

Very Qualified!



help improve confidence and self-esteem. All GTC assessors are trained to accommodate any candidate with special assessment or training needs.

5. Do BIGGA courses and training aids meet the requirements of NVQs?

Ken: All BIGGA courses, books and training videos are linked to the GTC Training Manual and, therefore vocational qualifications. Any course of instruction can provide only the knowledge and principles of doing a job. Competence needs to be proved, to an assessor, before an award can be made

6. What is the cost to register and where can I register?

David: If the candidate is new to the profession it would be advisable to allow the person to attend a GTC approved college for the knowledge and principles of greenkeeping but also ensuring most of the assessments are carried out in the workplace. These candidates will register at the college and the fees for City & Guilds/Scotvec and the training will be all inclusive.

Alternatively you can now register through the GTC Headquarters at Aldwark Manor, York. On average the cost per level of N/SVQ is £70 but please contact the GTC for the charges as they vary between City & Guilds and Scotvec and from Level to Level.

7. Are there grants available to study NVQs?

Ken: Some concessions are available for people who are not in paid work and anyone paying their own fees can claim tax relief on the full amount paid. Modern Apprentices have their training paid for, by the GTC but for greenkeepers in work, it should be their employers, ie the golf club, who pay for any training and or assessment.

8. Who are the assessors?

David: The role of the assessor is to make sure the person doing the N/SVQ is competent and carrying out the task to the national standard. Who better then to assess greenkeeping skills than competent greenkeepers?

As with greenkeepers there are also national standards for assessing and all industry assessors have to be trained to achieve the necessary qualifications (D32/D33).

To date the GTC has funded and now are training Course Managers/Head Greenkeepers and in some cases, Deputies, to become assessors.

If you have a candidate on the N/SVQ scheme or wish to enrol candidates and you are to be their workplace assessor contact the GTC.

By the end of March '97 the GTC will have trained over 400 greenkeepers to be assessors.

9. Why did the previous City and Guilds system change?

Ken: The old City and Guilds qualifications were theory and examination based. Candidates were not assessed, doing the job. Very few workers, in Britain, were given the chance to attend college

and gain a qualification and the numbers of qualified workers in Britain was one of the lowest in Europe. Vocational qualifications were introduced in the hope of remedying this by encouraging all workers in all professions to work towards a formal qualification which would indicate what they could do and what they must know in order to do their job.

10. Do greenkeepers have to go to college at any stage?

Ken: Not all of them. As I have already said, for young greenkeepers just entering the profession, college is the best route, however, more experienced greenkeepers can gain a vocational qualification without ever attending college whereas others may need to attend top-up training at a college or other training centre. The latest directory of colleges including all GTC Approved Colleges appears on Pages 26-27 of *Greenkeeper International*.

● Next month a comprehensive list of N/SVQ Advisers and Assessors will be included and David and Ken will be looking in more detail at the new Modern Apprenticeship.

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The continuous

Although golf course turf will benefit greatly from any traffic management measures taken during the wetter months of the year, regular aeration will still be needed to keep the surface and subsoil in good condition.

Those who aerate simply because "we always do it as this time of the year", risk incurring the wrath of the golfers who increasingly are demanding a good reason for disruption to play.

To maintain both good relations and playing conditions, aeration should be carried out for two principal reasons. First, to prevent a problem occurring in the first place, otherwise known as preventive maintenance. And second, to treat (or cure) turf compaction which, for one reason or another, has built up over time or simply cannot be avoided.

For obvious reasons, the more disruptive treatments should not be undertaken in the middle of the summer, if at all possible. Appropriately, such operations



tend to be the "cures" rather than the preventive measures, and are best left to the spring or autumn months when the soil is better able to respond to the work being carried out.

Fortunately, the less disruptive operations such as spiking or slitting are those which are able to benefit the turf during the main playing season, helping prevent a problem occurring in the first place.

