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MAY 1994

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Seven water hazards will make this year's BIGGA National Tournament a real challenge. Chris Boiling travelled to Devon to find out how head greenkeeper Terry Farkins is preparing his course for the onslaught **Pages 18-20**



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The National Education Conference was the platform for greenkeeping luminaries to share their knowledge. We pass on a selection of hot tips **Pages 10-12**

Golf course presentation

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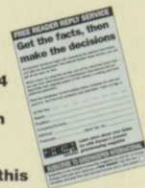
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Avoiding a water hazard at Dartmouth, venue for this year's National Tournament

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Use the post-paid Reader Reply Card facing Page 54 for further information on the products and services advertised in this issue. Just state the companies' Ad Ref numbers, post the card to us and we'll arrange for further information to be sent to you direct.



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- DAVID SMITH, Managing Director, Atterton & Ellis Ltd.

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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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For an information pack on BTME '95 call Louise Lunn on 0347 838581

Education officer is a high flier

BIGGA's new education officer is Kenneth Richardson.

Previously a senior training manager in the Royal Air Force, Kenneth achieved the rank of squadron leader in training and education specialisation.

With proven experience in training development, computer based training, distance learning and lecturing, he brings well developed leadership and communication skills to one of BIGGA's key posts.

Commenting on the appointment, executive director Neil Thomas said: "Kenneth brings specialist skills, knowledge and experience to the education officer post which will serve the Association well in the future and enable us to move forward progressively with education and training programmes for our members."



BIGGA
Staff
Profile

PAULINE THOMPSON
Accounts Clerk

Pauline used to swim for Yorkshire until she was 16 and this, coupled with nine years working for Barclays Bank, means she's never out of her depth at the sharp end of BIGGA's computerised accounting system. During the day, Pauline processes sales and purchase invoices and after work it's back to the swimming pool with her 12 year old daughter, teaching life saving techniques.



An information pack for the 1995 BIGGA Turf Management Exhibition is now

available. All you need to know about how to exhibit at the industry's premier event is explained. For a copy, contact Louise Lunn at BIGGA HQ on 0347 838581.

A privilege under threat?

One issue which the Association will need to address this year is the use of membership cards for seeking courtesy of the golf course. This is a privilege extended only to full greenkeeper members who are reminded on the reverse of their membership cards of the etiquette involved. These cards are most certainly not a passport to free golf and they need to be used both sensitively and conservatively. The vast majority of BIGGA's greenkeeper members respect the privilege of obtaining courtesy of the golf course and benefit greatly from the opportunity not only to play golf but to experience other golf courses in many varied conditions, thereby enhancing their own knowledge and expertise. Long may this continue but some notes of caution need to be struck. Whilst we are talking of a small minority, there is increasing evidence of misuse of cards not only by greenkeepers seeking to use cards over frequently and for purely golfing purposes, but by members in categories of membership other than full greenkeeper, who, quite simply, are not entitled to seek courtesy of the golf course.

It is essential that members becoming aware of card misuse report such instances to Headquarters in order that appropriate action be taken. Turning a blind eye will achieve nothing other than I suspect an increasing reluctance by golf clubs to grant courtesy. During the course of BIGGA's review this year we shall be looking to tighten our procedures still further to protect this privilege and ensure the continued cooperation of the many golf clubs across the country who welcome our members onto their golf courses.

Appeal for books

The news of an R & A grant of £10,000 to establish an Association library is to be warmly welcomed. In the years ahead we will have the chance to establish the history of greenkeeping within our own Headquarters and provide a service to members both when they are attending Aldwark Manor on courses or visiting and also in operating a lend and return service. So far so good but no-one should pretend that there is a great avalanche of books waiting to descend on Aldwark Manor. Far from it. Indeed since 1987 I have been singularly unimpressed by the numbers of books available to greenkeepers. The profession is not rich in its literature particularly on this side of the Atlantic.

Yet if BIGGA is not prepared to make a start in locating and initiating such literature the profession will continue to bemoan the lack of a vital resource in disseminating information and enhancing the learning process. So whilst an authentic library is not going to appear overnight, I would urge our readers to blow away the attic dust and see if they can discover some long lost literary masterpieces which might be better located at BIGGA Headquarters.

