mule, or can be towed by an average family car. It is a rugged and versatile tool.

For technical information Tel: 08450 066099; Web: www.envirostar.co.uk.

In the Shed

Greenkeeper International brings you 'In the Shed', a new puzzle page to keep you entertained when the weather forces you in or for when times are slow.

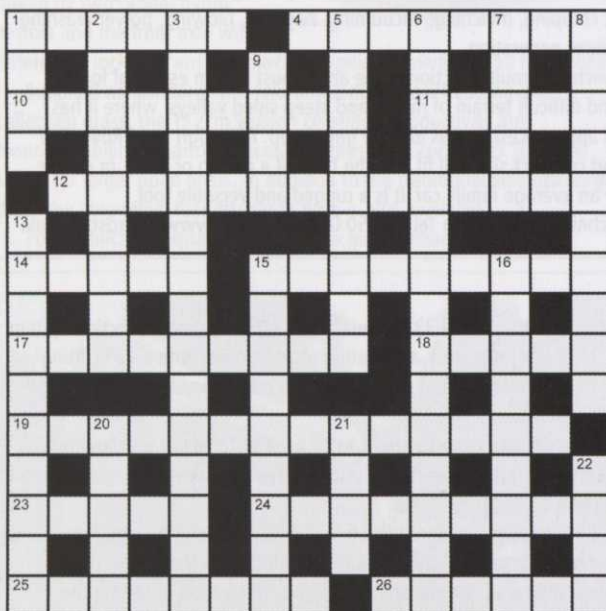
CROSSWORD - Compiled by Anax

ACROSS

- 1 Surname of US gangster known as Scarface (6)
- 4 TV comedy series which featured computer called Holly (3,5)
- 10 Member of Sioux Indian tribe - name also applied to a type of motor-home (9)
- 11 "There you are!" (French) (5)
- 12 Site of fatal car accident involving Edward Kennedy in 1969 (14)
- 14 Pungent, bulbous plant used in many dishes (5)
- 15 Mass of land projecting into the sea (9)
- 17 Make a situation more important (2,3,4)
- 18 Lively dance in 2/4 time (5)
- 19 Study of, e.g. ESP, or other phenomena not explained by science (14)
- 23 Preside over a meeting (5)
- 24 Term for any great European painter up to the 18th century (3,6)
- 25 Agenda, timetable (8)
- 26 Part of body between neck and diaphragm (6)

DOWN

- 1 Hooded robe usually worn by monk (4)
- 2 One who believes that God and the universe are identical (9)
- 3 "Whatever the cost" (2,7,6)
- 5 Mastery of language (9)
- 6 Term applied to an unequal struggle in which the underdog wins (5,3,7)
- 7 Legal defence designed to show that the accused cannot have been the culprit (5)
- 8 Eccentric US multi-instrumentalist, died 1993 (5,5)
- 9 Indonesian island south of Borneo (4)
- 13 Deceptive language (5-5)
- 15 Welsh town north of Newport, important tin-mining centre (9)
- 16 Free-standing lamp which points towards the ceiling (9)
- 20 Stretch of river visible between bends (5)
- 21 Pilgrimage to Mecca (4)
- 22 Important point; most difficult section of a rock climb (4)



ANSWERS TO ALL THE PUZZLES ARE SHOWN ON PAGE 50

ANAGRAM

Can you decipher these two film stars? One is an American Superstar, the other a Brit Actress.

COSTUMIER

PHANTOM MEMOS

QUICK 'NINE HOLE' QUIZ

1. Who did Tiger Woods beat in a play-off to win the WGC American Express for the fourth time?
2. Wales beat Northern Ireland 3-2 in Belfast, but who scored the winning goal?
3. Who is the new James Bond?
4. Who tied with England's Andrew Flintoff for the International Cricket Council player of the year award?
5. What is the name of Britney Spear's newly born son?
6. Name the male lead in The Legend of Zorro, who was recently awarded a star on Hollywood's Walk of Fame.
7. Thierry Henry beat Ian Wright's Arsenal all-time goal scoring record in October, how many goals did Wright's record stand at?
8. Tanja became the first ever Big Brother contestant to give birth on the show. Which country was this in?
9. Bradford Bulls defeated the Leeds Rhinos in the Super League Grand Final, what was the final score?

SUDOKU

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 to 9.

6	4		5		3			1
	5	7						
2			8					5
8	6					9		
			4	9				
		5				2		7
	3				8			6
						3	9	
9			3		1		7	8

Supplied by www.dailysudoku.com

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

Look closely at the pictures below and try and spot the difference between them. You should be able to spot six!





News from the Chief Executive

Firstly I would like to congratulate Alan Pierce for winning the Student of the Year Competition, sponsored by Toro, and also Noel Crawford for winning the BIGGA National Championship that was sponsored by Ransomes Jacobsen. Both of these companies put a great deal of money into activities outside the remit of the Education and Development Fund and I would like to express my thanks for their support.

I hope that by now every member will have received the programme and guide to Harrogate Week 2006. Please take time to study the booklet. The guide includes a day of education for Golf Club Secretaries/Managers and other such officials, these seminars have been organised in conjunction with the English Golf Union and the Association of Golf Club Secretaries. The R&A are also very supportive and have arranged a mini-conference on 'The Sustainable Golf Course' during which speakers from both the UK and Denmark will put forward for debate their views on this very topical subject. If a copy of the programme has not yet found its way into your clubhouse then I would ask for your cooperation in making sure that the club management become aware of what is on offer.

I am only too conscious of the changing times in golf club and golf course management and more than ever before do those involved in such management need to work in harmony to try to provide what the golfer expects. Often these expectations are unreasonable given the resources available and this is where we must try to educate the golfer. Only by working in unison can the various bodies involved in the management process hope to make progress. I am pleased to say that, in my opinion, the level of collaboration between the professional organisations has taken a huge leap forward over the last two years.

I am aware that I keep referring to Harrogate Week in my recent columns, however I cannot stress too much the importance of this event on the well-being of the Association. There remains a great deal of pressure from certain major manufacturers who have already stated that they will not be supporting the Association's event in 2007 and while there are also a significant number of exhibitors who also support an annual show the ensuing restructuring could cause long term problems.

I would reaffirm that the BIGGA Board of Management is committed to a policy of providing an annual education and exhibition event in Harrogate. As part of a planned development the accent of the week has changed from being an Exhibition with some education to that of an education opportunity with an Exhibition along side. Some members have asked if we intend running a separate conference next year. We at BIGGA HOUSE feel that the whole week can be deemed a Conference Week with the choice to opt in and out of seminars and workshops as relevant and in between times take in the Exhibition. The new conference complex at Harrogate International Centre has made it possible for BIGGA to run its education programme for the week under one roof.

If you have not already done so then why not take a look at the Association's website that is dedicated to the event, www.harrogateweek.org.uk, where you will find up to date information on exhibitors, products, education and what's on, as well as the ability to pre-register online. One late addition to the programme is a discussion forum for users of the BIGGA website, in particular the bulletin board. Ideas on how we can improve this facility will be welcomed.

Over the coming weeks I will be attending some of the Section and Region events, and speaking at a few too. Rachael Palmer and I will also be meeting with all Section Secretaries in an attempt to improve communication between Headquarters and members.

BIGGA has an important role to play in the world of golf, however it can only be successful if the members support it. Please help the staff help you!

John Pemberton

Around
the Green

SCOTTISH REGION

The Scottish Region has several changes to announce in relation to Harrogate Week 2006. It has been decided to withdraw travel to and from the Conference venue at Harrogate. Having taken everything into consideration the Board has decided it is no longer practical or cost effective to continue with this service.