"When thinking about aeration, greenkeepers must focus on two important areas," points out Neil



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battle to maintain fine turf



Solid tining has a similar aerating effect to slitting but the round hole holds its shape better in dry weather

Squires, agronomist with the Sports Turf Research Institute, Bingley." One is to keep the soil profile as open as possible to encourage the downward movement of air, water and nutrients to the root zone. The other is to prevent the top surface becoming

too hard or too soft, as either condition can lead rapidly to soil compaction, poor drainage, turf wear or root growth problems."

A wide range of aeration techniques and tools are now available to help the turf professional achieve both these objectives with

TACKLING COMPACTION



minimal disruption to those playing golf.

Although slitting has probably the least effect on compaction, the action does open up the surface, allowing air and moisture to get into the turf and down to the roots with very little disturbance. Particular parts of the course which will benefit are golf greens and tees, the choice of slitter coming down to either a triangular or a knife-type blade, the first-mentioned producing a greater opening at the surface.

Greenkeepers should, however, avoid over-aeration which, through the repeated treading of

tyres and severing of root systems, can create more problems than the treatment actually prevents. Care must be taken also in drying weather to avoid the slit opening up, demanding urgent remedial treatment on the finer turf areas.

If in any doubt about the consequences of blade or knife slitting, use a solid tine instead. This has a very similar aerating effect and is considered by many more appropriate for treatment of summer golf greens. The reason is that a circular hole has far greater strength than an elongated slit and will hold its shape and size



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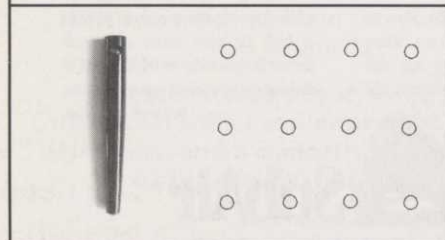
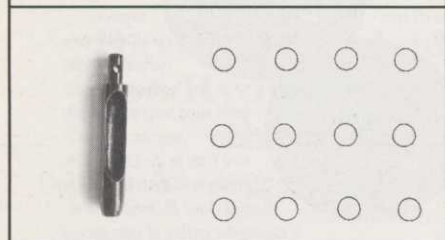
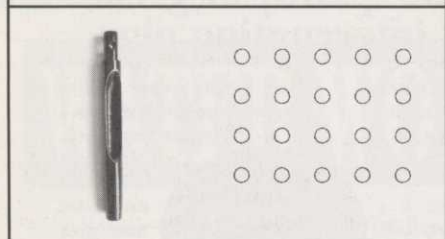
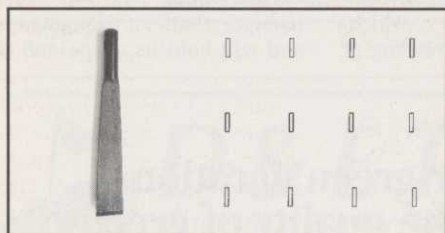


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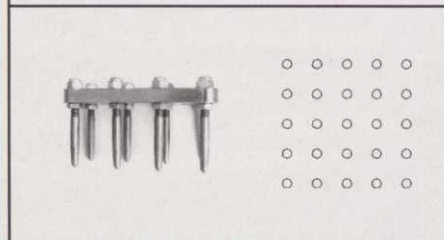
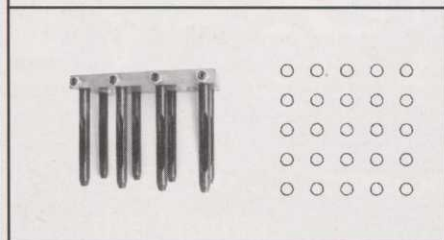
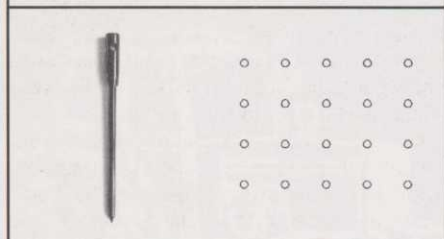
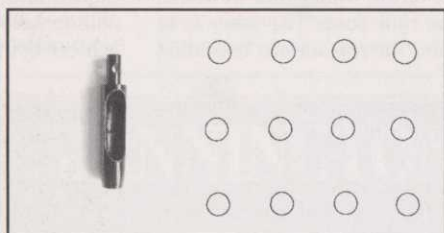
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better if the ground does dry out.

