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This lottery competition is only open to BIGGA members and is restricted to 400 numbers. Cost per number is £50 per year and these will be allocated on a first come first served basis. There are ten cash prizes awarded each quarter, which means 40 prizes in total over the year, giving plenty of chances to win!

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When are the numbers drawn?

At BIGGA events. The January–March draw will take place at the National Education Conference in April; the April–June draw will be made at The Open in July; the July–September draw will take place at the Hayter Challenge final in September and the October–December draw will be made at the BTME '95, in January 1995.

Can I share the cost

of taking part with my friends?

If you want to share the cost – and, of course, share any prize you might win, then that's up to you. By all means get together with other BIGGA members who you may work with, so that you all chip in to buy a number. As far as each application form is concerned, we can only accept one name and one amount of £50. However, subject to availability, members can apply for more than one lottery number thereby increasing their chance of winning. All entries will go into every draw regardless of whether you have won previously. The key name will receive any winning cheque and it will be up to you to share it out.

I want to go ahead – what should I do now?

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Official publication of the British & International Golf Greenkeepers Association
DECEMBER 1993



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GREENKEEPER International

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Iain MacLeod, Tain's head greenkeeper on the course he's called his own for over 18 years

Greenkeeper Education and Development Fund

Launched by Viscount Whitelaw at BTME 1992, the Fund provides the key to the future for greenkeeper, golf club and game. Individuals and companies can join the Golden Key Circle and Silver Key Circle. For details, contact BIGGA on 0347 838581.

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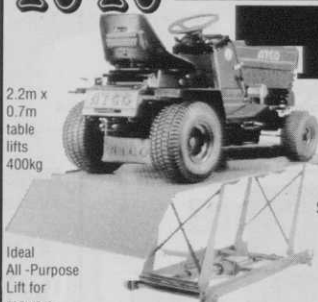
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Faces and places



■ Chris Gray, latterly working on contract management with several local authorities in Nottinghamshire and previously a greenkeeper for five years working on the Isle of Wight, has been appointed Lecturer in Greenkeeping, Warwickshire College, Leamington Spa.



■ Andrew Smith, one of the likeliest of likely lads from oop t' North, has landed a grand new job as first assistant at Old Fold Manor GC, Hertfordshire. A regular 'face' at golfing events and educational seminars and latterly a member of the BIGGA North committee, Andrew will no doubt be fine tuning his 'likely lad' handicap – so watch out London section!



■ West Country Groundcare have appointed David Nock (left) as contracts manager for their West Avon interests.

■ Restoration is well advanced (see picture, below) at British Coal's Telford, Shropshire site, where the Howard Swan Practice are designing a public golf course for Green Eagle Golf, to complete the reclamation exercise. The new facility, due to open in 1996, will be operated by Wrekin District Council.



■ John Walker, managing director of Ritefeed Ltd, the company that operates a 'try before you buy' scheme for its range of organic liquid fertilisers, has had a busy time over the past two years. Not content with making purposeful inroads into the marketplace, John has found time also to compete in a full programme of Kart racing, culminating in winning the Manx Grand Prix, a street race at Peel in the Isle of Man. Need info on Ritefeed, or how to drive very rapidly? Tel: 0772 253521.



■ Liquid Sod has appointed Tim le Mesurier (formerly with Agriland) to develop the new Roots Division, which will market a complete range of liquid organic products. Tim le Mesurier has considerable experience in liquid organics, especially their use on golf courses. He will also be responsible for the development of Liquid Sod products into the UK and Europe, through Liquid Sod's

own direct marketing methods or through appointed distributors.

■ Irrigation Industries Ltd, a new specialist company, are setting new standards in irrigation service by aiming to take the hardship out of irrigation design and materials acquisition. They are offering a varied package of services, from design through marketing and supervision to full supply packages. Golf architects, developers and installers can select those items which will reduce their time input or increase their expertise. Many of these services are provided free.

The company is headed by Malcolm Thomson and Gordon Bennington, who have a lifetime of experience in the industry and have designed the irrigation for such prestigious courses as Lost City in Australia and the Sri-raja CC in Thailand. They are currently involved in projects in Europe, Africa and the Middle East as well as here in the UK. Need info? Call Malcolm on 0227 772102

■ West Country Golf has appointed Mark Walsh, 23, as greenkeeper for the newly completed course at Tickenham, Avon. Mark comes straight from St Andrews, where he has been for over five years, much of that time working on the Old Course to prepare it for The 1990 Open Championship and five Dunhill Cup events. Greenkeeping is in the Walsh family with Edwin, Mark's father, the head greenkeeper at Whitefield GC, near Manchester.

