Oils in my notes for the June issue, the winner of their prize being A Hughes of Portmadoc GC – once again my apologies.

Dates for your diaries: On September 29 or 30 we hope to run a coach to Haydock Park for the trade show. Those interested in attending should contact Terry Adamson or me.

On October 6 our Autumn Golf Competition will be held at Pwllheli GC, the cost being £11.00 for members and £14.00 for guests. I plead yet again, get those forms back early!

A First Aid course will be held at Northop



College during the winter months – providing we have enough people willing to attend. For further details phone me, or B Anderson on 0745 826695.

DAVID PROCTOR

## **EAST MIDLANDS**

First of all, I would like to apologise to all section members who may have thought I had emigrated – it's just that having had little to report, I have refrained from troubling the editor with my usual banal prose.

The section's Autumn Tournament this year is scheduled to take place on 21 September at Ruddington Grange GC., Ruddington, Notts. and entry forms/details should be with you by the time you read this. If not, and you wish to enter, please call me on 0509 650140. As usual, this competition will be the qualifier for the Breakwell's match and, along with the results from the Spring Tournament, also for the annual East versus West Midlands game sponsored by Rigby Taylor. Regarding the latter, we are 'at home' this year and well overdue a win.

Well done to all those members who represented the East Midlands at the Hayter Challenge regional final in July. We finished third in the team event, with Russell Allen coming second in his group and Mark Bindley fourth (on count-back) in his, just out of the prizes.

The section is pleased to welcome new members – Dean Cooper and Steven Heap, both of Rothley Park, Anthony Russell of Lingdale, and as an associate member, Nicholas Birch, currently working at Ramsdale Park



Golf Centre. I am proud to report that the section's greenkeeper membership has just passed one hundred!

See you all at Ruddington. TONY HOWARTH

# **BUCKS, BERKS & OXON.**

July has been a hectic one for the section, with two very enjoyable golf matches having been played. The first match was held at Harewood Downs GC on 20 July, though unfortunately the Mid-Anglia section had to pull out, so a Committee v Section event was held instead. I'm very glad to say the committee ran out winners, though no thanks to me, as I lost my match five and four! Our thanks to Harewood Downs GC and to club secretary, Mick Cannon, for all his help, also to Steve Bryant and his staff for producing a stern test for us all and not forgetting Nora Davis and her catering crew for providing us with an excellent buffet.

The second match was held at Calcot Park GC on 26 July and was our annual 'needle' against the club secretaries. The weather held true, the course was in excellent condition, and we were lucky enough to have a very tight result go our way, three to two with one halved match. That includes Simon and Steven from Calcot, who very tactfully lost their

# **Around the Green**



matches against the secretary and past secretary respectively! As always the company was great, the match being played in the very best of spirits, and I have no doubt this will continue to be enjoyed for a long time to come. For the time being the secretaries will have to lick their wounds, waiting until next year at Sonning GC to (maybe) getting their own back (anyone would think I was gloating!). By the way, I won my match this time! Thanks to Calcot Park and secretary Alan Bray for organising the secretaries team, Simon Robinson and his staff for the excellent course, and the catering staff for a wonderful meal.

The section will be running a mini-bus to BTME in January, those interested should let me know ASAP so that numbers may be organised – please! After the go-karting session we need more ideas for social events that



you would like to see staged next year, also ideas for next year's lecture programme. Either ring me (0628 829208) or write with your input.

RAY CLARK

## KENT

Perhaps just time to remind you that our regional seminar on the topic of '365 Days A Year Golf' is taking place at Hadlow College on 27 October. We hope for a good attendance, not only from greenkeepers but also from golf club officials, and that everyone participates in what we believe will be a lively afternoon of debate. Already we have seen some heated response to Mike Travers' article in Greenkeeper International, so hopefully this will continue as a sensitive topic. For my part, I think that much of the criticism and comment levelled at the article was unfair and unjustified. Perhaps to stir things up a bit more, I will state that I am a believer in the 365 days a year ideal, in all but the very extremes of weather. I am very lucky that my course over lays gravel, and knowing my site for nearly 20 vears I am confident that I can achieve my

I sometimes question the commitment of others, especially the short-sightedness of management at many private clubs, when they fail to adequately invest in the manpower, skills, materials and machinery for varying tasks or to tackle on-going problems, also the failure to allow maintenance tasks to be carried out at correct times due to 'that very important autumn fixture'. Finally, the undue and ill-considered meddling of some green committees in pressurising greenkeepers, especially with regard to the over-watering of greens in summer – don't we all know that this leads to stinking, diseased 'bogs' in winter and ultimately to temporary greens?

