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■ The next edition of
Greenkeeper International
should be with you by August 6.

GREENKEEPER

International

JULY 1997

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Royal Troon, the beautiful venue for this year's Open.

Picture by Brian Morgan

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Memories of Troon in the '89 summer

I have had the exacting task this month of attempting to combine moving house with producing this magazine.

The former has led me into corners of the loft to which I'm sure I've never ventured before – at severe risk to my personal well being – in attempts to rescue boxes containing things we didn't know we owned and are certainly not likely to need in the foreseeable future. The latter saw me pay a visit to Royal Troon to see how preparations for this month's Open are progressing.

While much of the house moving experience involves sweat, tears and occasionally blood it does give a chance to relive old times as clear out sessions are diverted by the discovery of old photographs and souvenirs.

It was during one of these that I came across a programme for the 1989 Open Championship at Royal Troon and it brought back some memories of that hot week eight years ago.

I have always considered Troon to be one of the best locations for an Open. There is a definite "golfing feel" about the place generally while there is plenty of room to host an Open and all the accompanying tentage. Oh yes, and the views it shares with Turnberry over the Firth of Clyde are among the finest to be found anywhere.

What I, indeed everyone, recalled about the '89 Open was the hard running fairways and the lack of rough – the result of one of the west of Scotland's rare extended dry spells! The hard running fairways contributed to Greg Norman's stunning start to his final round – he opened with five straight birdies – but also led to his eventual downfall when he drove into a bunker an obscene distance from the tee on the 18th hole during the play-off and

lost all chance of wrestling the title from Mark Calcavecchia.

The lack of rough was illustrated by Calcavecchia himself who sealed the Championship by playing a short iron to within two feet of the final play-off hole from what would normally have been thick rough.

A recently installed irrigation system, not to mention the wettest June in 40 years – Can I remind you of last month's Editorial piece? – will toughen up a course which will undoubtedly be an exacting test for Tiger, Ernie, Colin, Nick and co. They will also find a course in immaculate condition.

No less a source than Kim Macfie of Hayters, a former Chairman of Green at Royal Troon, played it recently and said he had never seen it look better.

Good luck to Billy McLachlan, in his first Open as Head Greenkeeper, and his team.

The BIGGA Open Championship Greenkeeping Support Team will also be in action once again. As well as being a superb chance for old friends to meet up, the Team is becoming an increasingly influential part of the Championship as a whole providing professional help whenever and wherever it is needed.



Scott MacCallum
Editor

As I see it...

BY PAT MURPHY
BIGGA CHAIRMAN

What a month! My feet just haven't touched the ground. I've visited just about every corner of the country and I've even played some golf for the first time in 10 years.

It started with the Scottish Hayter Final where among the highlights was enjoying some square sausage with Kim Macfie and his brother, and, courtesy of Jim Paton, paying a quick visit to Billy McLachlan at Royal Troon where he was extremely busy preparing for this month's Open.

As ever the Scottish Hayter was organised to perfection and credit must go to Elliott and, of course, Edna Small in what is Elliott's last year as Regional Administrator.

After fitting in a GTC meeting at Aldwark Manor I was off to Burnham and Berrow for another Hayter organised admirably, on her debut by Paula Humphries. Chairman of the Region, Richard Whyman, also presented Kim and myself with a memento of the occasion which was a nice touch.

There followed a Regional Board meeting where it is sad to report we accepted the resignation from the Board of Management of David Milbourne to allow him to spend more time on his own job. He will be replaced until January by Past Chairman Barry Heaney and then by Ian Holoran, Chairman of the Northern Region.

With barely time to reflect on that meeting I was off to Germany to be one of the 180 British greenkeepers on John Deere's Feedback event. I think it is excellent that the greenkeeper's views are given so much consideration and I am particularly excited by the new cutter which eliminates clogging that is being developed.