■ Brian D Pierson (Contractors) Ltd have been awarded their first contract for a Japanese client – Mizno-Gumi Co Ltd. Work has commenced on an 18-hole course at Halliloo Valley, Croydon, designed by American architect, Bradford Benz. The international flavour of the contract is exciting, as not only is this the first course that Pierson's have built for Japanese clients, but also the first of Bradford Benz' designs to be built in the UK. Pierson's have seven golf courses under construction, with projects in France and Spain.

■ It seems the north-west staged their own form of The Masters recently, with the Ritefeed North West Masters, played over Fleetwood links and won by greenkeeper Bill Merritt of Allerton Park GC. The major award winners are pictured below, with Bill Merritt (third left) next to John Walker, the well known international Kart racer.



Westurf and now Southturf line up for '94

Get your diaries out for a new turf care trade show in 1994. BIGGA's South East region are organising Southturf at Motspur Park on Wednesday June 29.

"We're very excited about this new development," said South East regional administrator David Wood.

The event's organisation is still in its early stages but speak to David for more information on 0342 850875.

Moving from south to west and in Bristol, plans are already in hand for the sixth Westurf exhibition. Some 58 stands occupied Westurf's first show in 1989 and last year, that number was doubled.

Venue for Westurf '94 is again Long Ashton Golf Club, Bristol and the date is April 27.

The practice ground site at Long Ashton boasts two greens and a large area for demonstrations. Trade enquiries should be made to Marion Child on 0803 844056.

Golf without clubs

A Japanese film crew has been busy at St Andrews producing a highly accurate visual record of the Old Course, which will be developed into computer graphics to create a game for playing the Old, hole by hole, using the Super Nintendo computer system. The game will be sold only in Japan and the company expect to sell at least 200,000 copies. The complex game allows players to select the club to use and the type of shot they wish to play, whilst variables such as wind speed and direction, ground conditions, and quality of lie all come into play.

The game will be launched in 1995.

Stamps of approval

It's taken 154 years (the first British postage stamp was issued in 1840), but it is nevertheless pleasing to learn that the Royal Mail at last is set to issue a series of theme stamps which commemorate golf. Sometime in 1994 a tribute to the Honorable Company of Edinburgh Golfers, reputedly the world's oldest golf club, will be published, together with first day covers, presentation packs and 'mint' stamps – look out for them!

When it rains...

An amateur weather recorder's figures have revealed that over a 40 year period, Thursday is the wettest day of the week. The Middlesex based forecaster expressed no surprise, because Thursday is the God of Thunar (thunder). From a low of 125.17 inches recorded on Sunday the figures are: Monday 132.78 inches, Tuesday 136.43 inches, Wednesday 134.85 inches, Thursday 143.16 inches, Friday 133.94 inches, Saturday 132.57 inches. TOTAL 938.90 inches. The difference between Sundays (low) and Thursdays (high) is quite something, since one inch equals 101 tons to the acre!

