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It's bigger, it's more comprehensive and it's better than ever before – the BIGGA Turf Management Exhibition and Educational Seminar Programme, January 24–26, 1996.

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BIGGA National Education Conference: January 22–23, 1996

BIGGA Educational Workshops: January 22–23, 1996

Educational Seminar Programme: January 24–26, 1996

BIGGA International Symposium: January 25, 1996

Sports Turf Research Institute/BIGGA Chairmen of Green/Secretaries' Course: January 23–24, 1996



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BTME and the Educational Seminar Programme is organised by the British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association, Aldwark Manor, Aldwark, Alne, York YO6 2NF. For more details, or for a copy of "The Learning Experience", call Ken Richardson, BIGGA's education officer, on 01347 838581.



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GREENKEEPER

International




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NOVEMBER 1995

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James Braithwaite, the new Toro/PGA European Tour Student Greenkeeper of the Year. Picture: Scott MacCallum

WIN £50 CASH IN OUR BUYER'S GUIDE COMPETITION: TURN TO PAGE 41

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BTME
96
BIGGA TURF MANAGEMENT EXHIBITION & EDUCATIONAL SEMINAR PROGRAMME

Greenkeeper Education and Development Fund

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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Warm welcome in land of the ice bears

The Chairman and myself were recently invited to attend the Conference and Exhibition in Jonkoping, Sweden organised under the auspices of the Swedish Golf Federation and the Swedish Greenkeepers Association. Four years ago I had the opportunity to address a conference of the S.G.A and one could not fail to be impressed by the progress made in the intervening period. The S.G.A is a forward-looking organisation with a broad vision for the future of the profession and for its members working within it. With a large geographical area to cover the choice of Jonkoping was a good one being reasonably central and accessible. The exhibition was exceptionally well attended and the facilities were excellent. The Seminar Programme attracted a thousand delegates and Billy McMillan presented an excellent paper.

The Swedish nation is renowned for its organisational and adminis-



BIGGA in focus
BY NEIL THOMAS

trative skills and they were on display in abundance during our visit. It is not difficult therefore to see just why the S.G.A goes from strength to strength under the capable leadership of President, Per-Olof Ljung and Chief Executive, Tommy Lindelof. BIGGA and the S.G.A enjoy a close relationship and we currently have some 30

Swedish greenkeepers in membership of BIGGA. In meeting some of them in Sweden, their commitment to and enthusiasm for the profession shone through and we can look forward to welcoming a delegation from Sweden to the BTME in January. One interesting aspect is that the S.G.A boasts no fewer than six lady Head Greenkeepers and there is no doubt that the ladies are on the move in Sweden.

In Scandinavia as a whole greenkeeping is making purposeful strides forward and it was interesting to talk to a lady Golf Course Superintendent, Elise Jarvinen from Helsinki, who chairs the Finnish Greenkeepers Association. Finland currently has 83 golf courses while the Finnish Association includes members from each and every one of those golf courses. We still have some way to go in BIGGA! Talking with Tor Senstad from Norway, the impression again was of much development in that country with the Norwegian Greenkeepers Association gaining in strength. Returning from Sweden, the Chairman and myself had come firmly to the conclusion that the greenkeeping associations in Scandinavia are in capable hands, there is an eagerness for education and training programmes and an outward looking perspective which augurs well for future European cooperation. We were warmly welcomed and to our hosts Per-Olof, Tommy and his wife Helen, herself a Head Greenkeeper, a big thank you is due. We look forward to seeing them again at the BTME.


tional I hope each and every member will find good reason to renew his or her membership. BIGGA essentially remains an organisation in being to serve its members and if any member feels that his voice is not being heard, please let me know and we will ensure that the particular viewpoint is considered within the democratic structure of the Association. However, despite our progress as an Association and the year on year increase in membership, there remains a concern that a large number of greenkeepers have still to join BIGGA and enjoy the benefits of belonging. A good number of golf clubs are still without any BIGGA members. So much can be done at local level by existing members to enlist new members and I would venture to suggest that nearly every current member will know a fellow greenkeeper still to be convinced of the merits of joining our Association.

