

Groundsman to 2.8 tonnes for the 70-12/14 model.

Kubota (UK) Ltd launched its new 14 HP petrol ride-on mower.

The new machine, the T1560 – pictured below – features a special operating platform suspension system to support the operator's deck which combined with the high backed cushioned seat maximises operator comfort.

"The new machine is an innovative step forward for both ride-on mower design and operator comfort," said Brian Hurlley, Vice-President Director of Kubota (UK) Ltd.

It was Brian's final Saltex Show as he will be retiring next June.



Toro launched five new machines – four entirely new and one an up-dated version of an existing machine.

The Groundsmaster 3000-D is an out-front rotary which boasts a new design and several new features including a implement-disconnect system which allows the cutting deck to be removed from the power unit within minutes by unlatching a level on both lift arms. With a 35hp Peugeot diesel engine and 12 gallon tank the machine can operate all day on one fill-up.

The Greensmaster 3200-D is the latest model to join the GM 3000 series and claims to have the quietest combustion engine in the industry – an 18hp Perkins diesel. Features include fully floating and steerable cutting units that follow the ground better than anything previously; the rear roller height of cut adjustment; an independent grass box ensures that there is no carrier frame roller influence so height of cut uniformity is ensured and new, easier to empty, grass boxes.

The Reelmaster 2300-D is a



Toro Greensmaster 3200-D

dedicated tees mower totally new in design, engine, drive, cutting units and mainframe. It has a new hydraulic-drive reel system with variable reel speed which enables it to work in all kinds of grass and terrain including wet early morning grass. It also incorporates the new Toro L-I-N-K-S cutting unit suspension system and an adjustable spring counterbalance for enhanced ground contour following with no extra down pressure.

The Reelmaster 6500-D also boasts the L-I-N-K-S system and an ACE (Automated Control Electronics) system which automatically adjusts reel speed to mowing speed and can also be programmed to control mowing speed – maximum mowing and transport speeds are 7.5 and 10mph respectively.

The new version of the existing machine is a four wheel drive version of the Toro utility vehicle which joins the Workman 4000 series.

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Early morning mowing is no problem for this greenkeeper. He knows there'll be no complaints about noise because he's operating a Greensmaster 3200.

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The new cutting system

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The worm TURNS

Counting the number of surface casts on the STRI acidification trial using a frame quadrat

The banning of Chlordane has raised the threat of earthworms causing course closures. The STRI is working on alternative means of combating them. Dr Stephen Baker, Senior Research Officer, reports.

Earthworm control on golf courses has an interesting history. In the 1920s and 1930s earthworm casting was recognised as one of the biggest problems facing golf greenkeepers. Heavy casting brought about problems in wet weather of smeared and slippery fairways and approaches. The profusion of casts made putting surfaces uneven and the expelled soil also formed ideal seedbeds for weed invasion and this contributed to a further reduction in the quality of the playing surface. Indeed it was problems such as this that contributed to the foundation of the Board of Greenkeeping Research (now the Sports Turf Research Institute) in 1929.

Even before the foundation of the Institute there were a number of methods that were recommended for earthworm control. For example the famous Charles Darwin in his book *The Formation of Vegetable Mould Through The Action of Worms* published in 1881 refers to gardeners using lime water to remove earthworms from their lawns.

In the first 30 years of the Institute's history a lot of research effort was devoted to problems of earthworm control. In 1929 the first volume of *The Journal of The Board of Greenkeeping Research* was published and included an article on the use of four materials for earthworm control on golf courses. Methods were described for using perchloride of mercury, mowrah meal (seed residues from an East Indian tree), copper sulphate and mowrah meal plus acetic acid.



Derris dust, which has rotenone as its active ingredient, was also used for earthworm control during this period.

In the 1960s chlordane was introduced and along with materials such as lead arsenate, this gave effective control of earthworm casting for three or four years and sometimes more. However these materials are toxic to many other soil organisms and there were concerns about long term environmental effects because of persistency of these chemicals. Initially lead arsenate for earthworm control was banned and it has been illegal to use chlordane since December 31, 1992.

