

Greenkeeping education's new PHILOSOPHY

The last few years have seen more changes in British education than in the previous century. Indeed, it will probably be one of the vote winning or losing issues in the next general election. Those of you who are parents of teenagers will be all too well aware of the changes within secondary schools with the change from GCE and CSE to the GCSE. This will be even more significant to you if you have just left school and have had to deal with all the changes. You will know all too well whether the core curriculum and return to the three 'R's has worked or whether the supposed lower standards are just a figment of some politicians imagination. One thing is for sure, change is the only constant thing in today's society and something with which we must come to terms.

Changes in education, however, have not been limited to schools. Colleges have also had to make drastic changes to the way they operate. This has been due to both the change in teaching methods and the rapid decline in school leavers. Who would have dreamt of agricultural colleges advertising their courses in magazines ten years ago?

From about five years ago many of the college courses changed their national validating body. All three year diploma courses are now validated by BTEC (The Business and Technical Education Council) in England and Wales (SCOTVEC in Scotland) and BTEC philosophy has meant a move to more student centred learning. Students are encouraged to be responsible for their own learning and discouraged from the spoon-fed lectures of the past. This generally means that information learnt in this way is better understood and more likely to be retained by the student. However, it also means much more work for the student and, incidentally, for the teaching staff. On the whole this new approach is much better, albeit more demanding, for students, staff and college resources.

As part of this 'student centred' learning strategy BTEC has devised the 'Integrated Assignment' for unit based courses. This is to make sure that courses taught as a number of units (or modules) do not become too compartmentalised. It encourages students to relate different topics such as design, construction, maintenance and machinery to each other as is the case in the real world. After all, you don't build a new tee or green without thinking about what it will look like before you start or how you are going to maintain it after it's put into use. The assignment also provides an opportunity for assessing students, not only on whether they can do the technical skills involved in greenkeeping but also those interpersonal skills necessary if they are to work together as a team.

These 'common skills' as they are known include communication, ability to work with others, problem solving, information handling and data presentation.

The National Diploma in Turf Science and Sportsground Management at Myerscough is now in its fourth year. The integrated assignment for the course last year, and for the next two years, involves the design and construction of a golf green and tee. It is integrated because it involves co-



The Team standing on their new green

operation and input from five separately taught skills – Design, Surveying, Construction, Machinery and Management – over three terms of the second year. Students are able to learn and/or practice a range of skills including surveying, design, drawing, proposal presentation, preparing specifications and bills of quantity, construction techniques – using a range of machines and site management.

The construction of a new green means the college now has seven standard greens built to differing specifications. Golf green construction types include an 'All Sand' Cell System, a USGA specification, a sand/peat system, a sand/soil system mixed off and on site and a native soil green. The featured new green consisted of a 300mm sand/soil rootzone mixed off site and laid in a herringbone drainage system installed at 3m centres. Humell peat was then added and rotovated into the surface prior to the application of a fertiliser and turfing with Rolawn 'Advantage' turf.

Teaching in this way involves a number of new teaching methods and I'm sure that other colleges using integrated assignments have, like us, had to make changes to the way courses are time-tabled and run. While the initial survey and design work was undertaken in the autumn of '89, the construction taking place during two weeks last summer. It is easy to imagine the problems that would occur if those two weeks had been wet, not only with the construction work but also the knock-on effect within the college teaching scheme. Fortunately for us the first week or so was dry, although final clearing work at the end was rained off. The photographs show students building the green and I know that they all enjoyed and gained something from the experience.

Undertaking projects of this nature are, of course, costly in terms of an educational budget and we rely upon the generosity of commercial companies to supply goods either free of charge or at cost. Special thanks are due to: Rolawn, Tarmac Roadstone, Inter Seed Ltd and Kubota.

● **John Hacker, the author of this article was, until last August, the Senior Lecturer and ND Course Manager at the Lancashire College of Agriculture and Horticulture. He is now a director of Professional Sportsturf Design (NW) Ltd, a consulting agronomy practice based in Preston.**



Laying the Rolawn 'Advantage' turf



Ask any greenkeeper which single subject concerns him most and the likely answer will be COSHH. Government regulations are often couched in a language that is hard to understand and it is no secret that greenkeepers and club officials are often puzzled by the predominance of 'technobabble' favoured by those boffins of officialdom. **JON ALLBUTT**, an acknowledged leader in the field of training in safety awareness and pesticide usage, disentangles some of the mysteries...