Apathy is, I believe, one of the fundamental problems facing both BIGGA and the profession. Within BIGGA we need to tackle it at all levels for in this day and age an insular, "laissez-faire" approach to greenkeeping simply will not do and indeed threatens the stature of the profession as the game of golf continues to develop on all fronts. Scepticism may be less of a problem but equally needs to be rooted out. It manifests itself in the "what can BIGGA do for me?" syndrome and a philosophy that feels comfortable with greenkeepers knowing their place. I would urge members, therefore, at a local level to make every effort in this membership "season" to convert the doubters and give us added strength. If we are not providing services which you need please tell us. Initiatives from members are welcomed. Let me give just one example. We are currently seeking worthwhile projects in 1996 on which to expend monies in the Education and Development Fund. If you can identify a worthwhile project or a need that is not being met, please let us know.


Greenkeepers need the backing of a strong, professional Association and please read on within this issue to find every reason for renewing your membership. There is also every reason to convince the as yet unconvinced and let's look forward to an ever stronger membership in 1996.

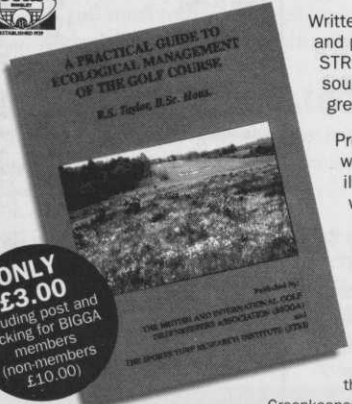
The Season and the Reason

As I write the season of "mists and mellow fruitfulness" is once again upon us and also the season when the great majority of our members will be asked to renew their membership of BIGGA for another year. BIGGA's membership has been on an upward curve since 1987 and we now fast approach another milestone of 6000 members. BIGGA is a buoyant organisation with a standing within the game of golf which would not have seemed possible ten years ago. As an organisation it is only as good as its members and the old adage remains true that there is strength in numbers. Within the pages of this issue of *Greenkeeper Interna-*



A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO ECOLOGICAL MANAGEMENT OF THE GOLF COURSE





Written by RS Taylor, STRI ecologist and published by BIGGA and the STRI, this new book is an invaluable source of reference for greenkeepers.

Presented in compact A5 format with 103 pages and full colour illustrations, this practical guide was put together after BIGGA identified the need to assist greenkeepers, golf club officials, especially chairmen of green and anyone interested in the ecology of golf courses.

BIGGA's contribution in co-publishing this vital guide, is thanks to members of BIGGA's Greenkeeper Education and Development Fund.

ONLY £3.00 including post and packing for BIGGA members (non-members £10.00)

ORDER FORM

TO: BIGGA, Aldwark Manor, Aldwark, Aline, York YO6 2NF

Please send me copy/copies of A Practical Guide to Ecological Management of the Golf Course

I am a BIGGA member (membership no.) and enclose my cheque for £..... OR

I am not a BIGGA member. My cheque for £..... is enclosed.

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Your cheque will not be cashed until your order is despatched. Transfer these details to a plain sheet of paper if you don't want to cut up your magazine.

BIGGA membership renewals brought into the spotlight

Renewal subscriptions for BIGGA membership will be due for payment on or before the first day of the month following expiry of current membership. Renewal notices will normally be forwarded at least one month before the expiry of current membership.

Members whose subscription has not been received by the due date will cease to be entitled to any of the benefits of membership. In particular, please note that all insurance cover associated with membership will be cancelled and you will not be entitled to participate, as a member, in Section, Region or National activities.

Subscriptions received during the month following the date of expiry will be renewed to expire on the next anniversary date of the original expiry date and benefits will commence from the date of payment.

Subscriptions received after the end of the month following expiry will be renewed for one year from the first of the month following payment and benefits will commence from that date.

● BIGGA: It's for you – Pages 13–16.

College wins first Shildrick Award

Elmwood and Reaseheath Colleges are the first recipients of John Shidrick Memorial Awards presented by the British Turf & Landscape Industry Association.

The awards, turf irrigation manuals written by American authority James Watkins, are, says the BTLIA, to be placed in the college's reference libraries for the benefit of students.

