

Seeds, held a draw for a bottle of champagne for anyone that visited their Stand during the Show. This was won by Alan Aitken, Kilspindie GC, – if he needs a hand to drink it I'm only a phone call away!

Well, that's it for this month but before I go I would like to wish all our members plus all our friends in the trade including our Patrons who do so much for us every year a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous New Year. If I have missed anyone let me know and in the meantime, all the best to one and all from the Committee and myself. I look forward to writing the first column in the New Year and to seeing you all in January 1998.

PS – while at the Scotsturf Show and being on the Standard Golf Stand, I found out that Nat Beggs was retiring when the show finished so all I can say to Nat from all our members, the Committee, myself and all fellow trade friends is have a happy retirement – you deserve it and we hope to see you at some of our Section outings etc as you are most welcome. I will send you out a 1998 fixture card so you can keep track of what's happening in the Section once we have finalised all dates at the start of the year. So that's it for 1997, see you all next year.

Chris Yeaman

NORTHERN REGION

Douglas Bell
Tel: 0151 431 0433
Sheffield



On October 2 we held our first winter lecture at Rotherham GC. The lecture was given by Mr Jay Dobson from PSD Agronomy Ltd. Our thanks go to Jay who gave an interesting lecture on thatch problems which was enjoyed by around 40 of our members.

My apologies go to Dave Norton who also qualified for the Hayter finals but unfortunately I wasn't informed – sorry Dave, and well done!

Congratulations go to Steve Nixon, from Wortley GC, who has recently won the Toro Student of the Year Award. Well done Steve! As part of Steve's prize he won an eight week course in America.

Only one new member this month and that is John Sunderland, of Rapler Barracks GC.

Anyone who has any news for these notes can contact me on 01909 480150.

Finally may I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.
John Lax

North Wales

Well lads and lasses, two months on the trot and you've got something to read. However, as stated last month I can't write much if no-one tells me anything. I'm not a reporter, I'm a greenkeeper just like you! News needs to come to me, not me to go out and find it, I ain't got time. 01824 710693 – I can't do any more than give you my phone number again!

The Autumn meeting was held at Abersoch, the weather was mixed as was the golf but everyone who played enjoyed the day and our thanks go to Abersoch for inviting us and especially to Arthur and his team for the preparation that went into presenting the course. I never got to see a lot of the course due to my own work commitments and arrived late but as the 40 plus who played must agree even if their golf was rubbish the views on the drive to Abersoch made for a delightful day.

Andy Peel, of Bull Bay, rang me (see, someone has) and informed me that he has just had a fully automatic irrigation system fitted using Toro heads and everything was done for under £30,000. He seemed very pleased with it and thought that other members should know and if you are thinking of a system get in touch with him for the low down on how it was done.

BTME – we are thinking of hav-

ing the the coach leave later this year to avoid all the morning traffic, get there in the afternoon and take in the AGM which is at 5.45, but the Committee needs feedback.

On the same note I attended the AGM this year (the only member of the North Wales Section to do so to my knowledge). It made me realise how the Association has progressed, I was at the BTME for three days and I came away feeling very proud of what BIGGA has achieved.

Ask your own clubs because the Seminars etc are all very educational and my club thought the package was excellent value for money. Remember if you don't ask you don't get. This year I will endeavour to make sure that every committee member attends the AGM but it would do you all good to go!

On the educational note, the Welsh College of Horticulture at Northrop is holding its annual Golf Greenkeeping Technical Seminar on Wednesday February 18. Subjects will include Health and Safety, Irrigation, Grass Seed Breeding, R and A Golf Research and Micro Organisms so make a date in your diary. The College is also holding one day courses on Machine Maintenance over five separate days in January/February. They will be held from 10 am to 3 pm with theory in the morning and practical in the afternoon. Dates to be confirmed.

Our last committee meeting was attended by Douglas Bell, the Northern Regional Administrator, it was good to meet him and he explained his role in the Association. He will attend our AGM – he is there to help and as with me, he is only a phone call away.

A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. May all your greens stay fuzz free. Now that would be a Happy New Year! Dave Goodridge

North West

October has been a great month

for greenkeeping and I am sure you all took advantage of the good weather to complete your hollowtining and top dressing. The dry conditions have also allowed scarifying fairways to be done without causing damage with wheel marks. This of course all adds up to a good start to your winter work programmes so let's hope a mild winter ensues and all programmes can be completed and targets reached. Not a lot happening in the Section in October, but in November we have the Section AGM and the first Regional Board meeting with the new Regional Administrator, Douglas Bell. At the moment I am awaiting replies from several golf clubs regarding permission to hold our tournaments for 1998 and as soon as all the fixtures are completed you will receive your fixture list for the year.

That seems to be it for this month so I will close by wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year. Any news ring me on 0151 724 5412.
Bert Cross

Northern

John Waite, our Section Chairman, represented the greenkeepers on behalf of the Northern Region in the 1997 Kubota Challenge event. Although he won both of his matches, the team finished third. John stated that it had been one of his ambitions to play The Belfry and that he was pleased with the presentation of both courses. Pat Murphy, our National Chairman also attended and once again brought the rain – this talent could earn him millions in the right location!

News has filtered back that Tim Blacombe, who was at Scarthingwell GC, is to return to greenkeeping in the New Year after taking care of his daughter, Kate, back in his native Canada.

On behalf of the Northern Section may I thank all sponsors who have very kindly donated money for prizes ➤ *Continued on Page 34*

ITS EFFECT IS SHATTERING

Charterhouse



Deep aeration on an intensively used golf course is vital if the grasses which we require are to survive.

We purchased our first Verti-Drain back in 1983 and very quickly bought a second. Both these machines have been working on a continuous basis providing excellent results and utilising only a minimum of spare parts.

*Comment From Walter Woods
St. Andrews Links Golf Course supervisor*

For your free guide to compaction relief send this coupon to Charterhouse Turf Machinery Ltd., FREEPOST, (G1/2283), Haslemere, Surrey GU27 1DW.
Tel: 01428 661222 Fax: 01428 661218

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COURSES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

GREENKEEPING

THE COLLEGES AND THE

The Greenkeepers Training Committee (GTC) are continually reviewing the approved status of colleges offering greenkeeper training courses.

This guide shows colleges offering courses to craft, supervisory and management levels, but it must be stated that until the GTC review is completed only the green coded colleges are approved to train greenkeepers beyond craft level.

The introduction of vocational qualifications into industries, has caused the colleges

to re-think their training policies and the GTC will be issuing guidelines for the golf greenkeeping industry as to which colleges employers and their staff should be supporting.

Anyone with a query regarding greenkeeper training should contact the Greenkeepers Training Committee at Aldwark Manor, Aldwark, Alne, York YO6 2NF, telephone 01347 838640.

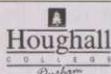
NORTH



ASKHAM BRYAN COLLEGE Askham Bryan, York YO2 3PR. Contact: The Registry Tel: 01904 772211. National Certificate in Horticulture, National Diploma in Horticulture (Turf Option), Higher National Diploma in Horticulture (Golf Management Option) all available full or part time. Block release courses: NVQ Level 2 Greenkeeping, NVQ Level 3 Greenkeeping and Sportsturf Maintenance, NVQ Level 4 Amenity Horticulture. Short courses: FEPA spraying, chainsaw and brushcutter courses.



