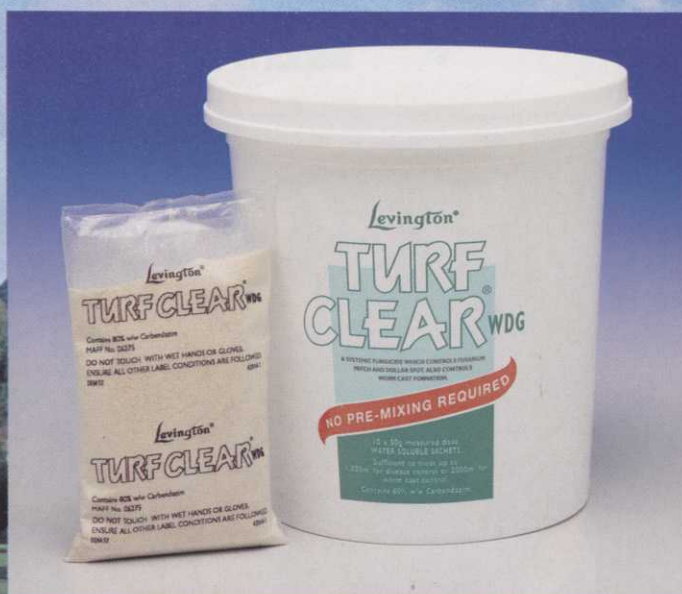




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With unrivalled access to top golfing talent at The Open Championship, members of BIGGA's Greenkeeping Support Team were widely quoted in press and TV coverage. It all helped raise the Association's profile – and provided a memorable experience for everyone involved. Reports and pictures by Scott MacCallum



Life's a ball for champ's main man

Mike Ardley, pictured, Head Greenkeeper at Braintree Golf Club in Essex, will remember the 1995 Open and its Champion for the rest of his life.

Mike was the member of the Greenkeeper Support Team working on John Daly and Ernie Els' match on the final day and won a toss of a coin with Iain MacLeod of Tain who had worked on the Costantino Rocca match to work on the play-off.

Once completed, Mike went to shake the new champion's hand and congratulate him on his achievement and was handed the ball which Daly had used to hole the clinching putt.

"I just couldn't believe it. I'd had such a wonderful week and been so lucky first to get the Daly, Els match and to win the toss of the coin with Iain then to be given the ball by John Daly is unbelievable."

Mike, who has had friends calling him up to say they'd spotted him on TV, is having a presentation case made for the ball and has already turned down an offer of £1000 for it from a dealer.



Team spirit: Members of the BIGGA Greenkeeping Support Team at St Andrews

Unforgettable!

BIGGA's Greenkeeping Support Team was on fine form at the Open Championship at St Andrews with the 49 greenkeepers providing valuable news items for the world's media as well as their more conventional work.

The team provided information for the Great BIGGA Bunker Competition which was run in the Press Centre as well as made notes of any interesting incidents which occurred during the 18 holes.

The competition was to predict the number of bunkers the world's top players would find during the course of the Championship. Every time a player found sand it was marked on a form and this information provided information used by the BBC and the world's press.

The competition was a major talking point in the Press Centre particularly as one man Andrew Farrell of Golf Weekly won the first three daily prizes of bottles of whisky and was only three bunkers out on his prediction after two days. Andrew, who by

the second day was re-named Mystic Meg, choked in the final round and allowed Mike Kern of the *Philadelphia Daily News* to win the final bottle of whisky and Keith Jones, of *Golf Monthly* magazine to walk off with the £600 Hayter Harrier 48 lawn mower kindly donated by Kim Macfie of Hayters.