Presented by BTLIA Chairman Philip York, similar awards will be made on an annual basis in memory of John Shidrick, the Association's former secretary.

"The BTLIA intends to use the scheme to recognise landscape or greenkeeping colleges which, in our estimation, make significant contributions towards turf maintenance training," said Mr York.

NEWS



Peter Sproston putts on to the 10th green at Sutton Hall. Holding the flag is Maxwell Faulkner, owner of the new club

Peter's new challenges at new club

Another dream of a golf entrepreneur has finally been achieved in the centre of the rolling countryside of Cheshire.

Sutton Hall GC opened its 1st tee to a full membership of over 600 in mid-October five years after going to the local planners and just 12 months after getting the green light. The par 72 layout, which boasts 18 interesting holes with water hazards on no fewer than five of them, was built on 140 acres of prime Cheshire farm land which had been farmed by the owner Maxwell Faulkner – not the former Open Champion! – and two generations of his family before him.

A consultant was appointed in the form of Ace Golf and Leisure to find the members and to promote and advertise the course which was designed in conjunction with Steven Wunke, Managing Director of A.G Leisure and Maxwell Faulkner himself. M. Lowe and Associates were appointed to

do the initial construction work. Once this was completed Peter Sproston, formerly Head Greenkeeper at Chester GC having spent 17 and a half years at the club, was appointed Head Greenkeeper.

"It's what I always wanted, a new challenge," said Peter. "I know things are not how I want them but I know we can only improve on what we have. I was a bit dubious at first about a career change but thought it's now or never."

"The one thing which helped was the fact there were no committees and I wouldn't be dictated to by people who didn't know what they were doing."

"I've been given a free hand and I hope they're pleased with what I've achieved so far."

"I have a good staff behind me and know it can only go on to better things," said Peter.

"So here's looking to a mild winter and a good new year," he added.

FLYING DIVOTS

■ Tim Allard, Head Greenkeeper at Chornwood Forest GC in Leicestershire, got a bit of a shock when he went into work on Sunday morning recently – someone had stolen four pop up sprinklers from the 3rd green.

"It must have taken around half an hour to remove them and whoever it was obviously knew what they were doing. I find it hard to understand who might do such a thing because I can't think of greenkeepers wanting second hand sprinklers," said Tim.

■ Etesia UK Ltd has appointed Colin Plumb as Area Manager for the East of England and Scotland. Colin is well known in the southern part of his new territory having previously worked with Home-lite, SKH and Greenland UK.

■ Clearwater Ltd of Portmarnock has been appointed distributor of Hunter, Hardie, Lasco, CIC and Air-O-Lator products by Sports Ground Irrigation Co.

■ GR Hales, of Penwortham GC has won the Martin Brothers UK Ltd prize draw for £200 worth of DeVere Hotel vouchers.

■ Tyneside Golf Club and its entire greenkeeping staff were in shock when their popular assistant Bill Jones collapsed and died on the 10th green.

Bill (58) who had been was a well known professional cricketer in the Tyneside area was collecting cores after hollow tining when he was struck down.

"He was a super bloke and extremely popular," said Head Greenkeeper Steve Pope.

"His death has really shaken the greenkeeping staff and everyone at the club."

Bill had originally worked for Vickers on Tyneside, then became a sales rep before being made redundant.

"He had taken up golf after he finished playing cricket, getting down to around 7 and I offered him some summer relief work when he couldn't get a job and was around the club. When one of my men left Bill was offered a full time job."

"He was great, you just had to say what you wanted and it would be done," said Steve.

Ransomes pledge support for 'Learning Experience'

The future and continued success of the BTME education programme has been assured thanks to a major agreement signed by BIGGA and equipment giants Ransomes.

The agreement, initially for three years with options which could take it beyond the year 2000, will strengthen the Learning Experience programme at BTME from next January and ensure that its status, as the finest of its type anywhere in Europe, is reaffirmed.

"We are delighted to have finalised the contract and feel that it demonstrates Ransomes commitment to the greenkeeping profession and reinforces our position as the leading supplier of golf equipment in Europe," said Peter Wilson, Group Chief Executive of Ransomes PLC.