I feel that our management practices should be progressive, professional, and most of all positive. For some of you 'young uns' here are some wise old words to ponder: 'You do not get good greens out of a bag of fertiliser or a hose pipe', 'Go into the winter with your greens as dry as possible' and 'Avoid watering in September'.

On a lighter note, it was good to see many familiar faces at The Open at Royal St. Georges. I'm sure those attending thoroughly enjoyed the atmosphere and the experience. On separate days, David Wood and I raked bunkers for the group comprising Tom Kite, Peter Fowler and Mark Roe. May I say, "Thanks Tom, you're a real nice chap, a thorough gentleman, and thanks for the golf ball". As for Roe and Fowler...!

Hopefully another visit to the now open London Golf Club is imminent. The interest in the last visit was almost as staggering as the project itself.

You may already know that secretary David Wood now doubles as our regional administrator. Rumours abound as to whether he will have to cut out three games of golf a week to find the time. And talking of rumours, with many companies pulling out of the IoG Peterborough Show, could we all be trecking back to a race course near a well known royal castle next year?

As for me, well the name remains the same, although we must now say 'Course' and not 'Club', and it is great to be back doing some positive work for a professional, golf-based,



company. The course is coming along nicely, and THERE IS NO GREEN COMMITTEE, just me! Have I died and gone to heaven? PAUL COPSEY

### SHEFFIELD

To begin, I have been asked by David Golding to pass on his sincere thanks to the committee and members of the Sheffield Section of BIGGA for the beautiful, engraved rose-bowl which Barry Heaney presented to him at The Open Championship. David wrote to me, saying "Whilst the recent changes with the GTC resulted in me having to choose between BIGGA and GTC, I trust that anyone who knows me well enough will always understand that the greenkeeper and his or her future remains at the forefront of my mind." We wish David all the best and look forward to working very closely with him at section level in the future.

Winter Lectures: I am pleased to inform you that permission to hold our monthly meetings at Rotherham GC, starting on 7 October and ending on 7 April 1994, has been granted. The lectures will be on the first Thursday in the month, starting at 2.00pm. Please make ever effort to support your section. Dates for your diary: October 7, November 4, December 2, February 3, March 3 April 7.

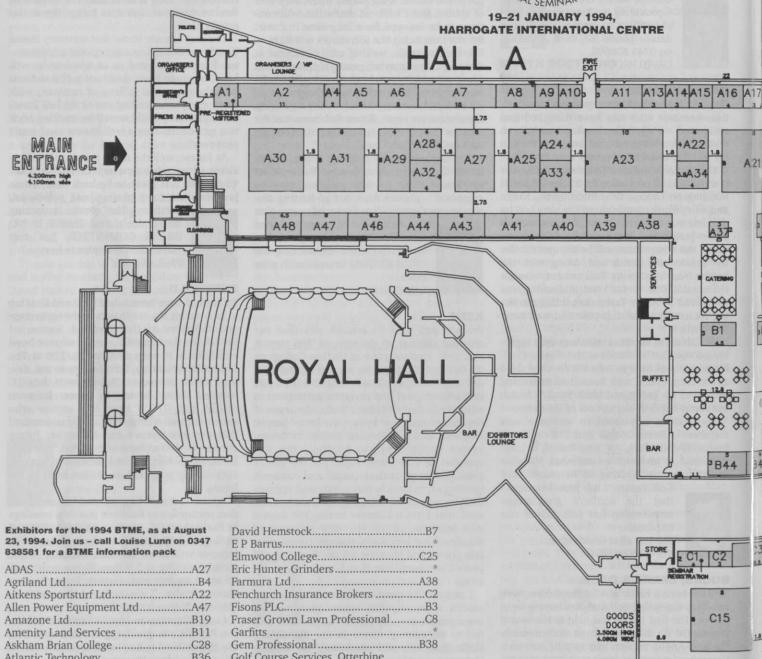
Congratulations to Martin Scothern (Wollaton Park GC) in qualifying at Worksop GC for the Hayter Final to be played at Sandmoor GC, Leeds. Good luck Martin, keep the flag flying for Sheffield.