Book donations, loans or sales will all be welcomed and this library will only be a success if there are concerted moves within the membership to support it. Let's be hearing from you. In thanking the R & A for this grant, we thank them not only for the finance



BIGGA in focus

BY NEIL THOMAS

involved but also throughout the last seven years for their steadfast and ongoing support of BIGGA. The R & A was instrumental in the formation of BIGGA and it continues to actively support our growth and development acknowledging the need for a strong greenkeepers' association. The R & A welcomes the improved education and training opportunities now available for greenkeepers and the enhancement of the status of those working in the profession as the evidence of better maintained and quality golf courses becomes clearer with each passing year.

Your views wanted

In the February issue of 'Greenkeeper International', I wrote of your Board of Management's decision to implement a review and prepare a five year plan. Regions and Sections were invited to contribute to this process and to canvass the views of members at section level. I recently spoke with a Section Secretary who considered it would be impossible for his section to comment on the structure and workings of the Association in its entirety. I could not

agree more. Indeed this was never the intention in implementing the review. Of necessity much of the work entailed has to be undertaken by your duly appointed professional staff who will report in the first instance to the Board of Management. There will then be circulation of an initial draft to Regions and Sections in the early summer for comments to be forwarded by the beginning of September. It is during the autumn that the final plan will be drawn up for approval by the Board of Management and ratification at the 1995 Annual General Meeting. However, as of now and throughout the process, any member either independently or through his section has the opportunity to put forward a view. Views can be submitted either individually, by sections or by regions. You may wish to see a change in procedure or policy at section, region or national level. If so, please let us know. If you have a concern communicate it to Headquarters. Members should not see this as an intimidating or onerous task - it was never meant to be and the administrative details will fall on your Headquarters office. This exercise should not be viewed as an attempt to restructure the Association. We would not be the growing and successful organisation we are today if our structure and policies were fundamentally unsound. Essentially we are seeing where the existing structure and policies can be improved and strengthened. Viewed in this context I hope that many members will feel able to make a contribution to the present exercise.

With regret...

In this issue you will read of the passing of John Shildrick. I first had the privilege of meeting John when the Association commenced its activities at the Sports Turf Research Institute in Bingley late in 1987. Shortly after in 1988, John retired from the STRI and became Chief Executive of the National Turfgrass Council. In that capacity he continued to work closely with BIGGA. Like many others I had a tremendous respect for John - his knowledge, his grasp of detail and his abiding wish to see the industry develop and prosper. At all times, often under acute pressure, he remained friendly, approachable, compellingly industrious and willing to offer advice and guidance. Within the Association as elsewhere in the industry, he will be sadly missed.

Association membership at new high

BIGGA membership is at an all-time high.

Already the number of members so far in 1994 has surpassed 1993's total – which itself was a record. There are now 5,183 members of the Association, compared to 5,162 at the end of last year.

"This is fantastic news and helps give BIGGA an even more powerful voice to act on behalf of greenkeepers everywhere," said the Association's sales and marketing manager Bill Lynch.

"And what's more, this figure doesn't include those members from last year who still haven't paid their subscriptions.

"If you know a greenkeeper who is not a member or has forgotten to renew, tell him what he's missing. Some 5,183 paid-up members can't be wrong!"

● For information on how to join BIGGA, complete the post-paid reply card facing Page 2 in this issue.

NEWS



John Deere's manufacturing plants at Mannheim and Bruchsal in Germany have achieved certification to ISO 9001, which is the international standard equivalent to BS5750 (part 1).

John Shildrick dies of cancer



John Shildrick, one of the world's foremost authorities on sport and amenity turf cultivars and turf science generally, has died after a six-month battle against cancer. He was 65.

John was known to many greenkeepers through his 20 years as assistant director of the Sports Turf Research Institute at Bingley, West Yorkshire, and latterly as both chief executive of the National Turfgrass Council and secretary of the British Turf and Landscape Irrigation Association.