CITY COLLEGE MANCHESTER Wythenshawe Park Centre, Moor Road, Manchester M23 9BQ. Contact Peter Riley/Martin Webb. Tel: 0161 957 1526. Day Release and Full Time courses leading to NVQ Level II Amenity Horticulture with the Greenkeeping option.



HOUGHALL COLLEGE Durham College of Agriculture and Horticulture, Houghall, Durham DH1 3SG. Contact Tony Milan. Tel: 0191 386 1351. Full time courses: National Certificate in Horticulture/Greenkeeping and Groundsmanship - 1 Year; National Diploma in Horticulture Turf Option - 2/3 years. Part time courses: Greenkeeping and Sportsturf Management Level II - Day Release; NVQ Level 3 Amenity Horticulture - Afternoon Evening. Short Courses: Health & Safety Legislation; Turfcare; Machinery and Mechanisation. All courses contribute towards NVQ Levels I and II.



MYERSCOUGH COLLEGE Myerscough Hall, Bilsborrow, Preston, Lancashire PR3 0RY. Contact Academic Registry. Tel: 01995 640611. Fax: 01995 640842. Full time courses: BSc (Hons) Turf Science and Golf Course Management - four years; Higher National Diploma Turf Science and Golf Course Management - three years; National Diploma Turf Science and Sportground Management - three years; National Certificate Groundsmanship and Greenkeeping - one year. Part time courses: NVQ Level 2 and 3 Greenkeeping and Sportsturf Maintenance (plus Fast Track option); Higher National Diploma Turf Science and Golf Course Management; Certificate and Diploma in Turf Irrigation; FEPA and Chainsaw short courses.



REASEHEATH COLLEGE Nantwich, Cheshire CW5 6DF. Contact Dennis Mortram. Tel: 01270 625131 Fax: 01270 625665. Full time: BTEC First Diploma Horticulture (Sportsturf Option) - 1 year; BTEC National Diploma Horticulture (Sportsturf Option) - 2 years; BTEC Higher National Diploma Golf Course Management - 3 years. Part time: HNC Golf Course Management - Distance Learning, NVQ Level 1 Greenkeeping - Day Release, NVQ Level 2 Greenkeeping - Day/Block Release, NVQ Level 3 Greenkeeping - Day/Block Release, C&G Phase IV Greenkeeping - Block Release, IoG National Intermediate Diploma in Turf Culture - Day Release, IoG National Diploma - Day Release. Short Courses: FEPA Chemical Safety, Safe Lifting, Chainsaws, Off-Road Vehicle Driving, First Aid.



KIRKLEY HALL COLLEGE Ponteland, Northumberland (10 miles from the centre of Newcastle upon Tyne). Contact Mike Swinton. Tel: 01661 860808. Fax: 01661 860047. A wide range of full and part-time Amenity Horticulture and Commercial Horticulture courses including Greenkeeping and Spots Turf maintenance and management.



SHIPLEY COLLEGE Exhibition Road, Saltaire, Shipley, West Yorks BD18 3JW. Tel: 01274 757222. Full time courses: BTEC First Diploma Horticulture (Environment and Landscaping), BTEC National Diploma Horticulture, BTEC National Diploma Environmental Horticulture. Part time: Greenkeeping NVQ 2, Amenity Horticulture NVQ 2/3, Horticulture Skills Test, Pesticide Spraying, Royal Horticulture Society Certificate, City & Guilds Gardening Certificate.



BRACKENHURST COLLEGE Southwell, Nottinghamshire NG25 0QF. Contact Student Administration. Tel: 01636 817099. BTEC First Diploma, C&G National Certificate, BTEC National Diploma, RHS Diploma, BTEC HND in Landscape Design and BSc (Honours) in Urban and Rural Open Space Management both in conjunction with The Nottingham Trent University. Part-time courses include GTC & RHS day release, evening and short courses.



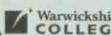
BROOMFIELD COLLEGE Morley, Ilkeston, Derby DE7 6DN. Contact Admissions Officer. Tel: 01332 831345. NVQ Level I and Level II Amenity Horticulture (Greenkeeping) Block Release course. Two years duration presented in 12 one-week blocks following guidelines of GTC Training Manual. NVQ Level III gained by 9x 3-day blocks, or APL service.



CAMBRIDGESHIRE COLLEGE Milton Centre, Landbeach Road, Milton, Cambridgeshire CB4 6DB. Contact Martin Crimmins. Tel: 01223 860701. Part time - Day Release over two years leading to NVQ Level II (Greenkeeping Options) and III (day release), including the GTC Training Manual requirements. Autumn term commences September/October 1998.



RODBASTON COLLEGE Rodbaston, Penkridge, Stafford ST19 5PH. Contact Nigel Foskett. Tel: 01785 712209. Courses offered: NVQ Level 1, 2, 3 and 4 by Day Release. FEPA and chainsaw training



WARWICKSHIRE COLLEGE Moreton Morrell, Warwick CV35 9BL. Contact Graham Martin. Tel: 01926 651367. Greenkeeping courses - day release - NVQ Level I; NVQ Level II; NVQ Level III; IoG courses (evening class), National Intermediate Diploma in Turf Culture; Full time two year BTEC National Diploma in Horticulture (with option in Turf Culture); Professional updating courses include: Groundsmanship, Machinery Maintenance and Repair, Managing Conservation Areas, Plant Identification, Hedgelaying, First Aid, FEPA Spraying Courses, Chainsaw Courses.



WEST OXFORDSHIRE COLLEGE Warren Farm Centre, Horton-cum-Studley, Oxford OX33 1BY. Contact: Alan Brown. Tel: 01865 351794. BTEC First Diploma Amenity Horticulture; NVQ Levels 2 and 3 Greenkeeping (based on the GTC Training Manual) - day release or evening. Short courses include: Chainsaw; FEPA Spraying; Machinery Maintenance and Health and Safety.



BRINSBURY COLLEGE North Heath, Pulborough, West Sussex RH20 1DL. Contact Keith Harrison. Tel: 01798 873832. Full time courses: BTEC 1st Diploma Horticulture with Greenkeeping option, National Diploma Landscape Studies, Sportsturf and Greenkeeping option. Part time: NVQ II Greenkeeping plus Care. Day Release to NVQ II level. Both full time and part time students with work both to the NVQ II work book and the Greenkeeper manual. NVQ Level II (National Technical Certificate) with Inst. of Groundsmanship manual may be delivered as an evening course. NVQ Level III Sportsturf Maintenance, ND Landscape Studies (Option - Sportsturf Management and Greenkeeping), National Technical Certificate (IoG), National Practical Certificate (IoG), Intermediate Diploma (IoG), National Diploma (IoG)



HADLOW COLLEGE Hadlow, Tonbridge, Kent TN11 0AL. Contact Keith Backhouse. Tel: 01732 850551. NVQ Level II and Level III Part-time Day Release with two periods of Block Release or evenings. Level II in Groundsmanship evenings. NVQ Level III Golf Greenkeeping. Centres at Hadlow, Canterbury and Maidstone.



NESCOT North East Surrey College of Technology, Reigate Road, Ewell, Epsom, Surrey KT17 3DS. Contact Dr S Shaw. Tel: 0181 394 3220/3049. NVQ Levels I, II and III in Amenity Horticulture (Greenkeeping options) Training and assessment for the Greenkeepers Training Manual. Part time, Day Release. Duration: Two years to Level II. FEPA Spraying Courses.