The wheel has almost turned a full circle and we are rapidly approaching a situation reminiscent of the 1920s and 1930s where the quality of many courses could be substantially affected because of heavy earthworm casting. It has already happened in Germany where the use

of chemical control is even more restricted. After a major tournament there, former Open Champion Tony Jacklin was quoted as saying, "Last year, in Stuttgart, I found a total infestation. It was unbelievable, worm casts everywhere."

EARTHWORM CASTING

There are about 25 different species of earthworm in Britain but only a small proportion of these are responsible for problems of casting. The culprits are primarily the deeper burrowing species that ingest large quantities of mineral soil, rather than near surface dwelling species which feed on material of high organic matter content. The three main casting species are: *Aporrectodea longa*, *Aporrectodea caliginosa* and *Lumbricus terrestris*. However other species have been recorded as producing surface casts, ie. *Aporrectodea rosea*, *Allolobophora chlorotica* and *Lumbricus rubellus*, particu-

larly in compacted soil condition. Compacted soils have fewer large internal pore spaces in which earthworms can cast therefore they are forced to cast more frequently at the surface. This is of course of relevance to sports areas because of continual trampling that they receive.

In natural grassland, densities of 250-500 earthworms per square metre are not uncommon and in these circumstances around 40-50 tonnes of soil per hectare can be brought to the surface by casting. This is equivalent to a layer of three-four mm of soil per year. In Connecticut, USA, Schread estimated that over two tonnes of soil were cast on the surface of a 465m squared golf green.

CULTURAL CONTROL

If chlordane and other persistent worm control chemicals are not available, the first control measure that must be considered is the manipulation of soil condi-

The worm TURNS

tions to ensure that they do not favour heavy earthworm activity. Research on management methods during the 1920s and 1930s indicated that it was possible to modify the soil and turf environment making it less attractive for earthworms. There are two main factors influencing earthworm populations which can be controlled, these being food supply and soil pH. It was shown that the supply of food could be reduced by boxing off mown clippings and using inorganic fertilisers. Observations in the 1930's indicated that heavy dressing of organic fertilisers such as poultry manure, rape or castor meal should be avoided as they were a source of available organic matter. Removing clippings undoubtedly decreases earthworm activity. R.B. Ferro, writing in the 1937 Journal of the Board of Greenkeeping Research, showed that boxing off of clippings on bentgrass turf reduced the rate of casting by 58%. Reduction of thatch by regular aeration and scarification should also further restrict the supply of food.

A reduction in soil pH generally results in a lowering of the earthworm population, as well as encouraging the more desirable bent and fescue grass species. Work by Jefferson given in Figure 1 clearly shows the theoretical response curve of earthworm numbers to soil pH. In particular the important casting species *Apporectodea longa* and *A. caliginosa* known to be intolerant of acid soil conditions.

The use of acidifying fertilisers such as ammonium sulphate or ammonium nitrate will tend to decrease soil pH and hence reduce earthworm activity. Conversely fertilisers such as nitrochalk, sodium nitrate or basic slag induce alkalinity or a neutral reaction and should generally be avoided on sites where excessive earthworm casting is likely to be a problem. Iron sulphate also tends to reduce earthworm casting and in some circumstances sulphur and aluminium sulphate can be used to manipulate soil pH.

Addition of lime will normally

increase earthworm numbers and thus lime-rich top dressing materials should be avoided. The early work by Ferro (1937) showed that rates of casting on plots top dressed with a lime-rich sea sand were almost double that of turf dressed with a lime-free river sand. In general rootzone mixes and top dressing materials should have a calcium carbonate content <0.5% otherwise they can raise pH causing problems with weeds, disease as well as earthworm activity.

RESEARCH TRIALS

Thanks to financial support from the R&A we have already started a number of trials to start examining methods of earthworm control now that the use of chlordane is illegal. Firstly, we are examining methods of chemical control that can still be used. Three chemicals (carbaryl, carbendazim and gamma-HCH plus thiophanate-methyl) are still approved for use in earthworm control. We are evaluating the effectiveness of these chemicals at three sites and in particular examining the required application frequencies.

