GREENKEEPER'S LIBRARY

Champion in chains

iss, to become a story, to tell stories'. If there is an awan or the best gulf book of 1991 this fine work will be a pring gone when a call to the local gravel merchane will take car of supplies for the adversity of applications on a golf course

Lifting the lid on unlikely hero Harry Vardon's tragedies and triumphs

Harry Vardon – The Revealing Story of A Champion Golfer – by Audrey Howell, is the intimate and touching biography of a great golfing champion – the greatest player to ever grace a course and a man idolised on both sides of the Atlantic as the King of Golf.

Revealed for the first time are details of Harry's private life – including the hitherto unknown fact that he fathered a son – the result of a love affair he never made public. This son, Peter Howell, is married to the author.

Harry Vardon rose to fame with a golf swing that brought him six Open titles. Even now, fifty years after his death, that record has never been surpassed. Yet he was an unlikely hero. Born in 1870, Vardon had stood in hand-me-downs and bare feet studying his "betters" at the Royal Jersey Golf Club, and mentally perfecting his own game. It was he who adopted the controversial "overlapping' grip first used by Johnnie Laidlay, a grip that was to become known universally as the 'Vardon' grip. He developed phenomenal accuracy by lofting the ball high for a softer landing, and when he took his first Open in 1897 he launched a legend as the 'Greyhound' with knickerbockers and nerves of steel.

Even so he was a modest and private man who kept his feeling bottled up. When he won his first Open he did so after suffering personal grief; and at the height of his fame he was struck down by tuberculosis, the effects remaining with him for much of his life. Some secrets he never revealed – the sadness of a loveless marriage leading to a secret love affair and the birth of a son. Recalling the great golfing performances of Vardon's career, Audrey Howell has written the intimate and touching story of a man of few words, who expressed all his genius with his golf clubs.

Harry Vardon - The Revealing Story of a Champion Golfer, is published by Stanley Paul, priced £16.99.

Sand, sand and still more sand. The editorial office seems to be ringing to sounds of 'The Desert Song' these days. Although there are only a handful of golf courses today without sand bunkers (and in the opinion of many none the worse for it) the days are long

• Continued overleaf

GREENKEEPER'S LIBRARY

Wisdom from the 'ultimate storyteller'

From previous page

gone when a call to the local gravel merchant will take care of supplies for the adversity of applications on a golf course. Thus the specialist publication issued recently by the STRI and authored by Stephen Baker fills a most important gap in the greenkeepers library, describing as it does in great detail how choice of sand type and quality can be vital in all aspects of turfgrass construction and management. Chapters include data on sources, eg river washed, quarried, sea dredged, sandstone rock, and sand waste from China clay extraction, together with their characterisation and chemical properties. The influence that grain size has on its performance, recommendations for bunkers, top dressing, drainage or blinding, all are examined with great thoroughness and provide the reader with a working manual which will prove indispensable.

Available from the STRI, the 67 page publication, Sands for Sports Turf Construction and Maintenance is priced at $\pounds6.50$ post inclusive

The Royal Worlingham and Newmarket Golf Club is the finest nine-hole course in the world'. This is the opinion of Lorne Rubenstein, acclaimed Canadian golf writer, player and former caddie; in his magical book 'LINKS'. Lorne is a regular Tour journalist and has played perhaps more of the great courses in the world than any other, for golf is his passion. What separates him from most of his contemporaries however is his belief in the simple basic premise that golf is



better played over natural unspoiled terrain and his turn-off is that which is patently manufactured. Strategic architecture, where a golfer can select possible from routes according to ability, confidence, or courage is this man's meat, and his rich descriptive prose does more for me than any other in painting vivid scenes of places and events that I know I simply must visit. There are no pictures in 'LINKS' and it has no need of them, for Lorne is the ultimate storyteller. In his own words. 'Golf

encourages reverie. To be part of golf is to come upon stories, to become a story, to tell stories'. If there is an award for the best golf book of 1991 this fine work will be a prime contender. I wholeheartedly recommend it.

Links – An Insider's Tour Through the World of Golf – is published by Stanley Paul at £12.99

The name of James B Beard is one that is instantly acknowledged wherever turfgrass science and culture is discussed, and no further proof of the man's huge knowledge and great skill at holding an audience spellbound need be sought than that which was witnessed at BIGGA's own seminar held recently at the BTME at Harrogate. Those fortunate in attending Beard's lectures were unanimous in their praise, not only for his ability to make an essentially technical subject entertaining but in his talent for really imparting true knowledge to his students. Under the sponsorship of BIGGA, the complete content of his mammoth two-day presentation is available in book form, categorised in sections under: Turfgrass Growth, Turfgrass Species Descriptions, Soils and Soil Modification, Construction and Turf Establishment and Basic Cultural Practices, ending with a further reading list and biographical notes about the author. For the student it is clearly essential work material and for the practicing greenkeeper a unique opportunity to have at his disposal the transcript of a learning experience which has been termed 'priceless'.