"We have always been a supporter of BIGGA and Harrogate and last year, when the show was under threat, were among the first to step forward and say that whatever happened we would

in association with



the Learning Experience



Ransomes' Peter Wilson: BIGGA supporter

continue to attend BTME. We believe in what BIGGA is trying to achieve and this will give us an opportunity to get our message across to BIGGA members.

'Demonstrates Ransomes commitment to the greenkeeping profession'

"We have made an initial three year commitment and look forward, with our options, to extending our association long into the future."

The agreement has been warmly welcomed by Neil Thomas, Executive Director of BIGGA

"I was delighted to receive a recent approach from Peter Wilson to the effect that Ransomes wished to support the BIGGA Education Programme during the week of BTME," said Neil.

"The speed at which the negotiations were completed is indicative of the cementing of BIGGA's relationship with Ransomes since Peter took up office two years ago.

"Considerable opportunities are now opened up for the development of our Learning Experience over the next three years and, as Peter has said, ideally beyond that," said Neil.

"The agreement with Ransomes is another major step forward for the BTME and as such will be widely welcomed by BIGGA's members," he added.

In addition to support for the Learning Experience, Ransomes will also commission a series of independently focussed articles in *Greenkeeper International* on an on-going basis under the Learning Experience banner.

"Having Ransomes input and support on the production of educationally inspired articles will undoubtedly add to the quality of the magazine as a whole," said Editor Scott MacCallum.

Time marches on and it will not be long before the 1996 BTME in January.

Finishing touches are being put in place to make the exhibition the best yet.

In addition, with the terrific news on the Ransomes support - see above - this too can only go from strength to strength.

The momentum achieved by BTME 96 shows no signs of slowing.

The first pre-registration card has arrived - take a bow Philip Haigh, Head Greenkeeper of Crosland Heath GC in Huddersfield - and if you join Philip you too will beat the queues. You know it makes sense! Also please make sure you tick as many of the appropriate boxes on the card as it enables us to use the information to maximise the benefits you will derive from future shows.

With over 158 exhibitors already confirmed the last few spaces are being snapped up so hurry if you want to exhibit or you'll miss out on BTME 96.

Recent companies to book space include Turfland Profes-



Working for the good of the fine turf industry

sional, Roadphone Communications, Lawn-Boy, Fox Contracting (Owmbly), Eagle Promotions and ADAS.

The winners of the BTME competition, to win prizes worth £800, will be announced in the December magazine.

Learning Experience

Applications to attend the Learning Experience are arriving at BIGGA headquarters in every post, from all parts of the UK and from Europe.

"The unsurpassed range and quality of the National Education Conference, Workshops, joint BIGGA/STRI Chairmen of Green/Secretaries Course and BTME Seminars are having an encouraging impact on the numbers requesting further information and submitting applications," said BIGGA Education Officer, Ken Richardson.



The par-three course at the Gleneagles Hotel provided a superb setting for a demonstration of grass and turf machinery presented as part of Scottish Grass Machinery's turf care seminar. More than 200 visitors from golf courses, local authorities and contract organisations attended the two day event.

Seminar's big success

In attracting more than 200 representatives from golf courses and local authorities over two days, the fifth annual turf care seminar organised by Scottish Grass Machinery (SGM) in late September has been judged a resounding success.

The variety and content of the programme and the superb setting offered by the Gleneagles

Hotel combined to attract visitors to the seminars from the length and breadth of Scotland.

Anyone expecting a "hard sell" would have been disappointed. Instead, the event offered the invited guests plenty to think and talk about, with top priority being placed on giving the audience a valuable and informative day out.

Why it's never too late to learn



Education Update

BY KEN RICHARDSON

One of BIGGA's main aims is to encourage its members to gain nationally recognised education and training qualifications and to continue that education and training throughout their careers. Gaining recognised qualifications can improve your knowledge and skills, thereby improving your job performance, enhance your career prospects, help you to cope with change and improve the status of the greenkeeping profession.