MIDLANDS

SOUTH EAST

ER TRAINING

E COURSES AVAILABLE

GREENKEEPER International

KEY TO COLOURS

Currently GTC approved as Regional Training Centres, offering courses at Craft, Supervisory and Management levels

Currently GTC approved for training courses up to Supervisory level

Currently GTC approved for training courses up to Craft level only

Pending GTC approval for all courses

Please note that all college details on these pages were provided by the colleges themselves.

Greenkeeper International takes no responsibility for accuracy of information provided.

Contact the colleges direct for prospectuses and comprehensive information.

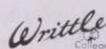
SOUTH EAST



OTLEY COLLEGE Otley College, Otley, Ipswich, Suffolk IP6 9EY. Contact Course Enquiries. Tel: 01473 785543. *Full time courses:* National Certificate in Horticulture, option in Sports Turf Technology. Part time NVQ 2 Golf Greenkeeping and NVQ 2 Groundsmanship, NVQ 3 Sports Turf Management. IoG Intermediate and Final Diplomas (Evenings). NVQ Horticultural Mechanics. FEPA Courses PA1, PA2, PA6. Otley College ★ Developing individuals ★ Achieving more.



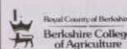
PLUMPTON COLLEGE Lewes, East Sussex BN7 3AE. Contact David Blackmur. Tel: 01273 890454. *Full time courses:* National Diploma in Amenity Horticulture (options in Landscape and Sportsturf); National Certificate in Amenity Horticulture; First Diploma; A11 BTEC. *Part time courses:* NVQ Level II Amenity Horticulture in Arboriculture, Interior Landscaping, Hard Landscaping and Greenkeeping, Sportsturf and Sportsground Management; Decorative Horticulture, NVQ Level III Amenity Horticulture; Phase IV Business Management.



WRITTLE COLLEGE Chelmsford, Essex CM1 3RR. Contact Dai Edwards. Tel: 01245 420705, Fax: 01245 420456. *Part time courses include:* NVQ Levels I, II, III and IV Sportsturf & Greenkeeping. Day Release. Includes training and assessment of Greenkeepers Training Manual. *Full time courses include:* BTEC First Diploma (1 year), BTEC National Diploma with Option in Sportsturf and Golf Course Management, 3 year sandwich course; BTEC Higher National Diploma with Option in Golf Course Management 3 year sandwich course, BSc (Hons) Degree course in Landscape and Amenity Management. Short courses for FEPA, Irrigation, Fork Lift Trucks, Chainsaws and First Aid also available. Associate students welcome, progression routes identified, accreditation of prior learning possible.



MERRIST WOOD COLLEGE Worplesdon, Guildford, Surrey GU3 3PE. Contact Student Services. Tel: 01483 884040. *Full time courses:* National Diploma in Greenkeeping and Sports Turf Management. National Certificate in Greenkeeping and Sports Turf Management. *Part-time:* NVQ Amenity Horticulture Greenkeeping Level 1, NVQ Amenity Horticulture Greenkeeping Level 2, NVQ Amenity Horticulture Sports Turf Maintenance Level 3.



BERKSHIRE COLLEGE Hall Place, Burchetts Green, Maidenhead, Berkshire SL6 6QR. Tel: 01628 824444 Fax: 01628 824695 *Full time courses:* BTEC First Diploma and National Diploma in Greenkeeping. *Part time courses:* NVQ Level II Greenkeeping and Fine Turf Management, GTC Manual, NVQ Level II Groundsman and Sports Turf Management, NVQ Level II Golf Greenkeeping (craft level - block release); NVQ Level III Greenkeeping; IOG National Diploma (Intermediate) in Turf Culture. ★ Regional Centre of Excellence for Land based Industries & Professions ★



OAKLANDS COLLEGE Oaklands Campus, Hatfield Road, St Albans, Herts AL4 0JA. Contact Ian Merrick. Tel: 01727 850651. *Full-time courses:* National Certificate in Greenkeeping and Sports Turf Management. *Part-time courses:* leading to NVQ Level 2 Greenkeeping, Modern Apprenticeships. *Evening courses:* leading to NVQ Levels 3 and 4. Short courses: Pesticide, Chainsaw, Greenkeeper Mechanics.

SOUTH WEST

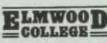


CANNINGTON COLLEGE Cannington Bridgwater, Somerset TA5 2LS. Contact Decland Gallagher: 01278 655083/Hugh Parry: 01278 655084. BTEC National Diploma Sports Science (Golf Studies), Higher National Certificate Golf Course Management, BTEC First Diploma, BTEC National Diploma in Golf Course Management, BTEC Higher National Diploma Golf Course Management (inc. European Studies) NVQ Level I and II Golf Greenkeeping, NVQ Level III Greenkeeping and Supervisory Management, NVQ Level IV Greenkeeping Management, FEPA Training, Chainsaw Certification, Off-road Vehicle Certification, Greenkeeper Mechanics.



HARTPURY COLLEGE Hartpury House, Hartpury, Nr Gloucester GL19 3BE. Hartpury Marketing Tel: 01452 830065. Hartpury Marketing Fax: 01452 831393. *Courses available:* First Diploma Horticulture, National Certificate Horticulture (Landscape), National Diploma Horticulture (Landscape), First Diploma Greenkeeping, Certificate in Greenkeeping, National Diploma Golf Studies, National Diploma Greenkeeping, Modern Apprenticeships, Route 2 Work, NVQ Amenity Horticulture Level II, NVQ Amenity Horticulture Level III, NVQ Commercial Horticulture Level II, NVQ Amenity/Turf Level II, NVQ Amenity/Sportsturf Level III & IV, City & Guilds Certificate in Gardneing, TDLB Assessor Awards, HND Land Use, BSc Land Use* subject to validation

SCOTLAND



ELMWOOD COLLEGE Cupar, Fife KY15 4JB. Contact Carol Borthwick. Tel: 01334 658910. Fax: 01334 658918. *Craft Level courses.* Full-time National Certificate, Block-release, following SVQ Level II and the GTC Training Manual. Six week specialist modular programme (January-February), including Golf Course Construction, Pesticide Application and Plant Protection Procedures. SVQ Level III (Supervisory) Block Release. HNC/HND Golf Course Management available as full-time, block/day release and distance learning. FEPA, COSHH and Health & Safety short courses also.



LANGSIDE COLLEGE GLASGOW Langside College Glasgow School of Horticulture, Woodburn House, Buchanan Drive, Rutherglen G73 3PF. Contact Colin S Urquhart. Tel: 0141 647 6300. SCOTVEC National Certificate - 3 years day release or 1 year full time. Higher National Certificate in Golf Course Management - 2 years day release. SVQ Level II Amenity Horticulture with Greenkeeping options plus a range of NC and HNC Horticulture programmes including G SVQ Level III. Short courses on a range of subjects including Tractor Operations and the Safe Use of Pesticides can be negotiated.



OATRIDGE COLLEGE Ecclesmachan, Broxburn, West Lothian EH52 6NH. Contact Steve Miller. Tel: 01506 854387. *Full and part time courses:* Higher National Certificate in Golf Course Management; National Certificate in Greenkeeping; National Certificate Modular and Scottish Vocational Qualification Level I and II. National Certificate in Hort. Machinery. Short specialist courses - including safe use of chemicals, operation of greenkeeping machinery.