Secondly, we are examining acidification techniques. As mentioned above, earthworm activity is strongly influenced by the pH of the soil and for example the over zealous use of lime on golf fairways in the past undoubtedly contributed to problems of casting. Certain earthworm species eg. *Dendrobaena octaedra* and *D. rubida* are tolerant of acid conditions but two of the main casting species *Apporectodea longa* and *A. caliginosa* will not tolerate acid conditions. A pH of about 5.0 represents their lowest tolerance and this can be used as a method of cultural control on golf courses. If the pH gets too low it will obviously affect grass growth but a balance with a slightly acid soil which permits the healthy survival of the finer turf grasses but decreases earthworm activity is an advantage. To this extent we are examining the use of sulphur and aluminium sulphate to modify the pH of fairway soils looking at both application rates and application

frequency. For example two applications of sulphur and aluminium sulphate at the highest rates in the trial in autumn 1993 and spring 1994 brought the surface pH down from 5.8 to 4.5 and casting rates from October to December 1994 were typically only 25% of those of untreated plots. However care has to be taken on application rates because of problem of scorch and weakened grass growth so further work is still required on this trial.

A second trial is examining surface acidification by iron sulphate, in particular its application frequency and interaction with carbaryl, carbendazim and gamma-HCH plus thiophanate methyl.

EXPELLANT MATERIALS

In the past expellant materials, eg. Mowrah meal and potassium permanganate were used, being applied to turf and thoroughly watered in. The material acted as an irritant causing the earthworms to rise to the surface where they could be brushed into piles and remove by wheelbarrow. If future legislation on earthworm control becomes even more stringent we may be forced into adopting these time consuming

and undoubtedly messy procedures. We have thus started some preliminary investigations of expellent techniques using potassium permanganate, formaldehyde, mustard and even vindaloo curry powder, but contrary to some press reports, we are still a long way from the stage of recommending a visit to the local Indian take-away as a source of worm control materials!

REMEMBER THE ADVANTAGES OF EARTHWORMS

On areas other than greens, earthworms have many advantages most notably with respect to the development of soil structure, soil fertility and the breakdown of organic matter. If a decision is made to control earthworm activity, careful thought should take place beforehand to ensure that the advantages of reduced casting outweighs the potential disadvantages of structural deterioration and thatch development. Nevertheless heavy rates of casting bring problems to the greenkeeper and golfer alike and it is hoped that this research will lead to more environmentally acceptable methods to reduce the casting problem.

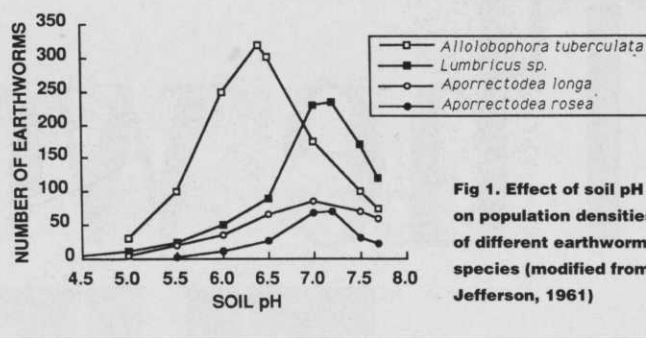
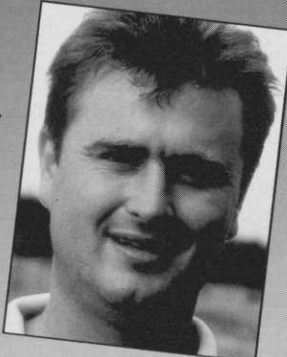


Fig 1. Effect of soil pH on population densities of different earthworm species (modified from Jefferson, 1961)