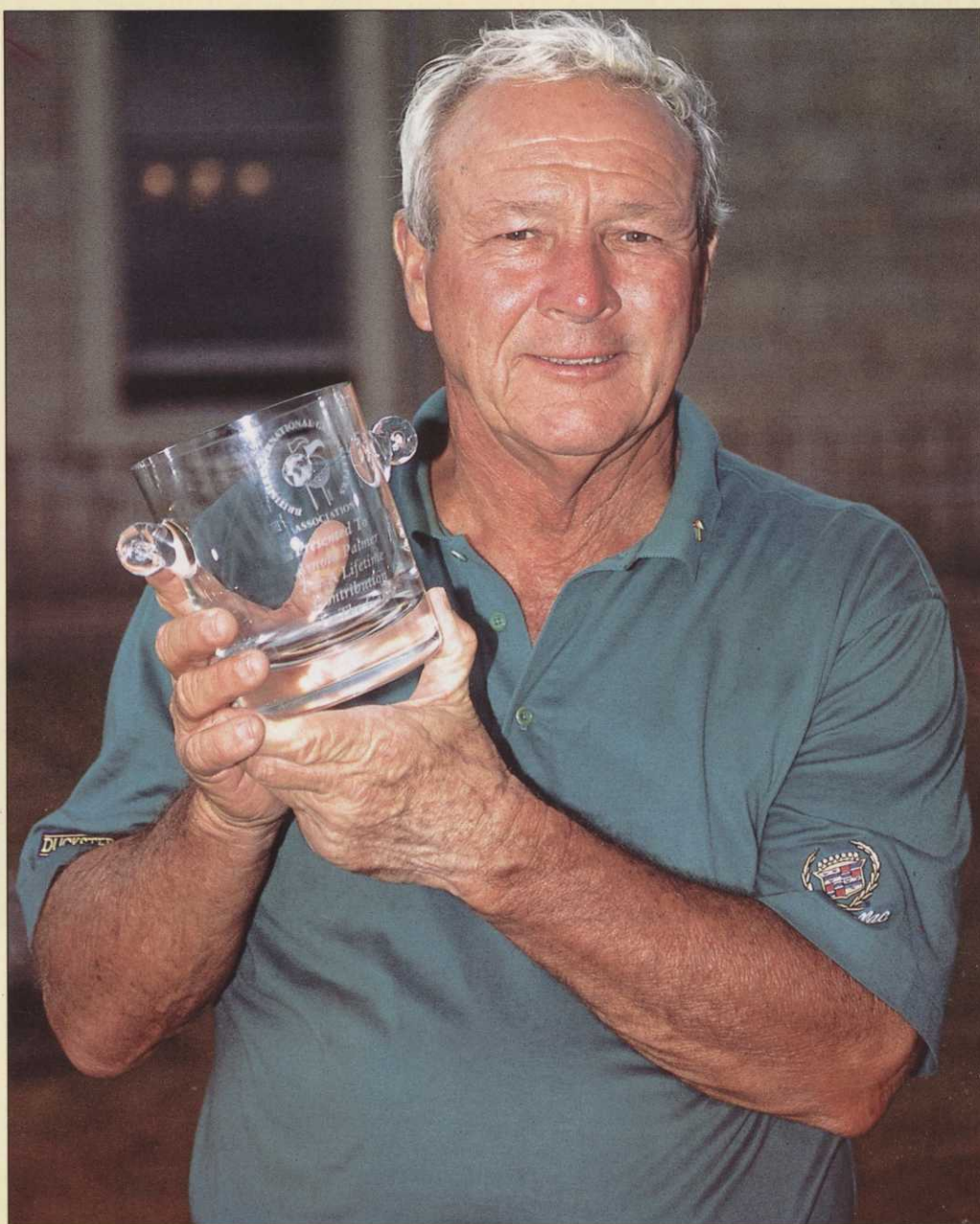
The competition and the titbits of information made it into many of the national daily newspapers and was mentioned everyday on

the BBC coverage keeping the work of the Greenkeeping Support team to the fore and ensuring that BIGGA's profile was high during the most important week on the golfing calendar.

For the record exactly 700 bunkers were found during the course of regular play with Rocca's visit to the Road Hole Bunker during the play-off adding one to the final total.

Taking a break: Our squad relax!





BIGGA adds its tribute to one of golf's legends

Arnold Palmer was presented with the inaugural BIGGA Lifetime Achievement Award in front of the R&A Clubhouse by BIGGA President Barry Heaney and Gordon Moir, Chairman of the Scottish Region on the Wednesday of the Open.

Arnold Palmer said that he was flattered and honoured to become the first winner of the Award.

"My father was in greenkeeping for 55 years and to be recognised by the British and International Golf Greenkeepers means a great deal to me," he said.

He spent a few minutes talking with Barry and Gordon in front of a battery of photographers before going off to prepare himself for his final rounds in the Championship

The citation which accompanied the Darlington Crystal ice bucket read:

"In recognition of the universal debt the game, and all those who are employed within it, owes to Arnold Palmer, the British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association wishes to honour this great and universally revered golfer. As the son of a respected greenkeeper, and a man renowned as much for his sportsmanship and integrity as his talent as a golfer and a golf course designer, there could be no finer choice than Arnold Palmer to become the inaugural recipient of the BIGGA Lifetime Achievement Award."