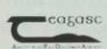
GOSTA TRAINING LTD Unit 2B, Clydeaway Centre, 45 Finnieston Street, Glasgow G3 8JU. Contact Chris Bothwell. Tel: 0141 248 2772. Fax: 0141 248 2453. SVQ II in Amenity Horticulture will all options including Greenkeeping and GTC Training Manual. Available Day/Block Release from November-February. Evening classes also available. Short courses including pesticide training, noise assessment, chainsaw and health & safety courses, SVQ III in maintaining sportsturf to be offered from early 1997.

Northern Ireland



GREENMOUNT COLLEGE Greenmount College of Agriculture and Horticulture, Antrim, BT41 4PU. Contact Henry Shaw. Tel: 01849 426666. Day release courses leading to (a) GTC Certificate/NVQ Level II Greenkeeping and Sportsturf Management (b) GTC Certificate/NVQ Level III Golf Course Supervision.

EIRE



TEAGASC COLLEGE Teagasc College of Amenity Horticulture, National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin, Dublin 9. Contact Pat Suttle. Tel: 003531 8374 388. Block release courses in greenkeeping providing Level III Certificates by the National Council of Vocational Awards.

COLAISTE STIOFAIN NAOFA Tranmore Road, Cork. Contact Paul O'Neill. Tel: 00353 (0) 21961020. National Certificate in Greenkeeping NCVA Level III one year full time course. Also one year full time courses offered in landscape design and construction and amenity horticulture general.

► From Page 31 at all the golfing tournaments throughout the year. I hope this will continue in the future, as all help to generate funds and keep the Section going is much appreciated.

There has recently been a football match played between staff at Rigby Taylors and our Section greenkeepers. Unfortunately I do not have any details at present but will give a full report in next month's magazine.

Any news from within the Section can be passed on to myself by telephoning 01484 317813 or to John Waite on 0113 286 6432.

Finally may I wish everybody a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Do not forget the Annual Dinner Dance on Saturday March 4 1998 - £16 per person payment is required to book a place. Simon Heppenstall

North East

The Barburial Foursomes Knock-out Cup has now been played at Tyneside GC and the winners were John Surtees and Tony Mclure who defeated Michael Gunn and David Thompson 5&4. The presentation will be made at South Moor GC on December 11 after the AGM. An 18 hole competition will be held in the morning and all members will be notified.

The annual match between the North East and the South East of Scotland was recently played at Haddington GC for the Stewart's Cup. The winners were the North East Section, our thanks to Stewarts for sponsoring the event and we look forward to the return match next year. Hopefully we could be playing at Slaley Hall.

Alan Parkin, Assistant Greenkeeper at Whickham GC, has taken over the Head Greenkeeper's job at Beamish Park Golf Academy. We wish him well in his new appointment.

The first green at Whickham is busy being altered again and put back to its original design of a two tier but on a larger scale.

Askham Bryan College is doing well out of the North East Sec-

Around the Green



tion, John Surtees and Brian Clark are doing Phase Two and Craig Parkinson and Craig Wyman are doing Phase Three.

Brian Hughes passed Phase Two and is now taking Phase Four.

Stocksfield's Head Greenkeeper, for 18 years, Tommy Harrison, has now taken over at the Bridle Path course at Gosforth, the Section wish him well on his new appointment. Ian Hutton, formerly working in Austria is now working at Slaley Hall GC. The golf fixture is almost complete for 1998 and the match against the South East of Scotland will be played at Slaley Hall in the first week in October. Jimmy Richardson

Cleveland

John Chanthill, ex Teesside GC, has moved to Lilleshall GC, in Staffordshire, and is very happy in his new appointment. His old boss, Tony Smith, has now completed mound building and tree planting as a sound barrier close to the A19 and A66 and Parkway motorways. Over the past two years 10 new tees have been built and bunkers altered at four greens at Teeside GC.

At Bedale, Ian Pemberton, the Head Greenkeeper moved house from Middlesbrough but his wife has not settled in Bedale so they are to return to Middlesbrough to live and he will travel daily, while Kevin Scarce, the Assistant at Bedale is on a training course at Askham Bryan College, York. Bedale are to install irrigation to six tees and have started an extensive tree planting programme. The 6,000 trees will certainly create interest to the golfers in the future!

Dinsdale Spa GC have re-laid two greens to USGA specifications using their own greenstaff. The surrounds and mounds have been newly shaped and turfed to complete the job.

SISIS held a machinery demonstration at Eaglescliffe GC in October. Sixty greenkeepers attended a successful day of excellent equipment. Two courses have also been arranged at Houghall College this winter, NVQ 3 and NVQ 4.

George Malcolm, at Brass Castle GC, Middlesbrough has replaced his sand in the bunkers with one which is firmer for both the player's stance and for the ball to sit on the sand rather than sink in. Bruce Burnell

MIDLAND REGION

Peter Larter
Tel: 01480 437507

East of England

The annual match again the Secretaries Association took place at Market Rasen. Head Greenkeeper John Hewson and his staff had prepared the course in its usual excellent condition. The result went in favour of the Secretaries 5-3. There was talk around the dinner table that the Secretaries had had their Spring meeting at Market Rasen to practice in preparation for this match as they lost to the Greenkeepers last year. The event was sponsored by Chandler's Machinery, thanks to Jim Carr for the company's help. The longest drive was sponsored by Phil Wilkinson, of Fieldcare, and was won by the big hitting Jim "Daly" Carr! Nearest the pin was won by Eric Coombes, of the Secretaries Association.

While I am on the thank you trail one must thank John Brown, Secretary of Market Rasen, for allowing us all courtesy of the course and thanks to the caterers for an excellent meal (but get some port in stock!).

The East of England Section results were:- Jim Birkett & Phil Wilkinson lost 3&1; Dave Griffin & Andy Richardson lost 1 down; John Scotney & Les Purdy lost 3&2; Peter Fell & Dave Hornsey won 3&2; Ted Lake & Fred Cobb lost 2 down; Norman Hewson & John Hewson won 7&5; Richard Smith & Graham Bontoft lost 2&1; Graeme Macdonald & Jim Carr won 3&2.

Next year's match has been provisionally booked for Toft GC.

Anybody interested in attending a Chainsaw Course at Woodhall Spa on February 2, 3, 4 and 5 then contact me on the number below.

That's all for this month apart from saying hello to Jim Brown, a Northern BIGGA member, who always reads this Section.

Contact me if you have any news from around the Region or Section on 01636 626564. Graeme Macdonald

Midland

The much awaited educational trip to Sunningdale and Wentworth took place on October 13 and proved to be very enjoyable for all of the members who took part. To be able to see behind the scenes of these two well documented courses was of great interest and the time given to us by Brian Turner and Chris Kennedy was much appreciated. The timing of our visit to Wentworth was not the greatest being the day after the World Matchplay and many thanks go to Chris for



his co-operation.

I would also like to thank Richard Minton, of Miracle/Scotts, and Nigel Tyler, of County Crops, for their sponsorship of the day and mainly the meals and drinks at lunchtime, thank you.

We are also looking to organising another trip to Turnberry but this will involve an overnight stop and there could be a round of golf. There would obviously be a small cost but if we can get enough numbers there would probably be some kind of sponsorship. If you are interested please contact me on 01384 292396.

