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**Where to contact BIGGA**

Aldwark Manor, Aldwark, Aine,  
York, North Yorkshire YO6 2NF  
Tel: 01347 838581  
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■ The next edition of  
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# GREENKEEPER

International

**AUGUST 1996**

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BIGGA's Greenkeeping Support Team at The Open Championship  
Picture by Scott MacCallum

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# GREENKEEPER

International

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**EDITORIAL**

Editor: Scott MacCallum

**ADVERTISING**

Sales and Marketing Manager: James McEvoy  
Sales and Marketing Executive: Louise Lunn  
Telephone: 01347 838581  
E-mail: sales@bigga.co.uk

**PRODUCTION**

Design and Production Editor: Tim Moat, telephone 01904 610611  
E-mail: timmoat@headline-comm.co.uk

**PRINTING**

Hi-Tec Print, Unit 7, Universal Crescent, North Anston Trading Estate, North Anston, Sheffield S31 7NZ  
Tel: 01909 568533, fax: 01909 568206

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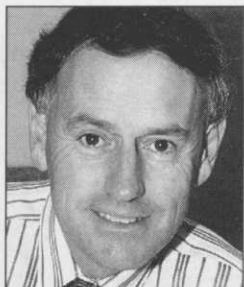
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# It's all down to the Finnish

**W**e had known for some time of the Finnish Greenkeepers Association but formal contacts only began last October during the Swedish Greenkeepers Association Conference and continued with the formation in March this year of the new Federation of European Golf Greenkeepers Associations when Elise Jarvinen, Chair of the FGA, was nominated to the new FEGGA board. Elise was very keen to foster relations between BIGGA and the FGA and so it was in the first week in July that Scott MacCallum and myself ventured forth on our first visit to Finland.

It was not without significance that we went in early July for there are only some two to three months in any year when Finnish greenkeepers can show their golf courses at their best. One can only be impressed with what is happening in greenkeeping in Finland. The country currently has 89 golf courses while some 200 greenkeepers make up membership of the FGA. Essentially the FGA is represented at every golf club – a target which we in BIGGA are still some way from achieving. The FGA is led by a strong and purposeful committee



## BIGGA in focus

BY NEIL THOMAS

of eight members which meets around seven times a year whilst communication between committee members is constant by mobile phone. Indeed we were informed that Finland is the world leader in the use of mobile phones. The lasting impression is that of the close bonding between committee members and greenkeepers throughout the FGA. It is very much an association which has flourished under the principle of self help and its leaders are extremely knowledgeable. There is no formal greenkeeping education system in Finland, although the committee is well advanced in

its plans for the future being currently engaged in productive discussions with one of the horticulture colleges. Meanwhile seminars are arranged and there is much informal exchange of ideas and techniques. I was told that the simple and cost effective solution to a problem was often seen as more appropriate than the complicated and expensive one. Practicality is a feature of the approach by Finnish greenkeepers to their profession and symptomatic of a Finnish trait for efficiency, common sense and sound administration.

It was a pleasure to spend a few hours in the company of Osmo Saarinen, Secretary of the Finnish Golf Union, and to appreciate at first hand the strength of the relationship between the FGU and the FGA. Both organisations are forward looking and keen to move ahead in harmony. This can only augur well for the future of the profession in Finland. If one needed any proof that here is a progressive country it was to be found in a visit to the Vierumaki Golf Course situated within the country's National Sports Institute. The facilities not only for golf but sports in general were

outstanding and we were privileged to enjoy a presentation by Tapani Ilkka, Director of the Institute and President of the Finnish Olympic Team. This facility is supported by other smaller institutes around the country and demonstrated very visibly just how far we lag behind in this country in such provision.

In a four day visit we proceeded on a whistle stop tour of eight golf courses covering many miles in the process. Wherever we went the Head Greenkeeper ensured us a warm welcome and there was real pleasure that we had taken the trouble to visit the country and meet with the FGA. The hand of friendship was extended and as we travelled with our hosts, headed by Elise and supported by Pekka Nieminen, Kristina Laukkanen and Ilkka Kaivosoja we learnt much about Finland and Finnish greenkeeping as well as about the outgoing Finns and their sense of humour. Make no mistake Finnish greenkeeping is well organised, excellently led and going places. It is a land of short summers and long winters. The snow and ice confronts the greenkeeper with his greatest problems closing courses for six to seven months of the year. But this is also the land of the midnight sun when in summer as one moves north golf is available 24 hours a day. Indeed yours truly was spied hitting a ball at 1.10am as a new golf course experience! The extended daylight encourages growth and I was informed that cutting takes place three times as frequently as in this country. That is part of a story which Scott MacCallum will report on in a two part series starting in the next issue of *Greenkeeper International*. It will cover some excellent golf courses and feature Head Greenkeepers who are leading the way forward in Finland. For Scott and myself it was a great experience where we learned much about Finnish greenkeeping and the way in which the FGA is administered. To Elise, Pekka, Kristina and Ilkka and the other friends we made, a big thank you. I suspect a few of you will be making your way to the BTME in Harrogate next January – I hope so.