Our Annual Golf Tournament was held on 21 July at Lindrick GC., with a splendid turnout of 50 players competed for the 27 hole medal competition. The day ran very smoothly and a fine time was had by all. Sincere thanks to Lindrick members for allowing us courtesy of their course, also to Kevin Hazlehurst (course manager) for presenting us with a superb course – the sough certainly sorted the men from the boys! It was very much appreciated to be graced with the presence of Lindrick green chairman, Mr John Boddy. Mr Boddy welcomed us to the club, played golf with us, dined with us and kindly presented the prizes – marvellous.

# EXHIBITION PLAN to date

\* Shaded areas indicate stands which have been already sold





| Agriland Ltd                                   | B4         |
|--|------------|
| Aitkens Sportsturf Ltd                         | A22        |
| Allen Power Equipment Ltd                      | A47        |
| Amazone Ltd                                    |            |
| Amenity Land Services                          |            |
| Askham Brian College                           | C28        |
| Atlantic Technology                            | R36        |
| Atterton & Ellis Ltd                           |            |
| Pailors of Norfolk                             | ********** |
| Baileys of Norfolk                             | Δ11        |
| Patter Mathode Furone                          | Δ27        |
| BIGGA  | C15        |
|  |            |
| Brian Pierson                                  |            |
|  | C5         |
| British Association of Golf Course             | 416        |
| Constructors                                   | A16        |
| British Seed Houses Ltd                        | A14        |
| Broadside Publishing                           |            |
| Cannington College                             |            |
| Charterhouse Turf Machinery Ltd                |            |
|  | C17        |
| Claymore Grass Machinery                       | B25        |
| CMW Equipment Co<br>D & E Turf Maintenance Ltd | A40        |
| D & E Turf Maintenance Ltd                     | A11        |
| D S Holdings Ltd                               | B44        |
|  |            |
|  |            |

| E F Dairus                      | ******* |
|---------------------------------|---------|
| Elmwood College                 | C25     |
| Eric Hunter Grinders            | *       |
| Farmura Ltd                     | A38     |
| Fenchurch Insurance Brokers     | C2      |
| Fisons PLC                      | ВЗ      |
| Fraser Grown Lawn Professional  | C8      |
| Garfitts                        |         |
| Gem Professional                |         |
| Golf Course Services, Otterbine |         |
| Aerators                        | A9      |
| Grace-Sierra UK Ltd             | A48     |
| Greenkeepers Training Committee | C3      |
| H Pattisson & Co Ltd            | B24     |
| Hardi Ltd                       |         |
| Hayters PLC                     |         |
| Hole In White                   | A4      |
| Huxleys Grass Machinery         | A25     |
| ICI                             | B21     |
| Industrial Power Units Ltd      | A2      |
| Inter Seeds Ltd                 | C6      |
| Inturf Ltd                      | A34     |
| Iseki UK Ltd                    | B22     |
| Jacobsens                       |         |
| John Deere Ltd                  | B17     |
| Johnsons Seeds Ltd              | A39     |
| Karsten Turf Science            | B34     |
| Kings Horticulture Ltd          | *       |
|                                 |         |

| Kubota UK Ltd             | A21/A20 |
|---------------------------|---------|
| Lely (UK) Ltd             | A23     |
| Lindum Seeded Turf        |         |
| Liquid Sod                | C18     |
| Lloyds & Co               |         |
| Lockwood Grass Machinery  |         |
| Martin Brothers           |         |
| Mommersteeg International | C9      |
| Moore Uni Drill Ltd       | B6      |
| Multi-Core Aerators Ltd   | A41     |
| Netlon Ltd                | B8      |