The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1988 are made under Section 16 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and require that from January 1st 1990 "An employer shall not carry on any work which is liable to expose any employee to any substance hazardous to health unless he has made a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks". All very well so far, but what is a substance hazardous to health? The Regulations define it as:

- (a) A substance which is listed in Part 1A of the Approved List as dangerous for supply within the meaning of the Classification, Packaging and Labelling (of Dangerous Goods) Regulations 1984, and for which the general indication of nature of risk is specified as: very toxic, toxic, harmful, corrosive, flammable or irritant.
- (b) A substance for which a maximum exposure limit is specified in Schedule 1 or for which the Health and Safety Commission has approved an occupational exposure hazard.
- (c) A micro-organism which creates a hazard to the health of any person.
- (d) Dust of any kind, when present at a substantial quantity in air.
- (e) A substance, not being a substance mentioned on Sub-Paragraphs (a) to (d) above which is comparable with the hazards created by substances mentioned in those sub-paragraphs.

As definitions go it is very comprehensive, and confusing, but what does it mean? To understand it better we need to look at each section in more detail:

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Life under the

THIS BOOK, WHICH COSTS £10.00 AND IS UPDATED EVERY YEAR! For many of the products we use it may be an individual ingredient in the product that gives it the hazardous classification, making the problem more complicated as some products may not have all the individual ingredients on the label. So, in addition to the label, we need to refer to the product Safety Data Sheet for the additional information. Manufacturers and / or suppliers are required to supply Safety Data Sheets at the time of delivery. The Safety Data Sheet will list any ingredients in the product that are classified as hazardous under these regulations.

(b) The Health and Safety Executive Guidance Note EH40/91 sets out the lists of the substances and their exposure limits. The limits are very technical, being based on short term exposure limits (STEL) or long term exposure limits (LTEL) of concentrations in the air measured in milligrams per cubic metre (mg / m³). These limits become important especially where staff are working in confined spaces with poor ventilation. Where staff are in regular contact with products containing substances listed in EH40/91, it is a good idea to arrange for experts to assess whether the degree of exposure approaches or exceeds the limits. While there is a low risk of such exposure when working outside, there can be problems in workshops using aerosols, some paints, paint strippers etc.

(c) Micro-organisms are a worry, as they can't be seen and easily identified; for example there are risks of infection from Tetanus and also from Weils Disease in rat infested water. The employer is required to be aware of the risks of infection from micro-organism and to take steps to ensure that there is a safe system for working in place to avoid such risks. The employee must also observe strict personal hygiene at work and take care of any personal protective equipment that is issued.

(d) A substantial quantity of dust is classified as a concentration of 10 mg/m³ over an 8 hour time weighted average (LTEL) of total inhalable dust; or 5 mg/m³ of respirable dust in the same period. These are strict limits that require special equipment to assess the concentrations of dust in the atmosphere. Mixing top dressings or handling bags of dusty fertilisers in confined spaces over this period might require that the dust levels be measured.

(e) This is the clever one! "Any substance used at work which does not fit the other categories but is comparable in terms of the hazard it represents". How do you decide? This section of the definition allows for any new substance that comes along or any existing substance that does not fit the other definitions. The label and safety data sheet will probably give enough information to enable the employer to decide if there is a hazard comparable with any of the above sections. It may be necessary to call in an expert if there is ANY doubt.

On top of the difficulty of understanding the definitions, it must also be

C O S H H

remembered that any risk assessments must be "suitable and sufficient". It may only emerge that the assessments are suitable, or not, following a visit from the Inspector. It is essential therefore that a start is made without delay as Inspectors are unlikely to be sympathetic to those who have buried their heads in the sand! So how do we make a start?

- (1) Make a list of all substances on the premises; make sure to note amounts and, if possible, how old they are. Remember that all substances may be subject to the Regulations, including cleaning materials, fuels, lubricants and pesticides.
- (2) Ask all staff to justify their needs for these substances. Are they old stock and no longer required? Sort out the unwanted stock and obtain quotes for safe and proper disposal.
- (3) Contact the suppliers and request Safety Data Sheets for ALL remaining products on the inventory. Inform the suppliers that future deliveries may be refused if they arrive without the Safety Data Sheets; as this is required under Section 6 of the Health and Safety at Work Act.
- (4) Sort out the inventory into classified and unclassified products.

You may be surprised to see, for example, that even some wetting agents are classified as Irritating To Eyes.

(5) Now investigate the use of the classified substances. How frequently are operators exposed to them, how do they actually use them and what training have they received? Some pesticides that are classified as Harmful may only be used twice a year, but diesel fuel, which is also classified as Harmful, is probably used every day.

(6) Write down the risk assessment for each substance. This may involve a decision to change to a less harmful but equally effective alternative; for example, there are non-flammable aerosols available. It may also state that in future a particular substance is to be used in a particular way, or may not be used without prior permission. There may also be a need to write a safe operating procedure for some products, e.g. the use of lavatory de-scalers or drain cleaners.

