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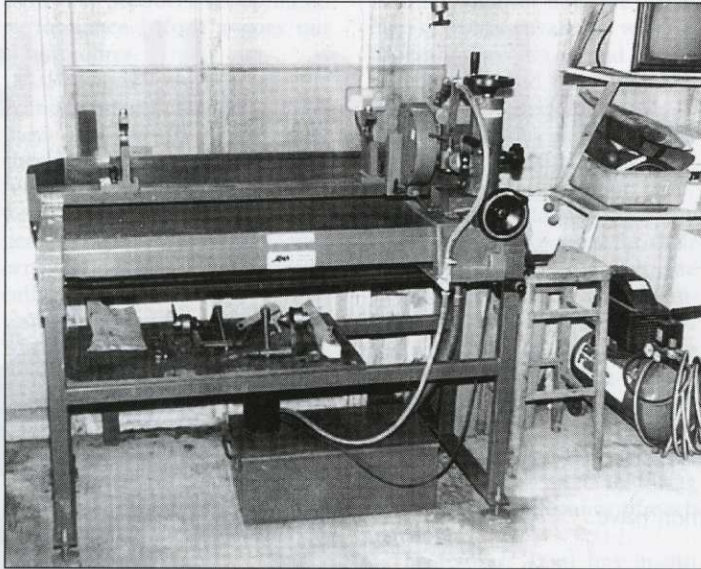
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GRINDING OUT

notched by a stud or similar foreign body. It is admitted that this may be extravagant but the view is that bottom blades are relatively cheap, and a high priority at Celtic Manor is to maintain the 'look good factor' in the belief that this equates to 'feel good' and leads to actually 'being good'.

The club carries over £8,000 worth of parts in stock but this is seen as an important insurance, and perhaps it relates to the past when the supply of parts was not good. Another perspective to this is that the club will soon have three courses and the building and perhaps some re-building of these places extra emphasis on the maintenance facility. At Celtic Manor, Cal insists that all cylinders are installed accurately, thus bearings or bottom blade carrier are packed if and as required to ensure that each cylinder relates correctly to the carrier and bottom knife – he commented upon how inaccurate this can be on supposedly new machines.



Eric Hunter Grinders - Juno 36" at Taunton & Pickering Golf Club

Toro has now appointed Ted Hopkins of Wentloog in Gwent as dealer, he is both more active and more local to Celtic Manor than their previous Toro dealer.

Taunton & Pickering Golf Club with a Eric Hunter Grinders' Juno

Taunton bought a Juno grinder about two years ago because they

found themselves with time to spare in the winter and the club considered it cost effective to buy a machine which would allow them to undertake their own maintenance and sharpening during the 'off' season. Taunton and Pickering is a private 18 hole club built on clay overlying rock without drainage, and therefore it has times when the course has to be closed.

The greenkeeping staff of five includes Head Greenkeeper Roger Bale, plus one part-timer who concentrates on cutting banks. Thus with time at a premium all greens and tees are cut using triples while a Ransomes Commander (5 gang) is used for the fairways. The Jacobsen Green King with hydraulic cylinder drive is back-lapped about once a month while tees and fairway mowers are not re-sharpened at all during the season. The eventuality of hitting a rock or other 'hard' object has either not occurred or had not been consid-

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ered, however, although to most people having to dismantle a cutting unit is seen as taking time and being a great nuisance, in point of fact it seldom proves to be too much of a problem nor take too much time when the necessity occurs and the alternative is to send the machine away. New bottom blades are normally fitted each year during the annual overhaul.

The Juno has proved to be extremely reliable and easy to use. It has been mainly used by one specific greenkeeper and he reported no problems in using the machine. Eric Hunter Grinders which provided the machine is proud of the training that they give new buyers and obviously this has been particularly effective, up to two days is allowed, while telephone support is always available there after. One of the major reasons for selecting the Juno was that it was particularly price competitive, furthermore one machine

handles both cylinders and bottom blades. However Roger said that by adding various options it was easy to upgrade the grinder, and he anticipated that the club would be upgrading the system, although at present he has no plans to change to in-situ or more frequent sharpening. Both in-situ and a hoist are available for the machine and can be retro fitted according to the makers.