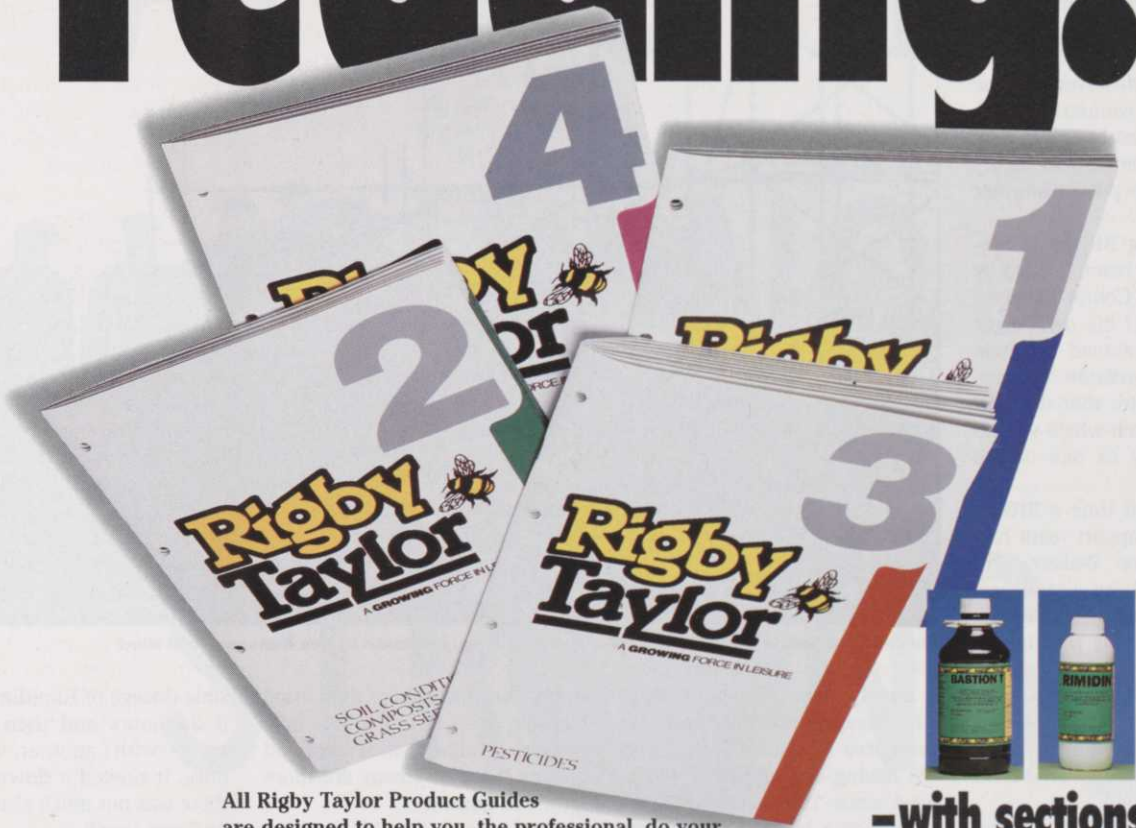
What's the *Best* thing about being a Greenkeeper?

Shaun Richards...

"If you've got a love of the game it's great to be involved working in it. Also seeing the fruits of your labours coming together when competitions are played on your course."



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Scott MacCallum reports from the Walker Cup at Royal Porthcawl on a historic victory and a wonderful BIGGA team.

At the end of the 1995 Walker Cup the scenes of euphoria and joy were so overwhelming they could not be diluted by the rain which had fallen incessantly for the entire second day of the match.

Who could blame the huge crowds which had flocked to the south coast of Wales and the magnificent links of Royal Porthcawl, to witness only the fourth victory by a Great Britain and Ireland team – and the biggest ever winning margin of 14-10 – in the 35 matches which had been played.

Clive Brown's team of 10 good men and true deserved all the adulation for a wonderful effort but there was another team, less well heralded but no less highly regarded, which put in another superb effort.

The 20 strong BIGGA Greenkeeping Support team, headed by Royal Porthcawl Course Manager David Ward and his own eight man team, guaranteed a course fit for such an occasion and was on hand to ensure that the rain didn't ruin a match which will go down in history as one of the finest.

It was the first time a BIGGA Greenkeeping Support team had operated at the Walker Cup although it has been a vital part of The Open Championship since 1986 and such was the impact made it would seem set to become a similarly important element of the biannual amateur match between Great Britain and Ireland and the USA when it is on this side of the pond.