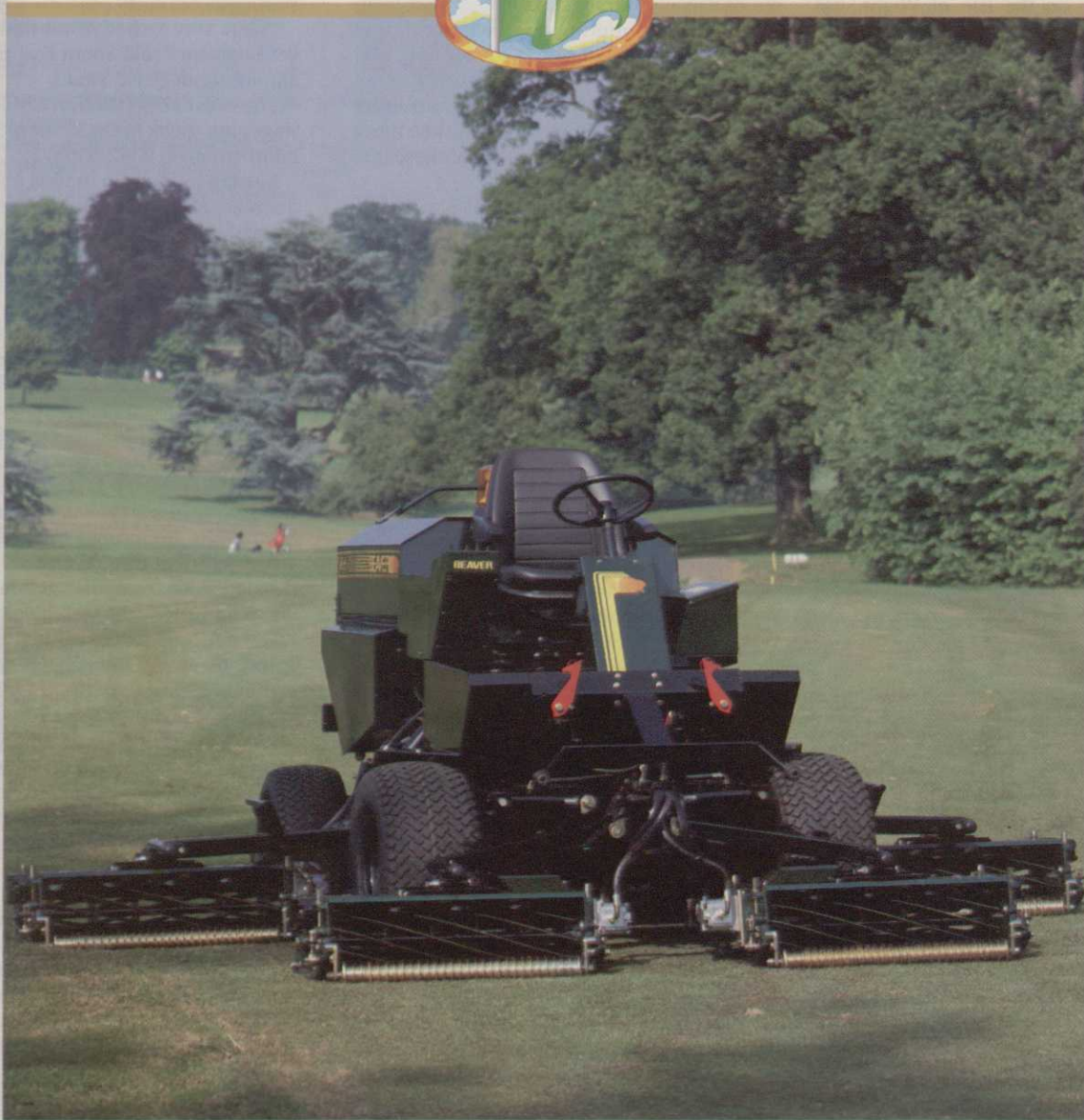


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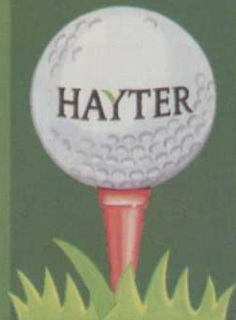
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JIM ARTHUR
argues the case
for mowable
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The Right Approach

Browsing through some articles I had written twenty odd years ago, in search of some half-forgotten statistics, I came across one pleading for more attention to be paid to improving approaches, specifically to create better conditions for the pitch and run up game. Reading only recently an American eulogy, for Americans, about super new courses they should play in Britain, all American designed of course, where lavish praise was heaped upon the architects (mostly top US pro's) for their penal protection of the greens by water and bunkers 'so that the green has to be directly attacked', their opposed attitude to our traditional game – our's played mostly along the ground, their's mainly in the air – was sharply brought home to me. This eulogy was incidentally somewhat flawed by the praise lavished on some courses in receivership and others abandoned and uncompleted. One sympathises with their unwary readers who travel many miles in high hopes of a memorable round, to be greeted by half-built greens or at best a course boasting a Portakabin as a clubhouse, with all the evidence of lavish plans having had to be abandoned in favour of a holding operation, hoping to survive until the end of the recession – perhaps in ten years time!

One of the advantages of a principle to which I have adhered all my professional life, viz 'write it down for the record', emerges in old age – one cannot be accused of having as convenient a memory as displayed in 'Gigi' by Maurice Chevalier – "Ah yes, I remember it well!"

I was stimulated to go back in history by the comments of a young head greenkeeper at a recent seminar on, inter alia, better winter playing conditions, to the effect that it was all very well having good-draining, all-weather greens, but what if the course was rendered unplayable by waterlogged or flooded surrounds and approaches.

No one is suggesting that we build the surrounds on stone carpets, as we virtually invariably build greens today, but certainly even two decades ago I was pleading with all who would listen, to stop digging holes in clay into which shallow crater greens were built on stone carpets. Often, as in one well known course on Midlands clay, the drainage from such greens was taken to a small sump (in some of the stickiest clay you have ever seen) a few yards in front of the green and dead centrally sited – creating a lovely bulls-eye bog in a critically important area.

There are many ways of improv-

ing conditions around the green to avoid this waterlogging. Clearly, surrounds must where necessary be drained, usually by intercept (cut-off) drainage and must be carefully constructed with surface flow in mind. There is nothing new in this. James Braid at the turn of the century solved this shedding problem by constructing shallow valleys or swales (additional drainage was often not needed) to collect and divert surface flow from slopes above greens.