As in previous years Harrogate Week will provide Seminars and Workshops. Two day, one day and half day workshops will be available. The cost of these will be intimated nearer the time but it should be noted they are not part of the Scottish Region package. However there will be a series of Seminars ran by Trade firms at which everyone is welcome to attend free of charge.

The Regional Administrator will continue to arrange and book accommodation for anyone who wishes to attend. The accommodation will, as usual, be the Moat House Hotel, Harrogate. The cost of three nights' accommodation on a bed and breakfast basis in en-suite rooms on January 24, 25 and 26 2006 is £155.00.

Once all accommodation has been confirmed the Regional Administrator can provide names of all attendees, this will allow members to contact each other, make travel arrangements and perhaps share the cost of travel. The Regional Administrator has already contacted the National Rail Help line, 0845 7 225 225, and has confirmed that competitive rates and lower cost travel is widely available.

Booking forms for accommodation at Harrogate Week 2006 are available from the Regional Administrator.

Peter J. Boyd.
Regional Administrator

Ayrshire

Hello everyone and no you're not hallucinating this is the news from Ayrshire. To be honest I haven't had much to report, but I will get back on the ball and try to get something in the magazine because I know how much you all look forward to it.

Anyway, our autumn outing, in association with the two leg Duval sponsored Harry Diamond Jug, was hosted by Ardeer Golf Club on September 15. The rain cleared and it was reported all had an enjoyable day's golf. Our appreciation to Stephen Higgins and his green staff for presenting a fine course. Thanks also to the Captain and Committee for allowing us the use of the course and facilities, also to all the catering staff that I am told helped all members enjoy the event.

Onto the results: Harry Diamond Jug. J. Mair. 1st Class. 1. J. Mair; 2. S. Higgins; 3. M. Wilson; 4. A. Storrie. 2nd Class. 1. D. Norquoy; 2. J. Wilson; 3. D. Gray; 4. G. Haughie. Trade Prize. J. Smith.

Congratulations to all the winners as there was an excellent turn out. Next year's outings should be just as well attended, as I know Derek is trying to get the Section two more excellent venues.

I will try and catch up with new members for the past few months here. So welcome and hope to see y'all soon! William McBride, Dundonald Golf Club, Stuart McCormick, Ballochmyle Golf Club, Kerr Rowan, Dundonald Golf Club, John Wilson, Ballochmyle Golf Club, David Wilson, Ballochmyle Golf Club, Philip Dick, Dumfries & Galloway Golf Club, Neil Cochrane, Dumfries & Galloway Golf Club and John Tait, Dundonald Golf Club.

News from the AGM will be reported in next month's edition.

"Yeah right," I hear you say, but it will, trust me!

Any news, call me on 07939104701.

Denis Tweddell



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



Peter Larter
NORTHERN & MIDLAND
 Tel: 01476 550115

East

I am writing this report in early October, with cooler temperatures being the order of the day. During September many of you have reported outbreaks of disease, including Anthracnose and Take all patch, as well as the more common Fusarium patch. Some of these outbreaks have proved extremely difficult to bring under control.

The autumn outing this year was held on September 25 at the magnificent venue of Bruntsfield Links, at Cramond in Edinburgh. Our sincere thanks go to the Bruntsfield Links Golfing Society for granting us courtesy of the course and the catering staff for keeping everybody fed and watered.

The course was in excellent condition and is a great credit to the Course Manager, Andy Connor, and his team. During the past few years the greens staff have undertaken fairly major construction jobs with new greens and tees taking shape. This work has been carried out in house aided by their KX71/2 Kubota Rubber Tracked Excavator.

The results of the golf are as follows. Best Scratch. Phillip Butler, Dundas Park. 1st Nett. Stuart Greenwood, North Berwick. 75-7-69. 1st Class. Alistair Holnes, Seahouses, 75-5-70. 2nd Class. Colin Irvine, Muirfield, 83-10-73. 3rd Class. David Coull, Luffness, 87-15-72. Trade. Ian Lauder, Thomas Sherriffs, 70 scratch.

Finally, our thanks go to the trade for their generous contribution of raffle prizes and to Peter Boyd, our BIGGA Scottish Administrator, who helped out on the day.

In the September report I mentioned the exploits of John Gallagher on the golfing circuit. Since then he has gone from strength to strength, representing his country at the home international tournament, which was held at Royal St Georges. Scotland won this event with John contributing 2.5 points out of a possible 5 to his team's total. He will shortly be off on his travels again representing his country in Texas in early October, followed by a trip to Argentina in November. John finished the Scottish season in second place in the Order of Merit. First place went to fellow greenkeeper Glen Campbell, of Murrayshall.

The Section Dinner dance will be held on Saturday December 3 at the Kilspindie House Hotel, Aberlady. An event not to be missed. Mr September may make an appearance in all his glory! Tickets can be purchased from any Committee Member.

On a personal note, during the summer I visited Sandy Bulloch, at Fereneze GC, whom I had not seen for some years. During our conversation he mentioned one or two of the older trade members had retired, leaving me, in his opinion, as the elder statesman.

Quick as a flash I responded that David Carson, of Rigby Taylor, and Alec McRae, of Aitkens, had been around much longer than me. The response: "But they are much younger than you," left me suitably deflated and beating a hasty retreat eastwards.

Mike Donner

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North

I would like to start this month by saying well done to George Mitchell, from Newmachar Golf Club, and Jim McCormac, from Kiriemuir Golf Club, for going down to represent our Section and the Scottish Region in the National Championship, at Worksop Golf Club and Sherwood Golf Club, down near Nottingham. Sadly they just missed out in winning a prize, but I am sure they had a good time and made a lot of new friends.

We had a golf outing followed by our Section AGM on my own course at Newmachar Golf Club on October 13. A great day was had by all 19 competitors, but we were lucky to go ahead after two days of solid rain before hand. No rain to talk about for six months then flooded out, but despite all the water the course dried up overnight and a good day was had by all.

The winners were: Nearest the Pin at the 7th, Kevin Thompson, and the 12th was Ben Brookes. Class 3 was won by John Geddes, McDonald GC, 85-14-71(bih) and the runner up was Steve Simpson, Unattached, 88-17-71. Class 2 was won by Ben Brookes, Newmachar GC, 81-9-72, and the runner up was Alan Grant, Fraserburgh GC, 87-9-72. Class 1 was won by Neil Kidd, Moray GC, 77-5-72, and the runner up was Steve Sullivan, Craigiehill GC, 77-4-73. The winner of the Veterans prize was Donald Patience, Tarbat GC, 92-12-80. The winner of the Trade prize was Raymond Warrander, Alpha Groundcare, with a nett 79. The Apprentice winner was Mark Main, Moray GC, 92-16-76. The runner up in the scratch prize was George Mitchell, Newmachar GC, with a 76, and the winner and Champion golfer for the day was Kevin Thompson, Moray, with a great score of 67 - yes, he did play all the 18 holes. I would also like to say to my own staff, I was not wearing jeans to play golf.

We held our AGM after the golf and we only had 19 members, which was very disappointing. So come on guys, the Committee make a big effort for your Section, so you should do the same. I would like to thank the members who did make the effort to turn up but some new faces would be nice. Right, I will get off my soap box now.

I am delighted to say we have another three new members for this month's report. They are David Williams, Course Manager at Cullen Golf Club, and another two greenkeepers from Royal Dornoch, Alastair Ross and Alexander MacDonald. So welcome to the Section lads. I guess that must nearly be a full house from Dornoch now, so many thanks.

The two winners of this year's Patrons' Award from our Section are George Mitchell, from Newmachar Golf Club, and John Geddes, from McDonald Golf Club. So well done to them and enjoy your trip to Harrogate. Remember to take plenty of money with you as the beer is not cheap.