From BIGGA Headquarters, the ring bound, soft covered 84 page volume entitled – A Manual on Golf Course Construction, Turf Establishment and Cultural Practices – is priced at £22.00 inclusive of postage.

Despite what might be seen in some circles as condemnation of the practice of installing Sand Greens to USGA Specifications (USGA Spec), the feeling filtering through to us is that many greenkeepers would welcome the chance to at least give them a try. Seen to be successful at such prestige British locations as Collingtree Park in Northampton and East Sussex National, with such greens being openly discussed and seriously analysed at BIGGA's National Education Conference, the availability in Britain of the USGA's booklet on the subject could not have been better timed. Written by members of the USGA Green Section Staff and edited by William H Bengevfield, the contents are a complete step-by-step guide which take the reader through such stages as subgrading, drainage, gravel and course layering, root zone mixtures, top mix covering, placement, smoothing and firming. The concluding chapter, entitled Tips for Success and Opportunities for Error, will enable those who have experimental nursery areas on their course to at least give the USGA Spec green a fair crack of the whip. To echo Ken Siem's words, 'the transition from soil based greens to those which are sand based is a difficult one ... but practices change and technology races ahead'.

From BIGGA Headquarters, the 24 page booklet, entitled Specifications for a method of Putting Green Construction, is priced at $\pounds 2.50$ inclusive of postage.



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REF

AROUND THE GREEN

Keeping in touch with news and comment from the regions

SHEFFIELD

Our winter (March) lecture was held at Thryburgh with a fine turnout of 35 members and including our President, Mr A.K.Arnold. The lecture was presented by Howard Evans, the BIGGA adviser on pensions, his address stirring much comment and causing him to still be talking individually with members some two hours later! Thank you Howard, for your time and patience.

Please note that players in any BIGGA golf tournament or competition MUST have paid the 1991 subscription. You may be asked to produce your membership card as proof, so don't put this matter off for another moment.

A chance to see before buying is the idea behind exhibiting all BIGGA merchandise at Sheffield Section functions with whatever takes your fancy being ordered through Tony Renshaw, Sheffield Section Secretary.

The new entry fee for competitions will rise to £10.00 from July 17th, this being necessary due to rising administration costs, postage and food prices at Golf Clubs.

Notes for your golfing diary are: July 17th – Annual Tournament at Hillsborough GC. September 9th – Autumn Tournament at Brough GC. (this is NOT as printed earlier – please correct your diary).

IAN COLLETT

SOUTH WALES

March 18th saw several members of both BIGGA and IOG gather at the comfortable Southerndown GC for entertainment in the shape of Bob Priddle, who gave a talk on Conservation. As one associated with the World Wildlife Fund, Bob's talk was most interesting and prompted much discussion and enquiry. In total some 31 people attended and it was nice to observe new faces in the audience, which we hope will be a continuing trend. Bob is to be thanked for turning out on such a dreadful night, as are the Club committee for their generosity; and our sponsors of the evening-Celtic Mowerswho have also donated a substantial sum for section upkeep. Perhaps this is a time when we can thank all our supporters, Celtic Mowers and all other traders, for past help, present support and future anticipation of generosity.

The news that Michael Harrison has been forced to give up his job at Southerndown, due to ill-health, is not good, but we hope that he will soon be recovered and may continue to participate in section events.

Neil Smith of Southerndown has left for Royal Porthcawl and Mike Wilson, who left these parts for Scotland, has returned and been successful in gaining a position at the Bowood Estates GC at Chippenham. We wish all three the very best in their different jobs and to Mike's wife, who by the time this newsletter reaches publication will have given birth to their first child, which will be even more precious after previous disappointments.

Colin Murphy thanks everyone who sent cards and good wishes during his recent illness. There is a good way to go yet before his recovery is complete, but it was good to see him at Southerndown.

FIXTURES: May 15th-Glamorgan GC., Jacobsen Cup & Brown's Shield. June 27th-Tredegar Park GC., Iseki Regional Qualifier (this is definitely 27th, not 17th as in fixture card) July 30th: Royal Porthcawl GC., Birdie Cup. Aug. 8th: Southerndown GC., Match, Greenkeepers V Secretaries. Sept 18th: Morriston GC., Autumn Comp. Oct 3rd: St Pierre G&CC., Match V South West. Dec.11th: Pyle & Kenfig GC., AGM and Vitax Cup Competition.

