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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Greenkeeper INTERNATIONAL

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February 2007

Your next issue of Greenkeeper International will be with you by March 16 2007.



18 Sunningdale Ladies' Golf Club



23 A week like no other at Happy Harrogate



36 Chemical clamping



37 Keeping green at HQ

REGULARS

4,5,6,8,9

News.

10 GTC

11 Education

Ken Richardson discusses the department's latest projects.

12 Membership

15 Letters

16 Continue to Learn

Good maintenance is the key to long-term success. Andrew Brown discusses.

48 In the Shed

Greenkeeper International's puzzle page.

50 News from the Chief Executive

50-58 Around the Green

70 Looking Forward to a New Challenge

National Chairman Billy McMillan introduces himself.

TORO

FEATURES

18-21 Course Feature - One of a Kind

Sunningdale Ladies' Golf Club is considered the second oldest ladies' club in England. Melissa Toombs spoke to Head Greenkeeper, Peter Tedder to explore why Sunningdale Ladies' is one of a kind.

23-34 Happy Harrogate

Record Education numbers; Packed Halls; Happy Exhibitors. That is probably the best way to sum up Harrogate Week 2007. Scott MacCallum takes you through a week like no other on the BIGGA calendar.

36-37 A Hand on the Controls

With EU directives clamping down on the amount of chemicals we can use, how can greenkeepers continue to effectively combat pests and diseases? Nia Frost discusses new developments in controls and some highly effective alternative methods.

38-40 Pedestrian Mowers: Simple checks to maintain quality Reports James de Havilland.

42 Sustainable Solutions

By Richard Fry.

43-45 No Introduction Necessary

Scott MacCallum meets BIGGA's new Chairman, Billy McMillan – a man who could be known as Number 20.

46-47 Keeping it Green

Scott MacCallum pays a visit to John Deere's UK headquarters and finds out that for such a huge company, success in the golf and groundscape industry may be relatively recent, but it's continuing to grow.



When you have finished with this magazine please recycle it.



Welcome

EASY START TO THE YEAR – SOME HOPE!

It's always nice to ease yourself into a new year, shake off the excesses of Christmas, dust off the old new year resolutions ready for another crack at making them stick and make the most of the January sales.

At least from what I remember, it's nice to ease yourself into a new year. Since joining BIGGA that concept has been blown clean out of the water. With Harrogate Week coming in the third week of January each year there is no time for such luxuries and we have to hit the ground of the new year running at full pelt. And this year more than ever!

Since January 1 we have put the finishing touches to, and followed through, with another excellent week in Harrogate; set the wheel in motion for talks with the IOG on a potential strategic merger and, sadly, said goodbye to a Board of Management member.

Everyone was aware of the background to Harrogate Week 2007, and the fact that some of the larger companies had opted not to exhibit, so it's a great delight and relief to report that the whole occasion was a resounding success.

It would be wrong to suggest that the larger companies were not missed, of course they were and we'll be delighted to welcome them back in 2008, but we heard from numerous exhibitors that people were prepared to spend more time on their stands than in previous years and that on many occasions business was conducted.

But right in the middle of the final touches being put into place for Harrogate, a delegation from the BIGGA Board of Management met with a similar group from the IOG to discuss the potential benefits of a strategic merger of the two bodies. A very productive meeting concluded with unanimous agreement on both sides to continue discussions for the benefit of the respective memberships and the sports turf industry as a whole. Obviously no decisions will be taken without full consultation with members, and if nothing ultimately comes from it at least the concept will have been explored, but both sides will be looking into the future with open minds and that can never be a bad thing.

Let's just wait and see how things proceed.

Harrogate Week started with sorrow in the hearts of quite a number of visitors when news reached us of the death, in his prime, of Board of Management member, Raymond Day. Raymond was Course Manager at East Sussex National Golf Club and a BIGGA man through and through.

I had the pleasure of playing golf with him at our annual golf day last year, just before his illness was diagnosed, and although, much to his dismay, my golf didn't come close to matching the standard of the 2 handicapper, he carried the team manfully – if not quietly – and we had a super day. Little did I know then that it would be the last time I would see him.

Scott MacCallum, Editor

JOINING FORCES

Eagle and Planette, have joined forces to become the largest supplier of guides to golf clubs throughout the UK and Europe.

The driving force at Eagle and Planette, Phil McNley and Brian Winteridge, are determined to reinforce their already strong market position by delivering even better value, and offering a wider range of marketing tools and income generating opportunities for golf clubs. Phil McNley, MD of Eagle, explains their thinking: "Planette is a strong brand name in this sector. Eagle deals largely with clubs and club secretaries, so combining with Brian and his company creates new opportunities for us in the club professional sector where Planette is widely respected for its course guides. Similarly, Planette's customers will now have greater access to Eagle's market-leading range of club and course signage, scorecards, green fee tickets, bag tags and other marketing and course accessories.



This synergy will be an ideal platform on which to expand the Eagle brand throughout 2007."

BIGGA AND IOG EXPLORE STRATEGIC MERGER



Geoff Webb IOG Chief Executive (left) and John Pemberton BIGGA Chief Executive (right).

On Thursday the 18th of January representatives of the boards from the British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association (BIGGA) convened and The Institute of Groundsmanship (IOG) unanimously agreed to explore in depth the possibilities and potential of a strategic merger for the wider benefit of their members and the Sports Turf Industry.

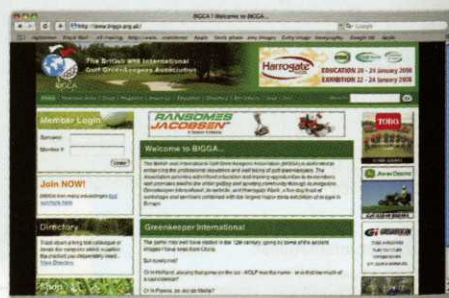
John Pemberton, BIGGA Chief Executive, commented, "The potential unification of BIGGA and The IOG presents a major opportunity for the turf management industry to influence the future both commercially and politically for the benefit of all members."

Geoff Webb, IOG Chief Executive, commented, "this agreement is an opportunity for the membership of both organisations and for the unification of the Industry in general."

BIGGA'S NEW WEBSITE GOES LIVE AT HARROGATE

BIGGA's revamped Website – bigga.org – went live during Harrogate Week. The interactive site, with full content management capabilities, will offer BIGGA members many more tools and facilities and be updated on a much more regular basis.

Designed by York-based company Stone Soup, the website includes a calculation function enabling greenkeepers to work out sizes and quantities for tasks they are about to do; weather forecasting; downloadable job descriptions while the new bulletin board will accept images giving greenkeepers, for example, the opportunity to display and seek advice on diseased turf.



"We are delighted with the new site and feel sure that BIGGA members will benefit immensely from the tools and functions it carries. With full content management we will be able to keep it up to date on a much more frequent basis than in the past and we would urge people, who do not already do so, to bookmark it and visit regularly," said BIGGA Communication Manager, Scott MacCallum.

ICELANDIC GOLF DAY AWARD



Ransomes Jacobsen and their local distributor
MHG of Reykjavik, sponsored the Icelandic

Greenkeepers Association's annual golf tournament, held at Golfklubbur Kidjoberg, 90 miles northwest of the island's capital.

82 greenkeepers representing 65 courses in Iceland took part in the event at the 18-hole course, which is situated on the river Hvítá in a spectacular landscape of lakes and mountains.

Scott Forrest, Ransomes Jacobsen's North European Sales Manager, who hosted the event said: "Over 70% of the courses in Iceland are maintained using Ransomes Jacobsen equipment. That's a testament to our distributor, MHG, who have been tremendously active in the country. The turnout was very impressive and it was great day's golfing in a truly spectacular setting capped off by a superb dinner and prize giving in the evening."

TRAINING SCHEME

Lely (UK) Ltd have recently employed the first recruits to their own Apprenticeship Training Scheme. The St. Neots, Cambridgeshire based company has been investigating a joint college / workplace scheme for several months and now has three trainees working within its many departments.

Lely has enjoyed substantial growth for many years and sees the Apprenticeship Training Scheme as an integral part of the company's expansion. The scheme also embraces recommendations made by the Agricultural Engineers Association (AEA) who has voiced concern at the lack of such apprenticeship schemes available within the industry.

The training scheme lasts for four years mixing academic, workshop and field experience into a superb work package, culminating in the students

attaining a Grade 3 NVQ in Engineering. Lely's partner in this enterprise is Writtle College in Essex, where students will experience course work in hydraulics and electronics while increasing their knowledge and skills in practical day-to-day activity.



RAYMOND DAY

It is with a heavy heart that I find myself writing a few words on behalf of his friends on the sad passing of Raymond Day, one of the Big characters of The Greenkeeping world.

Raymond passed away on Jan the 21st after a hard fought fight with cancer. During his illness Raymond strove to overcome the many problems that arose in his usual dogmatic and forthright manner and with great humility, and he had the great support of his wife, Jill, his two stepsons and his brother, Colin.

Throughout his illness Raymond carried on working at his much loved East Sussex National as long as his health would allow, and I know he would like me to record his thanks for the tremendous support he received from Scott, and his Greens Staff, and from Derek Howe and all the management.

Raymond was an out and out Greenkeeper who lived for his job and his Golf. He started his career north of the border as an apprentice at Erskine GC

before becoming Head Greenkeeper at Pitreavie GC and Glendoch House GC. When he moved south he became Head Greenkeeper at Ifield GC before becoming Course Manager at Sundridge Park GC and latterly East Sussex National GC. He was a category one golfer and represented his county on many occasions and was still playing scratch team golf at 49 off a handicap of two.

Raymond had also played a great part in BIGGA. He was a Section Secretary of the Sussex Section for seven years and Chairman of the South East Region for six years and was the current South East Board of Management member of the Association.

We are all proud to say that Raymond Day was our friend and companion and we will miss his great booming laugh, his uncompromising approach to greenkeeping and his willingness to help others.

The world of Greenkeeping will be a sadder place without him.

George Barr

BIGGA AND AGCS LAUNCH NEW SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Golf clubs could be enjoying lower insurance premiums thanks to the launching of a new Health and Safety Management system which has been the product of a joint initiative by the Association of Golf Club Secretaries (AGCS) and BIGGA.

The system which has been developed with the help of some of the best known Health and Safety specialists in the country ensures that there is a standard format for carrying out risk assessments in all aspects and areas of a golf club.

Based on Health and Safety Executive guidance, the SMS will enable golf clubs to set their health and safety policy; specify their club's organisation; list hazards and assess risks; plan for the future; introduce a review procedure and agree where and how to audit their system. Additionally, the system will allow Club Managers to access a wide range of data on a range of hazards.

"We are delighted that the effort both ourselves, the AGCS and all the people, who have given up many hours to work on this project, has come to fruition. We are convinced that the new system will be of huge benefit to everyone who uses it and help to ensure that golf clubs are much safer and healthier places for employees and golfers," said BIGGA Chief Executive John Pemberton.

"We are delighted that this example of two golfing bodies working closely together has proved so successful," he added.

The system will be available to all BIGGA and AGCS members through their websites in early April.



FORMER GREENKEEPER OF THE YEAR TAKES HIS CURTAIN CALL!



David with Roger Fitton

Thorpe Wood and Orton Meadows Golf Courses at Peterborough say goodbye and happy semi-retirement to their Superintendent Greenkeeper David Walden after 34 years.

David started working for the Peterborough Development Corporation in 1972, planting the first trees for Thorpe Wood golf course. He was offered the job of greenkeeper at Thorpe Wood in 1973. The golf course, designed by Peter Alliss and Dave Thomas, opened for the first time in 1975 and David was put in charge of a team of greenkeepers some of whom are still lovingly tending the course today.

In 1979 he oversaw the building of the 12 hole Pitch and Putt course at Orton Meadows. This was followed in 1980 with the overseeing of the start of the construction of the 12 hole golf course at Orton

Meadows which was designed by Dennis and Roger Fitton.

Following the wind-down of the Peterborough Development Corporation, David was made redundant in 1987. The golf courses became part of Nene Park Trust and the management of both Thorpe Wood and Orton Meadows was taken on by Dennis and Roger Fitton who were already installed as golf professionals having moved to Peterborough from Walsall. David was employed by them to run the two courses with two teams of greenkeepers under him.

David has always been a champion for education and training of greenkeepers and himself gained qualifications in turfgrass management, an HNC in sportsturf management and a Master Greenkeeping qualification.

In 1994 at the age of 50, David was awarded the ICI Premier Greenkeeper of the Year Award after being nominated by the East of England British and International Greenkeepers Association (BIGGA). This gained him a trip to the mighty San Francisco golf exhibition. David has also set and marked examination papers for the Institute of Groundsmanship and college courses all over the country and has completed an HNC course in greenkeeping.

David won't be sitting idle in his "retirement" but will be engaged in passing on his vast experience of specialist machinery to a new age of up and coming greenkeepers.

DRIVETIME SHOW

Master Greenkeeper, David Murdoch enjoyed a once in a lifetime experience when the Chris Evans Drivetime radio show was broadcast from his parent's (Mary and Bob Murdoch) house in Auchterderran.

The show was the first of four that the Radio 2 DJ chose to broadcast from people's homes in Scotland, Northern Ireland, Wales and England.

The basis was that all the names of cities, towns and villages from these countries were put into a tombola and then one was drawn out from each country. Residents of the place drawn out were then invited to put their case forward as to why the show should be broadcast from their house.

"My dear old mum did this and the rest is history," said David who is Course Manager at Liphook GC in Hampshire, "The day itself was great fun, although a bit chaotic. All in all a wonderful experience."



Chris Evans with David's girlfriend Deb.

GTC PLAYS KEY ROLE IN FLEXIBLE LEARNING

The GTC has played a major role in the development of higher education learning within the greenkeeping sector.

This development is a direct response to requests from the industry to help further the lifelong learning plan supported by the government for industry, according to Wayne Roberts, curriculum leader for greenkeeping and horticulture at Elmwood College, Fife.

The interest in the delivery of higher education into the greenkeeping and sportsturf industry has been met with the development of HNC, HND, Foundation Degree and First Degree courses in Golf Course management and Turf Science.

"What makes these courses interesting is the accessibility to these programmes of study through the various options of delivery that are available to the industry to ensure that both the qualification aims are met and the 'employability' of the learner is maintained through the balance of academic understanding linked with vocational experience and career relevance," said Wayne.

Greenkeepers can now study with the provider of their choice, through full time, part time and distance learning options and at an agreed time scale that meets the needs of the learner, the industry and the awarding body.

The main benefit to the individual is that distance is no barrier to learning with HE qualifications now available online. With learning

packages only a click away, the office at work, the spare bedroom at home or the kitchen table can become the classroom as well.

"This is an important development because it now provides access to learning for Greenkeepers and Course Managers who cannot give up employment to study full time but wish to continue their professional development," Wayne said.

"But just as much as the learner gets the direct benefit of the qualification, the employer and the golf course also benefit too, by providing the existing workforce with access to up to date knowledge and skills which can only help to benefit the long term of interests of the business.

"Here at Elmwood College we are continually working closely with the greenkeeping industry, the GTC and other industry partners to develop a range of HE qualifications that meet the needs of the industry and yet are flexible enough to provide bespoke learning opportunities for individuals undertaking the programme" he added.

One student who has benefited from the HE programme at Elmwood College is Mark Bewley. Mark, originally from Dublin, was working in the south of France when he came to Elmwood to complete his HNC in Golf Course Management - While studying he also received an R&A scholarship of £1,000 for being an outstanding student.

The HNC course helped to open up new opportunities for Mark including joining Gerry Byrne

and his crew at the K Club in Co. Kildare, hosting the European Open and of course the recent Ryder Cup.

"But what of the future?" said Wayne. "With an HE qualification supporting extensive vocational experience, Mark is returning to his native Dublin to be an assistant at the Grange Golf Club and taking on new responsibilities including the installation of new irrigation system under the direction of Head Greenkeeper, Jon Palmer another successful Elmwood HNC Graduate."

The success that Mark has enjoyed helps to highlight the important link that must be developed between the qualification, the industry and the progression opportunities that it can provide.

As HE qualifications improve not only their relevance and recognition within the industry, so will the opportunities available to graduates.

Over the past five years several students studying on our HE programmes have gone on to not only develop their professional qualifications through BSc and MSc programmes at university, but also develop and widen their vocational experience.

They have successfully obtained key industry positions such as course managers and developed into new industry areas such as course consultancy and research and development where their first hand knowledge and experience of the greenkeeping industry makes for an extremely employable asset to the organisation.

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ACCIDENT REPORTING AND HEALTH & SAFETY WORKSHOPS

The Northern Region is holding a practical Accident Reporting and Health & Safety Workshop at Bradford GC on Thursday, March 29. The workshop will run from 9am until around 4pm and will involve practical group exercises looking at a simulated vehicle accident, H&S hazards in the greenkeeping shed, risk assessment on a hole and a confrontation with a golf club official – plus discussion on the use of pesticides and insecticides.

Attendance is open to BIGGA Members and golf club officials. Invitations will be sent out to BIGGA members and golf club secretaries in early February. Refreshments on arrival and lunch will be provided.

For more information please contact Peter Larter, Northern Region Administrator on: 01476 550115 or email: petelarter972@aol.com

The Midland Region of BIGGA held a Practical Accident Reporting and Health & Safety workshop at Gay Hill GC last November, 16.

It was attended by 64 BIGGA members and Golf Club Officials, who spent the day involved in practical group exercises deciding what to do at a simulated vehicle accident, spotting health and safety hazards in the greenkeeping sheds, carrying out a risk assessment on the 17th hole, and managing a confrontation with a golf club official. The day proved very successful and thought provoking, and is being used as a model for future regional workshops.

The Region's thanks go to Gay Hill GC for hosting the event superbly, to T H White for providing the accident vehicle, to Paul Woodham (Course Manager

at Gay Hill GC) whose original idea it was, to Frank Newberry, Jon Allbutt, Richard Minton and Ken Richardson for facilitating the day with great skill, and finally to the delegates without who the day would not have happened. The photo below shows one of the groups spotting hazards in the sheds.



HERITAGE ACCESS GUIDE SCOOPS PRESIDENT'S AWARD

The English Heritage and Heritage Lottery Fund publication Easy Access to Historic Landscapes has won the Landscape Policy Award and the President's Award for the UK's most outstanding project by the landscape profession at the Landscape Institute Awards.

The comprehensive guidance for making historic landscapes easily accessible for visitors with disabilities was commended by judges for being "of excellent quality in terms of clarity, intelligence of advice, thoroughness of research and visual layout", "a refreshing approach" and "a very good resource pack for both professional and lay reader".

INDIA OPENS UP FOR SWAN

The Karnataka Golf Association, perhaps the premier club in India, will over the next two years see the renovation of its 30-year-old golf course by Swan Golf Designs, International Golf Course Architects from Essex.

Following Howard Swan's initial evaluation of the course last spring, the Club's council and membership approved the two-year renovation which begun in January 2007.

Each phase will take six months, being completed with the regrassing of greens with dwarf Bermuda, and fairways and roughs with Tifway 419. Each will be completed and grown in before the monsoon season.

The renovation works, which will encompass a lengthening of the course to some 7200 yards, some design revisions to improve safety together with greens, tees and bunkers reconstruction throughout, and extensive fairway drainage.

EDUCATIONAL BURSARY

The first winner of a new competition sponsored by The Toro Company, and run by the English Region of the Club Managers Association of Europe (CMAE), has been announced.

Amber Rawson, of the Reform Club, London, won the Club Managers Diploma Bursary for 2007. Amber received a Toro educational bursary of £1000, which will fund her first year's fees to attend the CMAE's Management Development Programme to study for the Club Managers' Diploma. The programme, developed with support from Elmwood College, is the first step to becoming a Certified Club Manager. Amber, who is

assistant house manager at the Reform Club, will also have a year's CMAE membership fees paid.

Richard Corbett, assistant to the golf operations manager at Woburn Golf Club, was runner-up and received a year's free membership of CMAE.

To win the award, entrants had to submit the best 400-word essay on why they believed the Club Managers' Diploma is very relevant to clubs. The competition was open to all supervisors and managers of the 500-plus clubs in the CMAE's English Region, which includes golf, country, tennis, city and athletics among others.

25 YEARS SERVICE

Julian Sykes Assistant Greenkeeper at Woodsome Hall GC, Huddersfield, recently completed 25 years exemplary service with the club. Captain Dr Phillip Shaw, presented him with a watch and a bottle of champagne to mark the occasion.



CHAMPIONSHIP COURSE INVESTMENT

The picturesque Duke's St. Andrews has made a major investment in the quality of its championship course having just completed a major construction project of its tees, bunkers and a renovation programme involving sand-banding and coring the fairways.

Souters Sports Ltd was appointed to construct the new tees and bunkers, with the emphasis on keeping the golf course open during the construction and renovation works. This project was quite unique in that all the construction works were completed during the main playing period of this year, making optimal use of the better weather and ground conditions expected at that time of the year.

Temporary tees were in place for holes if necessary but this was kept to a minimum for the time that the work was carried out and now the course benefits from five separate tee positions at every hole.

The bunkers also went through a complete transformation, being reshaped, drained and

sculptured to make them more aesthetically pleasing, consistent and strategic.

Additional bunkers were also added to some of the fairways and around the new greens, and strategically positioned.

The Duke's is regarded as one of the finest Heathland Championship Courses in the British Isles and a 'must play' course for any golfer. Its style ranks alongside the great inland challenges which demand accuracy and inventive play as well as power golf.



NEW CHAIRMAN AT GOLF CONSULTANTS ASSOCIATION

The Golf Consultants Association has elected Ian Bulleid as its new chairman.

Ian, a founder member of the GCA, replaces Mike Shields, who has completed a two-year tenure as Chairman and moves on to the GCA committee alongside Andy Hiseman and Mark Smith. Jacqui Baldwin remains as Secretary.

Said Ian: "I am delighted to take over as Chairman. As one of the original founder members I'm really looking forward to developing Mike's legacy and taking the association forwards."

"We have such a lot to offer the industry at a time when it is facing challenges on all sides."

"I need to spearhead the Association to bring us to a wider audience, so that owners and operators everywhere can gain full benefit from the unique array of talent available within the membership."

"I'd like to think that our members will be involved in a number of projects that leave a lasting impression - like our work on the Golf Tourism strategy for Wales".

The GCA was formed in 2001 to offer golf course owners and operators all aspects of golf management consultancy - from initial market research and feasibility studies to marketing, operating a club and even planning the right exit strategy and getting the best possible price.

In recent years the Association members have been active in helping all manner of golf facilities throughout the UK and Europe.

Mike Shields said: "I've had a great two years in the chair, seen the association grow and host two successful GCA Conferences, and I am delighted to be handing over to Ian who, aside from being part of our executive team, has vast industry experience".

"Ian is the ideal Chairman for the GCA: he has wide experience of the golf industry and a proven track record. I believe the Association is in excellent hands for the future."

Members of the GCA adhere to strict entrance criteria, which give assurance to any client that the member employed is experienced and up to the task.

Projects undertaken by members for clients include developing golf tourism strategy and major resort property sales, and working closely with individual owner operators advising on agronomy, golf course management, growing golfer usage and improving marketing and staff management.

Added Ian: "We are careful to ensure that any new member can demonstrate long-term commitment and experience in the industry, plus a degree of professionalism and expertise which will ensure that any prospective client can be comfortable with any dealings with one of our members."

If you are interested in GCA membership, potential new members are welcome to email the association at gca@sportsandplay.com.

NEW RECRUIT



Michael Martin, for many years a Senior Partner at York and Martin and more recently York Martin International, has now joined Robin Hume Associates.

The RHA team now comprises of the two most respected elder statesmen in the industry, Robin Hume and Michael Martin, ably supported by Iain Macpherson and Adrian Mortram. This now makes it the largest independent Irrigation Consultancy Practice in Northern Europe, as well as being associate consultants to the STRI.

Adrian Mortram, Director, commented, "Michael is a well known figure on the international fine turf irrigation scene and he will increase our presence in mainland Europe and North Africa, where he has been active for many years. This ensures that we have wide ranging capacity for our expanding business. We also value experience, and in his new role Michael will be working on specific projects. He will be fully involved in the design and specification process, in addition to project management, especially on the larger projects".

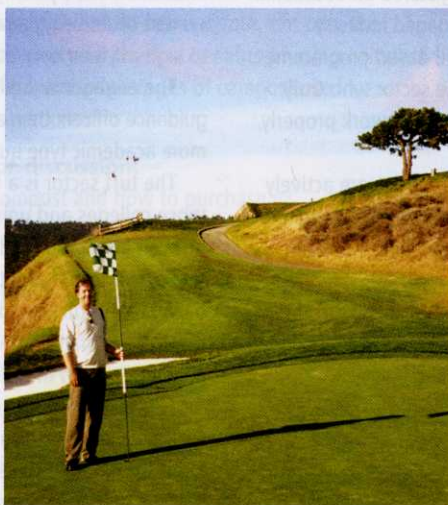
Michael looks forward to being contacted through RHA's Shrewsbury office.

PEBBLE BEACH GC

Frank Scullion, Course Manager at Dunstable Downs GC, visited Pebble Beach, Carmel recently while celebrating his Silver Wedding Anniversary with his wife Sylvia.

Frank contacted Superintendent, Chris Dalhamer before the holiday and asked if he would mind showing them around the Pebble Beach course during their holiday.