Finally I would like to wish you all a very happy Christmas and New Year and hope every greenkeeper has a successful 1998.

Welcome to these new members - Michael Bratton, Robert Coxall, Steven Lloyd, Adrian Haddock, Michael Gash, Robert Mason and Michael Trotman. Jonathan Wood

BB & O

The golf day at Lambourne was a great success with a full field yet again. The weather was a bit on the miserable side but this didn't affect the enjoyment on the day. Sadly there were no surprises when it came to the winner again! He must be in the running for sports personality of the year! The results were:- 1. S. Putt & M. Timms, 61 pts (boring!); 2. T. French & P. Walker; 3. L. T. Anderson & T. Smith (a prize at last!); Longest Drive - P. Walker; Nearest the Pin - M. Timms; Wooden Spoon - B. Wall & D. Winterton. I won't embarrass them by revealing their score as neither of them would speak to me again... on second thoughts I'm sure it was approximately one point per hole!

The day was sponsored by Avoncrop Amenity Products which was much appreciated by all. My special thanks to Richard Haynes for his organising on the day and also to Joe Feltham for presenting the prizes on behalf of the company. Thanks to Tony French and his team for providing an excellent test of golf and many thanks to all concerned at Lambourne for their hospitality on the day.

One other golf tournament is drawing to a close at last and that is the Rigby Taylor Fourball Knockout. B. Benzie and C. Millard have coasted into the final having disposed of P. Plater and J. Lee with ease. They will play R. Clark and C. Jacobsen who knocked out last year's winners T. French and G. Wheeler 3&2. The results of the final will be posted in next month's magazine. There are some Winter Lectures

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Robert Hogarth, Cathcart Castle G C

approaching so please make a note of the following dates in your diary:-

Berkshire College; January 14 – Communications, February 4 – Golf Course Design, March 4 – Irrigation. These all commence at 7 pm and run until 9 pm when refreshments will be served.

Warren Farm College; January 28 – Health and Safety, February 25 – Irrigation and Conservation, March 25 – USGA Specification. These also commence at 7 pm with refreshments to follow.

Please try and attend as many of the above as possible, the colleges need to see some support from our Section.

I would like to end by wishing all of you a Happy Christmas and a drunken New Year! See you in 1998.

L. T. Anderson

Mid Anglia

Our Autumn golf tournament was held at the end of October at South Beds Golf Club over 18 holes. Although the first frost of the year arrived prior to the tournament, it quickly disappeared in the autumn sunshine and didn't spoil the day.

The golf attracted an entry of 32 people, seven of whom were trade members. This was down considerably on last year's corresponding fixture at Collingtree Park. Those who did enter however seemed to enjoy a good round, with good scores evident on the day. The results were as follows:- 1. Gary Boulton, Dunstable Downs, 41 pts; 2. Leon Cant, Broucket Hall, 39 pts; 3. Eddi O'Hanlon, Chesfield Downs, 39 pts; Longest Drive – Jon Moorhouse, Broucket Hall; Nearest the Pin – Gary Boulton, Dunstable Downs; Trade Prize – John Donaldson, 44 pts.

Our thanks go to our main sponsors for the day, Driving Force Leisure, represented by David Murphy, and also to Kings Horticulture who sponsored Nearest the Pin.

Thanks also to the other trade members who supported us on the day and participated in the golf. My personal thanks to South Beds for the excellent choice of meals and hospitality shown and also to my staff for preparing the course.

The AGM of the Mid Anglia Section was held after the prize giving and in the absence of our Chairman, Stewart Boyce, Vice Chairman Mark Ellis chaired the meeting. The Secretary, Gerald Bruce reported that the Section now had 242 members and that the Hayter National Tournament will in future be sponsored by Ritefeed. He also thanked Chris Brook, who is standing down

from the Committee this year for his efforts over a number of years of service to the Section.

The Fixtures Secretary, Richard Saunders gave a report on all the golf matches throughout the year and complimented Jason Hatton, of Broucket Hall, on reaching the National Final of the Hayter Tournament.

The Treasurer, John Wells, submitted a balance sheet and gave a verbal report on the financial situation which is most satisfactory at the present time. No rise in the cost of golf events is anticipated.

The following people were elected to serve on the committee for the next year:- Secretary – Gerald Bruce; Fixtures/Match Secretary – Richard Saunders; Chairman – Stewart Boyce; Vice Chairman – Mark Ellis; Treasurer – John Wells; Regional Representative – Paul Lockett. Three other new members were voted on to the committee:- Colin Robinson, John O'Gaunt GC; Steve Mason, Mount Pleasant GC, and Neil Whittaker, Arkley GC.

One of these newly elected officers will become the Handicap Secretary. In "Any Other Business" several questions were asked concerning spread of prizes, fixture lists, handicaps and reduced levels of attendance to golf events. Most of the questions were answered at the time but they will also be discussed in depth at the next full committee meeting.

Finally, I would like to wish all our members a Happy Christmas and prosperous New Year and look forward to seeing Section members at BTME in Harrogate next month.
Paul Lockett

East Midlands

This year's Rigby Taylor East Midlands v Midlands Section golf match was played at the delightful venue of Whittington Heath GC on October 16. Despite a wet start to the day things eventually improved, not long into the greensome matches, with the Section taking a 3-2 lead. The afternoon format of matchplay singles started very badly for us with us losing five of the first seven games with the only winners being Anthony Foulds and Adie Porter.

Needing to win the final three games was left to Steven Heap, Mark Bindley and myself and all of us managed convincing wins, to finally win the competition 8-7. I would like to thank all the members of the Midland Section for participating in a great game of golf, and for playing in the correct spirit. Also I would like to thank Whittington Heath Golf Club for their marvellous hospitality. Finally a special thank you

should go to Steve Blackman and the rest of the Rigby Taylor team for sponsoring a really enjoyable day.

The Team on the day consisted of the following members:- Pete Billings, Dave Leatherland, Anthony Foulds, Dave Mitchell, Steve Goode, Adie Porter, Ian Needham, Antony Bindley, Mark Bindley and Steven Heap.

As Chairman of the Region I was fortunate enough to represent the Greenkeepers Team at the Kubota Golf Challenge, held at the Belfry GC on October 14 and 15. After losing in the semi-final to the eventual winners, the EGU the team performed well in the third place play-off defeating the Golf Foundation by 6.5-1.5 points. Thanks should go to Kubota for sponsoring an excellent two day competition.

This month I would like to wish all members of the Section a Merry Christmas and a Happy 1998. Remember this year starts off with the BTME at Harrogate, where hopefully as many members as possible will attend.

I would also like to thank all the companies who sponsored the Section throughout the year:- Spring Tournament – E T Breakwells, Autumn Tournament – Charnwood & Highmeres Horticulture, AGM Tournament – Vitax Ltd, Christmas & East Midlands v Midlands Section – Rigby Taylor and Scotts and ALS for sponsoring the Pairs Tournament, your support is greatly appreciated.

Two dates for next years diary, Spring Tournament – Beeston Fields on May 13 and the Autumn Tournament at Scraftoft GC on September 2.
Antony Bindley

SOUTH EAST REGION

Derek Farrington
Tel: 01903 260956

Surrey

The sun was up, the sky was blue and Kingswood GC on October 29 was the venue for the Autumn Tournament. The course was in superb condition and with lush green fairways and fast greens, the promise of a great day's golf was fully realised. The results were:- 1. D. Langhiem, Foxhills again!, 38 pts; 2. A. Freeman, Roehampton, 36 pts; 3. T. Edwards, Lingfield Park, 34 pts; Nearest the Pin – R. Christie, Addington Palace; Longest Drive – R. Glazier, Foxhills; Trade Prize – P. White, 40 pts.