It is hoped that the BIGGA Lifetime Achievement Award will now become a regular part of Open week.

Picture: Hailey Sports Photographic

JUST FOR THE RECORD

■ Gordon Sherry has been mixing in high company. He has holed-in-one in the company of Jack Nicklaus during a practice round, spent two rounds playing with Greg Norman and Tom Watson and been introduced to ex-US President George Bush. To top it all, though, he has been staying with Gordon Moir, Chairman of the Scottish Region of BIGGA and Head Greenkeeper of St Andrews Eden Course, for the week.

■ One man who watched Michael Campbell with great interest was Jim Johnstone a member of the BIGGA Greenkeeping Support team. Jim backed Campbell at 100-1 at the beginning of the week.

■ Nick Price was in a playful mood as he completed the defence of his title. When his playing partner Brad Faxon nipped into one of the on course toilets Price stuck a tee into the latch to lock him in. Faxon had to put his shoulder to the door to escape – watched by BIGGA Greenkeeper Support Team member Steve Curtis.

■ A fate nearly befell Robert Allenby which the rest of us have to put up with day in day out – carrying his own bag. Under the watchful eye of Alex Robertson, the accompanying member of the BIGGA Greenkeeping Support Team, he failed to escape from a bunker at the 9th and turned to his caddie and said, "That's the last time I listen to you." At that the caddie said "Well carry your own bag then" stripped off his bib, put down the bag and walked off. Allenby was forced to carry his bag to the green by which time the caddie had had a change of mind and returned and there was a speedy reconciliation.

■ John Cook was a victim of the weather when his yardage chart blew out of his hand on the 13th. It was retrieved by Brian Rigby, of the BIGGA Greenkeeping Support team, who said, "That's the Scottish weather for you." He replied, "Yeah, you have to keep a firm grasp on everything." He burst out laughing when Brian added, "Especially your wallet."

■ Ian Woosnam putted poorly all day and at the end of the round instead of shaking hands with his lady marker he handed her his putter – reports Richard Barker, of the BIGGA Greenkeeping Support Team who worked on the match.

MAKING OUR MARK ON GOLF'S PREMIER CHAMPIONSHIP



The Open



★ Arnold Palmer visited one of the on course toilets during his final St Andrews round. Howard McAddey, his accompanying BIGGA Greenkeeping Support Team member, overheard someone say that he was going into write "Arnold Palmer was here" on the toilet wall.

Left: BIGGA Vice Chairman Dean Cleaver soaks up the sun at The Open

Below: BIGGA Chairman Barry Heaney manages to get head and shoulders above the crowds for a better view

Bottom: Neil Whitaker poses beside the Road Hole bunker



Greenkeeper Trevor just misses out

Trevor Foster, pictured above, Head Greenkeeper at Accrington GC, came perilously close to teeing up with the stars over the Old Course.

He headed his local pre-qualifying event, coming back from two over par after two holes to post a 68, and competed in the final qualifying at Scotsraig

near St Andrews. Unfortunately despite posting a two under par total of 140 he missed out by four shots and his visit to the famous course was merely as spectator and not player.

Teeing up in The Open would not have been a new experience for Trevor. Neither would seeing his name on the top of the leaderboard.

After nine holes of the 1989 Championship at Royal Lytham and St Annes Trevor led The Open and he still has the photograph with his name sitting above the top players in the world on the leaderboard.

"It's a moment I'll remember for the rest of my life," said Trevor.

He has a fine record of making it through the pre-qualifying having failed only once but has only once converted it into a final place in the field.

"I've always played well though and never missed by very much. Even this time I did feel with a few holes to go that I could get a couple of birdies and squeeze in," he said.

JUST FOR THE RECORD

■ A total of 700 bunkers were found during the course of regular play in the Championship – Rocca's visit to the Road Hole during the play-off took the figure to 701. The final day, including the play-off produced 156 visits to bunkers. The Road Hole claimed 14 including Daly, Els and Rocca in the play-off.

■ The last man to find a bunker in the Championship was Davis Love III who waited until the 8th hole on Sunday before entering a bunker. Dean Robertson pushed him close but his challenge came to an end when he found sand on the 6th during the final round.