(7) Identify where there is need for staff training and arrange a training programme. This can be done in the form of a short period of instruction at work or by attendance at a local college. It is important to keep a note of all training carried out for this could become vital documentation should an accident occur at a later date at the workplace.

(8) Finally, make sure all staff are made aware of the risk assessment decisions and make a note of the review date, say in a years time.

It will never be possible to be completely up to date, for there will be changes of product and work practices throughout the year and this fact is accepted. However there is no excuse for being unaware of what is in use and how it is being used.

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TRADE TOPICS

Rolawn double up



Europe's largest turf grower, Rolawn Ltd of Elvington, York, have announced a doubling of production acreage by the end of 1991. Around 3,000 acres will be under cultivation in the UK and turnover is expected to be in the region of £6 million, further increasing their market share. Twenty two Rolawn-run depots serve the needs of greenkeepers throughout the country and according to founder and Managing Director Kenneth Dawson, "the future still looks good, both here and in Europe. Our economies of scale, sophisticated production and network of depots are, we believe, helping us ride the worst of the recession and two years of drought conditions". Ahead of 1992, Rolawn has a partnership agreement with French company Darbonne-Sitoflor, serving the rest of Europe.

Seed houses offer some 'green' alternatives

Sleaford based Booker Seeds Ltd, which recently became a member of the Royal van der Have Group BV of the Netherlands, has just issued a new brochure which covers the full range of top quality seeds for amenity turf areas. Copies of "GRASS SEED MIXTURES FOR AMENITY TURF AREAS 1991" are available from Booker Seeds, Boston Rd, Sleaford.

■ Staying with seeds, British Seed Houses Ltd. tell us of the

encouraging numbers of enquiries received from Golf Clubs interested in introducing wild flora conservation mixtures in areas such as roughs and copses.

A comprehensive brochure is available on request, giving details of 15 different wild flora mixtures, together with sowing and maintenance instructions. British Seed Houses are at Pitt St, Warrington, Cheshire WA5 5LE.

FFERENCE...

standard roll of turf

Event is a part of the landscape

Now in its fourth year, the Landscape Industries event keeps on growing. The 1991 event will be held at the National Agricultural Centre, Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire on June 5th and 6th, and will provide a focus for the diverse landscaping and related leisure sectors.



The event is organised by RASE, BALI and ILAM, and will feature working demonstrations including grass maintenance, ground construction, cultivations, and woodland/brushwood control.

See you at Westurf

May 1st is approaching fast, the day for WESTURF '91, the Turf Care Trade Exhibition at Long Ashton Golf Club in Bristol. This regional event, represented by local and national companies, is an opportunity outside of the mainstream to see new products launched and demonstrated. New machinery, such as a revolutionary water injection cultivator will be demonstrated for the first time, together with a wide range of tractors, grass cutting equipment, sprayers, top dressers, scarifiers, drainage equipment, brush cutters and power saws,

stump cutters and chippers, line markers and stimpeters, with qualified personnel on hand to answer your questions.

A full range of irrigation systems will be displayed, along with turf cultivation specialists, pesticide and fertiliser manufacturers, top dressing, sand and seed merchants. Training colleges, BIGGA and IOG will also be on parade and all the needs of the industry will be well catered for.

● Gibson Brothers, who have served greenkeepers for over a century, have constructed a new 8,000 sq.ft. machinery centre at Highgate, Kirkham, to extend their area of activity well into the Fylde and West Lancashire and the establishment of a fleet of mobile service units to service machinery requirements. By spring, Gibson Brothers will have extended their sphere of operations to cover the county and beyond.

Spreading it around

Supaturf Products Ltd of Narborough, Leicester, have advised Greenkeeper International of a new colour brochure which describes the full range of their rather clever Even Spred commercial fertiliser spreaders. As the name implies, Even Spred has a smooth efficient broadcast pattern, from seven to thirteen feet, which helps to eliminate the possibility of burning from overlap.

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Letters

Send your letters to David White, The Editor, Greenkeeper International, 13 Firle Close, Seaford, East Sussex BN25 2HL

To the Editor

May I be permitted to use your excellent magazine to widen the search I am making for a now obsolete but still fine piece of turf machinery, namely the Ransome Certes Mk XII hand mower. I am not a greenkeeper, but have an expanse of turf which is my pride and joy and which I try to maintain in a way that emulates the best of greenkeeping practices. The Certes Mk XII would complete the picture.

STUART CRANE

12 Sycamore Close, Tidworth. Hants. SP9 7PH

To the Editor

In response to Mr Carr (Jan issue) I would remind him that not all greenkeepers are as fortunate as himself. After 13 years of persuasion we have just managed to get our committee to install a flushing lavatory and we STILL wash our hands in cold water!