I would just like to finish by saying our two Section outings for next year are Montrose Golf Links on May 11 2006 and then up to Fraserburgh Golf Club on the September 14.

If anybody has any news they would like to put in the report you can get in touch with me at home Tel: 01224 821574, Mobile: 07711274525 and Email: dalengc@hotmail.com.

Dale Robertson

NORTHERN REGION

NORTHERN REGION ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES SEMINAR 2005

A Northern Region Educational Seminar is planned for Thursday November 24 2005 at Penrith Golf Club. The subjects to be discussed will be Employment Law and how it relates to the Greenkeeping Profession with Maggie Lawton, from the BIGGA Legal Helpline; Health & Safety Update by Jon Allbutt; Golf Club Policies and Management by Tony Smith, Course Manager at Teesside Golf Club; and The Need for Healthy Soil with Martin Ward, from Symbio.

Invitations were sent to all BIGGA Northern Region members during September, but if you didn't get one and want to attend, contact Peter Larter (Northern Region Administrator) for an application form at "Tamarisk", High St, Corby Glen, Grantham, Lincs, NG33 4LX or phone: 01476 550115; office: 07866 366966 or by email at petelarter972@aol.com.

North East

On September 29 we played our Autumn Competition at Alnmouth GC, this being our first visit for a Section day and it was a pleasure to play this excellent course. Credit must go to James Storey and his staff for the presentation of the course, coupled not only with a stiff test of golf but with a howling wind to boost up the scores. Thanks must also go to the catering staff for providing us with a great meal.

Once again the following companies came up trumps with some first class prizes. Thanks to Border Turf Services, Turf Care, Greenlay, Shorts of Whitburn and Aitkens. On behalf of the Section thanks again, without you we would not survive. Thanks to John Pemberton, Chief Executive of BIGGA, on paying us a visit. I hope you enjoyed the day.

The winners, other than the wind, were as follows. Best Nett. Jas Storey, Alnmouth GC, 73; Best Gross, A. Ingles, Newcastle Utd GC, 78. Greenlay Cup. S. Pope, Tyneside GC, 75 nett. Fewster's Shield. K. Dinsdale, Northumberland GC, 81 nett.

Jimmy Richardson

North West

I have just returned from the National Championship, which was played at Worksop GC and Sherwood Forest GC. The weather was great and the courses were in lovely condition. This year there were 61 members playing, which was slightly down in numbers from previous years. However the competition was equally as fierce as ever.

There was only two N/W Section members playing, these being John McLoughlin and Gary Burgess, both from Grange Park GC, and they did do well. On Monday Gary Burgess won the Longest Drive, and on Tuesday he won best nett in the 0-5 division. John McLoughlin won the third place gross over 36 holes. John plays off scratch, and Gary plays off 3. Well done to both of them.

I recently wrote in the Section notes that I would be retiring from the post of Secretary. After much thought and discussion with the Committee, I have decided to continue as Secretary for the time being, due to the Committee taking on some of the duties in running the Section. Bill Merritt will be organising the golf, and Chris Sheehan will write the Section notes after these notes.

I will remind you that the President's Cup and the AGM will be at Wilmslow Golf Club on December 1, with the tee available from 10am, bacon baps and coffee available from 9am. All applications to Bill Merritt,

The Lodge, Beacon Park Golf Club, Beacon Lane, Dalton, Wigan WN8 7RU. Please include a cheque for £20, made payable to BIGGA N/W. Everybody to bring a bottle on the day, or you will be fined £10.

Just one more thing, may I remind you that Harrogate Week, including BTME, will be at Harrogate on January 22-27, with a huge education programme. It is essential that this Exhibition continues, so please come along and see the best indoor Exhibition of machinery for turf culture.

That seems to be it for the time being but if you have any news or views please contact me on 0151 724 5412 or 07761583387.

Bert Cross

Northern

I'm afraid there is very little to tell you about this month. One very important piece of information for you though is that the date has finally been set for the year's Christmas golf. It will be taking place on Thursday December 8, at Bradford Moor Golf Club. So that means it's a great night out in Bradford instead of the usual Halifax. First tee off is at 12pm.

Two other events have been confirmed for next year. The first is the President's Day, which is going to be held at Northcliffe Golf Club. The Sheffield match is going to be held at Bradley Hall Golf Club. Both events have yet to have dates and times confirmed.

In December's report I shall bring you the results of the autumn competition. Any news or items of interest, please don't hesitate to let me know, 07739319060.

Adam Speight

Cleveland

Sorry about the lack of news over the last few issues but this was due to two main reasons. Firstly, a lack of news passed on to me and secondly, problems with my efforts not being received at HQ.

However let's try again! We all wish Richie Hood good luck in his new position as Head Greenkeeper at Houghton Golf Club. Richie takes over from Colin Baxter, who has retired after many year's service to the golf clubs of the North East and afar.

The trip to the dog racing at Sunderland was well supported. Everyone enjoyed a fine night but with varying success in the betting stakes. Mattie Robinson, from Oakleaf, was 'well up', but yours truly made the mistake of following John Talbot, of Middlesbrough GC, with his 1 - 6 reversed. He's useless! Not one draw.

The turn out at the Groundmen's bowls match was very disappointing with only Tony Mears and his son, Peter, attending from the greenkeeping fraternity. Such a pity as we had a great night in a wonderful part of the area, with a superb buffet to follow. Our thanks go to Durham City Bowling Club for their hospitality and the superb buffet.

On a sunny afternoon in June a small group visited the Rockcliffe Training Ground, in Hurworth, just outside Darlington. For those of you who don't know, this is the training ground of Middlesbrough Football Club. This visit was made possible from a kind invitation from Chris Powley.

We were given a full tour of all the facilities by 'Arthur', a well known member of Chris' staff, including the indoor and outdoor pitches, changing rooms, the state-of-the-art gym, physio rooms, coaching rooms, dining facilities etc, etc. We were even taken around the land that surrounds some of these facilities, which included a huge house also owned by the club, which is to be renovated into a luxury hotel.

The whole visit proved to be both enjoyable and very interesting and gave us all an insight into how today's Premiership footballers conduct their time when not involved in matches. Many thanks go to Chris, Arthur and Middlesbrough Football Club for an excellent tour. Thanks to Tony

Mears for his report on the visit.

Finally, the results of the Autumn Tournament held at Bedale Golf Club. The Stableford competition was won by Ian Holoran, of Middlesbrough Municipal GC with 32 points. Second was Alan Reed, of Saltburn GC, with 30 points. Third was Barry Walker, of City of Newcastle GC, also with 30 points. The best nett on the par 3 holes was shared by Ian and Alan. The trade prize was won by Jamie Applegarth, representing Rigby Taylor.

Many thanks are due to our main sponsor - Brendan Brown, of Norlube. His support enabled every player to receive a prize. Congratulations to Bedale Golf Club too! Ian and his staff had the course in superb condition. The meal was also top class, so thanks to the catering staff too. The only disappointment was the poor turn out - only 10 greenkeepers and two trade reps. I think many members were taking advantage of the Indian summer. Any news to TC on 07831214879.

Terry Charlton

Sheffield

On September 12 we held our autumn competition at Notts Golf Club. Our thanks go to Notts for giving us the courtesy of their course, and well done to Phil Stain and his staff for the excellent condition of the course.

The main sponsor of the competition was Palmer Groundcare, who provided an excellent prize table. Thanks to Glynn Sawyer, from Palmer Groundcare, and to all the other trade members who provided prizes once again, it is much appreciated. Thanks also go to the catering staff for providing an excellent meal that was enjoyed by all.