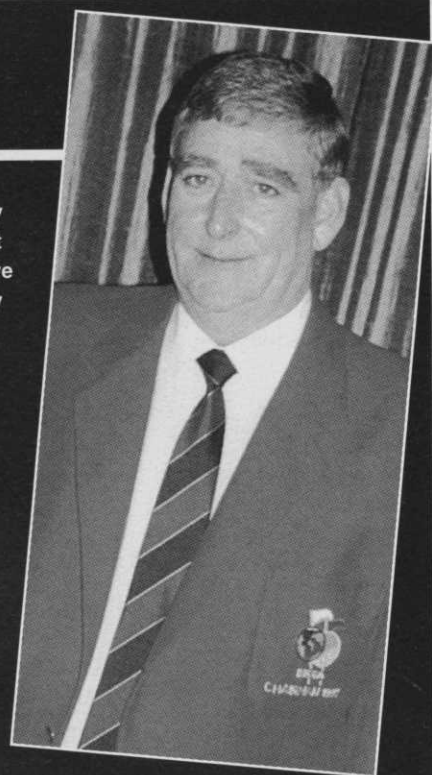
The Anniversary Golf Day was a superb occasion and will probably become an annual event. It was great to see so many familiar faces from the industry attend and interesting to hear Rory Underwood's talk.

After that it was to Shipley College to discuss the college being granted GTC status and I'm delighted to say that it will. Then on to Whitby GC to make Andy Boyd an Internal Verifier and then to South Leeds GC for the Northern Section President's Day. It was then that I played my first 10 holes of golf in seven years.

Having whetted my appetite for the game my next two visits to golf courses just resulted in me getting wet. The Hayters at The Warwickshire and Ham Manor both came within an inch of being cancelled and medals should be struck for the players who played nine holes on each course to ensure a result. I did manage to play at Ham Manor with Kim and James McEvoy from HQ but only out of a buggy!

Can I just thank all the golf courses I have visited in the past month for their wonderful hospitality.

Finally, to those people who contacted me regarding the Box Number Ad in the Magazine a couple months ago. There was a communication breakdown at HQ on the policy for such a situation and the problem will not arise again.



Conference date set for FEGGA members

The Federation of European Golf Greenkeepers Associations has announced a major Europe-wide greenkeeping conference to be held in Spain from November 21-23 this year.

The twin themes of the conference will be education and the environment. Each of the 17 member Associations of FEGGA will be invited to send two delegates to present two papers, one outlining the education provision for greenkeepers in their country and the other covering environmental considerations in relation to the greenkeeping profession.

The European Greenkeeping Conference will be held in association with Toro, the company having become a major supporter of FEGGA. General Sales Man-

ager for Toro, Bob Buckingham, welcomed the announcement of the conference. "FEGGA's progress since its inaugural meeting in Amsterdam in March 1996 has been rapid," he said.

FEGGA Chairman, Dean Cleaver, views the forthcoming conference as a significant landmark in FEGGA's development.

The 17 countries currently in membership are represented by the Greenkeeping Associations of Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Holland, Iceland, Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland, Italy, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland.

FEGGA currently represents some 10,000 members of constituent Associations. The Chair-

man of FEGGA represents the Association on the Management Committee of the EGA's ecology unit. Whether on ecological or other issues, FEGGA recognises the need for the greenkeeping profession to speak with one voice and brings the European greenkeeping associations together for this purpose.

There can be no doubt that the advent of FEGGA will bring many benefits to greenkeepers throughout Europe in the years ahead and the coming together of associations through FEGGA can only enhance the profile and standing of both the profession and its practitioners.

The conference will be reported through the pages of *Greenkeeper International*.

FLYING DIVOTS

■ Members of the Scottish Region were saddened to hear of the passing of Ian Forbes, former Chairman of Stewart & Co. Ian was a great supporter of greenkeepers all his life and especially of great help to the various greenkeeper associations over many years. Many of the older members of the region will remember him as a man of great knowledge of the turf trade who was always happy to talk to and advise greenkeepers at any time. With his passing an era of the older generation of trade has gone but not forgotten. The Region were represented at the memorial service and pass on their condolences to his wife Betty, his daughter Morag and son Graeme.