For newcomers to the profession, college courses are usually the best option. Colleges offer Scottish and National Vocational courses on a block or day release basis and National Certificate/Diploma course on a full time basis. However, some colleges are now offering distance learning Higher National Certificate courses and the range of course and method of study seems set to diversify even more. This diversification means that all greenkeepers have the opportunity to study for a variety of qualifications. Moreover, the introduction of National/Scottish Vocational Qualifications, the training of industry competent assessors and advisors and the approval by City and Guilds and SCOTVEC of the GTC as an "Approved Centre" means that experienced greenkeepers can now work towards and gain N/SVQs without attending college.

Experienced greenkeepers wishing to use their skills and knowledge to gain an N/SVQ should first register their interest with the GTC. They will then be introduced to an industry assessor, who will have been trained to match the candidates skills and knowledge against the criteria for an N/SVQ. In some cases, a candidates prior learning may match all of the criteria but in other cases, some "top-up" training or further assessment

may be required. "Top-up" training could be in a college, on a golf course or at another suitable site. Once a candidate has reached the required standards, the assessor confirms that he/she is competent and the GTC arranges for the delegate to be awarded the appropriate certificate. BIGGA, as a member of the GTC, has been fully involved in the design and introduction of N/SVQs and, as a major provider of greenkeeper training courses, seminars, workshops and education conferences it is in a unique position to identify and run "top-up" training courses as and when they are required.

BIGGA believes that education and training should be continuous and will continue to arrange education and training courses that meet the needs of its members. Continuing education and training will help all greenkeepers to adapt to change and ensure that the high standards of greenkeeping and, therefore golf courses continues.

If your qualification is out of date or if you do not have a formal greenkeeping qualification then contact the GTC today on 01347 838640. Don't get left behind, it is never too old to learn as training should continue throughout your working life.

ECOLOGICAL MANAGEMENT OF MAMMALS AND BIRDS COURSE

The first Ecological Management of Mammals and Birds Course was held at Walton Heath Golf Course on Monday 23 October 1995. To meet the demand for places, a second course has been arranged at Walton Heath, on Monday 27 November. For further details, or to reserve a place, contact Golf Training, Central Science Laboratory, Tanglely Place, Guildford, GU3 3LQ, on 01483 232581. Further courses are planned.

REGIONAL SUPERVISORY MANAGEMENT COURSES

Since last month's magazine was published, I have had to change the dates of some of the Regional Supervisory Management Courses which are due to be held in February/March next year. The full list of dates and venues is as follows:

Location	Venue	Date
York	Dean Court Hotel	7/8 February
Chester	Gladstone Centre	12/13 February
Birmingham	Westley Hotel	14/15 February
Kettering	Kettering Park Hotel	5/6 February
Killarney	TBD	7/8 March
Dover	County Hotel	5/6 February
Brighton	Old Ship Hotel	7/8 February
Bournemouth	Moat House	19/20 February
Bristol	Thornbury Golf Centre	12/13 February
Plymouth	Moat House	14/15 February

GCSAA Conference and Show, Orlando, February 5-11, 1996

BIGGA's trip of a lifetime!

As in previous years BIGGA is offering you the opportunity to travel with us to the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America's 67th International Golf Course Conference and Show at the Orange County Convention Centre, Orlando, Florida from February 5-11, 1996.

The BIGGA party will assemble at Gatwick Airport on Sunday, February 4 for departure to Orlando at 12.30pm. BIGGA is able to offer accommodation at the Holiday Inn, Gatwick at a cost of £39 per person for any members wishing to stay over the night before departure.

The Clarion Plaza Hotel, chosen by BIGGA to accommodate our party, offers excellent amenities including a heated swimming pool and whirlpool, three in-house restaurants, live entertainment and a night club. The Clarion Plaza has the added convenience of being a co-exhibitor hotel and is based next to the Convention Centre.

The GCSAA Conference and Show takes place between February 5-11 with the trade show on February 9-11. You will have the opportunity to attend educational seminars, programmes and the trade show bringing you up-to-date information on golf course management, technology and the latest trends in turfgrass management.

ITINERARY

Sunday, February 4

All participants will assemble at Gatwick Airport, for the 12.30pm direct flight with Virgin Airlines to Orlando arriving at 16.40 local time. The group will then transfer to the Clarion Plaza Hotel for a nine night stay on a room only basis.

Tuesday, February 13

Transfer to the Orlando International Airport for the direct flight at 19.10 arriving at London Gatwick at 08.15am on Wednesday, February 14.