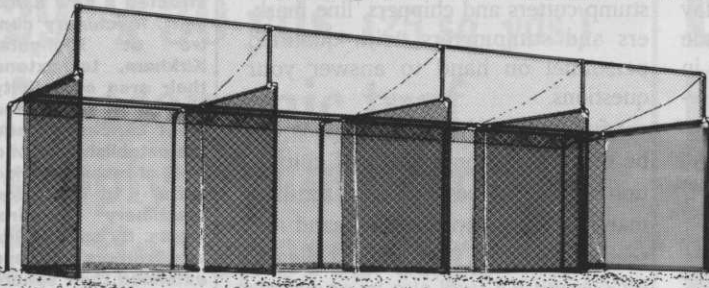
Many BIGGA members would really enjoy attending lectures, seminars and demonstrations but the three drawbacks we experience are; a) we can never get the time off because there is always a job that must be completed yesterday. b) nobody is prepared to help with travelling costs. c) many members live in remote areas. (On this point, thank heavens for the new magazine.)

Mr Carr is fortunate in having a committee or local authority that has moved out of the dark ages and I wish that all others would follow suit. At my club there is always money available for house expenditure and machinery, but the welfare of the greenkeeper is last on any priority list.

I wonder how many players would cry 'wolf' if even basic facilities were unavailable following a round, or if the greens were too slow on any given day?

My plea to secretaries, green conveners and course managers is this: are you sure YOUR greenkeeper didn't write this? We

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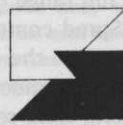
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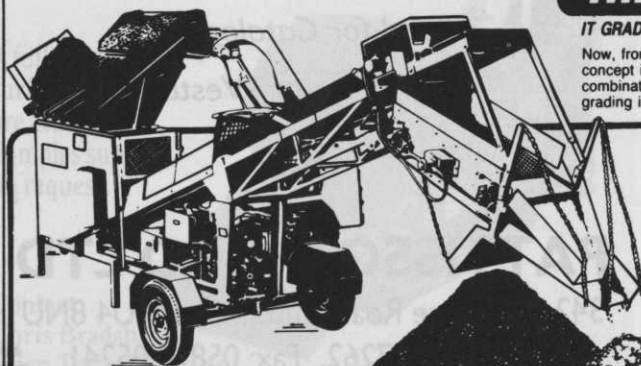


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● **The writer prefers to remain anonymous, stating that he is already regarded as something of an Arthur Scargill locally!**

To the Editor

Having just returned from an extremely entertaining and informative day spent with fellow BIGGA members at the Ransomes factory at Ipswich, I would like to express my thanks to them and say how grand it was to see the progress of cold steel entering at one end and finished products rolling off the line at the other! Our trip was organised by Paice's of Maidstone and we thank both them and the coach driver who battled through blizzard conditions to return us safely. Should other members be afforded the opportunity to visit Ransomes they may be assured of its excellence.

NIGEL STAPLEY

Head Greenkeeper, Darenth Valley G.C.

● **Having also enjoyed a similar tour, I can endorse Nigel's comments. My understanding is that such visits form a regular part of Ransomes programme, one where an exchange of ideas brings benefits to both parties. - D.W.**

To Neil Thomas

I write to thank you and the BIGGA staff for an enjoyable week at BTME and to opine that the hard work was well worth while. This is not just my view, but one shared by all from the Mid-Anglia section who attended. I have two suggestions to make: 1) I would like to see the presentation of the TORO Young Greenkeeper, the ICI Premier Greenkeeper and any Master Greenkeeper or National Tournament and ISEKI award winners being presented and properly feted by their fellow members in front of a gathered audience at, say, the end of one of the seminars. 2) I feel that with two consecutive drought years having passed, a paper covering this subject should have been included.

On the subject of Master Greenkeeper certification, I hope in time that all greenkeepers will seek to gain this qualification, thus enabling them to be on par with their American counterparts. One year ago I was quite content. I had 10 years experience as a head greenkeeper and some qualifications, but when MGC was introduced I soon realised that I was under qualified. Since then I have been to a National Conference, entered the ICI Premier Greenkeeper competition, attended workshops and seminars at Harrogate, spent nights at college sitting C. and G. Phase IV and am about to take the Pesticide Spraying Course.

In my case, education has clearly helped me to learn more about greenkeeping and management and to gain more qualifications. I will encourage fellow greenkeepers in Mid-Anglia to follow the M.G.C. route and hope that all greenkeepers throughout the land will follow suit. Perhaps this will eventually see an end to talk about what is due to the poor old greenkeeper, for we do so much NEED to be better qualified.

JOHN WELLS

Head Greenkeeper, Welwyn Garden City G.C.