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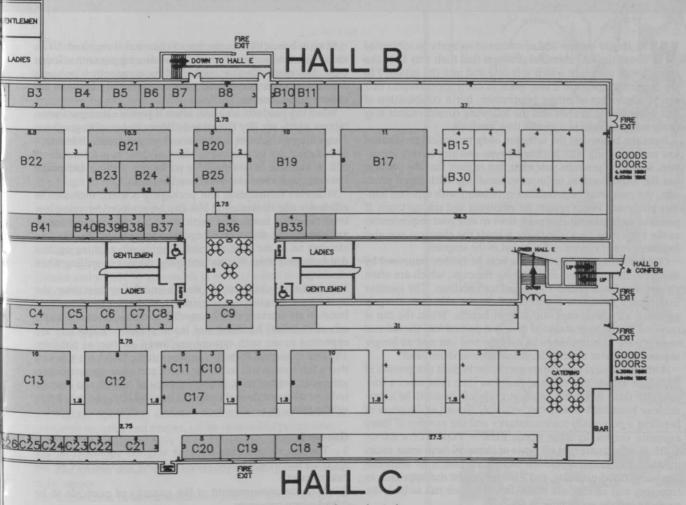
# SEEING IS BELIEVING

% of available stand space in Halls A, B and C is already booked and paid for\*!

If your company is planning to exhibit at the BTME in Harrogate next January contact Louise Lunn on 0347 838581 TODAY... tomorrow might be too late.

And if you were thinking about attending, make it a firm date in your diary – there will be lots more to see than ever before in '94!

\* 25% deposit paid



| New Holland Ford               | *    |
|--------------------------------|------|
| Oaklands College               | .C26 |
| Oakstead                       | .C21 |
| Ocmis Irrigation (UK) Ltd      |      |
| Parker Hart                    | .C19 |
| Philip York & Partners         | .B10 |
| Prime Waterman Ltd             | .B40 |
| Professional Sportsturf Design |      |
| Associates                     | .A13 |
| Ransomes                       | .A30 |
| Rhone Poulenc                  | A7   |

18A19

| Rigby Taylor LtdA43                      |  |
|--|--|
| RolawnA29                                |  |
| Rufford Top Dress (2000) LtdA46          |  |
| Saxon IndustriesB7                       |  |
| Shelley Signs*                           |  |
| Sisis EquipmentB1                        |  |
| Sportsground Irrigation Co / Hunters.A10 |  |
| Sta-Brite Supplies LtdA6                 |  |
| Supaturf Products LtdA5                  |  |
| Supreme MowingA32                        |  |
| T & G Irrigation/Watermation LtdB20      |  |
|  |  |

| Tacit                         | B2  |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| The Golf Sign Co              | B39 |
| Tillers Turf Company Ltd      | C4  |
| Turf Management               | A33 |
| Turf Management Systems       | C1  |
| Turf-Actant Sales             | C7  |
| United Agri                   |     |
| Vitax Ltd                     | A24 |
| Warwickshire College          | C22 |
| Writtle College               |     |
| *Stand number to be allocated |     |
|                               |     |

# CHEMICAL HANDLING

The benefits of getting it right, by RICHARD GARNETT

Why should owners and operators of sprayers be concerned about the way chemical products find their way from the container or packet in which it is sold and into the sprayer? In the current atmosphere it may seem to many greenkeepers that this is a question of minor importance, but a combination of increasing public interest and the following considerations may cause many users to re-appraise their methods.

From the beginning, the selection of agrochemical products of low toxicity along with packaging type and size is very important. Select the products you want, but request that the package has the latest features to improve handling. With liquid products, the new wide neck containers (63mm) with separate handles give much better results for emptying and rinsing times. If possible, order chemical in pack sizes to suit your requirements as the bigger the pack, the faster it loads the chemical and also facilitates easier rinsing and disposal of the empties.

Clean opening of the container may be further improved by using the new spanners for undoing the caps, which are often tighter than most people's grip and turn abilities. The spanner from Inpack Systems is double sided. On one side there is a grip to match all 63mm caps and a short handle. When the cap is removed the spanner is turned over and pushed into the foil seal to penetrate it. A further twist cuts the seal out and no longer requires the use of a penknife, screwdriver or thumb-nail!