■ Rhône-Poulenc has produced an informative guide to integrated bracken management.

This booklet could prove invaluable for Amenity Managers involved with heathland golf courses or upland amenity areas.

The guide gives details on the biology of the bracken plant, management options and how to optimise the use of the bracken herbicide.

A free copy of the brochure or further technical advice can be obtained by calling Rhône Poulenc Amenity on 01277 301115.

■ Anyone seeking assistance in reclaiming tax for BIGGA subscriptions should contact Janet Adamson or John Pemberton at Headquarters – telephone 01347 838581 – and a form will be issued which should be completed and sent to the local tax office.

■ Roger Bennett, Principal of Askham Bryan College, York has been awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy from the University of York for his research into the 'Amenity and Environmental Impact of Golf Courses in England and Wales.' The research and subsequent thesis examined all the issues relating to planning, conservation, course design and management. The findings should be of interest to those organisations involved in golf education at all levels.



Setback for speedy greenkeeper

The so-called "Nutty Novice", Terry Colvill, (see April issue page 5) has suffered a setback following an outstanding start to his motorcycle racing career.

Deputy Course Manager at Mill Hill in North London, Terry, pictured at Mallory Park, chalked up a series of fine results in the early part of the season including two victories and a second at Mallory Park

and a third placed finish at Cadwell Park in the Supersport Series.

However, his engine blew up at Snetterton due to overheating resulting in the need for a new cylinder head, valves, pistons, con rods, barrels, radiator, gaskets and oil cooler.

Although sponsored by Grass Roots and several other companies Terry is a "privateer" – he

doesn't enjoy the support of a factory so he had to foot the bill for all the work, around £1,500, himself.

The hitch caused him to miss the Snetterton race and also, to his great disappointment, another at Brands Hatch the following week.

It is hoped that by the time you are reading this he will be back in the saddle again.

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Europeans triumph in twitchers' Ryder Cup

The keen eyes and ears of 12 European birdwatchers have struck an early and morale boosting blow for the continent's Ryder Cup hopes, by soundly beating the American challenge in the first ever "Birdwatching Ryder Cup".

The competition took place over the full 24 hours on 12 selected golf courses in Europe, and 12 in the USA. It was a light-hearted way to demonstrate that golf courses can be valuable places for wildlife. On the day the European team recorded a total of 217 species, while the Americans managed 237 species. However, on the basis of the naturally richer North American bird fauna, the team captains had agreed a handicap of eight American species equivalent to five European species. This means the European total rises to an effective 347 species, easily shading the American effort.

Fittingly, in the context of the Ryder Cup, the star European site was in Spain - Club de Golf Ulzama, in the Pyrenean foothills near Pamplona. Here, ornithologist Antonio Rodriguez Arbeloa recorded a staggering 101 species, including 15 different birds of prey; such as golden eagle, Egyptian vulture and Montaguets harrier.

Also in Spain, at Valderrama,

the score was a more modest 48 species but this did include one of Europe's rarest birds, the white-rumped swift and a large number of migrating honey buzzards passing over from the Straits of Gibraltar as well as the only records on the day of red-rumped swallow and orphean warbler.

Among other highlights were arctic skua and bluethroat at Sarvik Golf Club in Finland; while in Hungary there was a spotted crane at Hensce National, and barred warbler and Syrian woodpecker at the appropriately named Birdland Golf Course. Despite atrocious weather conditions the team from the bird observatory at Falsterbo, Sweden, chipped in with a very creditable 94 species, including velvet scoter, marsh harrier and avocet. Most unexpected of all was the sighting of an African purple glossy starling at San Lorenzo, in Portugal, which also contributed little bittern, spoonbill and purple gallinule.