To the Editor

Congratulations on the new magazine, which has obviously had great thought and a deal of hard work put into it and is real winner! Visually it is excellent and the photographs are first class, as is the 'readability' and size. I have to say even the adverts look better and result in them being better observed and acted upon. I realise more than most about funding such an enterprise and am fully aware of the need for trade advertising, but in retrospect our old mag. had the look of a trade advertising only paper about it and it was hard to find real 'greenkeeping issues'. My wish now is that you continue to give a good 'mix' and place firm emphasis on technical articles. Also please give greater exposure to highlighting individual premier greenkeepers and their trials and tribulations. I'll end by saying 'well done' and keep up the good work.

CHRISTOPHER BROWN

Head Greenkeeper, Tidworth Garrison G.C.

BIGGA flies the flag in the United States

A visit to the GCSAA conference, held this year in the desert city of Las Vegas, was taken by a group of some 40 greenkeepers and officials from BIGGA and the IOG and proved to be an enlightening experience for all concerned, being in the words of Kevin Munt "ten days of culture shock."

Reasons for making this long air flight are many and varied, with an official BIGGA stand engendering interest world-wide in our own BTME exhibition, creating an open market place for the promotion of our Association and the enrolment of many new members, together with the generation of valuable magazine advertising and affording an opportunity to learn from the style and intensity of American educational seminars. Others, such as Anthony Davies, were there as part of the winning ICI premier Greenkeeper Award and still more had elected to make this a holiday with a difference. What a difference it was became apparent just as soon as Las Vegas loomed in sight, with illuminations on the 'strip' making Blackpool seem like a back garden firework display and the 24 hour gambling casinos awash with punters eager to win - or lose - a fortune. Flying in a Cessna light aircraft over the Hoover Dam and the north rim of the Grand Canyon was a decided highlight from the tourist angle, and a visit to a University arboretum an enlightenment, briefed on the problems of growing grass, trees and shrubs in a desert climate.

But to return to the conference and show

proper this was, in everyone's view, an 'eye-popper'. Imagine if you will the prospect of 16400 people attending the show and over 2500 attending seminars, with many of the popular ones 'sold-out' months in advance. Imagine too the prospect of an exhibition hall the size of Wembley Stadium - officially quoted as 175,000 square feet - packed to capacity with 591 exhibitors demonstrating every con-

ment for some 400 years". After listening to an overview of the current US environmental situation, and being 'treated' to a number of controversial papers, one of which was entitled 'United States Sets Standards for Design Considerations World Wide', Munt was left making the plea that all conference organisers should ensure ample time be given so that speakers cannot escape such pontificating without having to field questions. A valid point.

Few could have failed to be impressed by the overall size and grandeur of this 62nd GCSAA Show, though a comment heard from more than one source suggested that speech-making during a meal attended by many hundreds is not conducive with grabbing attention. As a learning experience it was eminently worthwhile, for in taking from the good, and rejecting the not so good, our Association thrusts still further forward into the nineties in a mood of great optimism.

In conclusion, the highlights outweighed any minor disenchantment that may exist with the views often expressed, that everything in the land of Stars and Stripes is bigger - and therefore better - than on our side of the 'pond'.

A grand time was had by all and the vast amount of work and organisation put in by Brian Robinson and Elaine Jackson of the IOG was rewarded with very many happy folks indeed, all of whom expressed a wish that they might return again in '92, when the 63rd Show will be staged in New Orleans, Louisiana.



At the BIGGA stand: ICI Premier Greenkeeper Award winner Anthony Davis, left, BIGGA Chairman Ivor Scoones and David Norton, Toro Scholarship Award winner

ceivable form of green management equipment - plus the full quota of gimmicks - and you'll know why three days is necessary in order to take everything in.

One particular session, given by the American Society of Golf Course Architects, especially caught Kevin Munt's attention, entitled: "Can we co-exist with the environment?" "rather a strange question to pose" he said, "considering that golf has been co-existing with the environ-

AROUND THE GREEN

Keeping in touch with news and comment from the regions

KENT

The Kent section seminar held in February at The Woodlands was an outstanding success on all counts, with 120 delegates in attendance addressed on the vitally important subject of DROUGHT - SOLUTIONS AND REMEDIES. Outlining the current and near future situation regarding actual water supply, Steven Oakes of the National Rivers Authority expressed the view that if predicted trends are taken as an accurate barometer the greenkeeper might do well to consider either installing storage ponds or sinking bore wells, this to avoid any restrictions or bans that are likely to be imposed.

Graeme Francis presented what many saw as a very technical presentation into the efficient use of water, using modern irrigation systems. In this he highlighted the need for correct installation, maintenance and usage, in order to achieve the best results. That entertaining character Danny Godfrey followed with his "Grass under stress" presentation, outlining the many factors that can contribute to poor turf performance during drought and how the use of some varieties of seed mixtures can perhaps give better resistance. A touch of controversy crept in as the subject of Poa annua and Rye grass were introduced.

