

Letters

being retained by the Tour to advise on course preparation and final presentation. Together with Roger, his eldest son, Richard has provided practical help at many Tour venues, with improvement to these courses having at times been so dramatic that this has resulted in the Tour providing long-term agronomy advice.

BRUCE JAMIESON

Director of Agronomy, PGA European Tour

Quite unconsciously, Bruce confirms what many have been saying for years: that Tour players (and indeed the majority of uninformed amateur players too, who demand 'lush green grass' and are totally unable to evaluate good playing conditions when they are presented to them) are quite happy with Poa annua for summer tournaments, whilst admitting they are not very good in winter – and winter is a period which is often seven months long in Britain. – Editor.

■ Whilst most greenkeepers are eager to make use of new techniques to produce better playing surfaces, I feel we are being discouraged by what I view as misinformation. The comments in the September issue were typical of innumerable fallacies printed on the subject of Penncross. May I take this opportunity to counter those views of Mr Arthur by reminding him that:

- Penncross has been grown successfully throughout Northern Europe for several years. I don't doubt Mr Arthur will have seen many poor results using Penncross, but I can assure him from personal experience that many greenkeepers are producing excellent results on heavily used facilities open 365 days a year.

- Although the maintenance of Penncross requires a different approach, this does not necessarily lead to a high increase in costs. Its tendency to thatch up easily can be counteracted by frequent grooming and top dressing, carried out quickly and efficiently with modern machinery.

- In my experience a healthy Penncross sward is no more susceptible to pests and diseases than a traditional mix and mercurial fungicides are neither necessary nor desirable for disease control. Does Mr Arthur really believe that greenkeepers have an inexhaustible supply of illegal chemicals at their disposal, as his comment implies?

- Although Penncross is unavailable in the UK at the moment, there are several varieties of creeping bent available that will produce the same results both quickly and cost effectively. These should be considered as a viable alternative by any new development wishing to produce greens of the highest standard, particularly in the warmer regions of Britain.

DAVID WHITAKER

Course Manager, The Wisley Golf Club, Surrey

■ I am sure the manufacturers of Blazon are pleased with the article 'A Better Way to Spray' (August), showing their product in such a favourable light. However, it was disappointing, unbalanced and missed an opportunity to deal with the whole question of spray marking in more detail.

The whole subject of mixing anything into a pesticide solution in the spray tank is subject to the Control of Pesticides Regulations. The article failed to establish if mixing marker dyes with pesticide solutions *without written guidance* from the manufacturer is possible.

The foam mixture in bout markers can be adjusted to

Opinions expressed in these columns are not necessarily shared by the editor or BIGGA and the Association accepts no responsibility for them.

Letters to the editor are welcome on any topic related to the practice or pursuit of greenkeeping.

Write to the editor, Greenkeeper International, 13 Firle Close, Seaford, East Sussex BN25 2HL. Letters should be signed.

We reserve the right to edit for brevity, clarity and good taste.

● **Apologies to Terry Adamson, winner of the special prize at the BIGGA National Tournament, who we mistakenly referred to in last month's magazine as 'Terry Anderson.'**

break down at different speeds, there being no need to have 'blobs' on the course long after spraying is finished.

It is bad advice to suggest that the operator can rely on marker dye to show how poor his nozzle spray pattern is, or if a nozzle is blocked! The Code of Practice sets out in detail the procedures to ensure that the spraying job will be accurate and the calibration procedures also require careful inspection of nozzles.

Some marker dyes can have a higher hazard classification than the pesticide and from a COSHH point of view it is important to include these materials in the Risk Assessment now required before the spraying can commence.

Marker dyes are an important aid to accurate spraying, but they are *not* the only way. More balance please.

JON ALLBUTT

Biggin Hill, Kent

Jon Allbutt is a technical consultant to the leisure and amenity industry. He is perhaps best known to greenkeepers as a technical trainer of those who apply pesticides, and in assisting with COSHH assessments.

■ I do not agree with the content of my good friend Mr Jim Arthur's article: 'The Analysis Fallacy' (September 1991).

There is a need for chemical analyses of soils taken from golf courses, particularly golf greens. Nowadays, with large quantities of sand being incorporated with soils and organic matter in green constructions, it is vitally important that pH, phosphate and potash levels be monitored regularly in these very sandy rootzone mixes.

