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GREENKEEPER

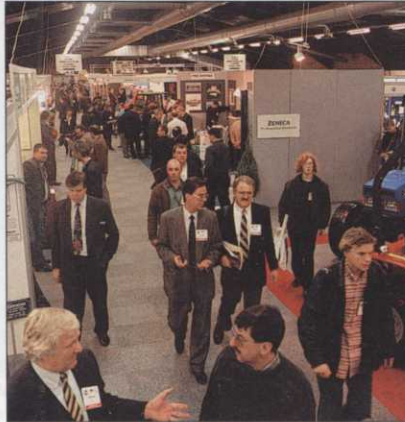
International

FEBRUARY 1995

Contents

The best BTME so far: official

In spite of surprise snowstorms, this year's BTME gets the thumbs-up from exhibitors and visitors alike as the best ever. We report on the industry's favourite show and present a complete pictorial record of the event**Pages 16-21**



The learning experience brought to life

For the first time, BIGGA's National Education Conference was held during BTME week. If you missed what was billed as 'the learning experience', pick up some tips today**Pages 9-11**

Chemical kings with the golden touch

Rhône Poulenc are the chemical company with an involvement in products you wouldn't imagine. Now they've joined the BIGGA Education and Development Fund**Pages 14-15**

It's a family affair

A farming family in Ireland has turned its land into a golf course. Chris Boiling travelled to the emerald isle - and discovered a gem in the making.....**Pages 22-26**

Regular features

BIGGA in focus Neil Thomas reflects on a very special week for the Association, which contains many abiding memoriesPage 4

News Greenkeepers were outraged to discover the extent of P&O Events' plans for a show to rival BTME. Plus all that's going onPages 5, 7, 12, 35, 36

Letters IoG's thanks for BIGGA's positive attitude, 'Jerry-bashing' greenkeepers brought to book and the consultants' saga rumbles onPage 29

Cover

A montage of photographs from BTME '95. More inside.

Pictures: Tim Moat and Chris Boiling

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ADVERTISERS' INDEX a quick reference guide

	Ad Ref	Page
ALS	408	47
Amenity Technology	431	6
Arco	449	10
Barenbrug	172	37
Eric Hunter	73	28
Grass Roots Trading	479	26,37
		40
Hardi	25	45
Hayters	90	64
Johnsons Seeds	64	48
Levingtons	102	13
Lely	61	42,43
LE Lubricants	481	37
New Holland Ford	165	63
OSL	482	27
Pattissons	35	8
Prime Watermen	283	28
Ransomes	9	41
Rhône Poulenc	59	2,44
Rigby Taylor	127	24
Roffey Bros	111	8
Rufford	5	27
Terralift	483	40
Turf Management Systems		457 27
Walkover Sprayers	199	46
Zeneca	54	23, 38-39
Buyer's Guide		• 49-53
Classified		• 54
Recruitment		• 54-61
Job Shop		• 53

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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 01347 838581.

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Reflections on a special week



SUNDAY 22 JANUARY
 Arrive at Majestic Hotel in Harrogate. Nervous – a new Headquarters hotel; will it be up to standard? Relax as greenkeepers are seen with towels in hand heading to the swimming pool and sauna. Off to a good start despite non-arrival of courier with some 30 conference badges. Never mind, Sami's in control. Meet up with our American and Swedish guests and enjoy their company throughout the week. Good dinner and conversation – the mood seems set fair. End the night with our two Russian visitors from Moscow – retire as the caviar and vodka begin to flow...



BIGGA in focus
 BY NEIL THOMAS

MONDAY
 Impressive conference set creates right atmosphere. All speakers present and Conference is sold out. Many compliments regarding hotel – excellent food and accommodation together with first-class service and friendly staff – a big worry lifted off my shoulders. Successful first day highlighted with conference dinner and presentation of ninth Master Greenkeeper award to Richard McNabb from South Carolina. Many disappear before cabaret by Willy Hirst and Rainbow Jazz Band – a pity as it was an excellent act. Noted to review for next year.

TUESDAY
 Conference off again on time. Thanks to Dr Peter Hayes for being an excellent Chairman. Audio/visual presentation a great success. Delegates have had an informative two days and many are looking forward to the Exhibition. Short Board of Management meeting to elect new Chairman and Vice-Chairman then off to cheese and wine gathering for the exhibitors. Hayter dinner follows splendidly organised by Kim Macfie and Barbara Garton. Late night call on first Past Chairmen's dinner in the Majestic – seem to have missed an excellent night with the world being put to right.