Altogether 18 species of bird of prey, plus five species of owl, 22 waders, seven woodpeckers and 22 warblers were recorded among the 12 European sites. Out of the overall total, 152 species (70%) turned up on more than one golf course. At the commoner end of the scale the four most widespread European birds, found on all 12 sites, were swallow, blackbird, greenfinch and goldfinch. A further seven species were found on 11 sites: mallard, house martin, white wagtail, robin, blue tit, great tit and chaffinch. The average score per site was 64 species in Europe and 65.5 in the USA. This shows that we are not dealing with one-off, stray records, but that golf courses consistently attract an impressive range of wild birds - as well as other wildlife.

The birdwatchers have set the tone. Now it is up to Europe's top golfers to emulate their achievement and secure the real Ryder Cup in September.



Vintage tournament gives students taste for the real thing

The third annual Vintage Open Golf Tournament at the Reaseheath College golf course in Cheshire was again the responsibility of the third year students, studying for their Higher National Diploma in Golf Course Management.

The competition provided the students with an opportunity to work as a team and exercise all of the skills required to make such an event a success.

This included golf course preparation and presentation, attracting both local and national sponsorship, media coverage, catering and customer care, all of which were achieved within the tight budget set. This, in turn, satisfies

the HND requirement for event planning while providing local golfers, over the age of 70, with a competitive and highly enjoyable day's golf.

Sixty one golfers took part in this hard fought and ultimately close Stableford competition, and judging by the comments, all enjoyed themselves immensely. In fact, general opinion would suggest that this year's event was the best so far. The overall tournament winner was Mr J. Sheffield, of Crewe, with a score of 45 points. He received the Vintage Open Trophy and won a round of golf for four at Nefyn Golf Club in North Wales and a putter donated by Ping.

Jim Wensley and Dave Stevens

Ocmis buys Midland

Ocmis Irrigation (UK) Ltd has acquired Midland Irrigation Ltd.

Ocmis say it will continue to develop the service and installation offered by Midland Irrigation and have retained Steve Brennan as Service Support Engineer in the area. The business will trade under the Ocmis name and will continue to supply the Rainbird range of products.

(mis)adventures of Gordon the Greenkeeper



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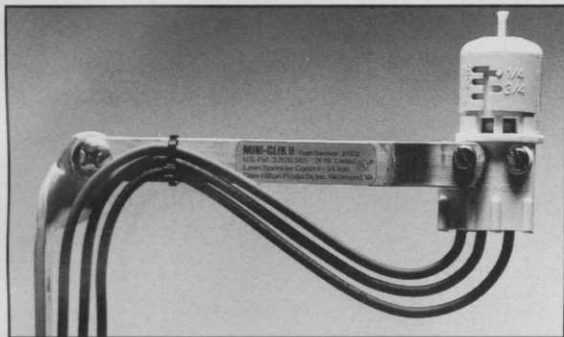
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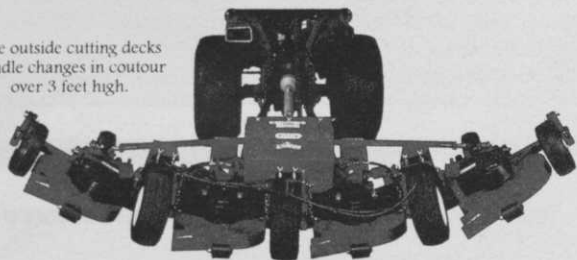
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Victorious teams look forward to Ganton

The Regional Finals are currently well under way and four of the teams will have been decided by the time this reaches you.