The ultimate triumph of the whole occasion must have felt a million miles away for David, though, when disaster struck the course a month before the start.

Take All Patch on greens



Magnificent team effort



The BIGGA Greenkeeping Support Team, headed by Royal Porthcawl Course Manager David Ward

David, who became Head Greenkeeper in 1990 and was promoted to Course Manager in '93 having been at Royal Porthcawl since 1988, arrived at the course on a Monday morning to discover Take All Patch spreading over his greens like wildfire.

"In the dry spell we were forced into using our bore hole to

water the greens more than usual and the water from the bore hole is more alkaline than is ideal and means that the greens are more prone to disease.

"It was a Catch 22 situation either don't water the greens and have them burn up or water them and risk disease," he said.

We used the maximum permis-

sible dosage of Rimidin once, left it 24 hours and then hit them again with another maximum dose. It slowed it down a bit but there was not much else we could do," said David.

Fortunately the greens were of such quality that the Take All, although doing nothing for their appearance, did not affect their playability.

"They putted well, at around 10 on the stimpmeter, and the R&A and both teams said they were perfectly happy with them," added David.

Ironically just over a week later the greens were beginning to return to normal.

The Walker Cup had seen the culmination of a £200,000 five year programme of intensive work on Royal Porthcawl Golf Club by David and his staff of seven.

Since 1990 all 96 bunkers were revetted, the irrigation system upgraded, the greenkeeping sheds relocated, the 12th and 13th tees re-sited to lengthen the holes while several other existing tees

1 YEARS ON

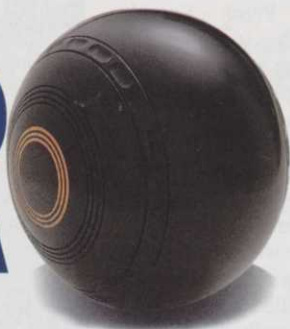


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BIGGA GOLDEN KEY CIRCLE

AD REF 59

FOR A TOP PERFORMANCE, USE THE TOP PERFORMER. ROVRAL GREEN.

Magnificent team effort

have been rebuilt and a new practice range purchased and developed.

"R&A Agronomist David Stansfield said that we had effectively completed a 20 year programme in five years," said David.

In addition to the programmed work the 2nd green had to be rebuilt in '91 after it was lost through flooding in a storm.

Royal Porthcawl is one of the finest links in the country and a worthy site for one of the foremost international golf matches, professional or amateur.

In the Walker Cup programme, Peter Corrigan, enthused about the view from Royal Porthcawl across the bay to Swansea. Peter, a Welsh golf writer who should know about these things, said, "The arrival of the Walker Cup to our treasured course will ensure that thousands will be sharing that view with us – unless it is raining in which case you'll have to take our word for it."

Prophetic words indeed because although the weather on the first day was ideal with sun and a light breeze the second day had latter day Noahs rolling up their sleeves and digging out their tool boxes.

It was then that the BIGGA Greenkeeping Support team showed its true worth. Gathered from clubs in the immediate area – with others from Hereford,



A rare sight: Sun on the opening day

Birmingham and two from America, Ed Walsh, from New Jersey and Peter Cassidy (allowed on the team only if they didn't cheer for the opposition!) – the team was able to adapt to the additional work brought about by the conditions. While conventional weather saw two bunker rakers accompanying each morning foursomes match and one with each of the eight afternoon singles the torrential rain called for squeegy operators to walk with each match and a scout, Paul Rosser,



What's the *Best* thing about being a Greenkeeper?

Bob Lupton...

"I enjoy presenting the course for the members and building it up to a peak for a specific occasion. There is a certain amount of satisfaction seeing the benefit of all the hard work."



to walk ahead of the matches.

In the main the course continued to play well and survived the onslaught from above and the squeegy team was not called into action until the final match of the day to go the distance reached the 18th green and a huge puddle had to be forceably removed to the cheers of the galleries before the approach shots could be played. By that time, however the Cup had been won

and celebrations were well under way.