Lunch was followed with an address by Derek Green of Royal Liverpool, who discussed the experiences he has at Hoylake with a severe Dry Patch problem and the management undertaken. Currently it seems to be the case of pursuing varying manage-

ment techniques in an effort to mount an attempted control. This is a problem known to us all and, as pointed out by Derek, one which requires still further research if a lasting solution is to be found. Rounding off the lectures, Steve Auckland from the East Sussex National gave a presentation on the practical aspects of overseeding and the correct usage of overseeding equipment.

A question and answer session rounded off the day, with that old argument of Poa annua and Rye grass on golf courses coming to the fore in spirited fashion, with one speaker describing Poa as "rubbish" grass and another suggesting that it had a rightful place. Our thanks as usual go to the speakers who entertained and educated us so well, to the traders who set up mini exhibition areas and to those who support us in these ventures.

Without wishing to over simplify the summary of the lessons learned, we should perhaps be praying for rain, digging a pond or bore hole, hoping that a miracle cure for dry-patch is marketed one day, look for a watering system that covers perfectly, requires zero maintenance and never breaks down, and that a plant breeder discovers a very fine leaved grass that withstands wear, gives good year round performance and has roots that go down six feet! The name of this species shall NOT contain the words Rye, Meadow or Annual. Grass may be acceptable.

On a different note, our Spring Tournament and ISEKI qualifier is at Sittingbourne on May 14th. Successful players will progress to the Regional Final at Ham Manor on July 3rd and possibly continue to the final at Hillside, near Southport.

Finally, congratulations to Anthony Davies on receiving the ICI Premier Greenkeeper of The Year Award. Many will remember Tony as a section member when he was at Cobtree Manor a couple or so years ago.

PAUL COPSEY

BUCKS, BERKS and OXON

The Spring Tournament will be held at Goring and Streatley on May 22nd, the format being medal play over 36 holes. Please have your entries in by May 1st otherwise we cannot guarantee a place. The Rigby Taylor Fourball Matchplay Trophy will again be held this year and again we urge that you send your entry in without delay. A social night will be held on August 15th and will include such delights as skittles, snooker, pool and some good food. More details will appear later.

NEW COMMITTEE: Chairman - D Heads. Vice-Chairman and Treasurer - D Childs. Assistant Treasurer - S Edward. Golf Admin. - L Morrison. Secretary - B Woodward. Assistant Secretary and newsletter - R Clark. Handicap Secretary - B Holt. Lectures and Education - A Collis. Magazine contributions - N Fenwick. Advisers - B Paterson and R Kates.

NORMAN FENWICK

EAST SCOTLAND

The skittles match was held on February 22nd at the 'Silver Wing', with some 30 or more members and trade guests enjoying another great night. This is the second year of the event and it was encouraging to see so many ladies present. The winning lady was Val Neilson with Anne Ormiston as runner-up. Our Vice-Chairman, Chris Yeaman, took honours for the best male performance. Some three days later a group of 30 members enjoyed a lecture and machinery demonstration given by Sports Turf Services. Our thanks go to Mike Eddington, Mike Dennis and his staff and to those who spoke on such an interesting subject. We must not forget the kind provision of soup and rolls at Ratho Park G. C.

The first tournament of our year takes place on April 9th at

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Baberton G.C., which will also be a qualifier for the ISEKI championship. Forms are already out and if you find yourself without one, first check to see if your subscription is fully paid. As we all should know, these tournaments – indeed all BIGGA Section events – are open only to paid-up members and if you wish to enter this tournament – pay the subscription! Failure to do so will mean a loss of benefits of BIGGA membership.

WILLIE BLAIR

AROUND THE GREEN

MIDLANDS

Our Spring Tournament will take place at Kings Norton Golf Club on April 8th and will be the qualifying event for the ISEKI Championship. We will make the draw for the Rigby Taylor Pairs event and our new Singles Knockout, based on the first four placed competitors in each event from 1990.

Members should note that it is essential when attending lectures or Golf Clubs during golf events that a high standard of dress be maintained. This means that you should ALWAYS wear a jacket and necktie and be aware that jeans are best left for work. Indeed, many Golf Clubs now quite rightly ban jeans, both on and off the course.

DEAN CLEAVER

NORTHERN

All section members should by now have received details of golf fixtures for 1991. If by some chance you have been missed, please let me know and I'll put matters right. You should also note that a deposit is NOT required for the Roses Match or Presidents Day and would-be entrants should contact Mountains of Morley, who are responsible for invitations. Indeed, most of the tournaments are filling up fast and you would do well to get your entry in with some haste.

I am sorry that it is now considered necessary to impose a £10.00 deposit on booking but many people have failed to turn up after making reservations – leaving the section with a deficit when it comes to settle for clubhouse meal dues.