Time to relax: Round the table with members of the Finnish Greenkeepers Association

## As I see it...

BY DEAN CLEAVER  
BIGGA CHAIRMAN

**T**he highlight of the month for me, and no doubt a great many other people, was The Open Championship at Royal Lytham & St Annes.

I began the week at the Association of Golf Writers dinner in the R&A Tent on the Tuesday night. It was a great honour to be part of the evening and the terrific atmosphere certainly set the tone for the rest of the week.

I must pay tribute to Jimmy MacDonald and his team who set up the course perfectly and considering the weather the course stood up remarkably well. It was also nice to hear the kind comments of the Champion, Tom Lehman, about the course.

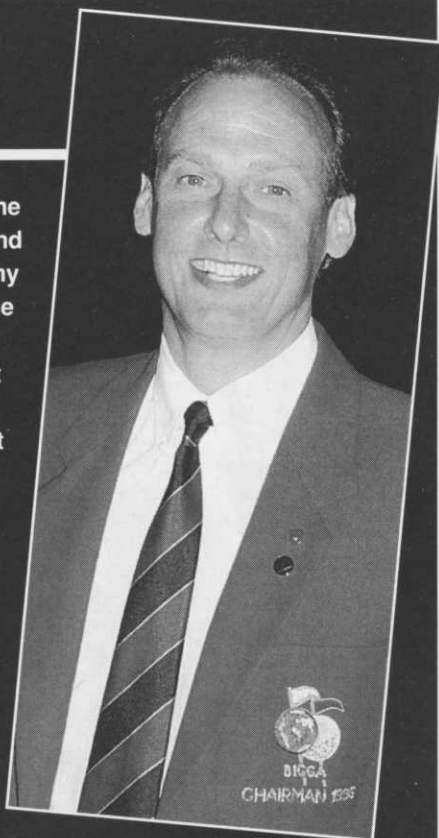
I'd like also to thank all the members of the Greenkeeping Support Team and the commitment shown by all the members throughout the Championship.

The recognition for the work done by the team is growing and it was nice to see Duncan Smith being able to assist the Championship officials in the confusion over a score at the 18th hole and the Chairman of the Championship committee visiting the marquee just to find out how many bunkers had been raked.

The information collected by the team and passed on to the media is also well received and becoming an increasingly valuable service provided by BIGGA.

Outside of The Open I attended a meeting about the possibility of forming a new Essex Section. It was a great success with over 60 greenkeepers attending and the green light being given to go ahead. I'd like to wish them all the best and hope that they become a successful section.

Elsewhere I attended the Hayter Regional Final at Abergele GC. I was lucky enough to play the course twice and found it to be in superb condition. I'm certainly looking forward to the Hayter Final at Fairhaven next month.



# NEWS



## BIGGA President hands out prizes

BIGGA President Viscount Whitelaw paid a visit to the Cumbria Cup sponsored by Course Care, at Penrith for the second successive year.

An excellent day's golf over John Berry's excellently conditioned course and Viscount Whitelaw arrived in time for the meal and presented the prizes.

Cat 0-9. 1. C. Leeming, 42pts,

2. J. Berry, 36pts, 3. B. Howarth, 36pts; Cat 10-18. 1. J. Eilsbeck, 36pts; 2. M. Haines, 35pts, 3. S. MacCallum 34pts; Cat 19-28. 1. B. McCrae, 35 pts, 2. S. Thomson 33pts, 3. M.Doano.

● Ian Holoran is pictured presenting Viscount Whitelaw with a token of the section's appreciation for attending the Cumbria Cup.

## New Essex section

A meeting took place on June 27 in Bury St Edmunds of all interested members with a view to forming a new Essex Section.