The trip to Orlando will also give you the chance to see the sights: but there's nothing Mickey Mouse about the GCSAA show - it's the best there is. Picture: Walt Disney Company

PRICES

£530 per person based on twin shares or £710. per person based on single room accommodation.

Plus comprehensive travel insurance for the duration of £55. Included are: Return economy class flights Gatwick to Orlando, UK and US taxes, transfers to and from the airport to the Clarion Plaza Hotel, nine nights accommodation based on room only and US accommodation taxes.

Please note: Registration costs for the Pre Conference Seminars which run from February 5-8 and for the Education Programme which runs from February 8-11 are not included in the package and bookings need to be made direct with the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America. Details are available from BIGGA upon request.

Please forward full payment of £585 or £765 (unless travel insurance is not required), adding £39 if accommodation is required for the night of February 3, to BIGGA, Aldwark Manor, Aldwark, Airedale, York, YO6 2NF to arrive by Friday, November 17 at the latest, together with name, address and contact telephone number.



Scott MacCallum admits responsibility for the worst performance ever by the greenkeepers in the Kubota Challenge

First the good news. It was a magnificent performance, achieved against great odds and proving an ideal showcase for the talents of the Greenkeeper's Kubota Golf Challenge team.

Unfortunately the victory came in not the golf competition, which has been dominated by the greenkeepers in its 13 year history, but in the consolation Drive and Chip competition where, despite handicapped by having to manoeuvre by far the largest piece of machinery through the slalom course, the time of eight minutes 28 seconds was good enough to see off the English Golf Union, the Golf Foundation and the Golf Club Secretaries.

However it was only the secondary event. Our men were actually sent into battle to bring the Kubota Challenge Trophy back to its rightful home.

The Kubota has long been a greenkeepers benefit – eight times we have won the trophy, lending it out to the secretaries on three occasions and the Golf Foundation once last year and never have we failed to win a match.

Did I say "never have we"? I should have said "never had we" because, ignominy upon ignominy, this year we finished last. Bottom of the heap. Fourth. Out of the Medals. Also rans... It's awful however you describe it.

The inquests have already begun. How could the mighty greenkeepers have fallen so far? Have the rest of the world caught up? Was it a freak result? Have our old stars gone past their peak and gone one fight too many?

I, too, have thought about it and, however reluctantly, come up with the probable answer.



**Above: Ian Holoran recovers from his over hit wedge at the 4th
Left: Brian Hurttley receives his gift from Barry Heaney, Chairman of BIGGA**

It must have been my fault. It was my first Kubota Challenge and we'd done well every year

before I had arrived on the scene, coming close on the rare occasions we didn't win. This year we

had even enjoyed their Drive and Chip triumph before I showed up. I must have jinxed us.

Look at the evidence.

Our star man was Iain Macleod, the sweet swinging three handicapper from Tain. I stood at the side of the 1st tee as he skied one down the fairway. I next saw him on the 5th tee and, remarkably, he was two up only for him to carve his tee shot into the trees.

I stayed out of the way and Iain

Sorry guys



recovered to win comfortably.

Thomas Jones from Wales found sand on the long 4th and with me in close attendance he extricated himself only to three putt and lose the hole.

Chris Mardon had played beautifully and won in the semi-final defeat by the Golf Foundation the previous day only for my presence to act as an invitation for a gremlin to enter the workings of his swing.

It must have been me. What else could account for Mark Cutler missing from three feet to close out his match on the 16th, as Barry Heaney and I stood watching, forcing him to down the formidable 18th before winning; Ian Holoran finding the trees at the back of the 4th green after "airmailing" a wedge 140 yards before eventually clinching

the last of our three points; Roger Willars missing the famous 10th green by the widest margin imaginable; Bill Banks finding water at the self same hole, and Alan Gamble succumbing by quite a few holes to an inspired secretary. All happening before my damning gaze.

It couldn't have been Barry's fault, he's enjoyed success in the Kubota in previous years, so it must have been me. I was like a lead weight dragging our guys down when I was anywhere within jinxing distance only for them to battle back, ultimately in vain, when I was out of sight and, more importantly, out of mind.