"My wife and I spent two and a half hours at the course. They have 30 permanent greenstaff with extra staff coming in during the summer months. I counted 22 handmowers in the sheds! Chris said they were cutting greens at 1/8th during November and the greens were running at around 13 on the stimp meter. All greens were 100% meadow grass with rye grass on fairways and tees," said Frank.



COLEGRAVE FOUNDATION GRANTS AWARDED

Three students from the Horticulture scheme at Writtle College have each been awarded grants of £500 by the David Colegrave Foundation.

The Foundation wishes to promote student interest in the commercial production of ornamental plants and seeds. The successful students were Richard Demby, Robert Farthing and Mante Bieliauskaite who will receive the £500 to use towards their course fees.

Richard Demby, 44 from Sierra Leone, is taking a BSc in Horticulture before returning to his job as horticulture technician at his university in Sierra Leone. Robert Farthing, 19 from Uckfield, East Sussex, is a first year BSc (Hons) Horticulture student with a particular interest in crop production. Mante Bieliauskaite, 22 from Lithuania, is a part-time student on the Foundation Degree in Horticulture and is employed in the nursery stock industry.

SCHOOLCHILDREN TARGETED FOR CAREERS IN GROUNDS MANAGEMENT

The Institute of Groundsmanship (IOG), has started a nationwide campaign to 'sow the seed' among schoolchildren for a career in grounds management by sending an information booklet to every private and public secondary school in the UK.

'Expand Your Knowledge - a Career in Grounds Management' has been especially designed to inform young people about the grounds management profession, starting with an explanation of the role of a grounds manager plus specific sections covering entry routes and opportunities for progression as well as expected rewards, for instance.

Interested youngsters and students are also being invited to take up the IOG's free membership opportunities, and as a consequence will be offered all the information and support required to get their careers off to a flying start.



EXPERTS DELIVER

In this article David Golding, GTC's Education Director, looks at how the approved network of training providers, often colleges, rely heavily on industry experts to deliver the various programmes relating to sports turf qualifications and asks 'can you help?'

At the recent GTC Training Providers seminar held during Harrogate Week, it was very noticeable that compared with only a few years ago there was a strong representation from former and current Course Managers, who now work either full or part time for a provider.



With a high percentage of student greenkeepers registered on vocational qualifications, the more enlightened providers have engaged industry experts to support the team entrusted to deliver the skill-based programmes.

This is very encouraging, as I know that we are one sector who truly understand that for vocational training and qualifications to work properly, there has to be a partnership approach.

While Course Managers, Head Greenkeepers and Deputies are actively becoming more formally involved in staff skills development by becoming qualified trainers and assessors, there still needs to be a "link" between the golf course and the training provider/Centre.

This "link" role, which is often the key to the success or failure of the vocational system and where more and more industry based people are being recruited, is a very good move.

I have reported many times before that when the learner's "boss" is a qualified trainer and or assessor, he/she makes progress far quicker than a

learner - who has to rely on the provider to arrange all aspects of the training programme.

At this point I have to state that many of the already established training provider link/guidance officers, find it increasingly frustrating when Course Managers/Head Greenkeepers do not support their trainees, relying far too much on the provider to "get them qualified".

Please set aside some time during your working week to review staff training and their progress. **I would also request that when appointments are made by your chosen centre contact with both you and the learner are available.** Vocational qualifications *have* to be a partnership otherwise the learner suffers, the golf club suffers and the centre then struggles to achieve their retention and achievement targets.

We all have to care about the quality of greenkeeper training provision, so I hope more and more industry experts become involved in the delivery of the various turf programmes.

Equally the training providers must not try to by-pass qualified trainers and assessors, by using their own assessors by way of short-cutting the system often using a range of excuses for not allowing qualified assessors to sign-off their own staff!

The engagement of greenkeepers or former greenkeepers as link/liaison/guidance officers then allows the more college based staff to deliver the more academic type qualifications such as the HNC/D – B.Sc – M.Sc.

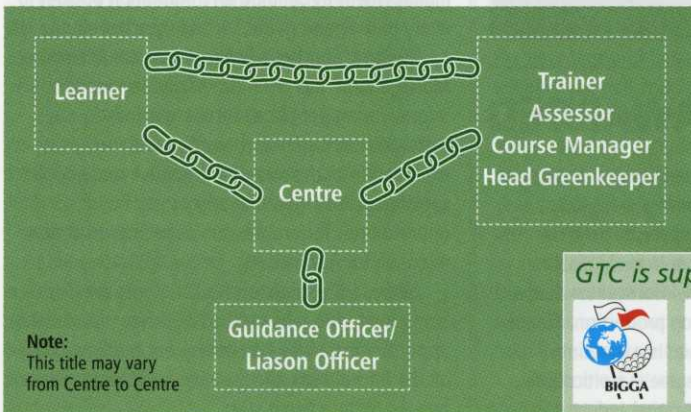
The turf sector is a very specialist area and therefore we have to ensure those colleges and universities offering higher education courses in sports turf can engage experts in their particular field often employed part-time.

Former turf students often look to share their knowledge either through becoming lecturers, Course Managers, Agronomists, specialist advisors or more often than not a combination of one or more of these important positions within the turf sector.

Let us then look to use all this expertise and establish a partnership second to none, which will provide a well-trained workforce and knowledgeable Course Managers.

I am in regular contact with all the GTC approved training providers and if you feel you have something to offer your local provider either contact them direct or if you prefer to discuss the type of roles which might be available, please contact me.

David can be contacted direct on: david@the-gtc.co.uk
Tel: 01347 838640



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

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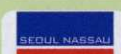
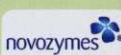
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Reaseheath College; Steve Dixon; Ian Benison.

Education Update

Ken Richardson discusses the department's latest projects

Following an extremely successful Harrogate Week programme when we offered more education sessions than ever before, our thoughts turn to Harrogate Week 2008. Yes, we have started to plan for next year and we hope to have a full programme of workshops and seminars to meet all needs. You can have your input to the Continue to Learn programme by telling us what and who you would like to see. Contact me: ken@bigga.co.uk or: sami@bigga.co.uk

Compost Seminars in the North West

Environlink North West are presenting three seminars on the commercial advantages of using compost at three golf clubs in the North West Section.

The venues are:

- 8th March 2007
Penrith GC, Penrith 9.30 to 13:00
- 14th March 2007
Worsley Park GC, Manchester 9.30 to 13:00
- 15th March 2007
Blundells Hill GC, Liverpool 9.30 to 13:00

Programme:

Issues of sustainability including recycling targets and diversion from landfill have resulted in the dramatic growth of the composting sector. The composting process can produce high quality fertilisers and soil conditioners.

These workshops aim to demonstrate, not only the chemical, biological and physical benefits of using compost but also the financial advantages of compost use in a commercial situation.

Topics for discussion:

- What is compost and how to purchase it?
- The benefits of using compost
- Compost production and specification
- Quality standards (BSI PAS 100, WRAP specifications) and quality issues
- Compost versus conventional fertilisers: cost comparison
- Specifications for sports turf applications
- Compost use: tools and resources for the sports turf professional

These workshops are aimed specifically at the Sports Turf Industry and will be conducted by Ron Alexander an American horticulturalist and compost specialist with over 21 years experience in the US and UK.

The seminars are free of charge and include refreshments and a light lunch.

Contact Linda McGeechan on: 01925 813200 to reserve your place.

Safety Management System

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Some of you may have seen the launch of the joint AGCS/BIGGA Safety Management System at Harrogate. It is designed to give all golf clubs the tools to develop their own Health and Safety System, making clubs healthier workplaces, to reduce costs due to accidents and injuries and to, hopefully, reduce club insurance premiums.

The System will be Internet based and all members of BIGGA and/or the AGCS will have free access. We are working hard to put the finishing touches to the System and we hope that it will be available on both Internet sites by the end of March.

As this package is worth approximately £5000 to each golf club, it makes sense for all greenkeepers to be members of BIGGA.

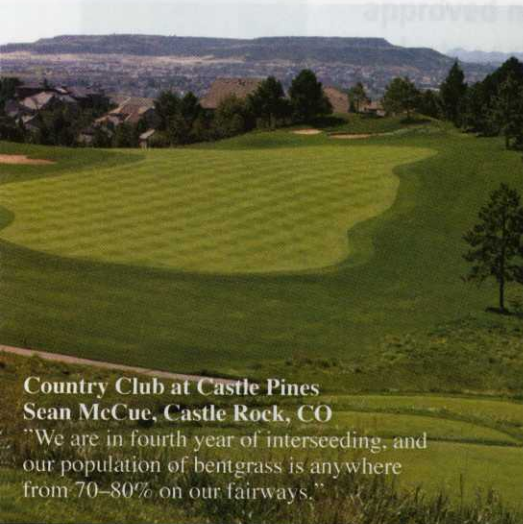


Ken Richardson at launch of SMS

TEE ² GREEN

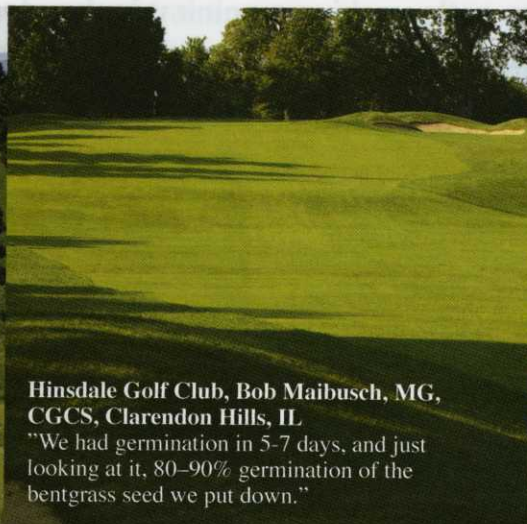
'Interseeding works for us'

HERE IS WHAT **WILL WORK** FOR YOU



Country Club at Castle Pines
Sean McCue, Castle Rock, CO

"We are in fourth year of interseeding, and our population of bentgrass is anywhere from 70-80% on our fairways."



Hinsdale Golf Club, Bob Maibusch, MG,
CGCS, Clarendon Hills, IL

"We had germination in 5-7 days, and just looking at it, 80-90% germination of the bentgrass seed we put down."



Stone Creek Golf Club
David Phipps, Oregon City, OR

"I've been doing it for two years now, and I've seen an overall improvement of appearance, vigor, and turf quality and texture in all my greens."

"I WILL CONTINUE TO INTERSEED TO KEEP GETTING ADDITIONAL POPULATIONS OF BENTGRASS OUT THERE AND TO HELP ME COMPETE AGAINST THE POA ANNUA POPULATIONS IN OUR FAIRWAYS"

Sean McCue, Country Club at Castle Pines, Castle Rock, CO

These superintendents, from both private clubs and public golf courses across the country, say that interseeding with the advanced bentgrasses from Tee-2-Green is a highly effective method for improving turf.

The interseeding process is simple: After you aerify, put down one of the aggressive Penn bents from Tee-2-Green, such as the Penn A's & G's, Seaside II, PennLinks II, or Penneagle II. Over time, as you slowly build up your seed bank, the aggressive Penn bentgrasses will grow and spread to become

the dominant turf on your greens, fairways, and tees—even out competing many unwanted weeds, including *Poa annua*.

Soon, you will begin to notice that your playing surfaces are growing more dense and playing more consistent. And because the advanced Penn bents are more disease resistant and tolerant of extreme conditions than other bentgrass varieties, your course will be easier and less expensive to manage. The key is to follow these simple interseeding techniques.

"I'VE SEEN AN OVERALL IMPROVEMENT OF APPEARANCE"

David Phipps, Stone Creek Golf Club, Oregon City, OR

The best part is that when you interseed, you can dramatically improve your golf course without disrupting play. Your members and players won't even realize until they

notice a better-playing course. To improve playing conditions on your golf course, don't renovate, interseed with the advanced Penn bents from Tee-2-Green—the finest, most trusted bentgrasses in the world.

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or

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BIGGA welcomes Vanessa Depré as our new Membership Services Officer along with 33 new members to the Association

Membership Update

First Impressions

"Hello! My name is Vanessa Depré and I have just joined BIGGA as the new Membership Services Officer.

I am now 26 years old and I was born in Belgium but spent most of my youth in Surrey. After returning to Belgium and completing my Marketing Bachelor in Brussels I rushed back to England two years ago to work as Communications Executive for The British Horse Society (BHS), Kenilworth, Warwickshire.



PROFILE	Name:	Vanessa Depré
	Pets:	Two cats
	Favourite food:	Steak and chips
	Favourite music:	The Cranberries
	Favourite film:	Firefly
	Hobbies:	Swimming and retail therapy
	All time hero:	Mum and Dad

At the BHS I was responsible for the website, media relations, marketing and writing for various publications (among other things).

I moved to York at the beginning of January and am very excited about my new role within BIGGA. I look forward to meeting as many BIGGA members as I can. I already met quite a few of you at Harrogate and would like to thank you all for making me feel so welcome.

If you need my help in any way or if you have constructive ideas on how to improve BIGGA's membership package email me on: vanessa@bigga.co.uk or ring me on: 01347 833800."

Show Success

Having just joined BIGGA in the middle of January I have utterly and truly been pushed into the deep end. In my second week I was off to Harrogate with no idea what to expect of BIGGA's flagship show. I was very pleasantly surprised and met many friendly faces during this hectic event.

Not having any previous shows to compare Harrogate week 2007 with I am having to rely on Gemma, who told me that Harrogate was a great success this year, even though the "big boys" were missing.

There was a great buzz at the show and both nationals and internationals had positive feedback. We recruited many new members and had a lot of renewals. Our new BIGGA clip on blazer badges were very popular. If you didn't get a chance to buy one at the Show they are also available directly from the BIGGA Headquarters for £26 on: 01347 833800.

I hope you all enjoyed yourself and I would like to say a big thank you to all who came down to Harrogate to support us. I hope to see you all again next year.



BIGGA welcomes...

SCOTTISH REGION

Ian Craig, West
Jeff O'malley, East
Kevin Webster, East

NORTHERN REGION

James Heaton, Northern
John Williams, North Wales

MIDLAND REGION

Ross Cook, Berk, Buck & Oxon
Alan Higgins, Midland
Alec Horsburgh, Berk, Buck & Oxon
Ian Richards, Berk, Buck & Oxon
Thomas Weaver, Midland

SOUTH EAST REGION

Dorian Ansell, Essex
Darren Burton, Kent
Douglas Butler, Surrey
James Collins, Kent
Mark Halverson, East Anglia

Lee Hamilton, Kent

Graham Hipkin, Essex
Kevin Hungerford, Sussex
Andrew Naismith, Sussex
Alan Smith, Essex

Timothy Stigwood, East Anglia
Wayne Syres, Kent

STH WEST & WALES REGION

Gerald Clark, South West
Ben Cumming, South Coast
John Hallesy, South Coast
Benjamin Hollands, South West
Mark Tucker, Devon & Cornwall

NORTHERN IRELAND

Hugh Farry, N Ireland

INTERNATIONAL MEMBERS

Kristian Munk, Denmark
Robert Lof, Sweden



STUDENT MEMBER

Sven Livesey, 42

ASSOCIATE MEMBER

Ian Vanson, North West

GOLD KEY MEMBER

William Tuer, East Midland

Harrogate week PRIZE DRAW

Congratulations to the four people who won a Nokia 6233 mobile phone at Harrogate week:

*Marcus Phelps from Filton GC
Robert McCabe from
Flamborough Head GC
Joshua Taylor from Thawnhurst Manor
Francis Kempster from Glen Gorse*



FEBRUARY'S MEMBERSHIP DRAW WINNER

Just introduce one or more new greenkeeping members to BIGGA and your name will be placed into a monthly draw to win a £10 Music Voucher. Our congratulations go Norman Fenwick of Ipswich Golf Club.



Control of Substances Harmful to Health (COSHH)

BIGGA'S new Health & Safety series produced by Xact



All employers are required to assess the risk of harm to their employees' health from exposure to substances used or encountered within their working environment. Generally, these are thought of as chemicals used for work such as cleaning products, pesticides, lubricants etc. They can usually be easily identified from the product container which will carry a hazard warning label depicting the particular hazard posed by the substance. Manufacturers also have a duty to supply safety data sheets which have information on the physical and chemical properties of the substance. Less commonly understood is that COSHH also applies to dusts generated by work and biological risks e.g. Lyme disease as well.

EMPLOYERS SHOULD START BY

- Making an inventory of the substances used and encountered within the workplace and then categorising these as hazardous or non-hazardous. Remember to include dusts, fumes and biological type hazards which may be generated by work or are encountered in the workplace.

Hazardous substances are usually identified by hazard warning symbols on the packaging:



IRRITANT
OF
HARMFUL



CORROSIVE



TOXIC



DANGEROUS
FOR THE
ENVIRONMENT



HIGHLY
OF
EXTREMELY
FLAMMABLE



OXIDISING



EXPLOSIVE

- Ensuring that manufacturer safety data sheets are available for those products classified as hazardous. The manufacturer or supplier is obliged to provide these by law
- Assessing how these products are delivered, stored and used within the working environment. As well as planned uses, the assessment should also include disposal of waste containers and surplus materials, unplanned events such as spillages, fires etc

From the assessment of use decide who could be harmed and how from use of the substance. As well as the direct users other persons need to be considered e.g. cleaning staff, the general public, Club members, neighbours. When assessing the risk of harm consider how people may come into contact with the substance

- Inhalation of dusts and vapours
- Skin absorption of liquids and gases
- Ingestion from eating, smoking etc
- Injection from sharp edges

- The duration of exposure also needs to be taken into account as the degree of harm is directly related to the time spent using the substance. Many substances have workplace exposure levels which give an indication of the safe level of exposure over a working day. This information can be found in the HSE publication 'EH40 Occupational Exposure Limits'

- Decide on the control measures to limit the exposure to as low as reasonably practicable e.g. stop using the product, use something less harmful, use engineering controls and as a last resort issue/use personal protective equipment.

- The control measures should be briefed to persons using the substance and monitoring carried out to ensure that the safety controls are observed.

As can be seen a COSHH assessment is all about how a substance is used. It should be remembered that a manufacturer's safety data sheet which details the properties of a substance is not a substitute for a COSHH assessment.



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DARK NIGHTS, DARK THOUGHTS

For some time I have pondered with the idea of offering my support and help to those among us who struggle to control their drinking. My name is Alan and I am a grateful recovering alcoholic. I am also a Course Manager and at a course with a high reputation and am active within BIGGA.

I haven't drunk for well over 3 years now and I no longer have that craving for alcohol that always ended up the same way – depressed, fearful of being found out, and living a life of pretence. My present state of mind and way of life has proved to me that life doesn't have to be the way it was.

During my latter years as a practicing alcoholic I was Course Manager at a club in the South East of England. I can remember doing my job but hating every moment and resenting the people I worked for and worked with. Away from work, life at home wasn't much better. My only friend, or so I thought was the bottle. I was intolerant of everything and everybody and only had one priority – myself!

Since I have stopped drinking, people who have the same illness have shown me the way to get better and gain a life that is quite incredible, where I am totally at ease with every situation and where each day I learn so much more about myself. I know what a stressful job we have. At times, you can feel very lonely and under great pressure. It is only too easy to forget about your woes by turning to the bottle. But your feelings and emotions don't change. The following day things are usually many times worse in your head – mainly because you haven't dealt with anything, so what do you do? – You drink again. Sheer insanity – but this is the nature of the illness. And as for being able to admit you have a problem – it's just impossible.

All I can tell any of you who can honestly identify with anything I have said, is that I am no longer like that. I had to admit my problem, ask for help and work on it one day at a time. It wasn't easy in the first instance. I so much wanted to speak to someone who not only understood my illness but who knew the job as well. At that time it was not possible but I vowed that when totally confident in my sobriety I would offer my help to any who needed it. With this in mind I contacted the board of BIGGA and the way forward for me to offer this help is by writing this letter for publication in the magazine. I am here to listen, identify and show you what I have done to recover from this killer disease.

If you need someone to speak to in total confidence then either phone me on 07939 806795 or e-mail me at alcoholpalan@aol.com. I don't need to know who you are or where you work but only you know if your life is becoming unmanageable. The first step of asking for help is a very difficult one but the longer you take, the harder it gets, and more devastating are the effects on you and those around you.

I am here to help not to preach, so please get in touch if you feel the need.

A friend

DEAR GREENKEEPERS BIG 'G' 4 BIG 'C'

Finding a way to favour the finer grasses is no easy job. The Danish example shows us that working together in groups can help forward progress. It is true to say that people do better when working together.

The problem when favouring the finer grasses is that every situation is unique and the answer for each course is slightly different. The Danes have come up with at least 3 models so far to our knowledge! "Off the peg" maintenance programmes don't tend to work in differing circumstances. You will need to use your own skill, judgement and experience to help find out what is best for you, but you should also try to draw on the experience of others. Talking to each other about your programmes, experiences and even sharing the results from experiments will only help you progress. Pool the knowledge. This will result in better turf for golf, which is what we all want.

If you want to make headway with the finer grasses and fulfil the potential of your greens then get yourselves together. Talking and listening will breed understanding. Believe us, the development of the finer grasses will happen if you work together.

The future of our game depends upon it...

it's your honour.

Best regards

Richard Windows, STRI Turfgrass Agronomist

Henry Bechelet, STRI Turfgrass Agronomist

I am currently setting up a free gardening scheme for terminally ill cancer patients called Big 'G' 4 Big 'C'. I will be offering either a full or partial service. The full service will be for people who can no longer fully maintain their gardens and the partial service is for people who can no longer carry out the heavier maintenance tasks. For example, hedge trimming, lawn mowing or border digging. These services will be completely free of charge, but if a donation is made based on the work carried out then it would be gratefully received. The working area for this scheme will be Hampshire, east Dorset and south Wiltshire but if I get enough response then I would consider expanding the area covered.

The main reason behind setting up this service is so that people who were once very active can still enjoy the gardens they have worked so hard creating even if they are finding it increasingly difficult to continue maintaining them. The idea for the scheme came from watching my father and father-in-law, who both have cancer, find it more and more difficult to be as active as they used to be.

At the moment I am asking people to contact me if they are interested in the scheme either for themselves or someone they know so that I can judge the need for the scheme and the resources needed. Please visit <http://www.bigg4bigc.org.uk> to find out more, and you can check for updates at <http://blog.bigg4bigc.org.uk>

To register your interest or support you can contact me in the following ways: Answering Service:

020 8133 2719; Website Form: www.bigg4bigc.org.uk

or Email: info@bigg4bigc.org.uk

Many thanks and I look forward to hearing from you.

Edward Smith

OPEN ACCOMMODATION WANTED

The 15 year-old son of a family friend is looking for bed and breakfast accommodation in Carnoustie for the week of the Open Championship. A golf lover, he has secured a position as a Scoreboard Carrier for the Championship but his family are no longer able to attend so he is looking for accommodation within easy access of the golf course and is quite willing to pay.

If anyone is in a position to help could they contact me at the following address:

Richard Barker, 27 Spinney Hill Drive, Loughborough, Leicester, LE11 3LB, Tel: 07919 652950

STIMPMETER PSYCHOSIS

Good to see my old pal Dave Woodbyrne once again sharing his well-thought out arguments with the greenkeeping world in December's letters page. I agree with everything he says about the stimpmeter psychosis we all seem to have bought into, but unfortunately I feel the condition is just a sad reflection of the way we have all become completely obsessed with figures and statistics.

I might have been stuck out here on the fringes of civilisation for too long, and may be looking at things from the rosy side of the fence, but it is my opinion that 95% of golfers couldn't actually give a stuff about stimpmeter readings, or indeed, more importantly, how fast the greens are. Granted, you are always going to get a few bravado-fuelled clowns who have a burning desire to putt off the front of all their greens, but on the whole, nearly every sensible human being will take true greens over fast ones every single time. Line them up and ask them honestly whether they would give up a 2 feet of speed in the Summer for year round golf, instead of lightning fast in July and unplayable sponges from September to May, and all but the village idiots will bite the hand off you.

So if the golfers don't care, why are we doing it-destroying the structure of our greens by continually pushing past boundaries that we are not actually being asked to cross? Is it the golfers we are trying to impress, because we are incapable of educating them as to why they can't actually have European Tour speeds in April, or are we actually going past the limits in some vain attempt to impress our peer group, scared to death that Joe down the road might tell the boys at the Section event that our greens are a bit sticky. Because if that's the case, then that's really, really, sad.

I sincerely doubt whether anyone ever gives Dave Woodbyrne any flak for having slow greens, even though he maintains them using traditional methods, with traditional cutting heights and traditional stimpmeter readings. I spoke to a number of people who played at Southerness during the Scottish Amateur last Summer, and to a man they had nothing but praise for what they had played over. Which just goes to show that quality greenkeeping is about good communication with your membership and common sense, and is definitely not about bravado."

Kind regards Simon Freeman

GOOD MAINTENANCE IS THE KEY TO LONG-TERM SUCCESS

Investing in, and getting a return on, a golf course project is not an exact science. There is plenty of evidence from around the world of courses being constructed and then, within a relatively short period, changing hands two or three times before any profits are realised from the business.

As you would expect, there may be many contributing factors behind the success or failure of a golf course. An ill-conceived business plan with unrealistic financial expectations, or over-investment during the design and construction phase, will increase the pressures on the day-to-day operation of the course. Similarly, poor quality of service is often identified as a reason for low levels of repeat business from non-members.

*Continue
to learn*

However, one aspect that is often not given due consideration during the early planning stages, and subsequently during operation, is long-term course maintenance. Although it should be recognised as a fundamental element of all golf course operations, maintenance is often relegated on the list of priorities behind clubhouse design or renovation.