One comment that Roger made was that when the club first began to undertake its own resharping it found 'all the problems' and how inaccurate past sharpening and aligning had been. This equates with the Eric Hunter's boast that his machines are exceptionally accurate and can produce cutting edges which can be set for a 0.002 inch (0.05mm) clearance. There is a large body of opinion that says cutting edges should never touch – a blade of grass is perhaps 0.2mm thick and can be cut cleanly

by a mower with a clearance of up to 4 thou. (0.1mm).

Other Golf Clubs

Greenkeeper International also spoke to Paul Bishop, Course Manager at Manor House Golf and Country Club at Castle Combe, expecting to find a Charterhouse 'Easy-lap' back lapping machine.

However Paul said that the machine had been stolen and has not been replaced but that since building the new greenkeepers' facility with its heightened security the club has bought and installed Atterton & Ellis Express Dual and Anglemaster machines to maintain their mowers. Paul said he had found the Charterhouse machine effective and it made back-lapping very easy. Mowers were back lapped every two or three weeks, however he felt that a full grinding facility was more efficient and the objective will be to relief grind in winter and to spin grind in-situ as

necessary during the cutting season. The club has a full time mechanic.

Ransomes since deciding to close its Supreme Mowing subsidiary will be making parts and service available from head office at Ipswich. While ceasing to produce grinders Ransomes will still produce and market Super-lap and Ecolap machines.

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Understanding the role of the training providers

Ken Richardson, BIGGA's Education Officer and David Golding, Education Director for the GTC, conclude this series of articles with questions and answers about training providers.

1. What do you mean by Training Providers?

In greenkeeper training, Training Providers are, in simple terms, any person, college or other organisation that provides training for greenkeepers.

2. How many colleges are there?

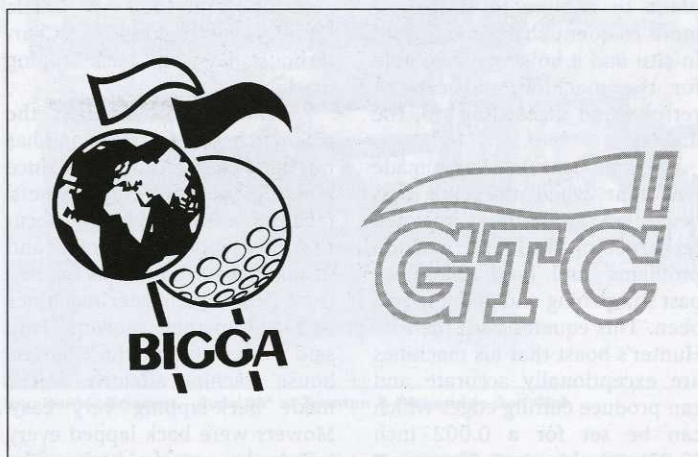
There are 28 colleges approved, by the GTC, to offer greenkeeping courses at craft level with a reduced number approved to offer supervisory and management training

3. Where are the colleges?

There are approved colleges in England, Scotland, Wales and in the North and South of Ireland. Full lists of approved colleges may be obtained from the GTC and BIGGA. Moreover, full college lists are printed in the June and December issues of Greenkeeper International, each year.

4. What is meant by approved colleges?

GTC approved colleges have to meet GTC criteria, including the setting up of an industry liaison committee, a commitment to pro-



vide N/SVQ courses and courses that cover the different sections of the GTC Training Manual. Colleges also offer a range of full time courses such as National Certificate and National Diploma, Higher National Certificate and Higher National Diploma.