On the golfing side of things I am told there was some good golf played. The Captain of Notts, Ken Kirk, presented the prizes. The eventual winner was Andy Unwin. Well played Andy.

1. A. Unwin, 35pts bb9; 2. G. Wells, 35pts bb9; 3. C. Hopper, 35pts; 4. G. Britton, 34pts bb3; 5. L. Varndel, 34pts. The winner of the guest prize was Russ Lathem. Well done Russ, it's getting a bit regular now!

Our Christmas competition is on December 5 at Rotherham Golf Club. While talking of Rotherham, they have a new apprentice greenkeeper, Phillip Smith, who is new into the industry. Good luck Phillip and we hope you enjoy it and hope to see you soon!

I also hear Andy Unwin has flown the nest and bought his first house! Good luck Andy. As usual any news contact me on 07793111845 or jv.lax@tesco.net.

John Lax

North Wales

Eaton GC was the venue for our North Wales Section Autumn Tournament and if you were not one of the 53 players who attended this event, well I know you missed something a little bit special. I remember the original Eaton GC that was situated in the grounds of the Duke of Westminster's estates, I also remember Paul. The Geordie and his First Assistant, Alan Kift, greenkeeping out of the orangey glass houses with all the mowers and tools based in there at Eaton. For whatever the reason for moving the club to Waverton, where it will now be kept with the Duke. I think he did the members proud by providing the new land which was predominately 'farmers grazing land' to relocate their golf club, in the early 1990's.

Then, after some changes in the staff, the reins were taken over by Len Sproston who headed the team through the late 90s and from then to the present day with the current Head Greenkeeper, Gavin Clarke. I thought Gavin and his lads had done a fantastic job in presenting a very strong golf course for our October event. What looks from the entrance and roadside views a flattish parkland course, was far from it once we made our way

out onto the opening holes. The course then never really relented and perhaps shown by the best gross greenkeepers score of a 5 over par 78, with his handicap of 3, shows you don't have to have a PGA tour set up to make things tricky.

The Section would like to thank Eaton for their courtesy and hospitality bestowed to us on the day. To the captain for the prize giving and the caters for the home made soup, the fine chicken curry with rice chips naan bread and vanilla cheesecake with fresh cream and ice cream for afters. I don't know what everyone else had, but I didn't have room for my supper when I got home!

The prizes on the day went as follows. Nearest the Pin on the 11th. Tom Durband, from Caldly. Nearest the Pin on 17th. Dave Austin, from Rigby Taylor. Best Gross. Jez Hughes, 78. Best Guest. 1. Roger Greenhalgh, Sutton Hall GC, 41pts; 2. Terry Dodd, Chirk, 37pts. The Trade trophy went to Dave Austin, with 38pts off his +1 handicap.

So to the Greenkeeper winners and in reverse order. 4. Steve Roberts, Flint, 34pts; 3. John Evans, Carden Park, 36pts; 2. Jeff Jago, Sutton Hall, 38pts; 1. Carl Croucher, Caldly GC - extracts from his winning speech have been noted and will be interpreted at our Christmas AGM. The date by the way is December 7 at Rhuddlan GC.

Staying in winning form was the Sandiway Club Committee, who attended the Golf Management Trophy, held by BIGGA and sponsored by Scotts, at Bingley St Ives GC in West Yorkshire. Head Greenkeeper, Brian Taylor, Past Captain, Charlie Wright, Secretary, Bob Owens, and Chairman of the Club and Greens, Keith Brain. Keith is also a great golf writer and a former columnist for the Manchester Evening News

They all thought the course was absolutely fantastic and represented what is typical of old style courses where you don't have to smash the ball 300+ yards. What started out as a bit of fun became quite serious at the end, when they were in with the top score and stayed leaders in the clubhouse even after the last match came in. 30 regional teams from the Wirral estuary to the far north of England were all pushed into runners up and the Sandiway lads brought the trophy home. Well done guys and I believe you are now the 2006 hosts of this event, so we wish you luck in your defence and keeping the trophy within the North Wales area.

One final congratulations goes to our own Dave Newton, from Arrowe Park GC, on the Wirral, who came runner-up in the Toro Student of the Year competition, and was presented with his award up at HQ. Both his colleagues, Neil Oxton and Les Parry, are proud to have his talents highlighted and would like to thank Toro for their support of education.

Mesen Cymru

Andrew Acorn - andrew@acorngolf.co.uk

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.

MIDLAND REGION

MIDLAND REGION ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES SEMINAR 2005

A Midland Region Educational Seminar is planned for Thursday November 17 2005 at Brampton Heath Golf Club, Northampton. The subjects to be discussed will be Employment Law and how it relates to the Greenkeeping Profession by Maggie Lawton, from the BIGGA Legal Helpline; Health & Safety Update with Jon Allbutt; The Need for Healthy Soil with Martin Ward, from Symbio; and a Course Walk at the adjacent Northampton County Golf Club, an Open Qualifying Course, with the Course Manager David Lowe.

All BIGGA Midland Region members should have received their invitations in September, but if you didn't get one and want to attend, contact Peter Larter (Midland Region Administrator) for an application form at "Tamarisk", High St, Corby Glen, Grantham, Lincs, NG33 4LX or phone: 01476 550115, office: 07866 366966 or by email at petelarter972@aol.com.

Midland

Oh boy how naive can one be. As some of you may be aware, for many years I was interested in and competed in amateur Latin & Ballroom dancing. At my new course, Sandwell Park, I let such slip out. I think that shall fuel many a banter gibe for all of eternity from my new work colleagues. On a personal note of my movement from Penn, I would like to thank Ed, the lads and Penn GC for the last five years of very interesting and enjoyable employment. I wish my successor all the best. I hope you enjoy it as much as I. Ed likes his tea...

On September 18 we held our third Annual Angling Event. The venue was superb, the fishing very good, and the following buffet/prize awarding top notch. The results were: 1. A. Shore; 2. S. Yates; 3. E. Perry. Heaviest Fish. E. Perry. Best Specimen. S. Yates. Our thanks to N.Tyler/Alpha Amenity for sponsoring the prize table and buffet, and to my father, KLM, for preparing the excellent buffet and securing such an exclusive venue. Last but certainly not least, thanks to our very generous host, Roger Perks, for affording us such a sumptuous and enjoyable day. Thank you Sir.

Once again the Scotts Doubles Tournament has been won by the current holders, E. Stant & P. Woodham - I must have a word with the handicap secretary. Ed and Paul played against Mike Gash and John Ganley. Well done to all for reaching the final, as such is played at Wentworth's West Course. There are no losers, only winners. Our thanks to Wentworth GC and Chris Kennedy - wow was unsurprisingly reported to me. Also thanks to Scotts for sponsoring such an excellent event.

It gives me great pleasure to welcome six new Members to our Section. C. Stilgot, J. Smith, S. Hart, S. Thompson, A. T. Brassington and, at my new track, N. Cooper - I now know where to get my barrels.

Last month Gay Hill GC hosted a manual handling course in which 10 greenkeepers attended and successfully achieved their certificates. A tractor driving course has been successfully completed by John Tomlin, Kevin Cheshire and Simon Watkins. After receiving enquiries from various golf clubs, a mole control course was to be held at Kings Norton GC on November 2.

Three greenkeepers from Moseley GC are set to attend an ATV course at Gay Hill on December 12. There are still places available for Chainsaw training. There are two places available for February 1&2 2006, and one place for 8&9. Prices are £225 for BIGGA members. Our thanks go to Ken

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and Sami at BIGGA for their help in subsidising these valuable training opportunities. If anyone has further training needs, please contact Paul Woodham on: 07880 734 197.

Until next month, fondest of regards.