Assuming that surface water has somewhere to go if it can be persuaded to drain into the soil, there is much to be said for deep aeration of surrounds, especially of areas compacted by walk-off wear to the next tee. Needless to say, if you are thinking of Vertidrainning, then find out where the pop-up pipes run – especially in older systems where installation was all too shallow as no one catered for aeration from the surface a foot deep. The main risk is of course the supply line to the hydrant box off the main, and from the box to the horse shoe ring round the green.

The main area for improvement in both fairly new and old courses is the actual approach – best defined as an area the width of the entrance

to the green and at least 20 m deep. Not only should this be regularly, deeply and intensively aerated (after all, the entire traffic on the course converges on this vitally important area) but it demands, and benefits from, exactly the same kind of treatment as the putting surface itself. The most important of these is regular mowing with a triplex, collecting the cuttings. Nothing improves turf more – nor more quickly. Turf density improves, especially with allied treatment, but also tractors and gang mowers are kept well away, whereas, too often, in the not too distant past before the advent of mounted gangs, tractors and trailed gangs passed and re-passed over the same area to pick up missed sections, with inevitable damage.

Approaches and surrounds should be mown at a greater height than greens of course but close enough to make it possible to putt with confidence from well off the actual putting surface, hazards permitting. Nothing to my mind looks more alien than the concept (imported again from America) of a wall of grass around the green which, if a ball pitches up against it, leaves it virtually unplayable. This is supposed to produce better conditions for chipping, but I remember vividly

one Surrey club with a constantly changing green committee, who demanded that their greenkeepers should mow surrounds to one inch height – 'to stop the balls rolling off the putting surface into greenside bunkers'. My advice to erect a six inch wall of wire netting as likely to be more efficient was not well received, but I had enclosed my resignation with my report on the grounds that the club could waste its money if it wanted to, but I reserved the right not to waste my time.

In the bad early days of irrigation in the late sixties and early seventies pop-up systems covered the greens only and indeed in many badly designed three head systems, even failed to do that. This meant rock-hard patchy approaches, giving unpredictable bounces, so an extra head was installed – operating with the green. The nett result was invariably a bog – especially if fixed, half-circle heads were installed round the sides and back of greens and a full circle one at the front. One such installation, much criticised by me, was defended by the installing firm as being specifically what the members wanted, lush approaches on which they could stop the ball! Words (didn't) fail me!

Needless to say, approaches, being inherently less well drained, need totally independent control and much less water, while surrounds should never be covered by full circle greenside heads but by periodic, tediously laborious adjustment from part to full circle for limited periods, and back again.

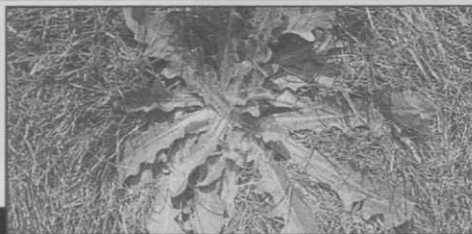
My advice is invariably not to apply any fertiliser to surrounds or approaches, even if the cuttings are removed in the box (and 'fertility' marginally reduced thereby). Even the worst heretics chasing colour and confusing it with quality do not expect lush green surrounds. In a few years the native grasses will dominate under such austere management. Many a time have I said on my first visit to a course "when we can get the greens half as good as your ('unfed and unwatered') surrounds we shall be winning the battle."

I do not claim to have invented the concept of better approaches to favour more predictable pitching and run up, even though I was banging on that drum in the late forties. After all, the concept of a 'fore green' was the cornerstone of many great architects such as Alister MacKenzie and Mackenzie Ross in the twenties and thirties – and is still to be found on many of their continental masterpieces.

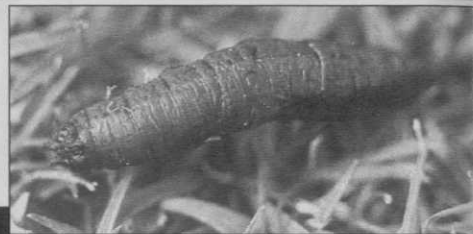
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Cat's-ear



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PESTICIDES

Misgivings, misconceptions and madness

The Right Approach

7 interest to those in charge of established courses, but it may hopefully fall on sympathetic ears if I plead for far more consideration to be given by architects to those clobbered with looking after impossible contours, envisaged on drawing boards. We need gentle mowable contours for sensible maintenance, not walls of death. My pet hate is the elevated green perched like Ayers Rock on a flat terrain, with a short steep approach, and equally steep surrounds. A ball pitching onto such a steep slope can and usually does go anywhere except onto the green. Yet you still see them being built, often because it takes money to build up a gradual slope – and flair to design in such a way as to avoid the problem.