Born in 1928, he graduated in agriculture at Cambridge University in 1952 and joined the National Institute of Agricultural Botany, also in Cambridge. As

head of the herbage seed section, he researched into new cultivars.

In 1968 he joined the STRI as assistant director, introducing and coordinating large-scale trials of sports turf cultivars. Many people believe the methods he developed dictated the path of subsequent research throughout the UK and in many overseas countries.

In 1980 he additionally became part-time secretary of the newly-formed NTC, consolidating information on amenity grass and non-grass surfaces, and was appointed secretary of the BTLIA in 1986. John continued both jobs from his home after retiring from the STRI in 1988, becoming NTC chief executive that year.

Very much a private man, John devoted his life to the turfgrass industry, frequently working seven days a week, and he con-

tributed articles and research papers to virtually all major turfgrass publications and conferences in the UK and overseas.

Many tributes from friends and former colleagues have poured in. STRI director Dr Peter Hayes said: "At all times John was absolutely thorough, accurate and conscientious. His knowledge was tremendous."

Current NTC chairman Jon Bauer commented: "One of John's major gifts was the ability to explain difficult scientific concepts to the lay person, verbally and in print – he was the plain man's interpreter."

Mike Chance, the NTC's first chairman, said: "John was a great friend and a true professional. Working for the NTC gave him a tremendous grasp of the industry, complementing his research knowledge with a deep awareness of the commercial side of the profession. He was quite unique."

BTLIA chairman Paul de Rham said: "John's dedication, knowledge and professionalism helped us all immensely."

John leaves a sister, Ann, and a close friend Barbara whom he met while working in Cambridge and who, with her husband, was particularly supportive during his illness.

FLYING DIVOTS

■ Mill Hill's newly-appointed assistant head greenkeeper, Terry Colvill, has qualified for the TV gameshow *Gladiators*. The 21-year-old strongman has passed the show's tough fitness and personality tests and is waiting to hear if he'll be selected for a forthcoming battle on the box.

Terry, who has also worked at Highgate and North Middlesex courses, has been weight-training since he was a boy and still goes to the gym four nights a week. He is about 5ft 9in tall and weighs 15.5 stone. He also enjoys motorbikes, waterskiing and golf. He has a 19 handicap. "He hits the ball a long way, but he's all over the place," says his boss, Tony Dunstan.

■ Mike Seaton, formerly sales office manager for Rigby Taylor Ltd at their Guildford sales and distribution centre, has left the company to expand his pesticide application company – Weed Free (Bracknell). Tel: 0344 481011.



■ The new Sweetwoods Park Golf Club on the borders of Sussex and Kent at Cowden, near Edenbridge, officially opened for play on April 25. Head greenkeeper at the 18-hole, 6408-yard course is William Wilson. One of the key holes is the 544-yard 14th which tees off in Kent, plays onto a fairway in Sussex, crossing Kent water twice.

■ Ian Wilson, 31, is the new head greenkeeper at Hamilton Golf Club, Hamilton. He will head up a team of five, including a trainee. The former Blairbeth GC head greenkeeper replaces Peter Hall, who has gone to Whitecraigs Golf Club.

■ Stratford-on-Avon, which celebrates its centenary this year, has appointed Julian Doughty, 30, as head greenkeeper. He was previously head greenkeeper at Ealing, Middlesex.

■ Sixty acres of parkland next to Plumpton Hall, near Bury St Edmunds, is to be turned into an 18-hole golf course.

Fancy a trip to America?

Are you good at what you do? Do you fancy a free trip to San Francisco? Well, why haven't you entered the ICI Premier Greenkeeper of the Year award? The closing date for entries has been extended to May 27 – just for you! Contact your section secretary for details and an application form. If you don't win the top prize – a trip to next year's GCSAA exhibition in San Francisco – you could win a weekend for two in London (including a West End show) or a weekend for two at Aldwark Manor.

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'Too easy' tournament course criticised

The US superintendents at the legendary Stadium Course at the Tournament Players Club at Sawgrass came in for some heavy criticism during The Players Championships (the so-called fifth 'major') – because the course was too easy.