A good maintenance regime will contribute to the long-term success of the business. However, problems with the course caused by poor design or construction will increase the pressures on the maintenance staff, quite possibly leading to high levels of reinvestment before the course can realise its true potential.

The simple fact is that developers must take into account the true maintenance requirements of the course when they are planning and budgeting. If a course cannot be maintained to the standards of the developer, course architect or paying customer, then it is unlikely to remain as intended and is never going to become the financial success envisaged.

So what course elements impact so heavily on the level of maintenance required?

The first and most obvious is the type of course that is to be built. Golf courses come in a number of styles and each one requires different levels of maintenance. A traditional links course like Portmarnock, in Ireland, or The Old Course at St Andrews, requires different levels of input (eg, fertilisers, water, manpower) compared to courses such as Wentworth or Valderrama.

Similarly, the intended customer base may well determine the level of maintenance. A municipal course with £20 green fees is unlikely to be presented to the same level as a high-end private members club, or a 5-star resort course charging in excess of £200 per round. Therefore the budget allocated for maintenance must reflect the expectations of the customer.

Golf course architects have a responsibility to their clients to explain the initial construction cost and long-term maintenance cost of their design features. For example, the number and style of bunkers will make a significant difference to the maintenance budget. If bunkers cannot be prepared using a ride-on bunker rake, and must be done manually, this will significantly increase the labour bill for the course, a problem in areas of the world where labour is getting increasingly expensive.

Likewise, if the style of the course requires a lot of definition between the playing areas – that is, three or four different heights of cut – this will increase the budget required for machinery.

A brief list of other course elements that impact on maintenance would also include:

- The number of trees on the course (shade affecting grass coverage, as well as leaf collection)
- Degree of slopes (machines are generally limited to 21 degree slopes to comply with health and safety regulations)
- The total irrigated area (is it limited to the greens and tees or does it extend to fairways and even the rough?)
- The extent of other non-playing but maintained areas such as landscapes or practice facilities and so forth

To this list we can also add the choice of grass type. This is a contentious subject and one that has been addressed in many forums by experts from around the world. There are those that are committed to the traditional, indigenous grass varieties, and others to exploring the opportunities afforded by the hybrid grass types on offer. The key point is that everyone involved must understand the implications of their choice both in the short and the long term.

Seashore Paspallum is a salt-tolerant grass species originating from the dunes of South Africa. It has been seen by some as an answer to the issue of growing grass for golf in areas with limited potable water resources. However, although it will indeed tolerate high levels of salt in the water, the soil profile itself still requires the salts to be removed through leaching using 'clean' water. If the salts are not removed, over time it is likely to cause a breakdown in the soil structure itself.

It is also yet to be fully understood what the long-term implications of using water with a very high salt content will have on irrigation system components and maintenance machinery. We may not know the definitive answer to this for another 10 to 20 years, but it is safe to say that there will be hidden costs associated with the use of Paspallum.



Spring city



Ride on bunker rake at K club



Watering at Pinehurst

By Andrew Brown

There is also no doubt that changes in climate and stricter regulations governing the use of fertilisers and chemicals will cause a review of suitable grass types over the next decade.

The simple point for any prospective golf developer to remember is that whatever the architect says, the more detail that is designed into the course, the more the costs of maintaining the course will rise. Maintaining a golf course must be effective, efficient, economic and above all safe. If a course cannot be maintained using these basic principles then it will either have to be changed or it will fail altogether.

The biggest issues facing golf courses and golf course development are environmental and economic. The drive to find new markets and financial opportunities for golf must be balanced by the real environmental issues we face today. If this balance is not respected then we will see a rise in anti-golf opinion and further restrictions being imposed from local, national or regional governments.

As mentioned earlier, from an economic viewpoint there is also a balance to strike between the level of investment and the return on that investment. The return comes from a combination of membership take-up (if part of the economic model) daily green fee business, and other money-generating activities held at the facility. To maximise the return a club must understand its customers' expectations.

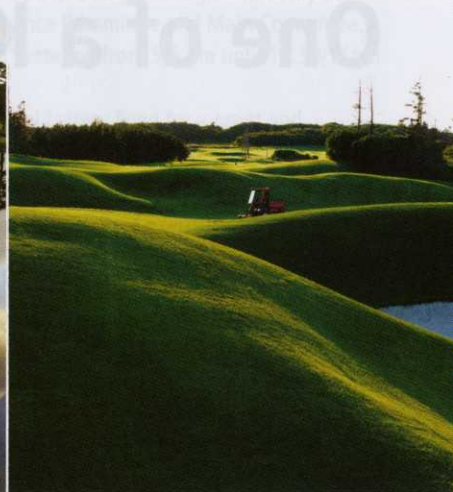
These vary depending on what the customer is looking for from the golf club. Few if any private, male-orientated clubs are being built today. Instead we are seeing more daily fee courses which want to offer the casual golfer the club member's experience without the long-term commitment.

Clubs face a challenge as they compete with others in the area for the same business. This means that each aspect of the club has to be right: from the initial tee-booking process and welcome received on arrival, to the club house facilities for changing and the dining options before and after the round of golf. But of course it doesn't stop at the clubhouse. The experience the golfer has on the course is the single factor that will determine whether they return for a second round in the future.

So what is the golfer looking for when he or she is out on the course? Well I believe it comes down to two words: quality and consistency. That does not mean that every course should be like Augusta in April or Valderrama in September. Neither does it mean that every course should be the same. What it does mean though is that a golfer wants to see a quality of preparation that allows them to enjoy the experience of the course and play a round of golf that won't have them pulling their hair out. Poor greens or severely-penal rough are not going to make any golfer return in a hurry!



Bears Club



PEI Canada

The challenge for the Course Manager is to achieve these dual goals of quality and consistency within the tight constraints of their financial budget and time. The continuous need to do more with less! To meet this challenge the maintenance staff must have good levels of training and education, high quality, productive equipment to use on the course and good support and advice from the other professionals working with the club, be they agronomists, architects, irrigation designers, contractors or suppliers.

The proliferation of legislation affecting what can and cannot be done on a golf course is now taking up a significant amount of the Course Manager's time. A short but by no means exhaustive list of some of the legal paperwork a club must deal with illustrates the problem:

- CDM (Construction Design and Management)
- COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health)
- ROPS (Roll Over Protection Systems on machinery)
- EIA (Environmental Impact Assessments)
- CAMS or similar (Catchment Abstraction Management Strategy – affecting the ability to abstract water for use in irrigation systems in the UK)

This item on the list has become particularly relevant today. The increasing pressure on water has led to many courses experiencing restrictions for the first time since the mid-1970s. This pressure is certainly not going to go away in the short term and is more likely to increase. Clubs have recognised the need for a well thought out water management plan to ensure they can adequately justify their water use. Failure to do this could result in further severe restrictions being imposed and even a loss of abstraction rights.

The availability of a reliable water supply is a key factor in the long-term viability of a course. Golf management companies looking to add to their portfolio are unlikely to consider an investment in a club that cannot guarantee its water for at least the medium term. In southern Europe we have already seen developments delayed and even cancelled due to a perceived lack of an available supply, despite the intended use of treated effluent or desalinated water.

Course maintenance is a fundamental component of every golf facility. For the course to reach its full potential it should be treated with as much attention to detail as any other aspect of the business right from the initial planning stage through to the on-going operational strategy. If developers, investors and facility managers understand this and commit sufficient resources, they are far more likely to end up with a sustainable course, in all senses of the word, that they can be proud of.

Andrew Brown is Corporate Accounts Manager for Toro Europe.



Pretty Golf

Course Feature

One of a Kind

Sunningdale Ladies' Golf Club is considered the second oldest ladies' club in England. It's unique in that the Captain and Ladies' Committee are responsible for the running of the club. The Committee also appoint the Secretary and the Assistant Secretary, and members are expected to assist in the routine tasks of the day to day running of the club. Melissa Toombs spoke to Head Greenkeeper, Peter Tedder to explore further why Sunningdale Ladies' is one of a kind.



Left to right – Head Greenkeeper Peter Tedder and Assistants Phil Bovington and Dave Barnes

"The ladies used to play on the main Sunningdale course but neither them or the men liked it very much so it was decided a nine hole golf course should be designed, just for the ladies, to keep them out of each others' hair," explained Head Greenkeeper, Peter Tedder.

Over 104 years old, founder Mr Edward Ernest Villiers – a member of Sunningdale GC, started the ladies' club in 1902 – he is thought to have been approached by Mr T A Roberts to form the club, ensuring the ladies would have a course independent of Sunningdale.

"The course was originally a nine hole and went to an 18 hole in the mid 30s," continued Peter, who heads the greenstaff of three.

In 1972 the course underwent a reconfiguration due to the lady members having to move out of their clubhouse and build a new one.



The Queen Mother was Patron of Sunningdale Ladies

The club, which allows men to join, has 60 artisan members, 40 associates, around 40 juniors and 260 ladies. Wednesday is Associates day at Sunningdale Ladies' just as Tuesday is ladies day at traditional golf clubs.

The club also boasts Royal connections as HM Queen Elizabeth, The Queen Mother was originally Patron of the club. After her sad death her grandson, Prince Andrew (The Duke of York, Earl of Inverness and Baron Killyleagh) took on the role.

Dear Stanley

20-10-02

I have been asked by the Secty of the S'dale Golf Club, if I would act as Hon. Sec. in organising a committee of Ladies residing in this neighbourhood to start a Ladies Golf Club in connection with the S'dale Club. The following have agreed to serve

Hon Mrs Erskine

Lady Barclay

Lady Dyer

Mrs Edward Villiers

I wonder if you would ask Lady Alice if she would consent to join this committee. I would have written to her myself, but as I have not the honour of her acquaintance I thought I had better write to you. The subs of the club is to be £1-1 a year with no other liability. This will include the use of the new ladies links just laid out the use of the Club house and the Dormy House for luncheon or tea if required. As it is most necessary to have an influential committee to start the Club. I hope Lady Alice will consent to let her name appear with the others I have mentioned.

The Dormy House Club will manage all finance and the committee is really only to elect members and to make suggestions for the convenience of members. I understand that Lady Alice and yourself are shortly starting for India but I hope that that will not prevent Lady Alice joining the committee at once, as her advice will be most useful to the Club when she returns.

Please forgive me for troubling you with this letter

Yours sincerely

Edward E Villiers

This letter was written to Lord Stanley at the suggestion of Mr Harry Colt, the Secretary of Sunningdale GC

Despite its location, the club is a poor relation to Sunningdale GC. The lushous, expensive houses that you pass on your way to Sunningdale Ladies' and the name Sunningdale itself, would imply wealth and security at the club, however, on the other side of the fence money doesn't flow quite so easily.

"We are the poor relation without a doubt but we are completely separate golf clubs, we are nothing to do with Sunningdale whatsoever, we are an individual golf club but everyone thinks, because of the area and the name, that we are up there side by side with Sunningdale GC. I mean, because we are pretty much on the same soil structure as them, we can achieve at times of the year the same qualities in certain areas, for instance the greens, but the big problem is that everyone sees us as one," explained Peter.

Phil Bovington and Dave Barnes assist HG Peter with the upkeep of the beautiful heathland course, and it's hard work at times. The club doesn't have an irrigation system. The greenkeepers use hosepipes and sprinklers from taps located around the golf course, which run off the mains.

"It takes about six hours to water the greens properly and about the same time to water the tees. They all have to be done in stages and there's

a certain routine we have to go through to water them, you can't just go out and put all 18 greens on at once because we have meters around the course – so we are looking at three moves just to get the greens watered and similar for the tees," continued Peter, who is regularly out on the course at midnight in the summer months ensuring his greens receive a little water.

SUNNINGDALE LADIES' GOLF CLUBS.S.S. 60Handicap.....HEALTH AND SAFETY (SEE OVER)Strokes Received.....Name.....Competition.....

Marker's Score	Hole	Yards	Par	Stroke Index	Player's Score	Won+Lost-Halved 0	Marker's Score	Hole	Yards	Par	Stroke Index	Player's Score	Won+Lost-Halved 0
	1	194	3	7			10	157	3	14			
	2	172	3	9			11	236	3	6			
	3	167	3	17			12	236	4	12			
	4	321	4	3			13	256	4	2			
	5	154	3	11			14	155	3	8			
	6	212	3	5			15	133	3	18			
	7	235	4	13			16	285	4	4			
	8	273	4	1			17	139	3	16			
	9	142	3	15			18	149	3	10			
	OUT	1870	30				IN	1746	30				
							TOTAL	3616	60				

Marker's Signature.....Player's Signature.....Date.....

HANDICAPNET SCORE

GS165

As soon as Peter took up his post at the club, he pushed for an irrigation system but unfortunately there just wasn't the means to purchase one. "The Committee changed, the Captain changed, so we tried again a couple of years later but there was still no money in the pot, so at this moment in time we can't really see it ever happening but who knows, we'll keep trying. There are a lot of people to go through – not only the Greens Committee but also the Finance Committee and Main Committee."

The greenstaff do most of their watering from 5/6 pm until 10.30/11pm – sometimes 12.

The Club approached the National Lottery Fund for a grant and unfortunately got turned down, "I think they thought we were having a laugh," said Peter. "They saw the name and immediately assumed we were a wealthy club."

The course hasn't undergone any dramatic changes during Peter's 19 years at Sunningdale Ladies,

"We've changed many bunker banks, lots of pathways and a few tee extensions but basically the course is pretty much how it was designed all those years ago. We haven't really made too many changes, we've just altered a few banks here and there," said a dedicated Peter.

"We have tried for many changes, some of them have happened. The club has come quite a long way though in the last 20 years and I think before that the club had stood still for a long, long time."

Peter's dad was actually Head Greenkeeper at Sunningdale Ladies for nine years prior to him taking on the position.

"There's only ever been three full time greenkeeping staff here. One of the changes we were after and have been after for many years actually happened about two years ago, and we were able to get a fourth man. Unfortunately just over a year after that we had one greenkeeper leave and move on, and we were back down to three. We then needed a new piece of equipment so the fourth greenkeeper never got re-employed.



The smaller building to the left used to be the clubhouse before the club underwent its reconfiguration





The greenstaff have named their fourth member of staff - the Procore - Bob

From time to time we have had people come and help over the summer – part time summer help, but not for the whole summer, a few weeks between their university studies and things."

It's unfortunate that Sunningdale Ladies' seems to have acquired a reputation for being a rich, problem-free club, that's well kitted out - The greenkeepers have a piece of equipment for every job they do but their kit is quite old - and therefore they are unable to get the help they really need. I wondered if HG Peter found himself envious of the copious amounts of kit Sunningdale GC have.

"Without a doubt we do and it would certainly make our lives a lot easier if we had some of that. We do feel that they've got what they've got and we've got what we've got and at the end of the day, unfortunately, that's how it is – there's no malice at all between the two but it would be nice to have that little bit more. We do feel that we're chasing around everyday and there's no time for rest. Certain jobs have to be done at the club and they're done, but with the levels of staff that we've got it's very difficult to get it done," explained Peter.

Last summer proved to be hard a season for Peter and his team - although they were lucky enough not to have restrictions put on their water usage during the drought.

"It was a slightly harder year for us because of the weather but it was a god send that we still had water so we could still carry on and use it the same as we ever did – I mean we don't use colossal amounts of water anyway, because



Two air raid shelters lie under this beautiful heathland course.

we are only on the mains," said a grateful Peter.

"This winter we're doing a lot of repairs around bunkers, a tee extension on the 10th tee – doubling the size, the tee at the moment is only about 80 square metres and we've looking at having around 160-180 there by the time we've finished the extension. We have also got an 180sqm tee that needs re-levelling as it's at a downward angle to the hole because it used to be played in the opposite direction. We'll do these jobs in house – we are going to get some help on the second tee by some of the Associates because it is a slightly larger area."

The club were faced with more problems early last year, when someone broke into the maintenance sheds and stole a lot of the equipment.

"Everything now has to be locked up and alarmed every time we leave – even if we go to the back of the property and we're doing something in the back garage, then we've still got to lock up and alarm the front just in case someone decides to come up the drive and walk away with all of our handheld tools, as they did before."

Peter worries that the club doesn't always spend the money it should be spending on equipment and jokes, "Women definitely come from the domestic point of view, viewing that a couple of hundred pounds is a lot of money but of course to a golf club, a couple of hundred pounds is nothing to spend!"

"The club itself is a very bubbly place and societies come here year in year out, as they love the course so much," smiled Peter.



Despite the problems the club has had and obstacles Peter has been up against, he obviously enjoys his job,

"If I didn't enjoy it then I wouldn't keep coming back for more, of course there's been times when I've questioned if it's really worth it but when things dry out and summer is on its way and the course is looking good – that's what keeps me here."

Memberships are available for Ladies', Associates and Juniors. Please ring the Club Secretary, Robin Mitchell on: 01344 620507 for details.



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Happy Harrogate

Record Education numbers; Packed Halls; Happy Exhibitors. That is probably the best way to sum up Harrogate Week 2007.

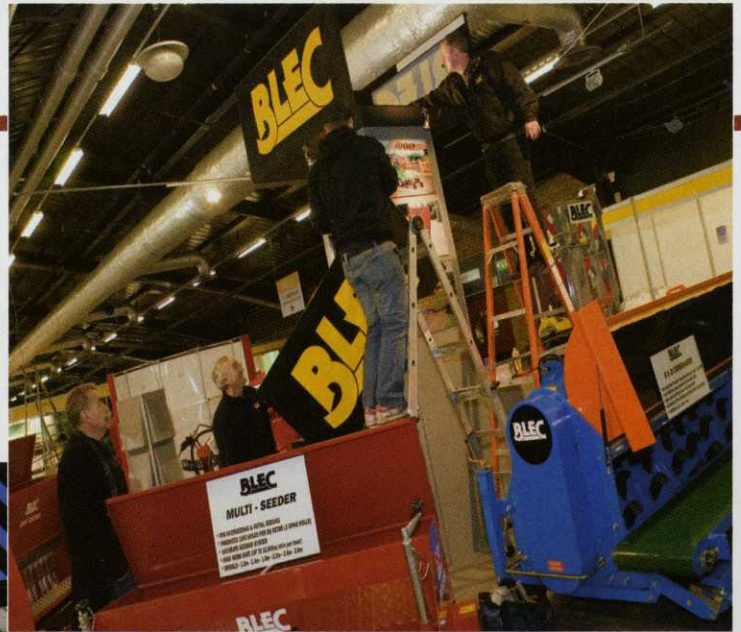
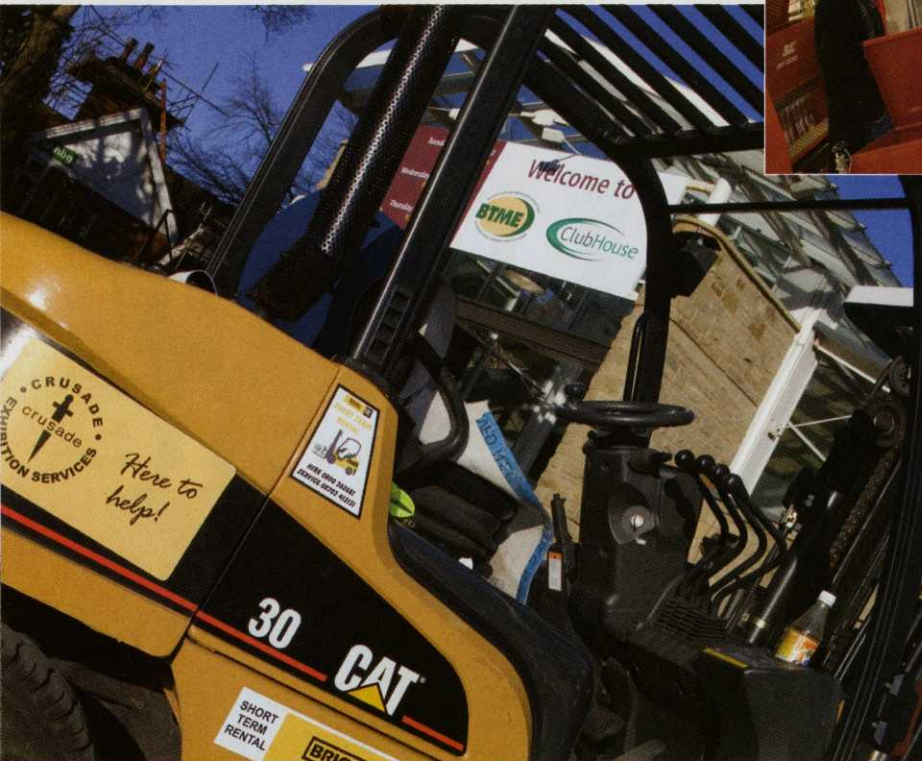
There was a genuine upbeat feeling with everyone who made the effort to attend the week with many exhibitors doing some brisk business – not just leads, but sales as well.

The overall attendance figure was 6653 for the three days with education and networking at the forefront of the minds of those who attended and you can be sure that they returned home as satisfied and fulfilled as those exhibitors.

Harrogate week

A week like no other

Scott MacCallum takes you through a week like no other on the BIGGA calendar.



No detail is overlooked in making a product shine

SUNDAY

It's not often that you put in a little more time and effort and still feel you are coming up short but Harrogate Week is one of those. I arrived at about 6pm on Sunday evening, ready for the Association's biggest week knowing that some of my colleagues – namely John, Ken, Pauline and Sami - had been there, working hard since Saturday.

One of the great things about Harrogate Week, and there are many great things, is the opportunity for BIGGA staff to show how good they are at working as a team. As you probably know the entire week is organised and run by the BIGGA staff – we don't employ specialist companies thus ensuring all money made can be ploughed back into the Association – and it's great to know that everyone pulls together to ensure it all runs smoothly. The bulk of the staff arrived on Monday morning with everyone knowing exactly what was expected and happy to go that extra mile if they spotted a job to do or a gap to fill.

Sunday evening proceeded with a meal in Grant's Hotel, not far from Harrogate International Centre, for speakers on the workshop programme which had begun earlier in the day and staff who had been involved in the setting up of the Show. The dinner is always a good way to begin the week and the conversation spanned the prospects for the week ahead to the more specialist areas of expertise brought by the speakers and current affairs in the world at large. However, it was also tinged with sadness with the news that BIGGA Board of Management member, Raymond Day, had died the day before following a short illness.

Harrogate Week



Harrogate
week
Media Centre

The new look Media Centre, beneath Hall A, proved to be a huge hit.



Registration was brisk from early on Tuesday

MONDAY

Monday and everything moved up a notch. As the workshops continued in the superb Queen's Suite, of the Conference Centre which was first used by us in Harrogate Week 2006, build up in the four Halls continued apace with empty shells turning into Aladdin's Caves before your very eyes. It is easy to underestimate the effort, skill and imagination, not to mention the efficiency, which goes into creating a stand which is a key element to a successful week. Those who excel in that department are more likely to draw the crowds over the three days.

It's the same every year. At lunchtime a tour of the Halls reveals much to be done and the same questions are always asked, "Will everyone be ready on time" and "Who's not arrived yet" but by the close of play on the Monday there is always a calm serenity which descends upon the Halls.

My own task, together with Assistant Editor, Melissa, during the day

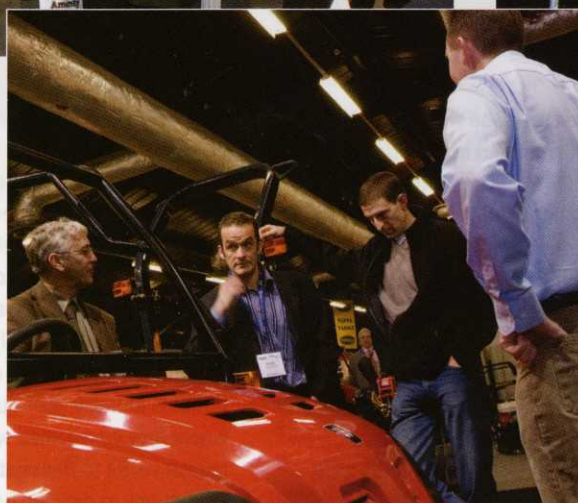
this year was to ensure that the newly-sited Media Centre would be ready for the start of action on Tuesday morning. Located under Hall A, the Centre was a big improvement on the previous year with a large informal area for meeting and greeting and an interview/press conference area towards the rear, complete with plasma screen and sound system, which offered the ideal venue for product launches and press statements. The new press facility was welcomed by the press, PR people and exhibitors who used it and hopefully we have found a new permanent home.

With opportunities to catch up with people wishing to talk about BIGGA business Monday goes quickly and this year the staff headed to Pizza Express where they were joined with BIGGA President Sir Michael Bonallack OBE, a regular visitor to Harrogate Week and a man who enjoys his annual opportunity to meet up with everyone connected with the Association.

TUESDAY

Tuesday morning, and there is very much a feeling of "Thunderbirds are Go". No matter how detailed the advanced planning there is always a feeling in the pit of your stomach that something has been forgotten. In fairness there usually has been, but more often that not it's something fairly inconsequential.