Sean McDade

BB&O

I am getting a new white van, one with shiny alloy wheels, air conditioning, electric windows, tectonic coffee cup holder, CD player and with economy in mind, a digital calorie counter to help the weight ratio making the van more fuel efficient. It was then that I woke up and realised it was all a dream, except the weight ratio

Anyway, let's start with the Big Bird Shoot. On September 20 the BB&O held the annual clay pigeon shooting competition at West London Shooting Grounds. With two barrels ablaze, a dozen or so bandits filled the air with the smell of gun smoke as they took on the various shooting disciplines organised by the shooting ground officials. The targets this year proved hard to hit, with the occasional clay rabbit spinning across the ground or flying towards you.

Those looping in the air at high speed were the hardest of the targets to hit. It was nice to see retired greenkeeper, Jack Evans, who, with serious failing eyesight, managed to instinctively shoot many of the clays on offer. Our thanks to proprietor Andy Castle and Jon Beck for cooking up the spicy hotdogs and burgers on a day when all appreciated the shooting and cooking.

On the move is Alec MacIndoe, who leaves Donnington Valley GC and moves up the road a few miles to Newbury & Cookham GC. Congratulations on your new position.

The Rigby Taylor Pair's Competition has reached the semi final stages and competing for a place in the final are Rabbits v Henley Firsts and Goring & Streatley v Hoof Trumped.

On October 4, at Caversham Heath GC, James Moore, together with family and friends, work colleagues and greenkeepers from the Region organised The Taylor James Moore Memorial Golf Day 2005. With 22 teams of four competing on a day blessed with good weather, Caversham Heath GC as usual did not disappoint. Pushing driving skills and accuracy to the limit, we teed off on the longest of competition tees with every blade of grass perfectly manicured but somehow always getting in the way.

Results were as follows: 1. Henley Boys, 93 points; 2. Rigby Taylor, 92; 3. God Like, 86; 4. 617 Squadron, 86; 5. The Ramblers, 85; 6. The Gem Boys, 84pts.

The object of the day was to raise money for charity in memory of James' newborn son, who died shortly after being born. With the help of various sponsors, football memorabilia for auction and various golf clubs donating prizes, the final figure achieved was a massive £5,500. The money will go to a good cause and be divided between The Great Western Special Baby Unit Hospital, in Swindon, and the Peter Dunn Neonatal Unit at St Michaels Hospital, in Bristol.

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 the Section Secretary on 07880 550 380.

Mark Day

Mid Anglia

Just a quickie this month. Our Christmas event is on December 8 at Dunstable Downs Golf Club. The usual format will apply, teams of 4 playing Texas scramble. All entries in to Richard Saunders in good time please.

A seminar on soils is planned for November, but at the time of print no details have been confirmed. Contact a Committee member for up to date information or look out for something in the post soon.

That's about it, autumn results in the next magazine.

Cheers

Bob Butfoy

SOUTH EAST

SOUTH EAST SEMINAR 2005

The South East Regional Seminar this year will take place on Wednesday November 9 at Benton Hall GC, Essex. The day promises, interesting and informative subjects with plenty of time for discussion.

The speakers for the day will include David Golding, GTC Education Director, Julia Turner, Material Development Manager Wrap, Jack MacMillan, Past Chairman of BIGGA now with the European Tour, Brian Pierson, celebrating 40 years as a Golf Course Builder, and Michael Pinner, a locally based Course Architect with strong views on current Golf Course Design. John Pemberton will also be speaking with Rachael Palmer attending to answer all your questions on membership and our Association.

All members should have received invitations, but if you didn't get one and want attend please contact Clive Osgood on 01737 819343 or mobile 07841 948410 or by email at cliveosgood@yahoo.co.uk.

Kent

Kent greenkeepers had a fantastic day at Orsett Golf Club in an unofficial, inaugural team challenge event against our colleagues from over the water in Essex. Our crack team of 10 golfing superstars/hackers/bandits (delete as appropriate) took on the best our northern brethren could muster on Don Clark's excellent open qualifying course.

Despite many of our team venturing into unknown territory for the first time they were undaunted by the challenge set by Don and his greenkeeping team. After the pleasantries had been exchanged through gritted teeth on the first tee it was down to me to make the opening drive and lead by example. A solid strike from my trusty three wood sent the ball sailing over the trees down the right then bouncing down the entrance road and was last seen heading for Southend! After diplomatically losing the first hole, however, Kev Morris and I managed to claw our way back in front. In desperation, Don Clark called on the storm clouds to gather and the ensuing violent lightning storm threatened to spoil proceedings but the might of Kent was never going to be daunted by a five minute downpour! At the end of a great day's golf Kent were victorious by four matches to one.

After negotiating the club's complex security system to access the changing rooms we were treated to a fantastic dinner in the clubhouse, where the shouts of 're-match' rang loud and clear from the Essex boys!

All in all this was a great day for our Section and although we have the basis of a winning team as I said in earlier reports, anyone who participates in our regular events is eligible to represent the county in what we hope will ultimately result in a home counties league. So Surrey, Sussex, BB&O, London et al, beware, the Kent Section is back!

September 29 saw our autumn competition played at Southern Valley. The weather was very kind to us with only the occasional dip in temperature, when the sun disappeared behind the clouds.

Congratulations to Matthew Gray, Kings Hill, as winner with 44pts. 2nd place was Ian Rawlings, Mid Kent, 41pts, and Nearest the Pin. 3rd placed was John Fullager, Whitstable, 37pts, and Longest Drive. Trade winner was Gary Tait, again, with 37pts. Thanks to Ernest Doe & Co and Scotts for their generous donation of prizes.

We have had a great response to our call for would be 'Rooneys and Ronaldos', for our upcoming match with the Sussex Section at the Withdean Stadium on Friday November 11. We have a 'squad' of around 15, although if you turn up on the night with a pair of boots I'm sure you'll get a game.

Supporters are also more than welcome, the more the merrier. So if you fancy watching 15 mostly over-weight and unfit Kent Greenkeepers humiliate themselves, we'll see you on the night. Directions to the stadium are available from our website, www.kentgreenkeepers.webeden.co.uk.

Rob Holland & Kevin Morris

Sussex

Now the summer is coming to an end, we can all put our feet up and take it easy. If only that were the case, for now is the time were we have to start the real graft and construction. Oh well, it keeps us out of trouble.

The eagerly waited Sussex v Surrey match was held at the Dyke Golf Club on a lovely warm summer's day. Sussex had it in the bag as we were a few players short until Surrey kindly gave us one of their players. Unfortunately it was Brian Wilmot, enough said. The match ended 4-2 in Surrey's favour. I did actually have the pleasure of playing with Brian, and I can say it was not all his fault. We did get attacked by a load of flying ants on the 14th green, which totally put me off my three inch putt (only joking Brian). I hope every one enjoyed themselves and hopefully next year we can turn them over on their own soil.

There was also a golf day at Slinfold Park, in October, so I'll let you know what happened next month. The Christmas golf day will be held at Worthing GC on December 2. So look forward to playing George Barr's course.

If anyone has any news they would like me to include, then please send to Robert.hudson77@btinternet.com. I look forward to seeing you guys at the next golf day.

Rob Hudson

Essex

On a blustery day to say the least, 48 competitors teed up for our latest golfing event, which was held at Bentley Golf & Country Club at the end of September. The day was kindly sponsored by Headland Amenity and a special thanks goes to Steve Crosdale for providing the prizes. The course was in superb condition as always and a big thank you to Mark Stoppes and his staff for all their hard work.

We would also like to thank Bentley GC for the use of their facilities, Geoff Scott, the Secretary, the Captain, Melvin Wright, Daz on providing an excellent meal and to all the staff for the friendly hospitality shown through out the day.