Hollow coring is probably the cause of more complaints from golfers than any other course maintenance work. It is important, therefore, that the non-professional is kept informed of why it is being carried out at a particular time of the year.

The treatment is normally combined with top dressing, the hollow coring action removing poor soil to be replaced with a fresh, clean, friable dressing. Apart from removing compacted soil, hollow coring helps combat thatch, improving drainage and root growth by allowing the surface layers to "breathe". Hollow coring followed by top dressing and brushing or matting-in is best carried out in the spring or early autumn when the grass is growing, helping the dressing work its way into the surface.

Choice of hollow-coring implement lies between the trailed revolving drum and the powered punch-action corer. While the first-mentioned is less complicated and less expensive to buy, the punch-action machine does penetrate the soil cleanly with reduced surface disturbance. Those who plan to hollow core once or twice a year could consider hiring in a high output, purpose-built machine to do the job. A core collector will also make light work of picking up and removing the cores littering the turf, restoring the surface to play with minimal delay.

Of all the specialist aeration machines introduced in recent years, those which mimic the original hand-forking technique



Hollow coring - an essential job which, nonetheless, prompts considerable criticism from golfers

on a golf green are regarded extremely highly by Neil Squires. "The Verti-Drain is perhaps the best known although there are others which follow similar working principals," he commented. "The action of the tines entering the ground then kicking before removal undoubtedly is of great

help in treating sub-surface compaction."

Mr Squires stressed that soil conditions are most important if full benefit is to be achieved. The surface should allow easy tine entry while the sub-soil must be sufficiently dry to crack and fissure. This makes the technique

ideally suited to late summer or early autumn on medium to heavy land while lighter and sandy soils can often be treated successfully through the winter.

Other specialist machines which work well on drier soils and cause minimal surface disturbance include those with vibrating tines or blades and those which inject water under pressure to depth, displacing soil to open up cracks and fissures.

Although pointing out that the use of water can be helpful also in treating localised dry spots, Mr Squires expressed some concern about the soil displaced by the high pressure jet. "It has to go somewhere, either downwards or sideways and this, in time, could lead to deeper-seated compaction, requiring supplementary treatments," he commented.

For courses suffering from deep, widespread compaction, the traditional answer has been disruptive soil-loosening action by subsoiler or major earthworks to eliminate the cause, with new drainage systems installed to help disperse excessive surface water. However, surface compaction, if left untreated, will soon spread and hinder the downward movement of water to even the most modern of drainage schemes.

On fairways, slit or vibrating aerators and verti-drain type machines will keep both the top and sub-surface open to allow the unrestricted passage of water, air and nutrients. For more localised, deep-seated problems, compressed air is increasingly proving a sound solution to shattering compaction at depths down to 600mm.



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Able to inject air under pressure via one or more long hollow probes, such machines are suitable for use on all parts of the course and are now available increasingly within hire fleets. Because such implements can cause considerable surface heave, Mr Squires advises their use on greens in late autumn, giving the turf plenty of time to recover before the main playing season.

"The problem today is that the main playing season has become far harder to define," concluded Mr Squires. "Golf is no longer a fine weather sport and more and more players and machines are treading the turf, giving it less time to recover and making it more susceptible to compaction.

"The answer which will have to be accepted both by golfers and maintenance staff is more aeration treatments throughout the year. The weapons are available to fight the battle against com-



Collecting hollow cores efficiently will help minimise course disruption and reduce pressure on greenstaff

paction but, due to the growing popularity of golf and the vagaries of the weather, it is a battle which I can never envisage being won."