The outcome of the meeting, attended by over 50 greenkeeper members, was that the new Section will be formed and the boundaries of the current East Anglia Section redrawn. Both Sections will form part of the South East Region. This will take place following the AGM of the East Anglia Section in December.

During the next few months discussions will take place with the present East Anglia Section Committee and also with those members interested in sitting on the new Essex Section Committee to ensure that all matters are appropriately dealt with prior to the new Section beginning to operate.

Members wishing to sit on either of the committees should make this known through local contacts or to Janet Adamson at Headquarters within the next few months.

Executive Director Neil Thomas commented, "The formation of a new Section is an important stage in the Association's development and the interests of members will be protected. At the end of the exercise it is vital that two viable and forward looking Sections are in place and it is the intention of Headquarters, the East Anglia Section committee and the incoming Essex Section committee to work to this end."

Members are invited to contribute to the current discussions and details will be reported in *Greenkeeper International* in due course.



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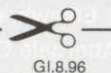
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# Coup for Ransomes as official supplier to PGA European Tour

Ransomes, Europe's leading manufacturer of professional turf-care equipment, has been appointed an Official Supplier to the PGA European Tour.

Under the agreement, Ransomes, Cushman and Ryan grass and turf maintenance machinery becomes a preferred greenkeeping product of the Tour and will be recommended for use at all PGA European Tour venues for the next three years. The agreement encompasses both the European Tour and the European Seniors Tour which comprise this year 50 tournaments including the Open Golf Championship and the Volvo PGA Championship.

As a preferred Tour supplier, Ransomes will make equipment available, as required, to help prepare Tour venues prior to all events. Ransomes will also hold special equipment familiarisation and discussion workshops for Tournament Directors. In addition, the company will co-sponsor an annual PGA European Tour Greenkeepers Conference and be involved in the presentation of conference sessions and educational papers.

"As a world-class supplier of



At the signing of the agreement: from left, Jeremy Hockham, Managing Director, Ransomes; Ken Schofield, Executive Director, PGA European Tour; Peter Wilson, Chief Executive, Ransomes and George O'Grady, Managing Director, PGA European Tour Enterprises

grass and turf machinery, Ransomes is delighted to be extending major support to the world-class series of tournaments comprising the PGA European Tour," commented Ransomes' Chief Executive, Peter Wilson.

"With St Andrews, Gleneagles and Pebble Beach already committed exclusively to Ransomes, this latest award demonstrates once again that we now have the full range of machines, the people and the resolve to compete for

and win business on golf courses the world over."

George O'Grady, Managing Director of PGA European Tour Enterprises, said: "The Tour welcomes this outstanding support from Ransomes.

"Their commitment and service is vital in ensuring that all Tour venues are offered the very best opportunity to improve playing conditions both for our tournaments and indeed their own members."

## HAYTER CHALLENGE

### Counting down to the big finish

The countdown is well underway for the final of the Hayter Challenge at Fairhaven and the inaugural Hayter International Cup which sees competitors and their supporters converging on West Lincs Golf Club from all corners of the globe.

With the Rest of the World tackling the Americas the event promises to have the excitement of the Ryder Cup coupled with the rare opportunity off the course to share greenkeeping knowledge with colleagues who cope with altogether different problems.

We all marvelled at the professionalism of the German soccer team which won the European Championships but it is not just in football that the German's display their flair for preparation. Matthias Ehser, representing the Rest of the World team was spotted at West Lincs GC getting a feel for the conditions.

"I am convinced that the Hayter International will become an established part of the greenkeeping calendar throughout the world and am thoroughly looking forward to both it and the Hayter Challenge Final which is already a popular and respected event on the domestic greenkeeping scene," said Neil Thomas, Executive Director of BIGGA.

Teams for Hayter International Cup: Americas: Samuel T. Williamson, Jim Dusch, Robert Heron, Douglas Meyer, Ricardo de Udaeta, George Renault, Dean Morrison, Paul McGinnis, Alejandro Young, Randy Nichols, Thom Charters, Gary Grigg.

Rest of the World: Cosme Bergareche, Fredrik Goa, Andreas Kauler, Derek McJannet, Ignacio Soto Alarcon, Peter Schumacher, Peter Frewin, Paul Bevan, Michael Dohlon, Ian Buckley, Matthias Ehser, Alexander Reid, Brian Mulholland.



Barenbrug has always maintained that staff should work closely together, to ensure a high quality service. Well, two members of staff have taken things a good deal further.