In passing, why do we tolerate such excrescences as multi-plateau greens, severe slopes and hollows, steep cross-falls and similar gimmicks which not only make putting a lottery but greenkeeping impossible. There is nothing wrong with building fairly uniformly gently sloping (large) greens which will soon develop their own less obvious borrows and are just as good a test of putting skill – as opposed to chance – and so much easier on which to produce perfect putting conditions all year round. With these comic greens, ridges get scalped, hollows become lush and soft, grass species vary as water and fertiliser shed off slopes into hollows, pin placements are minimised and wear increased. Above all, that all-important uniformity of appearance as well as putting surface is lost. Architects, please accept that you do not have to be eccentric to be acclaimed, though judging by a few American eccentrics it helps to be insane to produce such horrors, or at least to have a well developed Oedipus complex.

THERE IS SO MUCH written about pesticides these days that not a month goes by without their mention in trade magazines. Changes in the law relating to their use over the last 20 years have made the subject one very large bone of contention. I believe that the amount of commentary seen is largely due to the fact that users, suppliers, manufacturers and regulatory bodies are operating without benefit of a well-defined, co-ordinated plan, notwithstanding that all parties involved know the ultimate objectives in pesticide control: "Consideration must be given as to whether it is necessary to use a pesticide at all in a given situation and, if so, the product posing the least risk to humans, animals and the environment must be selected." So says the UK Pesticide Guide referring to COSHH, which came into force in the UK on 1 October 1989.

As directives go, I don't think we could be any clearer. As to the how and when, who decides? Without doubt, there are those with misgivings about it all – not least the GCSAA, whom I believe operate under constraints similar to the above. They have commissioned a study of the medical records of deceased superintendents to try to discover any possible link between the use of pesticides and the cause of death. This is being done, I don't doubt, to help expedite the chemical review process. Another clear intention comes across: if they can prove that the chemicals in use are safe, then they wish to be allowed to get on with their job!

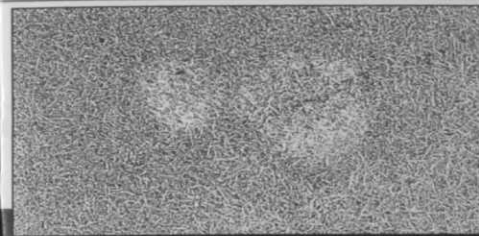
Having heard Professor Noel Jackson speak about turf diseases in the USA at this year's BIGGA education conference, the above move is hardly surprising. Two things he mentioned would raise misgivings with most – namely that a disease called pithium blight can wipe out whole greens virtually overnight, and that in the USA, 'if you lose your greens, you lose your job.' Professor Jackson also pointed out that no-one is safe, since diseases are likely to become as international as the players that play the game of golf. I personally am not prone to panic, but I do keep my locker and desk very tidy these days!

Further misgivings relate to the trade. These can be illustrated by looking at what has been written on the subject of worm-killing this year. The debate

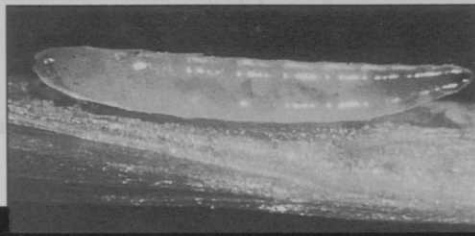
was started by the excellent Jim Arthur, and followed by Kerran Daly who, amongst other things, described the unpleasant and potentially harmful practices associated with lead arsenate. Gordon Irving has subsequently contributed sound common sense in suggesting that it is better to use an effective product once under controlled conditions than one with reduced longevity many times. If I were involved in the supply of vermicides at the present time I would most definitely be rubbing my hands, for having the opportunity to sell ten times as much product to achieve the same result is not to be sniffed at. That is not to say that I believe the trade to be either callous or uncaring, but a professional salesman can do no more than make the most of the situation.

Perhaps my biggest misgiving would revolve around the old adage, 'ignorance is bliss'. Recently I read a front-page report in a trade magazine entitled 'Fusarium attacks human'. I thought at first I had picked up the wrong periodical, and that if I read on, I would find out where Elvis was this week, or if any more aeroplanes had crashed on the moon. But no, this was a genuine, if extremely isolated case. How much more do we still not know, not only about the chemicals we use but about what we are trying to control. Manufacturers and regulatory bodies alike need not write in to say that everything possible is being done – if this was the case, people would live forever and it would only rain at night. I may be accused of cynicism, but the day I read a pesticide label that states 'This product affects only its specific target; it does not affect micro-organisms or the eco-balance of any system, and if you fell into a vat of it, you would emerge smelling of roses' – then, I would feel fairly confident about using the product.