On to the prize winners and the overall winner was our Treasurer, Dominic. So unfortunately for him, that's a two shot cut on his handicap next time around, but I guest it will not affect his game.

Overall Winner. Dominic Rodgers. Cat One. 1. Bradley Adams; 2. Anthony Kirwan; 3. Ben Sharpe. Cat Two. 1. Martin Forrester; 2. Andrew Cracknell; 3. Craig Campbell. Guest. Dave Wilshire. Trade. Steve Denton. Nearest the Pin. Andrew Cracknell. Longest Drive. Ben Sharpe.

We would like to thank the trade for the raffle prizes. Collier Turf Care, Rigby Taylor, Tacit, Scotts, Sherriffs, Banks, Ernest Does, P Tuckwells and Avoncrop.

Our last golf day of the year is on December 1 at the Essex Golf & Country Club. The format is Texas Scramble followed by the AGM. It's your Section so please support the AGM, so we can have your ideas or comments.

Hope to see you all at the SE Regional Education Seminar, November 9, at Benton Hall GC.

Martin Forrester

SOUTH WEST & SOUTH WALES

SOUTH WEST/WALES SEMINAR 2005

This year's South West and South Wales Regional Seminar, The Big Debate, will take place on Tuesday November 22 2005 at Cannington College, Bridgewater. The theme for the Seminar will be the use of fungicides and pesticides in golf course presentation and the effects of future legislation.

The speakers for the day are Euan Grant, Head Greenkeeper at St Andrews; Kenneth Siems, Course Manager at Loch Lomond; Frank Ainsworth, Course Manager at Hilton Templepatrick, Belfast; Andy Campbell, Course Manager at Carden Park; Jay Dobson, PSD Agronomy Ltd. These speakers will make the day both informative and interesting.

Booking details and information have been sent to Head Greenkeepers/Course Managers in the Region. Should you require any further information you can contact Jane Jones, Regional Administrator, on 01454 270850 or mobile 07841948110.

HARROGATE WEEK 2006

The South West and South Wales Region are once again offering members a three night bed and breakfast package to Harrogate. Staying at the Cairn Hotel, arriving Monday January 23 2006 and departing on Thursday January 26. The cost for this package remains the same as last year - Single room is £195; Twin room (sharing) is £135 per person.

Numbers are limited so to reserve your place and receive a booking form please contact Jane Jones, Regional Administrator, on 01454 270850 or mobile 07841948110.

South West

Who says motivational talks are rubbish? Team Captain, John Keenaghan, was well up for the recent team match against the South Coast Section at Marlborough. The first inkling we had as to how seriously he was taking it was when Wayne Vincent and myself sneaked into the bar for a much needed nerve-settling couple of pints of lager before playing, only to have the lager whisked away from under our noses and replaced with two nice nutritional glasses of carrot juice. "It's to keep your salt levels up," explained John, our self-appointed personal trainer.

Before we had a chance to complain, things got much worse and we were sent for a jog round the practice ground to loosen up while listening to John bellowing repeatedly into a megaphone: "Who are we going to thrash? When are we going to thrash 'em?" Revenge is sweet though, especially after the year that John has had as Team Captain. Word of comprehensive defeats in the two previous matches had reached the ears of the South Coast team, who came to Marlborough in confident mood, looking to send John to the same fate as most of the West Country football managers recently.

In particular I'm told, his chain had been jerked particularly hard by Fred Demon, but in the end, John's S.W. team emerged worthy 5-1 winners.

with John getting the additional satisfaction of grinding Fred's nose well and truly into the mud by 4&3.

Speaking of mud, there wasn't much at Marlborough and the course was in fantastic condition for the match - the hard work of Marcus, Nobby and the team really shone through. This has not been the easiest of years, but all the competitors were in praise of the course. Our thanks to everyone at Marlborough for stepping in to take this match at fairly short notice, and for welcoming us and providing such wonderful course conditions and food.

The results were: Ashley Darney & Rob Davies beat Tony Crouch & Shaun White 4&3. Tim Needham & Adam Matthews lost to Chris Bland & Mike Lake 1 down.

John Keenaghan & Nobby Knight beat Tony Gadd & Fred Deman 4&3. Kevin May & Adam Tunmore beat Stuart Hooker & Kevin Glass 1 up. Mark Anderton & Chris Sealey beat Phil Wentworth & Joe Cooper 1 up. Wayne Vincent & Paul Worster beat Steve & Don Friend 4&3.

I was chatting to a former assistant greenkeeper of mine over dinner after the game. Tim Needham, who is now part of the greenkeeping team at Chipping Sodbury, was telling me about his on-going Foundation Degree in Greenkeeping and Sportsturf Science via distance learning at Myerscough College. He has taken advantage of Association sponsorship to spread the costs and is settling well in to the study regime. Anyone who is reasonably computer literate could do this degree virtually completely online, and sponsorship is still available from BIGGA. He hopes to complete the course in about three years without having to visit Myerscough itself (near Preston, Lancs.) at all. Good luck Tim.

It was very nice to get a call recently from Gary Cooke, down at Enmore Park. Gary, who hits the ball further than I go on holiday these days (but a lot straighter), was telling me about all the work underway on the course at Enmore, ahead of their busy centenary year in 2006. He is working with the golf architects Hawtree to rebuild, reshape, and drain about 30 of the bunkers. He has also installed 1200 metres of drainage to the fairways, semi and bunkers, and now hopes to keep the course fully open in all but the very worst weather. Gary's final comment was: "Trust the bl***y weather, all this hard work and grief installing the drainage and has it rained? Has it hell!" Don't worry mate, it will, and then you'll be glad you went to all that trouble.

Stop Press from your Committee. In order to further underpin the Section's commitment to training and education, in addition to a sponsored place at Harrogate Week 2006, the South West Section will also sponsor 10 free places for assistant greenkeepers or deputy head greenkeepers at the forthcoming Regional Seminar at Cannington on November 22.

The first 10 applications to be received by Nobby Knight, 17 St Marys Gardens, Hilperton, Trowbridge, Wilts, BA14 7PG, will qualify for these free places. This is a good chance to hear Euan Grant, of St. Andrews, talking about his methodology and Open Championship preparation. Also on the bill are Ken Seims, of Loch Lomond, and Frank Ainsworth, who many in this area will remember from his days at Kingsdown. Other speakers from the top of the profession make this a must go occasion, so get your application in. Thanks go yet again to our Patronage Partners, whose generosity makes these important educational events possible.

Finally, at Minchinhampton we have just hosted the inaugural EGU Senior Counties Finals between Northampton, Cheshire, Kent and Somerset, over four days on the Avening Course. The weather for once tried to cooperate on the first day with warm temperatures and no wind, but reverted true to form thereafter with low clouds, fog and about 10 degrees colder. We still had the height of cut on the greens at 3mm and managed stimp speeds of 12 feet.

The President of the Kent Golf Union had played about 10 holes and remarked that he was enjoying the course so much that he'd bring their annual 'away day' to Minch next year. But his parting shot (after they'd lost) was: "It's your wretched greens that have shafted us."

It was a real pleasure to bump into my old friend Lauchlan (Jock) Millar, now retired, from Burnham and Berrow. Still as sprightly as ever, 5 handicap and enjoying his golf, and no doubt irritating the hell out of the current green staff at Burnham as the old habits of rising at 6am and heading straight down to the first tee every day die hard. Long may it continue. Keep the info coming in, 01285 651908 or paul.worster@tesco.net.