5. What other organisations offer greenkeeper training?

BIGGA organises and runs GTC endorsed courses in Supervisory Management, both at its headquarters at Aldwark Manor and out in its regions. These courses include leadership, motivation, organisation, discipline, planning, budgeting and finance, health and safety, first aid, pesticide application, oral and written presentation and employment law. BIGGA also organises a National Education Conference

and Workshop programme, each January, and regional and section conferences and seminars. BIGGA also runs educational seminars during BTME. The Sports Turf Research Institute, based at Bingley in west Yorkshire, offer courses in greenkeeping, both at their headquarters and by Open Learning. These courses are based on the contents of the greenkeeper training manual and can, therefore, lead to the award of a recognised vocational qualification. Managing agents, who work for local TECs and LECs, offer training in some parts of the country. However, check with the GTC, before enrolling with a managing agent. Many manufacturers and suppliers of horticultural machinery and golf course equipment provide training courses

6. Does that mean that I can become a trained greenkeeper without going to college?

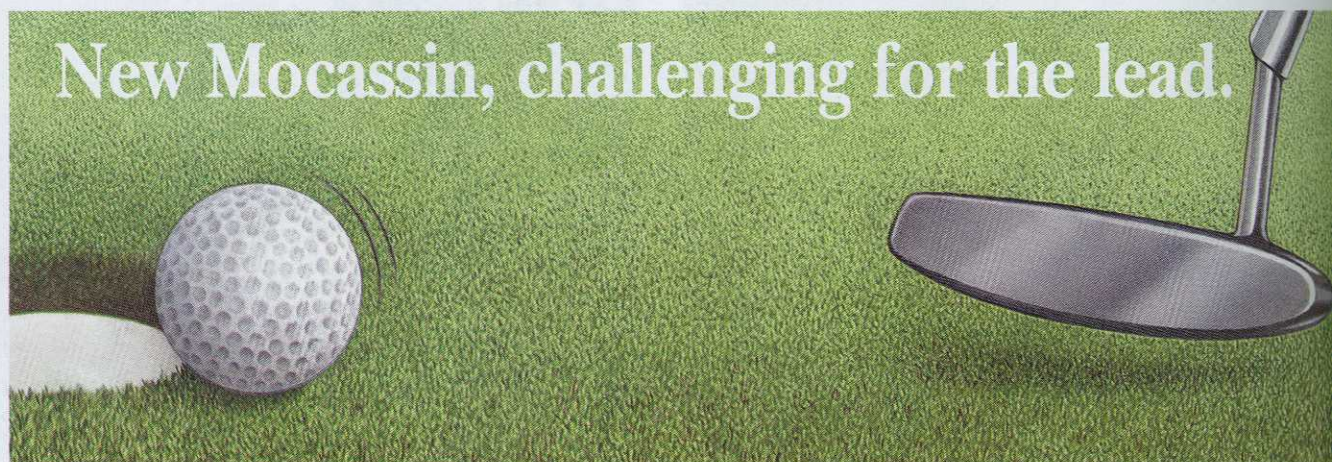
It all depends on your starting point. If you do not work or have ever worked on a golf course, then it would be very difficult to acquire the skills needed to be a greenkeeper. If, however, you are already working in greenkeeping and have acquired the practical skills, then it is possible to acquire the theoretical knowledge by distance learning eg correspondence course or from BIGGA conferences and seminars, books, videos and Greenkeeper International.

7. Could my Head Greenkeeper become a training provider?

Yes he/she could. In fact many Head Greenkeeper/Course Managers conduct on-the-job training for all of their staff as part of an overall staff training scheme. Those Head Greenkeeper/Course Managers who hold an assessor qualification can also assess their staff to National Standards and recommend the award of a Nationally recognised qualification.

9. How do I find out more information on greenkeeper training?

Contact the GTC on 01347 838640 or BIGGA on 01347 838581 or contact your nearest approved college.