● Many thanks to Neil Squires of the STRI for assistance in the preparation of this article. The STRI is based at Bingley, West Yorkshire BD16 1AU. Telephone: 01274 565131.

Richard Campey

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Pattisson's Mike Hinch, left and BIGGA's Neil Thomas at the draw

Lucky 100 are selected

The 100 lucky recipients of the £100 education discounts to BTME '97 courtesy of the Pattisson's 100/100 Club were picked by Mike Hinch, Joint Managing Director of Pattisson's, in the company of BIGGA Executive Director Neil Thomas.

The Club was devised to celebrate Pattisson's 100th Anniversary and clubs were invited to enter the free draw to receive a £100 discount to education seminars at next year's BTME.

"We are absolutely delighted with the response to the club," said Mike. "We had golf clubs ringing us up and asking how they could be involved and it

really caught the imagination." A total of 655 clubs entered the draw and the 100 clubs selected, listed below, were widely spread with Lismore GC in Northern Ireland the first out of the "hat".

"The support of our Golden Key sponsors like Pattissons is welcome and extremely generous and we feel privileged to have been included in the company's 100th anniversary celebrations," said Neil.

"We hope to see the 100 winners at Harrogate next year and urge them to retain the letters sent to the clubs to qualify them for a further promotion to be announced later this year," said Mike.

THE PATTISSON'S 100/100 CLUB MEMBERS

Wheatley GC	Whitchurch GC	Newtonmore GC
Bradford GC	Lydney GC	East Sussex National GC
West Middlesex GC	Epsom GC	Burnley GC
Broadstone GC	Bushey Golf & Country Club	Royal St Georges GC
Llandudno GC	Verulam GC	Dulwich & Sydenham Hill GC
Withington GC	Neath GC	Enfield GC
Cams Hall GC	Ashton Under Lyne GC	Branshaw GC
Helensburgh GC	Corinthian GC	Thirsk & Northallerton GC
Shrigley Hall GC	Pachesham GC	West Sussex GC
Salisbury & South Wilts GC	Swinton Park GC	Liphook GC
Rugby GC	Billingham GC	Chippenham GC
Canterbury GC	Ipswich GC	Stonyhurst Park GC
Lewes GC	Merlin GC	Callan GC
Colchester GC	Sapey GC	Prestwich GC
Dumbarton GC	Farnham GC	Kirby Muxloe GC
Prestwick St Nicholas GC	Redbourn GC	Bromborough Golf Club
Sonning GC	Shirehampton Park GC	Winwhistle GC
Upton By Chester GC	Carden Park GC	Worlebury GC
Knole Park GC	Kilmarnock GC	Wakefield GC
Newcastle Under Lyme GC	Stanmore GC	Elmhurst GC
Carmarthen GC	Kenilworth GC	Hale GC
Dufftown GC	West Lancashire GC	Harpden GC
Wenvoe Castle GC	Pannal GC	Glamorganshire GC
East Devon GC	Bakewell GC	Caldwell GC
Leek GC	Brough GC	Coxmoor GC
Huddersfield GC	Nottingham City GC	Lanhydrock GC
Stoke Rochford GC	Royston GC	Cochrane Castle GC
Greatham Valley GC	Hamptworth G&CC	Crieff GC
Rowlands Castle GC	Burghill Valley GC	Thorndon Park GC
Pitdown GC	Filford GC	Upminster GC
Kingsknowe GC	Bridgnorth GC	Woburn Golf & Country Club
Muthill GC	Lochmaben GC	Lismore GC
Stand GC	Wetherby GC	
Backworth GC	Mountain Ash GC	



Education Update

BY KEN RICHARDSON

Deadline nears for supervisory courses

The deadline for applications to attend this year's Aldwark Manor Supervisory Management Courses is fast approaching. Full details of these five residential courses appeared in the April issue of *Greenkeeper International*. They were very highly rated by past delegates drawing comments like 'Far better than expected' and 'I never realised what good value these courses were'. Details are also given below

Aldwark Manor Supervisory Management Courses: Level 3 N/SVQ

Managing People Module 1 October 7 - 11

This first unit of people management includes:

Computing for Greenkeepers, time management, team building, motivation, delegation, leadership.