By the time Richard Whyman had wielded the official shears, in a manner befitting a genuine master of the art, and cut the green ribbon at the door to Hall M everyone was raring to go. From that point – at 9am on Tuesday morning until late on Thursday afternoon – it was one mad frenzy. As the Halls filled the volume of chatter rose as acquaintances were made, friendships renewed and deals struck – by all accounts the level of business conducted during the three days was at an all time high. The Show's latest innovation the Park & Ride service was also doing brisk business alleviating the problem of both a shortage of parking spaces within the town centre itself and the general cost of parking. Users parked in the Yorkshire Showground on the outskirts of the town and could leave their cars there until they went home at the end of the week – for free!



Harrogate Week



Northern Patrons collect their awards from Ian Holoran



The Brighouse Bay team who won the BIGGA Environment Competition

With record numbers attending Workshops and Seminars and solid numbers in the Halls, it was hard not to feel the job was done but during Harrogate Week it never is and you can't afford to take a deep breath until it's all over.

There is so much going on. In one corner Northern Region Chairman, Ian Holoran was presenting plaques to Northern Patrons, Aitkens and Vitax with Richard Aitken and Clive Williams respectively receiving and in another Clive Nottingham, of Lloyds, launching a new product.

The presentation of Awards is always an uplifting occasion with this year four new Master Greenkeepers recognised for their achievements - Bob Ehrler, Chris Lomas, Gavin Kinsella and Ken Seims and a further 10 receiving CPD Diplomas. The winners of the BIGGA Golf Environment Competition, sponsored by Ransomes Jacobsen, Scotts, Syngenta and Course Care, received their awards culminating in Brighouse Bay Golf Club being presented with the top prize and it was pleasing to see the entire greenkeeping team on hand. The last Award was to the winners of the new BIGGA Golf Photography competition with Steven Tierney, from Switzerland picking up the top award.



The Bernhard's sponsored GCSAA delegation was a wonderful addition to Harrogate Week 2007

The day was topped off by the Exhibitors' Reception which gave stand holders the chance to compare notes on the day's events and BIGGA staff a chance to chat with them. It was a real pleasure to meet first time exhibitors John and Christine Hunter, of Hunter Promotions, who had travelled all the way down from Wick to display their hand made course accessories, as well to chat to regular attendees, Andrew Cornes, of Acorn Golf, and Mike Dooner, of Thorntrees Amenities, who, in addition to their regular duties provide the magazine with Section Notes for North Wales and East of Scotland respectively.

From there to another Reception, this time for the BIGGA Scholarship winners hosted by Bernhards, who this year brought 10 GCSAA Superintendents to Harrogate for the first time. The 10 mingled with the latest group who will be travelling across the Atlantic in the other direction to attend the GCSAA Show in Anaheim later this month. With many of the "Old Boys" from previous years delegations also in attendance the Reception becomes a larger and larger affair and, each year the pride in what has been achieved can be seen writ large in the face of Stephen Bernhard and his team. It really does epitomise all that is best about the greenkeeping profession – camaraderie and networking.

WEDNESDAY

Wednesday is generally regarded as the busiest of the three days and this year it was no exception, rendering it virtually impossible to negotiate the aisles without becoming closely acquainted with a wide range of deodorants. It was gratifying to be spotted by a number of exhibitors just to tell us how well they had done the previous day.

One of the highlights of the second day is the Unsung Hero Award, organised by Terrain Aeration, and Linda Green, ably supported by Carol Dutton, was on hand to ensure that two men could no longer be described as Unsung. Ronnie Bunting, of Ballochmyle GC, received the greenkeeping award and Brian Firman, the groundsman prize, with each received holiday vouchers so they could take a well deserved break.

Later in the day the annual BIGGA Press Briefing hosted its largest ever audience with outgoing Chairman Richard and soon to be appointed Chairman Billy McMillan in attendance, along with John Pemberton. The main talking point was the proposed strategic merger between BIGGA and the IOG.

The meeting was also attended by Geoff Webb and Alex Miller of the IOG so the press had ample opportunity to learn of developments first hand.

As the pace of the day seemed to increase it was straight onto the Queen's Suite for the launch of the BIGGA/AGCS Safety Management System which will be a huge benefit to members of both Associations.

The AGM which followed immediately afterwards in the same auditorium saw Billy succeed Richard as Chairman and welcomed Kenny McKay, of The Belfry, as the new Vice Chairman. It provided the perfect opportunity to present BIGGA's first Chairman, Walter Woods, with a token of the Association's appreciation. Walter stood down as an Association Guardian after many years' sterling service and Richard presented him with a stunning watercolour of his beloved St Andrews.

The Past Chairman's Reception which followed on from the AGM was a new addition to the programme but was an extremely convivial occasion and a chance for the guests to relax, enjoy a glass of wine with each other and chat.



John Pemberton and Keith Lloyd, of the AGCS, launch the new Safety Management System.



Harrogate Week



Comedian Adrian Walsh had Banquet guests in stitches on Thursday evening

THURSDAY

Thursday always has a slower pace with everyone having the opportunity to catch up with those they hadn't had a chance to see earlier in the week. That's not to say it wasn't a productive day and again it was pleasing to be stopped by exhibitors keen to tell us of the leads they had made and business they had done on the final day.

When the final whistle went the mad scramble to dismantle went into overdrive with the knowledge that it was only a few hours until the start of the Banquet. It's quite something to see the transformation in some people from 4pm to 7.30pm as they move from working gear to glad rags.

As usual the meal provided by the Majestic Hotel was superb and the entertainment provided by comedian, Adrian Walsh, was inspired. Rarely have I heard an audience laugh so much and hopefully the campaign, started by Adrian, to get Andy Whyman, the Past Chairman's son, an ipod will gather pace. The disco which followed had many well known faces from the industry throwing some marvellous shapes on the dance floor. There would have been a few aching limbs the next morning, not to mention the odd sore head!

Overall Harrogate 2007 will be remembered as an enjoyable, well run event but next year if I'm to match the efforts of some of my colleagues, I'm going to have to get there a little bit earlier!

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GRASS GRAB-ER

Hydrotech Solutions Ltd has launched the Grass Grab-er. The Grass Grab-er is a low cost, highly effective and robust waste water treatment system designed to treat machinery wash down water and allow it to be re-used or disposed of in a responsible and legal manner. The Grass Grab-er which is an American designed system is widely in use across the United States has a unique system to remove the contaminants which cause golf clubs concern with ground water legislation. For further information contact us on: 01925 758099 or visit: www.hydrotechsolutionsltd.co.uk



SOIL MOVER

Campey introduced the new Dakota D606 Soil Mover/Box Scraper, which enables a perfectly level finish to be achieved on surfaces such as tees. Weighing 750kg and 1.8m wide, it has a capacity of 1.5 cu m and can be powered by tractors of 30hp-60hp. Featuring very heavy-duty construction, the height of the blades can be adjusted quickly and precisely. Options include laser controls to ensure that precise levels are constantly achieved.

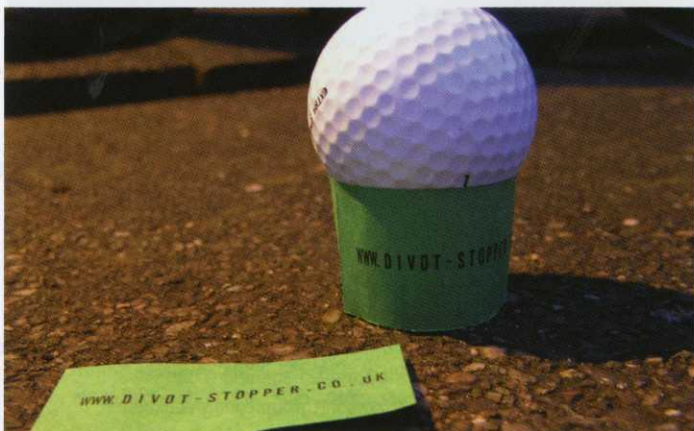
For more information visit: www.campeyturfcare.com

DIVOT STOPPER

Green Tee have just launched the Divot-Stopper. The product avoids wrist ache after shots, and also simulates playing off the perfect lie. It's also great for using off winter mats so as not to compromise the players optimised shot capabilities.

Not only does this pack have the potential to prevent an average 700 Divots from ever even happening, it is also beneficial to the player for ease of use and reducing the likelihood of club damage and dirt or mud splats hitting clothing, face and eyes.

For more information email: NGreenTee@aol.com



WATER SAVING WETTING AGENT

Headland have launched TriCure Ad (Aqua Dynamics), their new, advanced successor to TriCure wetting agent.

Designed for increased effectiveness in preventing and controlling hydrophobic conditions and dry patch, TriCure Ad combines improved soil treatment capabilities with additional soil surface dry-down characteristics for a faster return to play in adverse conditions.

For further information Tel: 01223 597834 or visit: www.headlandamenity.com



THE PRESSURE'S OFF

Terrain Aeration launched Spin Spray, their new-to-the-UK hand held sprayer that is gravity fed and operates without continuous pressure. Portable and compact, with a total weight of just under one kilogram, Spin Spray comes with three different nozzles producing three different volumes of spray.

For further information Tel: 01449 636783, or visit: www.terrainaeration.co.uk

THE PERFECT STORM

Sand Storm made its debut at BTME 2007. The Sand Storm is an innovative, simple, but effective means to recycle sand and other materials. The original Sand Storm was only launched in the UK in September 2006 – but a modified version was already on the drawing board at that time, with the UK market specifically in mind.

Principally aimed at the renovation of golf course bunkers, the sand storm can also handle other materials that may benefit from a screening process. Vibrating screens on the Sand Storm work to remove debris such as leaves, twigs, needles, weeds, stone and clay particles. The screens will also trap silt deposits on their surface, allowing for wash off and removal. The process remixes the sand particles and 'fluffs' it to a like new condition.

For more information contact JSM Distribution on: 0845 026 0064.

SAVING WATER AND MONEY

Vitax introduce the Dispatch application kit, a liquid surfactant, which comes with its own injection pump specifically designed for irrigation systems. Formulated by Aquatrols and available in America for a number of years, Dispatch has proved its worth by saving up to 30% on water bills.

The injection pump, which is provided with all necessary connectors and easily installed by the customer's irrigation engineer, ensures that the surfactant/water solution is always applied at the correct strength and is neither diluted nor capable of scorch. An application rate of 0.9 of a litre per hectare means that Dispatch is economical to use as well as an important water/money saving tool.

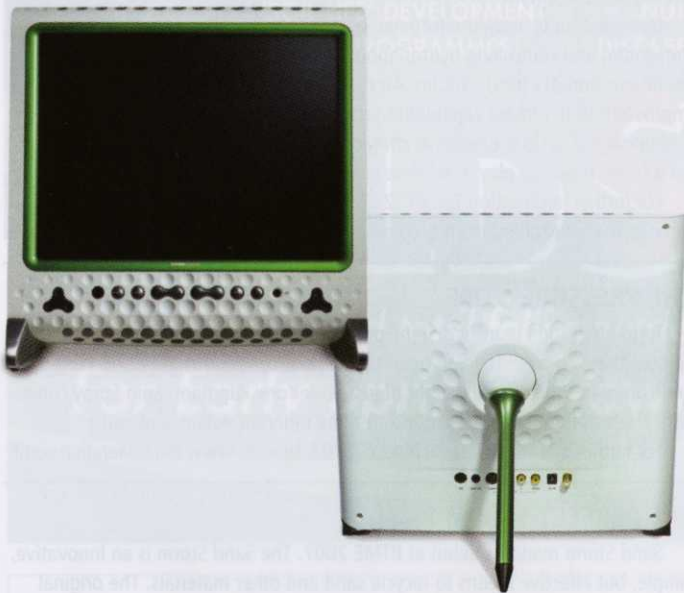
For further information contact Vitax on Tel: 01530 510060 or visit: www.vitax.co.uk



GOLF FANATICS

Want to watch next years Open in style? Never miss a swing with the new HANNSgolf 15" LCD TV. No detail of the game has been missed in the design; a pristine white golf ball dimple surround inspired by the traditional golf ball houses the 1024x768 XGA screen, two precisely balanced iron club heads make up the LCD TV's base, while a novel, oversized green golf tee acts as the HANNSgolf's stand. The fairway is just a button away!

For more information visit www.hannspree.com the range is available from: www.misco.co.uk



GOLF GRASS MAT



Rubberplas Ltd has launched the Golf Grass Mat: (22mm thick, tough, reusable rubber matting) used to install permanent or temporary walkways around Golf Courses.

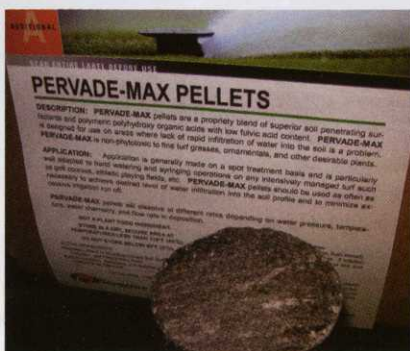
For further information contact Paul Buxton at Rubberplas Ltd on: 07765 625508 or: 01676 535600.

REVOLUTIONARY PENETRANT AIMS TO TROUBLE SHOOT

Floratine introduce their extremely effective soil penetrant Pervade in pelleted form, specifically designed for spot treatment on undulating greens, bunkers, slopes or any difficult to reach areas prone to water logging.

Pervade-Max comes in the form of a large pellet, perfectly proportioned to fit standard spray guns. Hand watering via a hosepipe with spray applicator attached, dissolves the penetrant's active ingredients, which are then aimed directly at the trouble spot.

For further information contact David Snowden on Tel: 01765 658021; Email: dpsfpg@aol.com or visit: www.floratine.com



BSH INTRODUCES 'LEVEL PAR'

British Seed Houses launched its new Level Par velvet bent grass blend at Harrogate Week 2007.

Level Par is a unique blend of Avalon and new Vesper velvet bent grasses and is suitable for use on both soil-based and USGA greens. Avalon is renowned for its shoot density, fine leaf and superb wear tolerance and has been used successfully in the UK since 1997. Vesper is an exciting new addition to the STRI seed listings. It has the highest recorded score for shoot density (10.3), a very fine leaf and a dark, year-round colour.

Level Par produces a dense sward, requires minimal watering and is suitable for lower or more traditional maintenance regimes. Because it's a blend, the risk associated with sowing just a monoculture of bent grass is reduced.

For more information visit: www.britishseedhouses.co.uk

BUFFALO KB3 BLOWER

JK Inc, providers of niche turf technology products have introduced the new KB3 Turbine Blower to its range. The KB3 supersedes the KB2 and provides even more power with a 3900 rpm operating speed. The most exciting feature is the ergonomically designed, waterproof, wireless remote for easy throttle and nozzle control.

For more information call: 01763 208142



FINE TURF AERATOR

The new GXi is a compact fine turf aerator incorporating Wiedenmann's revolutionary ATC technology. Specially developed for fine turf and designed from the ground up, this compact machine incorporates a new chassis and new linkage and is ideal for 25hp compact tractors and above. The launch model is available with a 1.4 metre working width and has a selection of accessories including a turf retainer, core swath board and comprehensive range of solid and coring tines.

For more information visit: www.wiedenmanns.com

GOLF COURSE MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE

Korec launched their latest software system FastMap Greenkeeper - A powerful PC software system that allows the Golf Course Manager to visually manage the assets and infrastructure of the course - at this year's BIGGA exhibition.

Korec's team of surveyors will undertake a Land Survey of the golf course playing surfaces, providing an accurate plan, the data is then installed as part of the system and used to provide a single source of information producing reports and maps for all aspects of the course. The survey can be added to and updated by the greenkeeper using Trimble handheld GPS.

For more information visit: www.korecgroup.com/greenkeeper

SUPER CONCENTRATED SPRAY INDICATOR

Conventional
pattern indicator



Super Signal Blue

Headland have launched their new, non-toxic spray indicator Super Signal Blue.

As well as providing visual evidence of the whereabouts of spray applications, thereby eliminating waste due to overlap, Super Signal Blue indicates drift, and potential nozzle blocking – an important factor with the increasing use of shrouded booms. This money saving new product dissipates with sunlight or moisture and will not permanently stain vegetation, soil or human skin.

For further information contact Headland on Tel: 01223 597834 or visit: www.headlandamenity.co.uk

T3000 RANGE TAKES CENTRE STAGE

The T3000 series took centre stage on New Holland's stand at this year's BTME.

Making its debut at the three day event, the T3000 series is an upgrade of the TCE series. Designed to meet the expanding needs of greenkeepers and groundsman, the upgrade applies to the engine and means that the tractors will meet, and move beyond, the new emission levels set by the EU.

For more information visit: www.newholland.com



POWER BRUSH ATTACHMENT

The patented Rear Roller Power Brush Kit is the latest edition for the Turfworks product, which enables turf professionals to undertake a range of key maintenance tasks with their existing greens mowers and can be fitted to all Turfworks chassis, avoiding unsightly deposits of clippings.

For more information visit: www.campeyturfcare.co.uk

SUPA-COMPACT OVERSEEDERS

Among the latest launches from Campey Turf Care Systems is the range of Vredo supa-compact overseeders, designed to enable greenkeepers to renovate turf surfaces quickly and effectively.

Three Vredo supa-compact overseeders are available, with operating widths of 0.8m, 1.2m and 1.6m. Each can either be mounted on to the three-point linkage of a compact tractor, or used as a trailed machine.

For more information visit: www.campeyturfcare.co.uk



NEW ADDITION

Rigby Taylor has added to their Mascot Grass Seed range for 2007, the new strong creeping red fescue cultivar Greenvie.

Already ranked number one on the STRI list, this cultivar produces a dense sward and is designed for use on golf tees and fairways.

For more information visit: www.rigbytaylor.com

SISTER MODEL MAKES DEBUT

Following the 2005 UK launch of the Pequea GT100 Top Dresser, its sister model, the SuperSpread, made its UK debut to the golf market at Harrogate Week. Exclusive distributors, Lloyds of Letchworth are delighted to offer the larger version for golf course and amenity maintenance.

For more information visit: www.lloydsandco.com

KEEP SPRAYS ON TARGET

Techneat Engineering has introduced a new shrouded boom for the company's renowned SPPS range of self-propelled pedestrian sprayers. The innovative boom design, available in widths of up to 3 meters, enables operators to safely and accurately target spray application, without fear of spray drift.

For more information visit: www.techneat.co.uk





AN INNOVATIVE SOLUTION TO CLIMATE CHANGE



As climate changes lead to extremes of weather and even more unpredictable rain patterns for turf professionals to combat, Dennis offers the new mini Blotter as a solution.

The mini Blotter is ideal for the removal of surface water from football pitches, cricket grounds, sports stadia, golf courses and racecourses. It is equally at home on artificial turf, athletics tracks, tennis courts and hard surfaces like car parks. Its speedy results mean that facilities can be kept open after unexpected downpours, avoiding fixture cancellation.

For more information visit: www.dennisuk.com

BREAKER ADVANCE

Rigby Taylor has launched Breaker Advance, their latest wetting agent for treating Dry Patch and other water related problems.

The product still incorporates unique Complete Immersion Technology and contains three active components to prevent and cure Dry Patch – a Wetting and Spreading Agent, a Soil Penetrant and Re-wetting Agent.

For a free brochure call freephone: 0800 424 919. For more information visit: www.rigbytaylor.com

NEW TRACTORS AND GROUNDS CARE PRODUCTS

Massey Ferguson's all-new 3600 Series mid-range is suitable for a wide range of on- and off-road applications within the grounds care, landscaping and commercial horticulture sectors. Massey Ferguson's 3600 Series comprises the MF 3615, MF 3625, MF 3635 and MF 3645 tractors rated at 58hp, 68hp, 78hp and 91hp respectively. All are powered by three-cylinder turbocharged Sisu engines, the top model benefiting also from an intercooler.

For more information visit: www.masseyferguson.com

BIGGA SUPPORTS NEW COURSE MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE

Golf course management software OnCourse, developed by Swedish company SYSteam Epani and endorsed by BIGGA, was re-launched with some new features during Harrogate Week.

The programme enables Course Managers to budget and track expenses; prepare personnel records and time sheets; record equipment and property maintenance records; stock control; list details of suppliers; write reports and keep a diary.

OnCourse was first launched in the UK seven years ago but since then several improvements have been added, including new improved user interface, which simplifies navigation around the software offering opportunities to link to websites and a unique web marketing enabling users to advertise second hand machinery between OnCourse golf clubs.

"Ultimately OnCourse saves you time and money and with record keeping and a detailed paper trail so important to the modern Course Manager we feel we offer an easy-to-use comprehensive solution," explained Daniel Henningsson of OnCourse Epani.

"We are delighted to receive the endorsement of BIGGA and we hope that the Association members benefit from OnCourse," he added.

OnCourse package costs £2,000 for a multi-user 12 month license with full training and aftercare, however there is a three year payment plan option which helps reduce the costs.

For more information contact Fliss Chaffer on: 01347 833800.

HOBBIES

Our new feature, finds out what greenkeepers get up to in their spare time. Here's something you didn't know about me...

Name: Steve Pope

Age: 75

Club: Tyneside GC

Position: Retired Member after 39 years

Hobby: Building Rocking Horses



When and how did you get introduced to the art of building rocking horses?

"I was first introduced to the craft when I decided to build a rocking horse for my grandson. I got tuition at Kirkley Hall College, Ponteland in a class of 10. At first I just made a small one but my grandson grew out if too quickly. I decided that a medium height rocking horse was best, measuring about 36-38 inches off the floor. I'm now on rocking horse number four. I got into this hobby as I thought they were nice gifts for children and I wanted something to do in the wintertime."

How long does it take to build a rocking horse?

"Well it's a lot of work. I do a couple of hours at a time and then keep coming back to it. I'll start one in June and be finished in time for Christmas."

What is it about the craft that appeals to you?

"I find it relaxing."

Where does the building take place?

"In my greenhouse. I use the greenhouse to store bedding plants for golf clubs and when they go I use the greenhouse as my workshop."

How long have you been building rocking horses?

"Five years. The last one I sold for £700 last Christmas and I'm just finishing one that is going to Kent shortly."

£700 sounds like a lot of money, do you make much of a profit?

"Well considering the the tac costs around £189 on it's own, I don't make much profit but I enjoy doing it."

Steve is happy to take orders for his handmade rocking horses, you can contact him on: 0191 4132662.

Do you or your fellow greenkeepers have an unusual hobby?

If so, get in touch, email: melissa@bigga.co.uk or tel: 01347 833800



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A Hand on the Controls

With EU directives clamping down on the amount of chemicals we can use, how can greenkeepers continue to effectively combat pests and diseases? Nia Frost discusses new developments in controls and some highly effective alternative methods.

Over the past 10 years, many control products used regularly on golf courses and other amenity areas have been lost or removed for use by amenity managers. This has happened across the whole amenity area, although pesticides and fungicides have been particularly affected with the loss of, for example, Chlordane, Gamma HCH and Carbaryl. More recently, actives such as Thiabendazol and Diquat for aquatic use have also gone. One thing is for certain, more control products will be lost over the next few years.

WHY ARE PRODUCTS DISAPPEARING?

There are a number of reasons why there are fewer control products available:

- Ai (Active ingredient) not being supported through EU review by manufacturer
- PSD/HSE revoke product for safety, (human, flora or fauna)
- Non support of Data Submission Deadline (efficacy or storage)
- PSD/HSE revoke label (addition or deletion of statements)
- Manufacturer update/change of Ai
- Marketing decide to request label/name change.

THE EU REVIEW

The EU review of control products is probably the single most influential factor affecting the access to control product for turf and amenity managers. The review is officially known as EC Directive 91/414/EEC. Its aim is to ensure that all pesticides on the market before 1991 meet present-day safety standards.

The review has been initiated to:

- harmonise national arrangements for authorisation of PPP within EU
- ensure that all countries operate to a high standard
- be implemented in UK by Plant Protection Product Regulations (PPPR) 1995
- use European data for national registrations.

WHAT DOES THIS LEGISLATION MEAN FOR THE TURF OR AMENITY MANAGER?

Of the 834 actives which are subject to continual review, 50 per cent are not being supported. Although it is fair to say that most of these will affect agriculture and not necessarily amenity. However, there will be a significant proportion affected or lost to amenity and this will have an impact on how you manage your turf in the future.

NEW PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

But it's not all doom and gloom! There will still be, and are, new control products coming onto the market. These new products have to meet stringent new guidelines laid down by the EU. A positive side to this is that any new products brought onto the market will be the most efficient and safest ever seen in the turf and amenity industry.

But further down the line it may be more difficult to provide new control products that conform to the new legislation, as the cost can be inhibiting. For example, to produce a specific control product just for the turf and amenity industry could cost as much as £200 million. In this situation it would simply not be economically viable to invest in product development. Hopefully in the future it will be possible to work more closely with all areas of the controls industry on a global basis to provide cost effective control products for part of the business.

Research and investment into new control products for the turf and amenity market is still at the forefront of our research programmes, however, we are also looking at all other alternative methods such as 'sustainable' and 'biological' programmes to provide turf and amenity managers with a means to control pests in the future.



Fusarium

WHAT ARE THESE ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS?

Adjuvants can enhance the performance of pesticides by increasing its uptake by, for example, spreading on a waxy surface or by penetrating thick cuticles which results in increased control of difficult species. Another adjuvant benefit is reducing spray drift.

A future development could be using less pesticides and more adjuvant when formulating new products. Scotts is developing a new marker dye which has adopted this principle, with an added benefit of a pH buffer and spray drift reducer.