"I was delighted with the professional way our members worked and I know the work was appreciated by the organisers and especially the players. I also received a visit from Royal Porthcawl's Chairman of Green who asked my to pass on his thanks to the team," said Peter Lacey, the local section secretary who co-ordinated the team.

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BOURNE AMENITY

Around the Green

Keeping in touch with news and comment from the regions

West of Scotland

Winter is coming and everybody will be busy hollow coring, verti draining and topdressing after the summer, in readiness for winter rain. The nights draw in faster and members can start to relax, or so they say. The social events are nearly ready for notification, but two events require special mention.

The AGM is arranged for 14th November and a letter will soon be on its way with time and venue. A good turn out is required for a change, if only to let the committee know what is needed by the membership. So please come along and support your committee.

The second event is the Annual dinner, with a special speaker, comedian Gary Davis. The night should prove a great success with such a well known television comedian entertaining members. Don't miss the night and get your tickets early as only a limited number will be available at the special price of £12.50. The date is 24th November at the Admiral Bar, Glasgow, with a meal included, what great value.

Football, the five-a-side tournament response has been very poor with only five teams entering so far. Another seven teams required for the Round Robin competition. The format would be four sets of three teams playing round robin, then semi finals, and final all in one night, so better get fit lads (remember its only for fun). Entries close at the end of October, with a view to playing some time in November. If you have five members interested, they don't need to be at the same club, then phone 0141 942 5554 at any time and leave a message.

Welcome to some new section members Andrew Wilson, and Alec Glaeham both of Cameron House Hotel, Ross McLeish (Eastwood GC) and Duncan Farrell. A warm welcome is extended and we look forward to seeing you at the various social occasions. Remember and notify me at the afore mentioned number if you have any interesting information.
S Taylor

Mid Anglia

Our annual match against the Midland Section took place on August 3rd at Letchworth GC. After missing out last year, it was nice to renew ties with the Midland team, in what was a very closely contested match, on a very hot day. Our team came out on top 6.5 - 5.5 and we retained the Ashfield Toro Trophy. Thanks to all members who turned out, to Ronan for organising the event, and to Letchworth GC for allowing the event to take place.

Members of our section also had some success in the National Tournament held recently at St Annes Old Links. Robert Pearce, Mark Ellis and Mark Whittle won the Jubilee Cup together for the best team score of 661 over 54 holes. Robert also came 3rd in the Nett. (15-28) handicap competition with a score of 214. Well done lads, it was nice to see some familiar faces in last month's magazine holding trophies up!

Our Autumn Tournament is being held this month on the

26th at Brocket Hall, followed by the section's AGM. Closing date for entries is October 5th. Finally I would like to welcome the following new members to the section; W. Spencer, Briggens House GC; T. Cook, Beds & County GC; J. Winterbottom, Aspley Guise and Woburn Sands GC; S. Nightingale, Pavenham Park GC; M. Oakey, Pavenham Park GC; J. Stanley, Met Police Sports Club; L. Welford, Aylesbury Vale GC and M. Boshier, Kingsway Golf Centre.
Paul Lockett

South West

There have been mixed fortunes for Section members throughout a summer season now firmly registered in the history books as one of the hottest.

On a happier side, it has been a good golfing season for Shaun Richards from Taunton & Pickeridge GC who not only won the Hayter Regional Final at Carmarthen GC by coming first in Category 1 but then won the Hardi Amenity Sprayers Trophy for Best Gross for 54 holes with a score of 222. By the time this report reaches you he will also have competed in the Hayter National Final where hopefully he will have achieved further success.

Events this year however, have not been so fortunate for Derek Eves now formerly of Painswick GC. After 17.5 years as Club Steward including the last seven in a dual role with that of Course Supervisor. Derek was dismissed from the club after failing to agree to what he viewed to be unreasonable contract changes. At a subsequent industrial tribunal where he claimed unfair dismissal, Derek funded his own costs and accepted a financial settlement after half of the first day's hearing. The moral of this unfortunate story has to be - What price loyalty? On behalf of the Section we wish Derek every success in finding future employment.