A date for your diary is the AGM, which will be held at The Royal York Hotel, York, on April 25th at 2.30 pm. Finally may I remind any member wishing to join the BIGGA team at Royal Birkdale for The Open support team to please contact me for further details.

BOB LUPTON

AYRSHIRE

Contrary to what may have been announced elsewhere, the Spring section outing will be held at Irving Bogside on Monday May 20th, beginning at 8.30.am. Entry forms will be issued shortly and a prompt reply will be essential. Please remember, this event is an ISEKI qualifier.

At the February committee meeting a decision was made to form a Dumfries and Galloway sub-section, to keep members in closer touch. More details in the next issue.

DUNCAN GRAY

SHEFFIELD

Peter Jefford of Rufford Top Dress was the guest speaker at our winter lecture and gave what proved to be an entertaining and informative talk which was much appreciated by the less than normal numbers usual at such a gathering – victims as we all were of the snowy conditions. Photocopies of the slides used by Peter in his lecture are obtainable from him at Rufford's offices.

Our spring tournament is now finally confirmed for April 3rd at Coxmoor. Please note that in order to play in this and other BIGGA events it will be necessary to produce your paid-up 1991 membership cards. On April 4th we shall have a lecture given by Ian Misselbrook of Tillers Turf Co Ltd. and I would urge you to support this and other educational events in the same way as you do our golf competitions.

Finally our thanks to Henton and Chattell and especially James Robson for arranging the trip to Ransomes in February. The staff at Ransomes made us feel most welcome, especially



David Royle, and we were most impressed by the hospitality and the excellent evening meal on the first evening at Ipswich. The tour of the factory was itself most enlightening and is to be heartily recommended. Andrew Roscoe cannot escape mention, for he managed to by-pass some 33 pubs on the forward and return journeys – thanks Andrew!

IAN COLLETT

SURREY

The lecture given by Mark Hunt of Sierra UK Ltd on slow release and controlled release fertilizers proved to be a most entertaining and informative evening and we are most thankful to Mark for his presentation, and Sierra for providing the excellent buffet. The buffet was prepared with Marilyn Johnson's usual panache and her efforts were once again delivered out of the kindness of her heart – thanks Marilyn, it is much appreciated.

Our March scheduled Dinner-Dance was unfortunately cancelled due to lack of support. Whether this can be blamed on the current economic climate I'm not sure, but in any event the cancellation cost the section £200, being the non-refundable deposit paid. Whilst we will look favourably at any similar future events that may be mooted, consideration would need to be taken as to the degree of genuine commitment for quite clearly we cannot afford to lose money in this fashion.

On a brighter note, we hope to run a full winter lecture programme with subjects already proposed being: Health and Safety. Chainsaw use and maintenance. Conservation and Rights of Way through Golf Courses. First Aid. On this topic, would members care to indicate if these are the sort of subjects which appeal, or perhaps make other suggestions.

We've been offered the opportunity to visit Jacobsen UK at their Kettering location, however numbers are limited to a maximum of 25. Interested? Let me know and if we go over the 25 mark we'll select by ballot. The trip is proposed for June /July.

PHIL BALDOCK

NORTH WEST

A Greenkeeper Training Forum was presented at the Lancashire College of Agriculture and Horticulture, Myerscough, on February 21st, this being a joint venture between BIGGA North West section and the Lancashire Union of Golf Clubs. Some 70 people attended, made up of a cross section of greenkeepers, club secretaries and green chairmen. Opening the proceedings was the President of The LUGC, Mr Caton, who gave a brief introduction before Nick Hardman (Secretary of the LUGC) discussed "The

Members of the Sheffield section seen here at Ransomes headquarters in Ipswich

AROUND THE GREEN



Jim Fry - President of the South Coast section - who has presented a new trophy for their Spring Tournament.

Way Forward". This was followed in turn by Dr Richard Gibbs, representing the college, who spoke of greenkeeper training at Myerscough and of the encouraging increase in figures of those being recruited to the ranks of college life, well up on previous years.

A subject dear to our hearts - COSHH regulations - was dealt with by another college representative, Brian King, and touched upon the subject of safety in the work environment - prompting many audience questions. The final speaker, North West BIGGA Chairman David Berry, presented a talk on the Master Greenkeeper certification plan and greenkeeping policy in general.

We now have a date and venue for the North West v North Wales Golf Tourna-

ment, this being Tuesday 23rd April at Llangollen Golf Club, with a tee-time of 2.00 pm. A team of 16 is required and anyone interested in playing should call me on 051 -724 -5412. The Spring Tournament will be played this year at Saddleworth on Wednesday May 15th, with a tee-time of 1.30 pm. This is also our ISEKI qualifier and prospective players should note the closing date, which is May 8th, due in part to a need for advanced catering arrangements.