Tom Kite, a former TPC winner, said it was in excellent condition "but it's not in the condition the architect intended." He explained it was way too soft, that the rough had been brought in by 6-8 yards on some holes, stopping wayward drives from running into the trees, and some hazards and mounds are now covered with grass.

The tournament was won by Greg Norman who shot a 24-under total and runner-up Fuzzy Zoeller was 20-under. The 36-hole cut was made on level par.

■ Kevin Garfitt has taken up the head greenkeeper's job at Ely Golf Club and is looking forward to hosting the county championship there next year. The 31-year-old was previously head greenkeeper at Pontefract. He takes over from 33-year-old Mark Jones who has gone to Preston Golf Club.

■ Myerscough College will soon be re-introducing a course which established it as one of the foremost centres of turf technology training. The new 'Sportsturf Construction and Drainage Course' will run from July 18-22. Tel: 0995 640611.

■ Aintree, the Liverpool racecourse that stages the Grand National, is off to a good start with its plans to build a £500,000 nine-hole golf course. It should be ready for an autumn opening, they say.

■ Sisis Equipment (Macclesfield) Ltd has sent its Kent, Sussex and Surrey area rep, Keith Morris, to America to boost sales there. He has now set up home in Florida.



Ideal for verti-drain use

In last month's Greenkeeper International an ex-contributor got the details of the Kubota tractor wrong. We apologise for the error. The tractor tested was the L3250.

The 40 SAE hp (36.5 DIN hp) L3250 has a four-cylinder direct injection diesel engine, 540 rmp rear PTO and power steering as standard.

Particularly suited to meet turf maintenance needs in the golf, sports grounds and local authority markets, the L3250 has mechanical shuttle transmission providing the operator with 16 forward and 16 reverse gears including creep speed as standard, making it ideal for verti-drain operations. Partially synchronised transmission enables the operator to bring the tractor up to full speed quickly and easily for road travel.

Attachments compatible with this tractor include rear mounted flail units, quick attach front loaders and backhoes together with cultivators and post hole diggers.

Long service rewarded

Two employees at Ransomes have been given premium bonds in recognition of 40 years of service for the Ipswich-based company. Barry Saunders, left, joined as an apprentice and is now the quality audit engineer. Ron Pyke, who is blind, joined as a machinist in the thresher department and is now an assembler. They are pictured with Peter Wilson, Ransomes group chief executive.



Flower power

If you're under pressure to turn your course into Augusta National, Charles Hill Nursery tell us they have a collection of over 200 hybrid and species rhododendrons and azaleas – and at least one variety in flower every month of the year. Tel: 0252 703375.

FLYING DIVOTS

■ Michael Buchanan, 41, is the first greenkeeper to be appointed at the Corby Golf Range and Leisure Club, where a nine-hole pitch and putt course, a nine-hole par 3 course and a large putting green are being added to a 26-bay floodlit driving range. Michael was previously with the borough council's grounds maintenance team and had worked on Mowsbury golf course, Bedford.

■ David Holloway, 30, has gone from deputy head greenkeeper at Royal Wimbledon to head greenkeeper at Coombe Wood Golf Club, Kingston Hill, Surrey.

■ Nottinghamshire's Hucknall Golf Club, which opens May 27, has appointed Jeff Dickinson as head greenkeeper. He is presently at Bulwell Hall (Nottingham City GC).

■ Phillip Newton, 23, has been promoted to the new position of deputy course manager at The Ridge Golf Course in Kent.

■ Chirk Golf and Country Club's new head greenkeeper, 41-year-old George Whitby, is preparing the 27-hole complex for the North Wales County Championships in June. After that he has two greens to rebuild with his seven-strong team. Previously this 16-handicapper was head greenkeeper at Mid Yorks. Before that he was at West Herts.

■ Five-handicapper Ross Wilson, 32, is moving from the Isle of Man, where he was head greenkeeper, to take up the new deputy course manager post at Newbury & Crookham Golf Club.

■ Stephen Street, 17, has joined the profession with his appointment as assistant greenkeeper at nine-hole Horsham Golf Park, West Sussex.

■ The 6th Madrid International Golf Show will be held on November 17-20 at the Casa De Campo Exhibition Centre, Madrid, Spain.