For those players they can look forward to the challenge of Ganton, one of the finest courses in the country and if they perform well there they have the chance of winning a place on the Rest of the World team to tackle the Americas team in Atlanta next year. The teams which were confirmed at the time of going to press were:

Scotland

Cat 1. 1. D. Leith, St Andrews, 73-1=72; 2. S. Taylor, Killermont, 74-1=73; 3. D. Wilson, Irvine Bogside, 81-8=73; 4. C. McKay, Elmwood, 79-6=73. Cat 2. 1. A. Wilson, Kirkhill, 86-14=72; 2. J. Johnston, Turnberry, 86-13=73; 3. A. Torrance,

HAYTER CHALLENGE

King James, 86-11=75; 4. C. Cumming, Fortrose, 87-12=75. Cat 3. G. Shearer, Balmore, 91-22=69; 2. S. Carmichael, Fins GC, 92-22=70; 3. D. Nelson, Brunston Castle, 91-21=70; 4. A. Robertson, Grangemouth, 91-20=71.

South West and South Wales

Cat 1 - 1. R. Daly (D & C) 65; 2. L. Millar (S. Coast) 69; 3. D. Bray (D & C) 74; Res. C. Bland 74. Cat 2 - 1. A. Knight (S.West) 71; 2. P. Wentworth (S. Coast) 73; 3. M. Porriah (D & C) 73; Res. A. Cosh (S. Wales) 73. Cat 3 - 1. A. James (D & C) 68; 2. J. Cooper (S. West) 76; 3. A. Rideout (S. Coast) 77; Res. J. Braithwaite (S. West) 77.



The Scotland team



The South West and South Wales team

Famous name is still at helm of BIGCA

The British Institute of Golf Course Architects has confirmed Martin Hawtree, the third generation of the famous family, as President for a further year, with Simon Gidman continuing as Vice President.

At its recent Annual General Meeting at Wentworth, the Insti-

tute announced the details of its professional Diploma Course at Merrist Wood College, now in its inaugural year, as the world's first course of its kind in golf course design.

Six Associates have now been invited to join the membership of BIGCA after qualifying recently,

they are Jonathan Gaunt, Thomas Himmel from Germany, Steven McFarlane, working with Hawtree; Tom Mackenzie, a colleague of Donald Steel, and Paddy Merrigan from Ireland.

Nigel Henbury, assistant to Howard Swan joins as an Associate.

Martin Hawtree, President of the Institute, added "I am pleased to see our organisation advancing and expanding so positively and that our members continue to impress the market, old and new, with sound professional work."

The Institute now boasts almost 50 members, half of whom are based on the Continent.

STRI to sponsor scorers

STRI is sponsoring a team of 20 boys from Giggleswick School in North Yorkshire, responsible for operating the Hole by Hole Scoreboard at this year's Open at Royal Troon.

STRI advise on the sports grounds at Giggleswick School and on the preparation of all the Open Championship venues, in their role as official agronomists to the R&A Championship Committee.

Giggleswick School has been operating the Hole by Hole Scoreboard for the past 12 years. The score team is selected on a voluntary basis each year.

Gull adds a further hazard on the 18th

The 18th hole is reckoned to be one of easier par fours on the links at Borth & Ynyslas. Recently a new natural hazard has appeared in the form of a Herring Gull that has built her nest just off the fairway just right in line with the pin. A small area of semi-rough separating the 1st and 18th fairways attracted the expectant gull in the last week of May. Having build a nest largely composed of old divots, she settled in and by the end of the month had laid four eggs.

The greens staff at Borth are well aware of the importance of good conservation practice as

the northern end of the course, which borders the Dyfed Estuary Nature Reserve, is a Site of Special Scientific Interest. The bird seemed unaware of this and has chosen a very exposed site in full view of the clubhouse and professional's shop.

The first reaction was to put a fence round the nest but as this unsettled the bird it was quickly dismantled. To everyone's relief she showed no adverse reaction to having a white line painted round the nest site and settled down happily with a GUR notice. This is taken to stand for "Gull Under Residence".

New direction for Anthony

Anthony Black, previously Project Manager at Golf Euro-Disney and Course Manager at The Warwickshire, has set up a new company. "Groundstrokes" offers a practical hands-on service involving construction, alterations, and general maintenance.