We lost 4.5-3.5 to the Golf Foundation on the first day and 5-3 to the Golf Club Secretaries in the third and fourth place play-off. The eventual winner, making

their first appearance on the top of the rostrum, were the English Golf Union.

The 13th Kubota Challenge was notable not just for new champions but for the fact that it was the final event presided over by Brian Hurtley, Vice President & Director of Kubota (UK) Ltd, who retires next June. Brian, who is to enjoy a particularly active retirement with some business ventures of his own, was presented with a gift from BIGGA members by Barry Heaney at the end of event dinner, during which he was also the subject for a "This is Your Life" tribute by comedian Mal Rich.

It was an excellent dinner but I wasn't in a mood to enjoy it. The responsibility for our defeat was weighing far too heavily on my shoulders.

The greenkeeping team, from left, Bill Banks, Ian Holoran, Roger Willars, Alan Gamble, Mark Cutler, Iain MacLeod, Chris Mardon, Thomas Jones and non-playing observer Barry Heaney



RESULTS

1. The English Golf Union
2. The Golf Foundation
3. The Golf Club Secretaries
4. The Greenkeepers (Iain MacLeod, Chris Mardon, Ian Holoran, Mark Cutler, Bill Banks, Roger Willars, Alan Gamble, Thomas Jones)



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DRAIN

**Drainage Consultant Barry F Cooper
discusses some of the interesting projects
he is currently involved in and gives some
helpful advice on the subject**

When I was asked to write an article on golf course drainage I had to sit and think very hard on how to condense such a vast subject into approximately 1,000 words. I thought the most sensible approach was to relate the story behind the design of the drainage scheme on two of my current projects which are both very much out of the ordinary when it comes to drainage problems.

The first major project I was involved in this year was the drainage of the new National Golf Centre at Woodhall Spa.

I knew the existing course fairly well because the club are clients of a drainage contracting company of which I am a Director. Having taken many soil samples from the existing course I thought the new project would be very similar and quite straight forward to drain, how wrong I was.

Half of the site was open farmland and the other half was planted with commercial conifers which were ready for harvesting.

I spoke to the outgoing farmer, and he informed me that at least four attempts had been made to drain the open land which was still extremely wet. My heart sank, but at the same time it made me realise that my investigations into this site had got to be even more thorough than usual, and two men with soil augers some 1.2 metres long proceeded to take up to 200 soil samples from all areas of the site, and the findings were remarkable.

The open farmland where previous drainage schemes had failed was found to have approximately 900mm of heavy clay soil overlying sand, and as none of the previous attempts at draining the land had laid pipes at a depth greater than 800mm it was clear to me that deep drains laid in the sand would be required and in fact this part of the contract is now complete. I am just keeping my fingers crossed now until the system has had a fair test.

In the woodland area before the trees were harvested you

would have thought that the whole area was as dry as dust, but once again the men with the soil augers came to my rescue, finding running sand overlying clay in some areas and pockets of very heavy boulder clay overlying sand in others.

After studying the results of the soil samples it was decided to design a system of lateral drains laid at 1.2 metres deep over the whole site at spacings of 15 metres in most areas and 10 metres in others where the running sand was found.

I relate this story to emphasise how important it is to examine the whole site properly rather than make dangerous assumptions.

The site in general is fairly flat and a comprehensive level survey had to be undertaken. This caused a few problems in the woodland and we were restricted to taking a series of levels along all the woodland rides. All pipes being laid on the site are filter wrapped to prevent ingress of sand and because of the amount of water present, even after this summer no pipe is smaller than 80mm diameter. This story also illustrates the folly of laying shallow drains on golf course sites.

The only time I would ever go along with shallow drains is on a land-fill site that has been turned into a golf course.

When assessing the drainage requirements on some golf courses investigations sometimes have to be carried out several hundreds of yards outside the golf course boundary to determine where the best possible outlet should be.

These courses are usually very flat or are links courses affected by tidal conditions I am, at the time of writing, designing a drainage scheme to alleviate problems being experienced on the 13th, 14th and 15th holes at West Lincs Golf Course, where areas of silt are causing problems. The outfall to all three fairways is a 900mm storm water pipe emptying into the Irish Sea.