Andy Sadler, Production Manager, recently married Caroline (nee Townsend), Barenbrug's Sales Office Manager, before proudly carrying her over the threshold – of the Barenbrug warehouse! At least the happy couple begin their marriage with their feet on the grass!

Picture shows Andy and Caroline at Barenbrug.

## Toro links up with Disney for major sports complex

The Toro Company and Walt Disney World Sports have formed a corporate alliance for facilities maintenance and presentation at the Walt Disney World International Sports Complex, due to open in the USA next May.

The multi-million pound international sports complex will accommodate festival-type events, more than 30 different sports as well as professional-calibre training and competitions. It will serve as the headquarters for sporting events taking place throughout the Walt Disney World Resort near Orlando.

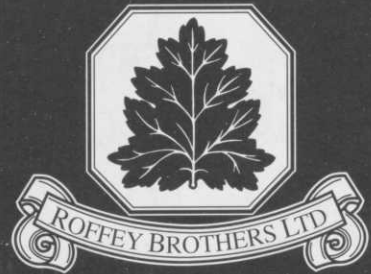
Toro will provide maintenance equipment and computerised irrigation systems for the 80 acres of turf throughout the sports complex. The environmentally-friendly "fertigation" system developed by Toro – feeding daily doses of liquid nutrients to the

grass through irrigation systems – will also be used.

In addition, Toro will present and name the four and half acre "town green" designed for ceremonies, celebrations and other public events in the heart of the 200 acre complex.

The company already supplies all landscaping equipment to Disneyland, Paris, and provides turf maintenance equipment to top sporting sites such as the Valderama venue for the 1997 Ryder Cup and Wimbledon. Toro has been represented in every major country in Europe since the mid 1930s.

Kendrick P Melrose, chairman and chief executive of Toro, said, "We are thrilled to be joining forces with Disney on what we believe will be the premier championship sports destination in the world for years to come."



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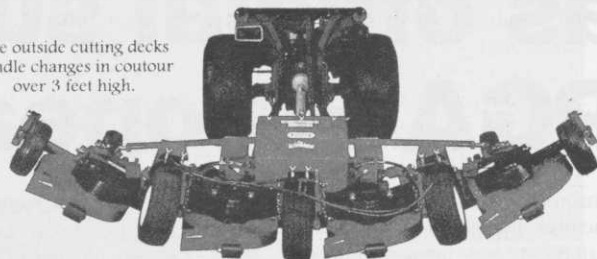
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## Praise for greenkeeper from highest source

Marriott Forest of Arden Course Manager Ray Hunt received some praise from no less a source than Europe's number one Colin Montgomerie during the Alamo English Open.

"We were here in March and since then I think he (Ray Hunt) has done a very good job," said Monty during a press conference at the tournament he came close to winning but which eventually

went to Australian Robert Allenby. Prior to the tournament Ray was asked to produce a course with a US Open flavour to it as it was the final European event before several of the field flew to Oakland Hills for the US Open - see April *Greenkeeper International*.

"The course itself, from a definition point of view, looks fabulous and plays like a tournament

course. It is tough, as tough a layout as we will find in Europe," explained Monty.

"I spoke with the Course Manager with suggestions to see how we could toughen it up and it's certainly as tough as I would like to see it. This has set a bit of a standard this week and hopefully other courses and tournament promoters can see that the players believe in this type of layout."



## Nigel is wired for sound

Nigel Potter, Head Greenkeeper at Meltham GC was the winner of the Sony portable CD player offered in a draw among respondents to the OPE golf machinery survey.

Our picture shows Nigel receiving the machine from Graham Dale, Chairman of the OPE Council.

The OPE Council is part of the AEA and covers all Outdoor Power and Equipment products, including those sold into land amenity, local authority and domestic markets as well as to golf courses. The OPE Council has over 80 member companies.

The golf machinery survey has been undertaken on behalf of OPE members supplying the golf market and aims at providing an indication of the total number of machines owned by golf courses and the age distribution of these.

Graham Dale commented, "We were very encouraged to receive replies to our survey from 600 courses and we hope that we can use the results to provide an ever improved service to this sector. The draw we offered was a small thank you for all those greenkeepers who helped us and we hope that Nigel will get many hours of pleasure from the CD unit."