TANK MIXING

This option of combining actives could be very beneficial if lack of control is given by one product only. The Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) is trialling this method to eradicate the invasive aquatic weed water primrose (*Ludwigia grandiflora*) and results have been very positive. Their proposal was to compare the efficacy of a glyphosate-based herbicide and a glyphosate and 2,4-D amine mixture-based herbicide. Their report reads:

"The addition of 2,4-D amine to the mixture is anticipated to enhance translocation rates of glyphosate through the plant, thereby improving long-term control. While glyphosate is excellent for control of many aquatic plant species, the use of glyphosate for eradication on non-native aquatic plants has proved challenging. This approach is novel and will contribute to the management of such species and reduce pesticide use in the environment by improving efficacy of single applications."

According to Defra, the trial has achieved "considerable" success so far. They have reported that:

"The UK is almost free of the invasive aquatic weed water primrose (*Ludwigia grandiflora*), and complete eradication may be feasible."

BIOLOGICALS

Another exciting and potential growth area is the use of biologicals for managing problems in turf and amenity areas. Biologicals have been around for a long time, especially in the horticultural industry. They are currently being used very successfully in some areas of the turf and amenity industry, but scope for their use is potentially much bigger.

The term 'biological' covers a wide range of different products and approaches, from bacterial and fungal products, to soil fauna enhancement products.

Scotts' new biological product ProCrystal is a fast-acting aquatic algicide that controls swimming or floating unicellular and filamentous algae. It improves water clarity and reduces unpleasant odours within days of treatment, without affecting the balance of the environment.



ProCrystal



Grass

MODERN PESTICIDES

The new products that are entering the amenity market are developed to have a label that would ideally consist of the following characteristics:

- a low dose application that minimises the amount of active ingredient released into the environment during application
- covers all modes of action
- a high level of efficacy against a broad spectrum of diseases/pests
- no impact on the environment
- minimal risk to users and non-target species.

A good example of a new product with these characteristics is the turf fungicide Heritage, a unique disease control product from a new class of highly effective, low-use rate, broad-spectrum, environmentally-sound chemistry. The active ingredient, azoxystrobin, is synthetically derived from strobilurins, which are naturally occurring fungicides produced by various species of wood-decaying mushrooms.

CONCLUSION

There is more pressure than ever before on turf and amenity control products, which means that there will be increasing pressure on turf and amenity managers when trying to control pests and diseases.

The EU review process and other legislation will have a big impact on availability of control products for use on turf and other amenity areas. However, there are still high-quality products available now and new products coming onto the market. The impact of new legislation on the turf and amenity sector can be minimised if an integrated approach is used. We are also relying on R&D to provide new products for the future and Scotts is leading the way in this area.

Nia Frost is Scotts Technical Manager, Plant Protection Products

CHEMICAL ERROR

Question: What is the worst thing that could happen during a heatwave?

Answer: Chemical burns on the golf course.

Please check the wording of container labels thoroughly - accidents can and have happened.

BIGGA suggests coloured caps on containers as a good way of avoiding errors, ie:

- | | |
|--------|------------------------|
| GREEN | – Liquid Fertiliser |
| BLUE | – Wetting Agents |
| RED | – Total Weedkiller |
| BLACK | – Selective Weedkiller |
| YELLOW | – Pesticides |
| WHITE | – Fungicides... etc. |

GI welcomes your thoughts on the subject



Pedestrian mowers:

Simple checks to maintain quality

By James de Havilland

Regardless of make or model, a pedestrian cylinder mower will only produce a decent cut if it has been both looked after and set up correctly. Although much of what follows should be well understood by course workshop personnel, it is easy to overlook some of the basic details. What follows are a few reminders.

With the first tournament of the season looming and all the greens to prepare before an 8.30am inspection, the last thing anyone wants to worry about is the pedestrian greens and tees mowers. Some courses, however, will find the infrequent use of pedestrian machines can lead to the mowers effectively coming out of storage between usage, with faults going unnoticed and getting worse as a result.

To suggest a mower will deteriorate through lack of use is misleading, but it is fair to say any item of kit that is parked up needing the odd tweak will not emerge a few weeks later in tip-top condition. With this in mind, a few running checks a few days before the machine is to be used will never be wasted.

The checks can be divided into two. The first relates to the power unit and drive. Reminders are listed in the table but a key issue will be to also look for any oil or fuel leaks and to check that nothing has worked loose. Cables and controls will also need looking over and adjusting and lubricating as appropriate.

The second area will relate to the cutting unit itself. A well set-up and maintained machine should have been given a clean and then greased following its last use. But it is well worth re-greasing a mower that has not been used for a while - making sure any excess lubricant is wiped off to prevent it contaminating the turf.

Adding fresh grease is as much about driving out moisture as providing good lubrication. In storage, moisture can find its way into bearings, so it pays to re-lube even a kit that has been stored in a fully serviced condition.



Moving on the cylinder, groomer, rollers and, where fitted, brushes, their setting is critical. Where applicable, the bottom knife to cylinder clearance 'air gap' needs to be maintained as recommended by the mower manufacturer. An air gap can reduce bottom knife wear by up to 50% and improves clippings flow for a smoother discharge. A quick check with a feeler gauge is all that is needed.

Mowers that have been back lapped have altered characteristics between the knife and cylinder. It is important to realise this, and set the mower up accordingly, following the specific instructions relating to an individual machine. A common mistake when back lapping is to stop the process before it has finished. It is important that the cylinder runs silently against the bottom blade before all traces of lapping paste are removed and the bottom blade to cylinder clearance is checked and set accordingly.

TIP: Always re-grease the cylinder bearings following back lapping. This will help drive out any paste that may have got into the bearings.

Groomer settings are also often overlooked. A groomer is not a scarifier, and it should typically be set 1mm above the height of cut. Similarly, roller power brushes should be set so just the extreme tips of the bristles flick the roller. If the brush is set so the bristles bend over, they will not do their job properly and they will wear prematurely too.

A periodic check of the roller and cylinder bearings can help reduce the chance of wear going undetected. A good time to inspect the bearings is when the mower is set up for a cylinder grind. The key points to look for will include play, any noise when the roll or cylinder is spun and tight spots when turning. It is best to do these checks before adding fresh grease.

The final point is to ensure the mower is set to run parallel or level. This setting on a greens mower is critical as it ensures the bottom blade is presented at the optimum cutting angle to the turf. This setting is checked using a simple 'Setting Bar' on John Deere and other makes of mower, and should be checked EVERY time the height of cut or other adjustment is made.

With thanks to Chris Perkins, Workshop Technician with John Deere dealers Parks and Grounds Machinery, Bidford-on-Avon, Warwickshire.

PEDESTRIAN MOWER PREPARATION – BRIEF CHECKLIST

- Change the engine oil as per the manufacturers recommendations.
- Clean or change the air cleaner/filter.
- Keep the air intake grill clear of grass clippings to ensure proper cooling of the engine.
- Lubricate all recommended points and check oil levels in transmissions, if fitted. Do not over grease.
- Check belt or chain transmission systems. As the cylinder and bottom blade are adjusted to accommodate wear, drive tensions may also need to be adjusted to prevent over tight running.
- Belts can crack and break with age so check their condition.
- Consider the need for a cylinder regrind and replacement of the bottom blade depending on their condition. Back lapping may be required.
- Ensure cylinder bearings are not worn. Check for excessive free play. Taper roller bearings may be adjusted.
- Adjust the cylinder and bottom blade as per the manufacturers recommendations. Some use the "air gap" principle, while others rely on cylinder to blade contact. Always follow the manufacturers recommendations.
- Carry out cylinder/bottom blade adjustments before setting the height of cut. As either is adjusted, height of cut is also changed.
- Check for worn roller bearings. An accurate height of cut cannot be achieved if there is free play in the bearings of both front and rear rollers.
- If Turf Groomers are fitted check the drive mechanism, blades, rollers and required operational depth as required.
- Ensure that transport wheels are inflated correctly (if pneumatic) and also that they can be removed easily and are not seized on to the drive shafts or hubs.
- Check all operating cables for wear and also adjust to ensure correct operation.
- Make an operational check of all OPC systems to ensure correct functionality.
- Keep the machine clean - always clean off grass clippings with a brush, compressed air or low pressure water from a hose.

With thanks to Nigel Church, Ransomes Jacobsen.



Pedestrian mowers: Simple checks to maintain quality



Regardless of make or model, a pedestrian cylinder mower needs to be checked over before it is used. This will apply equally to a mower that has been un-used following a service.



A small bend in a blade at the edge of the cylinder may be eased out using a light hammer. If in doubt, leave it to a specialist. With the mower up-ended, check for play in all bearings.



Where the cylinder and bottom knife operate with an air gap, check it is even across the face of the mower using a feeler gauge. Check with the manufacturer how this gap needs to be altered following back lapping. There are differences between makes and models.



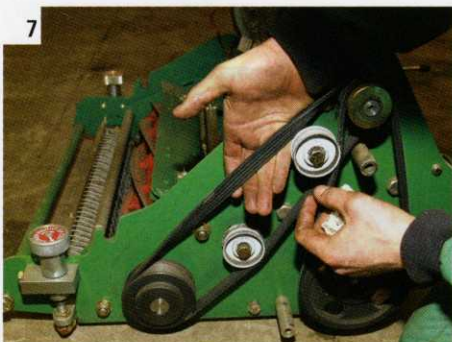
John Deere supplies its mowers with a simple setting bar that enables the rollers to be set so they run parallel to the bottom blade. This setting is critical on cylinder mowers.



Checking the oil in a mower engine is a routine job, but remember the engine needs to be level to get a true reading. A block of wood under the front roller will do the trick. If the oil is dirty, change it. Look for leaks and clean off any spills before mowing.



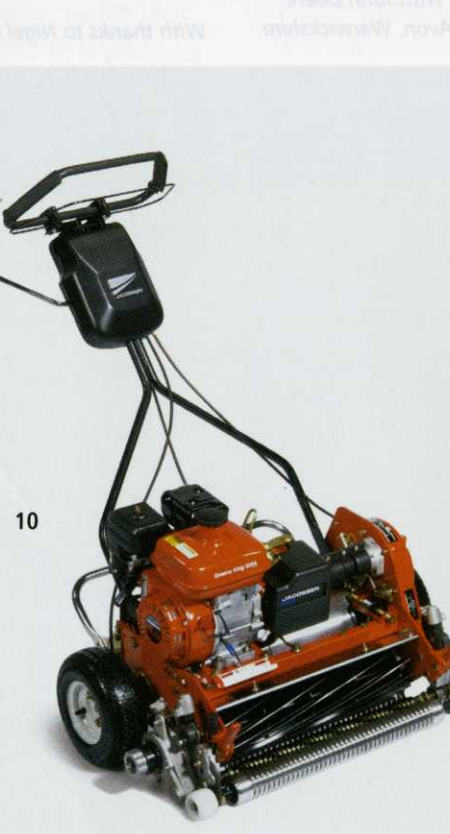
Ease out the starter cord, looking for damage particularly near the end. Any sign of fraying spells new cord time. It is easier to renew the cord than try to replace one that has snapped.



Belts need to be correctly tensioned to prevent slippage; an easy quarter of a turn on the belt is the typical maximum. If a belt drive machine is to be stored for an extended period, it can pay to remove the belts. If a belt shows signs of cracks or has been allowed to slip, it is best replaced.



Set the roller power brush so the bristles lightly touch the roller. If the bristles are bent over they will typically not do their job and the power brush may need renewing. This setting needs periodic checking.



Although it is never possible to keep a mower in showroom condition, a good clean before putting it away is a key maintenance task. It pays to grease the machine as it is put away and then again when it is next used. Wipe off surplus lubricant.

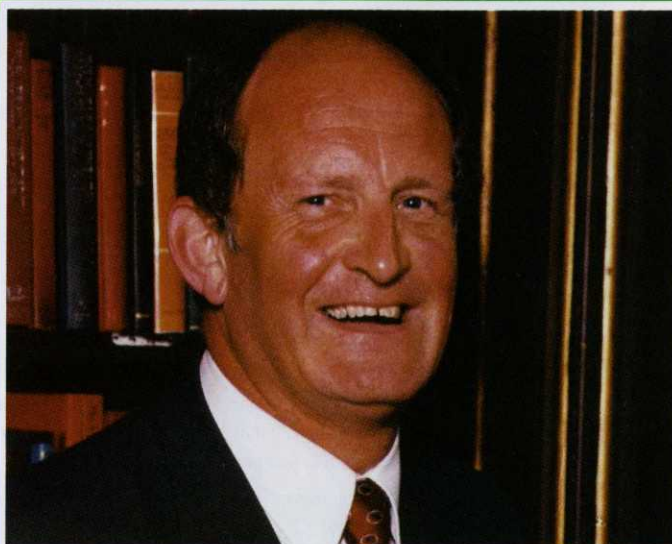


Transport wheels typically slide onto their shaft. To prevent them seizing, remove any corrosion with emery paper and apply a coat of copper grease. Check all fasteners, replacing any adjusters that are damaged or badly corroded.



Pedestrian mowers differ in many subtle ways, so do not assume knowledge with a particular make and model automatically applies to other designs. Well maintained kit will have lower whole life operating costs, be easier to operate and do a better job.

What's your Number?



Name: Colin Gregory

Company: Massey Ferguson

Position: Groundcare and Utility Vehicle Manager

How long have you been in the industry?

"I joined Ransomes in 1966."

How did you get into it?

"My father was a Sales Manager of a dealership in Norfolk."

What other jobs have you done?

"I've been in the Agricultural and Groundscare industry all my working life."

What do you like about your current job?

"Working as part of team in a company which supports your decisions."

What changes have you seen during your time in the industry?

"Loads - Massive changes in Grass Cutting Machinery and the use of Compacts."

What do you like to do in your spare time?

"What spare time? The little time I have, I spend gardening and watching golf."

Where do you see yourself in 10 years time?

"Happily retired watching MF Groundscare grow and grow."

Who do you consider to be your best friends in the industry?

"Too many to mention. The industry is incestuous."

What do you consider to be your lucky number?

"No 1."

Pick a number.

"12."

You've picked Andy Cornes from Acorn Golf, do you know him?

"He is not known to me."

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Sustainable Solutions By Richard Fry

For turf grass professionals, a dense, healthy plant and consistent playing surface are key goals.

The achievement of these targets is extremely challenging, requiring the use of pesticides, fertilisers, soil conditioners, wetting agents and water, together with certain intensive management practices such as regular mowing and aeration regimes to achieve and sustain the desired condition.

For example, modern golf course greens are mowed at a height of 3-4mm and are designed to receive the majority of the wear even though the total green's surface can be as little as 3% of the total playing area of a golf course. However, even under intensive management, the goal of turf sustainability is becoming the main focus of attention as greenkeepers, agronomists and research organisations work to identify turfgrass management systems that are more efficient, thus requiring less inputs.

Increased use of wetting agents (surfactants) can improve aspects of turf sustainability by increasing uniform soil wetting and decreasing irrigation requirements. Water conservation is a major issue and any savings in water usage on turf by reducing the amount of supplementary irrigation will be welcomed.

Incorporating a wetting agent in to the turf management programme will maximise infiltration and minimise runoff and help retain water within the soil profile. With these gains, golf courses can be maintained with reduced pesticide, fertiliser and water needs; benefits that are consistent with the aims for sustainability.

Wetting agents are often referred to as surfactants. The word "surfactant" is actually derived from the words, surface active agent.

The application of wetting agents on turf is not new as products for this use have been around since the early sixties. However, their use was quite limited as in the early years the formulations available were basically industrial surfactants such as Teepol. It was not until the early eighties that wetting agents, developed specifically for use on fine turf, became more widely accepted throughout the UK.

IMPROVED WATER UTILISATION

Wetting agents work by lowering the cohesive and adhesive water surface tensions and this allows the water to more easily move into the soil and thatch instead of just laying on the surface or running off sloping contours. The benefit of applying a programme of wetting agents therefore is improved water utilisation, whether from natural rainfall or applied irrigation.

Historically, some UK soils in which turf is grown are hydrophilic. A hydrophilic surface will readily suck up the water until it reaches a state of full absorptency.

However, there are many soils that are referred to as hydrophobic as they do not have the ability to rapidly soak up water and in most cases will repel any absorption. Many of these soils, and also sand based constructions, will have particles that have formed an organic, waxy coating that will repel moisture. With out treatment these water repellent soils will cause major problems with localised dry spots (LDS) that will not support root development or plant regeneration.



As an example, to better understand the interaction of surfaces in regard to surface tension, absorption and repellency, a simple experiment can be carried out by placing a water droplet on a piece of blotting paper and another on wax paper. The blotting paper is generally hydrophilic, which means the water droplet is not affected by surface tension and the paper's adhesion between the water molecules and itself are greater than that of the water's molecules alone. So the water is absorbed quite readily. When attempting the same experiment on wax paper, the droplet does not separate and beads up. This is because the wax paper is hydrophobic and does not allow for the absorption of water rapidly. It is the wax coating on the paper whose molecules are weaker than that of the water, so absorption does not take place. It is this wax-coating example that has led to a high level of research into developing formulations that will allow water to be absorbed by hydrophobic soils.

STANDARD WETTING AGENTS ALONE ARE NOT THE ANSWER:

Though treating turf surfaces with standard wetting agents will infiltrate the ground by force of gravity and allow some spreading to occur, complete wetting of the soil rootzone will not happen.

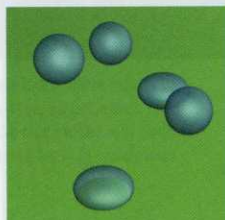
Infact, these products will only act as a maintenance tool to manage the symptoms. They cannot and will not address the cause. As a result, those areas left untreated within the soil profile will continue to be water-repellent. When subject to a sequence of wet/dry cycles, these areas develop dry spots and high spots. Sloped contours are highly vulnerable to these conditions.

It is important to note that dry spots can occur for many reasons on greens. Other causes that should be examined are compaction problems, excessive thatch accumulation, insect and disease presence and poor irrigation coverage.

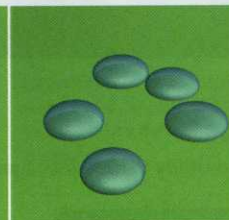
To counter the problems associated with standard wetting agents one company, Rigby Taylor has undertaken a great deal of research into complete immersion technologies that addresses the problem in three ways; 1. Initial soil penetration, 2. Rootzone wetting & spreading and 3. Soil profile re-wetting.



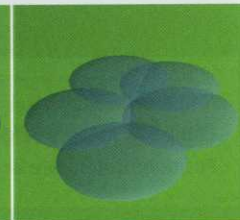
Soil core showing a conventional wetter



Conventional wetting agent droplets



Wetting agents with some spreading characteristics



Complete Immersion technology

This unique, three-in-one approach, allows the wetting agent to achieve a strong attraction between the applied product molecules and the soil particles. This attraction converts a water repellent soil in to one that is water receptive with the result that the wetting agent more easily penetrates the soil surface and thatch layer. The wetting agent spreads both vertically and laterally across the water repellent zone and advances deeper into the rootzone.

SOIL RE-WETTING

The hydrophobic (water repellent) end of the re-wetting molecule attaches itself to the waxes and lipids covering the soil and sand particles.



The hydrophilic (water-loving) end which attracts the water molecules so allowing the soil to re-wet. The extended chain is very stable and so provides a long-lasting effect.

The advanced immersion re-wetting technology ensures that once penetration of the target rootzone has taken place, a dry soil will be re-wetted in 4-6 hours and visible effects can be seen in 48 hours.

When it comes to selecting a turf wetting agent it is vital that the buyer selects from a reliable and proven source, one that can provide technical advice and ongoing support. There are many products currently being promoted within the industry but it is important that the right product is selected for a particular problem. It is also important to stick to the recommended programme. It took a long time for the problem to occur so there are no quick-fix methods in its removal.



Soil core showing Complete Immersion Technology benefits

Richard Fry works for Greenlink International. For further information contact Rigby Taylor on Freephone: 0800 424 919 or visit: www.rigbytaylor.com

A portrait of Billy McMillan, a middle-aged man with light brown hair, wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and a red and blue striped tie. He is smiling slightly and looking towards the camera. In the background, there are green plants with purple flowers. On his left lapel, there is a circular embroidered badge featuring a globe and a golf club, with the text 'BIGGA CHAIRMAN 2007' below it.

No Introduction Necessary

Scott MacCallum meets BIGGA's new Chairman, Billy McMillan – a man who could be known as Number 20.

It is often said, when introducing someone who everyone knows, that, "They need no introduction..." but then the person is given one anyway. I'm going to fall into that very same trap when I say, "BIGGA's new National Chairman needs no introduction." You'll understand what I mean when I explain that the man who took over the Chairmanship of the Association from Richard Whyman at the AGM last month is Billy McMillan, Course Manager at Tyrrells Wood Golf Club, in Leatherhead, Surrey, and a member of the most famous family in greenkeeping.

Meet the Chairman

In being appointed Chairman Billy becomes the first son to follow father and in much the way George W. Bush is referred to as "43" and his father, George Bush Snr, as "41", in terms of US Presidents, we could call Billy "20" and his dad, Jack, "2". The Duracel battery-operated former Sunningdale Course Manager, and current European Tour Consultant, was the second Chairman of the Association in the late 80s.

"When Richard asked me I was quite humbled and very honoured to have been asked. It's very personal, done by phone call rather than a letter, and you're given time to think about it, because you do need time to reflect and take stock, as well as put the support networks in place that you are going to need during the tenure of Chairmanship," explained Billy, as we sat in his office overlooking an extremely windy Tyrrell's Wood.

In the end he took about three weeks before committing, not because he had any doubts about taking on the role, but to ensure he had the full support of all concerned before accepting.

"Your heart says to take it straight away but your head urges you to check everything out first. I also sought advice for previous Chairmen, as well as John Pemberton at BIGGA HOUSE, on the amount of time that is required to devote to the role and then armed with this information took it to the golf club so they were well aware of what it would entail," he said, adding that when it comes to priorities the golf club's needs would always take precedence.

Billy has spoken to his dad about his new role, and Jack and his mum, Rita, are extremely proud of their son's new Association role.

"He was particularly chuffed that I'd been asked and I'm proud of what he and the Walters (Woods) of this world have done for greenkeeping. We were very lucky to have the calibre and profile of people around in those early days and that they had the time and energy required to move the Association forward. We owe them a great debt of gratitude for their

courage, foresight and wisdom because without them we wouldn't be as strong an Association today."

As you can well imagine Billy's greenkeeping education began almost as soon as he could walk.

"Since I was knee high to a Dunlop 65," he says, using the wit and turn of phrase that seminar delegates the world over have enjoyed through the years.

"At Cardross Golf Club, near Glasgow, my brothers and I would be out divotting, or, following the boys who were hand cutting greens, switching and clearing up. The great thrill was when we were allowed to wash their machines and then drive them back into the shed – we were so small the handles were above our

heads. It was a passion even then," he said, talking of innocent times denied youngsters today because of much tighter Health and Safety legislation.

Currently the oldest in the family, Stewart, is Course Manager at Mill Ride; Bobby is at Hendon; Ian, a former winner of the Toro Award for Excellence in Greenkeeping, is three miles from Billy at Walton Heath, and Cameron is at Queenwood. Sister, Heather, is not a greenkeeper but is an equally important member of the dynasty.

Funnily enough Jack implored his boys not to become greenkeepers because of the poor money and poor working conditions. Initially Billy took him at his word.

"When I left school at 16 I was going to be a plumber in Dumbarton but my dad came to see us when we were at cadet camp and told us we were moving to England. I was full of doom and gloom and said I was going to be a plumber, but he said he'd got me a job with him as a greenkeeper. So much for his earlier advice!"

Billy and his twin brother, Bobby, joined Jack at Bushill Park Golf Club in North London as Apprentice Greenkeepers.

**"Your heart says to take it...
but your head urges you to
check everything out first."**



Tyrrell's Wood Team

"I remember dad putting his arm round Bob and me on our first day and saying we must never sacrifice quality for quantity – we must always do a quality job... but if we weren't back by 8 o'clock he'd kick our backsides. So he not only insisted on quality but indoctrinated us with productivity as well."

Billy stayed at Bushill Park until he was 17 and a half when he got his first Head Greenkeeper's job. He had to fib at the interview to get it, saying he was 18.

"It was a nine hole course near Reading, then called the Black Swan Golf Club, now it's Hurst GC, and I had a husband and wife team working with me. They were from a farming background and were great. They didn't know much about greenkeeping but they taught be a lot about driving tractors and tying knots. They were good times."

From there he moved to Cray Valley, in Kent.

"It was a very commercial operation and we built an extra nine holes while I was there and learned a lot about driving lorries and 360 diggers. I also met my wife while I was there."

From Kent he was tempted by the opportunity of working at Badgemore Park, at Henley-on-Thames.

"I've never been reluctant to move for work. Greenkeepers are slightly nomadic, Scottish greenkeepers particularly so, and it lets you experience life and different conditions. No two golf courses are the same and I've been fortunate to work on London clays, heathland, chalk downland and it all helps make you a better greenkeeper."

After the spell at Badgemore Billy was asked by his dad to join him at Sunningdale in the run up to the 1987 Walker Cup match.

"I became Old Course Foreman and it was a very special time for me at Sunningdale. You couldn't buy that sort of experience and preparing the course for the Walker Cup was wonderful."

"The club's resolve was without compromise, and when it came to greenkeeping, organisational skills and dedication my dad was leading edge. I don't think we'll ever get him to retire but we're hopeful of getting him to slow down to six days a week."

From Sunningdale, Billy moved to Effingham Golf Club, a mere four miles from Tyrrell's Wood, and a fine chalk downland course. He remained there until he was drawn to the newly built Wildwood Country Club in 1992.