■ The 17th produced the most sand drama. The hole claimed 94 victims with 72 of them coming at the Road Hole – including Rocca's visit in the play-off.

■ Lee Westwood was the man who made most visits to sand during the tournament with 12 visits to sand during the four days. Nick Faldo was second with 10.

■ James, Tomori and Nakajima were the men who made the fewest visits to sand during the week. Tommy Nakajima who became known for his Road Hole horror in 1978 made his first visit and only visit to sand on the 14th hole in the third round.

■ The hole which possessed bunkers but which claimed the fewest victims was the 8th with 16 victims all week.

■ Craig Parry was sick of the sight of one particular bunker on the course. He found the same bunker as he played the 7th and the 11th causing extra work for Sean McDade of the BIGGA Greenkeeping Support Team.

■ After his second successive 75 former US PGA Champion Wayne Grady gave away his putter to a young girl who had accompanied his match. The comment from Robert Hogarth, the BIGGA Greenkeeping Support Team member who followed the match was, "On this showing I don't blame him."

■ On an unfortunate note. The Editor's pick to win the Championship, Bernhard Langer, and the six lottery numbers he selected for the Saturday of Championship week failed to live up to expectations. The Editor expresses his regret to anyone who was daft enough to invest in them and can only rub salt in the wound by saying that he clean forgot to put any money on them himself.



Moment of glory: the BIGGA Greenkeeping Support Team with this year's Open champion, John Daly



BIGGA President Viscount Whitelaw made his traditional visit to the BIGGA Open Headquarters, this year in the Madras College FPs Rugby Clubhouse close to the 17th green, on the Friday of the Championship.

He chatted with BIGGA Chairman Barry Heaney, Vice Chairman Dean Cleaver and Executive Director Neil Thomas as well as a number of the members who were enjoying a break between their matches.



John Daly receives the trophy – and applause. Also at the top table is Walter Woods, Links Superintendent at St Andrews

Managing and

Management tips from Duncan McGilvray, Course Manager at Letchworth GC in North Hertfordshire.

If one person manages the golf course efficiently, and takes control of the many varied responsibilities involved, the benefits to the golf course and the club as a whole, are immeasurable.

This may be a rather obvious statement to make but I have to say there are still very many private members' golf clubs which do not hold one person responsible for managing their course, and because of this the golf course and its members have to suffer sub-standard conditions and long term problems.

The person or persons who may be responsible at the moment may range from the General Committee, the Green Committee, the Green Chairman or Convenor, the Secretary, or how about the Course Superintendent or the Estates Manager? Or even a "working" Course Manager (whatever that may mean) and in a few isolated cases it may be the Head Greenkeeper.

With all that confusion around I am not surprised that there are many private members' courses not being efficiently managed. But let's not blame anyone for this rather confusing situation. At the moment there is no workable alternative. To be quite frank there are not enough suitably qualified Golf Course Managers to go round. I do believe however that there is an answer and an ideal which can be achieved in the foreseeable future.

To manage a golf course you need a Course Manager NO MORE – NO LESS. There may be Managing Committees and even Managing Sub-Committees which are there (quite rightly in my view) to ensure the members interests, but there should be no argument against the necessity of every golf course having a suitably qualified Course Manager to be responsible for the golf course.

To whom that person is answerable may be a matter for debate but we must hold one person responsible and that person must be a Course Manager.

In the next few months we will cover what I believe is the absolute minimum requirement/remit/job description of that person and I fervently hope that it will become the rule at every private members' club and not the exception. With the Greenkeepers Training Committee now well established, and the many training providers (including BIGGA and the approved colleges), there will be no excuse for not finding the relevant training to develop the necessary competency levels and skills required to be a successful and effective Course Manager.

1. TAKING A MAJOR ROLE IN THE FORMULATION OF POLICY

What is "policy"? Simply explained, it is an agreed system within which we work. Note the word "agreed". The Club sets policy – not the Course Manager. That point is extremely important – we may think the course is ours but it belongs to the members and we are employed by those members to carry out their instructions. That said however – because we are trained to manage courses and possess the knowledge, expertise and above all, experience to avoid potential future disasters – we must be involved and indeed take a major role in the formulation of such a policy.

If for example the club aimed to have a policy of no aeration: "we don't want all those holes in the greens disturbing our putting" – and lots of water so that "we can hold the ball on the green more easily" – it would be the Course Manager's duty to convince the Club of the catastrophic results and that a different policy should be adopted.