WEDNESDAY
 The first ribbon-cutting ceremony goes off well, recorded on video

for a promotional presentation. Amazing numbers through the doors. Pleased to welcome our President Viscount Whitelaw to the Chairman's luncheon. New shields for Golden and Silver Key sponsors are attractive. Rousing speech by our President who then tours the exhibition leaving just before the snow starts. Back to the Majestic as a white blanket descends. Off to AGM. Excellently attended with members locked in by the snow. Unanimous support for the continuation of the BTME in Harrogate in 1996. Good to see Bill Lawson elected as a Trustee and Eric James and Bert Cross as Life Members. Karaoke night disappears as the snow falls – never mind the lads are having a great time in the bar led by the Men of Harlech under the baton of one T Adamson. A good time was had by all whilst the blizzard continued...

THURSDAY
 7.45am Steering Committee meeting – but who will be there? Just about everyone it transpires. Fortright meeting with the show scene clarified. Overwhelming support for BTME '96 is great encouragement. Off to the exhibition through the snow. Will anyone be there! You bet – everyone astonished by the numbers through the doors and the day is off to a great start. But will our entertainers make it for the banquet, the climax of the week? The agency has done a great job with a late replacement in Linda Nolan and with Tom O'Connor setting

off the night before to ensure his arrival. Capacity attendance at banquet – what a night! Perhaps the best cabaret I've seen. Many present overcome with the appearance of Linda Nolan and in a state of near frenzy by the time Tom O'Connor appeared for a quite brilliant 75 minute stint. A truly memorable evening discussed long into the night.

FRIDAY
 Bleary eyed but happy, attendees descended again on the exhibition halls to attend Jim Beard's lecture and for a final walk around. Good numbers for the last morning. Dire weather warnings keep me on my toes. Plug pulled at 12.45pm instead of 1.30pm. Just about get it right as snow sets in again around 2pm. Speed of evacuation of personnel and equipment is excellent. We've made it and thanks to our exhibitors for their stoicism and their continued backing, also to our members and other visitors for the determination to make it to Harrogate and contribute to the week's success.

And seriously
 Whilst there had been unconfirmed rumours since before Christmas of the English Golf Union's possible participation in the new "Landscape & Turf Professional '96" exhibition planned for 16-18 January 1996, at Olympia, London, BIGGA members arriving for the BTME were surprised both by the timing (23 January) and the nature of the press release announcing an agreement between the EGU and P&O Events. The agreement between the two organisations means that the EGU will be responsible for the golf education and training seminars at the show. The BTME in Harrogate has yet again been a great success and we believe we have a solid base for the further development and expansion of the exhibition which is planned for next year's show. We are encouraged by the ongoing support of our exhibitors, many of whom are requesting additional space for 1996.

Whilst the issues concerning the EGU's participation in a rival event are discussed elsewhere in this magazine, it is not too late to ask the EGU to reconsider its position.

Surely their place is at Harrogate supporting greenkeepers and their education and training seminars as well as their National Education Conference. How much more beneficial if they contributed positively to an expansion of those programmes and urged every Secretary and Chairman of Green to visit Harrogate where they would learn much that would be beneficial to their respective roles at their golf clubs. The excellent paper presented by Brian Carnie, Managing Secretary of Broadway Golf Club during the recent Seminar Programme and much appreciated by our members is indicative of the way forward. What can be achieved by the EGU attempting to establish a rival show at the expense of the BTME and to the detriment of greenkeepers and their profession? If the EGU's present position is divisive and not in the best interests of the game, BIGGA's position is clear. The Association wants the EGU's support at the BTME, it wants the EGU's backing for greenkeepers and their profession and it wants the EGU's participation at Harrogate in the educational programmes. We would see the participation as a cooperative effort to include the Irish, Scottish and Welsh Home Unions as well. BIGGA will be at Harrogate in 1996 and we hope so too will the EGU. Come and talk and let BIGGA and the Home Unions move forward together.

And finally
 An abiding memory from the week. An audience of 300 at the closing banquet on their feet, some standing on chairs, hands linked singing along with Linda Nolan, "We'll meet again don't know where don't know when". It stirred the emotions. But we do you know. It will be in Harrogate from 22-26 January 1996. See you there.

● Greenkeepers angry at non-golfing industry's plan for BTME spoiler

● BIGGA president

'disturbed' at attempts to establish unnecessary London rival

The English Golf Union stunned and angered greenkeepers on the eve of BTME by announcing its support for P&O Events' rival show next year.