Pouring chemical into the sprayer is the highest risk portion of the whole activity and to stand and pour then rinse takes a considerable time. Risk when using any type of chemical, be it pesticide or household bleach, can be simply viewed as the result of handling a potentially toxic substance and the number of times exposure occurs. In other words RISK = TOXICITY x EXPOSURE. If we assume that all types of chemical have some toxicity, then the simple approach to reduce risk is to minimise exposure. Good planning and a well thought out approach to emptying and rinsing will dramatically reduce risk to both the operator and the environment.

One of the new advances to look out for will be sealed containers that may be connected to your filling system or sprayer and which provide direct transfer of the chemical. If current trials with these systems by leading Agrochemical companies prove successful, then your dealer may have them available in 18-24 months.

The added bonus to this type of container is that once empty, the operator disconnects and, because the container remains sealed, no rinsing is required and it is then returned for refilling with the same product. In most operations measuring of chemical is required. Use a clean, accurate and easily readable measuring jug with a stable base. The most effective method of measurement is to use a fully closed measurement and transfer system which allows full control of the process.

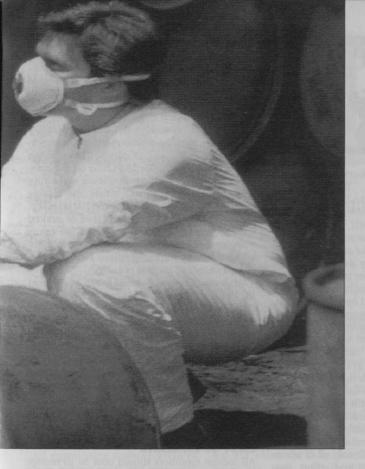
When dry products are used, select if possible the new formulations which are Dry Flowable or Water Dispersable granules. These are much easier to handle and produce much less dust – so reducing risk by inhalation. Many of these new formulations will be available in water soluble packaging, making disposal of the outer pack even easier and handling safes.

Whatever formulation and packaging is used, increases in efficiency and decreases in risk can be achieved by using low level induction bowls, and particularly the new closed transfer systems. Using this type of equipment removes the need to clamber on to the tank and risk slipping off, rubbing against dried-on spray materials and removing the risk of spilling when climbing.

As recently publicised, the Health and Safety Executive, the Agricultural Engineers Association and the British Standards Institute are working closely together to define improved methods of chemical handling and loading. Safety inspectors are expecting to see such systems employed as soon as possible. The Environmental Protection Agency in the USA have assessed that a full system will reduce operator and environmental contamination dramatically. In tests, the use of fully closed systems reduced operator dermal contamination by 90% and inhalation risk by 85%.

## Genera

- 1 Transfer of pesticide from its original container to the spraying machine without contaminating the operator or the environment.
- 2 Accurate measurement of the quantity of pesticide to be mixed where necessary.
- Rinsing of both the container and the transfer device with the washings returned to the application equipment and ultimately the target
- 4 The device should be acceptable to management and operators, both in terms of technology and cost measured on a comparative basis to chemical usage and application equipment value
- 5 To be effective, the device should offer a progressive approach beginning at an easily affordable and useful system for bulk dilution but leading to common container access methods



and simplicity of approach to environmentally sounder packaging. The ultimate aim should be inexpensive direct metering of chemical to the target with the minimum of contamination to the equipment. This must be achieved with a system simple enough to fit any application, handling and measuring equipment using basic tools and skills.

- Container rinsing prior to disposal.
- Facilitate recycling and re-use where possible for refilling.