Contact Anthony on 01676 532826.

THE FACTS: NOT THE HYPE

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Top seeds!

Barenbrug UK has recently joined BIGGA's Golden Key Sponsorship programme and, as Scott MacCallum found out, it comes on top of a major expansion within the company.

It's amazing what you end up thinking about in the bath. Last week, as I was having my regular soak, I found myself wondering why the strongest competitors in sporting events are called seeds. It was probably because of Wimbledon.

For the life of me I couldn't come up with an answer and I found myself searching for an answer from the type of seeds we all know about. Sowing seeds of success... It didn't quite follow.

As my mind wandered and the water became cooler and the bubbles less bubbly, mentally I put the two types of seeds together and wondered what would happen if you ranked seed companies. Would you have the Top Seed seed?

If that were the case there is a fair chance that the Seeding Committee would consider Barenbrug for that honour based on the criteria that Barenbrug is a global company with a group of companies spread throughout the world and also that Barenbrug varieties are a constant feature at, or near, the top of many of the STRI Rankings. The company has also just joined BIGGA's Golden Key sponsorship programme.

The man whose name adorns the familiar yellow bags is Joseph Barenbrug, a Dutch seed



merchant who established the company in 1904, and since then, while always operating with a Barenbrug at the helm, the company has set a pattern that many of its varieties have followed – showing great strength and an ability to reproduce across the full gamut of climates.

"We export to 80 countries worldwide and have companies all over Europe as well as Australia, New Zealand, North America and China," explained Michel Mulder, the Dutch Managing Director of Barenbrug UK, and a man whose enthusiasm for the industry is infectious.

The British arm of the Barenbrug empire was established in 1990 but the name had been known in Britain for many years as a wholesale product before that, principally in the agricultural field, but Michel is quick to point out that Barenbrug products were supplied to St Andrews as far back as 25 years ago.

In 1990 Michel and John Bradley, who is now Amenity Sales Manager, were appointed

and it was only then that they started to market the Barenbrug products as a brand.

"What happened when John and I went out into the UK market was that most of our customers, like turf producers or golf courses said 'where have you been. We've seen all your varieties for years at the top of the lists and we've been waiting for you'. It was a very positive and a great way to start the company," explained Michel.

"With this support from the industry we really took off," he added, recalling that the first show in the golf market that they exhibited at was BTME '92.

It is indeed remarkable that Barenbrug UK has grown so quickly in an industry where it takes 15 years to develop a new variety to the stage where it can be commercial viable.

"Because of the nature of grass – it flowers only once a year and as it is a cross pollination plant – it takes a long time to produce enough seed for it to be sold," explained John.

"In the trial system you always take what you consider to be the best and test the potential new variety against it and our philosophy is that we only want to introduce grasses which are better than the existing. There is no point in proceeding if we are going to produce a new perennial rye grass which is no better than Barclay or Barcredo," he explained, while adding that he is excited by the performances of some of the varieties nearing the end of the 15 year process.

Much of the success of Barenbrug comes from harnessing the excellent work Mother Nature has already done in producing grass species to produce the latest varieties.

"As a company we like to work with nature. Over 300 grass seed species have been developed naturally without our help and those which do not have winter hardiness or disease resistance for example have already been weeded out. Using breeding technology we can go in, collect and refine the species and try to develop them to increase their yield," explained John.

Having research stations and plant breeding stations in Northern Ireland, Holland, France – one in the north and one in the south, North American, New Zealand and Australia gives Barenbrug a complete range of climates in which to work from.

"There is a lot of inter linking between the research stations and we can combine the drought tolerance on the southern hemisphere with the winter hardiness of the northern hemisphere. All extremes can be tested and, by sharing the information, we get the best of both worlds," explained Michel.

"We really are a global company and say that we can supply from the North Pole down to the South Pole!" he added.



Constant re-appraisal among the testing at Barenbrug