In a press release read out to a hushed gathering of greenkeepers at the National Education Conference, P&O confirmed that the EGU is to become a partner in Landscape & Turf Professional 96. This London-based show will take place a week before the BIGGA Turf Management Exhibition and education programme, which will again be held in Harrogate. The agreement between P&O and the EGU makes the EGU responsible for the golf education and training seminars at Olympia.

EGU secretary Paul Baxter said: "We are delighted to become part of the event and recognise the platform that a London-based exhibition will give the industry throughout Europe. Our responsibilities will involve the development and organisation of the education and training seminars. These will be an important and integral part of the show."

After failing to buy BIGGA's goodwill and expertise, P&O secured the support of the EGU by not only offering to pay their expenses in London and pay expenses of speakers, but also give them a stand at the show and an entertainment lounge free of charge.

"It's an offer we've never had before and it's a wonderful opportunity to continue the education work we've been doing for chairmen of green and greenkeepers since 1988," said Baxter.

But the announcement shocked many at the packed BTME.

Among the most surprised was PO Ljung, chairman of the Swedish Greenkeepers Association (SGA), which was there in force. He said: "It is sad that the EGU prefers to co-operate with the non-golfing industry instead of BIGGA, which is a very able and professional organisation that has taken the training of greenkeepers to its heart. We in the SGA and, I venture to say, all the greenkeeper organisations in Scandinavia do hope our sister organisation, BIGGA, will continue with its arrangements in Harrogate as the exhibition, national conference and the seminars are much appreciated by



Viscount Whitelaw, speaking at the Chairman's luncheon, told guests why Harrogate was right for the BTME. Among those pictured above are BIGGA's Neil Thomas, Len Breakwell, of ET Breakwell Ltd, Peter Wilson, of Ransomes, Sims and Jeffries, Steve Mona of the GCSAA, and BIGGA Board of Management member Gordon Moir

Outrage as EGU joins rival show

both greenkeepers and exhibitors.

"It is sad that the EGU does not recognise the professionalism that BIGGA represents. In Sweden, the Swedish Golf Federation with its 360,000 members has recognised that SGA stands for a sound development of golf courses and their maintenance and the co-operation between SGA and the Swedish Golf Federation is very close as regards training programmes and research/experiments.

"I do hope that the EGU will have second thoughts as regards the London exhibition, as it would probably be a disadvantage both to BIGGA and the EGU if P&O chooses to go ahead with their exhibition."

It wasn't just greenkeepers who were surprised by the EGU's move. Brian Carnie, managing secretary at the Broadway Golf Club, said: "It's a shame. It'd be so sad to have two conferences run so close to each other in opposition."

David Golding of the Greenkeepers Training Committee, which is partly funded by the EGU, said the first he'd heard about the EGU/P&O partnership was when conference delegates told him about the press release read out by BIGGA chairman John

Millen. "We have not been contacted about it," he said two days after the announcement. "John Millen told us via 200 greenkeepers." But he added he expects to be at BTME in '96 - as do the vast majority of greenkeepers.

Asked at the BIGGA annual general meeting if they wanted to go to London, the greenkeepers voted unanimously to stay in Harrogate.

Most of the leading turfcare companies are also choosing Harrogate.

Andrew Sunaway, the new sales and marketing director at Ransomes, told us: "We will be in Harrogate supporting BIGGA and we are taking more space next year." In fact they want to double the size of their stand, as do Hardi Sprayers and Lely UK. Other leading companies, including Hayter, Zeneca, Rolawn and Farmura have also promised to be in Harrogate next year.

Viscount Whitelaw, president of BIGGA, summed up the feelings of many greenkeepers and exhibitors during his visit to the show: "I do so enjoy coming to Harrogate and this

show, which has been an enormous success over the years. I spend a lot of time in London and I can tell you Harrogate is much better for greenkeepers than London. I want to see this development continue and expand. I want it to expand further because it's been a great advantage for greenkeepers in Britain and I hope it will become so for greenkeepers all over Europe."

● Letter received from Viscount Whitelaw:

From: The Rt. Hon. The Viscount Whitelaw, K.T., C.H., M.C.