# **Specific**

- Adapt to ANY chemical/pesticide container shape, size and closure dimensions.
- Operation of the system should take no more time than traditional methods.
- 10 Use of the system should significantly reduce the safety clothing requirements ideally down to gloves only.
- 11 The system must be acceptable to the health and safety legislators and should be acceptable in general terms to: (a) chemical/pesticide manufacturers (b) application, handling and measuring equipment manufacturers (c) the environmental lobby (d) the users.
- 12 The system should not be dependent on the container or chemical manufacturers for its success.
- 13 The system should allow for special packaging at a future date for added safety.
- 14 The occasional use of powders and granules and soluble packaging must be catered for.
- 15 Filling, operating, cleaning and maintenance should be inexpensive, quick and simple, i.e. be reasonably practicable.
- 16 The system should offer scope for advancement in technology and practices.
- 17 The system should allow for containers being removed partially empty.
- 18 Connection between containers and the device should be made using a 'dry break coupling' that allows less than 1ml of concentrated active residue per break.
- 19 If containers are to be rinsed then this should take place prior to removal, and all rinsate should be directed to the tank. The system should remain 'closed' throughout the process and perform under a range of conditions up to a level that ensures a residue of less than 0.01% of the container's original volume.
- The author, former college machinery lecturer, Richard Garnett, is designer of the award winning Wisdom closed transfer system for chemical handling.





31 → Prize Winners: Gross – Martin Scothern 106, Nett – L Mason 100, P Lyons 104.5, A Whittington 107, C Hooper, 108.5, K Kirham 109.5, P Heaney 112. Guest prize – Brian Booth (Rigby Taylor). Our thanks to the trade who contributed prizes: Atkins Sports, Steve Boroughs, Rigby Taylor, Parker Hart and Purdey's, and a special vote of thanks to Nancy Park (Lindrick) for her kind contribution to the prize table. Lastly our thanks to Barry and Joan Heaney for making the arrangements on our behalf.

I am pleased to announce that the new rep.



for Trident in Yorkshire is Mike Brear. Mike was a greenkeeper at Abbeydale GC for some 15 years. We wish him well in his new venture.

JANE RYAN

## SURREY

Walton Heath GC recently hosted the annual England versus Scotland match, and on a course in fine condition the trophy was retained by England by six games to four, many matches going to the last green. Thanks to the club for again hosting a section golf fixture and to Clive and the Walton boys for the hard work carried out on the course.

On the subject of hard work, who saw Dave Andrews on the TV Open highlights, raking the massive sleeper-faced bunker on the fourth? Well done to all section members who helped out, I understand a good time was enjoyed by

Derek informs me that this year's Huxley Bowl has progressed (at the time of writing) extremely smoothly to the semi-final stage – well done to all competitors for getting their games played on time and notifying Derek of the results.

On the education front, the committee has been looking at the North East Surrey College of Technology with a view to it becoming a 'recognised' college for Surrey. Currently they are running NVO courses in greenkeeping.

A fixture for your diary is the Autumn Tournament at Epsom GC on Thursday 21 October – closing date for entries 7 October. This will comprise a 27 hole Stableford, ploughman's lunch and three course evening meal, all for the incredibly low price of just £27.00. Also make note that David White will be our guest speaker at Walton Heath on Wednesday 3 November.

ROGER TYDEMAN

# **MID ANGLIA**

It was Mid Anglia's turn to host the regional final of the Hayter Challenge Tournament in July, Northants County GC being selected as the venue. Although I was unable to attend, the course was by all accounts in superb condition – so thanks to David Low and his staff, who obviously beavered away before the event!

The event was particularly successful for the section, the team prize being won outright and three players qualifying for the final at Sand Moor this month, these being John Gentles (Griffin GC), John Moorhouse (Brocket hall GC) and Dave Piggott (Leighton Buzzard GC). Congratulations to you all and I hope you do well in the final.

The section's Summer Tournament, a 36 hole medal, was held on 27 July at St Neots GC. Thirty members attended and found the rain and windy conditions difficult, producing some quite high scores and several 'no-returns'. However, the weather improved for the afternoon and the day was enjoyed by all. Full credit must go to the top three, who produced the fol-

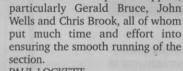
# **Around the Green**



lowing scores: 1st John Moorhouse (Brocket Hall) 70+72=142. 2nd Tony Freeman (Northants County) 70+73=143. 3rd David Forsyth (Mid Herts) 69+77=146. Best a.m. score Leon Cant (Brocket Hall), best p.m. score Neil Whitaker (Woburn). Our sincere thanks to the officers of St Neots for the courtesy of their course and for the hospitality shown to us, also to Martin Lay and his team for producing excellent playing surfaces. Our sponsors were Boughton Loam, represented by Mike Franklin, and we acknowledge with appreciation Mike's efforts and help during the tournament.