Congratulations to Ian McMillan on winning the 1997 Toro Award for Excellence in Greenkeeping and the 1997 BIGGA Golf Environment Competition, in association with Rhone Poulenc and Amazone Ground Care. A

truly excellent achievement to win them both in the same year. Perhaps a Golf Day at Hankley Common will inspire other Surrey members to take up the challenge.

And now a bit of local news from our roving reporter. Gavin Kyle has moved to Hendon GC as Course Manager, Ray McClatchie is the new Head Greenkeeper at Blackmoor and Bill Lowe, Head Greenkeeper at High Elms GC, has just become the father of a bouncing baby named Jason. All three have moved to courses in adjacent Sections but can we get rid of them? Fortunately not!
Brian Willmott

East Anglia

Our travelling band went to Gog Magog GC on October 9 and played the Wandlebury Course which is very new and was in excellent shape due to the high standards set by Lydon and his team. It was also a Captains and Greenkeepers competition – my fourball played some excellent golf but failed the orienteering! The Captain/Greenkeeper prize went to D Childs and his Captain D Bram from Sheringham with a combined total of 73 points. The other results were:- 0-9 Handicap – 1. Alan Carter, 38 pts; 2. M Brewster, 38 pts; 3. Roger Plummer, 35 pts; 10-18 Handicap – 1. I Semson, 38 pts; 2. I Hill, 37 pts; 3. P Mallows, 37 pts; 19-28 Handicap – 1. Tim Russell, 41 pts; 2. Steve Davidson, 36 pts; 3. Ernie Hart, 34 pts; Guest Prize – 1. T Winter, 40 pts; 2. D Bram, 40 pts; 3. I Skellon, 38 pts; Longest Drive – James Gemun; Nearest the Pin – Brian Lemmon.

The prizes were donated by Kings, Rigby Taylor, SISIS, Rushbrooks, Pattisons (Longest Drive), Tomlinsons (Nearest the Pin), Barenbrug (Captains and Greenkeepers) and Does (main sponsor). Thanks lads yet again. The prizes were presented by Mr T. Winter, Captain of the Wandlebury Course. Our thanks to all at Gog Magog for a super day and I



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Neil Whittaker, Arkley Golf Club

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Around the Green



spouses (excluding seminars) £110, non-members £160. All inclusive. Further details from Paula Humphries Tel: 01363 82777

South Coast

By now you should have all received your programmes for the Section and Regional events for 1997/98. If you have not received a programme, please contact Jef Drake who I'm sure will get one to you. I do hope that the programme meets with your approval. The Winter Lecture Programme is slightly different this year. For example there was the trip to the London GC in November. I shall be reporting on how the trip went in the next month's report. Also we have made the venues more central so that the amount of travelling has been cut to the minimum. If you have any suggestions on how we can improve our lecture programme please let us know.

Talking about winter lectures, our next meeting will be held at Bramshaw GC on January 7 at 7pm. Our speaker will be Mrs Susan Oldale-Deamon. Susan will be talking about Conservation on the Golf Course. Susan gave a talk to the members of Alton GC to a full house a few months ago. I am told that her talk went down very well with the members. I feel sure that with conservation becoming such an important aspect of course management, Susan's talk will be well received. Please gentlemen let's give Susan our full support.

Our Regional/Section seminar is fast approaching. This will be held at Sparsholt College on February 26 1998. Jef will be sending out details of the speakers very shortly. The last few years we have had some very successful seminars. Some very good speakers have been approached and agreed to come along. One or two points have yet to be finalised. As I said last month there is no reason why this seminar should not be as successful as the last ones have been.

I don't know whether there are any seats left on the Regional Coach for BTME. If you have not booked and still wish to go get your booking forms in to Paula Humphries, our Regional Administrator or contact her on 01363 82777. You might be lucky! Just another reminder regarding those of you who wish to make use of the feeder coach. Please contact

me with your names so that I can arrange pick-up points and the size of the coach to book.

It just doesn't seem possible that we are close to ending another year, they seem to fly by. Still they do say as you get older time goes by a lot quicker. All that remains for me to say is for everyone to have a Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.
Ken Lodge

Devon and Cornwall

Seasons greetings to you all.

Our first meeting of the autumn and winter programme was the Roffey's October meeting held at Bowood GC on Wednesday October 8. On the morning of the meeting members awoke to find the rain coming down in bucket loads so it was a credit to Bowoods greenstaff who managed to have the course playable for the mornings reduced golf competition for the DO Hunt Trophy which was played over the front nine holes. Only the hardy or mad played golf and walked the course during the morning. Our sponsors for the day Roffeys kindly rearranged our afternoon talk to start earlier and lunch was brought forward to prevent members hanging around too long.

After an excellent lunch Don Hunt, on behalf of Roffeys, presented the prizes for the singles Stableford golf competition for the D. O. Hunt Trophy:- 1. Buster Lewer, Dainton Park; 2. Eric Barber; 3. Chris Bland, Dainton Park.

The Section would like to thank Roffeys and Don Hunt for their support in sponsoring the day. Also we would like to thank Mr Ross Cobledick and all his staff who made our day run so smoothly.

Our afternoon educational talk followed the golf presentation and Company presentation by Roffeys with our friends from Cannington College presenting their talk on "Winter Golf and Courses at Cannington". Our thanks to Brian and Huw for their informative talk.

Our raffle concluded an excellent day, pity about the rain!

Our first meeting in the new year will be held at Bude & North Cornwall GC on Wednesday February 4 and sponsored by Barenbrug Seeds, the morning will start with a St Andrews foursome golf competition with starting times between 9.30 am and 10.30 am. For our non-golfing members there will be a workshop running between 10.30 am and 12.30 pm on "Business Planning for Greenkeeping" presented by Robert Brewer, Director of Golf at St Mellion G & CC.

After lunch our sponsor for the day Barenbrug Seeds will present the golf prizes and Company pre-

sentation which will be followed by our afternoon seminar on "Business Planning for Greenkeeping".

Have you booked your place on the Region's package to BTME 98 which includes transport, accommodation and entry to the BTME Show and Seminars. There's only a few places left so hurry!

Richard Whyman

South West

I am sometimes reminded of that well known Channel 4 "Cutting Edge" documentary in which the viewer was taken into the fascinating world of the old established golf club in which a group of the finest of Britain's managerial minds get together and succeed in running the club in the most haphazard, discriminatory and out of touch way imaginable. It was hilarious to see the total lack of diplomacy, the political bickering and all the many little factions within the golf club all convinced they had total knowledge when it comes to the management of their club. Now I am not saying that Kingsdown GC comes into that category but if it did then their Head Greenkeeper, Mark Ford, would undoubtedly rise well above it. Regardless of the reputation Kingsdown may or may not have they can be very proud in listing the 1997 Premier Greenkeeper runner-up as among their assets. Congratulations Mark, you've deserved it and have done the Section and your Club proud.