As President of BIGGA, I had the pleasure to attend last month's BTME in Harrogate. It is a tremendous show, professionally organised by BIGGA's staff and loyally backed by companies within the turf industry. BIGGA's programmes are of a high standard and well supported. As such, they do much to advance the greenkeeping profession. I am disturbed to hear of attempts by P&O Events to establish a rival show in London next January, when BIGGA's members have overwhelmingly indicated their commitment to the BTME in Harrogate. I do not believe greenkeepers want a show in London, when the special atmosphere of Harrogate will be lost and expenses will invariably increase both for exhibitors and BIGGA's members. I do hope that this show at Harrogate will continue as at present, because it is valuable and educational for greenkeepers and many others. I have every confidence in the ongoing success of the BTME, which as President of BIGGA has my unqualified support.

Whitelaw

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18 x GC 801

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Stand Pipes 48"

Litter Bins Green c/w Spike

White Flag Pins c/w Swivels

Yellow Nylon Flags

Red Nylon Flag

Polymer Hole Cups

Putting Green Markers

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Zeneca set to become a Miracle for £37m

Zeneca has sold its Garden and Professional Products business to newly-formed Miracle Garden Care Ltd for approximately £37 million.

The new owners will be taking over all existing staff and the full range of professional products which includes Longlife and Ultra-Green fertilisers, Daconil-turf, Greenshield and Casoron.

The chief executive of the new company is John Wilson who is leaving Zeneca (formerly part of ICI) after 26 years. John was both general manager of Zeneca Crop Protection (the UK arm of Zeneca Agrochemicals) and Zeneca Garden and Professional Products.

He confirmed that the new company will continue to supply the same products with the same brand names using the same people.

Miracle Garden Care Ltd's principal shareholders are Advent International Plc and Charterhouse Development Capital, who led the purchase, and Stern's Nurseries, proprietors of the Miracle Gro brand of garden products.

Production facilities at Howden, North Humberside, will continue to be part of the new business.

More tragedy at Welsh club

A third tragedy has hit Southerndown Golf Club, near Bridgend, South Wales. Assistant greenkeeper Christopher Thomas, 20, was struck by an Inter City train on a railway line close to his home. Earlier in the week the club heard that former head greenkeeper John Walsh, 36, who had retired due to ill health five years ago, had died. "He fought a long and hard battle against cancer, was well known locally and well respected," according to Peter Lacey of BIGGA's South Wales section.

These tragedies follow the suicide last year of head greenkeeper Stuart Lindsey.

NEWS



For the second year running, managing director Graham Dale picks up the 'Mr Toro International' award on behalf of Lely UK. American manufacturer Toro gives the award annually to the distributor who shows the most outstanding achievement in all aspects of its service to Toro commercial customers. Presenting the award is Bob Buckingham, left, sales manager Toro Commercial Products (Europe).

Avoncrop joins our development fund

Avoncrop Amenity Products is the latest company to back BIGGA's Education and Development Fund. This brings to five the number of new companies already in Golden or Silver Key membership for 1995.

In welcoming Avoncrop Amenity Products as a Silver Key supporter BIGGA's executive director, Neil Thomas commented, "It is significant that such a well-respected regionally based company should choose to support the Education and Development Fund at a time when the Association is about to utilise the resources of the fund on a regional basis through the planned localised management training courses. The backing of regional companies such as Avoncrop Amenity Products can only strengthen the regional resources and support for our members".

Avoncrop Amenity Product's membership brings to 16 the number of companies in either Golden or Silver Key membership.

On credit

BIGGA now accepts plastic. You can use your VISA and Access cards to pay your membership fee and buy BIGGA goods, such as blazers, ties and jumpers.

Zeneca and Terralift

The January issue of Greenkeeper International carried a newsletter from Terralift Fertilizers. Terralift would like to make it clear that no slight was intended on ICI/Zeneca or its products. The use of the name ICI in the article relates only to the 'Greenkeeper of the Year' Award.

Terralift acknowledges that its fertilizers are one of several being considered by David Walden, the ICI Greenkeeper of the Year.

Any embarrassment caused to David or ICI/Zeneca was unintentional.

FLYING DIVOTS

Attention late subscribers

Has your 1995 BIGGA membership subscription been paid? If not, you ought to be aware that all membership benefits have, strictly speaking, lapsed. Of particular importance is the legal helpline and the personal accident insurance. If you have not renewed your subscription then you are not covered. Consequently, any accident arising after December 31 1994 will not be insured. Furthermore, those 1994 members who have not paid their subscription by February 28 will be taken off the Greenkeeper International magazine mailing list. Subsequent renewals will not be issued with back copies of the magazine free of charge. All benefits of membership will deem to commence from date of payment.