■ An article from the STRI in last month's issue was written by Dr AJ Newell, not Peter Hayes as stated.

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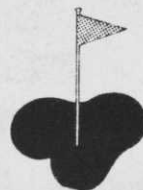
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AD REF 214



IRISH GOLF GREENKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION

SECOND TURF MAINTENANCE EXHIBITION

Last November, nearly 800 people – greenkeepers, golf club committee members, course managers, course designers, county council and corporation parks superintendents, developers, sports groundmen, students, etc. – attended the first ever **Irish Turf Maintenance Exhibition.**

Already half of last year's exhibitors have asked for space this year, but we want to increase the range of exhibitor – so if you are interested in participating, contact us now for further details.

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AD REF 446

HOT TIP



Duncan McGilvray, course manager at Letchworth Golf Club:

The following points, which I have wanted to discuss with colleagues for some time, are, I believe, essential so that the perception of us and the work we do improves, as it certainly needs to.

POINT 1: If we manage a golf course we should be titled golf course managers. No employer will argue that point unless you do NOT manage a golf course.

POINT 2: We, as golf course managers, must hold seminars in the clubhouse so that all facets of our work can be presented and our golfing membership can question our actions and decisions. All golf course managers who do this (and there are a growing number) know that our work is made easier if we make the effort to communicate (a point expanded on elsewhere in this issue).

POINT 3: We present (as well as conduct) ourselves in a professional manner. This, in part, can be achieved by supplying our greenstaff with a uniform (not overalls) so that an image of professionalism can be projected.

HOT TIPS

HOT TIP

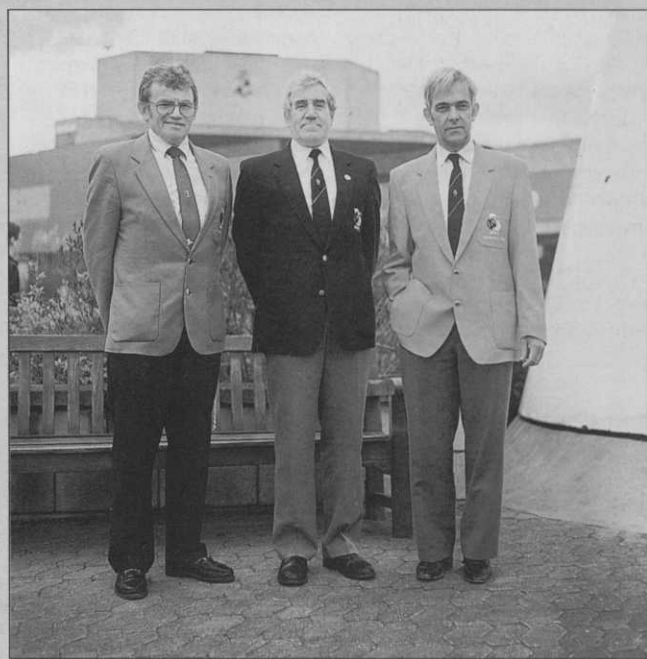


Joseph Baidy, president of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America

While many of us have a self-image as a nature lover and a steward of the land, our public image doesn't quite measure up. A 1990 National Golf Foundation survey in the US found that golfers were evenly split on whether they thought that the fertilisers and chemicals used on golf courses pollute surface waters. But statistics from a National Golf Foundation survey one year later showed that golfers are almost twice as likely as non-golfers to describe the overall effect of golf on their community as "very positive" or "positive" – 67 per cent of golfers chose a positive description, compared to 35 per cent of non-golfers.

It's not that non-golfers feel that the game is a threat to the community – only 3 per cent said golf has a "negative" or "very negative" effect. Most non-golfers surveyed said that golf has no effect on their community (that's 32 per cent) or that they didn't know (that's 30 per cent). Altogether, that is 62 per cent of the non-golfing public that we might be able to reach with good news about golf and the environment.

As greenkeepers, we need to make sure, first and foremost, that we do a good job environmentally; and secondly, that we let everyone know about it. We must make sure we tell our good news, for there will always be someone else to share whatever bad news there may be. We must continue to sharpen our public relations and media relations skills.