Paul Worster

South Coast

Where has this year gone? It doesn't seem that long ago when I was looking forward to the summer and now autumn is here and we are racing towards Christmas. Renovation programmes, winter programmes, leaves, needles and a little bit of fusarium and anthracnose thrown in for good measure. We have at last seen some rain after another prolonged dry spell! Hopefully we won't pay for the dry summer too much.

Our autumn tournament was held at Sherborne Golf Club, a course I hadn't played for a long time. Course Manager, Chris Watson, has been there two and a half years now and has played a huge part in transforming the course, although he says there is still much to be done. The day's sponsors were Rigby Taylor and Eco Compost and as usual Joe Crawley was there to ensure we all teed off promptly.

It was nice to have Jane Jones attending and she brought her clubs along, unfortunately she got drawn with me! A nice stiff breeze made the course even more testing for us lesser mortals and it certainly separated the men from the boys. My golf was at its erratic best with every shot in the bag including some of the unmentionable 'Lucy Locketts'.

However I must blame Chris Watson for his duff information on how to play the 5th hole and the supposed 'tiger line'. I must thank my playing partners for their patience, Jane Jones played like a dream on the front 9 and Chris Sturgess was Chris with the odd glimpses of genius. Highlight of my round was a superb birdie on the 9th hole. A very well struck duck hook careering into the undergrowth followed by some high pitch screeching from a very unsuspecting pheasant. Anyway enough of my comedy golf!

Mark Davies showed his true class with a superb round of 4 under par 68. I was fortunate to play in the group behind Mark and he was hitting the ball 'solidly' in his words. I managed to edge past his Longest Drive with my second shot but came nowhere near his Nearest the Pin. Mark has been long overdue picking up some prizes as he always plays well. So it was good to see him clean up.

Winners on the day were: Division 1. 1. Mark Davies, 40pts; 2. Simon Ridland, 37pts. Division 2. 1. Shane Hodgkins, 41pts; 2. Paul Staples, 39pts. Division 3. 1. George Cooper, 38pts; 2. Peter Handford, 33pts. Longest Drive. Mark Davies. Nearest the Pin. Mark Davies.

Many thanks to Sherborne Golf Club for their superb hospitality. Chris Watson and his team must have worked extremely hard in presenting the course so well for us and our sincere thanks go out to them all. The caterers provided an excellent meal for us and looked after us so well. So many thanks. Without sponsors our golf days wouldn't happen, so many thanks to Rigby Taylor and Eco Compost. Last but by no means least many thanks to Chris Sturgess for all his hard work in organising the day.

I will report on the AGM in next month's notes. The date for the Turkey Trot is still to be finalised and you will receive details when it has been

confirmed. I hope to see you at Cannington College on November 22 for the Regional Conference, which has an excellent line up of speakers.

Alex McCombie

South Wales

Well the golfing fixtures are finally over, thankfully, it seems to have been a hectic year. I don't know about you but I hate the autumn, leaves seem to be a never ending battle, making my course look untidy. Dew lasting all day, disease, golfers wanting my head for issuing trolley bans, buggies driving in all the wettest places possible, I think they do it to wind me up. I think I will go and core the greens again to nark them off.

Congratulations to Russell Anderson, Cardiff Golf Club Course Manager, for winning his Club Championship, for the second year running.

The Section is looking for competent A1 assessors qualified in level 2 Changing Hole positions; please get in touch with Pennard Golf Club for next year's Club Championship. Out of a field of 100 members, less than half completed the course, greens stimping over 11 in the morning, wind got up by the afternoon the speed rose to over 12, making the choice of pins on four greens unplayable. I bet the Head Greenkeeper's name was banded about the clubhouse bar.

Dates for your diary: November 22 at Cannington College, Bridgewater. I know I mentioned the seminar last month, just in case you have forgotten it is entitled 'The Big Debate'. The following speakers will be covering the use of fertilisers and pesticides in relation to their application, with regard to the management of their own courses, Euan Grant, Head Greenkeeper at St Andrews; Kenneth Siems, Course Manager at Loch Lomond; Andy Campbell, Course Manager at De Vere Carden Park; Frank Ainsworth, Course Manager at Hilton Temple Patrick. The following speaker will give an overview with regard to these practices - Jay Dobson, Director of PSD Agronomy Ltd.

The cost for the day inclusive of buffet lunch and mid morning coffee is £15 members, £20 non members, £10 retired members. Booking Forms and details will be sent to Head Greenkeepers/Course Managers. Please note the date and come to what looks to be an informative and interesting day and support the BIGGA South West and South Wales Region. Further details or any queries contact Jane Jones, Regional Administrator, on 01454 270850 or 07841948110

December 9 is another great day out and is our Winter Tournament. Our annual return to the Pyle & Kenfig Golf Club for the Section's largest gathering of the season. Teeing off from 10.30am and sitting for our traditional Christmas dinner at 5pm. Bring a bottle and enjoy our traditional raffle, recorded in the Guinness Book of Records, as the longest running raffle in history, a great day out, don't miss it!

January 22-26 2006 - Harrogate Week. We have been approached by Tower Chemicals, who are prepared to sponsor a coach to transport the members of our Region to the Harrogate Week, including BTME & ClubHouse. All we have to do in order for us to qualify for this free sponsorship is to demonstrate the need for such transport from within our Region.

The coach would mimic that of the past BTME express that the Region used to run and would leave on Monday morning and return on Thursday afternoon. Please help the Region to take up this generous offer by registering your participation and use of the coach by contacting your Section Secretary ASAP!

The Winter Evening Lecture Series 2006. This has been finalised and I will give out details next month. If you have any further queries, please contact your Section Secretary.

Any news please get in touch on 07725 040878.

Angus Macleod

NORTHERN IRELAND

The Section's final golf competition of the season took place at Royal Co Down in early September. A stroke play competition was played to find our two National Championship Section Qualifiers. We also had a Stableford competition for the competitors who found the stroke play around RCD too tough. Course Manager, Alan Strachan, and his team had the course in magnificent condition, the greens were truly superb. Noel Crawford and Michael King won, so went to the National Championship.

The Stableford results were: 1. Gareth Abernethy, Balmoral GC, 28pts; 2. Gary Crawford, Royal Co Down, 27pts; 3. Eamonn Crawford, RCD, 27pts. Closest to the Pin. Gary Crawford, RCD. Longest Drive. Michael King, RCD.

Many thanks must go to the Royal County Down GC and our generous sponsors of the competition, Coburns of Banbridge. The company representatives, William Cartmill and David Eager, joined us on the day and were able to present the prizes. They also sponsored the airfares of Noel Crawford and Michael King to the National Championship. Thanks also to Liam, at Amenity Technology, who gave sponsorship towards the prizes.

I've just heard the news that Noel Crawford won his return from the BIGGA National Championship, in Nottingham, as the Overall Gross winner at Sherwood Forest GC and Worksop GC. This is another great achievement by Noel, who has now won the gross prize three times in the past five years. He returned a 75 and 75 to win by one shot. Noel receives our congratulations from the entire Section for his super performance.

I am unable to give a report on Jerry Crawford's Charity Golf Day this month, but I will add the event in my notes next month. Our AGM will take place in November this year, so members will soon be notified of the venue, date and time.

Ken Henderson

CHECK OUT THE EVENTS PAGE ON THE BIGGA WEBSITE FOR AN UP TO DATE LIST OF ALL THE HAPPENINGS IN YOUR SECTION AND REGION.

From Tournaments to Seminars, AGM's to Dinners it's all covered at www.bigga.org.uk.

If you have a BIGGA event that you wish to place on the Events Page contact Gareth at BIGGA HOUSE on gareth@bigga.co.uk or 01347 833800

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Letters ▶▶

A Proud Day

I just wanted to write a short note of thanks to everyone at BIGGA for making the 2005 Toro Student of the Year Competition such a great experience and to Toro itself for sponsoring the Award.