"Wildwood was a real reality check on life for me as we had to secure membership from zero in a very tough market place so the product had to be perfect. It was a tough school."

The club ran into financial difficulties and was sold to a Japanese company and Billy's job was extended to become Group Course Manager, overseeing final construction of Lamerwood Country Club, in Hertfordshire.

"I did this for six months when they said they asked me to become General Manager. I thought they meant of Wildwood Country Club but they meant Group General Manager. Another enormous challenge," said Billy.

"The Managing Director was Mr Takabatake, but we all shortened that to Mr T. He enjoyed that and we found it easier to spell. He was, and still is, very kind to me and told me I could have all the assistance I needed to do the job. He also told me, and this is a great lesson in instilling confidence in people, that I would never make the wrong decision - which meant he would back me 100% - but that we might discuss things from time to time should I get it wrong."

Billy had responsibility for all aspects of the clubs from the golf operation through to the golf course but always ensured that he had an active role on the greenkeeping side of the operation.

"It was an enormous job – For four years I was driving thousands of miles a year and I probably wasn't home enough. That's probably why I'm



divorced now, my work/life balance was wrong."

The catalyst for change came when Wildwood was sold leaving Billy facing a 75 mile journey each day to his place of work so he moved to Mannings Heath Golf Club until his current role at Tyrrells Wood, which he took on three years ago.

"I really do feel blessed. I don't think I've ever worked for a nicer, warmer and friendlier membership and I feel I've got the balance between my work and home commitments about right."

In three years on the golf course the team has remodelled huge parts of the golf course and they have increased the machinery base to become an impressive fleet of machinery while they have also invested in new irrigation.

"It has all been a huge commitment for this members' club."

Billy is a self-confessed people person and is thoroughly looking forward to the opportunity to meet many more people than would be the case in normal circumstances.

"I want to open my ears and listen to the problems that people are experiencing and share the burden with them. That's the great thing about

BIGGA, people can share difficulties and problems and seek advice and help. It is such a generous industry, I've never been charged for good advice in my life. At Harrogate you talk with greenkeepers to three or four o'clock in the morning, get up at six and do it all again.

"I'll do the best I can to represent BIGGA in all regards. I'm sure there will be issues for the Association to involve ourselves with over the next 12 months which will be emotive, tough, exciting and rewarding. We have to continue to progress the Association to secure its future because if we don't we do everything that has gone on before a disservice. Nothing stands still so we must continue to develop and I'm sure we will have to work closely with all the staff at BIGGA HOUSE to that end."

Billy has six children to keep him on the straight and narrow – Laura (23), whose son and daughter make Billy a grandfather; Lewis (21); Amy (19); Billy (14); Shannon (13) and Summer (9).

If he has one piece of advice for all greenkeepers up and down the country it is.

"Remember to go home. Your family do need to see you sometimes too."

Keeping it Green



Scott MacCallum pays a visit to John Deere's UK headquarters and finds out that for such a huge company, success in the golf and grounds care industry may be relatively recent, but it's continuing to grow.



Type the name "John Deere" into Google and do you know how many entries come up? Over 2,470,000. Reduce that to just "Deere" and it's over 11,600,000, with virtually every one of them referring to "John Deere".

That's just a measure of the size of the John Deere company worldwide and the impact the green machines have had on the world. But don't just make the mistake of thinking that John Deere is purely and simply a manufacturer of agricultural, grounds care and domestic machinery. There is also a huge industry in children's toys, whether it be ride-on tractors or die-cast models; a John Deere baseball cap is now a sought after piece of apparel, while John Deere also sponsors a tournament on the US Tour which receives additional publicity each year as it offers a single qualifying spot for The Open Championship – giving Michelle Wie, a regular sponsor's invitee, a much hyped chance to be the first woman to appear in a men's Major.



Horne Park GC from Surrey at Reynolds Plantation Resort, Georgia, USA at the John Deere World Championship Golf Tournament final last November. Left to right: Club Owner Neil Burke, John Deere Dealer Salesman Andy Page of Palmer's Turfcare at Hailsham, East Sussex, Richard Whyman of BIGGA, Secretary Elaine Purton, Head Greenkeeper Danny O'Rourke

It may therefore be surprising to learn that John Deere in the UK recently celebrated a joint anniversary – completing 40 years in the agricultural market and 20 in the grounds care division. In that time John Deere has made a huge impact on the golf market, and the distinctive green liveried machines can be seen at many clubs in all parts of the country.

"We built our business in agriculture around strong customer support and without a doubt that was a key element in how we were able to grow our grounds care business so rapidly – focusing on product and parts backup, and overall offering a level of support that was new to the grounds care business," explained Richard Johnson, who became managing director of John Deere Limited in the UK & Ireland last year.

"Our challenge now is to sustain that and to keep ourselves ahead of the competition. While we feel we have set the benchmark in this area, our competitors are always looking to try and close the gap."

So how do Richard and his staff of 117 at the John Deere Limited headquarters at Langan, near Nottingham, plan to move forward?

"We enjoy a reasonable market share in golf, but with the depth of the product line we have and the opportunities presented by the new products coming through, we certainly don't feel as if we've exhausted our growth in the golf market, and we look forward to increasing this in the future."

With expansion in the golf market seen as steady off, at best, such confidence is admirable. Richard is not gazing into a rose tinted crystal ball, however, but is merely hinting at what John Deere may be bringing to the market place over the next few years.

"We are always looking at new technology. A good example of this is our new 2500E hybrid greens mower, which combines conventional diesel power with electric motors to drive the cutting reels, and this machine has already become well established at golf courses throughout the UK and Ireland. On the agricultural side we have developed market leading GPS



Richard Johnson



David Hart

guidance systems, and these are the types of cutting edge technology that the company is constantly looking to transfer across the divisions."

John Deere has always been renowned for the importance it places on research and development, and the company regularly takes greenkeepers from all over the world to its feedback sessions, with the information exchange providing much for the JD boffins to chew on.

"Today John Deere worldwide spends something in the order of \$1.5 million a day on R&D, and a key part of this is our feedback sessions," says Richard. "We have held them for many years and do so to find out what the customer – the greenkeeper – is looking for from our product range, whether it be concept machines which may take five years to come to the market place, if they make it at all, or refinements to the ergonomics of machines which are much closer to being available for sale."

And the information that the company gleans from this influx of course managers is rarely wasted.

"Many of our golf and turf machines over the years have been based on asking greenkeepers what they want to see in the future, and trying to develop the products around the answers they give, with environmental issues such as noise pollution and the risk of oil leakages on greens becoming increasingly important. So if we can save the end user money in running costs, and if we have a product that is more environmentally friendly, then everybody benefits."

Richard has been with John Deere since 1988, when he joined as a business management trainee having studied agricultural engineering at Harper Adams Agricultural College in Newport, Shropshire. Following spells as a groundscape territory manager and then homeowner equipment product manager, he became UK business development manager.

Richard then moved to Germany in 2001 for a two and a half year stint at the European HQ in Mannheim as European parts & service manager, covering the agricultural side of the business. He returned to the UK as agricultural division sales manager for southern England, before being appointed managing director in succession to Alec McKee in January last year.

"I'm lucky to have sampled life on both the groundscape and agricultural sides of the company," he adds. "Working in Germany was also extremely valuable in gaining a wider perspective of the business, on both a European and global basis."

While Richard is the MD, the man who is now the public face of John Deere's groundscape division is David Hart.

David is another agricultural engineering

student, this time from Lincolnshire College of Agriculture & Horticulture, and he joined the industry 22 years ago as a salesman with John Deere dealership Ben Burgess. He entered the John Deere fold six years later as an area manager, product support for the agricultural division, and moved on to become an agricultural territory manager based in the south west of England.

After five years he then moved to Langar as product manager for harvesting equipment, including combine harvesters, balers and mowers, before becoming commercial & consumer equipment division manager in 2003.

It may have been by a long and circuitous route, but David eventually got to where he wanted to be because groundscape is in the blood – his late

father, Ernie, was both a member of the IOG and a BIGGA Life Member.

Having already attended many of the company's feedback sessions, David is well placed to see whether there are regional differences in what the world's course managers are looking for.

"To be honest there are more similarities between golf and turf products around the world than there are in commercial mowing, for example, where you see a lot of localised or regional trends," he says.

A large proportion of the work carried out at John Deere's Langar headquarters is education and training related, with four full time trainers, five classrooms and four dedicated, state-of-the-art workshops designed specifically to help both dealer staff and end users become well acquainted with the full product range.

"We have a network of 120 dealers in the agricultural business and 44 in the golf and turf market, as well as 38 dedicated dealers on the homeowner side," reveals Richard.

Added to that the John Deere website, one of those millions of Google entries, is becoming increasingly valuable in allowing customers to do their homework and benchmarking in advance before they venture out to a dealer.

John Deere has been a Golden Key Supporter for over 10 years now and the company is committed to supporting BIGGA into the future.

"We have had a very strong relationship with BIGGA over the years and we view the activities of the association and what it does for the industry as a whole very favourably," says Richard.

"We have been very happy to support these activities through different means of sponsorship, and as both John Deere and the industry move forward I do believe that BIGGA has a key role to play."

Already prominent in that support is the donation BIGGA receives from the John Deere Team Championship – the combined golf club and dealer event for which the association receives £25 for every team entered (the donation from the 2006 event was £7200).

The Great Britain event (an equivalent is also held in Ireland) involves qualifying tournaments around the country, with a grand final – last year held at East Sussex National – from which the winning team, comprising club captain, club secretary, course manager and the dealer, goes on to represent GB every alternate year in the John Deere World Championships held in the USA.

So there you have it. John Deere is a huge multinational company, and its UK and Ireland arm is very much committed to the future well being of BIGGA and greenkeepers in both countries. And thanks to this article there will now be over 11,600,001 entries on Google!



Gregg Breningmeyer, Deere & Company's Worldwide Golf and Turf, Sales and Marketing Director presented Past Chairman, Richard Whyman with a donation to BIGGA

In the Shed

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

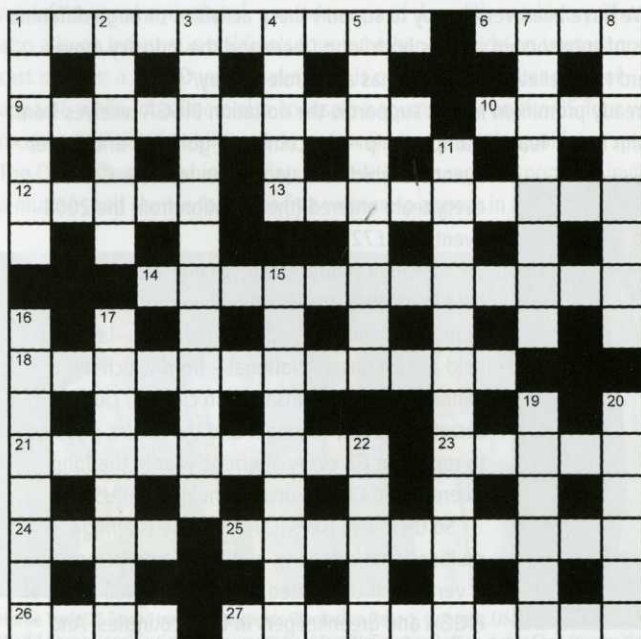
CROSSWORD - Compiled by Anax

ACROSS

- 1 Toadyishly attentive (10)
- 6 Vehicle, name derived from "general purpose" (4)
- 9 Composer of Orfeo, the first recognised opera (10)
- 10 Long cry, typically canine (4)
- 12 Minimal in magnitude (5)
- 13 Single notch, or row of notches (9)
- 14 Specialised, incomprehensible language (12)
- 18 Above reproach, especially in a way considered to be superficial (7-5)
- 21 Enthusiastically pursuing something (2,4,3)
- 23 Feeling of boredom (5)
- 24 Wide-screen cinema format launched in the 1960s (4)
- 25 Cut of meat taken from either side of the spine (6-4)
- 26 Oddball character, often one with extensive technical knowledge (4)
- 27 Kaiser Chiefs' 2005 album (10)

DOWN

- 1 Decorative covering of brass, made to look like gold (6)
- 2 Grammatical arrangement of words in a sentence (6)
- 3 Suspect, dubious (12)
- 4 Intestinal blockage (5)
- 5 Offer discount against competition (9)
- 7 Email addition, often called a smiley (8)
- 8 Director of the 2002 film The Pianist (8)
- 11 Queen of England who was beheaded and replaced by Mary Tudor (4,4,4)
- 15 Hair-care product introduced in 1929 (9)
- 16 Would-be (8)
- 17 The right to vote (8)
- 19 Light sleep (6)
- 20 Seal used to mark official documents (6)
- 22 Singing style in which the voice changes rapidly between normal and falsetto (5)

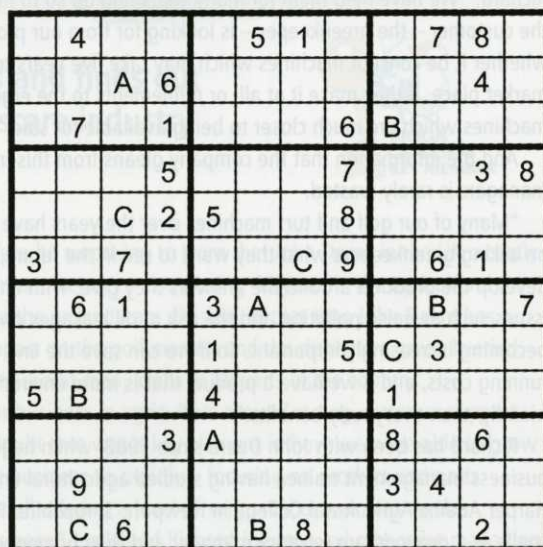


QUICK 'NINE HOLE' QUIZ

1. Name the Irish golfer famous for holding the winning putt for the European team in the 2002 Ryder Cup and ending up in the lake at the Belfry.
2. Who designed the original Volkswagen?
3. Runner-up in 1996, 1997 and 2001, who became World Rally Champion in 1995?
4. What is the name for the highest point on a triangle?
5. Who took a hat trick against Australia at Sydney in 1999?
6. Which part of the body is the scapula?
7. Name the only England manager to begin his managerial career at Lincoln City.
8. Who wrote The Last of the Mohicans?
9. What is acrophobia?

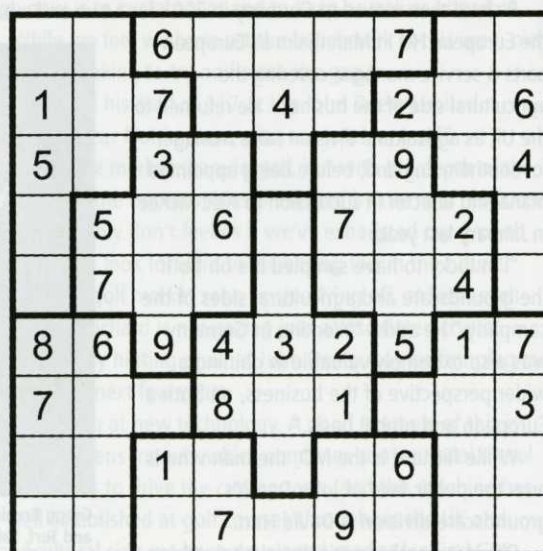
MONSTER SUDOKU

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x4 box contains the numbers 1 to 9 and the letters A, B and C.



SQUIGGLY SUDOKU

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 12 box shape contains the numbers 1 to 9.



Supplied by
www.dailysudoku.com

ANSWERS TO ALL THE PUZZLES ARE SHOWN ON PAGE 59

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GROUND CARE



News from the Chief Executive

Harrogate Week 2007 – a week to remember for all the right reasons. There is no doubt that this event has grown to be the major turf management Conference and Exhibition in Europe. The support by members was unprecedented while exhibitors extolled the virtues of being there with many rebooking for 2008 at the show. I was pleased to witness crowded halls and very busy education workshops and seminars, proving to those sceptics that predicted a poor attendance that there is a healthy demand for an annual event and that Harrogate is a viable venue.

Harrogate Week 2007 will produce a good profit, however, not good enough for this size of event to be acceptable for the long-term success of the Association without some sort of cut to overheads. Plans for Harrogate Week 2008 are already under way and the major machinery manufacturers have expressed a wish to exhibit in accordance with their marketing strategy. Just where they will be allocated space will need careful consideration and full consultation however exhibitors in 2007 have been assured priority booking until February 28.

FEGGA is playing a pivotal role in the development of greenkeeping across Europe, especially in the 'emerging' countries. BIGGA, once a founder member, withdrew its membership several years ago, mainly due to a difference of opinion between the two organisations. Times have moved on and differences have been resolved. Unification is the way forward and BIGGA has applied to rejoin following discussions with the executive of FEGGA. The application will be considered in February at FEGGA's AGM and Conference in Slovenia.

FEGGA, BIGGA and the GTC are in discussions regarding the introduction of Pan-European greenkeeping qualifications that will facilitate a better understanding of the skill levels of those wishing to work outside their native country and Ken Richardson, BIGGA's Education and Training Manager, will be able to give you more information.

10 years ago we were expressing concerns about increasing pressure relating to environmental issues. Today those issues have been developed into major political agendas and golf is very much in the forefront. There is no doubt that resources such as water and chemical treatments will come under more and more scrutiny and BIGGA is working with or represented on several focus groups in an attempt to manage change rather than be driven by it. Golf as a business is also changing and the boom period of the 1990's is now behind us all. Golfers expect to be able to play 365 days of the year on courses that are in their opinion perfect. In general there is keen competition between clubs for members and visitors to the point where more and more clubs are becoming heavily reliant upon casual green fees. Those that have so far escaped this treadmill are fortunate.

Like it or not we live in a climate where numbers count and the larger any organisation can become the more chance it has of having an effective voice both commercially and politically. To this end, as you may be aware, representatives of the BIGGA Board of Management recently met with representatives of the IOG and it has been agreed that the two organisations will look at the potential of a strategic merger for the benefit of their respective memberships. I am aware that this is a very emotive issue and there will be a diverse range of views. There will be transparency of operation and detailed consultation with the members at all stages. I would urge your patience and ask that you consider matters fully rather than adopting a 'knee jerk' reaction. Reservations by members of both the IOG and BIGGA will be addressed and it is the intention to be able to put a detailed proposal to members of both organisations in January 2008. The Board assures the membership that no binding agreement will be made without their approval. There is no doubt that a merger would bring new challenges, however, it will also bring new opportunities that will benefit both greenkeepers and groundsman. I will be happy at any time to discuss the proposals with members who can either ring me at Headquarters or send me an email. During the course of 2007 my colleagues and I intend visiting many of the Section and Region events and I hope that members will take the opportunity to speak with us on this and any other matter. Your views are important and will help us develop the Association.

John Pemberton

SCOTTISH REGION

CENTRAL

First things first, I hope you all had a good Christmas and a Happy New Year.

It's the time of year when we all have our Christmas nights out, go for a meal and a drink and thank your staff for their support and commitment over the past season. This year we (The Scoonie Boys) met up with the Leven Links Lads for a games night, pool, darts, and bowls, Scoonie went down 2-1 – I think we were at a disadvantage as I have heard that the Leven lads have a pool table and darts board in there booth, true or not? Mind you there's always next year.

By the time you read this BTME will have come and gone - a great place to meet old friends, make new ones, eat good food, and have a few shandies. There is a great opportunity to learn something new from the excellent workshops and seminars on offer. Anyone that hasn't been to BTME should make a point of planning a trip down next year.

I'd like to extend a warm welcome to Alistair Tough, (Auchterarder GC), James Wilson, (St Andrews Links Trust) and Stuart Harley, (Royal Burgess), who all joined the Section recently. I look forward to meeting you at future events.

As for Section news the spring outing this year is at Panmure, a qualifying course for the 2007 open at Carnoustie, to be granted permission to play prior to the qualifying is a major coup for the Section. Many thanks to all involved in achieving this. This will be a superb test of golf for all and places will be on a first come first served basis, so please return forms as soon as you receive them. The Central Section looks forward to seeing you on the day.

Frank Newberry, who many of you may know already, presented the evening seminar, at Elmwood last month. 14 guys turned out to listen to Frank's enthusiastic presentation which kept everyone entertained, and the topic (The Influential Greenkeeper) was of great interest to us all.

Let's get involved, it's your Section

The Section are arranging various workshops in 2007 dates and time can be found on our website. If there are any subjects you think we haven't covered and would like to have, please get in touch and the committee will endeavour to arrange one. The website is growing all the time with good articles and interesting pictures, but we need your help, please send anything you would like added to the site i.e. pics, articles, any news you want to share with the Section, lets get involved it's your Section.

Well that's me, I better go dry off my wet clothes, this rain! When will it snow? (Just joking)

Bye for now

Derek Scott

Chairman

www.biggacentralsection.org.uk

EAST

I write this report with the festive season fast becoming a distant memory and Harrogate looming large before my eyes!

The weather, apart from a few days of sharp frost during Christmas, has been unseasonably mild with high winds and torrential rain falling during December and the early part of January - The exception to the rule being the Aberdeen area where less than 60mm of rain fell during December.

On Friday, March 2, Ratho Park GC, in conjunction with the Scottish Golf Environment Group, are holding an Open Forum to discuss climate change and environmental issues affecting golf clubs. The organisers are hoping for a good turnout from Greenkeepers and Groundsmen, as well as their own club members. The speakers on the night, which starts at 7.30pm, are as follows; Carolyn Headly – SGEG; Stuart Smith – Lothian Bat Group;

Richard Windows – STRI; Chris White – Cut Above, Tree Surgeons. For further information, or to book your place, contact Tom Murray: on 0131 333 4126 or: 07709 960163.

I have news this month of two former East Section members. The first, Richard Mullen, former head man at Swanston and latterly at Old Meldrum, has moved along the road to take the position of Deputy at the acclaimed Meldrum House Golf Resort. The vacant post at Old Meldrum has been filled by Robert O'Donnell who served his apprenticeship at Torphin Hills under two head men, Graeme Hobbs and the current incumbent Ruairidh Campbell. A young man also on the move is Danny Murray, recently returned from his time at Winged Foot, scene of the 2006 US Open, he has now joined Chris Kennedy's ex-pats at Wentworth, where I understand he is working on the West Course.

Finally, I had a discussion this week with my fellow scribe who writes the North Section report, Robert Patterson, about the difficulty in obtaining information for the monthly column. We agreed that the column is only as good as the information provided, so please help us by passing on your news and views!

Until next month,
Don't work too hard!
Mike Dooner

NORTH

Harrogate will have come and gone by now, and I'm sure there will have been a few sore heads that week. I hope it went well for you all.

Bob Hardie from Craibstone GC will now be doing the 200 club. He took over from Hugh McClatchie after the AGM in October. I think Hugh deserves a vote of thanks from all members for keeping the 200 club going, even when members weren't buying the tickets. So well done Hugh, your efforts are appreciated and all your hard work over the years.

During late February a letter will go out from Bob about the 200 club, which is again being sponsored by Scotts and we thank them and Gary Smith for their support this year. There are currently around 140 tickets being used by the membership but it would be beneficial to the Section as a whole if more members would take the tickets that are left to boost funds. Bob has said that any members without a ticket can send him a text message on: 07841-993772 with their membership number and he will forward a ticket to them. The fee at £7 is still very good value.

There is very little happening in the Section at the moment. The weather so far this winter has been favourable but I said that last year and we ended up with a foot of snow for a fortnight in March, so here's hoping it won't get too bad.

Robert N Patterson
Royal Aberdeen GC

WEST

Happy New Year to everyone in the Section, I hope you all got the presents you wanted from Santa.

On walking home on Hogmanay through the gales and heavy rain I was approaching our golf club road and I looked to my left hand side and saw a 25 foot lime lying across the road so I had to return to work to remove the tree so members celebrating their New Year's party could get home so it was a great start to my New Year.

I was very fortunate to win this year's Patrons Award from the Section, I attended the awards dinner at the Terraces Hotel – it was a first class day with the speaker John Copland giving a first class speech.

The patrons do a first class job within the whole of the Scottish region and I would like to thank you on behalf of all the winners from all the Sections in Scotland.

Myself and Steven Sheehan from East Kilbride GC will be attending Harrogate as part of our prize.

Many thanks to Peter Boyd for arranging the day's events. I would like to wish Stuart Greenwood all the best over the next two years as new Chairman of the Scottish Region, I know Stuart will do a great Job.

We would like to welcome a new member to the Section. Ian Craig from Elderslie GC – hope to see you at some events during 2007.

Congratulations to Jack Steadward who has left Douglas Park after 17 years service. Jack has taken up a new post at the Carrick Golf course on the banks of Loch Lomond, all the best from all at the Section.

On a sad note our thoughts go out to Alistair Connell who lost his partner Ann over the Christmas period. Alistair has been a long time member of the West Section and we pass on our condolences to all the family.

Course news – The months of November and December has brought us some miserable weather but spare a thought for George McCutcheon and his staff at Bellshill GC.

During the wet period the club has seen a spate of mindless vandalism, mostly on the greens in which the 18th and 15th were damaged by Diesel and all other greens badly dug up. On top of this 25 new standard trees were also destroyed, this industry is bad enough without idiots making our job harder.

Hopefully 2007 will bring better fortune for George and Bellshill GC.

Just to remind members our autumn outing will be held over Vale of Leven GC, during September.

We are still awaiting confirmation of our spring outing, hopefully this will be sorted as soon as possible.