It is true that most of our old golf greens have very high levels of phosphate and potash present and in these cases there is no need whatsoever to apply phosphatic or potassic fertilisers.

There are a small number of cases each year where phosphate levels in greens are very low (less than 10 ppm) and here our agronomist would recommend the application of phosphatic fertilisers, however I would wish to emphasise that these are rare occasions.

On golf greens there is a continual removal of phosphate within clippings and if not replaced phosphate deficiencies can occur and a lack of vigour in grass growth can result.

I fully agree with Mr Arthur's comments concerning trace elements. A deficiency of any trace elements is extremely rare on British golf courses.

DR PETER HAYES

Director, Sports Turf Research Institute

I now admit to being confused, my understanding being that application of phosphates positively encourage Poa annua in every case (see Goss et al, Washington University Trials 1975). If a green appears healthy and the grass type is ideal, even if soil analyses show levels of 10 ppm or below, does this automatically call for phosphate application? Further, if the turf is not good on a modern sand/soil green at what levels should corrective treatment be applied? I am drawn by an article by an STRI Agronomist which appeared no later than August; which states: 'it should be borne in mind that there are no exact limits for deficiencies in individual elements, whilst excesses in some, particularly available phosphate, are known to cause severe problems in the useability of turf long-term'. – Editor.

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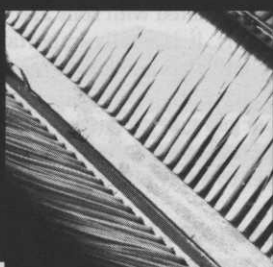


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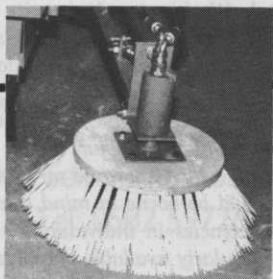
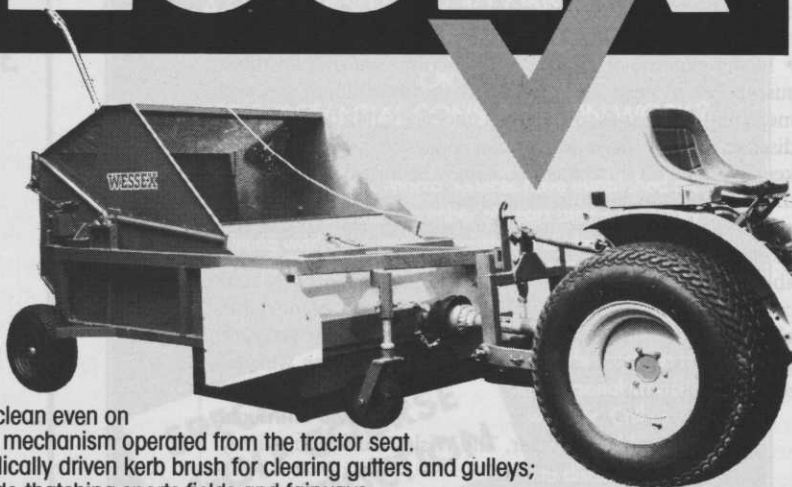
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Who's who in BIGGA



NORMAN EXLEY

You'll be hard pushed to attend a golf meeting, seminar or indeed any form of activity where greenkeepers gather in the south east without coming face to face with Norman Exley (or his delightful wife Linda, for that matter, who is one of only a handful of BIGGA lady members and a horticultural expert of some note). The reason is plain to see, for BIGGA and the greenkeeping cause is Norman's prime reason for living. You can't

get more dedicated than that!

It's probably true to say that greenkeeping discovered Norman rather than the other way round, for after what seemed like a lifetime of charity fund-raising for the Lifeboat Institute and getting more and more 'browned off' with the London rat-race, he read of an opportunity to attend a TOPS course at Askham Bryan College and sent off his CV.