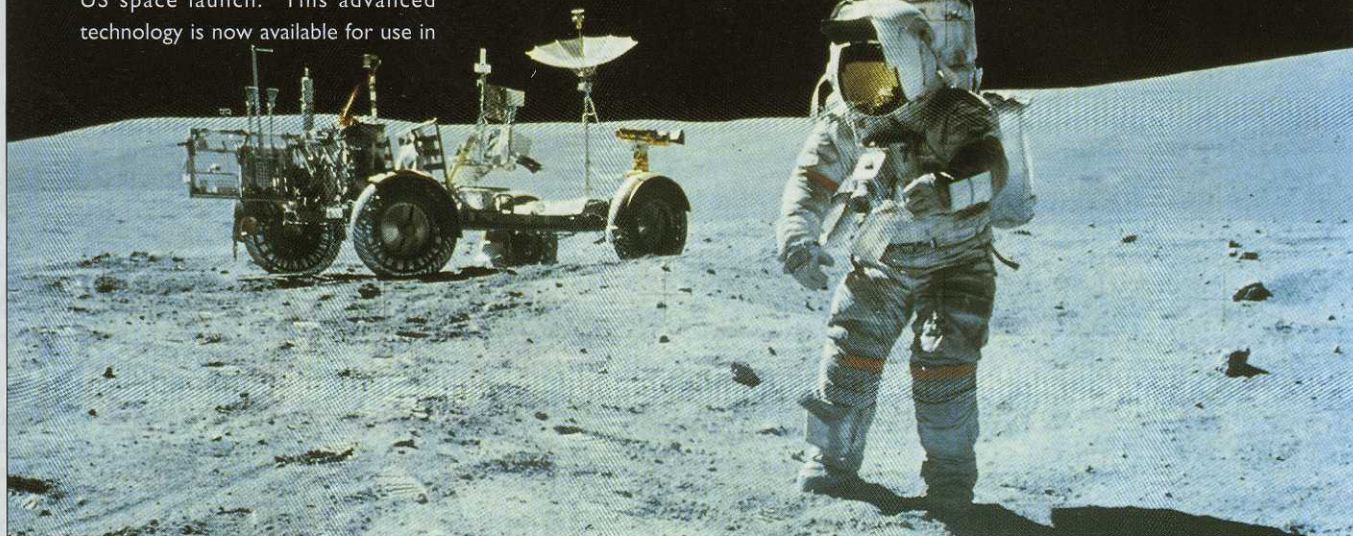


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THE BIG CLEAN UP

Roland Taylor examines the problems autumn brings and looks at some of the solutions.

It's time again for those autumn leaves to start to fall. They may inspire song writers and poets to pick up their pens, but for most of us it is a time consuming operation that seems never ending. How many times have you cleared away the previous nights fall, only to turn round and find that mother nature has played a cruel joke on you by depositing twice as many leaves over your cleared area?

Do not despair, help is at hand in the form of a host of mechanical aids. All are designed to make clearing up leaves and other general debris as easy as possible.

In the beginning there were rakes and brooms, then there were blowers. These come in all shapes and forms from hand held petrol powered unit to larger push and self-propelled models. A small unit is an effective replacement

for the traditional broom. It is far quicker, more efficient and less strenuous to use. A fan produces a strong blast of air to move leaves and other debris in whatever direction you require. This makes them ideal for all those awkward areas, such as



under seats in gutters, ditches and among flower beds. By careful manoeuvring the leaves can be blown into a heap, ready for collection. Most of the hand held units are easily converted into a suction model with a collection facility. This, however, is generally

more suited for domestic use as the collecting bag is relatively small.

Pedestrian and tractor-mounted blowers are ideally suited for use on large open spaces. These units produce a very powerful air flow and are available with a wide choice of engine sizes. Along with clearing leaves off the greens they will also remove dew. Some of the larger blowers have a suction and delivery hose attachment as an optional extra, to suck up leaves and deposit them into trailer or vehicle.

Specifically designed truck loaders are now readily available. These units can be mounted on to a trailer or a vehicle's tail board. They make the loading of leaves and any other litter or rubbish fast and easy.