In all seriousness, I am not decrying any efforts in the field of research, but I believe we can never do too much. Anything we can do to accelerate the process of evolving highly safe, highly effective and thoroughly tested products must be seen as worthwhile. Whether it involves money for development,



Fusarium patch



Frit fly



Greater Plantain

or amassing a vast data-bank of results and observations from end-users, surely we all have our part to play. At the same time as there may be misgivings, perhaps some hold misconceptions regarding working without pesticides. As mental arithmetic is in demise since the introduction of the calculator, so the use of chemicals in turf management has become such an intrinsic part of the syllabus that students entering the profession are dissuaded from considering the alternatives. The game of golf has been around a lot longer than pesticides and if the game managed without chemicals once, even given that the job then was labour-intensive and expectations were not as high, it can surely do so again.

Imagine a scenario where, for whatever reason, the use of pesticides on sports turf is completely banned. As an aside, one thought that cheers me in considering a world without pesticides is how it all came about in the first place. If my readings are correct, the earliest efforts in the course of man perverting the balance of nature involved the spraying of cereal crops with sulphuric acid. Taken at face value, this seems about as sensible as connecting yourself to an electricity supply to see if you get a shock. Unfortunately, results proved that this was effective in killing most of the weeds, but not quite so much of the crop. So much for little acorns!

How then do we manage without? You are now looking at your poisons cabinet and seeing the products disappear one by one. Let us start with the easy stuff. We can dispense with the aluminium phosphide by buying some scissor traps – killing moles is essentially a brutal business, whether chemically or mechanically achieved. Forget repellents for rabbits – don't just move them on, shoot them! Total weed-killers – where do we use them? Tree bases, hedges, ditches, peripheries – all can be catered for with weed-blocking materials, mulching, strimming, digging up (and out). Now we start to struggle.

When all sound mechanical and cultural techniques fail, selective weed-killers control the non-grass species in turf effectively. But, could we not help by increasing the frequency of vertical mowing on all areas where weeds are starting to prevail? By more conscientious hand-weeding of fine turf areas, could we not nip the problem in, or before, the bud? Failing all else, could we not fall back on re-turfing?

But what do we do about the big nasty – fungal disease? One option is the no-action policy. Formulated either through lack of funds or for practical reasons (e.g. not being able to access the turf under prolonged snow cover), this relies on early over-seeding and top dressing in the growing season to quickly restore playing surfaces. Perhaps we can con-

sider another possibility. With a suitably large, home-grown turf nursery, prepared well in advance, could we not undertake plugging or sodding of patch-damaged areas? Certain advantages could also accrue. Choice of cultivars for the turf nursery could be made with disease resistance in mind. Constructing the nursery from free-draining materials and making a full root-zone transplant to 'heavy' greens might help in the fight against poor drainage and compaction.

All of the above is not an attractive scenario, since it involves time-consuming methods with possibly unsightly or ineffective results. But if we could all do a little – say, pick out the greens least affected by disease and drop them out of the spraying regime, – wouldn't we be acting more in the spirit of the pesticides regulations? I am sure that many will have better ideas for greenkeeping without pesticides. I certainly hope that something accrues with regard to worms – I am not looking forward to tackling the problem with a paint scraper!

Moving on again, I would like to consider certain aspects of the pesticides issue that, to

Perhaps greenkeepers should formulate their own policy for pesticides, says TONY HOWORTH

me, do not seem to make any sense. Two years ago I started to look at a product containing the fungicide fenarimol. At the time, this fungicide was approved for use on turf in the USA but only for commercial horticulture in the UK. To my surprise, fenarimol was approved this year for use on turf in the UK, albeit under a different brand name. Comparing the two brands, I could discern no difference (from the labelling) in formulation – both products contained the same amount of active ingredient. However, the price of the new turf brand was almost double that of the one previously available. Further, within weeks of the new brand being launched, my supplier advised me that the price of it's twin had just gone up over twenty per cent! I could not see why prices for what appeared to be the same thing should be at such variance. Having asked the question, I was told that the new brand had to recover trial and approval costs. Fair enough, I give credit to the company marketing the product for making the effort to win approval in the first place – the UK amenity fungicide market does seem to have been very static. But I would ask these questions: Are there other

reasonably-priced fungicides in bulk production for the agriculture or commercial horticulture markets which could be approved for use on turf? If the answer is 'yes', and such approval were gained, would the amenity market have to pay through the nose for it? Or are we doomed to using the same products forever and paying prices that reflect a closed-market situation?