The answer was affirmative and off he set, determined to make a career in sports turf but certainly unaware that golf would snare him, along with a certain lady who is now his wife, for Linda was also taking the TOPS road at that precise moment. A year full-time at Askham Bryan, Phases I and II of Greenkeeping Management, several seminars and a multitude of lectures later and the stage was set for Normans first job in a new career, that of greenkeeping at N. Middlesex GC, this followed a year later with a head greenkeepers job at a private Club in Kent – Woodlands Manor. It was a case of what might have been, for the lure of London – or at least what is now part of London suburbia in Northwood – called him just one year on to his present job at Northwood GC, where he has been for nine years.

Talking to Norman one quickly realises that he is London's man and although he and Martin Peters ran the old EIGGA London Section almost from the start, he did run the new BIGGA region from day one, appointed Regional Administrator in '87 as the new era first dawned.

Amongst Norman's many other attributes is a burning optimism for the future of greenkeeping, almost against himself in some ways for he is witness to some pretty awful tales of secretaries in the region who think we (BIGGA) are getting altogether too big for our boots! His own goal is to spread the gospel according to Saint BIGGA and to take a stand wherever two or three chairmen of green or secretaries are gathered together. He sees it as vitally important that standards continue to rise, that BIGGA eventually has its own greenkeeper training centre and that head greenkeepers simply must positively encourage all youngsters within the ranks to join the Association.

You can't get away from the man's enthusiasm even if you try. Within minutes of the Iseki Championships finishing, in which he captained the SE Team whilst playing as a last minute stand-in, he's off into a reverie about Littlestone 92 and the National Tournament, his latest baby. He's already demonstrating signs of the minor nervous tension that is



Featuring two more of the Association's backroom boys, the men who help make BIGGA tick, taken from taped discussions and aided and abetted by a little persuasive nudge from the editor

often the badge of a good administrator, but with Norm you can be sure it'll be all right on the night – and the day will be pretty good too!

HUGH PARRY

'I know you but I don't know much about you', was my opening gambit with Hugh Parry, the quiet man of Welsh greenkeeping. 'There's not much to tell' his too modest reply. But within minutes, interspersed with his tales of how others were faring, this peaceable man began to expand, warming to my prompting and expounding upon his great passion, the continuing education of greenkeepers.

A member of the Board, Hugh told of how tickled he was to be on the Education Committee, a job he'd rather hoped he'd get and how he now intended to throw himself whole-heartedly into the promotion of the great education cause.

Hugh was always a greenkeeper, starting straight from school and serving an indentured apprenticeship with a local authority. That he liked what he did is evidenced by his remaining with them until he was 28, during which time he attended Llandaff College, successfully progressing through all City and Guilds stages I-III in Greenkeeping Management and further topping up with IOG examinations. Now his sights are set on progressing through to HND status – 'I'll never stop learning' his avowed philosophy.

Moving to more recent times, Hugh, now 34, lives in Cwmbran with his wife, 15 year old daughter and 16 year old son. Both youngsters are clearly a source of great pride to him, the youngest currently taking O levels and the boy waiting eagerly for A level results before hopefully moving on to University.

From local authority golf, where perhaps his last task was building a municipal course, Hugh moved first to Blackwood Golf Club and thence to Caerphilly. Now he has his passport stamped, ready to commute the 45 minutes across the border to Bristol and Clifton as head greenkeeper, a task he looks forward to with great relish. 'They really have their act together' he opined, 'for almost as soon as the STRI and course architect Hamilton Stutt had finished preparing a report for them prior to refurbishment, they set too and completely rebuilt the greenkeeping workshops and stores, a case of first priority and one that augers well for the future'.

Hugh is fired with enthusiasm for his future at Bristol and Clifton, a task where he knows clearly why he has been hired and where the green committee have faith in his judgement and ability. Asked what he would like to change in future, he's not unlike most other greenkeepers in wanting to see the rank and file golfer award his colleagues the prestige and standing they deserve, for as he rightly points out, 'without the tender care of the greenkeeper on their course, they would have a poor patch on which to do battle'.