The next golf fixture is the Autumn Tournament at Woburn G&CC in late October. The exact date will be published in October, the day planned to combine golf with our section AGM. Fixture cards, listing events for the remainder of '93 and into '94, will be with you soon.

Finally, I would like to thank my fellow committee members for their help and support,



PAUL LOCKETT



# CLEVELAND

The autumn programme is being prepared. May I remind student greenkeepers that they should be contacting their colleges NOW, in order to book courses for 1994 – don't leave it too late.

Some thoughts on preparing winter greens: start a programme of winter work, i.e. drainage, renovation or construction, as soon as possible, as next year arrives all too soon. It is wise to complete construction work before Christmas if greens or tees are to be in play from May next – early planning is essential.

The new course at Romanby, Northallerton, opened late in July.

Players are required for the match against the N.E. section, a team of 12 being needed for the game scheduled to take place on 27 September. Contact G Munro on 785195 or G Pyle

on 784491.



The annual match Greenkeepers versus Eaglescliffe (green committee) ended in a draw. Thanks to all for an enjoyable evening BRUCE BURNELL

# **DEVON & CORNWALL**

The section's guest day was held again at Launceston GC on Wednesday 7 July, the format being fourball better ball for the Jacobsen Trophy, sponsored this year by MST, Jacobsen dealers for the section. We thank Launceston GC for allowing us the use of their facilities, also the club staff who made our day so successful, with special thanks to George Bailey and his team, who had the course in excellent condition.

Following the evening meal, Mr D Bassett, managing director of MST, presented the prizes to the lucky winners: 1st T Martin & B Long (Torquay) 41 pts. 2nd M Gilbert & R Japes (Launceston) 40 pts. 3rd B Ridgeway & K Mitchelmoor (Fingle Glen) 39 pts.

To conclude the day our after-dinner speaker, David Golding (now education director with the GTC) spoke on NVQ's and the role the GTC has to play in greenkeeper training. Our thanks to David for making the long journey to Cornwall.

The section's first meeting of the winter season will be at Bowood Park GC on Wednesday 27 October, playing a Stableford in the morning for the D O Hunt Trophy, followed by an educational talk by Gordon Child on his management policy at Churston. Please make sure you return entries to me before the closing date, as meals must be booked in advance. Note also that there is a likelihood of limited tee times at meetings this season, as many more are entering our competitions – avoid disappointment by returning entries (with the correct payment) as soon as possible.

Regional dates for your diary are 12 October for the first regional workshop at Cannington College, where Jim Arthur, Donald Steel and Mark Pierson will present papers on golf course construction, design and maintenance. Also the regional seminar on 23 November at Canning-

ton, where speakers will be Derek Green on Dry Patch, Derek Ganning on The Belfry, Barry Cooper on Drainage, and Master Greenkeeper, Kerran Daly, Please book early. RICHARD WHYMAN

## **EAST OF ENGLAND**

All section members should now be in receipt of details concerning the fourth competition of the season, to be staged at Peterborough Milton GC during the last week in September. It is also planned to hold a winter meeting this year, in conjunction with the AGM, in December – watch this column for details!

Congratulations to Fred Cobb (Newark Park GC) and Daniel Wells (Burghley Park GC) in qualifying at Church Brampton Golf Club for the Hayter Challenge Tournament, to be staged later this month at Sand Moor. We wish them both good fortune.

Congratulations must also go to Mark Jones (Ely City GC), who has been nominated as our section representative for the ICI Premier

Greenkeeper of the Year Award. Should any members have any news, or views that they would like to see aired, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me.

MIKE FINNEY

## **MIDLANDS**

Following news from The Belfry, I have to inform members that The Belfry have decided they no longer need the greenkeeping support team, requested some months ago, for this year's Ryder Cup. I can but apologise to those members of BIGGA who were prepared to give freely of their time, many making firm commitments and even giving up holiday time in order to be available on the day's requested.