No tournaments to report on this month but we have been running a few courses. Unfortunately we have had to cancel the chain-saw course due to a last minute negative availability situation but will be running one as soon as we get a couple more people on the list. It will be run over five days and will lead to a certificate of competence in the safe use of chainsaws. We are still open for places on the abrasive wheel course. I was hoping to arrange one for November 26 at Chippenham College but as this clashed with the Regional Seminar I am trying to find another venue and date for that one. The incorrect use of an abrasive wheel can lead to a fine of up to £8,000 if caught, so it's probably best to give me a ring on 01380 828380 to book your place. Remember the other courses we can sort out, namely all the spraying courses and the first aid course. Anyone interested, just give me a ring.

I recently had the pleasure of attending one of the BIGGA regional courses down at Bournemouth. These are very well organised and highly informative courses that are being held locally

must just mention Brian and Colin from Canvey, Essex who made golf what it should be - fun, thanks lads!

Bartram Mowers sponsored a great day at Barnham Broom in early October. Ian told me to mention it, I think its because he won first prize on the day with 37 pts! Longest Drive was the Plum and Nearest the Pin was Cyril Stammer. Brian set up a first rate course and a good day was had by all thanks to Barnham Broom and Bartram Mowers.

What's next? We desperately need some Head Greenkeeper to assess young greenkeepers to pass their D32 and D33 exams themselves. Anyone interested please contact Ian Willett. We need about a dozen (or ten if you're metric!).

The next meeting is on December 10 - the AGM at Thorp Ness, Loch's brother.

Mick Lathrope

Essex

As we are now fast approaching the end of our first 12 months as a new Section together, we can be pleased with the success of the 5 golf days and the 3 evening lectures held at Writtle College.

By the time you have read this the Essex Section will have held its first AGM on December 3 at Orsett GC and new from the above will appear in next months publication.

On a disappointing note, the lack of support for both the presentation dance, which had to be cancelled and the two day regional supervisory course at Maldon had only two members from the Essex Section attending giving some cause for concern. These events are for all our benefits and without your attendance they will never be a success.

On behalf of all the members I would like to take this opportunity to thank the trade for their support throughout the year and wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a prosperous 1998.

See you at BTME.

Dave Wells

SOUTH WEST AND SOUTH WALES REGION

Paula Humphries
Tel: 01363 82777



South West and South Wales

The Region's Special Express to BTME includes the following:- Luxury Coach Travel - various pick-up points starting from Exeter; three nights bed and breakfast in an en-suite hotel; entry to all seminars; spouses welcome - a trip to York will be arranged; payment by instalment accepted.

The cost for members is £135,

so as to attract and educate as many people as possible. So please try and attend them if at all possible so as to ensure their continuation and also to put yourself in a well informed position when dealing with the above mentioned committees.

Finally may I wish everyone a very merry Christmas and may your greens be perfect throughout the next year.

Marc Haring

NORTHERN IRELAND

North East

It's now official - BIGGA is in Northern Ireland and judging by the interest shown at the BIGGA Stand at the IOG Show on October 2, it can only go from strength to strength. Northern Ireland has now its own Region with two Sections - North East representing Counties Antrim and Derry and South East representing Counties Down and Armagh. Members in Counties Tyrone and Fermanagh will be given the choice which Section is most convenient for them. Each Section has a strong grouping of clubs thus creating two strong sections. The members who attended the meeting in early September have elected Philip Baldock of Royal Portrush as Chairman with Henry Farrell as Vice Chairman, Mark Farrell of Allen Park as Secretary with Mar-

tin Laverty as Vice Secretary and Eamonn Farrell of Cairndhu as Liaison Officer for the North East Section. Any inquiries on BIGGA membership and the benefits for greenkeepers, any of the aforementioned Committee members will only be too happy to help.

A joint section meeting will be held at Greenmount College on Monday December 1. BIGGA will give a talk on membership and its benefits, Philip Baldock of Royal Portrush will also be speaking on pest problems and diseases, other speakers have yet to be confirmed. The seminar will last for no more than three hours, buffet included. All attendees will be charged a nominal fee of £5 to cover expenses. Details of times and speakers will be forwarded to all golf clubs closer to the venue date.

Anyone with relevant information in the North East Section that would be suitable for printing in Greenkeeper International would you please contact me on 01574 276001.

BIGGA would like to congratulate Frank Ainstworth on his new position at Templepatrick, we all wish him the very best.

On closing may I congratulate Bob Walker BEM of Cairndhu GC who is celebrating 50 years service to Cairndhu. The man is a legend in golfing circles. E Farrell

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Dates of next courses in 1998

Venue	Rabbits (1 day)	Moles (1 day)
Bristol	January 13	January 14
Manchester	February 18	February 19
Edinburgh	(not available)	March 6
York	March 17	March 18

For further details and to register contact:
Ed Allan on 01303 863948 or Jan Pullen on 01626 892639

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Most industries have their own night of nights. The Oscars are the most famous of them all. They are occasions to celebrate excellence and reward people who have reached the top of their chosen field.

BIGGA has had such nights in the past – separate events covering both the greenkeeper and student greenkeeper of the year titles but only this year have they been combined and under the titles of Excellence in Greenkeeping Award and Student of the Year to become known as "The Toros".

It has come about due to Toro adding the new Excellence Award to the Student of the Year.

To be known as a Toro winner, or indeed a finalist, now means entry to a select club for both students and established greenkeepers.

TORO

Student
GREENKEEPER
of the year



The TOROs



The winner: Ian McMillan, holding plate and certificate, with, from left, Bob Buckingham, Toro and Pete Mansfield, Lely and BIGGA Vice-Chairman Gordon Child

Notes from a small island

Walter Woods visited the courses of all five finalists and what he found gladdened his heart

The Toro Award for Excellence in Greenkeeping certainly conjures up all sorts of factors in your mind – how do you measure good greenkeeping or good greenkeepers? These were some of the thoughts which went through my mind many years ago

when I first set foot in Elmwood College to talk to students who were taking their first ambitious steps into a greenkeeping career. During that period the only education available was a one year course to achieve a City and Guilds certificate. Fortunately, owing to the dedicated effort of many, mainly greenkeepers themselves, education has advanced considerably even almost to a University Degree in Agronomy.

The Toro Company based this award on Course Managers' ability to organise their affairs both in maintenance and management. The philosophy was the more encouragement greenkeeping education receives the more that golf clubs with their golf courses will improve.

The '97 competition got going in earnest in April when nominations were accepted at BIGGA Headquarters. Each entry was vis-

THE FOUR RUNNERS-UP



Ratho Park



Nottingham Golf Club

View of the course at
Hankley Common



ited at local level with a winner coming from each Section.

The final five Section winners were Tom Murray, Ratho Park, Edinburgh; Philip Stain, Nottingham Golf Club; Mark Ford, Kingsdown Golf Club; Ian MacMillan, Hankley Common Golf Club and William Sparrow, East Herts Golf Club – all spread out across the length and breadth of Britain. The Competition had a high judging criteria right through every part of their golf course maintenance, taking into account the level of resources available. Other judgments on the individuals were their role in the golf club management coupled with their ability to set policies throughout the daily work programmes either on the golf course or in the maintenance building.