DAVID WHITE reports on the glory

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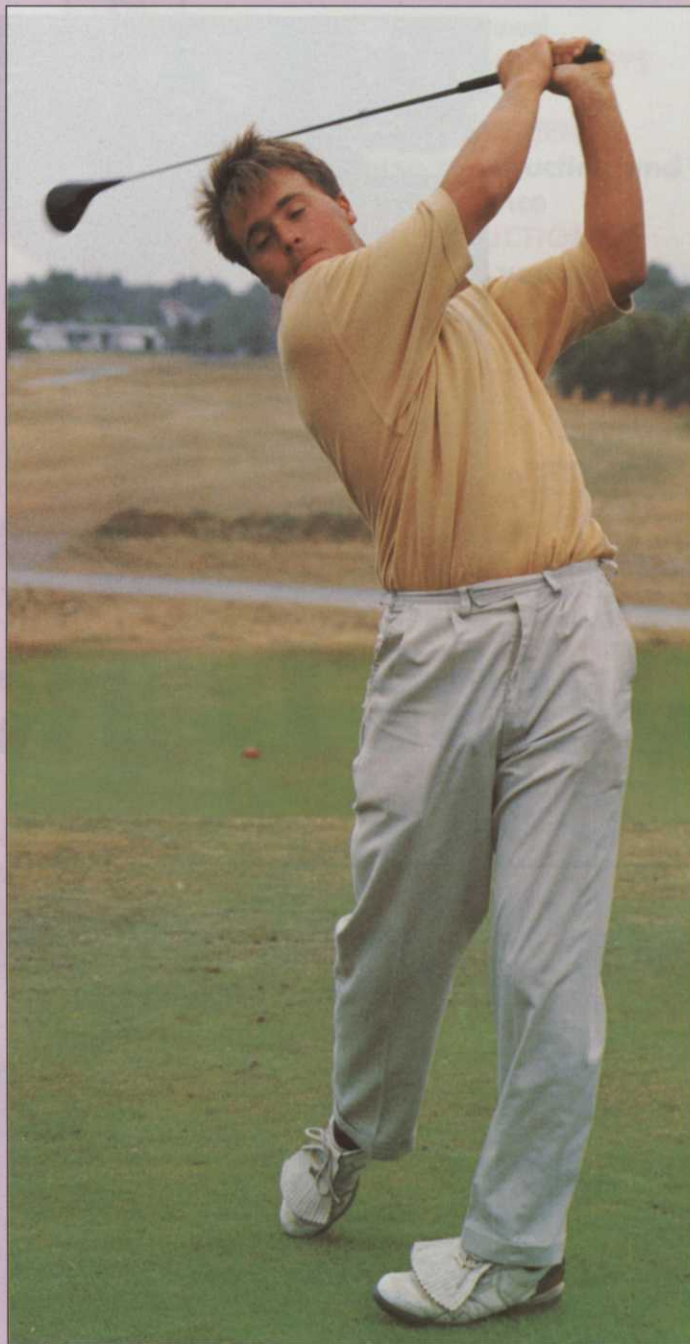
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Great GOLF



What do you get when you gather together 60 or so competition hardened greenkeepers in one tournament? The answer, simple to witness at the wonderfully testing links of Hillside, is great golf!

From the very beginning, the linking of Iseki and greenkeepers in the field of competition has produced some truly heroic results – year after year the scratch and low handicap players conjuring up their most inspired play – and almost always a player from the army of middle to high handicap ranks producing a score that leaves the field shaking its collective head in disbelief.

As an observer from the sharp end of a camera lens, more often than not I'm witness to the swing rather than the result and can form an opinion of its effectiveness. At Hill-

side I saw them all: the 'classic', the 'worker', the 'mechanical', the 'never had a lesson', the 'slump', the 'b..... good thrash' and the 'dodge, it's coming my way!' It was breezy, highly entertaining stuff!

It's a tradition at Iseki that the regional team managers-cum-coaches give last minute pep talks to their teams, followed by incursions to the holes regarded as critical for further words of advice or encouragement. Thus even before the first ball was struck the sight of Gordon Child (South West & Wales) striding off, strategically followed by Elliott Small (Scotland) and Howard McCaddey (North) suggested that this was to be deadly serious, fighting for the honour of the regiment and all that...