We still intend to hold a trip to the Carrick GC during spring; the weather has held us back in confirming dates, members will be notified as soon as possible.

When you receive this report we will all be back from Harrogate planning our season's programmes, hopefully 2007 will bring us some good weather - it may even stop raining from time to time.

Well, that's all for now, see you next month.

Fraser Ross

Mobile: 07970 366 355

Email: karen.ross@tesco.net

NORTHERN REGION

NORTH EAST

Well not much to write about this month, just more bad news. Members are leaving the profession – Roy White and Andrew Morrison both from Stocksfield GC and A Wishart from Tyneside GC, looks like there could be a bit of movement within the Section shortly. I was talking to Craig Parkinson from Matfen Hall GC and he was telling me that the new nine holes will be opening in June for about 16 weeks, and I can tell you they are quite impressive holes.

Although we are losing three members, we have also gained two new ones and they are: James McCarthy, Whitley Bay and Robert Hill, Alnmouth Village GC - on behalf of the Section we wish you both well.

Due to a mix up at HQ, Jimmy's December notes were not published, so here they are:

In November we finally got our annual match against the East of Scotland played after being cancelled from October, and boy did we get a hammering losing 4-1, had it been played on the original date, I'm sure the score would have been reversed as at that time we had a full team. We had a couple of friends playing for us and also may I thank the two greenkeepers from the home club (Bamburgh Castle) for their part in the team – I reckon it would have been a 5-0 loss if it wasn't for them.

As most people knew, Stewarts of Edinburgh had sponsored this event for the last 25 years and recently have been taken over by Aitkens who have said that they are going to carry on with this event in the future, so it would be nice if more greenkeepers were eager to play – as they used to be once upon a time.

Jimmy Richardson



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NORTH WEST

As I compile these notes, Harrogate is only weeks away. I am looking forward to it to see what impact, if any, we will have this year. It is difficult compiling the notes because I have to submit them a month in advance and as I did not get a crystal ball for Christmas, I can't predict the future.

Please get in touch if you have anything you would like to share with us all, there must be many births, job changes or funny things that have happened – so please share them with us. Please support your Section this year; in 2006 all our events were well supported so please keep it up. If anyone has any news or just needs a little bit of advice, please contact the Secretary Bert Cross on: 0151 7245412 or myself on: 0151 2894625. Mt email address is: jsheehan@blueyonder.co.uk.

Chris Sheehan

BENEFIT GOLF DAY

Withington GC in Manchester, will be holding a Benefit Golf Day on Tuesday, March 20.

The day is to celebrate Head Greenkeeper of 26 years, Stuart Bridge's recovery. Stuart was involved in a motorbike accident on his way to work last November and is finally on the road to recovery.

The competition is open to greenkeepers, groundsmen and friends, and costs £20 per person (with a meal and prizes included).

The day will start at 10.30am and all the money raised will go to Stuart's family.

Those of you who are interested in coming are asked to phone Sid Pugh on: 07811522758 or Henry Royle on: 07850698138. Entries must be in by March 9.

SHEFFIELD

Firstly may I wish you all a belated Happy New Year, as there was no news for last month's edition.

On December 11, we held our Christmas competition and AGM at Worksoy GC. May I thank Worksoy for giving us the courtesy of their course which is very much appreciated. Unfortunately the weather tried its best to spoil things with very heavy overnight rain continuing into the morning but due to Worksoy's naturally good drainage we managed to play our competition, actually in very nice weather for December, when it stopped raining. Thanks go to Tim Gittins and his staff for the condition of Worksoy (nothing like dropping you in at the deep end Tim!) Tim had only been in charge at Worksoy for six weeks! Thanks also go to Mike Brier and Rigby Taylor for being the main sponsors of the event once again, your support of the section is appreciated. Thanks also to all the other trade and guests who provided prizes for the raffle. Final thanks go to Joe and Jayne and their staff for providing an excellent meal that was enjoyed by everyone.

I am sure that everyone enjoyed playing golf, even on the temporary greens and there was some very good scoring. The eventual winner was Stuart Fricker from Bondhay GC with 43 pts, congratulations Stuart (I think your Craig must have given you some tips!). 2. J Shaw, 43pts; 3. T Boyd, 42pts; 4. R Needham, 41pts; 5. A Whittington, 40pts.

Everyone who played received a prize as usual in our Christmas competition and with an excellent raffle table some people went home with a lot more than they came with, thanks to Peter Fell for selling the raffle tickets, once again you are a natural!

After the golf we held our AGM which was attended by a good number of our members. It ran fairly smoothly with nothing much to report really, apart from the Section had a very successful year again. There were two resignations from the committee – Dave Chappell and Kevin Kelsall, who I would both like to thank for all the work they have put into the section over the years, thank you! James Steven volunteered to come on to the committee, we all look forward to working with you this coming year.

The day was also a special day for three people in our section who had retired during the year and with well over 100 years service between them I think they all deserved their retirement gifts from the Section! They were:

Barry Lax, Les Easthope and Roy Ward, may you all have a long and enjoyable retirement. Barry and Roy received an engraved decanter each and Les received a printer/scanner. May I wish you all have a long and enjoyable retirement from everyone in the Sheffield Section.

Finally, congratulations go to Daryll Curtis on his appointment as Head Greenkeeper at Lofthouse Hill GC nr Wakefield, Daryll moves to Lofthouse from Lees Hall GC – all the best in the future Daryll from everyone in the Sheffield Section. Just to add to that, Dave Womack and all the greenkeepers at Lees Hall wish to say well done and good luck with your new job!

As usual, any news feel free to contact me on: 07793111845 or: jv.lax@tesco.net

John Lax

NORTH WALES

Hello everyone. Stuart from Lymm GC being your scribe this month.

Short notes this time I'm afraid after the BTME Swaray. Like the BBC 2 programme 'Have I got news for you,' this month we have a stand in presenter as Mr Andrew Cornes battles his Harrogate dinner addiction following on from the festivities and feasting. It is a sad and deliberating condition and we all wish him well. He is getting treatment as we speak, but I fear he may have to go 'cold turkey'.

Not much to report this month only to congratulate all involved in the Xmas tournament at Conwy GC. I have always had great memories of Conwy, catching crabs off the harbour, a pint in the Liverpool Arms, getting stuck in the smallest house in the UK and lovely Fish and Chips. Sadly I hope to very quickly forget all memories of this competition as we all played golf in the most horrendous of conditions. Blowing gales, horizontal driving rains, and the fact that, I could only manage four bacon sandwiches before we went out. The course was a credit to Dave Lewis and his team who battled the conditions to provide us all with a stern test. The hot showers were also fantastic as was the welcome, warming food. Thank you to all. The results are as follows: 1. Darren Anderson, Chris Langdon, John Lloyd Jones & Dave Austin; 2. Jeremy Hughes, Hadon Jones, Terry Dodd & George Whitbey; 3. Paul Walker, Trevor Rowlands & John Currie; Nearest the pin on the 2nd John Hunfries & 15th Joe Holdsworth.

The Spring North Wales/North West Seminar is hotting up already and looks to be a stonker! It's being held at Wilmslow GC on Friday, March 9. It starts at 9.15 and is carrying on from the "sustainable golf" theme from Harrogate. We don't want to bore people about this new buzzword so there will be a twist. It is hoped we can apply sustainability to the real world, and hopefully the speakers will reflect that.

The speakers are Steve Oultram – Sustainability at Wilmslow GC; Alistair Beggs (STRI) – Natural Greenkeeping and Disturbance Theory; John Allbutt – Chemicals and their Legislation (How we are to be affected); Stuart Yarwood (Course Manager Lymm GC) – We are not Alone! (A short story by a Gingerbread Man); Bob Taylor (STRI) – Sustainability and Ecology on the Golf Course; Frank Newberry – Getting your message across (The art of Communication) – and a couple of surprise guests, who will all add to a fantastic day! Details are being sent out as we speak so get your replies in early.

Hope all your wading through puddles is working off the Christmas wobbles and that it stops raining soon. It might even be nice to get a little frost. I have a very strange feeling it may be a late spring. Carrying on from the nice debate we had in Harrogate over a pint of crème de menthe in the warm snug of Wetherspoons.

Hope you had a good one and keep paddling.

But remember when the chips are down – "A positive attitude may not solve all your problems, but it will annoy enough people to make it worth the effort." – Herm Albright

Stuart Yarwood

MIDLAND REGION

EAST MIDLAND

Not much to report on this month besides the go-karting that has been booked for Wednesday, February 21. This will be a two man team event and there are still a few places remaining if you are interested. Please contact me (Dan Rodgers) on: 07745227224 or: HEAD.GREENKEEPER@SHIRLANDGOLFLUB.CO.UK.

The price for the event is £20.85 per person and there is a maximum of 24 places available.

Dan Rodgers

MIDLAND

Is it me or are we not supposed to fly south for the winter? Of course it is. I write this month's notes after spending New Year in Reykjavik, firework city or what! However, our old friend Steve Wood got it right. He moved to Bulgaria (nearly free smokes and ale), met a lass somewhat younger than himself and kept her in tow by having a little girl by her. Jessica (surely the English for Jalzekia) arrived December 4. Well done Steve and mother.

On December 8 we held our Christmas Tournament at Broadway GC. What wonderful views, we can see why Elgar was so inspired by such on his walks. This was further enhanced by the wonderful condition of the course as presented by Mr C Gough and his fine greenkeeping team, very well done folks. Our thanks to the Club for its warm welcome, and gratitude to the catering and bar staff for their fine food and service. It was great to see you Cedric after too many a year. The results: 1. S Thompson and E Stant; 2. L Swann and B Bouchier; 3. A Smith and 4. S Hart and M Gash. Nearest the Pin: E Stant. Longest Drive: P Woodham. Our thanks to our main prize table sponsor Mark Chamberlain/Tacit, Champaign Ville. An extra prize for Nearest the Pin in two was provided by N Tyler and won by M Hughes. Don't forget to get your entries in for the Spring Tournament to Gary, which is to be held at Ludlow GC on May 9.

As these notes are written before BTME you shall have to wait until next month for any poignant stories or news.

This month's Calendar picture has kindly been sponsored by Turner Groundscare/Robert Page. They have also, for a number of years, been kind enough to provide refreshments and sustenance in a mobile manner during our golfing events. "And then an angel appeared from within the woods" Our thanks to them for their continued support of our Section.

It gives me great pleasure to welcome two new members to our fine Section. Such being: Adam Wood (not related to the afore or below) and Ian Lloyd. Please remember that I am a link between you and many subsidised educational possibilities within our very diverse field of greenkeeping, ranging from sweeping-up (H&S), agronomy, through to machinery maintenance and tree surgery. Please take advantage of both your Section's, and HQ's efforts as a whole. We are here to serve you, our members.

Finally it gives me great pleasure to congratulate Barry Wood on his 50th Birthday on March 3. With thanks to his lovely wife Elaine for her wonderful foresight in informing me of such. I don't fancy the last dance again mate (I'm dead now) but please save one for me baby. Happy Birthday mate.

Sean McDade

BB&O

Harrogate! Great entertainment with fantastic educational workshops and seminars to kick off 2007 with a bang, and a small hangover. I am sure a great time was had by all who enjoyed superb company with friends new and old to pass the time away, unbeatable BTME, long live the show!

Dean Jones, the new Section Secretary, has been busy organising forthcoming events for 2007, kicking off with the first event on the agenda – The Spring National Qualifier hosted by Wycombe Heights GC and under the leadership of the legend dart player himself, The Great Surgey.



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



Peter Larter
NORTHERN & MIDLAND
 Tel: 01476 550115

The Summer Tournament will be held at Sonning GC on American Independence Day and Newbury and Cookham GC hosting the Autumn Invitational. A Clay Shooting Day is at planning stage and will take place in the later part of the year.

As the last event closes the Section for the year, Bill Patterson will be looking forward to welcoming the Section to The Turkey Trot and AGM at Beaconsfield GC.

Education Seminars are in the early stages of development, and on the agenda are plans to approach interesting and varied speakers to stimulate the grey matter, also making these venues enjoyable with topics that will motivate a wider audience throughout the BBO Section. Dates for all these venues and special events will be published as they are confirmed.

News from around the green with new, first time dad club member, Course Manager Ian Upton from Rye Hill GC who is now the proud father and celebrates the birth of baby Lucie – Congratulations to you all.

If any member has any news or views they would like to share, or would like more information about the Section and forthcoming events in 2007 you only have to log your cyberspace details and email address with the new Secretary, Dean Jones, who will be only too pleased to keep you informed and up to date. Dean can be contacted on:

d.jones51@tiscali.co.uk

Mark Day

mark@day.fm

SOUTH EAST

KENT

As I sit here at the start of another year, pondering over my objectives for the coming year, one can't help but wonder what lies in store for us all over the forthcoming months. With the wettest winter period in years upon us, many courses in my area are seriously struggling to cope with increasingly wet ground conditions and a hardier breed of golfer who seems impervious to rainfall that would have Noah himself heading down to the local timber yard. I've even heard a prediction from a scientist this evening threatening the hottest summer ever this year! No doubt there will be more drought orders imposed on us all down south again, the way my course is at the moment, however, it'll probably take a year to dry out if it stopped raining tomorrow!

You can't beat a good old whinge about the weather can you!

Some great news from our esteemed Chairman Kev Morris. At the ripe old age of 40 he is now a very proud grandfather to baby Liliane. Congratulations Pops!

We are compiling a year's programme of events which will hopefully be available soon but we kick off this month with our final winter seminar at Hadlow College on February 13. These free events are open to anyone and run from 10am to 4pm with some excellent topics being covered at every session. If you need more details please call me on the number below. This event shall be followed at 6pm on the same day by our annual night golf event at Birchwood Park. This is great fun and again open to anyone



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whether you have been to the seminar or not.

Your committee on the Kent Section are endeavouring to appeal to the masses to try and build on our successes of the last couple of years, so if you have any ideas of events, trips or any other pursuit you would like us to organise then please feel free to contact any of us with your suggestions.

Best of British to one and all
Rob Holland
07843 410755

SUSSEX

Hello again.

Just before Christmas we had a football match against Surrey, up at Colliers Wood. I would like thank all the people at Colliers Wood for providing the venue and laying on the refreshments. A big thank you to Dave Langham who organised things at Surrey's end. The game itself was a full-blooded affair, with some good football played by both sides. Surrey took a two goal start in the first 20 minutes. Sussex rallied and with a good team performance, managed to pull one back by half time, which was scored by young Sam Lake. After half time the guys really played well and went 3-2 up with goals coming from Captain Matty Ash and Jon Thomson. As the game went on, Surrey pushed for the equaliser which they got 10 minutes from time. A draw was the fair result and a big thank you to everyone who took part.

Anyone who would like to participate in the next match please contact me on: 07776223234 or: robert.hudson77@btinternet.com

Moving onto the golf. I know Dave Ansell, our Fixtures Secretary, is looking for venues for golf days, so if you would like to put your course forward please contact me. It can be for this year or the following.

I would like to say congratulations to Matt Crossley and his wife Claire who gave birth to a baby girl on December 13, which they have called Daisy. All the best to them.

If there is any news that I can include in Around the Green please let me know. All the best for now and a Happy New Year.

Rob Hudson

EAST ANGLIA

Over 100 people attended our annual Turkey Trot at Thorpeness on December 13, sponsored by CMW, and the AGM. What a lovely day it was too. The course was pristine as is now the norm for Ian and his men, one of who was responsible for the pin positions. Stand up and be shot Mark Henderson. (I thought Billy Connolly was the only Scotsman with a sense of humour). Well done Mark, I thought they were brilliant for what it's worth.

A few others that also had no problems were: 1. (Funnily enough) Mark Henderson; Peter and John Howard; and Ray Forman who made up the Thorpeness 'A' Team and scored 56.3 (Texas Scramble don't forget); 2. Glen Rayfield; Barry Hanks; Peter Cooney and Neville Rowlandson made up Felixstowe Ferry and scored 56.9 and 3. Richard Lewis; Rob George; Dale Baldwin and Nick Ashman who made up the score, only joking, no name for team so we'll call them "Billy No Mates". They scored 57.8.

A few others to be mentioned in dispatches were: John Howard, Nearest the pin on the 2nd sponsored by Aitkens; Neil Worger, Nearest the pin on the 10th sponsored by Lely UK; Stuart Robson, Nearest the pin on the 7th sponsored by Tomlinson Groundcare; David Hawkins, Nearest the pin on the 16th sponsored by Ben Burgess; Richard Lewis, Nearest the pin in 2 on the 6th sponsored by Tacit; Kevin McCollm, Longest drive on the 1st sponsored by Ernest Doe; John Howard, Longest drive on the 4th sponsored by Prime and Glen Rayfield, Longest drive on the 18th sponsored by Tower Chemicals.

All prizes were awarded by Richard Newton, Thorpeness Captain.

The man in charge of the soup kitchen half way round was David. The catering was lovely and the 'well oiled machine' was run by Ian, who was not well oiled, well at least not at the start! Thank you Thorpeness once again for a super day.



Jane Jones
SOUTH WEST AND WALES
Tel: 01454 270850

Our most sincere thank you's must go to our trade members who do a fantastic job in supporting us throughout the year. Our section is acknowledged as being the best run and best supported in the country (ask Essex) and it is all down to Ian and the trade guys & gals. We thank you all. The hall of fame is as follows: Aitkins; Atherton and Ellis; Bartram Mowers; Ben Burgess; Collier Turf Care; Consultant Clarkson; Ernest Doe; Headland Turf; Lely UK; Midlube; Prime Irrigation; Rigby Taylor; Sherriff; Sisis; Tacit; Textron; Tomlinson Groundcare; Tower Chemicals. (Apologies if we have missed anyone out).

Then came the AGM.

A fairly quiet affair. Ian would like all applications back at least one week prior to the tournament. The AGM may be before the meal this year in the hope that more will be involved. (There were only 12 of us at this one).

If you have any questions for next years AGM you will have a chance to write in prior to the AGM in order that any problems can be sorted out and save a lot of time.

I had the good fortune to have the Thorpeness President, Brian Lindores in our team and he said they had a meeting that lasted three minutes and that included a two-minute silence for a deceased member. Well I reckon we can match that. I don't know about the deceased bit though.

Actually thinking about it we did have one of our true characters pass on at the beginning of December. It was Toddy Huddlestone; he was 93 years old and will be sadly missed by all who knew him. Our sincere condolences to his family. I hope all of his expertise in greenkeeping is not wasted.

The President's Award went to one of our younger members. He was a finalist in the Young Greenkeeper Award; although he did not win we thought he deserved better, so well done Graham Brunton.

We must also welcome some new blood from Dunston Hall, good to have you aboard, we could do with some more 'Norfolks'.

As it happens we could seriously do with a few more venues in Norfolk to balance the travelling (ask Roger).

Congratulations once again to Ian Willett on his term of office as Regional Chairman.

Incidentally, all the officers were re-elected so you'll have to put up with my waffle for another year.

Mick Lathrope

ESSEX

Another season is shortly round the corner with the winter weather being somewhat strange and who knows what is to come? More of the same and more they have said on the news tonight, this will test the resolve of our greenkeeping skills.

2006 was a year of change and challenge, and it looks like the one to come will be very much the same.

The Christmas tournament held at Blake's, Nr Epping at the beginning of December was no different weatherwise. We arrived to lashing rain and everyone was contemplating a day of waterproofs and feeling miserable, but when the hour arrived so did the sun and off we went with a spring in our step and battle commenced. The course, although only a year or so old, was very challenging and produced some good scores. Our thanks go to the Head Greenkeeper, Darren Dowsett and his staff, who despite the poor weather conditions over the days leading up to the tournament produced a course to be proud of. To the owner of Blake's, Phil Newman, and his clubhouse staff, we also give our thanks for the fine food and hospitality we received.

Hopefully we will be able to return to replay the course in the not too distant future.

Texas scramble was the format of the day and Antony Kirwan did a fine job in mixing the teams to give an even field. 1. R. Hare, S. Barber, S. Cook & L. Springett with a Net 59; 2. on count back and also 59 was N. Gates, P. Whaley, T. Wolfe & B. Scrivener. 3. A. Kerwan, R. Lewis, A. McCreddie & D. Baldwin. 4. T. Smith, J. Selwood, S. Jenkins & I. Wood.

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TORO

Count on it.

A fantastic turnout on the day, of our largest field of the year we did our sponsor for the day proud; we would like to thank Scott's and Michael Fance for a day to remember.

As usual we had a good raffle prize table, supplied by the many trade representatives that support us through the year and I would like to thank them for their support.

This year's trophies were won by the following members. Spring – Nick Gates; Summer – Nick Gates; Autumn – Tom Smith; Winter – Mark Phipps-Jones. Golfer of the Year was Nick Gates.

We introduced a new trophy this year, in recognition of the support that we receive from the trade. This a competition played over the year for the most consistent trade member. This year the winner is Neil Peachey of P Tuckwell Ltd. I'm sure that with the introduction of this new trophy the competition will be fierce next year for the honour of being the trade golfing member of the year.

The AGM followed the meal and the following were elected to office. Chairman, Don Clarke. Vice Chairman & Scribe, Arnold Phipps-Jones. Secretary, Martin Forrester. Treasurer, Tom Smith. Competitions & handicap, Antony Kerwan. Education, Paul O'Kane.

I would like to thank Clive Osgood for attending and giving us his words of wisdom also for giving his support at our meetings over the year. As far as I can remember he has not missed an event all year, hopefully he will venture out with his clubs on the odd occasion this coming season.

This season's fixtures are as follows: Spring, Gosfield Lake. Summer Medal, Theybois GC. Autumn, Colchester GC. Winter, North Weald. Christmas Texas Scramble, Orsett. Dates are to be confirmed and you will have these in next month's report.

As a last note I received a phone call this evening just as I was finishing this report of the following news; I am sure that you would all like to join me in congratulating Antony Kerwan and his wife on the birth of their second child, on 3rd January, a baby boy, who they have named Seth.

Anyone who has any news for inclusion in the Around the Green section can email me: highwoods.photographic@virgin.net or call: 01206-852.353

Arnold Phipps-Jones

SOUTH WEST & SOUTH WALES

SOUTH WEST

The course at Bath GC was in fine condition for our Christmas Tournament 2006. Andy Boyce and his team made the most of a brief window in the weather to prepare it, and to be able to present it with only one temporary green with the weather as it was, was something of an achievement. Well done and thanks. A lot less well done to some of our Section members in the bar afterwards, speaking as the guy who writes to the clubs to arrange the fixtures and gives his personal assurance that all competitors will be bona fide members of BIGGA etc, I was not particularly impressed to receive a letter expressing concern at half drunken après-golf antics. We are (non-paying) guests at all the clubs and represent our profession on each and every occasion – so sharpen up. Nuff said.

Back at Minchinhampton the new lake is lined and filling rapidly. The only tiny snag is getting turf across what's left of the golf course and finding enough dry topsoil to finish off the landscaping. Abbott's have finished installing the Rainbird System on one course and are now moving across to wreck the other one! So if I ever write again suggesting major projects on the course, tell me not to be so stupid.

This comes out in early February by which time hopefully the weather will have cheered up and I'll have cheered up (although after last months report I've been accused of being one short of a full set of hub-caps) We'll all be looking forward to the first meeting at Stockwood Vale on February 22, with the golf followed by the Roger Davey lecture. Spring renovation and the new season will then be just around the corner. In the meantime I hope you've all

had a good week at Harrogate, and good luck on the courses in the early spring. The latest news from the area is the acquisition of The Bristol Golf Club by the Crown group. The Course Manager is David Nicholls, who runs the 18 holes plus nine hole par three, with six staff plus himself. The club is about seven years old and the course, which was built by John Pierson, is on the former deer park opposite Cribbs Causeway retail park. The Course has extensive views over the Bristol Channel and much work has been carried out over the last few years to address drainage and other typical post building opening problems. This brings the total number of properties in the Crown group to 32. This should keep Laurence Pithie busy for a while with his first in-house training day at the Bristol already booked into the calendar.

Finally, the weather is making the headlines at the moment. Laurence kindly sent me some rainfall figures from across the Crown properties. The Bristol Club recorded 830mm in 2006, against a paltry 503 at Hampton Court, and spare a thought for the guys at St Mellion International, near Plymouth – 1214mm. Laurence added, "2006 was also one of the warmest years ever recorded and 2003 and 2005 weren't far behind.

The latter end of 2006 was also devoid of much frost with winter temperatures well above average.

From a 'turf' standpoint, only August was a month that was helpful, being warm and reasonably moist. In most 2006 months, it was either too cold, too dry or too wet, making life challenging to say the least.

As always, predicting what lies ahead is pure guesswork and conditions can change fairly rapidly". My thoughts exactly! The 2007 fixture list is now complete and will be landing on your doormats in the near future – in the meantime, two further dates for your diary are Match vs South Wales Section, August 1 – St. Pierre Old Course, and the Christmas Tournament 2007 is December 12 at Burnham & Berrow.

Some good courses to look forward to in 2007. Let's have some info about your winter programmes, construction, maintenance, ecology etc.

Paul Worster

01453 837355

paulw@mgcnew.co.uk

SOUTH COAST

Welcome to the latest edition of news from the South Coast Section. I hope you are all coping really well with the winter thus far, although very mild mother nature does seem to be making up for recent droughts with lots and lots of rain. So, after you have cleaned the sheds and greased all the machines I hope you all have a good read of Greenkeeper International.