One more area that seems to defy the logic of the control of hazardous substances is the public sector sale of pesticides. Having been frightened to death two years ago by pesticides consultant Jon Allbutt, on a BIGGA management course, I resolved to set about obtaining certificates of competence in the use of pesticides and producing risk assessments for the products that we were using on the course. Some £500 poorer and a good deal of time and effort later, I now think I understand something of why Jon was so forthright at the time about the dangers associated with the storage, handling and use of pesticides.

Yet, on a recent visit to an ordinary garden centre, a review of lawn products on offer identified fifteen 'irritants', three 'harmfuls', and a packet containing paraquat, a substance subject to the Poisons Act, with no hazard warning symbol displayed at all! The general public are unlikely to have extensive knowledge of pesticides, any particularly safe or accurate means of applying them, or anywhere to dispose of empty containers except in the bin. Is it right that anyone can buy products to throw on the garden that could also contaminate a water supply, or do away with next door's cat?

If pesticides continue to be offered for general sale, could manufacturers not consider introducing sealed containers of some kind? Could cheap, accurate applicators be developed, and a system introduced whereby a large deposit is charged on containers, refundable on their return to the supplier for safe disposal?

In conclusion, irrespective of what is being done regarding the safer use of pesticides, would it not be better if all parties involved knew what others were doing? Could not the Ministry set out clearly, and on a regular basis, which products were under review and why? Couldn't manufacturers, without committing commercial suicide, make us privy to their plans regarding existing products and the development of new ones? Could not greenkeepers collectively formulate their own policy document, and explore alternatives? Finally, couldn't we all (with the exception of Jon Allbutt) try a little harder for safety's sake?

Illustrations courtesy of Rhône Poulenc – taken from their poster 'Your guide to the control of weeds, pests and diseases'.

Letters

Send your letters to Greenkeeper International, BIGGA, Aldwark Manor, Aldwark, Aine, York YO6 2NF or fax them on 0347 838864

Video is great, but...

May I congratulate BIGGA on the production of their first education video, which I think will be of great value to all greenkeepers. However, it should be pointed out that a few points are incorrect.

To begin, the video shows a green being sprayed with a boom sprayer, the operator spraying whilst turning. All spraying should be done in straight lines, in order to avoid over-dosing on the inside of the turning circle and under-dosing on the outside. In fact, if very tight turns are made, the inside of the boom can actually be travelling backwards! I know this can sometimes be difficult because of the shape of greens, but that is the very reason for using walking booms and hand lances.

Secondly, standing still and waving a hand lance over an area whilst using a knapsack sprayer is hardly accurate, making pointless all those calibrations regarding walking speed. For spot treatments with a knapsack the operator should walk over the target holding the lance steadily and at the correct height, as though spraying the whole area, then simply turning the lance on as the target is transgressed.

I was particularly concerned regarding disposal of unwanted spray material, the video showing the drain valve on the sprayer being opened, the chemical 'glugging' out onto the ground. Granted, the point is made that this is a designated area for the disposal of unwanted spray material, but surely anyone in their right mind would rinse out first, including the first washings, so that there is no risk of a large volume of liquid running off into streams and watercourses, which on hard ground could quite possibly happen.

Apart from the above, I feel the video is too long and might be better condensed to thirty minutes. Also the mentioning of one particular product seven times could perhaps be reduced to just once or twice.

Chris Mitchell, Course Manager, Royal Ashdown Forest GC, Forest Row, East Sussex
Jon Allbutt replies:

I agree with the points in Chris's letter. However, this was a technically demanding video to make and Richard Fry did a good job, especially when you consider that he is not a spraying expert. I was in attendance on the first day of filming, but only to sort out protective clothing, calibration etc.

By the way, Chris missed the incorrect pouring of chemicals into the induction hopper, and I'm sure if I watched it again and again I would find more to criticise. Yes, it is too long, but don't ask me which bits to cut out, it is all interesting.

The video sets a high standard and will be invaluable to young greenkeepers, managers, college teachers, instructors and, yes, older greenkeepers too. They will find something to make them think as well.

Students say thanks

I am writing to thank everybody at BIGGA HQ and to say how honoured I am to have been chosen the winner of the Toro/PGA European Tour Student Greenkeeper of the Year competition. It was a great experience.

My employers are delighted with my win. There has been quite a lot of local and national press attention and I have never had so many handshakes - I feel like I have won a gold medal at the Olympics!

The trip to the US starts on January 10. I have been told that the GCSAA trade show in Dallas is one that I won't forget quickly!

Once again, thank you for looking after us all at Aldwark Manor and for a great night out in Harrogate. I am very much looking forward to my trip to America and also keeping in contact with you all.