Norman Exley (South East) and Roger Willars ➔ 16

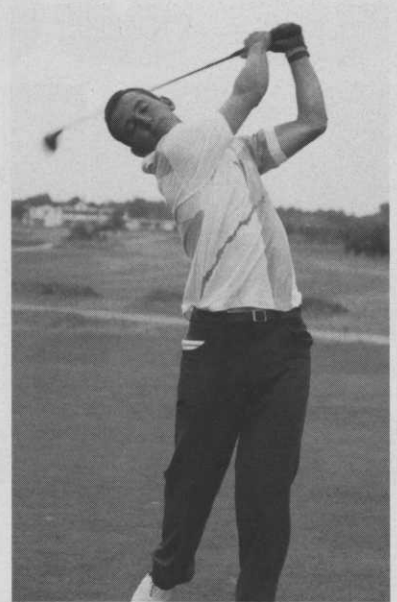
Above: the winner – Telford Jarvis, in a full frontal assault.

Left: a study in perfect control and timing, from low gross winner, scratchman Kevin Peace

A hug for our sponsor: Frank Larkin, Ireland's worthy winner of category two and an 18 handicapper "with the grin of a wee leprechaun," showed delight at his success with an impromptu hug for Iseki managing director, Mr T Shinoto



Just Larkin about!



What did they put in the team's lemonade shandy? Above: the victorious Northern team.

Right: Paul Robinson (Northern), category one winner.

Far right: Alan Reed (Northern), category three winner

15 ➔ (Midlands) were both playing managers and could offer none of the soothing syrup, with the teams from Eire and Northern Ireland presumably having had their orders over an Old Bushmills or two the night before. What great guys they all were, bringing to the event a spirit that truly bridged all partisan action and demonstrating the wonderful camaraderie for which the Irish are noted: but then they are simply dedicated greenkeepers and not politicians.

The first ball was driven far and sure by Scotland's Kevin Peace, a pure joy to behold, and immediately one was aware that here was a man to watch closely. That he continued to strike sweet shot after sweet shot came as no surprise to the cognoscenti of golf and, as was predicted, his scratch

score of 116 for the 27 holes gave him the coveted and well deserved best gross award – both he and Elliott must have been delighted!

Folks in the Midlands have learned never to count Maurice Emery out of any serious competition and so it was that this 'oldest swinger in town' saw off all the opposition in the over 55s class, producing solid dependable play – like the man himself – to capture this class. He may be 'getting on a bit', they murmured, but just look at that supple action.

From the wisdom of elder field marshals we moved to the exuberance of youth, Martin Private from the South East suggesting that he was without visible nerve by slamming Titleist after Titleist into just the right places – look- ➔ 18



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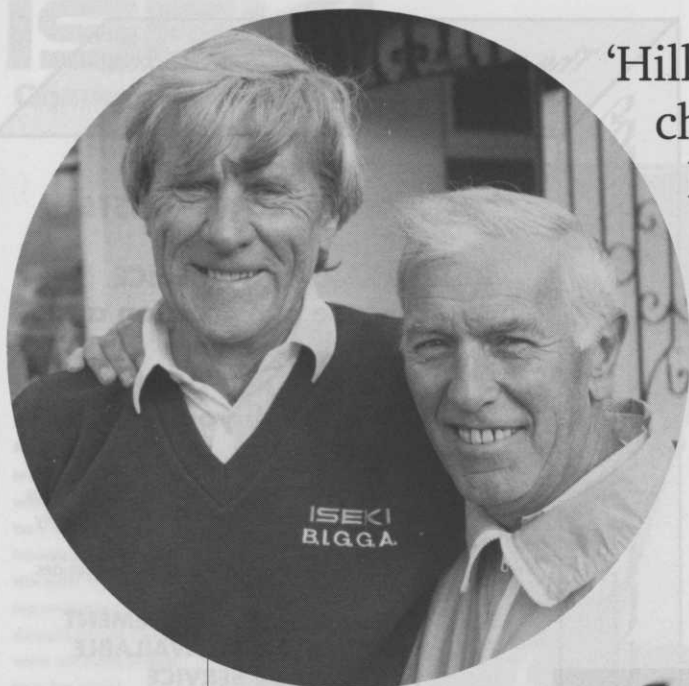
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'Hillside lived up to its reputation as a challenging test of golf and the tight lies were just perfect for this truly splendid Iseki Championship'



Top: All smiles from Over 55s winner Maurice Emery, with his caddy.