Ken Richardson, the Association's Education Officer, is certainly a perfectionist, with military precision on train journeys, golf course locations, time of arrivals – this made me wonder why trains are always late when I organise them. However, my first golf course was Notts Golf Club, Hollinwell, where at one time I was employed. What a majestic golf course this is, organised in a traditional manner with a large history spanning over a 100 years. Philip Stain is the Course Manager and what a super job this young man is doing – with tidily kept maintenance buildings housing the most up-to-date machinery. Philip has been at Notts Golf Club for a number of years but this has been his first one in total charge. He has taken it in his stride and has

hosted a top amateur event to the complete satisfaction of players and members.

Next on the list was Kingsdown Golf Club, near Bristol, a very progressive golf club with recent acquisition of land on which to build a practice ground and perhaps extend the golf course. Mark Ford has worked at the golf



course for 20 years and been the Course Manager for the last seven. Kingsdown is a parkland course but was in very good condition. Mark is also very enthusiastic in education on all aspects of club management.

The following day it was organised to visit Hankley Common, a heathland golf course with outstanding natural beauty

and what I would say is an example for every golf club to follow. About 10 years ago the Club Council drew up policies in every department of golf club organisation. Their first priority was to employ a Course Manager which they did with Ian MacMillan, son of Jack, coming on board. The golf course was in magnificent condition with perfect playing conditions. Heather was in abundance making it into an environmentalist's dream.

Travelling from Hankley Common to East Herts Golf Club is two train journeys, numerous tube rides then miles of twisting roads through traffic lights and traffic jams bringing you to a lovely parkland golf course with mature trees where deer and pheasants roam undisturbed, making me think what would happen to them if they were on a municipal course in Glasgow! Bill Sparrow is Course Manager and has an abundance of experience which he is putting to good effect to the golf playing conditions along with the training of his young staff. Bill is also a very good golfer and knows what a golfer's requirements should be.

Back to Scotland to visit Ratho

Park, a private golf club not far from Edinburgh Airport, and what a surprise confronted me. A beautiful parkland golf course in perfect condition with fast firm fairways and greens along with tees perfectly cut and presented. Tom Murray, the Course Manager, has worked at Ratho, I believe, all his working days taking charge in the last ten years. Tom is a product of Elmwood College and certainly a credit to his club who encourage him.

On completion of the golf course visits and assessments all of the five finalists still had to go through the mental barrier with a vigorous interview session to a selected Panel which was organised in Harrogate on October 27. Each of the candidates were asked like-for-like questions to create consistent answers on a similar pattern. This was terrifying for the individual and it could be detected on their faces. However a winner had to be chosen and this was Ian MacMillan making it a remarkable double for the golf club having won the BIGGA Golf Environment Award, in association with Amazone and Rhône Poulenc only two weeks before.

Ian receives a two week trip to the USA taking in the Superintendents' Convention, in California, which is the ultimate in learning. He will also be taken to the machinery and irrigation Toro factories. His golf club, Hankley Common, also benefit being presented with a new Toro Greensmaster Greens Triplex.

The other four finalists were also presented with cheques and gifts. The Toro Company has been outstanding in their contribution towards greenkeeping education and encouragement. Bob Buckingham and Graham Dale along with their colleagues should be congratulated.



East Herts G C



Kingsdown Golf Club



The TOROs

Hankley Common's Ian McMillan set himself and his golf club two goals at the beginning of the year. On each occasion he scored the winner.

How many of us set goals at the beginning of each year? One, two, three four... Yep! I make that most of us. How many of us actually achieve them? One, two... any more? No, I'm afraid that's about it.

One of the guys who should have had his hand up is Ian McMillan, Course Manager at Hankley Common in Surrey who, like so many of us, set himself some goals in January. They were to win both the inaugural Toro Award for Excellence in Greenkeeping and the BIGGA Golf Environmental Award, in association with Amazone and Rhône Poulenc. Ten months, and a great deal of hard work later both trophies sit together proudly in a little corner of Surrey.

If the name is familiar perhaps it should be because Ian belongs to perhaps the best known family in the world of greenkeeping. Dad, Jack, was Course Manager at Sunningdale for many years and is a Past Chairman of BIGGA. He is now a respected consultant. Ian's oldest brother Stewart is Course Manager at Leatherhead, Bobby at Burhill, Billy is General Manager of both Wildwood and Lamerwood golf clubs and younger brother Cameron at Stockley Park – all are top golf courses and it's a dynasty unrivalled in golf.

"I don't know how or why it is that I'm the one who has gone for the awards. I enjoy entering into things that are competitive but I certainly wouldn't look forward to the prospect of competing against them," laughed 36 year-old Ian. It certainly isn't a male only family sister, Heather, now a nurse, has also spent time working with Cameron and mother, Rita, has probably picked up enough knowledge to be a dead cert if she were ever to



The winner, runners-up and competition organisers. Top row, from left, Bob Buckingham, Graham Dale, Neil Thomas, Walter Woods. Front row, Mark Ford, Philip Stain, Ian McMillan, Tom Murray and William Sparrow

Fanfare for the Common man

sit a Master Greenkeeper exam.

Ian had previously entered both competitions in their old formats in the past and had been runner-up in each of them – in the Premier Greenkeeper in '92 and the Environment Competition in '95.

"That basically made us feel that we could win them both and we worked very hard at putting both documents together," said Ian, using the plural to reflect the input he received from his three Course Members – Hankley's version of a Chairman of Green – John Harris, Peter Green and the present incumbent, Alan Kerr; the Club Secretary, John O'Brien; his team and his family.

"The competitions complemented each other. Both entries were fairly weighty documents – about 60 pages each – and there

was a considerable amount of thought put into them. I started work on the Environment entry in January, completed it, then started on my entry for the Toro award.

"Inevitably we thought it would be a bit of a fairy tale to win them both."

Asked if winning one and finishing runner-up in the other would have been seen as a failure Ian paused before smiling and saying slowly.

"We do set our goals high. We like to achieve."

Winning was not without its pressure and Ian freely admits to feeling nervous as he sat in the St George's Hotel, Harrogate, waiting for the result of the Toro Award to be announced.

"I could certainly feel the tension in the room and I didn't

really realise just how tense I was myself," he explained.

No-one who watched Ian make his victory speech could have doubted just how much winning the award meant to him and it was clear that his unique pedigree, a desire to learn and many years of hard work had combined to make him an outstanding winner.

"My father never wanted any of us to be greenkeepers but it was a desire of mine from fairly early on. I enjoyed the game, I liked the outdoor way of life and tinkering with mowers. There were lots of aspects which attracted me in those early days."

Ian grew up at Cardross Golf Club in Scotland and it was there that he picked up his love of golf.

"We moved south to Bush Hill Park, North London, and that's where I started work as an apprentice under my father." Remarkably four out of five of the McMillans worked on the course at the same time. Jack, Stewart, Ian and Bobby before Jack moved to Effingham Golf Club and Stewart took over as Head Greenkeeper at Bushill.

"I was there for four years then moved to Datchet which was my first job as Head Greenkeeper. It was 1981 and I was 20. After three years I moved to Finchley and spent a couple of years there before going to Hankley as Course Manager in 1986.

"Hankley was a real magnet. I'd played the course before and I was very fond of the area but I really had a desire to work on a heathland golf course.

"When I was at Datchet I lived at Sunningdale and gained lots of heathland experience helping my father and I certainly appreciated the finer aspects of it," he explained.

Ian's 12 years at Hankley have, by his own admission, been exciting and very progressive times.

"The whole club is run by very professional people, many of them company directors, and through dealing with these peo-