# Root zones in seminar spotlight

Quality, consistency and availability were the main themes of a seminar on root zones held by Hepworth Minerals and Chemicals Ltd., Pro-Sport Product Group in June. Senior greenkeepers and groundsman from many parts of the country plus distributors' representatives attended the meeting at Mere Golf and Country Club, Knutsford.

George Sheils, consultant agronomist to the PGA European Tour discussed soil testing and the formulation of root zones. John Souter, who lists Manchester United Football Club among his clients gave case histories of problem solving on high profile sports pitches. Both speakers paid special attention to the problems raised by the increasingly high rate of usage of sports turf of all types whether golf course or sports pitch. They stressed the need for proper evaluation of the soil and sub-soil and the correct build up to the final root zone which alone can lay the foundation for a grassed surface which will withstand the demands of all the year round usage.

John Souter showed his simple but effective glass tube method of demonstrating to clients the

drainage properties of various turf construction materials. "It's simple," said John, "But when you are showing greens committees or grounds committees who are not trained greenkeepers or groundsman, what the problem is and what you are trying to achieve, a simple demonstration is always better than a 10 or 20 page report."

Pro-Sport Product Group Sales Manager, Tony Jacques, gave a summary of the various root zones, top dressings and sports sands under the Pro-Sport brand. He introduced the new Pro-Sport Green divot mix and was able to demonstrate the effectiveness of the product when many of the delegates played golf on the immaculate Mere course. This has been one of the courses where the product has been successfully tested.

The par 3 holes where using an iron from the tee is most likely to result in a divot being taken all have Pro-Sport Green divot mix boxes on the tees. Using the product greatly improves the look of the tee while grass is growing back. The Mere greenkeeper mixes seed with the green divot mix to speed up the repair.

## New marketing job for Les

Bob Andrews Ltd has appointed Les Cork as Marketing Manager, all products. Les has been working with Goblin McCulloch for the past five years as Area Sales Man-

ager and has had valuable previous experience with Sachs Dolmar (Area Manager) B.T.R., Markt (UK) Ltd and Solo Power Equipment Ltd.

## FLYING DIVOTS

■ Tom Brooks, Golf Course Superintendent at the K Club in Kildare, is leaving at the end of the year. Tom, a representative of the Arnold Palmer Golf Management Company, has been in charge of the course and grounds since 1992 during which time the entire course has been drained to the extent that it is now playable all year round.

Having put the K Club on a firm course management programme, it hosted the '95 Smurfit European Open and will do so again next month. Tom is returning to the USA to further his career with the Arnold Palmer Golf Management Company.

■ D&E Turf has announced the appointment of Colin Graham, pictured left, as Sales Manager. Colin was previously territory manager for Lely UK.



"Colin's wealth of experience will give the customer the dedicated sales and service they require," said Managing Director David Stephenson.

■ Co-sponsored by RE Rushbrook & Co, SISIS, Levington and Rhône Poulenc, the recent golf day at Brett Vale Golf Club, Suffolk was attended by members of BIGGA East Anglian section. The competition was a Stableford and was won by Richard Hickford, Newton Green Golf Club.

■ Sovereign Turf Ltd Sales Manager Steve Williams has moved office. He can now be found at Meadow View, Norwich Rd, Norwich, NR5 0LA. Tel/Fax 01603 746229.

■ Sherwood Forest Assistant Derek McJannet performed heroics on his way to victory in the Nottinghamshire County Championship.

Scotsman Derek was 60 feet away from the hole on the final hole at Coxmoor needing two putts to force a play-off for the title.

Just like Vicente Fernandez in the Murphy's English Open at The Belfry a few years ago who holed a putt the length of the final green Derek didn't risk a play-off however and holed the monster putt to snatch the title.



# Huxleys celebrate 50 years progress

More than 100 visitors representing golf clubs, local authorities, contract firms, schools, sports clubs, public and private parks, estates and gardens helped Huxleys celebrate its 50th Anniversary at Alresford Golf Club in June.

The day began with Managing Director, Paul Huxley, introducing his father, Edward, who founded the business in 1946. Paul went on to thank the company's many customers for their support over the years, pointing out that a number of those present had been associated with the firm for a quarter of a century or more.

"That in itself speaks volumes of the confidence and trust built up over the years between Huxleys and its customers," commented Paul Huxley. "Still wholly family-owned, the business was founded on the twin principles of straight dealing and good service, principles which hold true to this day."