PHILIP SWAIN

NORTH SCOTLAND

By the time this reaches print I'm sure everyone will join with me in wishing Peter Tait, head greenkeeper at Inverurie GC. a speedy return to his work after suffering a mild heart-attack in February. At the time of writing, good progress was being made and, who knows, maybe he'll appear at the Spring Outing with his camera?

There are certainly plenty of job opportunities going in the North

Section at the moment with Huntly, Buckpool and Rothes Golf Club's all currently seeking head greenkeepers and still more looking for first assistants. Whilst some of these vacancies have arisen through people moving to other Clubs, a disappointing trend is that many result through leaving the profession altogether for jobs outside, such as oil-rigs. Can there be an obvious reason for this?

May I make an appeal for magazine section news items? Please contact me on 0346-26931.

GORDON MOIR

SOUTH WEST

'Rain, rain go away, come again another day'. Miraculously it did! In the midst of the wettest spell for what seemed like years, our opening 91' fixture – The ICI TECHTURF sponsored day at Saltford GC on March 21st – remained blissfully rain free. Despite the forecast, we were greeted on the first tee with bright, breezy conditions, a perfect morning for golf on the first day of spring.

The course, whilst suffering muddy, sticky pathways, (along with most of us) was in excellent early condition, for which our thanks to Ian and his staff- and not forgetting the redoubtable Leslie Johnson- for preparing it for us. The results were: 1st: Vion (Buster) Lewer, Wells GC., 37 points. 2nd: Cary Rawlings, Wells GC., 34 points. 3rd: John York, Wells GC., 34 points. 4th: James Taylor, Tall Pines GC., 33 points

It is possible to discern certain similarities between the top three places, though rest assured they did not all play together. I'm certain the handicap chairman will be watching future results

very closely and probably dish out the first ever group handicap at this rate! Our thanks go to ICI and Avoncrop Amenity for prizes and a worthy mention for Richard Minton of ICI. His 37 points put him amongst the prizes but he nobly refused, saying he was overpaid as it was!

After lunch, generously provided by ICI., it was over to Gordon Rolfe and his Techturf Team for an interesting and enlightening talk featuring this exciting new product. Thank you gentlemen, for your time and trouble, and may I say how we were particularly impressed by the calm manner in which you parried the awkward questions at the end. On a personal note, I was very pleased with the overall turn-out, which vastly improved on this time last year when an audience of just seven listened to John Hinton. Thank you all.

PAUL WORSTER

NORTHERN

With another season underway after a hard winter, it's all hands on deck everyone hoping for another nice summer. As the Spring Tournament approaches the golf competitions are filling up well. Invitation day at York is now full, though places for the Roses Match and the Autumn Tournament are still available. The 'Roses' will be held at Crossland Heath GC on August 22nd (no deposit for this one -just send me your name!) with the Autumn Tournament at Garforth GC on October 1st. Those wishing to play in the Presidents day at Lightcliffe GC on June 11th are advised to contact Bill Mountain on 0532-533230.

Our winter lectures ended at a wet West Bowling GC with the ISEKI Roadshow, for which thanks to both ISEKI and EFG of Halifax for kind support. Once again the turn-out was poor, with our past two lectures attracting just twenty people between them! Can you imagine how embarrassing this may be for the speakers? – it certainly is for me. Do you – the members -want lectures? We've tried different venues, different times, so please let me have your ideas on what you want and when the timing would be best.

Continued on Page 47



Vion (Buster) Lewer

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AD

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AD REF

• From Page 45

The main social event of our year – the Dinner & Dance – took place at Baildon Rugby Club in March, where a grand time was enjoyed by all. Here once again, just as it is in the lecture programme,the turn-out was pathetic with just 40 members and guests attending, this from a section with nearly 300 members! Come on all you guys, support your section. Everyone at BIGGA is working hard on your behalf but, UNLESS YOU ARE PREPARED TO CON-TRIBUTE YOU WILL NOT GET MAXIMUM RETURN. You know it makes sense. BOB LUPTON

GREEN

due to the tented village arriving without notice! At very short notice Richard Minton of ICI agreed to step in – good stuff and our thanks Richard.

RICHARD WHYMAN

EAST ANGLIA

There has not been much going on lately, except for a rather disturbing letter from a fellow head greenkeeper in our region about an over-enthusiastic member. Apparently this fellow had been sending notes to the committee about how he thought the course should be run, how the litter bins were never emptied etc.etc. ad nauseam... I'm sure we've all got one in our Club, recognised a mile off by a copy of "Be your own Lawn Expert" under the arm and a know-it-all attitude.