Managing People Module 2 October 14 - 18

This second unit of people management includes:

Listening and Questioning skills, appraisal, assertive communication, constructive feedback, grievance and discipline, computing for greenkeepers.

Managing Operations and Resources October 21-25

This unit deals with:

Resource planning, estimates, budgets, projects, quality care, competency based qualifications, portfolio development and computing for greenkeepers.

Managing Information October 28-November 1

This unit deals with:

Memos and letters, report writing, managing meetings, communication skills, presentation skills, computing for greenkeepers

Aldwark Manor Management Module: Level 4

Managing Recruitment and Selection, Managing Finance & Management of Health & Safety November 4-8

This level 4 unit is for delegates who have attended at three level

3 units in the past and includes:

Recruitment and selection methods, the Law, Equal opportunities, discrimination, interview techniques, controlling budgets, expense reports, re-forecasting, cash flow forecasting, use of spreadsheets, computing for finance, Health and Safety Policy, problem areas, managing safely

The cost of each course, which we have managed to keep unchanged for three consecutive years, including, 4 breakfasts, 5 lunches 4 dinners and 4 nights accommodation plus all tuition fees is £426 + VAT for BIGGA members (499.38) or £490 + VAT for non-members. Each delegate and employer receive a certificate of attendance.

Applications for a place on these courses must arrive at BIGGA HQ by 31 July 1996.

Remember that these courses are not just for Course Managers/Head Greenkeepers but also to prepare the managers of tomorrow.

TORO/Lely/PGA European Tour Student of the Year Competition 1996

The closing date for entries to this year's competition was 31 May 1996. However, any college still wishing to nominate students can do so if applications are received by 28 June 1996.

MY AMBITION IS...



"To become a Head Greenkeeper at a golf course in Spain"
Simon Walley, Sandy Lodge GC



Hold on to your hats!

Seacroft, venue for this year's National Tournament sponsored by Miracle Professional, is a magnificent links - but boy is it windy.

I've always known the east side of the country was cold. I was brought up there and can still remember climbing into my thermal vest in June.

I wasn't too surprised then when Richard Hardie, Head Greenkeeper at Seacroft GC, suggested I might need a thicker jacket as we prepared to look over the course despite it being the middle of May.

Confident in my ability to embrace the chill like a long lost childhood friend I said I'd be fine and was content merely to "zip up". Just as well I did because had I left my jacket flapping open I'm convinced I'd have taken off and finished up in some dark corner of Lincolnshire.

Seacroft is a windy golf course. It is a kite flier's paradise. Weather vanes have been known to seek shelter. It could double up as a wind tunnel. Wind socks are so full young children think it's permanently Christmas. If flags hang limp it's only because the flagpoles are horizontal... Get the picture? Seacroft is a breezy place.

We walked most of the way down the 1st hole known as "The Tree" because of the magnificent "marker" to the 1st green which is the only tree on the course, when Richard said



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- ◆ Venue: The Seacroft Golf Club August 5th-7th
- ◆ Closing date for entries Friday July 5 - forms available from BIGGA Headquarters.
- ◆ Accommodation - Skegness Tourist Board Tel: 01754 764821
- ◆ Note: Would any trophy winner from last year who has not yet returned his trophy to Vickie Peckham please do so as soon as possible.

that people had been driving past the fairway bunkers to our left and right. I looked back and there appeared enough room to land a jumbo jet between the tee and where we stood.

On the other side of the course players were attempting the 18th hole which, by coincidence, is exactly the same length as the 1st. I know on which of the holes I'd like to play if I had to make par to save my life.

"You really need the wind to make the course a challenge," explained Richard, although I'm sure it's a rare day when it's left defenceless.

It's also the wind which causes most of the greenkeeping problems at Seacroft.

"The bunkers do get blown regularly and we have problems keeping the sand in place."