The main news this month is the advertising of the South Coast Seminar. Please make a note in your diary that this event will take place on Wednesday, March 14 at the same venue as last year – Canford Magna GC. These seminars, in past years, have proven to be very popular and go from strength to strength. This year will be no exception as Chris Bitten has arranged some magnificent people to talk on this day.

Eddie Seaward from the All England Tennis Club will give a fascinating insight into the turf maintenance at Wimbledon for the year. Those who have heard Eddie talk previously will know how good Eddie's talks always are.

Continuing the Groundsman theme, Peter Craig from The Hurlingham Club will present a talk on his management practices of both personnel and of turf at the Club. Peter manages up to 24 people and is responsible for 42 acres of high value Sports Areas, including croquet lawns, bowling greens, cricket squares, tennis courts and artificial surfaces. Peter is a true advocate of Groundsmen and Greenkeepers having close communication and equal respect and is a keen member of both BIGGA and the IOG.

Marcus White from Iriplan will be giving a presentation on the very important subject of water abstraction and licensing, the efficient storage of water and how to make the most use of this very valuable natural resource. We will also be welcoming Jerry Knox from Cranfield University.

The price for the day is yet to be confirmed, but will probably be in the same region as last years. South Coast members will be sent details of how to book as soon as all information is clarified. The Seminar is open to all BIGGA members and also any non-BIGGA members will be welcome to

attend. As soon as you receive details I strongly recommend booking promptly as this is a very popular event. For further details or any questions to be answered, please contact Chris Bitten on: 07796 887633 or email: chrisbitten@btinternet.com.

Finally, here is a reminder of this year's golf fixtures for the Section: Spring Tournament at Romsey GC – May 3; Summer Tournament at Andover GC – July 3 (Andover's Centenary Year); Autumn Tournament at North Hants GC – October 23; Turkey Trot TBA; The South West Match at Farringdon Gurney GC – September 13; The Scotts/BIGGA Management Trophy at Stoneham GC – May 31.

That's it for this month. Those of you who attended BTME, I hope that you had a good time, did lots of networking and not too much drinking!
Joe Crawley 07721 389200

DEVON & CORNWALL

I would like to start my report by congratulating our past National Chairman, none other than Richard Whyman, on his year in office. As you can imagine, our Section has a very high regard for Richard, as he is, to coin a phrase, a local lad. Having been the Section Secretary for years, we all knew he would give his heart and do a brilliant job as Chairman, and during his year of office he has been very forward thinking and has ensured that the Association is still moving forward. Talking to Richard recently, I know that he was very keen on encouraging younger members to join the Association, and indeed onto committees, this we have managed to do very successfully with very positive results, well done Richard.

On behalf of the Section I would like to wish Billy McMillan a very successful year as Chairman.

Okehampton GC was the venue for our Christmas party on December 12 last year and yet again it was a day to remember, in spite of very heavy rain the day before, the course was playable and all 18 holes were open. A big thank you to Richard Wisdon, the Head Greenkeeper and his staff for all their hard work in preparing the course in such good condition.

A huge thank you must also go to P J Flegg, the sponsor for the day, and especially Paul Watson the Sales Manager; Clive Ralph the local Sales Representative and Jo Turner from Jacobsen, who manned the hospitality tent on the course in their normal, efficient way. It is quite interesting to note that the course walkers seems to double for this meeting, I wonder why?

The results for the P J Flegg Trophy are as follows: 1. N O Sullivan and N Baggio, China Fleet GC, 42pts; 2. N Clark and T Blackman, Downs Crediton GC, 41 pts; 3. D Mouldin and S Kent from Bigbury GC, 40 pts.

After a fabulous Christmas dinner, we were entertained by Tank Sherman, a well known local comedian who kept us all entertained for the rest of the afternoon, this was followed by the Christmas draw. I would like to thank all the Trade, and members that supplied some 60 draw prizes and all the staff at Okehampton that made our day so special and enjoyable.

Last but by no means least, I would like to thank all the Trade that have sponsored the Section in 2006, without their support I am sure we would all struggle, and a special thanks to our President, John Palfrey of Avoncrop for supplying the wine on the table for lunch.

Donovan O Hunt

SOUTH WALES

The annual Winter Tournament sponsored by Vitax was held in traditional fashion at the Pyle & Kenfig GC, near Porthcawl recently. Despite some really awful weather of late we were lucky enough on the day to get away with it being blowy only to about gale 4 on the scale. Despite having experienced many inches of rainfall prior to the day, the course held up well and an enjoyable day was had by all. Just under 50 people took to the golf course, most finished and there was some great scores posted considering the conditions. Results: Winner of the Vitax Shield was Jamie Probert - Pontardawe GC, in second place was our Golf Team Captain - Andy Roach - Haverfordwest GC; Third place still on countback went to Daryl Bray - Morriston GC; Fourth place was local pommie bashing newcomer - Graham Blum - Trefloyne GC; Fifth place was Leigh (Gunky) Davies - Morriston GC.

Best Trade card went to Wyn (one round) Davies - representing Ted Hopkins Ltd and Guest Prize was claimed by Alex Webster from "Tower Sport Europe". Nearest the pins were claimed by: Nigel Ruck - Glynhir GC, Alan Pooley - Cradoc GC, Leigh Davies - Morriston GC, Daryl Bray - Morriston GC, The monster Drive of the day pipping Gareth Knight by 30 metres was Phil Sharpe. Winner of the Aggregate Shield (Best scores over the four seasonal competitions during 2006) was Peter Lacey - Pennard GC. Following the golf 53 people were treated to a super traditional Christmas Dinner, followed by the annual worlds longest raffle, although it was mentioned that it was the shortest to date and going in the right direction. A huge thank you to all of those who brought along a present/bottle and also to the trade who supported in abundance and assisted the raffle table too with donations of all kinds. The hospitality afforded us by the Pyle & Kenfig GC is superb and we can't thank them enough for allowing us to host this annual event at the club. We were fortunate to have with us as guests on the day our National Chairman, Richard Whyman and his lovely wife Denise, our Regional Administrator Jane Jones and while the opportunity arose a small token of our appreciation was made to them all. Also in attendance as our guests were Regional Chairman, Chris Sealey and IOG Chairman of Wales, Tony Horne, Vitax representative and Sponsor, John Mullins and P&K Deputy Course Manager, Paul Johnson.

Our sincere thanks to Vitax and their local distributors, Celtic Mowers for their ongoing support and sponsorship of the event, it is appreciated!

Unfortunately we are to lose another staunch supporter in Angus Macloed. Angus who has been involved on board our committee and represented our section on the National Board, is also Around the green scribe and has recently accepted the position of Course Manager at the De Vere Resort Belton Woods, taking over from Seamus Coogan. We are very sad to lose him, he has been incredibly pro-active and supportive while in South Wales and he'll leave a big hole to fill. However we wish him, his lovely wife Marie and daughter Erin well, but I won't miss his dog, have you seen him! Brody I think, I haven't been near enough to hear his name clearly, he's a monster. It's been a pleasure working with you Angus, you're very much the professional that we aspire to and you've taught us all so much, thanks! And keep in touch!

A happy and prosperous, disease and thatch free New Year to you all.

Please find below the "Winter Evening Lecture" series for 2007. Which for this year has been organised by the IOG. These evenings will be held at Pencoed College in the lounge bar and will commence at 7.30pm. For this series we have a new sponsor in Countrywide Turf & Amenity to whom we thank for their support and for taking up our invitation at short notice. The evenings are open to anyone interested and not just BIGGA and IOG members. Why not bring along a member of staff, your Secretary or Chairman of Green?

- Wednesday, January 17 - Neil Baldwin, Amega Sciences. "Stress management of turf during drought conditions."
- Wednesday, February 14 - Richard Beghin, Perma Enzyme. "The use of enzymes in turf management."
- Wednesday, March 7 - Iain Courage, Fleet Line Markers. "Paint and Line marking technology."
- Wednesday, April 11 - Field visit to the new Liberty Stadium - home of the Ospreys and Swansea City FC. A tour conducted by Head Groundsman Dan Duffy, with a buffet to follow.
- Thursday, April 26 - Annual Spring Seminar at the Royal Porthcawl GC. Details to follow shortly.

Our sincere thanks to all who give freely of their time and effort to ensure that this education series continues. To all speakers and participating companies, to Pencoed college, the IOG and Countrywide who support and sponsor this series of educational events. A single CPD credit can be claimed by those attending any/each of the above educational evenings.

For enquires or further information contact: P Lacey, Secretary. 31 Browns Drive, Pennard Swansea SA3 2AE or phone: 07812 369848 or email: biggasec@btinternet.com

P Lacey

In the Shed ANSWERS

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QUICK 'NINE HOLE' QUIZ

1. Paul McGinley
2. Ferdinand Porsche
3. Colin McRae
4. The Apex
5. Darren Gough
6. The shoulder blade
7. Graham Taylor
8. James Fennimore Cooper
9. Fear of heights

MONSTER SUDOKU

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SQUIGGLY SUDOKU

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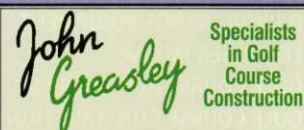
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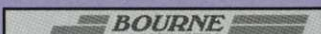
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Requires an

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Tandridge is a members' golf club and we are seeking a well qualified Assistant Greenkeeper to join our newly established dynamic and progressive team. The applicant must have NVQ Level 2, spraying and chainsaw qualifications, in addition to being enthusiastic, well motivated and hard working.

Applications should be submitted by e-mail to:
secretary@tandridgegolfclub.com

The closing date for CV's is
Friday 9th March 2007.

Recruitment



Set in 750 Acres of Cheshire Countryside approximately
10 miles from the Historical City of Chester.

We currently have vacancies for the following positions:

ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER

We are looking for 2 ambitious, professionals to join our full-time teams on the Nicklaus and Cheshire Courses. You will need to hold a minimum of NVQ Level 2 and preferably all current spraying certificates. We would also require you to have a minimum of 2 years relevant work experience.

ASSISTANT MECHANIC

To work alongside the Head Mechanic carrying out routine maintenance and servicing on horticultural machinery, minimum one year relevant previous experience is required including use of grinding machines and relevant industry qualifications.

Please apply to:

Christine Lowrey, Human Resources Manager,
De Vere Carden Park, Chester CH3 9DQ
E-mail: Christine.Lowrey@devere-hotels.com

TEST VALLEY GOLF CLUB

Experienced Greenkeeper

Test Valley Golf Club is currently seeking someone to join their Greenkeeping department. Applicants must have a minimum of NVQ Level 2 Qualification together with PA1, PA2, PA6 spraying certificates and will need to be able to demonstrate self-motivation and experience in all aspects of course maintenance.

Reporting directly to the Course Manager, this is an excellent development opportunity for individuals wishing to pursue their career in Greenkeeping.

Applicants should possess good leadership skills, be self-motivated and be able to work in a team.

Please apply in writing enclosing your CV together with details of your current salary to: David Ross, Course Manager, Test Valley Golf Club, Micheldever Road, Overton, Hampshire RG25 3DS, or email it to pro@testvalleygolf.com or call 01256 771220

PITLOCHRY GOLF COURSE GREENKEEPER

A vacancy has arisen for a suitably experienced Greenkeeper as assistant to the Head Greenkeeper.

The successful applicant will:

Possess an NVQ Level 2 or equivalent with a minimum of 5 years greenkeeping experience.

Be fully conversant with modern greenkeeping methods.

Possess all current spraying certificates.

Be skilled in the use and routine maintenance of golf course equipment and machinery.

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

Applications in writing with CV to: Pitlochry Golf Course Limited,
Pitlochry Estate Office, Pitlochry, Perthshire, PH16 5NE



LADYBANK
Golf Club

Open Championship
Final Qualifying Course

Require a

QUALIFIED GREENKEEPER

The successful applicant will ideally have the following:

- At least 5 years greenkeeping experience.
- Minimum of NVQ level 2 in Greenkeeping.
- Must have detailed knowledge of maintaining and operating machinery and hold current spraying certificates.
- Will be enthusiastic, reliable and able to use own initiative.
- Ideal candidate will be between 25 - 45 years of age and must be a team player.

Applicants should apply in writing enclosing a current CV by 23rd February to: Fraser McCluskey, Managing Secretary, Annsmuir, Ladybank, Fife KY15 7RA

THE CRAYTHORNE

1ST ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER



See our 18 hole course on our website & download an application form now. The position is to help supervise a team of up to 5 staff and deputise in the Head Greenkeeper's absence. Must have the ability to lead by example as this is a hands on position. The applicant should be qualified to at least NVQ 2 or its equivalent & have a minimum of 3 years experience. They must also possess a sound working knowledge of Health & Safety regulations. Pa1, Pa2 and Pa6 Spraying Certificates an advantage. Knowledge of golf preferred.

Salary negotiable in accordance with experience.
No accommodation available.

Applications in writing, with full CV.

Mr. V. Gilroy, Head Greenkeeper, The Craythorne, Craythorne Road,
Rolleston on Dove, Burton upon Trent, Staffs. DE13 0AZ



Ashford Manor Golf Club

Ashford Manor is an 18-hole par 70 parkland golf course founded in 1898 and is situated between Sunbury and Staines, close to Heathrow Airport

Applications are invited for the position of Assistant Greenkeeper

Applicants should have recognised greenkeeping qualifications and preferably possess the following:

- Spraying Certificates
- Chainsaw Certification
- Be reliable, flexible, hardworking and willing to learn
- Good communication skills and be able to work as part of a team

In return we offer excellent rates of pay along with good training opportunities and full PPE.

Please apply in writing with full CV to: The Course Manager, Ashford Manor Golf Club, Fordbridge Road Ashford, Middlesex, TW15 3RT • Tel: 01784 424644

Scotland's Premier Landbased College

Lecturer in Greenkeeping

This specialist landbased College is looking to recruit an enthusiastic, motivated and experienced individual to join the Greenkeeping and Horticultural Section. The successful applicant will be required to teach and assess greenkeeping, machinery/engineering, horticultural and other related subjects on a range of courses and training programmes.

The successful applicant will also have course tutorship duties.

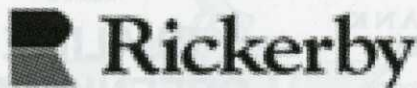
Applicants must have appropriate academic qualifications such as an HND and/or equivalent relevant industry based qualifications, a good practical knowledge of machinery use and maintenance, at least three years relevant industrial or teaching/ training experience; and an enthusiastic approach to young people and ability to work well in an established team.

Salary scale: £19,314 - £29,986 p.a. with placement dependent upon qualifications and experience. Attractive holiday entitlement and Final Salary Pension Scheme offered.

For further information contact Personnel Services, Oatridge College,
Ecclesmachan, Broxburn, West Lothian, EH52 6NH.
Tel (01506) 864800. Closing date: 28 February 2007.



Recruitment



Rickerby Limited is a successful established family-run firm with branches covering northern England and the borders, supplying a huge range of products and services to farmers and horticultural businesses.

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HEXHAM - "WORKSHOP MECHANIC"

We have a vacancy in our professional grass machinery workshop. We will consider anyone with a good knowledge of diesel engines, electrical and hydraulic systems.

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Please contact: Hilary on 01772 780545
or Mobile: 07730 663089 in the first instance

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You should be highly motivated, enthusiastic and have a determination to succeed. Whilst spending most of your time on the road enhancing existing business as well as developing new opportunities you will have the support of an experienced sales and admin team.

Your initial territory will be the Northern Home Counties and East Anglia but we will also consider people for other areas. Salary negotiable depending on experience, vehicle, phone etc supplied.

Please apply with full CV including current salary either in writing or by email to:

Nick King, Sales Manager, BMS Europe Ltd, Unit 22, Cosgrove Way, Luton, LU1 1XL.
Email: nick.king@bms-europe.co.uk

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www.lawnkeeperrecruitment.co.uk



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We are looking for self-motivated and ambitious people who can demonstrate a successful history selling similar products to golf and other sports clubs and independent clients such as hotels and schools.

If you are seeking a new and interesting challenge please apply in writing with a full CV to:

Mark Smith, Gem Professional, Joseph Metcalf Ltd, Brookside Lane,
Oswaldtwistle, Accrington, Lancashire BB5 3NY
Tel: 01254 356600

E-Mail: msmith.gem@tiscali.co.uk

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Feature listing from February 2005

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; Helliidon 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

November 2005; Chipping Norton GC;
National Championship; Course Construction;
Fertilisers; Servicing

December 2005; Harrogate Week Preview;
BIGGA Delegation; Environmental Competition;
Fescue Debate; Irrigation

January 2006; Bearwood Lakes GC;
Course Furniture; Nicklaus Design; Seed;
Alternative Fuel; Disease Survey

February 2006; Cold Ashby GC; Netting;
Chemical Fertilisers; Turf Construction

March 2006; Seed; Ride-on Mowers;
Pesticides; Irrigation; Bio Stimulants

April 2006; R&A Conference Report;
Connie GC Profile; GCSAA Delegation Report;
Wastewater

May 2006; Stock Brook GC Profile; Spraying;
Aeration; Line Marking; Growth Retardants

June 2006; Disturbance Theory; Hand Tools;
Surveying; Thatch/Scarification; Drought

July 2006; Hoylake Profile; Difficult Areas;
Japanese Course Management; Top Dressing;
Askernish Project

August 2006; Open Championship Review;
Drainage; Burton GC Profile; Sustainability;
Japan; ATVs; Trailers

September 2006; Building an Irrigation Lake;
Toro Student of the Year Preview;
Artificial Surfaces; Algae

October 2006; Trevoise GC Profile; Aeration;
Utility Vehicles; Open Aftermath;
Grinding Equipment

November 2006; National Championship;
BIGGA Photographic Exhibition;
Drainage Explained; Greens Brushing

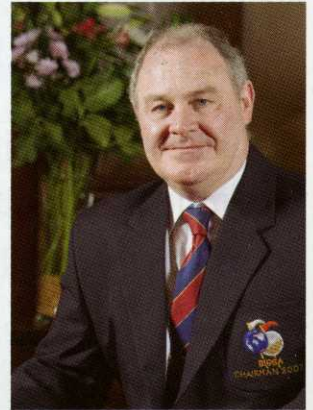
December 2006; BIGGA Environment
Competition Results; Harrogate Week Preview;
Work Wear; Paths; Tyres

January 2007; Turfgrass training;
Harrogate Week Preview; Grass selection;
Think Ergonomically; Petrol complying;
Marvellous Mowers; BIGGA in the USA

Chairman's Column



Looking forward to a new challenge



I must first thank you all for giving me the opportunity of being your Chairman for the coming year. It's a great honour for me personally and I promise you my best efforts in representing your Association during the coming months. Taking over the reins during a very successful Harrogate Week was for me a very proud moment in my Greenkeeping career and this I promise you! You have my voice and full support in anything that may benefit and progress the profession of Greenkeeping within the golfing world.

Taking on this role would not have been possible without the help of many people and I would therefore like to take a moment and say a special thank you to firstly my employer Tyrrell's Wood Golf Club, its Board members and staff for their continued support during the coming year. To Richard Whyman, firstly for asking me as his Vice Chair and having seen close up his unselfish dedication and enthusiasm during the past year as your Chairman. He will I'm sure be a hard act to follow. So it's a heartfelt thank you, Richard, for all that you have done for us all - time to relax a wee bit and enjoy some well earned time with Denise without the phone ringing off the hook and I'll see you at the next board meeting (yes we will still make use of him for another year).

I am delighted to welcome on as my Vice Chairman, Kenny Mackay, Kenny is Director of Golf Courses & Grounds at The Belfry and I know will make a good Vice and, mark my words, a "great" chairman in 2008.

Then there's my family, my rock. You know those special people that make everything worthwhile. The first test was Harrogate and I returned home to a tidy house with the washing all done and up to date and no reports of any parties that upset the neighbours. So with everyone's help I look forward to the next year filled with pleasure and challenges in equal proportions I'm sure.

I mentioned another successful Harrogate – not just words I might add. It was truly wonderful to see so many people there and enjoying themselves during the week. Our exhibitors seemed to enjoy meeting with you all and exchanging views and doing business at the same time. We do have a very friendly way of conducting ourselves so well done you lot. The highlight for me was seeing some of our Greenkeeping Gods singing their hearts out and wriggling in and out of their chairs after the banquet for every chorus. It was an amazing thing to see believe me. One thing! I never in my wildest dreams thought that so many people knew me – Wow was that a humbling experience with everyone saying hello and wishing me well for the coming year. When you become Chairman they give you a list, things to do, where to be and stuff. Well, we must work on that list for next year, or it may have been me, because I was running

(yes, hard to believe, I know) between places only to find out I was in the wrong place at the wrong time but, hey, it keeps me fit I suppose.

We have to thank John Pemberton and his team "your staff" for all their hard work and professional dedication for putting on such a great show because the whole week was by anyone's standards a resounding success, so well done everyone at BIGGA HOUSE.

It's with great sadness I would like to mention the untimely death of Ray Day, Course Manager at East Sussex National, board member and a man who worked tirelessly for you all at Section, Region and Board level for many years. I know he will be sadly missed by Greenkeepers and friends up and down the country. Our hearts and thoughts are with his wife Jill, and their two boys. On a personal note I will miss his cheery smile and warm welcome every time we met.

I look forward, with your board, to an exiting year and would like to pay tribute to your board as a whole – an enthusiastic, dynamic and hard working team that give of their time for the benefit of you all in Greenkeeping at the grass roots.

So I wish all the members a safe successful and happy year, and I'm sure you will rise to any challenge asked of you and, as your Chairman, I'm proud to represent you as you are an amazing bunch of individuals that I am very much looking forward to meeting and sharing some time with over the next year.

Billy McMillan
Chairman

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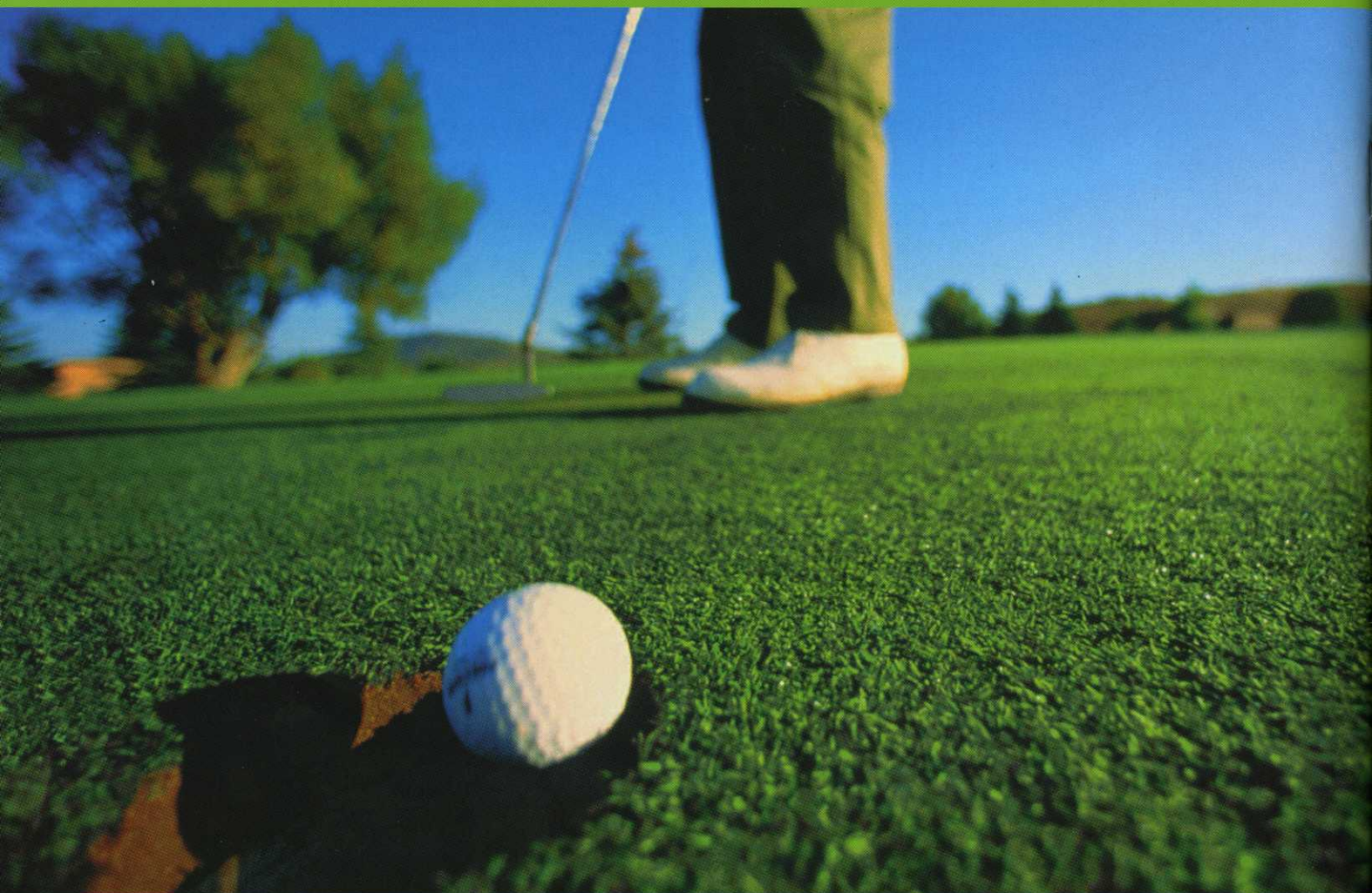
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