BIGGA luminaries such as past chairman John Crawford, vice chairman Barry Heaney and new chairman John Millen (pictured) heard a rich variety of greenkeeping facts at the National Education Conference, at Warwick University. Greenkeeper International was there too and presents seven hot tips from the industry's hottest speakers.

HOT TIP

David Oatis, director, green section Northeastern Region, USA

The grass growing environment that a particular green or tee is located in has a big impact on water management and this is sometimes overlooked. Pocketed, shaded greens produce weaker, less stress-tolerant turf that is more prone to disease problems. This type of turf requires less water due to its reduced

vigour and because the lack of sunlight and air circulation reduce the amount of water lost through evaporation. The end result is that thinning and loss are common problems for turf located in a poor grass-growing environment.

We regularly recommend trying to improve poor grass-growing environments through tree removal and even through the installation of electric fans. This may sound like a peculiar suggestion, but properly used fans can improve the turf's

ability to cool itself. They can also help reduce disease pressure by reducing the level of free moisture. Obviously, they are not appropriate in every situation and removing trees and underbrush often improve a bad grass-growing environment to a sufficient degree. However, electric fans offer an effective alternative for especially difficult locations.

QUOTE OF THE CONFERENCE

'When everyone else was into the Sex Pistols and punk rock, I was into Jim Arthur' – Kevin Munt, course manager at The Buckinghamshire Golf Club.



HOT TIP ✓

Barrie Gregson, course supervisor at Mottram Hall Hotel

I have sand greens at Mottram Hall. God, have I had problems. Some of these problems are from a form of compaction and compaction is not something I would normally worry about on sand greens.

My greens are sat on a very correct stone carpet which, in turn, is blinded by a geotextile separation membrane. On top of this is a sand which, although it conforms to a recognised specification, everything is at its maximum regarding particle sizes.

Add to this the fact that the depth varies somewhere between 12 and 18 inches and you may start to recognise signs of problems.

Firstly, with natural rainfall and irrigation, plus normal maintenance, the 2 per cent clay and the 2 per cent silt and the 2 per cent fines have all started migrating downwards leaving all the larger stuff at the top. When the fines reached the geotextile membrane, they blocked it up. This caused three distinct problems:

1. Water cannot pass through at the rate it was intended;
2. Now the build-up of fines in the lower reaches act as a compacted layer and a filter for any nutrients that are trying to pass by.
3. Water and nutrients race through the top 4 or 5 inches where my grassroots need them to be. Because of this filtering effect I have got what can only be described as a hot layer, and when roots reach it, they burn off causing the death of the plant.

Our solution was to cut through the membrane. But without a separation layer, the sand would eventually pass through into the drainage stone below and block that up too. So we hired in a verti-drain, a big verti-drain, the one with the 18-inch tines on and passed

over each and every green.

We followed up the verti-drain by filling in the holes with Lyt-ag, the idea being that it would act as a blinding layer, therefore stopping the migration of sand but allowing the reasonably normal amounts of water and nutrients to pass through. Incidentally, we filled in the holes by hand using scoops and funnels. You should have seen my lads' faces! In general, it worked. It solved three of my problems, but not the other 17. When I've solved those, you'll read about it here first.

HOT TIP ✓

Happy is the greenkeeper who knows what his members want. But, remember, lady members are the most important because most of them sleep with male members – I mean, they are usually married to male members. It is very important for the greenkeeper to understand this fact, especially when constructing a new ladies' tee or just working on the course on certain days. Treat them right or forever rue the day. Awesome pressure comes from this direction.