In this way policy is set and the Course Manager is responsible for that policy being carried out.

I do not wish to go into detail regarding what a policy should contain but suffice to say it should cover every area of the course from greens and conservation areas, to clubhouse surrounds and car parks. It should also contain all staff and committee responsibilities. This may sound daunting at first but, believe me, if policy is set out, your working relationship with the Club will be much more amicable and workable.

The biggest aggravation I hear from colleagues is that the Committee/Secretary/Green Chairman (or all of them) are always "interfering" in the work on the course. If you set policy and work within it, there is no need for any "interference" – everyone knows what the aims are, and how they will be achieved – the course will be managed in a way which the Club can understand and relate to, and in the case of a written Course Policy Statement (which is highly recommended), is clearly defined and documented.

2. TO OVERSEE THE SHORT, MEDIUM AND LONG TERM MAINTENANCE OF THE COURSE WHICH IS DICTATED BY THAT POLICY

This covers the common sense decisions, made by us without realising it, on a day to day/week to week/month to month basis.

It covers decisions on staff working singly, in pairs, in groups, using overtime effectively and managing your staff's time as well as your own, eg. two or three tasks may be carried out at the same time thus making obvious savings, not only in time but also in machinery wear and fuel costs.

I also think it's essential to re-evaluate how/when we do anything on the golf course

on a regular basis. There is always a more efficient way no matter how well we think we do it already.

The most important work in the above heading is oversee – Course Managers are paid to manage, not to sit on machinery cutting grass all day every day – you save your club a considerable amount of aggravation, and therefore money, because you think and manage.

I do believe, however, that in our position we must earn the respect of our staff by not only being capable of doing any task we ask of our staff (no matter how menial) but also assist staff where and when appropriate. What we have to do is find the balance between overseeing, administration and the physical use of our own labour as part of the overall Greenstaff, so that the course is run as efficiently as possible.

Overseeing should not mean spying on staff. This is time wasting and counterproductive. In my experience staff respond extremely well to trust.

3. TO PRESENT AND IMPLEMENT WORK SCHEDULES

The Course Manager must be capable of assessing the detail and duration of every task on the golf course and convey this information whenever asked. The largest work schedule which must be presented, approved and implemented will probably be the Annual Winter Programme. This may be presented in many different forms but we have found the "3 Part System" to be very effective (Parts 1 to 3 in order of priority).

PART 1. NECESSARY ANNUAL COURSE MAINTENANCE

For example:

- Checking drainage and cleaning ditches, etc.
- Checking trees, staking/tree ties/lopping, etc.
- Checking/replacing small bridges.
- Painting course furniture and machinery overhaul, etc.
- Health & Safety updates, etc.

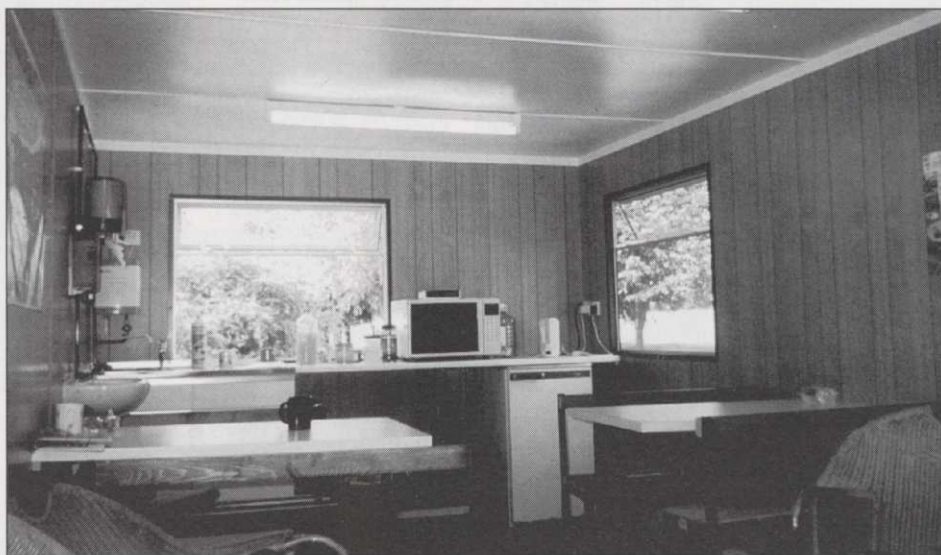
PART 2. AGREED PRIORITY WORK

The Committee/Green Chairman/Secretary will have more of an input in this section. It is effectively what the membership would like done on the Course, for example, new paths, new tees/larger tees, tree planting, etc.