Greenkeepers looking for a self-contained leaf and litter collector will not be disappointed. There are plenty to choose from including push, self-propelled and ride-on models. With these machines

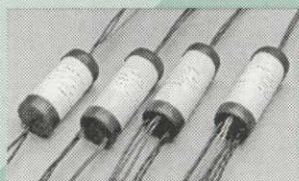
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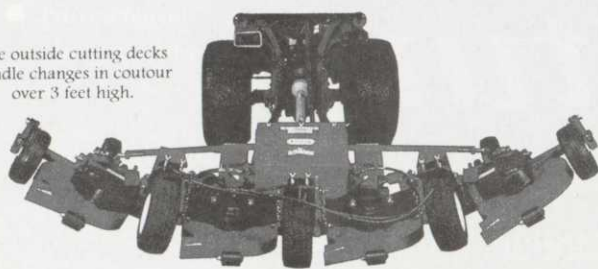
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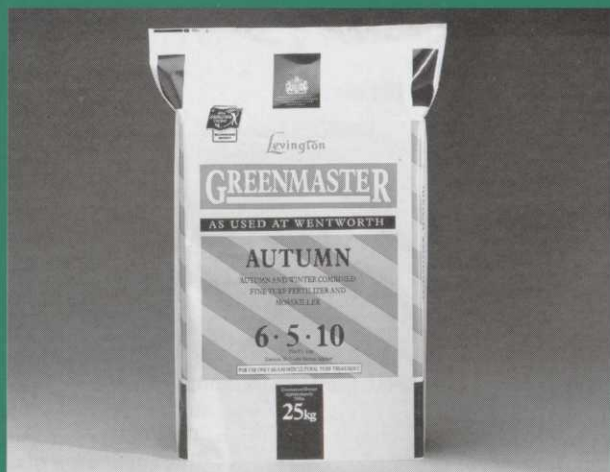
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the bulk is reduced as it passes through the unit – this ensures the collecting system is used to its maximum. Wanderhoses are usually available as an optional extra. These enable the operator to clear awkward areas, drains, ditches and flower beds.

It should not be forgotten that most rotary mowers will collect leaves off grassed areas and that for smaller tractors there are sweeping attachments available.

In recent years we have seen the introduction of mulching and recycling mowers. The suppliers of this type of machine claim that the system will finely chop leaves and deposit them back into the earth. The effectiveness of this method will be dependent on the volume of leaves involved. Large amounts are going to be difficult to reduce to a level where they virtually disappear. However, recycling has its advantages.

For areas of where the leaf fall is very large there are tractor-mounted units. These fall into

two categories; combination units and specific sweeping systems.

The combination units are usually a flail mower that can be used for cutting light and heavy rough, adapted for scarifying, plus leaf and litter collection. A large hopper is fitted and this is often available with high-lift option. They can only be used on grass – this could be a disadvantage where there are paths, roadways and car parks that have to be cleared.

Sweepers are an alternative. These incorporate a rotary brush plus impeller that creates a vacuum to suck the leaves into the collector. As the material passes through the system it is shredded

and reduced in volume by as much as 50 per cent – thus minimising the number of times the collector has to be emptied. Brush and suction heads are usually available in a choice of widths from 2 metre to 2.5 m. These are usually fully floating both vertically and horizontally, which enables them to follow the ground contours closely.

A wanderhose for clearing ditches, awkward areas and even emptying rubbish bins is available as an optional extra.

Self-propelled ride-on sweepers are usually specifically designed for collecting general litter, as well as leaves. Generally the average golf course has insufficient


work throughout the year to justify the cost of one of these machines.

Before making any choice of available equipment it is important to determine exactly what problems are likely to be encountered. A large unit may look good on paper, but is its size going to limit the number of areas where it can be used, thus reducing its cost effectiveness. At this stage expert advice should be sought. It will probably be necessary to consider more than one type of appliance for your particular needs. There is nothing like seeing equipment in action, so an on-site demonstration is a sure way of finding out exactly what the machine's capabilities are.

If this autumn you find a member of your staff leaning on a broom or rake, having just gathered up a great pile of leaves, consider for a second – there is much better, easier and faster way of carrying out this operation.




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