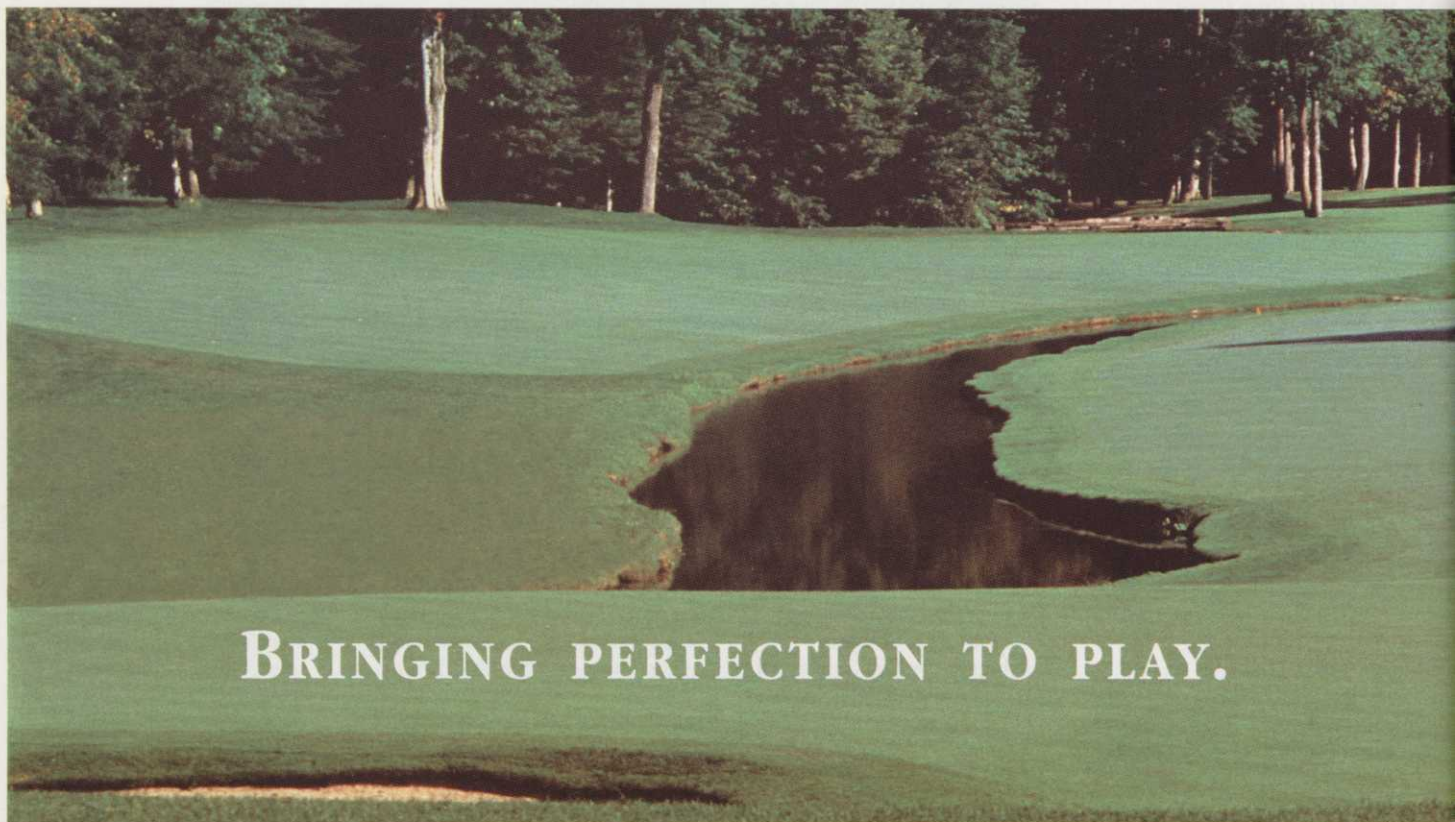


HOT TIP ✓

Alan Mitchell, course manager at The Hampshire Golf Club

A golf course can be built and open for play in less than a year. Work on The Hampshire Golf Club, a pay-and-play course with membership aimed between a municipal course and a members' club, began early last year and by September it was open for limited play. Built on downland near Andover, the site boasts an 18-hole course, a nine-hole par 3 course and a driving range.

Dry weather during February and March helped the project and the greens were prepared and sown by April. An 80/20 rootzone of Kingsley sand and fen soil was chosen. All fairways and tees were sown by the end of May. The installation of the irrigation system was not completed until September and erratic irrigation resulted in some



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