This is all very well until these know-alls get elected to the green committee, when the fun really starts. Then the greenkeepers every move is questioned. Three quotes needed before you buy a tin of paint and half your working time spent trying to prove that you already have the best system – one which works! It is not enough that the course has never looked better and that you've been at the job for twenty years and never lost a green!

I recently heard his suggestion that two experienced men could run an 18 hole course with – just maybe – an extra hand in the summer. Why not have three animals, say a goat for the rough, a sheep for the fairways and a goose for the greens. At Christmas he could kill the goose. Then, when spring comes he'll say 'The greens are getting long, where is the goose? Ah yes, I remember, I killed him last year'. Exactly Mr Know-it-all, exactly.

I wonder how many good greenkeepers have said 'I don't need this', and left the profession because of a Barrack Room Lawyer? Too many, I would guess. I remember when I was a young greenkeeper (many years ago) reading the definition of a committee which read: THE COMMITTEE: THE UNFIT, APPOINTED BY THE UNWILLING, TO DO THE UNNECESSARY. That seemed to sum it up nicely.

MICK LATHROPE

DEVON and CORNWALL

East Devon GC.was the venue for our March meeting, with members taking to the course in sunny conditions to play for the SUPATURF and MAY & BAKER Trophies. At the same time, players were trying to qualify for the regional final of the ISEKI Championship. Our thanks and congratulations to Paul Newcombe and his green staff for a course in excellent condition. Also thanks to John Palfrey of Avoncrop and Mike Berriman of Monro for donating and presenting prizes as follows: SUPATURF (Head Greenkeepers and Trade) 1st: J.Mills (Woodbury) 37 points. 2nd: T.Pipe (Honiton) 36 points. R.Minton (ICI) 36 points. MAY & BAKER (Assistants) 1st: A.Woolnough (Teignmouth) 37 points. 2nd: C.Pine (Churston) 36 points. 3rd: N.Gagg (Churston) 35 points.

The ISEKI qualifiers were: (0-9) N.Gagg, R.Hall, P.Newcombe, N.Pring. (10-18) J.Mills, A.Woolnough, T.Pipe, S.Dymond. (19-28) C.Pine, T.Blackburn, J.Breyley, N.Clark.

Unfortunately Roy Battishill was unable to attend and make his presentation on 'The Ups & Downs of Holding a Major PGA Event',

NORTH WEST

On March 20th, in the magnificent clubhouse overlooking the wellmanicured course of Tytherington GC., an 'Educational Afternoon' was presented jointly by the N.W.Section and the Cheshire Golf Union. Brian Moss, a N.W. committee member welcomed 44 attendees and introduced the speakers and our President, Arthur Harrison, who was attending his first event in this new capacity.

David Golding, BIGGA's Education Officer, chaired the afternoon session and also spoke of the Association's progress and the importance of education and its availability at recommended colleges. David was followed by Peter Dutton, past President of the C.G.U., speaking on 'The Role of a Green Chairman'. Peter is well qualified on this subject, having been a green chairman himself and stressed the importance of working closely with the greenkeeper in order that a first hand report may be made to the green committee.

John Hacker, Consultant Agronomist, gave an interesting talk on 'Coping with Play' and of how

increased rounds played is causing compaction problems. He also spoke about the recent and widespread problem of Dry patch and of ways to tackle the problem.

The M.D. of Tytherington GC., Patrick Dawson, then addressed us on 'The Golf Business' and explained how he had designed the course, was present throughout construction, and now runs both the golf and other sports facilities at Tytherington, together with his managerial staff. Some interesting points which came to light were: no green committees; no house committees; no captains, yet 2500 members enjoy facilities of the highest order.

Anthony Davies, Course Manager, Prestbury GC., then gave his "Oscar Winning", or should I say "Greenkeeper of The Year" award winning talk on 'Where the greenkeeper fits In'. he related various aspects of greenkeeping and forward planning at Prestbury, again stressing the importance of close communication between greenkeeper and green chairman.

Continued on Page 54



Jeff Mills: winner of Supa Turf Trophy 1991

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AD REF 307

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The Secretary, Lenzie Golf Club Crosshill Road Lenzie Glasgow, G66 5DA.

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require a

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Mallow Golf Club Ballyellis Mallow County Cork Ireland



MILL RIDE GOLF CLUB

has an immediate vacancy for

2 ASSISTANT GREENKEEPERS

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Please contact Mr M Gunn, Temple Golf Club, Henley Road, Hurley, Maidenhead, Berks SL6 5LH.

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