■ Martin Hucklesby, 28, is set to take over as course manager/head greenkeeper at Five Lakes Hotel, Golf and

Country Club (formerly Quietwaters) in Maldon, Essex. "It's going to go places now," he told us with a smile, "It's in excellent condition." Martin, whose father is head groundsman at London Scottish Rugby Club and whose brother works as a greenkeeper at the Burhill Club, Walton on Thames, takes up the new challenge on February 27. At the moment he is assistant course manager/head greenkeeper at Roehampton in Surrey.

■ Gary Cunningham is moving from Menorca to take over as head greenkeeper at Ufford Park in Suffolk. The 29-year-old 10-handicapper is currently head greenkeeper at Club De Golf Son Parc. He takes up his new job at the end of this month, replacing Peter Brooks.

■ Steven Grass, 27, has been appointed head greenkeeper at Brampton Heath Golf Centre, Northampton. He was previously deputy head greenkeeper at Calcot Park.

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The 1995 National Education Conference got BTME week off to a cracking start. With the best line-up of speakers anywhere in Europe, it really was THE Learning Experience. For those that missed it, here are some of the key messages to come from the experts on show.

WATER



Independent irrigation consultant Philip York said:

It is most important that the course manager/head greenkeeper is aware of how much water he is applying (not how long!) in a given period of time

– A level maths is not required!

For spacings with full circle sprinklers the formula is:

$$\frac{\text{Litres per minute (of one sprinkler)} \times 60}{\text{Side 1} \times \text{side 2 (in metres)}} = \text{mm/hr}$$

For triangular spacing:

$$\frac{\text{Litres per minute (of one sprinkler)} \times 60}{\text{Side 1} \times \text{side 2 (in metres)}} = \text{mm/hr}$$

For in-line spacing:

$$\frac{\text{Litres per minute (of one sprinkler)} \times 60}{\text{Side 1} \times \text{hr}} = \text{mm/hr}$$

This latter formula is not 100% accurate particularly if the spacing is not head to head, therefore it should be treated as a guide.

It must be remembered that in the British Isles many installations feature part circle sprinklers around the greens and that assuming they are set at 180° the application rate will be twice that of full circle.

For this reason part circle sprinklers should never be on the same station as full circle, and a group of part circles should all be adjusted to the same arc, do not be tempted to set a greater arc on the windward side to the leeward side.

Incidentally in discussing the use of part circle sprinklers I am not endorsing the practice as we feel that in many cases full circle sprinklers will give more satisfactory results

A few of you may have special application sprinklers, ie sprinklers which rotate at different speeds through different sectors of the arc of coverage. In this event the following factors should be applied to the application rate:

2 speed 180° x 180° with the slow arc facing the opposing sprinkler x 1.33

2 speed 180° x 180° with the slow arc facing outwards x 0.67

2 speeds 120° x 60° x 120° x 60° in a single row configuration (the only time it can be used) x 0.91

Martin Smith, head greenkeeper at Ramsdale Park Golf Centre, said:

If you are having an irrigation system installed, find out if the irrigation company intends using its own staff to do the job or if

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The EXPERTS

they intend using sub-contract labour. If sub-contract labour is used they'll have a vested interest in finishing their work as quickly as possible since they will be paid on the quantity of their work – that is, how much pipework and how many sprinklers they put in the ground, not how long they take. This could result in short cuts being taken, both in preparation and installation.

One obvious example of a shortcut which is often impossible to detect until a much later date is the practice of cementing lengths of pipe together and then mole-ploughing them into the ground on the same day. Many times I've dug out burst pipework only to discover a joint that was not given enough time to bond properly and had consequently blown apart under pressure. If a joint is cemented properly and given the time necessary to achieve a strong bond before being put under the stress and tension of being dragged through the ground, often for quite long distances, then the chances of the joint coming apart are minimal. At a previous club of mine, more than 25 joints came apart at various times and all simply because the installation was done by subcontractors working to tight schedules.

James Moore, director, green section, Mid-Continent Region, USGA, said:

There's a golf course I know in Colorado that has a real problem with *Poa annua* and diseases in their fairways. They have bentgrass and lots of *Poa*. They have snow mould problems and red thread – and the superintendent is pulling his hair out.

The problem is he has bentgrass fairways, Kentucky bluegrass in the semi-rough on the mounds and tall fescues and native grasses in the rough. And with his fairway irrigation he has full circle heads operating on the same clock watering all three areas at the same time. If he sets it for the mounds, which he tends to do because they require the most water, he over-waters the fairways and over-waters the rough at the same time.

And so he ends up having a lot of weed problems. One of the best fixes for this is the Verti-drain.