News came to me recently of the sudden death of Sam Hagen, course manager at the Vale GC. Sam, aged 35, was well known to members of several sections within the region, working at Kibworth GC for some time before moving to The Belfry, where he played a big role in the success of the last Ryder Cup. Sam then undertook the challenge of constructing a new golf course at Lynham in Oxfordshire, leaving when construction was drawing to a close to take up what was to be his final challenge, management of the Vale Golf Club, where he remained for the past two years. Our thoughts go out to his wife and three children at this sad time.

DEAN CLEAVER

# HOLED UP

Filling aerator holes completely, the first time

# by STANLEY J ZONTEK

Director, Mid Atlantic Region, USGA Green Section

here can be little doubt that deep soil aeration, by solid or hollow tines, has given the golf course manager a very important tool with which to better manage grass under less-than-perfect soil conditions. Unfortunately, the soil in most putting greens in this country is far from ideal, and as an alternative to the expensive and aggravating reconstruction of these greens, most turf managers exercise the option of trying to modify the existing soil through a programme of shallow and deep aeration in conjunction with topdressing.

These techniques are well

understood by the turf manager. What is more difficult is the challenge of filling these deep-tine holes with topdressing material. In fact, due to the difficulty of filling these holes, most turf managers do not even try. A variety of techniques have been used, but the results usually fit one of the following descriptions: The holes are not filled the first time, the holes are only partially filled, and/or the greens are so heavily topdressed that the grass is either badly bruised or else the surface of the green is left buried in topdressing material.

Golfers tend to be unhappy



First step is to apply topdressing sand heavily only to the strip to be aerated

with these results, and with most course managers being sensitive to criticism, it is no wonder we see so many deep aeration operations being just that — the punching of holes into the greens without any attempt made to fill the holes. It usually is just not worth the aggravation of trying to fill these holes, except on certain troublesome greens. The holes are left open not because it is better to do so, but because there does not seem to be a good method to



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# 'There is no question that filling holes to the surface

fill the holes to the surface.

Why fill holes in the first place? In terms of improving drainage in a soil profile, there is no question that filling the holes to the surface is very beneficial. In fact, partially filled holes have little effect on water movement through the soil profile. Consequently, in situations where you want long-term drainage improvement, soil modi-

fication, and interruption of layers in the profile, filling the holes is important. My turf tip is the result of a USGA Green Section Turf Advisory Service visit to Wilmington Country Club when aeration and topdressing were being done. Paul Latshaw, Sr., is the golf course superintendent. During our visit, I saw firsthand the filling technique described briefly in the

following steps.

## Step 1

Topdressing is applied heavily to the strip of the green to be aerated, in this case with solid tines.

## Step 2

One or two passes are made over the topdressed area with a Verti-Drain

### Step 3

After the holes are punched

through the topdressing and into the green, the topdressing is hand-broomed into each hole. It takes several employees to accomplish this task. The back-and-forth action of the brooms works the dry topdressing into the holes completely and gently. This careful brooming allows each aerator hole to be filled individually. If a little extra topdressing is needed, it can be back-brushed over the

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# is very beneficial..."



The sand begins to fill the holes by gravity or the 'hourglass' effect, even without brooming



After the Verti-Drain has completed its pass, the crew hand-brooms the topdressing material into the holes. The back-and-forth action completely fills the holes with minimum damage to the turf

hole and, like an hourglass, the topdressing filters down into the hole and fills it up.

Excess topdressing then is brushed forward into the area where the topdresser and Verti-Drain make their next pass. Thus, excess topdressing sand is moved forward and not left in place.

The whole process is repeated on the next strip of green.

In seeing this technique in action, it was remarkable how little the turf was damaged. The greens were playable soon afterward, and the grass was less bruised and under less stress.

Naturally, matting of the entire green's surface after a heavy topdressing using a steel drag mat behind a wheeled vehicle can be very abrasive to the grass. Also, the heavy traffic over the green as the topdressing material is matted into the surface (usually in a

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