BERT CROSS

SOUTH COAST

Even with temperatures dropping to minus 9 degrees C, a good speaker and topic can encourage members to attend a winter lecture. Section member Kerran Daly, Course Manager Salisbury and South Wilts GC, was the speaker and his topic was 'The use of computers in greenkeeping management'. Over thirty members were in attendance and heard how Kerran was using his home computer and word processor in assisting him as a course manager.

Members were delighted with Kerran's address and I am sure that a few more greenkeepers will now also be considering the use of a computer to assist them in their work.

Congratulations are also in order to Kerran on coming third in the BIGGA / ICI Premier Greenkeeper of The Year Competition.

Details for our first section tournament are as follows:

Venue - Blackmoor GC. Date - Wednesday 29th May. Competition - 36 hole medal. Entry fee - £15.50. Members wishing to play only 18 holes will be entered for an 18 hole medal and members over 50 years can compete for the Nita Stimson Trophy. There is a new trophy to be played for, presented by our President, Jim Fry, and this will be awarded at the Spring Tournament for the best nett over 36 holes by a competitor under the age of 25. Closing date for entries will be May 19th. Written

entries giving name, handicap, age and including the correct fee should be sent to Joe Burdett, 948 Castle Lane East, Bournemouth, BH7 6SP. Tel: 0202 483017

Finally a reminder that WESTURF 91 will be held at Long Ashton on Wednesday May 1st and I would urge you to support this regional event. Offers of assistance before the event will also be most welcome and I would also like to hear from those planning to attend in order that I can co-ordinate travelling.

BOB DENNIS

NORTH SCOTLAND

All members will be saddened by the death of Ed. Stuart, one of our Honorary Life members, who died on Feb 7th after a lengthy illness, aged 82. Ed was an enthusiastic and keen member who joined the old North and Midlands section of SIGGA in 1964 attending practically every event - even after his retirement in 1974 - until failing health caused his absence.

For close on 50 years he worked on the Golf Course and within the gardens of Balmoral on Royal Deeside, many as the head gardener, a position he took after his brother died. A past Captain of the Royal Household Golf Club at Balmoral, he was held in high regard, with both The Queen and Prince Philip being regular visitors to his cottage. Following retirement, golf continued to play a large part in his life and he was a member at both Ballater and Braemar as well as Balmoral. Despite all this he still maintained an active interest in gardening - his other love - and also made several visits to Bermuda where he assisted a friend in building and landscaping a golf course.

Ed. tried extremely hard to get the section to arrange a golf outing to Balmoral, an offer we unfortunately never took up. His friendliness, kindness and great enthusiasm will be missed by all who were fortunate to have known him and we extend our sympathy and kind thoughts to his wife Edith at this sad time.

The Spring outing is to be held at Nairn on May 16th and I take this opportunity of reminding members that Mr Howard Evans, BIGGA's pensions and financial expert, will be in attendance and available to discuss matters in private consultation from 12.30 pm onwards until he addresses the group for 15 minutes before the evening prize presentations. The cost for the day is £12 and a limited number of guests can be accommodated at £14. Those in greenkeeping who have attended as guests in the past should note that if they wish to continue to enjoy our promotions they will be expected to join our association.

Although this year's AGM has been arranged to follow a golf match at Letham Grange in November, it is being considered that in future we will hold it in conjunction with a 'gentlemen's' dinner. The committee will be pleased to hear your views on this matter and an indication of support for the evening.

To finish on a happy note, we offer congratulations to Bob Hardie, head greenkeeper at Strathpeffer, who got married in early February.

GORDON MOIR

MID-ANGLIA

This month I would like on behalf of the section members who attended BTME at Harrogate to thank those at HQ for all the fine work and effort put in to make the week such a success. We are all proud to be members of the Association.

February 20th saw us once again attend Beadlow Manor as their guests, this time to listen to Danny Godfrey of Inter Seeds Ltd and be entertained by his topic of golf course design. As on previous visits, Danny manages to both inform and amuse and we find learning is fun, though how many budding architects he may have made of us is something of which I am unsure. Thank you Danny, for all the time and effort you put into helping greenkeepers.

The Summer Tournament will be held at Letchworth GC on July 17th, the cost being £16.50 and the entries to be in Ken Bunting's hands by June 30th. There is a change of venue for the Autumn Tournament from that published in the fixture list, as Woburn G and CC, in the person of Mr Alex Hay, invites us to return this year. In his letter of invitation he states "I feel that our Club gives greenkeepers the opportunity of playing golf in convivial surroundings where they can discuss various aspects of these courses compared with their own, at which time the offering of ideas is beneficial to everyone concerned with the game

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