Charlie Barebo of Otterbine Barebo, said:

Ponds and lakes, whether they are man-made or natural, have a natural life cycle. They start out clean, fresh and clear; grow into middle age with weed and

algae growth and high nutrient levels and pass into old age as shallow bogs or marsh land. Before man began to impact the environment this progression took hundreds or thousands of years. Ponds and lakes now can be created, live and die within decades. Why is the life of our ponds and lakes so short? Much of the reason lies in the fact that water is our most abused and least understood natural resource. For centuries streams and lakes have been our dumping grounds. We have allowed our ponds and lakes to be unmanaged so that now many of them are unmanageable. The problems we commonly associate with ponds are excessive algae and aquatic weed growth, foul odour, fish kills and insect infestations.

This ageing process can be slowed down by good management. Good pond management practices include:

- Preventing or controlling water runoff from other areas bringing organic products into your pond.
- Identifying and correcting septic tank leeching.
- Stopping poor management practices such as disposing of grass clippings, leaves and other organic material in your pond.
- Using chemicals intelligently to treat stubborn or persistent problems.

But one of the main ways of slowing down the process is aeration.

How does an aerator improve water quality and control algae growth? By puffing large amounts of oxygen into the water, an aerator encourages a strong colony of aerobic bacteria which, in turn, work to clean the pond of organic nutrients and waste. The presence of oxygen in the water also encourages the chemical bonding of phosphorous with calcium in the water and causes the phosphorous to precipitate to the bottom of the pond and become unavailable for plant use. High

the Learning experience

oxygen levels also prevent anaerobic digestion which leads to nutrient cycling and foul odours. The introduction of dissolved oxygen to the pond's bottom may inhibit phosphorous release from sediments, curtailing this internal nutrient source.

The high pumping rate or circulation rate of an aerator breaks through thermal stratification and distributes oxygen to all parts of the pond. By pulling cool bottom water up to the top of the pond, the surface layers of the water are cooled and the growth of algae is slowed. Single celled algae are mixed to the pond's bottom which increases the cell's time in darkness and will slow growth and reproduction. Rapid circulation and contact of water with the atmosphere, as well as the introduction of carbon dioxide rich bottom water during the initial phase of mixing, may increase the water's carbon dioxide content and lower pH, leading to a shift from blue-green algae, which can release toxins and cause odours, to less noxious green algae.

Aeration attacks the source of the problem - poor water quality. It is an economical and on-going method of pond management. It has no harmful side effects and it supports the natural ecosystem. In addition, spray type aerators are aesthetically pleasing.

Billy McMillan, course manager at Wildwood Golf Club, said:

Many years ago I was a young, headstrong, head greenkeeper. I suppose I thought I knew everything there was to know about greenkeeping. I had just fed all the greens with sulphate of ammonia and iron, one hot July day as I remember. I packed up shop and went to visit my mum and dad for the evening, some 60 miles away. We were discussing work and dad asked, "What have you been up to?" I explained the day's work and he asked if I had given the greens a good water. I replied no because it's going to rain, they said so on the weather forecast. "Son," he said, "It's raining when you're getting a wet head, now get back and give them a drink." I did as I was told and, you know what, it didn't rain that night nor for the next month, contrary to the weather forecasters.

Irrigation is only one of the tools available to us as greenkeepers. It's not the be all and end all to successful course management, however when well designed and maintained it is without doubt an asset. It must be used in conjunction with a healthy aeration programme, because it would be no good us throwing this valuable resource (water) onto a surface too compacted to accept it. It has great value, when we are using fertilisers,

top-dressings, wetters etc because it releases us from the constraints of the weather. If you have an automatic system (not everyone has, you know), it allows us to water the course during the night removing the problem of inconvenience to the golfer and of course cutting down evaporative loss etc.

How much water should we use on our golf course? It's worth noting that you may experience some restriction due to cost if coming directly from a water board, or extraction limits from a natural source on site.

Some golfers, bless them, would have us apply sufficient water that would allow a well struck three iron from 100yds to stop a ball dead. On the other hand greenkeepers have over the years, me included, applied so little amounts that the playing surface has been as receptive as an airport runway. Please remember, golf is a game played on grass, not bare ground. We must apply just enough water to maintain a healthy sward and a moist soil profile. Remember, I said moist and not soaking. Each golf course will in my experience require different amounts of water to achieve this end, depending on its climate, location, topography, and soil conditions. It's up to us as the greenkeeper to determine when and how much to achieve the best possible results.

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