PART 3. GOLF COURSE ALTERATIONS

Following a recognised Golf Course architect's appraisal this section would cover improvements to the Course in design terms, e.g. movement of bunkers, green re-design/re-construction, etc. The Winter Programme should state when it starts and is due for completion, eg. October 31st, 1994 to March 17th, 1995 as well as stating how many staff will be

taking control



A place for everything: Canteen facilities, top, and workshops at Letchworth GC

involved, and how that staff will be allocated to each project. Ideally a Master Plan would have been prepared as part of the Policy Document, so that Annual Winter Programmes are not viewed in isolation, but part of an overall strategy looking well into the future. Regular Course Reports to the Club should be produced throughout the year as a form of work schedule, covering progress and future work envisaged on the course, so that the Committee, and ultimately the membership, know what has/what is/what will be carried out on the course. (More detail of this under the later heading of Communication). Forward Planning is so important in ensuring things run smoothly for ourselves and our staff as well as the membership. Without going into any detail, written schedules have to be kept in a folder with access for all staff, which is updated on a daily/weekly/monthly basis so that everyone knows what is planned for

today/tomorrow/next week/next month. This is of course in addition to Year Planners, Holiday Schedules, Fixture Lists, etc. In this way the allocation of staff, materials, and machinery will be as efficient as possible. However, in the real world there are changing circumstances, and these have to be accommodated, but this should not be used as an excuse for not planning ahead.

4. TO PRESENT AND IMPLEMENT MACHINERY MAINTENANCE PROGRAMMES

A proper Machinery Maintenance Programme is very much reliant on finance and this will therefore be covered more fully under the next article heading of "Controlling Finances".

However, I would like to cover two very important points under this heading now.

An accurate machinery/equipment inventory which is updated immediately following

any change is absolutely vital and is the responsibility of the Course Manager. An efficient, clean, tidy and well-designed workshop, as well as good, comfortable canteen facilities where all staff know where all tools and equipment are kept sets the scene for the whole course. If the workshops are well kept I would bet that the Course would be too.

5. KEEPING ACCURATE RECORDS

Thank goodness for the Health & Safety Executive. Above all others they are the authority which has forced all of us into keeping accurate records. I must say I have certainly improved in this respect following their inspection, ie. chemical records, usage records, machinery repairs, etc. Another form of keeping records is via the desk diary. This tends to be used as the focus of all our operations.

It holds the obvious things like appointments and dates for golf days and the like, but having kept many years worth of work activities on the course, as well as what and how materials have been applied, it is a formidable record for the Club.

It is also important, should you move on, that the next Course Manager has the knowledge of what has gone on in the recent past, and would undoubtedly make his job easier.

And lastly, an accurate plan of the Course is essential in ensuring that everyone knows what's underground as well as what's on top. Expenditure records will be covered under Controlling Finances.

6. KEEPING UP TO DATE WITH MODERN METHODS, MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT

In this ever-changing environment, with the myriad of materials and machinery, it is our duty to keep up with developments in all areas. I have to say that the best way I have found is to meet with colleagues at every possible opportunity, both in the line of business, eg. BTME, Education Conferences and Workshops, Saltex Exhibition, etc. as well as semi-social occasions, such as BIGGA golf days, etc.

The obvious occasions are the demonstration days given by companies within the trade which are very helpful, but still find talking to colleagues on those days more beneficial. We seem nowadays to be inundated with product information and the tendency is for it to go straight in the bin. However, we owe it to our employer continually to look at the most cost effective way of managing the course, and if that means reading every circular, book or magazine article, then we have to do it. Today's golfing member deserves an efficiently run golf course for the money he or she is paying, and more and more of these members are questioning where their money is being spent.

A Course Manager totally responsible for the course is I believe the only way to make sure that requirement is met in future.

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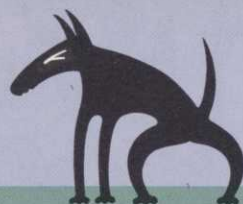
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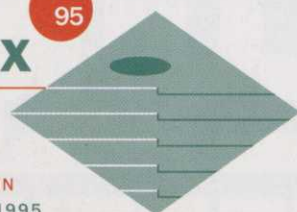
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