1: Craig Parkinson - Runner-up in category one.

2: Stephen Cram - Runner up in category two.

3: Martin Private - Under 21s winner.

4: Frank Platt - The North's 'third man'.

5: Peter Connett - Third in category two.

6: Scotland's 'mighty atom' - Hugh McLatchie.

7: John Robinson - Runner-up in category three.



16 ➔ ing great through the lens - to pull off a nett 114 which bagged him the under 21s class with comparative ease - this 'Private' is destined for promotion from the ranks.

Did I mention Howard McCaddey? What was it he said to his team that produced the perfect result? In the class for players of handicap 0-9, the Northern boys enjoyed a right old ding-dong, each perhaps without knowing what the other was up to, the end result being as close as the proverbial gnat's whisker, just one stroke separating class winner Paul Robison on 110.5 from Craig Parkinson on 111.5 and third placed Frank Platt on 112.5. The looks on their rugged northern faces at the presentation dinner said it all - it's all down to team work don't you know!

In the 10-18 handicap class it warmed this old hacker's heart to see Eire's Frank Larkin in action, an 18 handicapper with the grin of a wee leprechaun and a killing touch

around the greens. Frank's score of 107 was two and a half strokes better than second man Steve Cram, yet another Northern stalwart and a compact and good looking player whose action suggests better things are probable, followed by Peter Connett's nifty, workmanlike 110, a nice effort which must have temporarily boosted the morale of the South West & Wales team.

Would you believe it, yet another Northern winner presented himself for honours in the 18-24 class, this time in the shape of Alan Reed, whose swing belies that which I found hard to believe: a 24 handicap.

Creamy smooth and with a delicate touch, his score of 105 suggests that come next season he'll be moving numbers a peg or two. Four strokes separated first from second, the 109 from John Robinson of the South West & Wales team, with the mighty wee man, Scotland's Hugh McLatchie

ISEKI

Championship Finals

Results

The Iseki Trophy and Winner on Handicap:

Telford Jarvis - 102

Best Gross:

Kevin Peace
- Scotland - 116

Over 55s:

Maurice Emery
- Midlands - 121.5

Under 21s:

Martin Private
- South East - 114

Category one:

1st Paul Robison
- Northern - 110.5

2nd Craig Parkinson
- Northern - 111.5

3rd Frank Platt
- Northern - 112.5

Category two:

1st Frank Larkin
- Eire - 107

2nd Stephen Cram
- Northern - 109.5

3rd Peter Connett
- South West & Wales - 110

Category three:

1st Alan Reed
- Northern - 105

2nd John Robinson
- South West & Wales - 109

3rd Hugh McLatchie
- Scotland - 111

Team prize:

1st Northern - 884 points

2nd South West & Wales - 915 points



a highly creditable third on 111.

Like any good drama, the best comes last, in this case the best being some 'out of my boots' play by the winner of the Iseki Trophy, Telford Jarvis.

Telford plays off 22, looks like a 12 and putts like a scratch man. He is, in handicap terms, a phenomenon. Of course he had to work for it, but when you drive well and putt like a demon you end up leaving your victims strewn on the fairways. Did I mention he represented the north? It almost seems superfluous and I really do want an answer from Howard. What *did* you put in the team's lemonade shandy?

Credit for slick organisation must of course go to the Iseki travelling circus, ably manned by Steve Broad and headed by Colin Gregory, graced further by the added presence of Iseki's managing director Mr T Shinoto, who presented all

the awards. It speaks volumes for such fanatical enthusiasm that those Iseki smiles remained from first dawn to the last sup from the glass - thanks to them all.

Whilst issuing accolades, none are more deserving than those given to Martin Twist and his worthy team. Martin was at pains to actually apologise for the sparse growth on Hillside's fairways, victim like most other linksland courses in this area of a prolonged drought. But as one enthusiast pointed out - when asked to describe the game of golf to non-players - he tells them it is a game played over ground separated by a green area known as a tee, aiming to another area known as a green. What is in between depends on circumstance and the ground is the same for everyone. Hillside lived up to its reputation as a challenging test of golf and the tight lies were just perfect for this truly splendid Iseki Championship.

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Tel: (0449) 741012 Fax: (0449) 741012

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