The standard of my fellow finalists was very high indeed and I think that they should all be very proud of their achievements. We all made new friends during the weekend that will stay with us for life.

A big thank you to Andrew Pledger, 2001 winner, and Alex Shore, 2004 victor, for all their support and advice during this year's competition. Thank you to the other judges, Peter Mansfield, Bruce Jamieson, Ken Richardson.

Also I must apologise to Bruce and Andrew for my bowling skills afterwards, good job the final wasn't judged on that!

Alan Pierce,

Ham Manor Golf Club

2005 Toro Student of the Year

Looking Forward

I would just like to say thanks to Ken Richardson, all the judges and all the staff at BIGGA HQ for looking after us all so well at the Toro Student of the Year Award. I also have to thank Toro for sponsoring the event so generously.

It was a privilege to be in the final eight and a real honour to be one of the prize winners. I met so many people and made a lot of new friends. It will be an experience I won't forget for a long time.

Congratulations to Alan, he was a very worthy winner and I'm sure he will do well in the States.

I look forward to seeing everyone again at Harrogate Week 2006.

James Lindsay

2005 Toro Student of the Year runner up

The article by James De Havilland on Utility Vehicles, which appeared on pages 25-27 of last month's magazine, did not include models from the E-Z-GO range. This was an oversight and we apologise to Ransomes Jacobsen Ltd for the unfortunate omission.

YOUR LETTERS ARE REQUESTED!

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Pannal Golf Club

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Kevin Wroe, Head Greenkeeper, Pannal Golf Club, Follifoot Road,
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e-mail: secretary@pannalgc.co.uk / www.pannalgc.co.uk

Closing date for applications: Monday 28th November 2005



Dunstable Downs Golf Club

require an

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The Manager, Dunstable Downs Golf Club,
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Closing date: Friday 25th November

West Kent Golf Club

Require an

ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

Ideally the successful candidate will be enthusiastic, reliable and will be qualified to NVQ Level 2, have relevant spraying qualifications and at least 2 years experience.

However, the Club will consider applications from a person wishing to take up a career in greenkeeping and training will be given.

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HEAD GREENKEEPER

The successful candidate will work closely with the Greens Committee and the Secretary and have the vision and creativity to further improve and develop this established course.

Applicants should have:

Good man management and leadership skills

The ability to work within approved budgets.

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Applications can be made in confidence, in writing, with CV to:
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Ingrave, Essex, CM13 3RH.

Or by email to michael@thorndonparkgolfclub.com



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- Proven man management and motivational skills
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- An understanding and practical application of the requirements of COSHH and Health and Safety at work regulations
- The ability to assist in compiling, and working within, an annual budget
- Sound communication skills

A competitive package is available to the successful candidate, which may include accommodation if required.

Applicants should send a full CV and letter of application to:

The General Manager, Burnham Beeches Golf Club,
Green Lane, Burnham, Bucks. SL1 8EG

Closing date for receipt of applications is Friday 25 November.

Feature listing from November 2003

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

June 2005; Minchinhampton GC; Aeration;
Rigby Taylor Profile; Chemical Useage;
Top Dressing; Jim Arthur Tribute

July 2005; Loch Lomond GC; St. Andrews;
Mini Excavators; Disease; Finance; Scholarship

August 2005; Ramsey GC; Open Review;
Quad Bikes; Top Dressing; BIGGA Golf Day;
Anthracnose; National Championship Preview

September 2005; John O'Gaunt GC;
Drainage Special; Security; Student of the Year;
Massey Ferguson Profile

October 2005; Laleham GC; Dollar Spot;
Utility Vehicles; Bio Oil; Pneumatic Fracturing;
Best Practice

Chairman's Column



Tales from the Greenwood



I am at the final day of the National Championship at Sherwood Forest Golf Club. The course is splendid, the weather is great and I have met many members I have never met before and in no time at all we are like Robin's band of brothers. I am sitting on a bench on a fine autumn day in deepest Middle England, watching the merry men (there weren't any women) driving off from the 1st tee while I am thinking about how we might help the rich in spirit to support the poor.

I turn to a BIGGA member who I do not know and say: "How lucky are we, sitting here on a beautiful day, in a beautiful place, listening to the banter and just enjoying the crack? I feel lucky just to be here sharing it."

And he says: "Lucky, what do you mean lucky? As greenkeepers, we have a difficult job, we have all worked really hard to get where we are. It is effort and reward, it is what we are due, it's not lucky!"

And I say: "Well yes, but what I meant was I am lucky to have had the opportunities. I am lucky my parents gave me a good start, I am lucky generous people have helped me along the way, some don't get that kind of luck."

And he says: "You make your own luck in this world!"

I think about that for a minute or two. About the children of Beslan, about the London bombings, about the victims of the Tsunami and I just can't believe they deserved their luck. And I say: "You see, the thing is, I don't believe that you do make your own luck on your own. I believe other people make it for you. Every step forward I have made has been due to someone else's influence. Someone has always helped me or inspired me."

"And I think about people like, Bob Young at Sparsholt College and all the guys from the South Coast Section and the South West and South Wales Region Harrogate crew and Gordon Child saying to me once, 'Kerran, why don't you join the Regional Board, I think you have a lot to offer."

"Me - a lot to offer! That inspired me! And then Frank Newberry gets hold of me and just shoves me up onto another level and before you know it, I am here in Sherwood Forest, thinking about how lucky I am and what might be the best way to try to repay them by giving the same opportunity to others."

Someone else sits down and say: "What do you think we should do about all this apathy Kerran?"

"Which particular apathy?"

"Well, members not helping with Committee and not turning up to Section golf days and education events."

"Well", I say, "I don't really know."

"But you're the Chairman Kerran, you should know!"

And I say: "Well, it's not really my job to know. It is my job to ask questions, to highlight issues and to find and motivate the people who do know. Somebody does know, because there are Sections that are very active and get good attendances. To be honest I don't know how they do it but all we have to do is give them the key to open up the opportunities to influence others."

"Ah, you will never change them Kerran, it's how people are today, they are just not interested."

And one of those old Dylan songs just bursts into my head.

'While one who sings with his tongue on fire
Gargles in the rat race choir
Bent out of shape from society's pliers
Cares not to come up any higher
But rather get you down in the hole
That he's in'

And I am thinking, well, if people can exert enough pressure to bring down the Berlin Wall, surely if you believe in something enough you can achieve anything you want. And I say, "Well, I am not really trying to change anybody, people change by themselves, change is inevitable. All I'm hoping to do is make more opportunities for positive change as opposed to negative change."

Just then, our Chief Executive, John Pemberton, taps me on the shoulder and says: "Kerran, can you just check an email I am sending to one of the members?"

So I go and read the email and it is to a member who wants to give his time to support fellow greenkeepers. John is offering him the opportunity to join with others to see if they can find the most positive and effective way of bringing this about. That is all you can do really, keep creating positive opportunities for all. Some will take them up and some won't, some will bear fruit and some won't, but the more we create, the more chance there is that those currently looking for something better will find it.

Now it is November, it's bonfire time. Time to burn all your accumulated rubbish, both physical and metaphorical. Time for a good clear out, time to lighten the load, time to get rid of all that excess baggage and free your mind. I think about Robin Hood and his merry men sat around their campfire, purging their sins by quaffing good English ale while sharpening their arrows and plotting the next opportunity to lighten the burden of those less able to support themselves.

We all occasionally stray from the path and get lost in the forest. Sometimes we cannot see the wood for the trees, but if we keep lighting the fires, more and more may see the light and come in from the cold.

From tiny acorns mighty oaks do grow.

K. Daly

Chairman



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