He pointed out that Huxleys is one of very few companies within the turf machinery industry which has its own direct retail operation offering sales, service, parts support and local hire of the machines it manufactures and distributes throughout Britain and overseas. These facilities are available to professional customers located within a reasonable distance of Huxleys' New Alresford head office and its Scottish branch at Broxburn, West Lothian.

"Our retail operation helps provide a close understanding of cus-



In 1946 Huxleys sold the Allen Motor Scythe (top). Founder Ted Huxley, above, is pictured on the new all-hydraulic Teestar

tractors' needs while ensuring a fast and positive response to calls for assistance, service or repair," Paul Huxley explained. "Most of the machines developed and built by Huxleys over the years have benefited from the suggestions, comments and ideas of end users."

Following Paul Huxley's welcome and introductions came

product demonstrations and a hands-on opportunity to assess individual machines, followed by a golf competition in the afternoon. Ever popular, the golf attracted 80 entrants playing four ball matches around the attractive and immaculately-prepared Alresford course.

During the morning machinery demonstrations, Huxleys highlighted a number of its latest products. These included the quiet and exceptionally stable Teestar tees and surrounds mower, the remarkable Soil Reliever deep aerator and the Grainskeeper greens grooming brush, now suitable for use behind compact tractors and turf vehicles as well as fitting in place of the cutting units on most ride-on golf greens mowers.

Also demonstrated was the latest Turfblazer 1280 rotary mower equipped with 126in (3.2m) wide cutting deck, 61hp turbocharged diesel engine and four wheel drive option. This high performance machine features individually folded wing cutting units, enhancing work in confined areas and transport between different sites. Maximum transport width is just 70in (1.7m).

For those not playing golf, guided tours of Huxleys' manufacturing facility gave an insight into the teamwork involved in designing, developing, producing, demonstrating, supplying and supporting the wide range of professional grass and turf machinery carrying the Huxley name.

## Mike hits his quarter century

A quarter of a century of loyal service has been reached by one of the South West and South Wales Region's most respected greenkeepers.

Mike Pike of Elfordleigh Hotel, Golf & Country Club joined the club in 1971 when he was only 22 years old. Since then Mike has nurtured and looked after Elfordleigh's popular course and has turned it into one of the very best kept in the region.

After 25 years of service Mike has some very firm ideas about how a golf course should be run: "The secret of a good golf course is allowing the Greenkeeper to run his own course. I've always had this freedom at Elfordleigh which is probably why I'm still here and why I'll be hopefully be here for another 25 years."

"The feedback I get from members and visitors who play the course is that they most appreciate a firm and true putting service and I've always had very good remarks made about mine which makes me and hopefully the members very proud."

## Firm bought out

AM Russell, the 114 year old Edinburgh based Toro dealer, has been the subject of a successful management buy out led by new Managing Director Brian Goudie and Financial Director Joe Zawinski. The company which employs 33 people is the largest supplier of Toro equipment in Europe and has an annual turnover of £4 million.

## Beware of those rays...

A reminder to outdoor workers – that they should be aware of the health dangers from excessive exposure of the skin to the sun – comes from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

Mindful of last year's heat-wave, a statement from the HSE points out that undue exposure of the skin to the sun should be avoided, particularly during the three or four hours around the middle of the day, and especially for those people who are more sensitive to the sun than others.

Senior HSE health policy official Mike Shepherd said: "Too much exposure of the skin to

sunlight can be damaging. It can prematurely age the skin, leaving it wrinkled and leathery, and increase the risk of developing skin cancer in later life. However, these adverse effects can be almost totally avoided by following the guidance contained in HSE's free leaflet, "Keep Your Top On" which includes simple advice on how to recognise skin types most at risk.

"It is important for outdoor workers to realise the possible dangers from the sun and to take sensible precautions to protect their health. These include shading the skin from direct

sunlight by wearing a long-sleeved top and also a wide-brimmed hat – the latter will be very effective in helping to shade the face, head and the back of the neck."

The leaflet supports HSE's current "Good Health is Good Business" publicity campaign, which aims to reduce the number of people who suffer ill health caused or made worse by work.

Copies of the leaflet can be obtained free from HSE Books PO Box 1999, Sudbury, Suffolk, CO10 6FS. Tel: 01787 881165 Fax: 01787 313995.

## THE BIGGEST MISTAKE I'VE EVER MADE AND WOULD ADMIT TO IS:



"Asking advice from Ronnie Bunting, who's just over the hill from me at Kilmalcolm"  
Gordon Kerr, Glendoach