The solution is one which will cause the odd shiver to work its way down the spine of the competitors in this year's National Tournament sponsored by Miracle Professional.

"We do a lot of riveting and the bunkers tend to be quite deep," said Richard, a man known, as I found out on the course walk, for understatement. The first one he showed me was at least eight feet deep.

"We've had an on-going programme of riveting over the past five years or so and over the winter added a new bunker and replaced one big one with two smaller ones on the 18th - as if it needed any more defences!

"We find it is the best way to keep the sand in place and is fairer to the golfer as shots can be played by both right and left handed players wherever they are in the bunker.

"They've got straight faces which help to keep the sand in and we've done a lot of work on them. It's a little like painting the Forth Bridge because by the time we've done them all it's time to start again at the beginning."

Like every other course at the time of my visit the course was well behind for the time of

the year and if the native Indians of South America had devised a dance for rain...plus a bit of sun, Richard and his team would have been straight on the phone to Peggy Spencer.

"This is the worst it has ever been. We are often late as it can be so cold here but this year I reckon we're about a month behind. Just last week we had three mornings of frost on the trot"

Richard has worked at Seacroft since he left school and became Head Greenkeeper late last year, taking over from his mentor - father John, who still works at the course in an advisory capacity.

Speaking to Richard you would have no idea of his origins. They only become clearer speaking to his father. He still retains a broad Scottish accent, having been brought up in Inverness, and he worked as greenkeeper/professional at Tain before moving south.

"They say Scotsmen make the best links greenkeepers," says Inverness-born Richard later, in an accent which is definitely from the wrong side of Hadrian's Wall.

But back to the course. Like many of the best links it's not fair. Hit a screamer down the middle and you're quite likely to face an awkward lie with the ball below or above your feet - that's if you're lucky enough to miss a bunker. The fairways are undulating and this causes Richard and his four man team a few problems.

"It's quite a severe course and we have to cut them both ways to make sure the jobs done properly - we have two sets of gang mowers, one four bladed unit and one six bladed unit and we get a lot of run off into the hollows making them green and the humps bare. Balls also gather in the hollows so the divots concentrate there much more."

The club is in the process of installing irrigation to the tees already having a Watermation system on the greens.

"We have a double valved system so we can organise it that we can cover the entire green by only using a sprinkler on one side because of the wind. We don't waste water."

On the prospect of have a host of greenkeepers descending on his course and giving it the critical eye Richard just smiles. "I haven't given any thought to the fact that they'll be coming. Not yet anyway. But I am looking forward to meeting them."

Skegness is the pleasure capital of Lincolnshire and those who make the trip for the National Tournament sponsored by Miracle Professional will find a playground to occupy everyone from the youngest in your party to the oldest.

In conjunction with the tournament there is the Miracle Professional evening with barbecue and entertainment on the Monday while the Tournament Dinner on the Tuesday will feature after dinner speaker Reg Thompson. Tickets may be purchased from BIGGA Headquarters, price £15.

Among those stars who will be appearing in



the town in August when the National Tournament takes place are Chubby Brown, Joe Brown (no relation) and Sheila Ferguson, Cannon and Ball, the Grumbleweeds, Ken Dodd and Chas and Dave.

For those of a more racy disposition "The Ultimate Challenge" is available, Skegness' Indoor Karting centre and, as a veteran of such entertainment, I can vouch for the rush that speeding round a cut down Grand Prix track on four wheels with a lawn mower engine purring behind you provides.

For those who intend ensuring that their name rarely disappears from the higher reaches of the scoreboard they can wile the hours away from the course by visiting The Elms Golf Centre where they can utilise the...deep breath: 20 all weather floodlit bays, six hole par 3 course, 18 hole putting green and practice bunker.

Yes it's all there and the excellence of Seacroft, which is surely one of the better links south of the border, coupled with the other

attractions of Skegness make the National Tournament, in association with Miracle Professional '96 one not to miss. Oh yes. But if you're thinking of camping make sure you've got plenty of lead in your ground sheet.

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