Bridie Redican, Toro/PGA European Tour Student Greenkeeper of the Year

■ May I take this opportunity to thank staff at BIGGA headquarters and the Aldwark Manor Golf Hotel, plus of course Toro Irrigation, Lely (UK) Ltd and the PGA European Tour, for providing two most excellent days when I competed for the Student Greenkeeper of the Year award. I would also like to thank my fellow student participants, especially for their great friendliness toward me. Though not an award winner myself, I know the accolades went to three most worthy winners, all of whom will serve BIGGA most proudly.

Antony Bindley, Braunstone, Leicester

■ May I begin by thanking you personally for the many splendid articles that have appeared in Greenkeeper International, they are much appreciated.

This has been a tremendous year for me, especially as I have been associated with the PGA European Tour Team. Through the letters column, may I thank Bruce Jamieson and his staff and everyone who made 1993 a year that I will never forget.

I would also ask you to give my thanks to Jimmy Kidd and his staff, who made my stay at Gleneagles such a memorable one.

Paul Brannan, 15 James Nisbet Street, Glasgow

Editor's note: Paul was one of three winners in the Toro/PGA European Tour Student Greenkeeper of the Year award last year. His prize? Attending two PGA Tour events, plus the PGA European Tour conference at Penina, Portugal.

One little word

Reference my article in 'Bones of Contentment' in November, before I am inundated with comments that 3/16 of an inch is perfectly acceptable, I heartily agree. The word 'below' has been omitted in the paragraph toward the end, which should read... "cutting greens below 3/16 of an inch". Although just one small word, this dramatically alters the meaning of the sentence.

Tom McKechnie, Carnoustie Golf Links, Angus, Scotland

'Inspiring' trade show

A recent holiday trip to the USA gave me the opportunity to visit the 1993 Florida Turfgrass Association Annual Conference and Trade Show, held at the Tampa Convention Center. After a short drive from Orlando I arrived in Tampa and soon found the convention center. I was welcomed by the Florida turfgrass officials and after speedily registering I proceeded to the first lecture.

The quality of speakers was first class and I especially enjoyed listening to Dr Bob Carrow, who presented a fine paper on Hydroject vs Solid Tine vs Hollow Tine aeration in fine turf. Following the workshop I was invited to their annual meeting and awards luncheon, this again proving

to be most interesting and informative. The amount of money generated from sections around the State, from which turfgrass research and their Association will certainly benefit, was encouraging. The trade show itself was inspiring and I made many friends in such a brief period. Next year's convention will be held in Fort Lauderdale, 17-21 September, and hopefully I can arrange my holidays accordingly. It was certainly money well spent!

Tony Dunstan, Mill Hill Golf Club, London

Accidents in waiting

I am a greenkeeper currently employed at Costessey Park GC, Norfolk. During convalescence following a heart attack I've visited a number of golf courses, to enjoy some rest and relaxation in beautiful surroundings. However, all is not rosy in this Eastern Paradise and, in some cases, accidents are just waiting to happen. Examples abound:

- a) Operators using machines without ear protection when the noise output far exceeds minimum levels.
- b) Use of equipment that presents a high health risk, whilst less risky equipment (though available) remains idle.
- c) Use of 'new' equipment that does not conform to current regulations.

It may be that Greenkeeper International can draw upon the services of experts at workshops given through BTME to outline the shortcomings and anomalies found. However, many greenkeepers and employers cannot afford the time to attend such workshops and rely upon written word prior to action.

My comments may draw adverse comments from greenkeepers and employers in this area, but I will stand by my claim and issue a challenge to readers to answer these questions honestly; any cheating is only against themselves.

- 1) In carrying out a risk assessment, is it necessary for an employer to record any significant findings?
- 2) Should someone, identified by name, be responsible for health and safety on the course?
- 3) Do you have transport standing by whenever a competent, correctly dressed, individual is using a chain saw, just in case?
- 4) What is commonly regarded as the first level of noise output, and how can one determine if a machine exceeds this in a normal working environment?

Did anyone get all of them right? Does any golf club comply with all these regulations? Should people care? In answering yes to the last question, readers should remember that these are but a small selection from H&S regulations. They affect everyone and are enforceable by law.

Answers:

Q1. Regulation 3 (4) Management of Health and Safety at Work: Where the employer employs five or more employees he shall record the significant findings of the assessment and any group of his employees identified by it as being especially at risk. Are there more than five employees at your location? Have you seen the written findings of the assessment? Which employees at your location are identified as being at risk?

Q2. Regulation 6 (1) Ditto: Every employer shall, subject to paragraphs (6) and (7), appoint one or more competent persons to assist him in undertaking the measures he needs to take to comply with the requirements and prohibitions imposed upon him by or under the relevant statutory provisions. Paras (6) and (7) refer to self employed