This year's Regional Seminar will be held at Cannington College on 29th November. Barenbrug is sponsor of the event with speakers including Dr Anne-Marie Brennan, Ecology Advisor to the English Golf Union and John Linneker, Manager of the Royal North Devon GC. Good attendance from members has graced this educational day over previous years and your presence this year will help to continue the trend.

Congratulations to Robin Greaves of Thornbury Golf Centre who is the Section nomination for the Premier Greenkeeper of the Year Competition sponsored by Miracle Professional. Robin now takes part in the Regional Final with the winner participating in the National Final at the end of the year.

As part of their ongoing educational programme, Headquarters and particularly Education Officer Ken Richardson has arranged some Management Courses at Section level this winter. See Education Update on Page 33. A venue and date are yet to be agreed but will be advertised on finalisation.

To conclude, I wish you a successful autumn renovation period to put right what has been an extremely stressful five months for your courses, and yourselves the people

employed to maintain them.
Kevin Green

Surrey

Looking back to August 3rd the McMillan Tankard was played at Sunningdale GC as usual there were maximum entries for this our most popular event. It was encouraging to see a lot of new faces present we hope this will be a regular thing in the remainder of the year's events as your support to such events is critical for their continuing existence as poor response in the past has led to cancellation, so please support all your sections events if possible as an awful lot of hard work and time goes into their organisation so don't make the McMillan Tankard and Sunningdale the only event you enter this year. All the courses we play over the course of the year are equally as good in their own way as well as the company you are likely to be in on the day. Results: 1st - Jim Russell (Lingfield Park GC), 2nd - Kevin Humphreys (Cromham Hurst GC), 3rd - Mark Todd (Lingfield Park GC) all scored 36 points so the results were decided on a count back.

Thanks go to Sunningdale GC and the Artisans Section for accommodating us, to Jack McMillan for supplying the Tankard and to Lawson Bingham for as usual turning out the Course to its usual high standard, and Ron Jobson for doing the cards - thanks to you all.

Use of membership cards, please abide by the courtesy rules on the reverse of your membership cards as this will avoid disappointment upon visiting other clubs for a round of Golf and also shows good manners of which shouldn't spoil things for others in the future.

Tickets are now available for the Surrey Section Dinner Dance on November 10th to be held at Reigate Manor Hotel, tickets are priced at £18.00 and can be purchased from any of your committee members.

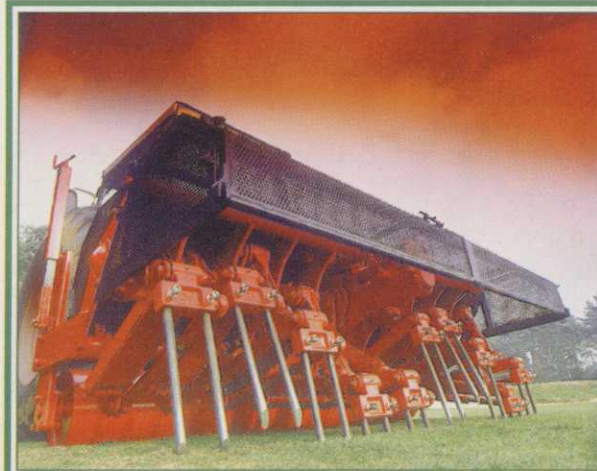
Venues for tournaments for the coming year and 1997 are still required so if you wish to host a BIGGA event please contact Derek Walder on 01737 246088.

The first of our winter lectures has now been organised for November 13th where Gordon Jaaback has agreed to give us a talk at Kingswood G&CC 7-7.30pm.

Forthcoming events include the Autumn Tournament, October 12th Home Park GC 27 Holes Ploughmans/evening meal £22.00, the Turkey Trot December 6th Effingham GC followed by the AGM.
Derek Walder

Berks, Bucks & Oxon

There are two golfing events forthcoming the first is the Autumn Invitation to be played at Hadden Hill near Didcot on the 9th October. This event has proved very popular in the past so I hope to see a large turnout on the day. The second is the Rigby Taylor knockout competition, this is a fourball event which is going to run through the winter months. The first names out of the hat will receive home advantage



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